



Impact of Globalization on Higher Education in Asian Countries: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Globalization has caused a paradigm shift in higher education, which is a subject of research and discussion within the global community. The purpose of this research was to present cross-case comparison of key patterns of globalization impact on higher education in some Asian countries. A qualitative comparative-analytical and descriptive approach was adopted to analyze the similarities and differences among education systems and globalization trends in higher education in Asian region. The data was collected from policy papers on higher education reforms and strategy, and through interviews of faculty and students. While the study focused on the

comparative analysis of higher education, impact of innovation, and challenges related to globalization of higher education institutions, it discovered changed dynamics in higher education in Asian countries. It was found that a special focus on internationalization of higher education is required in the context of integrated policy strategies. Such reforming strategies and transformations in higher education systems in Asian countries would have practical relevance. The paper colludes with a strong belief that globalization has transformed higher education systems, culminating into internationalization of education.

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Introduction

Globalization refers to the development of increasingly integrated systems and relations beyond nation (Marginson, 2022; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). In globalization era, nations are being moulded into a shared social space by economic and technological developments in different regions of the world. Globalization process has faced several challenges making an impact on the implementation of the UN initiated sustainable development goals, including reducing poverty and unemployment, sustainable economic growth, expanding labor market, and improving access to education (Sart, 2022). Globalization has affected the society in all dimensions. For instance, human capital and knowledge intensive products serve as drivers of labor market (Sabir & Gorus, 2019). In business sector, innovation is more important than competition. People are surprisingly changing their mind such as their beliefs and requirements, demanding for more knowledge intensive products, even at the cost of making paradigm changes in their cultural identities and thought patterns (Sabir & Gorus, 2019).

In terms of education, globalization and knowledge economy is seen actively being pursued when universities in leading Asian countries such as Japan, China, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan have become global players in transforming the higher education market into a knowledge hub at the international level (Lin, 2023; Ma, Fan, & Razzaq, 2023). These countries have seen an upward trend in foreign students enrollment in the last few decades. Many of these Asian countries have adopted globalized and internationally accredited cross-territorial higher education policies, establishing newest educational institutions and owning foreign institutions partially and wholly (Porter & Vidovich, 2000). For instance, there are about 40 off-shore university campuses in Asian countries of major global universities. Some of these offshore campuses are integrated in regional clusters. For instance, all major European nations have their branch campuses in Asian countries such as Vietnam, Singapore and Qatar. The Singapore cross-border campus in Kuala Lumpur is a good example of such regionalization of education at international level (Mok, 2000).

Many higher education institutions (HEIs) in some Asian countries have brought a paradigm shift in their financial model of running education campuses. For instance, these countries have managed to receive grants from local partners, government as well as industrial companies, for their offshore campuses, which are now attracting several local and foreign students. This paves the way for regional integration in the form of network-based cooperation, ensuring the mobility of universities in Asia and the Pacific. For instance, southern university network has over 26 leading universities (Shahjahan & Grimm, 2023).

The Mongolian Ministry of Science and Education has adopted the policy of making HEIs more globally oriented and internationally connected. According to this policy, Mongolia has implemented internationalization of the curriculum, offering double degree programs with partner universities in China, Japan, Korea, and Russia. Mongolia also has a joint German-Mongolian Technology University in Ulaanbaatar city area (Sainbayar, 2019).

The current study undertook a comparison of national and global factors shaping education systems in different settings. The rationale behind this study was to examine how the Asian countries have promoted internationalization of education as their important policy for higher education (HE) reforms, adopting various financial schemes including sanctioning competitive fundings. The study also attempted to examine the extent to which neo-liberal and post-modern

forces of globalization have driven higher education reforms to force a more competitive spirit in knowledge-based economy across nations.

Literature Review

- *Higher Education and Globalization*

There is no dearth of research studies on comparative approach between higher education and globalization, to evaluate higher educational policies in national and global contexts (Enkhtur, Li, & Zhang, 2023; Mok, 2000; Sabir & Gorus, 2019; Zajda & Jacob, 2022). With respect to Armstrong's definition of education undergoing a globalization process in international arena, it is understood that HEIs are integrated to the whole process of globalization in all countries (Armstrong, 2007). On the other hand, Schugurensky and Myers (2003) identified another aspect of globalization, which is global economy, or the 'commodification' of knowledge, and welfare state. According to him, globalization of economy acts as an important force for the change in higher education as well. The question arises how globalization leads to the emergence of a knowledge economy. It is answered in very simple terms: information technology and knowledge management outweigh the capital and labour, hence making a huge impact on the economy, by adding value and transforming all capital and goods as knowledge capital and knowledge goods. Such a knowledge-based economy, according to Slaughter and Leslie (2001) also leads to global political and economic changes, which are instrumental in making an impact on higher education patterns.

Moreover, knowledge is also considered as a global phenomenon, and transferring or sharing knowledge is a global process. In a globalized environment, a country's economic capacity depends on its capacity to face the competitiveness in the field of higher education. With digitalized and dynamic job markets in a non-linear world, changes in skills demand unexpected trajectories of modern careers. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) note that academic capitalist knowledge/ learning regime is expressed in faculty work and departmental activity to develop, market, and sell research products, educational services, and consumer goods in the marketplace. A comparative analysis of HE systems supports HE policy development as an exploratory framework for balancing national and global accounts, relationships between higher education and national development. Many international organizations (UNESCO, World bank, ADB, OECD) undertake comparative studies in HE developing recommendations to expand access to Higher education and improve the overall quality of education.

- *Impact of Globalization on Higher Education: Case Analysis*

Globalization trends have created new dynamic markets, which have forced revolution in higher education and represented the multidimensional impact on national system of higher education in Asian countries. In that way, comparative analysis of Higher education is embedded in political, economical and cultural perspectives of Higher education as a soft power. Comparative research of HE in the context of globalization emphasizes the need to integrate methodologically contextual element into analysis of complex relationships between globalization and HE. Hence, globalization processes in HE at national, regional and global levels should be analyzed in more coherent ways (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

With structural changes in the global economy, countries in Asian region have developed new policies aiming to reform their higher education strategies. For instance, People's Republic of China implemented nation-wide projects in 2017, when the Ministry of Education of the PRC announced that the higher education reforms are oriented to strengthen China's soft power policy in global dimension (Li & Xue, 2022). The Government of the PRC also provided policy on establishing research and innovation global network, supporting research and innovation addressing social problems in health care, unemployment, improving legal environment to protect intellectual property, establishing artificial intelligence laboratories in cooperation with foreign universities. Likewise, Japan has approved its government's policy to promote knowledge intensive university network, innovation and technology transfer programs, and university corporation globally. To implement this policy, Japan has focused on increasing investment in basic research programs, to create new technology and support social innovation to solve actual social problems (Enkhtur et al., 2023).

Following the footsteps of China and Japan, other Asian countries have also come forward with their educational programs with a globalized approach. People's Republic of Korea introduced several programs such as Brain Korea 21, university-industry entrepreneurship programs, and regional business innovation systems. The Global school house initiative of the government of Singapore sets the decisive goal to internationalize higher education, and to develop global educational hub, and joint research clusters. Taiwan has implemented university-industry cells that conduct research-training programs. India has focused on setting up an international hub in engineering and technology at its various international educational centers. Malaysia supports establishing corporate universities, developing research and innovation systems, and becoming Asian higher educational hub. Philippines have focused on improving higher education governance and management, increasing access to higher education. Vietnam aims at restructuring higher education, integrating research activities into its industries, increasing self-independence of its citizens, and introducing new financing schemes to promote competitiveness of higher education and support both regional and international integration. Thailand has also developed research universities to become a regional research leader, by making changes in its highly-qualified workforce. Indonesia has introduced guidelines to improve academic and vocational school system, improve competitiveness of universities, and implement mobility projects. Finally, the Mongolian Universities have played a key role in the development of Mongolian economy and industry and its competitiveness in accordance with its government policy agenda, The Parliament of Mongolia approved such progressive policies like The Mongolia's Long-Term Development Policy - Vision 2050, and National Agenda on Development of Research University, to ensure competitiveness of national higher education at the global level (Gundsambu, 2019; Sainbayar, 2019).

In addition to contributing at individual levels, leading Asian Universities in Japan, Singapore, China and South Korea are becoming regional education hubs as a destination for Asian students. Regional and global hubs offer opportunities to join higher quality education and research networks for developing countries. Asian countries like China, Thailand, and Singapore have also adapted innovative foreign models of HE with its indigenization as part of national strategy. In this way, internationalization of education was linked with regionalization as well as national contexts. One of the first initiatives to develop higher education regionalization was the Bologna Process which sought to bring more coherence to higher

education systems across Europe. The Asian countries also implemented the similar initiatives. For instance, the for-profit institutions created a global network of degree-granting higher education institutions, which developed new tendencies of open educational resource movement while buying high quality of learning technologies and offering worldwide higher education service to meet all the educational needs of the market.

Additionally, a few important trends have also been noticed in the Asian countries. First, it is felt that globalization is closely associated with liberalization of market and making an impact on Higher Education. Secondly, in developing countries, particularly in Mongolia, there is an imbalance growing between labor market demands and traditional HE resources. This imbalance in national context is accompanied by a rise in competition between HEIs in global environment. Thirdly, governments of leading countries are promoting policy measures to adopt national HE system to promote globalization of education through a collaborative effort of steps like R&D, franchising, and branch campuses with globalization perspectives. Lastly, there is a growth in the understanding of university systems in the public domain, which increased the typology of access level in HE. Further, the mobility of off-shore campuses fostered new development of comparative research in international dimensions.

The international aspect of HE in developing countries is becoming increasingly important in economic and socio-cultural dimensions (Saleem, Khan, & Mahdavian, 2023). HEIs in leading countries of Asia play an important role in knowledge exchange and R&D programs as new actors of knowledge diplomacy and soft power. An analysis of policy reforms drive to variation in multilevel national contexts, and cross-case comparison of key patterns of Higher education administration leading to alternative perspectives in HE development across countries. External and internal drivers of globalization in Asian countries lead to an internationalization as a rapidly growing trend in Asian higher education. It is being coupled with knowledge economy development and global competitiveness discourses. National governments stimulate institutions of higher education going international and in this way concept of internationalization of higher education has itself become globalized integrating national, regional and global dimensions (de Wit & Deca, 2020; Tight, 2021).

Methodology

A qualitative comparative-analytical and descriptive approach was adopted in this study to coherently capture and analyze the similarities and differences of cases sampled for this study. The comparative-analytical approach helped to diagnose and critically analyze the complex interrelationships between global forces as witnessed in different countries; while the descriptive approach was employed to make a detailed analysis of education systems in various national settings. These two approaches helped in understanding the similarities and differences among education systems as important to analyze Higher education development from alternative perspectives and globalization trends in HE in Asian region. The comparative analytical approach further helped to understand the different competitive horizons of development referring to structural, functional, cultural and contextual characteristics of HE systems in developed and developing countries of Asia. Besides, linear causal explanation of national policy and education systems was used to understand

observed differences in HE institutions across countries. Significant differences in the globalization impact were translated into neoliberal imperatives of Higher education and policy reforms in many Asian countries. The main objective of this study was to draw innovative insights towards new trends of Higher education development in selected countries. The data for this study was collected from policy papers on HE reforms and strategy, through interviews of faculty and students who participated in international projects and exchange programs.

Results and Discussion

• Asian Countries' Perspective

The Asian countries' economic perspectives of internationalization are multi-faceted in relation to human capital development, research and technological advancement (Tight, 2021). It is therefore necessary to first identify what HE models are being employed in order to understand transnational education, its growth and implications. Table 1 provides a purview of comprehensive internationalization as a coordinated framework integrating various types of transnational education in the Asian region (Tight, 2021).

Table 1

Various Types of Transnational Education Models in The Asian Region

Models	Notes
Branch campus	An educational institution of higher studies from the offering country establishes a fully-fledged branch campus in the host country.
Franchising	A provider from the offering country authorizes a provider or a partner in the host country to deliver its courses and programs.
Articulation	This model allows partial credit transfer towards a program at the offering institution. Generally, one qualification is awarded by the institution in the source country.
Double/joint degree program	Under this scheme, education providers in different countries collaborate to a single degree program and/or double degree program for which students receive qualifications from both providers, or a joint award from the collaborating partners.
Twin 2+1, 3+1 program	In this model a student from an institution of a country travels to undertake courses and degrees for a fixed period of time at an institution which is located in a different country.
Distance education	Under distance education delivery mode, courses and programs are offered via televisions, radios, computers, internet, video conferencing, Skype, Lectopia, correspondence, or other methods within or beyond the national boundaries.
Virtual education	Under virtual education delivery mode, courses and programs are offered via virtual blackboard within and beyond the national boundaries. All students directly enroll in source country's institution from anywhere in the world.
Education hubs	Student hubs, talent hubs, research and innovation hubs

Source: (Clark, 2012).

All these models are functional in the Asian region. For instance, the franchising double degree programs dominates cross-border educational institutions with purchasing mode playing an important role in contributing and promoting convergence. In franchising, foreign institutions also allow implementation of their curriculum wholly or partially, to award foreign diplomas according to their terms of agreement.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed HEIs in both developed and developing countries to move quickly to online education (de Wit & Altbach, 2022; Priya, Cuce, & Sudhakar, 2021). In some developing countries technology could not be fully exploited due to its rising cost. IT-based distance education, however, still offered more opportunities to higher education providers in leading countries to meet growing enrollments in regional and global dimensions. These processes have global influence in national HE systems. In addition, market competitiveness and neo-liberal approach also transformed higher education management into a corporative identity, and offered a new platform, popularly known as corporate university model which supported educational activities in campus as well as outside campus environment. These models also encouraged e-learning platforms that contributed to re-thinking of physical mobility in higher education. Curricula became more market-oriented and multi-agent based. Higher education moved from dominated one-to-one management to multi-player governance. For instance, Alibaba, eBay, Facebook, WeChat, Google, Baidu and Amazon companies built their empire around the corporate university platform in some Asian countries.

- *The Mongolian Perspective*

Mongolian universities have been involved in programs for higher education development in the framework of European Union Initiatives. Several programs were initiated with a collaborative approach, aiming at high competitiveness. For instance, a three-year project on “Enhancing education programmes in Arts and Humanities via European STEM methods and tools/ARTEST”, was implemented within ERASMUS+ Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education (CBHE) at National University of Mongolia, Mongolian University of Science and Technology and The University of Humanities. The Mongolian HEIs implemented a few joint programs as SOCRATES - ERASMUS, LINGUA, LEONARDO, with student and faculty involvement in universities in European countries. Most Mongolian universities implemented joint degree programs on trans- and multi-disciplinary basis. For example, scholarship programs were implemented through blended learning development programs on “Training of Teachers” during 2018-2020 and “Training of Clinicians” offered by Harvard University, and implemented at Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences. Likewise, J-WEL program was launched by MIT in University of Science and Technology, Mongolia in 2020. Figure 1 exhibits various benefits of internationalization to HEIs and students in developing countries as revealed in a survey of study abroad alumni and careers.

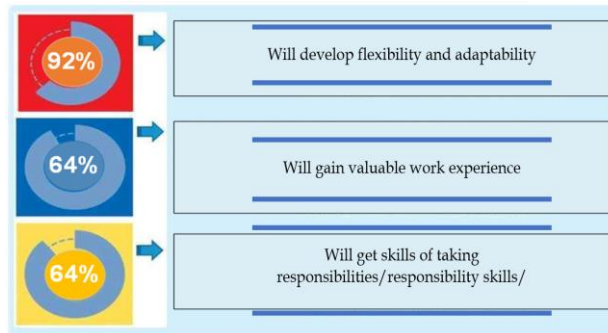


Figure 1. Benefits of Internationalization to Heis and Students in Developing Countries
 Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact-summary_en

These benefits are the evidence of the fact that Mongolian Universities have adopted a step by step strategy to internationalize academic and research programs in order to offer more opportunities to study abroad, which has significantly increased in last two decades. These benefits also hint at the Mongolian students’ preparedness and academic staff being more internationally oriented.

- *A Comparative Paradigm of Cross-Territorial Higher Education System*

Contextual understanding is required to conduct a comparative research in a broader perspective of the development of higher education policy across boundaries. All higher educational institutions have understood the positive benefits of opening overseas branches and producing graduates who are internationally knowledgeable, cross-culturally sensitive, and would practice openmindedness in their career pursuits. Figure 2 graphically presents the survey results of graduates from international educational centers where they have counted positive benefits of studying in a cross- territorial branch of a higher education institution.

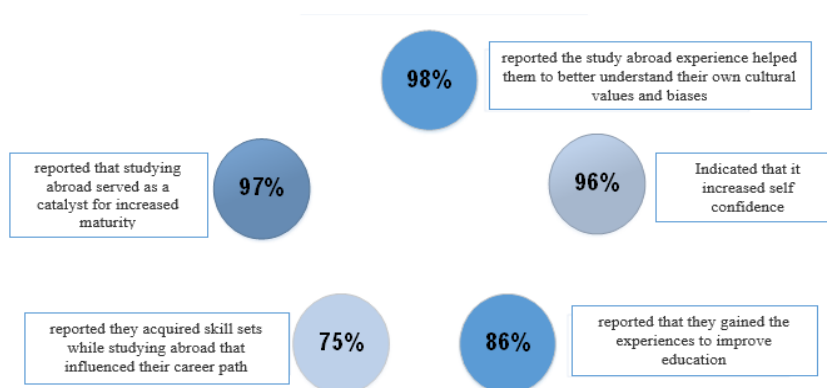


Figure 2. Survey Results of Graduates from International Educational Centers
 Source: <http://www.iesabroad.org/study-abroad/why/alumni-survey-results>

The JICA survey results (Kuroda, Yuki, & Kang, 2014), as presented in Table 2, clearly depict the comparison between the person and the future cross territorial activities. These statistics emphasize future influential perspectives of cross-territorial education in Asian countries. The Mean of each statement related to cross territorial activities was calculated on a 5-point scale, where 4 = Highly significant; 3= Fairly significant; 2= Moderately significant; and 1= Slightly significant; 0= Not significant. The table clearly shows an increase in the Mean values between present and future cross territorial activities.

Table 2

Future influential perspectives of cross-border education in Asian countries.

Cross-territorial activities	Mean	
	Present	Future
To improve international visibility and reputation of your university	3.23	3.78
To improve the quality of education	3.19	3.78
To achieve research excellence	3.17	3.78
To promote intercultural/international awareness and understanding	3.13	3.75
To promote national culture and values	3.09	3.68
To meet the demands of your national economy	3.01	3.63
To promote regional collaboration and identity of Asia	2.93	3.53
To meet the demands of global economy	2.69	3.39
To generate revenue for your own institution	2.68	3.34
To promote global citizenship	2.63	3.31
To meet the demands of Asian regional economy	2.62	3.29

Source: (Kuroda et al., 2014)

Comparative analysis unveils various strategies of HE internationalization in Asian developed countries, suggesting how globalization of HE has determined internationalization strategy in the global higher education landscape. In some Asian countries, internationalization is linked to geopolitical projects of leading countries (Rumbley et al., 2022).

- *Cross-Territorial Collaboration for Research and Innovation*

Collaboration between HEIs is widely recognized as one of key factors of innovation and technology transfer in industry and business cooperation in this area and proposes new research framework across the national boundaries. International cooperation in higher education contributes to developing research and innovation in global and national contexts. Internationalization can be an effective instrument to narrow the gap between research and technology capacity between HEIs of many countries. Universities of Japan, Korea, China and Singapore keep a leading position among world universities in Research and Innovation. Research oriented start-ups, spin-off companies, and commercialization of patent and licenses are common in Asian countries. Some Asian countries, as Taiwan, support investment into research work by small and medium-sized institutions and university start-up companies.

According to the Economic planning agency of Japan, colleges actively launched the initiative "From college to knowledge production" to support research and innovation (Li, Liu, & Jia, 2014). Asian scholarly community has contributed to reshaping academic knowledge production in response to changing needs of industry and business through a

number of research and innovation activities like patents. Table 3 presents a comparative summary of research and innovation activities and economic growth

Table 3

Correlation of Research and Innovation Activities and Economic Growth

Rank	Measurements	Asian leading countries	PRC	Asian developing countries
Innovation	Number of patents /in million/	569	1395	33
Market	Growth of GDP	1.1	4.4	4.7

Source: (Tonby et al., 2019)

Keeping in view the growing GDP as seen in Table 3, higher education entrepreneurship model can also support schools and departments conducting fundamental academic research with the sponsorship and commercialization of intellectual property. In Asian countries as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and PRC, HEIs expand close cooperation in the form of joint innovation center and incubators. In Japan and Taiwan, where the private sector financing is dominantly promoted, the private sector investors assess the outcomes of the researches. Table 4 shows university & business incubators, success factors and human resource professionals, collaborative spaces and networks in leading universities in Asian countries

Table 4

Collaborative Spaces and Networks in Leading Universities in Asian Countries

	Output	Input
University & Business incubator	In society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand creative innovation Integrate research results into development goals 	Supporting services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Financial Advising Administrative
Success factors	In economy	Stakeholders and partners
Human resource professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support economic growth Reduce unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founders and investors Research centers
Collaborative spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil society and private sector Entrepreneurship and young people and students who expected new challenges
Network	For supporters of business and entrepreneurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop young people's talent Expand small and medium-sized enterprises Implement new projects successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Founders and investors Research centers Civil society and private sector Entrepreneurship and young people and students

Source: Review of Economics and Political Science. University business incubators as a tool for accelerating entrepreneurship: theoretical perspective. Noha Ahmed Hassan. 2020

In Asian countries, research universities give special importance to evaluate research and innovation to ascertain the benefits of internationalization of research and innovation through agencies like Clarivate Analytics and Thomson Reuters. In Malaysia, the assessment criteria for research outcomes are IF journal metrics, number of patents, citation rates, 50:50 ratio of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students, and finally, more than 20% of research cost should be invested by the sources of private sectors (The concept of Research University. Asian social science. Vol 9. 2013). Figure 3 speculates these benefits and how they create collaborative research and educational programs and opportunities to develop knowledge.

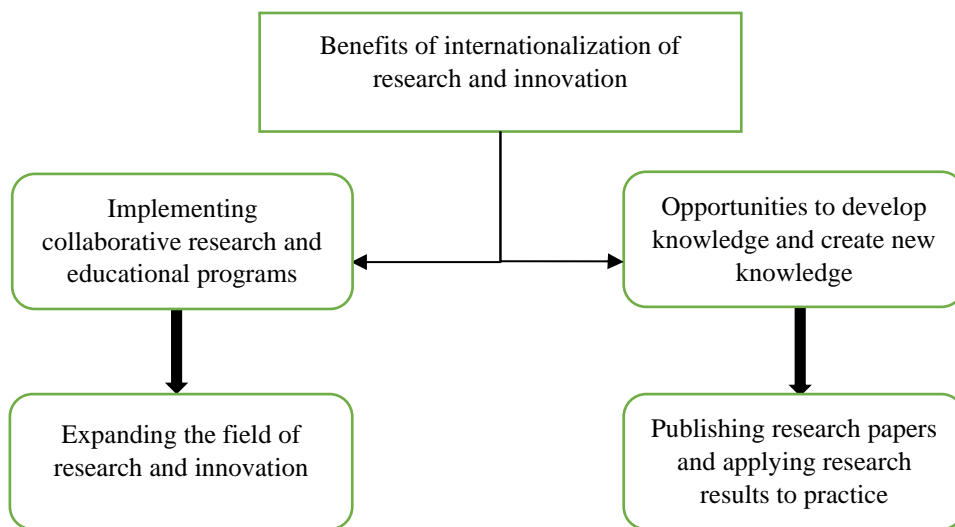


Figure 3. Benefits Of Internationalization and How They Create Collaborative Research

- *A Comparative Paradigm of Mongolian Higher Education System*

The global perspectives have made a positive impact on the Mongolian higher education competitiveness in the global arena. Internationalization of the Mongolian HE provides new insights that are important for development of Mongolian labor market and economic growth. In middle and low income countries, internationalization policy tends to be on quality assurance and capacity building (Rumbley et al., 2022). Quality issues of Asian higher education are closely related to issues such as higher education marketing, social responsibility of higher education institutions, economic efficiency, international collaboration, regional and cross-regional talent movement, and academic programs (Sabir & Gorus, 2019). In Mongolia, internationalization of HE is closely connected to improving quality of academic programs and research. The development of Mongolian HE depends on quality of academic programs and research.

The Mongolian universities have established close cooperation with Asia-Pacific Quality Network, Quality Assessment Agencies in the USA and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). In order to increase the competitiveness of national higher education in international arena, academic programs

offered by the Mongolian universities have been recently accredited by the international quality assurance agencies. Leading Mongolian universities such as National University of Mongolia, Mongolian National University of Education, Mongolian University of Science and Technology, University of Finance and Economics, and The University of Humanities, have approved quality improvement strategies to ensure competitiveness in academic programs and research. In accordance with the International standards, Mongolian universities also use International Quality Assurance criteria in national program accreditation, which serve as basis for mutual recognition of professional qualifications. Leading Mongolian public and private universities have signed agreements on recognition of professional qualifications with the universities in Korea, Japan and China.

Thus, the Mongolian government and their HEIs reinforce the internationalization of research and development activities to improve a potential of national education system to build an innovative country. The Mongolian HEIs emphasize a cooperation in research and innovation. Joint research and innovation present effective models of cooperation in higher education in Mongolia. University-based national innovation system within global innovation system have also been created to support economic competitiveness of the country.

Conclusion

The study has presented an analysis of higher education systems within the context of globalization in Asian countries. The discussions of national and global contexts made evident several new findings and helped to generalize from those findings. For instance, this paper examined the international experience with university collaboration which may offer lessons for the development of these arrangements in Asian countries. A comparison of various policies to develop higher education in these countries were done to find out whether they offered new opportunities to apply results of analyses to practice in national higher education, particularly in Mongolia. It was revealed that a comparative analysis of higher education systems can contribute to developing more enlightened and effective policies to achieve more competitive education system.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that empirical and policy analysis through a lens of intersectionality should be particularly suitable for policy development in HE in developing countries. It was also felt that national and regional challenges have direct relations with the economic problems of developing countries (Saleem et al., 2023). Hence, the knowledge intensive HE models have become central to economic competitiveness for developing countries like Mongolia. Besides, it is also necessary that internationalization of higher education should be made an important means of public and cultural diplomacy in Asian countries. Last, but not the least, a competitive funding policy is strongly recommended to intensify internationalization of higher education in developed countries.

In developing countries, higher education internationalization is associated with preparing graduates to work in global labor market. Long term internationalization will lead to unification of academic programs and quality assessment procedures in developing countries. Similarities and differences at macro levels (national and institutional) reflect the ways how dependent factors mediate global pressures. An analysis of convergence and diversity with the practical application of different models of internationalization in higher education presents basis to explore the interconnectedness between global, national and

local dimensions of higher education. The differences in HE systems motivate new research to respond to contemporary challenges facing HE in global world. The ideas presented in this paper could be adopted to frame more relevant higher education policy analyses and considered to improve national higher education competitiveness in Mongolia. This review indicates that education researchers in Mongolia are taking advantage from adapting methodological recommendations that are represented by comparative studies.

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