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Reform Policy on Internationalization of Higher Education in Malaysia

-- Analysis based on Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education)

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Abstract: Malaysia is committed to building a united, multiracial, and modern nation, and its education reform is closely related to national development. In January 2015, the Ministry of Education released the " Blueprint for Higher Education Development in Malaysia (2015-2025)" aimed at promoting English language education. The development of the internationalization of higher education in Malaysia is led by policy, and through the development of a strong education policy that Enhances the operability of education policies to provide safeguards for the internationalization of Malaysian higher education. To understand the background, content, and stages of the internationalization policy of Malaysian higher education, and to analyze the motivation of the internationalization policy of Malaysian higher education.

Keywords: Malaysia; Internationalization of Higher Education; Education Policy.

1. Introduction

As globalization continues, the internationalization of higher education has become an inevitable choice for developing education in all countries. Although Malaysia's internationalization of higher education started late, with the government's increasing attention, its internationalization of higher education has developed rapidly. It has become increasingly important and influential in Asia and the world. The growth of higher education's internationalization in Malaysia is based on policy, which is an important guarantee. The policy is an essential guarantee for the international development of Malaysia.

2. Background of the Study

2.1. Higher Education is Increasingly Becoming Internationalized on a Worldwide Scale

Higher education has been global since its inception. Higher education's global expansion is likewise the history of global interchange. The three stages of higher education's progression toward internationalization are as follows: from ancient Greece to the Middle Ages was the first stage, when students or scholars mainly traveled in the form of transnational "teaching tours" and "study tours," and universities naturally had a strong international flavor. The second stage was from the 16th to the 19th century. The European Reformation influenced this period. The rise of nation-states such as England, France, and Germany and the nationalistic expression of higher education substantially diminished the institution's international nature. The third stage is from the 19th century to the present, when higher education was still being internationalized; its depth and breadth were much less than globalization in higher education today. The genuine globalization of university education started after the 19th century, especially after World War II, which has developed rapidly. During the pre-the Second World War period, due to the expansion of colonialism, the educational exchange was mainly the export of educational models from the sovereign countries to the colonial governments. The British higher education model was exported to colonies in Asia and Africa, and some countries in these regions followed this model to establish higher education systems. Even after independence, these countries continued to be influenced by the suzerain state. In addition, after the birth of the University of Berlin in Germany, many countries welcomed its higher education theory. International students were sent to Germany to learn from the experience, which also promoted international exchange in higher education. After 1980, due to the influence of neoliberalism, higher education's role in economic globalization became increasingly essential and developed into the education trade. In this context, all nations prioritize higher education and have introduced policies and regulations to support and guarantee its international development.

2.2. Education Policy is a Crucial Safeguard for Malaysia's Higher Education System's Globalization.

The colonial era, when higher education in Malaysia was still largely inactive, saw the beginning of its internationalization. Following Malaysia's independence in 1957, The administration started concentrating more and more on the growth of higher education, enacting several education policies to direct the growth of higher education's internationalization and broaden the scope of policy concerns. The Malay government suggested in 1971 that higher education adopt the "fixed system" of instruction, which significantly increased the number of Malaysian students studying abroad. In the early 1990s, the Malay government proposed becoming a developed country by 2020. Since then, Malaysian higher education has proliferated from a one-way exporting country to a two-way importing and exporting country, gradually forming an international development strategy for higher education with Malaysian characteristics.

The Malaysian Higher Education Development Blueprint (2015-2025), promulgated in 2015, emphasizes establishing a student-centered education system. Driven by this policy, the globalization of Malaysia's higher education has developed leaps and bounds. The advancement of the expansion of higher education internationally in Malaysia is led by policy. The broadening of higher education worldwide in Malaysia is ensured through solid education policies and strengthening the operability of education policies.

3. Status of Research

3.1. Pertinent Studies on the Globalization of Higher Education

(1) Research on the motives of internationalization

Most academics have done in-depth analyses of the political, economic, cultural, and academic factors that have facilitated the internationalization of higher education. In his article, Professor Janet analyzed the primary motives of internationalization from two perspectives: talent development, international diplomatic relations, income generation for the national economy, strategic alliance with famous overseas universities, promotion of national needs, promotion of economic, social, and humanistic development, enhancement of international relations, enhancement of overseas reputation, improvement of education quality, two-way mobility of students and staff, business income generation, strategic alliance with famous overseas universities, international and academic internationalization. Strategic alliances with leading overseas universities, international and interdisciplinary strategic collaboration, and addressing global issues (Knight, 2008). According to Philip G. Altbach, three factors - economic interests, expansion of enrollment, and have a role in the expansion of international higher education and the globalization of higher education.

(2) Studies on the field of higher education's internationalization

International cooperation, quality assurance of higher education internationalization, and mobility among international students are the main areas of study for foreign academics. Rente Roga examines and assesses the elements that affect the institutions of higher learning that attract international students, and she suggests solutions to further the globalization of higher education. Svenja Bedenlier's research examines the impact of internationalization on stakeholder groups.

3.2. Research on Higher Education in Malaysia

(1) Studies on Higher Education Policies

Molly N.N. Lee analyzes the privatization and corporatization of Malaysia's public universities through restructuring. Yean Tham and Siew provide an overview of Malaysia's higher education services trade model and analyze its main influencing factors. The conceptualization of the education hub model in Malaysia and Singapore is used to understand better the concepts and conflicts between privatization, internationalization, and marketization.

(2) Studies related to the internationalization of higher education

Munusamy M M explored and analyzed the Asia-Europe Education Process (AEP) 's vital role in Malaysia's worldwide higher education process. Tham Siew Yean argues that since it was founded in Bangkok in 1996, the AEP has been crucial to the globalization of higher education. While the administration has strongly emphasized advancing academic research and knowledge production in its policies, according to Tham Siew Yean, it has primarily concentrated on increasing the number of students abroad to increase economic revenue. As a result, private higher education institutions see international students as an additional source of income. Despite the government's explicit direction and goals for internationalization, Tham and Kam contend that various types of institutions for higher education in Malaysia internationalize for different reasons and to different degrees, with established public universities already doing so as a part of their academic growth.

(3) Research related to higher education reform and development

Malaysian scholars Joseph and Adamu analyzed the effect on Malaysia's higher education institutions since the outbreak of the new crown epidemic. He pointed out that the effectiveness of online learning is unknown due to poor Internet communication, and there are several difficulties in teaching and learning for both educators and learners. Additional empirical investigations are required to determine the full degree of the crisis' influence on teaching and learning in Malaysia's higher education. Scholar Rozita based on a literature review on the evolution of higher education in Malaysia through time and its ties to interethnic dialogue and establishing a nation. The focus is on the various stages of the evolution of higher education in Malaysia from the colonial era to the present generation of globalization. Negotiations between the Malaysian government and ethnic communities have a long history that provides the context and specificity of multiculturalism in Malaysia.

3.3. Definition of Core Concepts

(1) Internationalization of higher education

Scholars give different definitions based on various research perspectives, and scholars have categorized and outlined the idea of the internationalization of higher education. According to some researchers, there are three methods by which higher education is becoming more global: one is international exchange and cooperation; two is global-oriented higher education; and three is to operate higher education by international standards.

Some scholars also classify it into four aspects: first, international educational exchange. Second, education should dovetail with foreign economic and social development and enhance its international status. Third, it should comply with international standards and carry out educational exchanges and cooperation. Fourth, to integrate educational resources on a global scale. On the one hand, vigorously recruit international students to promote international education and trade; on the other hand, try cooperating with foreign countries to run schools and conduct transnational inter-school exchanges.

(2) Education Policy

Educational policy is the central expression of socio-political behavior in education. Its main manifestations usually include laws, regulations, plans, guidelines, etc. Its functions include setting clear objectives for education development, coordinating and balancing different educational relationships in social development, and regulating people's behavior. The Malaysian police on the internationalization of higher education can be described as the guidelines for the Malaysian government's actions to expand higher education internationally in a specific period,

based on the definitions of higher education's globalization and instructional policy. (LIU Fu-xing, 2002)

4. Education Policy is an Essential Guarantee for the Internationalization of Higher Education in Malaysia

The foundation of action and the strategic plan for the development of higher education's internationalization and the regulation of that development's operation are education policies, which serve as a crucial compass. The entire national development policy now includes an essential component of education policy, which is closely related to a country's development. Only through legislation and strengthening the legal supervision and regulation of university management for institutionalization and standardization can we ensure the smooth development of the internationalization of higher education.

4.1. The Globalization of Higher Education in Malaysia is Governed by Educational Policy.

The government-enacted educational development plans will determine the level of internationalization of higher education in Malaysia. Two crucial education policies that supported the growth of higher education in Malaysia are the Education Strategic Plan, unveiled in 2007, and the Blueprint for Higher Education Development, published in 2012. Malaysia should internationalize higher education as its top priority and establish a top-notch regional Education hub (Dessoff, 2012), according to the Ministry of Higher Education's 2007 National Higher Education Strategic Plan for 2020. Under the guidance of this strategy, the expansion of higher education internationally has achieved initial results in promoting the return of overseas Malaysian students, attracting students come to Malaysia from all around the world to study, and enhancing the export earning capacity of Malaysia's higher education services. In the framework of a globalized economy, the Malay government launched the Malaysian Higher Education Development Blueprint (2015-2025) in 2012 to nurture more talent, emphasizing a student-centered education reform model and promoting rapid education upgrading to achieve Vision 2020. "This blueprint not only highlights the student-centered education reform model but also encourages rapid upgrading of schooling to achieve Vision 2020.

Educational policies and regulations heavily influence the advancement of overseas students' education. One essential element of the globalization of higher education and cross-regional educational cooperation, for instance, is the reciprocal acceptance of academic credentials and degrees. For international students, it is vital whether the degrees and capabilities of the destination countries can be internationally recognized. To further promote the development of international student education, the government must formulate related education policies, gradually broaden the fields of education cooperation, expand the scale of education cooperation, form an all-round cooperation policy and system of higher education internationalization, realize the fundamental unification of talent cultivation standards and the free flow of the cultivated talents in the region, and form a system of education cooperation. and the free flow of skills developed in the area, to form education cooperation Inertia.

In addition, the implementation of education policies should be evaluated and adjusted in time and gradually improved considering the actual situation to lead to the expansion of global student education. Education policies are of great value to promote and guarantee the internationalization of higher education in Malaysia.

4.2. Blueprint for Higher Education Development in Malaysia (2015-2025)

(1) Policy Context: Meeting the Needs of Human Capital Development in Response to the Wave of Globalization

In his summary of the key advancements in higher education over the previous ten years in 2013, Prime Minister Abrar Razak highlighted the 70% growth in higher education enrollment in Malaysia between 2004 and 2014, with a total of 1.2 million students. The country has gained global recognition in terms of research publications, patents, and higher education institutes' educational standards, with five institutions among the top 100 institutions in Asia as of 2014, and Malaysian higher education institutions are now among the top ten locations for foreign students, among the top in the Asian region. However, it also faces new challenges, like the standard of higher education in Malaysia needing further improvement, graduates needing more critical thinking and good communication skills, lack of mastery of English, etc. To meet increasingly competitive environment only by increasing investment in higher education talent development and accelerating the transformation and improvement of Malaysia's higher education system can we produce outstanding talents, thus making a significant contribution to meet the increasingly competitive environment, it is only by investing more in higher education and accelerating the transformation and Enhancement of Malaysia's higher education system we can produce excellent talents to contribute to Malaysia and the world. (Abd Aziz & Abdullah, 2014). Since 2013, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has been working on the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2015-2025). Over two years, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with more than 100 stakeholder groups (MOE officials, students, parents, and teachers), including international education experts, academics, university boards, and the public, invested significant resources to develop the Blueprint to develop Malaysia into a high-income country. As a result, the Blueprint has a certain level of public support and credibility. The development of the Blueprint was completed in three stages, the first of which was a review of the National Higher Education Strategic Plan to elucidate both the benefits and drawbacks. The Strategic Plan and the subsequent work would be completed based on this. The second stage identified eleven transformation proposals for the higher education system in Malaysia following a consultation process between the review team and various stakeholders. The final step was finalizing the eleven transformation plans through Cabinet guidance and public consultation. After 15 months of work, the blueprint was finally promulgated in September 2012, and implementation began in January 2013.

(2) Policy content: Establishing five primary training objectives and highlighting the student-centered education reform model

The Malaysian government has set out five majors in Malaysia's Blueprint for Higher Education Development (2015-2025). The government has proposed five visions and eleven transformation plans in the Malaysian Higher Education Development Blueprint (2015-2025). The five

visions include:

First, access to education. Malaysia's Ministry of Education hopes that by 2025 can be Malaysia's higher education enrollment will go from the current stage of 36% to 53%, mainly through technical education, vocational education and training programs, private higher education in online learning, and other means, to ensure that the supply and demand match, the specific expansion plan will be combined with the development of industrial cooperation. (Ministry of Higher Education, 2015)

Secondly, the issue of quality of education. The Ministry of Education Malaysia considers three main aspects of education quality: the standard of graduates, academic institutions, and the higher education system. The Ministry of Education wants to raise the standards for grads by raising the employment rate of Malaysian graduates from 75% to 80% by 2025. Only one university in Malaysia is currently ranked among the top 200 universities in the world regarding the caliber of higher education institutions. By 2025, the Ministry of Education hopes to have two universities in the top 100 and four in the top 400.

Third, equity. Although comprehensive data to effectively assess the system's equity currently needs to be improved, the Ministry is working to improve access to students from disadvantaged areas to ensure equity in education.

The fourth is unity. The Ministry of Education aspires to develop a system of education that incorporates people of all ethnic backgrounds and gives pupils access to shared values.

Effectiveness is the fifth. The Malaysian government is eager to increase enrolment, research capacity, and employment rates to optimize the return on investment in higher education. The Big Blueprint also reflects the six characteristics the Malaysian government wants students to possess: leadership, national identity, language ability, critical thinking abilities, and knowledge. The thinking skills emphasize the ability to think creatively and independently; the leadership skills include entrepreneurship, responsiveness, emotional management, and communication skills; and the language skills require students to be fluent in Malay and English and to learn a third language to meet the needs of Malaysia's multi-ethnic society and internationalization (Olson, 2005). Students must study a third language to support the viability of the higher education system in Malaysia. To further the sustainable growth of the higher education sector in Malaysia, the Great Blueprint has proposed eleven transformation plans, which focus mainly on quality and efficiency aspects. Focusing on results with stakeholders in the higher education system is the primary goal of the first four reform plans. The final six, which concentrate on the factors that make higher education possible, are delivery, financing, governance, innovation, internationalization, and distance education.

The eleven transformation programs include: ensuring equal access to high-standard, international education; ensuring that all students have a mastery of Malay and English; developing Malaysians with values; transforming education into a professional choice; providing that all schools have high-performing leaders; devolving authority to state and district education boards and schools to address issues as needed; leveraging communication and information technology to Enhancing the quality of learning in Malaysia; strengthening the delivery capacity and capability of the education sector; strengthening collaboration with the parent community and the private sector To increase the standard of instruction; maximizing learning results with every expenditure; and increasing transparency and direct accountability to the public.

The eleven transformation plans are divided into three phases, with the first phase (2013-2015) tasked with improving teacher education and teaching capacity, boosting school leadership and raising the standard of instruction, and further improving the principal appointment mechanism; the second phase (2016-2020) tasked with accelerating the reform process by The second phase (2016-2020) aims to accelerate the reform process, introduce a standardized primary and secondary school curriculum, fully develop students' knowledge and skills, and expand international perspectives. The third phase, which aims to move towards excellence by 2025, has seen significant progress made by teachers and principals in each school during this period.

At the heart of the program is a student-centered approach. The goal is to produce "job seekers" and "entrepreneurs. This requires that TVET programs be placed on an equal footing with traditional academic programs and that the concept of lifelong learning become part of the national culture. Private higher education institutions will also have more autonomy and decision-making power.

As you may notice, the Big Blueprint has five primary goals throughout the blueprint, which clearly expresses the focus and direction of the education reform. At the same time, education should focus on developing students' abilities to overcome globalization's obstacles in the 21st century. The blueprint not only highlights the student-centered model of education reform but also allows the public to understand and grasp the parts of the education reform that are more democratized.

The Blueprint for the Development of Higher Education in Malaysia (2015-2025) is vital in directing the growth of Malaysia's globalization of higher education. More different subjects have developed the blueprint. The Malaysian government has committed significant resources to develop the Blueprint with over 100 stakeholder groups (Ministry of Education officials, students, parents, teachers, etc.), including academics, university boards, and the public, to improve the effectiveness and scientific validity of education development planning. As a manifestation of national will, the Malaysian Higher Education Development Blueprint (2015-2025) carries the burden of educational reform, arguably far more critical than previous education plans, mainly because the education blueprint straddles the year 2020, a time of particular significance. Therefore, the government is counting on this education reform to produce more talented people for the country's economic development and to create a solid national identity for all people through education. (Knight & de Wit, 1997).

It is evident from the Big Blueprint that the Malaysian government wants to create an education system that can rank as a world leader and facilitate Malaysia to compete in the global economy (JANE KNIGHT, 2011). It is also evident from the six training objectives that Malaysia requires a holistic approach to student development to produce learners responsive to globalization's challenges. Therefore, the grand blueprint contains transformation plans at all levels, emphasizing an entrepreneurial mindset in the system of higher education and concentrating more on individualized education for students, hoping to inspire them to create jobs by fostering their creativity. At the same time, the government is paying more attention to technical and vocational education.

To prepare students for the challenges of the future in the face of the complexity and severity of the globalized economy, the Malaysian government is emphasizing providing students with more engaging and personalized learning models that allow them to enjoy high-quality courses, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills. To achieve these five visions, the Malaysian government and private higher education institutions will jointly develop more comprehensive and integrated curricula, expand inter-industry collaboration to enhance the student learning experience through raised program design and delivery and provide more personalized learning models for students through technology.

5. Conclusion

Education policy is the basis and guideline for the operation of education and plays a crucial part in education development. Throughout Malaysia's internationalization of higher education development, the Malaysian government has given full play to its guiding role by promulgating a series of education policies to provide institutional guarantees in support of the globalization of Malaysian higher education and continuously encourage the process of higher education internationalization, so that the growth of higher education internationalization is founded on the law. It is driven by the Malaysian Higher Education Development Blueprint (2015-2025). The internationalization of Malaysian higher education has advanced thanks to this education. It reflects Malaysia's recognition and practice of internationalization of higher education as an integrated internationalization process.

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