

The Internationalization of Higher Education in Tokyo and Enlightenment of Shanghai

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Abstract: The internationalization of higher education is a crucial strategy for fostering talent, promoting scientific and technological innovation, and enhancing the quality of education. This study delves into the history of higher education internationalization, spanning from educational aid to global trends. It also analyzes the implications of Tokyo's higher education internationalization strategy for Shanghai while emphasizing the strategic importance of university development.

Keywords: Internationalization of higher education, Tokyo, Shanghai.

1. Background

Higher education constitutes a vital component of national education, wielding significant influence in talent development and scientific and technological advancements. The concept of internationalizing higher education traces its roots back to the early 20th century. During that era, characterized by the aftermath of World War II and the onset of the Third Industrial Revolution, the internationalization of higher education primarily manifested as educational aid from developed countries to their developing counterparts. Subsequently, in the 1950s and 1960s, higher education internationalization expanded further.

However, it was during the 1980s and 1990s that the trend of internationalization became considerably more pronounced. This period coincided with the globalization wave, which presented both opportunities and challenges. Consequently, the internationalization of higher education evolved into a strategic objective for universities. In the 21st century, driven by globalization trends, higher education internationalization became an inevitable outcome resulting from the convergence of factors such as global economic integration, competitive educational landscapes, economic growth, technological advancements, cultural exchange, and universities' own development needs.

Our definition of the internationalization of higher education encompasses the proactive efforts of higher education institutions to advance internationalization, facilitate transnational cooperation and exchanges, and enhance educational quality and international competitiveness within the context of globalization. Today, internationalizing higher education is a global trend that receives high regard from governments and universities alike. It has become an integral component of most universities' missions. This internationalization encompasses various dimensions, including internationalized educational content, faculty, student demographics, and research activities.

Among these dimensions, the proportion of international students serves as a critical indicator of higher education internationalization, reflecting both the quantity and quality of international students attracted to higher education institutions. To achieve higher levels of internationalization, institutions must draw more international students, cultivate a diverse international student body, and establish platforms for international academic exchanges. This approach not only

fosters cross-cultural communication but also provides students with an expansive network of resources and employment opportunities.

As China's higher education system experiences rapid growth, the "Double First-Class" initiative has emerged as a pivotal symbol of internationalization. Through this initiative, Chinese higher education can better align with the nation's economic and social development needs. Simultaneously, the "Double First-Class" initiative plays a central role in the internationalization of Chinese higher education. These two aspects, internationalization, and the "Double First-Class" initiative, mutually reinforce each other. Only through their close integration can Chinese higher education institutions enhance their competitiveness and global influence within the higher education landscape.

For universities, internationalized education equips students with a global perspective and strong language communication skills, establishing a robust foundation for future job searches and career development. Moreover, internationalization fosters collaboration and communication among universities, further bolstering the "Double First-Class" university construction and elevating the quality of higher education. By actively promoting higher education internationalization and wholeheartedly embracing the "bringing in" and "going out" strategies, China can attract and nurture exceptional talents essential for socialist development. This will elevate the quality of China's economic and cultural progress and enhance its adaptability to the globalized economy and development process. Globalization is an imperative avenue for China to integrate more effectively into the world.

2. Internationalization Strategy of Tokyo Higher Education in Recent Years

Tokyo has consistently been at the forefront of higher education in Japan, and its commitment to internationalization is no exception. In recent years, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) has actively championed the internationalization of higher education, aiming to establish Tokyo as a global education hub. To achieve these goals, the TMG has implemented several measures, including providing financial support to universities for the recruitment of international students and

offering Japanese language education for these students. Additionally, Tokyo has established various organizations and networks to promote international academic cooperation, such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and the World Research Hub Initiative (WRHI) at Tokyo Polytechnic University.

Tokyo stands as a multicultural hub for higher education. According to the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), Japan was projected to host more than 231,000 international students in 2022. Among them, 78.6% were enrolled in higher education institutions, while 21.3% attended language schools. Furthermore, data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) indicate that approximately 35% of university students in Tokyo are international students.

2.1. Japan's Recent Initiatives for Higher Education Internationalization

Since 2022, the Japanese government has set the ambitious goal of restoring the number of foreign students studying in Japan to pre-pandemic levels within five years (by 2027). To achieve this objective, several strategic measures have been put in place:

Enhanced Information Dissemination to International Students: Collaborating with university study abroad centers, overseas educational institutions, governmental agencies, and relevant organizations, Japan aims to boost the dissemination of information about the attractiveness of studying in Japan and highlight role models for employment in the country. This effort aims to reinvigorate interest in studying in Japan, which had experienced a decline.

Strengthened Support for Foreign Students' Employment and Entrepreneurship: Japan's growing demand for highly skilled foreign professionals necessitates the acceptance of more talented foreign students who can study and work in the country. To facilitate this, practical education programs centered around business Japanese language education and internships will be developed and promoted. Support will also be expanded to encourage participation in these programs and to facilitate the settlement of foreign students in Japan, including through entrepreneurship.

Enhancement of Regional Employment Support for Foreign Students: In cooperation with relevant government agencies, institutions, and organizations, regional consortiums involving local governments, universities, economic organizations, Japanese companies, and JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) will be formed. These consortiums will strengthen support for the employment and settlement of foreign students.

Improvement of Japanese Language Education Quality: To ensure the smooth integration of foreign students into Japanese universities and Japanese language educational institutions, research will be conducted to propose a new bill on a qualification system and certification system for Japanese language teachers. This effort aims to maintain and enhance the standards of Japanese language educational institutions.

Acceptance of Foreign Students at the High School Level: Recognizing the importance of foreign students continuing their studies at Japanese universities and remaining in Japan, the government actively promotes a policy of accepting foreign students from the high school level, thereby creating an environment conducive to this goal.

Enhancement of Education at Colleges of Technology with

Globalization in Mind: In line with the objective of promoting the acceptance and employment of foreign students, a committee of experts will conduct research to strengthen the quality of education at specialized colleges. This research takes into account the current situation at universities and other educational institutions.

By actively pursuing these measures, Japan aims to foster the internationalization of higher education, reinforce its educational and research capabilities, and contribute to the process of globalization, ultimately strengthening its soft power and achieving sustainable development. These efforts hold significant strategic importance for the global cities of Shanghai and Tokyo as they seek to optimize the allocation of global educational resources and cultivate international talents to enhance their international competitiveness.

2.2. Initiatives to Internationalize Higher Education at Representative Universities in Tokyo in Recent Years

The University of Tokyo, a globally acclaimed research-oriented comprehensive university, holds the distinction of being Japan's highest academic institution and the foremost among the seven Old Imperial Universities. In the 2023 Times Higher Education World University Rankings, it proudly claims the 39th spot, enjoying a stellar reputation both domestically and internationally. As of May 2021[6], the University of Tokyo boasted a total of 4,283 enrolled foreign students, constituting 14.93% of its overall student population. The University of Tokyo boasts a rich history and a longstanding commitment to the promotion of internationalization, rooted in three core principles: the cultivation of global leaders, the advancement of academic exchange and collaboration, and the establishment of a diverse and inclusive environment. To realize these principles, the university has implemented a variety of measures, including the introduction of international degree programs, English-based courses, the establishment of international research centers, recruitment of international students and researchers, and the provision of academic and social support.

Waseda University, on the other hand, stands as a globally renowned research-driven private university with expertise spanning disciplines such as political science, economics, law, business, computer science, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, journalism, and communications. The university places significant emphasis on international cooperation and exchange programs. As of November 2022, the total number of foreign students at Waseda University had reached an impressive 7,123, making up 15.11% of the institution's total student body[7]. Waseda University embarked on its internationalization journey as early as the beginning of the 20th century. The university has a strong focus on nurturing students and faculty with international perspectives and cross-cultural competence, actively promoting international academic cooperation and exchange. Waseda University's educational internationalization philosophy encompasses the provision of education with an international perspective and intercultural competence, active promotion of international academic cooperation and exchange, and the continuous enhancement of its own internationalization efforts.

The university is dedicated to fostering a diverse range of talents encompassing various forms of knowledge, cultures, languages, and values, individuals who will make substantial contributions to the international community. Waseda University aims to produce global citizens with diverse

viewpoints and insights, individuals capable of addressing global issues. These individuals are characterized by their high ethical standards, competitiveness, and a strong foundation of humanity. The Faculty of International Education adheres to a rigorous selection process, identifying students with a strong academic foundation, intellectual curiosity, motivation, and a passion for learning. Through extensive education and interactions with students from around the world, with an emphasis on English language proficiency and critical thinking skills, the university strives to cultivate internationally minded talents with high aspirations, ethical values, and global competitiveness.

2.3. Commonalities in Policies between the University of Tokyo and Waseda University

There exist notable similarities in the policies pursued by the University of Tokyo and Waseda University:

Shared Commitment to Cultivating Globally Minded Individuals: Both institutions share a common goal of nurturing individuals equipped with broad perspectives and insights to address global challenges. They emphasize the development of global talents, the enrollment of international students, and the fostering of global competencies through international learning experiences.

Emphasis on Collaborations with Overseas Research Institutions: Both universities prioritize establishing collaborations and partnerships with overseas research institutes. They have founded or joined overseas research organizations and networks, creating extensive exchange networks with major universities worldwide.

Promotion of English Proficiency: Both universities emphasize the importance of students' English language proficiency. They encourage students to have a willingness to learn English and offer degree programs conducted exclusively in English.

Strong Emphasis on Industry Collaboration: Both institutions underscore the importance of close cooperation and links with industries.

3. The Inspiration Drawn from Tokyo's Higher Education Internationalization for Shanghai

3.1. Current State of Higher Education Internationalization in Shanghai

China boasts a multitude of universities and a vast student population, firmly establishing itself as a global higher education leader. Internationalization in higher education has progressed alongside increased openness to the world. However, in recent years, this endeavor has faced challenges and opportunities, influenced by factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, disparities in development, and other issues. Shanghai, located advantageously with a high degree of openness and economic development, has an urgent demand for internationalized talent. The internationalization of higher education serves to strengthen cooperation with high-caliber international institutions and to cater to the demand for high-quality education. Shanghai, as a hub for talent and higher education, has witnessed heightened internationalization since the 21st century. The government has implemented policies aimed at expanding international education cooperation. Nevertheless, when compared to Tokyo,

Shanghai still lags behind in terms of reforming the internationalization of its education system, foreign education practices, and the attraction of international students. Shanghai can gain valuable insights from Tokyo's experiences in these areas.

3.2. The Inspiration from Tokyo's Higher Education Internationalization for Shanghai

As one of the world's more developed countries, Japan has made remarkable strides in the internationalization of higher education. Tokyo's model and concept of higher education internationalization hold substantial relevance for Shanghai.

1. Policy Support

In recent years, the Tokyo government has been actively championing higher education internationalization. The disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on internationalization prompted the Japanese government to set a five-year goal to restore international student numbers to pre-pandemic levels through a series of strategic measures. Collaborating with relevant institutions, the Tokyo government is bolstering higher education internationalization through financial support and other initiatives, aiming to position Tokyo as a global education hub. In contrast, Shanghai's policies in this domain remain relatively nascent, warranting a closer look and drawing valuable insights.

2. Emphasis on Internationalizing the Higher Education Curriculum

Tokyo's universities prioritize English language instruction and are dedicated to providing education imbued with an international perspective and cross-cultural communication skills. They achieve this by introducing internationalized curricula, textbooks, and teaching methods, and by recruiting students and faculty from diverse countries and regions. This deliberate approach fortifies their internationalization efforts, enabling them to forge global connections and foster international exchanges and collaborations.

3. Cultivation of an Internationalized Teaching Environment

Several prominent Tokyo universities place significant emphasis on academic exchanges and cooperation with leading global research institutes. They are steadfast in developing students and faculty with international outlooks and cross-cultural competencies, fostering an environment characterized by diversity and inclusivity in academic exchanges. These universities highly value and respect diverse cultural backgrounds, actively promoting the concept of internationalized teaching and learning. This unwavering commitment has significantly contributed to advancing the internationalization of higher education.

4. Enhanced Employment Support and Infrastructure for Foreign Students

The Tokyo government has undertaken substantial efforts to bolster practical education by enacting the "Tokyo International Education Strategy." This strategy is designed to attract international students to settle in Japan and embark on entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, the establishment of the JETRO organization enhances support for the employment and settlement of foreign students. Shanghai stands to benefit from this experience by optimizing resource allocation to address the challenges of "employment difficulty" and "settlement difficulty" for international students.

5. Elevating the Quality of Chinese Language Instruction

While emphasizing the importance of English language learning, Tokyo is also committed to strengthening Japanese language education. This includes conducting further research and introducing new legislation for a qualification and certification system for Japanese language instructors. This underscores the need for Shanghai to enhance Chinese language education alongside its focus on English language learning. Prioritizing Chinese language education and training for foreign students will help strike a balance between "going out" and "bringing in," thereby expediting the internationalization of higher education in Shanghai.

6. Acceptance of Foreign Students at the High School Level

The Japanese government actively encourages the enrollment of foreign students from the high school level. This focus on enhancing internationalization starting from high school lays a robust foundation for subsequent steps in higher education internationalization. Shanghai, in comparison, has yet to widely adopt the practice of enrolling international students at the high school level, indicating the need for further development in this area.

4. Conclusion

In an era characterized by deepening globalization, the internationalization of higher education stands as a vital avenue to enhance comprehensive national strength, drive economic recovery, and facilitate cultural exchanges. Tokyo, Japan, has adopted strategies that include establishing an internationalized curriculum system, refining the study-abroad service framework, championing multilateral talent

development, and enhancing the support mechanism through multiple channels. These efforts have resulted in the creation of a higher education cooperation network that attracts top talents from around the world, ensuring the primacy of scientific and technological innovation and expanding international influence.

Therefore, Shanghai should glean insights from Tokyo, Japan's experiences in higher education internationalization, while considering its unique circumstances. This entails enhancing the quality of internationalized education and services and expanding the scope of two-way international student and foreign-teacher exchanges. Simultaneously, Shanghai must stay attuned to the contemporary landscape, monitor the evolving trends of the times, and proactively foster the internationalization of the local community. This multifaceted approach will propel the internationalization of higher education in Shanghai and, by extension, contribute to our nation's global integration.

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