

Globalization 4.0's Effects on Internationalization of Higher Education: Technology, Internationalization at Home and New Hubs

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ABSTRACT

Due to globalization, it has been realized that the distance between countries is irrelevant because of the various opportunities offered by technological and transportation advancements. Globalization has also manifested itself in the field of higher education through internationalization. The concept of globalization has evolved with time; its new form is called Globalization 4.0, as referred to at the World Economic Forum 2019, and impacts on the internationalization of higher education. Although the number of students in international circulation in higher education has not decreased, there is an apparent shift in the students' preferred destinations and motivational factors. This study attempted to understand the changes pertaining to the internationalization of higher education in parallel to global developments. Evaluating the effects of Globalization 4.0 on the internationalization of higher education will provide an important outlook to countries and higher education institutions that seek to update and develop internationalization policies.

Keywords: Globalization, globalization 4.0, higher education, internationalization, internalization at home, technological developments

INTRODUCTION

Even a cursory glance at recent developments reveals that globalization has certainly occurred, but there has also been a change in how it is approached. The United Kingdom's "Brexit" initiative; United States President Donald Trump's "America First" discourse; and Chinese President Xi Jinping's assertion that integration with the global economy is a historical trend that cannot be disregarded, while calling on the world to be part of China's Belt and Road Initiative for a more inclusive globalization, can be cited as examples of changes in globalization conceptions. Unable to dispense with global market opportunities despite these differences, the world shows an ever-increasing interest in the concept of "internationalization," which is regarded as the projection of globalization on higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Brandenburg & De Wit, 2011; Van der Wende, 2007).

Today, one cannot deny the dominance of a few established regions comprised of English speaking, Anglo-Saxon systems with developed economies (e.g., US, UK, Canada, Germany, and France) that cater to students seeking to receive higher education abroad (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Huang, 2007; Kondakçı et al., 2008). However, in the vast field of international higher education, the number of actors who strive to get their share is increasing every year. As there is demand for new actors, those institutions that typically secure the greatest share of these students have largely remained at the top, but despite this placement, the major actors seem to have lost some of their share to new competitors. The world is changing, and the field of higher education has its share in this change. To introduce the required strategic changes to higher education and formulate valid policies, it is crucial to correctly identify the relation between the world and higher education as well as the changes therein.

This study briefly explains the process that globalization has undergone since 1980 and its current state; thereafter, it evaluates the contemporary perspectives on the internationalization process of higher education, in light of global developments and changes. Therefore, this study will add value to the literature by evaluating the development of the globalization phenomena under contemporary conditions and by demonstrating how each global development would relate to the internationalization process of higher education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Process of Globalization from 1980 to the Present

The increased competition among countries and firms due to rapid industrialization and the search for new markets after 1980, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1990, and the

resulting collapse of the countries in the Eastern Bloc directed the entire world toward a capitalist and global order led by the USA. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed in 1994, and the establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995, ensured to overview the multilateral and multinational trade agreements, encouraged the entire world to be a global player in free trade.

However, in the 2000s, acceleration of technological developments in a world order that saw increasing rates of competition and ample circulation of money added new dimensions to the phenomenon of globalization. The use and spread of the Internet, which was also referred to as the Third Industrial Revolution, made it easier for people from anywhere around the world to do business with each other. E-commerce and digital services in various areas have created a “cyber world” that refers to an online environment wherein several participants interact socially and can affect and influence each other. The phenomenon of globalization faced the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which was referred to as Globalization 4.0 at the World Economic Forum in 2019 (Pezzuto, 2019; Roylance, 2019; Schwab, 2018; Wang, 2019). It should be noted that the following changes were mentioned under the category of Globalization 4.0:

Financial Mobilization in Developing Countries (Particularly in China)

China, which was the “plant hub” of developed countries between 1980 and 2000, began to emerge on the economic scene with its cooperation with the European Union, USA, Japan, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in many sectors in the 2000s and managed to become a global power over time by furthering its relations with the Asia-Pacific. With its vast demographic potential, China acquired a non-negligible position against the USA, the world’s greatest economy. China’s strong position, the upward trends in the economies and demographics of other developing countries, and the future projections referred to by global reports (McKinsey Global Institute, 2019; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2017) make it essential to take developing countries into consideration.

Globalization Declines in Political and Social Domains and Holds in the Economic Sphere

There is no eagerness to give up the “common market,” which emerged in parallel to the phenomenon of globalization; as the money in circulation has declined, i.e., the pie to be shared has got smaller, the countries getting the highest share from this pie have sought to divide it among themselves instead of sharing it with others. Therefore, the idea of globalization, which still holds importance in the economic order, has, nonetheless, weakened as a political or social ideology and has been replaced by discourses that support nationalization. The countries that managed to

boost their industries with supportive immigration policies in the 1980s have abandoned “inclusive” policies and adopted “exclusionary” policies. Therefore, those who assert “my nation” rather than “multinationalism” are in the foreground in the political arena.

Rising Tensions in Commercial Relations

The overall trend in commercial relations in recent years was to abolish the barriers among countries and encourage free trade, but now, “trade taxes” or “barriers to entry” are the most significant indicators of the change in the conception of globalization. It seems that in the Globalization 4.0 stage, the understanding around the world is evolving away from a liberal one to an approach that favors boundaries and bans. Brexit settlement in the UK, restrictions introduced to NAFTA, and the ongoing threatening trade discourse between the US and China naturally resulted in certain uncertainties in global trade, making all stakeholders uncomfortable.

Effect of the Growing Digital Market and Social Media across the World

The digital world has become a necessity for everyone nowadays. Having emerged digitally, certain firms are now competing with the world’s corporate giants (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, Coca-Cola, McDonald, Toyota). These corporate giants existed on the economic scene long before the emergence of these digital firms, and in some cases, have even outdistancing them. However, five e-trade companies (Amazon.com, Google/Alphabet Inc., Facebook, Alibaba, and Tencent Holdings) were ranked in the world’s 10 most profitable companies announced in 2018 (Duffin, 2019). While younger than the remaining companies on the list, their presence demonstrates the massive influence of social media on consumer decisions, as highlighted by many research surveys in marketing (Bronner & Hoog, 2014; Palalic et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2012), the findings of which present clear evidence of the dominance of the digital world.

DISCUSSION

Effect of Technological Developments

Being required to adopt innovative teaching models to keep pace with the changing world through online teaching channels or cooperation with diverse institutions, higher education fields should develop strategies to accommodate changes in the following:

Effect of Social-Media. The Internet has brought people closer, making distances less significant. Accelerating with the ever-increasing rate of technological development, the use of social media has triggered curiosity among people, which, in turn, has increased their eagerness to travel around

the world and have new experiences. People are curious to see places other than their home countries. Additionally, “peer opinions and recommendations,” which constitute an effective factor in the university selection process (Aydın, 2015; Pimpa & Suwannapirom, 2008; Yamamoto, 2006), have become more accessible due to the virtual world. A survey conducted on 32,000 prospective and current students (ICEF, 2019) showed that prospective students attach more importance to online advertisements (123% higher) and comments (68% higher) than current students do, which is a result that universities should consider while designing their promotional strategies.

Changes in Student Profiles. In the contemporary higher education environment, access to information is swift and easy due to technological developments; for instance, it is possible to have access to virtually all articles free of charge- without having to visit libraries, order any book from any country, and attend lessons at the world’s best universities from any place around the world. These changes in the higher education environment led to changes in student demand. Of the 32,000 students who participated in ICEF’s survey in 2019, 43% believed that they should receive a response from a university one day after their application, and 40% and 17% thought they should be given a response one week and two weeks after their application, respectively. This indicates that students are accustomed to having quick access to everything (ICEF, 2015b; ICEF, 2016). Such changes started to alter the way that a university diploma is perceived. The trend toward traditional destinations (developed Western countries) was challenged with new questions: *Do I have to go to another country to obtain this diploma or have access to the information I need? Does it make sense to spend four years for this diploma?* Nowadays, students are open to and eager for different experiences more than ever, and at the same time, they consider the ratio of money that they will spend to the quality of education they will receive in return, as well as how long it would take them to get back the money they spent.

Both the constriction of the labor market around the world and the increased awareness of the opportunities afforded by technological progress for the world of education caused students to focus on the rate of benefits that they can reap from the money they spend. Career opportunities to be obtained after graduation are prioritized as highly as the quality of education (Choudaha, 2017; Schulte & Choudaha, 2014). In recent studies on the factors affecting students’ university selection processes, the “price-efficiency relationship” (ICEF, 2017; ICEF, 2019) and “business opportunities provided after graduation” (Jones, 2014; Watkins & Smith, 2018) were found to be strikingly prominent. The student profile shifted from students who attended universities in the 1990s and were later able to support themselves (before the

global economic crisis), to students who are less reassured of the worth in what they pay for their education. As a result, these modern students have become more suspicious and more inclined to choose a virtual modality instead of a physical modality to receive international education (ICEF, 2018).

Moreover, studying at a prestigious university is still a major source of motivation for international students. However, it is also observed that an increased emphasis on the skills of graduates, rather than on the name of the university from which they graduated (Jones, 2014; Millet, 2017), and an increase in educational alternatives for students has led to a decreased focus on attending a reputable university during the selection process (ICEF, 2017). Cost-benefit assessment, social affinity with the destination country, and proximity to the home country, along with the criteria of the quality of education and attending a prestigious school have all come to be mentioned in the selection process. This supports the possibility of developing countries claiming a share from the international higher education sphere and encourages them to exert efforts to this end. It can be argued that these efforts have manifested themselves in the ever-increasing visibility of Chinese universities in the world ranking systems; the attempts by countries, such as Turkey, South Korea, and Mexico to boost their international student numbers; and their emergence as centers of attraction for students who are close to these regions. It is observed that students who seek to attend a university outside their home country now tend to prefer institutions where they can complete this process at lower costs, in a closer region where they can feel safe without being subject to physical attrition from visa restrictions, racist discourse, exclusion (Choudaha, 2018; Lee & Rice, 2007; Najjar & Saul, 2016; Zhou & Cole, 2017), rather than the most prestigious ones (ICEF, 2019).

Effects of Changes of the Globalization Approach in the Political and Social Domains: Internationalization at Home

After the 2000s, the process of internationalization was referred to in two forms: *internationalization abroad* (cross-border education) and *internationalization at home* (campus internationalization) (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Knight, 2008). The process of internationalization abroad involves the mobility of students and academics, institutions (cross-border institutional mobility, branch campus, or education hubs), and programs (online courses or program mobility). This mobility process makes many contributions to the academic, social, and economic life. The argument that these benefits should not be restricted to people in international circulation is the starting point of the concept of internationalization at home: to reduce the inequality between those who can get involved in international circulation and those who cannot, thus creating a more inclusive internationalization process. This approach

does not deny the role of mobility in internationalization but argues that internationalization should be treated with an understanding that goes beyond physical mobility (McKenzie & Baldassar, 2017; Wächter, 2003). It is vital that this process include every individual within the university; in other words, it should be “inclusive” and incorporate the “intercultural” dimensions (Hudzik & McCarthy, 2012; Paige, 2005). There are *two ways* of improving inclusiveness and interculturalism:

‘Inclusive and Intercultural Design’ of the Curriculum. Defining the concept of “internationalization at home” as a complete set of different activities such as the development of the international/intercultural dimension of the curriculum; development of appropriate teaching/learning processes, research collaborations, foreign language studies, extracurricular activities; and development of contact research or scientific activities with local, cultural, and ethnic groups. Knight (2008) regards “curriculum” development as a part of this concept. Beelen & Jones (2015) refer to curriculum development activities as the very heart of internationalization at home. Arguing that “the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments” is necessary, they maintain that the process should be beneficial for students who go abroad and for those who stay behind (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p.69). The notion of formal curriculum in this definition refers to all courses that a student is required to take for graduation from a program, while unofficial curriculum consists of all extracurricular activities that are not compulsory but implemented by the university to make students ready for life (Leask, 2015).

Design of the Administrative Structure to Support the Inclusive and Intercultural Approach. Crowther et al. (2000) suggested that institutions should undertake informed and systematic work in their administrative structures to improve their international dimensions. McKenzie & Baldassar (2017), however, approached internationalization at home from the “friendship” perspective and noted that institutions may contribute to the formation of groups that know and understand each other better instead of student groups formed based on their nationalities by ensuring that national and international students establish social relations. In their studies, both McKenzie & Baldassar (2017) and Beelen & Jones (2015) pointed out that this relationship may be supported by the school’s intercultural policies but that it should not take an artificial or compulsory form. Stier (2004) also asserted that this support from the university should be natural. She explained interculturalism with the metaphor of “four journeys” (academic, cultural, intellectual, and emotional) in her study and notes that developing an approach that regards international students as a natural part of the campus

will eliminate many challenges in these four areas.

Efforts to develop an inclusive/intercultural curriculum and administrative structure will be beneficial to all students. Trying to minimize potential difficulties for students involved in mobility will help them benefit from the internationalization process in the most efficient manner. International students who are satisfied with the internationalization policy will talk about their satisfaction in their close circles, supporting the increase in positive views about the higher education environment of the home country. As students not involved in mobility will be allowed to receive education with international standards, through the international/intercultural curriculum developed, and benefit from the cultural diversity in the campus, through support activities implemented by the institution, it is very likely for such students to have increased satisfaction. Design of the administrative structure for supporting the inclusive and intercultural approach will enhance the positive feelings of students about the institution, which will be the focus of word-of-mouth in close circles, thus contributing to the national image of the institution.

While the concept (internationalization at home) first emerged to reduce inequalities, technological and social changes in today's world have certainly added to concept's popularity. As unfavorable conditions, such as exclusion and isolation, to which student groups coming from developing countries to developed countries were subjected (Hendrickson et al., 2011; Trice, 2007), were complicated further with the obstructive policies implemented by governments, the question "why am I dealing with obstacles and negative behaviors although I am paying money?" emerged. At the same time, technological developments made it possible to have access to most information imparted at places with better standards at lower costs from one's own country; that is to say, the phenomenon of "being a part of global education without mobility" became more noteworthy. Furthermore, the awareness of developing countries as the biggest feeder of the field of international education and increased supply of higher education in these developing countries has urged the popular higher education areas to work toward developing a more welcoming and positive attitude toward international students. In other words, the idea of being intercultural and inclusive was driven by efforts to ensure equity and the need to address the changing student profiles and higher education areas of our modern culture. Therefore, it became clear that focusing solely on curricular work would not be enough and that this perspective should be supported by the administrative organization of the institution, services provided, and extracurricular activities. Within internationalization at home activities, the emphasis placed on the importance of improving dialog between local and international students and ensuring that incoming students leave the country with pleasant memories and positive experiences became crucial.

Dynamics of New Hubs in Changing Times

It is estimated in the projections of developing countries that they will contribute to specific changes in the world's power axis in parallel to their economic and demographic momentum. Many authors note that these developing countries are rising to the occasion to take their share from the world economy and from the field of higher education (e.g., Lee & Schoole, 2015; Li & Bray, 2007; Wei, 2013). While developed western countries such as the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, and France historically dominate the international higher education sphere, the recent inclusion of China and Russia and increased visibility of regional higher education hubs are closely related to these developments. The following factors that led to changes in shares of the hubs have also paved the way for the construction of new higher education hubs.

Political Environment Reflections on Higher Education. While leading destinations are losing some of their share, the number of students coming to China is increasing every year. The US is the most important actor in international higher education and the leader in the field in terms of receiving students. However, the rate of increase in student numbers has recently slowed down. The rate of increase in the number of international students received by the US fell from 7.1% in 2015–16 to 3.4% in 2016–17 and 1.5% in 2017–18 (Institute of International Education, 2018). The share of the US students in the international education markets declined from 28% in 2001 to 22% in 2006 (UNESCO, 2017). The rate of increase in the number of incoming international students has been stagnant for the UK since 2012 (Marginson, 2018; Redden, 2018). The number of international students was 341,790 in 2007, and it increased to 435,495 in 2012 with a growth of 27%; however, this number was 458,520 in 2017, meaning there was just a 5% increase between 2012 and 2017 (Study in UK, 2019). The increased share of Canada and Australia (from less than 3% to 8% and from 4% to 11%, respectively) in higher education due to the moderate immigration policies and political discourses that they use, unlike the US and the UK (ICEF, 2017), is a significant part of the changing scene. Although the visa policies implemented by the USA and the UK, the Brexit process, China's economic development, and the discriminatory attitudes of non-Western countries against international students, which were discussed in several studies (Barnett et al., 2016; Heng, 2017; Li & Bray, 2007), are essential points that may account for changes in these numbers.

Dynamism in Sending Countries. Another reason for the changing international share in the higher education area is that sending countries started to create their own higher education hubs. Increased population in developing countries brought about a demand for higher education, which, in

turn, triggered the higher education supply. For instance, the number of students enrolled in higher education in Turkey rose from approximately 500,000 in the 1990s to 5,139,469 in 2003 and to 7,560,371 in 2018. The number of universities in the country went up from 30 in the early 1990s to 76 in 2001 and 201 in 2019 (HEC, 2018). The demand created its supply, and the supply enhanced dynamism. This increased supply has decreased the rate of Turkish students looking for alternatives abroad and revitalized the demand for Turkish universities from neighboring countries. The status of the country as a regional higher education hub for the Balkan, Middle Eastern, and Central Asian countries as mentioned in many recent studies (e.g., Jon et al., 2014; Kondakçı et al., 2018) are also related to this dynamism.

Increased Significance of Regional Higher Education Hubs. The mobility in China, South Korea, South Africa, Hong Kong, Singapore, Mexico, Turkey, and other countries that have started to make their presence felt in international higher education (Ng, 2012; Wen, et al., 2014; Wen & Hu, 2019) is attributed to the developments of these countries and their reputations in their regions as more integrated with the world and more developed (Lee & Schoole, 2015). The ever-increasing racist discourses of the dominant powers around the world has amplified this regional mobility as well (Altbach & de Wit, 2015; ICEF, 2017). As noted in several reports (ICEF, 2015a; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014), it seems that these new hubs will increase their effects on global mobility every year and lead to the emergence of new rivals in higher education in the near future (Choudaha, 2018; Jon et al., 2014; Wen & Hu, 2019). In another study that indicated the importance of regional mobility, Wen and Hu (2019) referred to the “culturalist” approach (the argument that the only way to understand the world is not to look from the perspective of dominant powers) as an alternative to the “dependency theory” (concerned with how developing countries are dependent on developed countries), underlining two points in student mobility: (a) the direction of the flow of knowledge is no longer one-way and solely from the West to the East but is cyclical, and (b) the regional mobility inside the European Union, Asian countries, and South America has exceeded the global mobility.

While all the aforementioned factors may lead to specific changes in the international higher education field, the desire to have different experiences in university is still a standing fact (Choudaha, 2018). However, students’ needs and profiles change under the effect of various dynamics. Students with many alternatives and resulting occupations (career and business opportunities) make their selections by calculating whether they will get their money’s worth. All these changing paradigms designate new directions for student mobility, which was certainly “from the East to the West” or “within the West” in the past. Although all recent studies virtually

refer to this change in share of the higher education area, they also emphasize that the reasons for preferring “emerging hubs” are different from those for preferring “developed countries” (Barnett et al., 2016; Wen & Hu, 2019). Therefore, the salient view is that these hubs should be defined as a niche market rather than as a major global host (Jon et al., 2014). However, these regional hubs attract students with the opportunities that they offer for their immediate vicinity and take small slices from the share of more prominent higher education hubs. The demand for these hubs is currently fragile (Kondakçı et al., 2018) and limited. Most of the time, they are generally secondary options of students (Jon et al., 2014). In other words, as indicated by Altbach (2007), while the full change of “the center to the periphery” may not seem possible in the near future, these emerging hubs may become the primary options of students over time if economic and political stability can be preserved and informed higher education policies are implemented. Thus, this change of demand, described as a current trend, may prove to be lasting and shape the area accordingly.

CONCLUSION

The literature emphasized that many factors that led to, supported, or directed internationalization activities in the world are shaped around globalization and its relevant elements and that globalization resulted in the emergence of the concept of “internationalization” in education (Altbach, 2007; Teichler, 2009). The acknowledgment of globalization as the main driving force of internationalization implies that every development in the global world would be reflected in higher education. With regard to this thought, this study tried to ascertain the changes of internationalization in parallel to Globalization 4.0. In particular, the study attempted to evaluate the following three issues that have emerged in higher education in relation to the changes in the concept of globalization: the impact of technology, the emergence of new hubs, and the approach of internationalization at home. Understanding the changes in higher education from the parallel perspectives of global developments will provide an important outlook to countries and higher-education institutions to improve their internationalization policies.

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