

Internationalization of Higher Education and English Medium Instruction in Mongolia: Initiatives and Trends

Sainbayar Gundsambuu

Received in
June 2018

Sainbayar Gundsambuu

Ph. D. Candidate, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Osaka University. Address: Osaka University, 1-1 Yamadaoka, Suita, Osaka Prefecture, 565-0871, Japan. E-mail: sgundsam@fulbrightmail.org

Abstract. Internationalization has become a driving motivation for reform in higher education. Higher education reform brings changes in practice, culture, and environment where the internationalization can take place. The government of Mongolia acknowledges internationalization as a pathway towards improving the quality of higher education and increasing the ranking status of domestic higher education institutions in Asia. Following this government policy, education providers are striving to internation-

alize their institutions. This paper aims to discuss the current process of reforms in higher education as well as national and institutional policies and initiatives towards internationalization. The paper also explores the concept of English Medium Instruction in Mongolian higher education institutions as a growing global phenomenon of internationalization. This paper does not intend to evaluate the internationalization process of universities and /or their strategies.

Keywords. internationalization of higher education, higher education policy, international collaboration, student mobility, faculty development, English Medium Instruction, Mongolia.

DOI: 10.17323/1814-9545-2019-1-215-243

In recent years, the term “internationalization of higher education” (IoHE) has become one of the buzzwords like “comprehensive internationalization”. As Hudzik [2015] explains, IoHE is not a homogeneous concept but more of a global concept of interrelated dimensions. IoHE has many aspects including organized cross-border mobility of students and faculty, foreign language learning, internationalization of curricula, cross-border institutional partnerships in joint research, joint degrees, and branch campuses.

There is no agreed-upon definition for IoHE. Early on, Soderqvist [2002] defined IoHE as “a change process from a national higher education institution to an international higher education institution leading to the inclusion of an international dimension in all aspects of its holistic management in order to enhance the quality of teaching and

learning and to achieve the desired competencies” (p. 29). However, this definition is not comprehensive. The most recognized definition is the one put forth by Knight [2003]: “Internationalization is the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (p.2). According to Knight [2004], IoHE has two main spheres of action, “internationalization at home” and “internationalization abroad”. ‘Internationalization at home’ applies strategies and approaches designed to utilize an international dimension into the home campus by including global and comparative perspectives in the curriculum or recruiting international students, scholars, and faculty and leveraging their presence on campus. ‘Internationalization abroad’ encourages an institution to send students to study abroad, set up a branch campus overseas, or engage in an inter-institutional partnership [Altbach, Reisberg, Rumbley 2009].

Despite a handful of studies that discussed the early IoHE initiatives in Mongolia, little is known of current strategies and activities towards internationalization at national and institutional levels. Previous studies focused on the impact of globalization on higher education [Gantsog, Altantsetseg 2003; Altantsetseg 2006], educational expansion in higher education [Agvaantseren, Hoon, 2013], or a strategy for internationalization in one national institution [Jargalsaihan 2015]. This paper aims to provide a broader picture of current higher education in Mongolia through the lens of internationalization via the analysis of a wide range of documents available such as policy papers, institutional websites, brochures, technical reports, government documents, and reports by international organizations, academic articles, and papers.

This paper, thus, aims to answer the following two main questions:

1. What are the motives and drives of Mongolian higher education institutions to go for internationalization?
2. What are the driving factors for higher education institutions in Mongolia to implement English Medium Instruction?

The paper begins with a brief introduction to the higher education system and reforms, followed by a document analysis on national and institutional policies, strategies and approaches towards internationalization.

1. Methods This study draws on Knight’s [2004] model of internationalization of higher education, “internationalization abroad”, and Soderqvist’s [2002] concept of internationalization as a pathway to increase quality and competencies of HEIs as an overarching framework to explore internationalization of higher education process in Mongolia. All data related to the Mongolian higher education, reforms, internationalization,

policy, and English language policy went through the rigorous qualitative document analysis, “describing, classifying and connecting” [Coffee, Atkinson 1996: 8] to portray a comprehensive picture of the loHE and the concept of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Mongolia.

Following the qualitative document analysis methods [Ibid.], an array of documents was collected from public and academical sources. The collected documents included policy documents related to Mongolian higher education since 1990s including higher education laws, government orders, amendments, legislation; websites of 10 national universities and 18 private institutions (as of 2017); official reports by World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and Open Society Institute; online newspaper articles at three main newspapers (Daily News, Unuudur, and Zuunii Medee); and previously published articles written in both Mongolian and English. Documents concerning only loHE, higher education reforms, mobility, and exchange were extracted and the total document size reached 350MB excluding videos and pictures. Most documents were available in Mongolian; thus, the researcher, as native Mongolian speaker, had the advantage to analyze the documents in Mongolian. In addition, the researcher used his insider perspectives working in the higher education sector in Mongolia in last 14 years. The computer-aided qualitative data analysis software, nVivo 11 was used to support the document analysis.

Two different types of data were collected. The first type of data was extracted from the literature review that covered the higher education system, reforms, privatization and financing of HEIs. The second type of data was obtained as a result of the current research including loHE and EMI along with the respective facts and figures.

All data went through two phases of analysis. First, the documents were read closely to apply topic codes. These topic codes described the main segments of the documents. During the qualitative document analysis, an emphasis was given to official evidence relating to the strategies and approaches for internationalization and EMI policy at national level. The quotes and excerpts from the mission statements of national and private universities that were presented in the study were translated by the researcher from Mongolian into English. After completing the initial coding process, the coded data were reviewed again and coded segments that reflected similar concepts were grouped into larger categories. After the all coded data had been categorized, the categories were reexamined to identify major themes in a relationship with the loHE in Mongolian context and the questions of the study. As a result, six dimensions were identified. However, three of the dimensions were not covered due to lack of coverage across source materials.

The second phase analyzed documents from the 28 national and private universities. Data were collected by screening the websites and brochures of the each of the universities to understand their EMI policy and the implication of EMI in their strategic plans, mission state-

ments, and public identity. These universities were selected on the basis of their experience of EMI practice. In order to confirm the reliability of information obtained from each of the universities' websites and brochures, the author contacted with the universities' academic affairs offices. As a result, a total of 385 courses in English was identified. The documentary evidence from the analysis of the websites and brochures was used to address the second research question.

2. Higher Education System and Reforms

Mongolia is a landlocked country with 1.5 million square kilometers of land area, a total population of 3.1 million and the GDP per capita of \$7.8 thousand as of 2016¹. The total number of students studying at tertiary school amounts to 157,138 (58% female) in the academic year of 2016–2017. As of 2017, 95 higher education institutions (HEIs) including a high percentage of private institutions (78%), national (18%), and a small percentage of branch schools of foreign universities (4%) are operating in Mongolia². The branch schools of foreign universities include three from Russian Federation and one from Singapore. The total gross enrolment ratio in higher education is 68.57% (female 79.74%; male 57.67%) in 2015³, growing from 53.82% in 2010. The gross graduation ratio increased from 45.07% in 2010 to 52.26 (female 67.44%; male 37.43%) in 2014⁴. The student-to-teacher ratio in Mongolia is 25:1, closer to Turkey (22:1), but much higher than OECD's average of 15:1 in 2015 [OECD, 2015].

The history of Mongolian higher education starts from the National University of Mongolia (NUM) that was established in 1942 with three faculties: medical, pedagogical, and veterinary [Gantsog, Altantsetseg 2003]. Since then, several faculties were developed: physics, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, economics, laws, languages, and literature. These faculties were the foundation of other national universities, such as the current National University of Life Sciences (NULS), National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS), and the National University of Education (NUE)⁵.

¹ Mongolian Statistical Information Service. Statistical Yearbook 2016.

² Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport. Higher Education Statistics 2016–2017 (In Mongolian).

³ United Nations Institute for Statistics (2015) Tertiary Education. Cross enrollment ratio.

⁴ United Nations Institute for Statistics (2014) Tertiary Education. Cross enrollment ratio.

⁵ Due to the increasing needs and demands of teaching staff for secondary education schools, the State Pedagogical Institute was founded in 1951. In 1958, the zoological-veterinary medicine faculty at the NUM was transformed as the Agricultural Institute. Following this trend, the Medical Institute was formed from the medical faculty at the NUM in 1961. The polytechnical faculty that was established in 1969 as part of the NUM was also reformed as the Polytechnical Institute in 1982. The Russian Language Teachers' Col-

For decades, the Mongolian higher education had been free and the government of Mongolia subsidized all costs of higher education, including tuition fees, and played a key role in decision-making, planning, and development process of higher education. After Mongolia transferred to the free market economy system in the 1990s, the government ceased its funding for national universities, only covering utility costs. This resulted in the introduction of a student fee structure in 1993 [Gantsog, Altantsetseg 2003].

The reform in higher education of Mongolia can be outlined in three main phases: before the 1990s, after 1990s until 2010, and since 2010. The first phase happened in a socialist system as a way of reforming more national HEIs, separating units from the first national university. During the second phase of reform, the government of Mongolia made a policy of 'cost sharing' to shift a greater portion of the burden of payment to individuals and transfer the public expenditure on education to a student loan. The government also legalized the establishment of private universities and branch schools of foreign HEIs. The third phase of reform in the higher education sector rooted from 2010 when the government of Mongolia decided to merge national universities in response to the growing demand for internationalization.

It should be noted that the second and third phase reforms in higher education have been predominantly supported by international funds, technical assistance grants, loans and projects from both bilateral and multilateral sources, including the US, Germany, Canada, Japan, Korea, the European Union, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank (ADB) [Weidman, Yoder 2010]. One of the major ongoing projects in higher education reform is the Higher Education Reform Project of the ADB that started in 2011. This project expects to have three outcomes: 1) improved quality and relevance of higher education programs; 2) improved the effectiveness of higher education governance, management, and financing; and 3) improved equity and access.

2.1. Privatization and Financing of HEIs

As Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe [2004] concluded, deregulation, privatization, and the introduction of tuition fees were the main features of higher education reforms in most of the Central Asian countries after 1990. Following the collapse of Soviet Union, Mongolian HEIs suffered from lack of state funding. Encouraged and supported by international donors such as World Bank, Mongolia passed a resolution # 160 in 1997 to privatize national HEIs. Under this resolution, five national universities became private in 1997–2017⁶ [Khishigbuyan 2009;

lege of the NUM became the Russian Language Institute in 1982 [Weidman, Yeager 1998]. Later in 2004, the Khovd University separated from the NUM in 2004. This pattern of separating units from the NUM was the first major reform of Mongolian higher education [Ibid.].

⁶ Asian Development Bank (2008) Mongolia: Education Sector Reform Project. <https://www.adb.org/projects/43007-023/main>; Ministry of Educa-

Table 1. **Comparison of expenditure on education**

Countries	Total public expenditure on primary to tertiary education as% of total public expenditure	Total expenditure on primary to tertiary education institutions as% of GDP	Government expenditure per tertiary student (in PPP\$)
Armenia	10.66	2.81	842.06
Georgia	6.71	1.98	1174.65
Japan	9.29	3.59	9591.09
Korea, Rep.	...	5.05	5410.14
Mongolia	12.8	4.6	180.36
Norway	17.03	7.37	25483.5
Russia	11.15	3.86	3707.58
Tajikistan	16.28	5.23	556.44
Vietnam	18.53	5.66	1793.69

Source: Most recent year available data compiled from United Nations Institute for Statistics (2017) Education expenditures (<http://uis.unesco.org/en/home>) and Mongolian Statistics Office (2016). For Armenia, this was 2015, for Georgia, 2012, for Japan 2014, for Korea, 2015, for Mongolia, 2016, for Norway 2013, for Russia, 2012, for Tajikistan, 2015, for Vietnam, 2013.

OSF 2004; MECSS]. Another route to fund higher education was to open private institutions. While there were only six national universities in 1992, the number of universities, including private ones rapidly increased reaching 95 in 2017.

Until 1993, higher education institutions relied on full funding from the government then shifting to cost-sharing model introducing tuition fees. Currently, national universities receive funds from five main sources:

1. Government funds (student grants and loans, fixed expenditure)
2. Tuition fee
3. International organizations and donors (technical assistance, projects, and programs)
4. Research (joint research projects)
5. Individuals and businesses.

Ishengoma [2010] proposed new innovative models for financing higher education expansion while increasing equity and maintaining quality and sustainability. The proposed models include the business model or market model, bonds issues, higher-education-specific fi-

tion, Culture, Science, and Sport (2017) Higher Education Statistics 2016–2017 (In Mongolian).

Table 2. Comparison of expenditure on tertiary education (% of government expenditure on education)

Countries	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Armenia	11.3	9.5	10.3	13.6	12.7
Georgia	11.2	19.2	..	..	..
Japan	19.5	20.1	20.0	20.8	..
Korea, Rep.	..	15.6	..	..	20.8
Mongolia	3.8	3.4	-	-	8.6
Norway	29.9	..	25.9	..	..
Tajikistan	8.4	11.2	..	..	9.9
Vietnam	15.7	14.8	15.0	..	..

Source: World Bank [2018].

ancing facilities, credit or unit-based tuition fee financing, and the establishment of higher education investment banks. Among these new models, a few Mongolian HEIs apply the credit-based tuition fee to their operation.

Tables 1 and 2 below highlight comparisons of expenditures on education in several countries of low and high income (extracted from World Bank list). Percentage of national expenditure on primary to tertiary education in national budget dropped in 2011 from 2009 (14.51%) and 2010 (14.71%), but it is closer to the OECD average 12.9% in 2011 [OECD2014: 252]. While the OECD average is 5.6% in 2011 [Ibid.: 258], the expenditure on primary to tertiary education institutions as a percentage of GDP in Mongolia in 2011 remained closer to the figures in 2007 and 2010 (4.69%; 4.64%) except for the little rise in 2009 (5.15%). Table 1 shows that the government expenditure per tertiary student is the lowest among the countries compared. This indicator in the OECD average amounts \$9221 [Ibid.: 249].

The table 2 shows that government expenditure on tertiary education in Mongolia fell from 3.8% in 2011 to 3.4% in 2012 but then increased to 8.6% in 2015. This number remains lowest among the countries compared in the table.

In recent years, the government of Mongolia increased its research grants to the HE sector. In 2015, a grant of \$1.75 million was allocated to researchers and HEIs nationwide. In 2015, as indicated in the Higher Education Quality Reform Policy, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport allotted \$33.5 million of funding to improve HEIs' research and teaching environment and infrastructure⁷. Compared to 2009–2012, the amount of funding to HEIs has increased by 11.7 times

⁷ Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport (2015) The 2015 Year Report (In Mongolian).

Table 3. **Comparison of HEIs mission statements**

	Type	Name	Excerpt from Mission Statements
1	National	National University of Mongolia	"...to become a national model research university which meets world standards and provides pillars for Mongolia's development"
2	National	National University of Medical Sciences	"...to become a national leading and one of top 100 medical universities in the west coastal area of Pacific Ocean."
3	National	National University of Life Sciences	"To become a leading global university"
4	National	Mongolian University of Science and Technology	"...to become one of the Asian top universities."
5	National	National University of Education	"To become a competitive institution among Asian universities of education."
6	Private	Ikh Zasag International University	"...be a modern global university of technology and innovation."
7	Private	University of the Humanities	"...to become a reputable and leading university in Asia... "
8	Private	University of Finance and Economics	"...to become a leading research university recognized in the region..."

Source: Websites of each institution (translated by the author)

in 2013–2015. The funding was spent on building new research laboratories, renovation of university buildings, dormitories, and equipment.

3. Internationalization of Higher Education

Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley [2009] pointed out that at the institutional level, a large number of universities aim to produce 'global citizens' with 'global competencies' through the adoption of an extended mission under internationalization. Mission statements of a number of Mongolian HEIs stated that they aim to become "global" or an internationally recognized university. Table 3 below compares the mission statements of several major national and private HEIs that aim to be research-oriented and leading institutions in Asia and the world.

Becoming recognized in the region, improving research, technology, and innovation, meeting international standards are the main goals set by these universities. This goal is reflected in the Mongolian Sustainable Development Vision-2030, enacted by the Mongolian parliament in 2016. It set an ambitious goal to have at least four Mongolian national universities recognized internationally for research in STEM fields. It indicated,

Build a science and technology cluster and park in accordance with priority development areas, and ensure that no less than four Mongolian universities are ranked among Asian top universities⁸.

Within the initiatives and policies of IoHE, the government of Mongolia in cooperation with its national universities strives to build up a comprehensive university campus⁹. The goal of the policy is to integrate the national educational system to international dimensions and support transformation of national and private universities to campus model. One example is the policy on curriculum. The government passed an order¹⁰ to follow the UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education. Accordingly, the 817 field of studies was reduced to 181 in 2014. In addition, the policy focuses on developing collaborative research between faculty members, students, and scholars and making their research output more accessible and usable in productions.

The government of Mongolia believes that building up a comprehensive campus will lay a solid infrastructure base for adapting the national universities' strategic development goals, improving teaching and research quality. The comprehensive campus development plan will also allow the integration of educational resources among the national universities. In addition, national universities will be able to share resources, develop interdisciplinary research, and pursue a coordinated external relations strategy. While the NUMS is building a new campus with the assistance from the Japanese government, the NUM aims to build a large technopark, intensify research that focuses on technology transfer, and open modern research laboratories.

Under the goal to improve the quality of higher education, the government reduced national universities from 42 to 16 by merging small-sized institutions into large ones¹¹. The private HEIs also started to unite with each other following the government policy to decrease the number of private HEIs. The number of private institutions which amounted to 129 in 2004 was reduced to 79 in 2014 and consequently to 74 in 2017.

In addition, external assessment and accreditation started to play an important role in improving the quality and status of higher education in Mongolia. Currently, 74 universities qualified for accreditation¹².

⁸ Partnership for Action on Green Economy (2017) Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030. http://www.un-page.org/files/public/20160205_mongolia_sdv_2030.pdf

⁹ Government of Mongolia (2010) Resolution on Ratification of Developing Universities with Building Campuses (In Mongolian).

¹⁰ Ministry of Education and Sciences (2014) Order#78 on approval of indexes for fields of education in undergraduate degree level (In Mongolian).

¹¹ Government of Mongolia (2010) Resolution on Reforming of Some State Owned Higher Education Institutions (In Mongolian).

¹² Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (2017) Accredited institutions (In Mongolian).

The accreditation of HEIs was voluntary-based until 2016 when the government made it mandatory for all types of HEIs to go under accreditation¹³. In recent years, international accreditation started to play an important role. ACBSP accreditation in business for example accredited 13 institutions and processing 8 more or ASIIN accreditation in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics accredited few programs at national universities.

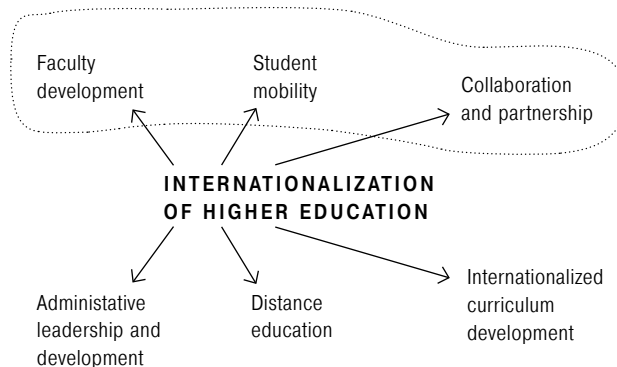
3.1. Key Drivers of Internationalization

The document analysis shows that the international rankings of HEIs, international accreditations, and in general, the necessity to improve higher education quality, and competition for high-qualified students are the main drivers for internationalization. Situated in the discourse of becoming one of the top universities in Asia, national universities started to pay special attention to rankings and international accreditation. As Elken, Hovdhaugen, and Stensaker [2016] emphasized, global university rankings are currently a worldwide phenomenon in higher education and rankings provide a visualized image of the position of particular institutions in the global hierarchy of HEIs. Since Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) first ranked universities in the world, global rankings transformed higher education [Marginson 2014; Hazelkorn 2009]. Rankings affect the decisions of university stakeholders, faculty, international and domestic students, their families, state policymakers and investors [Hazelkorn, 2009]. There are over 15,000 HEIs worldwide, 50 national ranking systems and 8 global rankings and the number are growing [Hazelkorn, 2009].

Mongolia does not have any domestic university rankings. Even more, there is no assessment information of Mongolian HEIs at the popular ranking systems, such as Times Higher Education's World University Rankings (THE), ARWU, and QS World University Rankings (QS). Research, in particular, the number and the proportion of publications in periodicals such as *Nature* and *Science* and the citations of papers in particular indexes including Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Science Citation Index are key measurements in the rankings' indicators. The total number of Social Citation Index, Social Sciences Citation Index, and Arts and Humanities Citation Index papers from Mongolia between 1967 and 2017 is 3550 (Hu, 2017). As Hu [2017] reports, the proportion of papers in the Web of Sciences data remained lowest in 1967–1972. However, since 2003, the number of papers has dramatically increased, reaching 315 in 2016 but dropped to 252 in 2017. The total citation is 41,823 including self-citations [Ibid.]. This shows that the number of papers produced per year still remains low and there is much to do to produce more papers. To do that, two measures are urgent. The government needs to add more

¹³ Legal Info System (2017) Approval of Program (In Mongolian).

Figure 1. **Internationalization of Higher Education in Mongolia**



budget for R&D whereas national universities should offer more reward to prominent faculties and researchers.

3.2. Main Dimensions of Internationalization

The document analysis showed seven main dimensions of the internationalization process at HEIs (Figure 1), (1) Administrative leadership and structure, (2) Faculty development, (3) Internationalized curriculum development, (4) Student mobility, (5) Distance Education and (6) Collaboration and partnerships. Three of these, faculty development, student mobility, and collaboration and partnerships are explained in this paper. Before explaining these dimensions, the following section explores internationalization processes of Mongolian HEIs in global and local contexts, their actions and strategies, and underlying motivations.

3.2.1. Faculty Development

Since the 1990s, faculties in higher education institutions had scarce opportunities and resources to develop their skills and knowledge. Although international philanthropic organizations such as Open Society Institute offered short-term exchange programs for faculties, project funding support and other initiatives, faculties across all HEIs lacked language skills to benefit from international training. However, with the need to improve the quality and competency, acknowledgment from government policy, national universities started to focus on faculty development in order to increase their quality and competency. Fink [2013] defined faculty development as “a set of activities that engage all members of the teaching faculty in the kind of continuous professional development that enhances their ability to construct curricula and modes of instruction that more effectively fulfill the educational mission of the institution and the educational needs of students and society” (p.1).

Fink [2013] also offered four levels of national efforts in faculty development programs including 1) little or no faculty development activ-

ity, 2) substantial minority of institutions offering faculty development activity where participation is voluntary, 3) nearly universal activity—mandatory for new teachers, and 4) continuous faculty development expected to all instructors. Fink noted that most universities in developing countries fall in the first level with little or no faculty development activity. While Mongolia has belonged to the first level, main national universities are striving to offer more faculty development opportunities, thus, aiming for the second level. The Mongolian government action plan of 2008–2012¹⁴ indicated in the section under education, “... HEI faculty development program will be implemented”, and “...Young researchers and scholars will be supported” in order to improve HE quality and standards. The Roadmap for HE Reform set goals for faculty development for 2010–2021 to increase the number of HE faculty members with a Ph.D. by at least 50 percent¹⁵. Currently, 2034 of 6917 (29.4%) full-time faculty members have a Ph.D.¹⁶

However, despite these initiatives, the majority of HEIs do not have a comprehensive plan for faculty development and faculty members spend little time for self-development due to a heavy workload [Narankhuu, Batkhishig 2015]. Through questionnaire study, Itgel et al. [2018] concluded that faculty members (67.3%) at major national universities view that the top priority in faculty development is the academic research and foreign language skills. This means that faculty members feel disadvantaged in participating and conducting high-quality academic research in a foreign language, mainly in English. The study emphasized that national universities including NUM, NUMS, and MUST have a faculty development unit that focuses on three key areas of faculty development: methodology, academic research, and more advanced English language instruction.

3.2.2. Student Mobility

In regards to incoming mobility, currently, Mongolia hosts 1,520 international students in 2017¹⁷. Of these, 55.9% are studying at bachelor’s level, 32.7% at master’s level and 11.4% at Ph.D. level. The geographical origin of incoming students reveals that the largest number of students are from China (969), Russia (182), and South Korea (132), representing 84.4% of all international students. The list is followed by Turkey (3%), Japan (2%), Laos (2%), Kazakhstan (1%) and Vietnam (1%). Of the total international students, 6.8% are studying with scholarship according to bi-lateral government agreements while 83% are

¹⁴ Legal Info System (2018) Mongolian Government Action Plan 2008–2012 (In Mongolian).

¹⁵ Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport (2017) Roadmap for Higher Education Reform 2010–2021 (In Mongolian).

¹⁶ Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport (2017) Higher Education Statistics 2016–2017 (In Mongolian).

¹⁷ Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sport (2017) Higher Education Statistics 2016–2017 (In Mongolian).

self-financed. The rest of 155 (10.2%) are paying from other sources. Compared to the last five years, the number of international students increased by 0.7% (1,098 in 2012) (MECSS, 2017a). In addition, the “EBI” government-funded short-term scholarship (named after former President Elbegdorj who initiated the program in 2017) encourages in-bound student mobility. The purpose of the program is to support foreign young researchers and scholars conducting research in Mongolian studies. Currently, nine researchers from eight countries received this scholarship in 2017¹⁸.

In regards to outgoing mobility, the government of Mongolia promotes study abroad programs with the aim to prepare domestic students for international careers and develop future high-level human resources. In 2014, the government commenced the Higher Engineering Education Development Project in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to prepare 1,000 Mongolian engineering students in Japan by 2023. Currently, 200 students received their degrees from universities in Japan¹⁹.

There is no comprehensive database on outgoing student mobility yet available in Mongolia. However, based on UNESCO figures, it is estimated to be around 9874 students in 2017²⁰. This figure does not count the students studying in China and Russia. As reported by the Mongolians Abroad non-governmental organization²¹, 9900 students were studying in China and 5500 in Russia in all levels of higher education in 2016. The true and accurate figure may be higher if it includes all types of mobility, including internships and the consolidated figures coming from the universities themselves.

The number of outbound Mongolian students has been stable during the past decade, with only some minor fluctuations. The most popular destination countries included the United States of America, China, Russia, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. Numerous foreign government-funded scholarships play a crucial role in the outbound mobility of Mongolian students. The popular scholarships are from U.S., Japanese, Chinese, UK (Chevening), Australian, Russian, German (DAAD), Hungarian, and South Korean governments.

3.2.3. International Partnership and Collaboration

For HEIs worldwide, building relationships with counterparts abroad is seen as a key aspect of strategies for internationalization. A greater number of HEIs around the world are eager to establish joint and dual degree programs and other types of partnerships with foreign

¹⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017) “EBI” Scholarship for Foreign Young Mongolists

¹⁹ Mongolian Economy (2017) 1000 students to study engineering in Japan.

²⁰ United Nations Institute for Statistics (2017) Outbound internationally mobile students by host region. <http://data.uis.unesco.org/#>

²¹ Mongolians Abroad. (2016) A database of students studying abroad should be created (In Mongolian).

Table 4. Comparison of gross outbound enrollment ratio of international tertiary students, all regions, both sexes (%)

Country	Income level	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Mongolia	Lower middle	3.4	3.5	3.1	3.5	3.7	3.9	..
Tajikistan		1.0	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.8	2.4	2.3
Uzbekistan		0.7	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0
China	Upper middle	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	..
Kazakhstan		2.6	2.6	3.4	4.4	5.4	6.6	7.0
Russian Federation		0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	..
Japan	High	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	..	..
Norway		4.8	5.1	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.5	..
Republic of Korea		3.8	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.0	..	..

Source: United Nations Institute for Statistics (2017) Gross outbound enrolment ratio by host region. <http://data.uis.unesco.org/#>

institutions (especially in highly developed countries). As the International Association of Universities [Egron-Polak, Hudson 2014] reports, among 782 institutions worldwide, 64 percent offered joint degree programs with partners abroad, and 80 percent offered dual degree programs.

With regard to internationalization at home, Mongolian HEIs experience international partnership and collaboration in three ways: joint/dual degree programs, student exchanges, and research and academic collaboration. The partner foreign schools in Asia, especially from Japan, South Korea, China, and Taiwan weigh higher than other regions. Examples show that 146 of 220 foreign partners with NUM are from Asia, Mongolian University of Science and Technology (MUST) (83/137), NUE (47/70) and the list will go on. Student exchange programs are funded by an array of institutions from private companies (e. g. Mitsubishi Scholarship) and national institutions (e. g. Mongolia-Namyangju Education Promotion Scholarship) to the government (e. g. DAAD or Erasmus Mundus programs).

Dual degree programs have become attractive for students interested in getting an international degree but have limited resources to complete full four years abroad. Thus, institutions offer such programs to attract more students which require increased English language exposure, training, and quality in order to prepare students for the partner institutions.

In Mongolia, joint and dual degree programs mostly in business studies have been experiencing considerable growth over the past decade. While there is some variation in the structure of the programs,

in most programs, students take half of the years of undergraduate or graduate courses in the home country and then complete other years in the partner institution. Currently, about 40 joint/dual degree programs are offered at national universities as of 2017. Most of the programs are taught in English, thus it requires students to have advanced English skills. The tuition fee for these programs is much higher, compared to the domestic average.

Research and academic collaboration is an excellent way that not only accelerates the internationalization progress but also enhances the institutional quality and extends the performance of the partners. HEIs in Mongolia benefit from participating in effective research and academic collaborations with others, both within the country and internationally. In 1974–2016, the government of Mongolia funded 4235 research projects (23.5% in natural science, 23.5% in technology, 22.8% in medical science, 17.8% in social science, and 12.4% in agricultural science)²². However, joint projects take a small percentage—18.5% in social science, 12.8% in natural science, 2.8% in medical science, 2.7% in the agriculture, and 2.04% in technology. In 2016, \$3.1 million was allotted to HEIs for 164 research projects. Unfortunately, Mongolian HEIs have not yet provided any accurate data regarding their academic collaboration with foreign institutions.

3.3. Current Challenges The document analysis on the discourse of IoHE in Mongolia presents the following key challenges:

- Institutional autonomy and short-term leadership. When the government of Mongolia appoints rectors and leadership teams for limited terms, national universities face difficulties with autonomy and short-term leadership to the continuity of vision for internationalization and sustaining strategic actions over extended periods.
- Insufficient funding. Funding and grants are unstable and insufficient for the internationalization process to go forward. This surely relies on the country's economic capacity and it will likely have long-term consequences for Mongolia's internationalization agenda and outcomes. (While the funding increased due to a loan from international organizations dedicated to developing higher education, the funding is not sustainable once the loan finishes.)
- Brain drain. As the International Organization for Migration²³ estimates, 130,000 Mongolian migrants were living abroad in 2016. Among the migrants, young highly educated and skilled people are the majority. There is little government incentive, award, or

²² Mongolian Foundation for Science and Technology (2016) The 2016 Year (In Mongolian).

²³ International Organization for Migration (2017) Mongolia. <https://www.iom.int/countries/mongolia>

potential advantage for high academic talents to stay in Mongolian HEIs.

- Quality assurance. Before 2016, HEIs were not required to go for accreditation. The only incentive for it was the government's financial support in the form of student loans only to accredited HEIs. The negative results of not being accredited may include a loss of funding, students, and even bankruptcy. Now there is a hope that the mandatory accreditation will benefit all HEIs and their stakeholders.

4. English Medium Instruction in the Internationalization of Higher Education in Mongolia

English medium instruction (EMI) is one trend in IoHE across many non-English speaking countries as countries shift from their focus on teaching English language to teaching academic subjects in English language [Graddol 1997; Dearden 2014]. Although there is no set agreed definition, Oxford Center defined EMI as, "The use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English" [Dearden 2014: 2]. EMI is a growing global phenomenon in all phases of education, and more and more universities are in rush to offer both graduate and undergraduate programs through EMI [Macaro et al. 2018]. By offering courses in English, an institution is able to attract international students and faculty members and this brings opportunities to its own students and teachers to participate in international scientific research [Graddol, 1997].

Currently, there is no data of EMI in the higher education sector of Mongolia. By carrying out the first attempt, this section will be able to answer the second research question, 'What are the driving factors for higher education institutions in Mongolia to implement English Medium Instruction?' This section examines the accounts for the history of foreign language instruction and then discusses the current situation of EMI in the country to discover the reasons.

After the 1921 Independence Revolution, as a newly formed communist country with a strong tie to the Soviet Union, the Mongolian education system had the policy to teach only Russian as a foreign language. In the 1980s-1990s, 30 out of 1500 Mongolian students studying in the Soviet Union majored in Russian language (Begz, 2001). During the socialist period, it was mandatory for all students regardless of their fields to learn Russian language for 3–4 years continuously and take a state examination in Russian. Students majoring in Russian language were eligible to take other foreign language courses, such as English and French, for only one semester.

The English language department opened at NUM in 1956, and it was the beginning of teaching English in HEIs of Mongolia in an extensive way (Munkhbayar, 2016). In the 1990s when Mongolia expanded its foreign relations with other countries, it needed more professionals who were able to communicate in English. Therefore, more HEIs

started to offer English courses. However, there were not enough English language teachers. In 1990–1995, with the support from UNDP and ODA-British Overseas Development Agency, a specialized English language institute was founded to retrain hundreds of Russian language teachers as English language teachers [Altan-Od, Khongorzul 2012].

English is not the second official foreign language in Mongolia. However, the documents on the English language in the past two decades show that English is treated as the second main foreign language of Mongolia. In 1997, the Minister of Enlightenment²⁴ passed an order to teach English language as a foreign language from the academic year of 1997–1998 in all levels of education institutions. Later, the order by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science indicated that the main foreign language in bachelor's level programs would be English²⁵.

The term, EMI, was first used officially in the Comprehensive National Development Strategy of Mongolia that based on Millennium Development Goals [World Bank 2008]. The strategic objective 2 in Education Development Policy indicates, "...provide financial support to high schools, vocational schools, and universities which use English as the medium of instruction" [Ibid.:19]. Moreover, this document addressed the importance of English, pointed out the goal of making the English language a major foreign language in Mongolia, and set a goal to have civil servants be competent in English by 2021. Prior to this official document, in its resolution on English language education, the government of Mongolia announced the need of teaching of EMI courses such as international relations, economics, journalism, tourism, medicine, and technology²⁶. The National Program on English Education (Government of Mongolia, 2008) highlighted the importance of "creat[ing] a system/mechanism pushing the need and use of English as the main tool for education, for communication, information access, and business..."²⁷.

Currently, national and private universities in Mongolia offer, in total, around 385 EMI courses. However, despite handful private universities, opportunities to earn academic degrees in English are limited. Examples include the Mongolia International University that offers undergraduate degree programs entirely in English since its establishment (in 2002). Another institution is Royal International Univer-

²⁴ Ministry of Enlightenment (1997) Resolution # 208 on Some Measures for Foreign Language Training (In Mongolian).

²⁵ Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science (2006) Resolution # 481 on making an amendment in the standard module (In Mongolian).

²⁶ Government of Mongolia (2001) National Program on English Language Education (In Mongolian).

²⁷ Government of Mongolia (2008) Resolution on Ratification of the National Program on English Language Education (In Mongolian). P. 5.

sity that opened its doors offering business degree programs entirely in English in 2010. At the graduate level, the opportunities to gain degrees in English are available in joint and dual degree programs (mostly Master's degree) at major national and private universities, such as NUM (1), NULS (6), University of Finance and Economics (9), and Otgontenger University (3).

As Macaro et al. [2018] concluded, the rationales for adopting EMI in a broader global context include 1) a perceived need to internationalize the university; 2) the need to attract foreign students due to the decreasing number of domestic students; 3) national cuts in HE investment; 4) the need of state HEIs to compete with private ones; 5) the importance of English in academic research publications. In the Mongolian context, the document analysis identifies that HEIs in Mongolia implement EMI for the following four reasons, 1) increasing the employability of domestic graduates, 2) promotion of international collaboration, 3) generating more income, and 4) increasing domestic and international profile. These four reasons are interrelated. When national universities strive for increasing their international profile by offering EMI courses and joint and dual degree programs in English, private universities promote international collaboration via joint and dual degree EMI programs to generate more income. Both national and private universities pay much attention nowadays to the employment ratio of their graduates due to the increasing demands of international and domestic business organizations to hire graduates who will be able to function internationally. English language knowledge is one of the main requirements in the employment.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study attempts to explore internationalization of higher education in Mongolia, current strategies and approaches to internationalization at national and institutional levels, the concept of EMI policy and its implementation in HEIs in Mongolia. Two research questions were raised, what are the motives and drives of Mongolian higher education institutions to go for internationalization? and what reasons do the HEIs implement English Medium Instruction in Mongolia?

In terms of the first question, the key findings of this research are that at the national level, the world university ranking affects the government to push its national universities to go for internationalization. In a bigger picture, the Mongolian government sees the IoHE as a way to integrate international dimensions into higher education [Knight 2003] in order to improve the quality of higher education. These two reasons are the key drivers of internationalization.

At the institutional level, national universities started to pay special attention to rankings, research output to journals with high impact factor, international collaboration and delivery of courses in English language. On the other hand, private institutions are increasingly applying for international accreditations to compete for high-tuition paying

domestic students. These two phenomena are moving forward the loHE in Mongolia by integrating international dimensions into higher education.

Although the government of Mongolia makes progress through strategic actions and projects in the higher education sector, Mongolia's internationalization efforts are still dispersed and managed in an ad-hoc fashion. At the national level, higher education policies and laws are not stable and they are constantly changed. Consequently, the internationalization process is becoming slow. As expected in the major document Roadmap for Higher Education Reform 2010–2021²⁸, Mongolia's first ambitious priority is to have four universities to be internationally visible at least in Asia by 2021. However, the plan is way behind the schedule. The Mongolian government should consider actions to intensify faculty development on a substantial scale for the development of scientific research in the country. The government should also grant full autonomy to national universities and increase its investment in a great amount in the coordination of international initiatives.

It is clear that more private rather than national institutions perceive the forms of international delivery through joint and dual degree programs as Deschamps and Lee [2015] claimed. The forms of joint and dual degree programs in Mongolia support Mongolian domestic students to study abroad rather than calling for international students. The medium of instruction in the courses offered at the joint and dual programs is mainly in English. There are relatively few programs offered in English. The country will remain disadvantaged and it will be crucial to many aspects of the internationalization when the number of programs in English is not leveraged. While many foreign institutions implement EMI to attract international students this does not seem to be a practice at Mongolian HEIs. Therefore, the answer to the second question is that HEIs in Mongolia adopt EMI policy for four reasons, increasing the employability of domestic graduates, promotion of international collaboration, generating more income, and increasing domestic and international profile.

To conclude, the Mongolian government is the key player in loHE by making policies, taking initiatives, and encouraging national universities. However, the process of internationalization is much slower in private HEIs. More in-depth research and particularly qualitative research of a comparative nature are clearly needed in order to gain greater insights into how the internationalization of higher education is implemented at national and institutional levels.

²⁸ Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science (2010) Roadmap for Higher Education Reform 2010–2021. <http://www.mesc.gov.mn/article-398-435.mw> (In Mongolian)

References

- Agvaantseren U., Hoon P. (2013) Comparatives Korean and Mongolian Achievement in Higher Education. *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research*, vol. 11, no 1, pp. 49–55.
- Altan-Od D., Khongorzul D. (2012) *Language Policy and Language Planning of Mongolia: Some Issues on English Language Education Policy*. Ulaanbaatar: Bembi San.
- Altantsetseg S. (2006) The Impact of Globalization: A Case of Mongolian Universities. *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research*, no 11, pp. 17–18.
- Altbach P. G., Reisberg L., Rumbley L. E. (2009) *Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Asian Development Bank (2008) *Mongolia: Education Sector Reform Project*. Available at: <https://www.adb.org/projects/43007-023/main> (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Begz N. (2001) *Theoretical and Methodological Issues of Mongolian Education Development in the Era of Globalization* (PhD Thesis). Ulaanbaatar: Mongolian Institute for Educational Research (In Mongolian). Available at: <http://www.stf.mn/infodb/author?id=3233> (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Coffey A., Atkinson P. (1996) *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dearden J. (2014) *English as a Medium of Instruction—A Growing Global Phenomenon*. Available at: http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/pub_E484%20EMI%20-%20Cover%20option_3%20FINAL_Web.pdf (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Deschamps E., Lee J. (2015) Internationalization as Mergers and Acquisitions: Senior International Officers' Entrepreneurial Strategies and Activities in Public Universities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 19, no 2, pp. 122–139.
- Egron-Polak E., Hudson R. (2014) *Internationalization of Higher Education: Growing Expectations, Fundamental Values*. Paris: International Association of Universities.
- Elken M., Hovdhaugen E., Stensaker B. (2016) Global Rankings in the Nordic Region: Challenging the Identity of Research-Intensive Universities? *Higher Education*, vol. 72, no 6, pp. 781–795.
- Fink L. (2013) The Current Status of Faculty Development Internationally. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, vol. 7, no 2, article 4.
- Gantsog T., Altantsetseg S. (2003) *Globalization, WTO and Mongolian Higher Education*. New York: International Policy Fellowships, Open Society Institute.
- Graddol D. (1997) *The Future of English? A Guide to Forecasting the Popularity of the English Language in the 21st Century*. London: The British Council.
- Hazelkorn E. (2009) Rankings and the Battle for World-Class Excellence: Institutional Strategies and Policy Choices. *Higher Education Management and Policy*, vol. 21, no 1, pp. 1–22.
- Hu T. (2017) *Advancing Research and Innovation with Web of Science*. Available at: https://news.num.edu.mn/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WOS-Night_2017.pdf (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Hudzik J. K. (2015) *Comprehensive Internationalization: Institutional Pathways to Success*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ishengoma J. (2010) Financing Public Higher Education for Expansion in Sub Saharan Africa: Towards Eclectic Business Models. *SARUA Leadership Dialogue Series*, vol. 2, no 2, pp. 43–52.
- Itgel M., Oyungoo B., Sumyasuren T., Otgon-Erdene X. (2018) *Possibilities and Ways to Support Higher Education Faculty Development* (In Mon-

- golian). Available at: <http://zuvluguun.num.edu.mn/conf2018/Content/files/%D0%A1%D0%A50302.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Jargalsaikhan J. (2015) *Internationalization of Mongolian Higher Education: With Special Reference to the Mongolian National University*. Kyoto: Kyoto Graduate School of Education.
- Khishigbuyan D. (2009) *Privatization in Higher Education: Cross-Country Analysis of Trends, Policies, Problems, and Solutions*. Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy.
- Knight J. (2003) Updated Internationalization Definition. *International Higher Education*, no 33, pp. 2–3.
- Knight J. (2004) Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 8, no 1, pp. 5–31.
- Macaro E., Curle S., Pun J., An J., Dearden J. (2018) A Systematic Review of English Medium Instruction in Higher Education. *Language Teaching*, vol. 51, no 1, pp. 36–76.
- Marginson S. (2014) University Rankings and Social Science. *European Journal of Education*, vol. 49, no 1, pp. 45–59.
- Munkhbayar N. (2016) *Analysis of English Language Policy for Higher Education Sector* (PhD Thesis). Ulaanbaatar University of the Humanities (In Mongolian). Available at: <http://www.stf.mn/infodb/author?id=5778> (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Narankhuu L., Bathkhishig I. (2015) *To the Issues on Higher Education Faculty Development* (In Mongolian). Available at: <https://www.slideshare.net/ankhbi-egluvsan/ss-47550077> (accessed 22 February 2019).
- OECD (2015) *Education at a Glance. OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (2014) *Education at a Glance. OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD.
- Open Society Forum (2004) *Case Study on Educational Reform, Restructuring, and Privatization*. Available at: http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00003928/01/final_report_eng.pdf (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Partnership for Action on Green Economy (2017) *Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030*. Available at: http://www.un-page.org/files/public/20160205_mongolia_sdv_2030.pdf (accessed 22 February 2019).
- Soderqvist M. (2002) *Internationalization and Its Management at Higher Education Institutions: Applying Conceptual, Content and Discourse Analysis*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki School of Economics.
- Steiner-Khamsi G., Stolpe I. (2004) Decentralization and Recentralization Reform in Mongolia: Tracing the Swing of the Pendulum. *Comparative Education*, vol. 40, no 1, pp. 29–53.
- Weidman J., Yeager J. (1998) Mongolian Higher Education in Transition: Planning and Responding Under Conditions of Rapid Change. *Tertium Comparationis*, vol. 4, no 2, pp. 75–90.
- Weidman J., Yoder B. (2010) Policy and Practice in Education Reform in Mongolia and Uzbekistan during the First Two Decades of the Post-Soviet Era. *Excellence in Higher Education*, vol. 1, nos 1–2, pp. 57–68.
- World Bank (2018) *World Development Indicators*. Available at: <http://databank.worldbank.org/> (accessed 22 February 2019).
- World Bank (2008) *MDG-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy of Mongolia*. Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMONGOLIA/Resources/NDS_DRAFT_ENG.pdf (accessed 22 February 2019).