

## INTERNATIONALIZATION: AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR ON UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

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**Abstract:** Financial, social, political and cultural developments changed agricultural society into an industrial society. With the advent of new technologies, the world has turned into an information society. Due to the improvements in technology and mass media, social changes and international interactions have gained speed. Therefore, globalization has become inevitable and has given way to transition from information society to communication society by creating a world beyond borders. In this study, the effects of globalization and internationalization are examined from educational, cultural, financial and industrial aspects.

**Keywords:** Mevlana Exchange Program, Internationalization, Global Education, Intercultural Ties, International Student.

### INTRODUCTION

The relations among nations become constantly necessary and important, the basic focus of internationalization is still the nation. However, globalization is the annulment of national boundaries for financial reasons primarily by free trade and free capital mobility (Özer, 2012). Therefore, the difference lies in their focus. While globalization highlights an economic process, cross-border sharing, common market and dependence, internationalization enhances world view, multicultural approaches and attitudes.

Education affects societies in terms of political, social, economical and cultural aspects by providing service to individuals throughout their lives. Therefore, organizing the educational services according to the modern developments in line with the needs of individuals and societies are among the priorities of all the countries in the world. The most important issue of the modern age is human capital for it maintains economical growth and social development and currently, the most powerful countries in the world are those which invest in human capital. Human capital can be expressed as the stock of competencies, knowledge, social and personality attributes, including creativity, cognitive abilities, embodied in the ability to perform labor so as to produce economic value. It is of utmost importance to invest in human being for increasing their abilities and qualifications during the process of becoming an industrial and information society. When we look at the developed countries in the world, the common features of them are having high-grade universities which are active in international cooperations and research-development technologies. Since investment in education is rewarding both for individual and society, contribution of education in financial growth and the increase of national income are inevitable. Training individuals who can keep up with the technology and contemporary life is only possible through a quality educational system which is rational and universal.

Being aware of these positive effects of internationalization, higher education institutions aim at increasing the opportunities through which students can benefit outside their home countries through bilateral, multilateral agreements, joint projects, dual diploma projects, student and faculty exchange programs, internships or service learning in a foreign country, foreign language education, cultural studies and international or comparative education programs. In line with these goals, higher education institutions not only motivate their students and staff to participate in international programs but also develops their promotional activities by enhancing their organizational images and visiting foreign countries to establish new contacts.

Institutions of higher education are reevaluating their goals as they try to best meet the students' expectations in terms of providing international programmes and upgrade their academic skills in today's diverse world. In this respect, Erasmus Exchange Programme has been the core of interaction between the countries since its launch in 1987. The Programme aims to provide opportunities for students and university staff to broaden their horizon and international perspective, and to exchange ideas and experiences with their counterparts in other countries. In line with this goal and with the aim of making Turkey a center of attraction in higher education area, increasing the academic capacity of Turkish higher education institutions, contributing to the internationalization process of

higher education, sharing the historical and cultural heritage of Turkey in a global scale, Mevlana Exchange Programme (MEP) was established in 2013 by Higher Education Council of Turkey (YÖK, 2012).

Research on how and to what extent the stakeholders of tertiary education actually benefit from educational travel experiences remain inadequate and excludes information about the new programs such as MEP which aims the exchange of students and academic staff between Turkish and foreign higher education institutions. In this study, we aimed to give information about exchange programs, especially MEP, in terms of their contribution to scientific and industrial needs of today's world.

## **OUTCOMES OF EXCHANGE PROGRAMS**

Internationalization is found to signify predominantly a search for student markets abroad in order to position the university's knowledge at the service of others, especially in less advantaged parts of the world (Stromquist, 2007). It is to prepare students for the global world of work as well as to bring about a shared future marked by justice, security, equality, human rights, and economic sustainability. Ideally to meet this challenge, universities need to incorporate an international/intercultural dimension into their teaching, research, and service functions (De Wit, 2000). In education, the expanded economic and social interactions dominates the landscape of many nations and leads them to be a decision maker of the policies at all levels of education (Gough, 2000). Technological innovations influence the dynamics of social relations while the resources of power and differential knowledge about the institutions are implicated in the construction, manipulation, and maintenance of the social world, at both the national and international level (Welton, 2001).

Multinational corporations are the core of new cluster/technology hubs attracting smaller companies which specialize in that area to supply them or favor the development of new research centers focused on very specific areas. These clusters are key drivers in economies, providing work opportunities and technological knowledge, and are highly integrated within the local society, to the point of a true mutual dependency (Thune, 2007). One of the most helpful steps of increasing the multinational functions of education is using exchange programs as a tool to get acquainted with the needs and characteristics of a country.

The benefits of a establishing a multinationality in education and corporations can be given as follows:

**Different ideas:** Multinational approach brings different ideas from different aspects. In order to avoid never-ending cycles, fresh and different ideas from all over the world are necessary.

**Defining local needs:** The needs of different countries become more visible by the contribution of their citizens to international projects. For example very well-known automobile companies generate the same brand with different features which may play a crucial role according to the needs and conditions of the countries. Locals of foreign countries are the ones who know their own conditions the best, thus their contribution is invaluable for a company at international market.

**Promotion of the country:** A student who graduated from the university with nice memories becomes a volunteer ambassador who promotes not only the university but also the country and if there is any opportunity of that person to have an industrial collaboration, the host country will be the first one to remember.

**Forming competitive knowledge society:** Highly qualified students prefer the universities which provide them the best theoretical and practical education. In order to recruit the best students, universities need to increase their quality and in turn, each time better students (potential future employees of the host country) will be added to the system. Thus, it will enable the universities to create an institutional continuous improvement model by creating innovative people who can interpret the whole world and turn into a dynamic structure.

**Working harder:** Surviving in a different country may seem more difficult than surviving in home country but this factor may turn out as an advantage to the foreigner by making him/her working harder in order to make the visit meaningful. Usually people prefer to go abroad because they cannot find a suitable ground to carry out their projects in their home countries and may have better chances abroad.

**Improvement in culture and art:** Internationalization enables to mix various cultural backgrounds easily. Typically this involves in daily life according to people's preferences. For instance, Chinese locations (China

Town) are founded in USA as a result of increasing the number of Chinese origin students and academicians. Cuisines, daily life habits, artistic aspects, festival rituals mingle together in one pot.

**Further project opportunities:** Students usually go back to home countries after their education abroad and the study abroad experiences brings extra advantage to the home country because of the possibility of bringing different aspects at work. Building joint projects, especially at international level, is one of the benefits and if it gets realized, the first institutions coming to mind for project partnerships is usually the education institutions they studied before.

All the factors above affect the scientific and industrial future of a country. In order to see the correlation between internationalization and industrial growth, international student number and Competitive Industrial Performance Index (CIP), a composite index to measure the ability of countries to produce and export manufactured goods competitively using several individual indicators to proxy various dimensions of industrial performance, can be compared. As it is seen from Table 1, CIP is generally higher in the countries with more international students (UNIDO, 2013).

**Table 1.** Relations between Competitive Industrial Performance Index and Number of International Students

Country	Number of Int. Students	Competitive Industrial Performance Index (2012)
USA	740.482	0,44
United Kingdom	427.686	0,28
France	262.597	0,30
Australia	249.588	0,14
Germany	206.986	0,55
Russian Federation	173.627	0,12
Japan	150.617	0,49
Canada	120.960	0,23
China	110.079	0,35
Italy	77.732	0,30
Saudi Arabia	62.105	0,11
South Korea	59.472	0,41
Austria	58.056	0,26
Malaysia	56.203	0,18
Spain	55.759	0,21
Ukraine	49.686	0,07
Egypt	49.011	0,04
Turkey	44.025	0,14

A significant goal of global training is to provide students and staff in higher education with various opportunities and let them broaden their minds by bridging cultural distance. The industry-oriented focus on higher education stimulates the higher education centers to develop strategies to make themselves more attractive and accessible to industry, by promoting collaboration and mobility. In this regard, exchange programs are offered as an easily accessible tool to provide student and academic staff mobility. MEP is a new movement of exchange programs which differs from others by including all higher education institutions in the world regardless of their region. Granted and executed by Turkish Higher Education Council, MEP provides opportunity to cooperate in mutual activities between the two parties since 2013. The students registered in formal education programs and all academic staff who works in a national or foreign higher education institution may benefit from MEP, on condition that the higher education institutions signed a bilateral Mevlana Exchange Protocol aiming to contribute the

internationalization of higher education. This program also aspires to turn Turkey into an attractive destination in education around the world (YÖK, 2012).

Often governments, on both a national and international scale, are involved in developing new policies to promote research and development, and help existing units to face the increasing foreign competition by promoting internationalization and partnerships with other counterparts. Some companies often sign research contracts with universities not only to focus on a single topic, but to include a wide range of research areas, taking advantage of scientific interactions and at the same time setting the basis for further development of new ideas. Moreover, many universities have already developed their own organizations to maximize benefits from industrial partnerships, often involving non-profit organizations to manage the existing relationships and develop a network of public and private contacts, that will be useful to launch new international joint projects, provide new ideas, ensuring the companies' technological future.

## CONCLUSIONS

The general consciousness about the significance of increasing the international competitiveness of higher education has obviously been growing. Internationalization has been the central driving force for higher education institutions to collaborate interactively all over the world. As a consequence of internationalization, the popularity of exchange programs in foreign universities has grown considerably in recent years, also in the universities of Turkey have made profound efforts to attract students from different countries. With these international programmes, students have the opportunities to learn about other cultures, upgrade their international perspectives and skills. All of these features are very useful tools to improve the global knowledge at scientific and industrial levels. Nations should call attention to the benefits of internationalization and make necessary arrangements to increase the level of internationalization at good quality.

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