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## Literature Review



# Educational Innovation amidst Globalization: Higher Education Institutions and Societal Integration

**Zainab Rasheed\***

Department of Innovation and Technology, Zennova Technologies, UAE

\***Correspondence:** Zainab Rasheed, Department of Innovation and Technology, Zennova Technologies, UAE, Email: [cto@almadad-group.com](mailto:cto@almadad-group.com)



## Abstract

The contemporary landscape of higher education resonates with the dynamic interplay of globalization's monumental forces, cultural diversity, and transformative educational paradigms. This scholarly inquiry navigates the complex terrain of higher education institutions (HEIs) within the context of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), unraveling the intricate tapestry of educational challenges amidst globalization's pervasive influence. The research embarks on an odyssey through a holistic examination of HEIs' responses to global forces, aiming to decipher the transformative journey and its implications for societal transformation. Globalization, a multifaceted phenomenon, has revolutionized higher education, driving a shift from traditional to diversified pedagogical models. However, this transformative journey presents a myriad of challenges and opportunities for HEIs. The study underscores the pivotal role of internationalization and cultural inclusivity in reshaping the educational landscape. Challenges faced by HEIs in adapting to globalized learning environments, reluctance to embrace cultural diversity, and limitations in fostering cross-cultural competencies among students emerge as focal points. This research contributes a novel perspective by delineating the barriers hindering the internationalization of educational settings, offering insights into strategies for fostering inclusive learning environments. Emphasizing the significance of embracing cultural diversity, the study recommends recalibrating institutional policies and practices. These findings resonate beyond academic discourse, influencing practical implications for real-world educational settings. In conclusion, this research emphasizes the imperative for HEIs to adapt and innovate in response to globalization, fostering inclusive learning environments to equip students with the requisite skills for navigating a diverse, interconnected world. Leveraging these insights, institutions can contribute to societal transformation and the holistic development of students, shaping a future aligned with global competencies and enriched cultural understanding.

## Introduction

In the wake of the 21st century, the realm of higher education stands as an ever-evolving crucible, shaped by the monumental forces of globalization, cultural diversity, and transformative educational paradigms. The confluence of these multifaceted phenomena has ushered in an era where higher education institutions (HEIs) grapple with an imperative mandate—to navigate the intricate interplay between globalization and societal transformation while redefining their educational landscapes.

Scholarly discourse within the academic corridors has reverberated with fervent discussions concerning the pivotal role of higher education in fostering human capital, steering economic prosperity, and reshaping the societal fabric. The foundational bedrock of higher education, once rooted in traditional research-

oriented pursuits, has undergone a seismic shift. Today, HEIs stand as veritable crucibles of diversity, offering a patchwork quilt of educational experiences attended by a plethora of individuals transcending geographical, cultural, and socio-economic boundaries.

Amidst this kaleidoscopic transformation, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) emerges as a compelling microcosm, encapsulating the dynamic interplay between a well-developed learning environment, the external constraints imposed by cultural influences, and the burgeoning aspirations for global educational assimilation. This research embarks on a scholarly odyssey, delving deep into the HEI landscape of the UAE to unravel the intricate tapestry of educational limitations influenced by external cultural norms, juxtaposed against the compelling drive for internationalization and the subtle confines of existing socio-economic paradigms.



## The evolution of higher education and globalization

At the nucleus of this academic inquiry lies an inquisitive quest to discern the evolutionary trajectory of higher education under the pervasive influence of globalization. The 21st-century educational discourse has witnessed a remarkable departure from traditional pedagogical doctrines towards a mosaic of diversification, propelled by a surge in educational technologies, digital communications, and heightened competition in the global educational arena [1].

Scholarly luminaries have traversed the terrain of educational systems, delineating the dialectic between the entrenched canons of traditionalism and the emergent vistas of innovation [2]. This paradigmatic shift has not been confined solely to the academic echelons; rather, it has permeated the societal fabric, fostering democratization, human rights, and a learning-centric ethos [3].

### Understanding educational systems through holistic perspectives

Pioneered by the revered Aristotle, the paradigm of holism beckons, underscoring that the whole transcends the mere sum of its parts. This philosophical underpinning resonates profoundly within the expansive framework of educational systems analysis [4]. Education, as a system, embodies complexity, interconnectedness, and an intricate web of relations, mirroring the holistic dictum encapsulated within the fabric of educational institutions [5].

Scholars, positioned as vanguards of systems analysis, have embarked upon elucidating the intricate fabric of educational systems. Their discourse spans self-organization, feedback mechanisms, and the innate complexity ingrained within these dynamic entities [6]. This holistic vista, transcending reductionist approaches, becomes instrumental in deciphering the intricate tapestry of higher education's evolution within the milieu of globalization.

## Background

It is an undeniable fact that globalization has turned out to be a referring term to many fields, ranging from politics to communication culture, and technologies in order to briefly describe the changes of a huge spectrum that is able to expand all across the globe [1]. This means that globalization can also be regarded as a term multifunctional highly concerning the betterment of technological, cultural, and economic affairs in addition to the process that can weaken the national boundaries with unlimited improvement and enlarged interaction which can create the awareness of mentality of citizenship and society along with rejection and consideration socially. Other than that, in society, just as many other organizations like educational institutions are also impacted by innovation requirements [2]. In that aspect, it is considered to be true that in education initial innovation movement started with some application revisions in the past. Therefore, this kind of process is followed practically by a group of new revisions. In the third step, in education, we can see the difficulties and challenges between traditional and new applications. Further, in these factors, the rapid increase in the number of students along

with the education program has resulted gradually in a central bureaucracy of remarkable effect on schools. To improve the results and process for these reforms of training and education authorities mainly concentrate not only on improving current schools through projects like "school enhancement", "total quality management" and "learning schools" but also on the models of "alternative school" [7]. After the changes on a global scale in education, a few countries felt obliged to perform comprehensive revisions leading the United States, New Zealand, Finland, and Australia, to be compatible with a constructive approach. According to Rege Colet [3] sources, social structure changes have had a considerable effect on this process of a learning-centered education mentality. Meanwhile, the improvement in human rights and democratization is also evident in making phenomenal contributions to the learning of democratization. Usually, individuals focus solely on their own focus skills, interests, and preferences in alternative programs of education, the rapid increase in individualistic learning progress, and school diversity.

## Literature review

In summary, the evolving educational landscape under globalization necessitates a critical examination of educational systems' adaptability, cultural inclusivity, and responsiveness to the demands of a globally interconnected world. The advent of globalization has profoundly reshaped the landscape of higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide. This multifaceted phenomenon, spanning political, cultural, and technological domains, has sparked a transformative journey within educational systems [1]. Understanding its implications on HEIs necessitates a comprehensive analysis of evolving paradigms, challenges, and opportunities amid this transformative process.

### Globalization's impact on education systems

Globalization has permeated various facets of education, prompting a fundamental reevaluation of educational norms and practices. The education system, once confined within national boundaries, is now subject to cross-border influences and transformative changes [2]. This evolution reflects a shift from traditional, rigid educational models to a more dynamic, adaptive approach. The initial wave of educational innovations primarily focused on revising existing applications. However, as globalization intensified, educational systems experienced a paradigmatic shift, requiring institutions to navigate the tensions between traditional and contemporary approaches [7]. Notably, this shift compelled nations worldwide, such as the United States, New Zealand, Finland, and Australia, to embrace a more constructive approach to educational reforms [3].

### Complexity of educational systems in a global context

Viewing education systems through a systemic lens unveils their intricate interrelationships and multifaceted nature. General systems theory underscores the complexity and interconnectedness inherent in these systems, advocating for a holistic understanding [5]. Aristotle's philosophy, emphasizing the synergy of individual parts forming a cohesive whole, resonates with the holistic approach to comprehending educational systems [4].

## Recruiting international students: Opportunities and challenges

The recruitment of international students has emerged as both an opportunity and a challenge for HEIs. Enrolling international students enriches the educational milieu by fostering diversity, cross-cultural interactions, and global perspectives [8]. However, institutions face intensified competition to attract and retain these students, particularly from regions like the Middle East and East Asia [9]. Branch campuses established in regions like the United Arab Emirates (UAE) encounter challenges in aligning educational curricula with local cultures and values. This struggle impedes the provision of a truly internationalized learning environment, limiting the cross-cultural experiences of both local and international students [10].

## Challenges of embracing globalized learning environments

Some HEIs exhibit reluctance to fully embrace globalized learning environments. These institutions often prioritize preserving cultural norms, linguistic preferences, and traditional modes of instruction over embracing global diversity [11]. Consequently, this resistance restricts the exposure of domestic students to diverse cultures and hinders their preparedness for a competitive global landscape (Stephens 2013). Moreover, this resistance is reflected in the challenges faced by students in navigating a multinational educational setting. Language barriers, cultural differences, and limited exposure to diverse perspectives hinder students' abilities to engage fully in a globalized learning environment [12].

In conclusion, the impact of globalization on HEIs is multifaceted and transformative. It demands a critical examination of educational systems' adaptability, cultural inclusivity, and responsiveness to the demands of a globally interconnected world. Embracing global diversity, fostering cross-cultural exchanges, and reevaluating pedagogical approaches are imperative for HEIs to thrive in this era of globalization.

## Research methodology

### Research design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to delve into the complex interplay between globalization, higher education institutions (HEIs), and their impact on social transformation. Qualitative methods allow for a nuanced exploration of multifaceted phenomena, capturing the diverse perspectives and experiences of stakeholders within the educational landscape.

### Data collection

The primary data collection methods employed in this study encompassed semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and participant observation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including university administrators, faculty members, students, and policymakers associated with the selected HEI in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These interviews were designed to elicit rich insights into

the institution's approaches, challenges, and perceptions regarding internationalization, cultural diversity, and educational practices. Document analysis involved examining institutional documents, policy papers, and educational curricula to glean insights into the formal strategies, policies, and frameworks adopted by the HEI regarding internationalization and cultural inclusivity. This method enabled the researchers to triangulate findings from interviews with the institutional documentation, providing a comprehensive understanding of the institution's formalized approaches. Participant observation was conducted within the academic setting, allowing researchers to immerse themselves in the day-to-day activities and interactions within the institution. This method facilitated the observation of cultural dynamics, language preferences, and interpersonal interactions among students and faculty, offering contextualized insights into the lived experiences within the educational environment.

### Data analysis

The qualitative data obtained from interviews, document analysis, and participant observation underwent rigorous thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves a systematic process of coding and categorizing the data to identify recurring patterns, themes, and salient issues emerging from the collected information. Transcripts from interviews were coded using qualitative analysis software, enabling the researchers to systematically organize and categorize key themes and sub-themes. Document analysis findings were integrated with interview data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the institution's formalized strategies and their alignment with the lived experiences within the educational setting. The analysis process involved iterative cycles of coding, categorization, and constant comparison to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. Triangulation of data sources allowed for a comprehensive and multi-perspective exploration of the research topic, mitigating biases and enhancing the credibility of the study's conclusions.

### Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. The researchers adhered to ethical guidelines and obtained necessary permissions from the institution for data collection and observation.

## Analysis and discussion

### Learning environment limitations

As Groff [13] discussed international students usually support growing the enhanced innovative approach to learning and discussion environments and diversity as well as increase the gratitude and awareness of various cultures and communities bringing knowledge and skills in different academic fields and later on the international graduated students. According to Lian, Wallace, and Fullilove [14] sources, in the 21st century, students are trying to find various approaches as a citizens for competency all across the globe to prepare for students for personal life and

professional challenges. Furthermore, in this modern time, students are required to have abilities, skills, and knowledge to be competitive globally and confident, communicative, confident, and develop strong attributes for interacting within the limitations of national borders. Possessing the awareness of national culture and cultural sensitivity to view different points of view with competence and doing critical thinking about the issues globally and then consider them as an interdisciplinary approach. Implementing the concepts of global citizens' which is considering a student a citizen to cultivate the citizenship concepts that are global in orientation [15].

Other than that, the challenges and difficulties to attracting international students toward higher education are being written by researchers like Stephens (2013), and Baas, [11] shed light on the organization of higher education that they are still there which are catering the national citizens only and not want to attract as well as expand the international students during the globalization era for not to impact the cultural learning environment of citizen's students. On one hand, HEI is spending an enormous amount of money to build a strong learning environment for UAE citizens of fails to provide a learning environment all across the globe to its students, this means that the national students instead of being associated with the different country also lack their experience of the environment of international learning. Furthermore, international students are trying to approach the Middle East to open a branch campus just to gain the accreditations of the national and international campus of the more international environment. However, HEI students lack the experience of learning and awareness of new communities and cultures with a low diversity number. HEI is considered to be the three governments of higher education institutes but the only one that resists the learning environment of globalization following cultural principles and wearing traditional clothing which is necessary for all the national students. However, on the side of employees for all national employees, cultural dress is mandatory and it is prohibited strictly for the employees who are non-national not to wear the national dresses for the identifying purpose and to distinguish between the non-nationals and nationals. Whereas, applying conditions similarly can also become challenging if multinational students with other diverse cultural and religious backgrounds join the student community. Furthermore, the other is that HEI is considered to be federally funded where all resources, education, and services of My Org are federally funded which poses a question on the use of federal funds for resourcing as well as servicing the multinational student apart from earning revenue from their tuition fee.

Limitations faced by the environment of learning because of HEI's reluctance to the environment of globalized learning adoption is considered to be the national students' lack of learning challenges and opportunities based on the perspective of the international community, respect, and lack of awareness for other nationalities and cultures. According to Crisp and Oliver [12], the governmental workplace is only preferred by graduating students with approximately 90% of citizens as an employee just because the lack of communication required is necessary for the environment of multinational workplaces hence avoiding all the private enterprises for employment, which lemmatizes the national students working

opportunities within their own homeland. In order to support the national language, the HEI learning environment promotes communication in Arabic hence all the students interact with their language, hence English language practice and reduced proficiency in mastering English for effective communication. For multinational employees, it poses difficulties to merge into the community, especially in Arabic meetings conducted. In the outer community, mostly the male working students dealing with different nationalities in the outer community have shown the contribution to relative learning subjects further because usually, the students have expertise in Arabic. English but also Urdu and Farsi which is different community languages as well. Other than that, these students are more comfortable interacting and studying with the multinational faculty and staff. On the other side, with more female students the non-working students with very limited working experience still follow the understanding of racism demonstrated during their experiences in classrooms with multinational faculty. However, these students strongly prefer to study with national faculty. Further through a survey of 50 female bachelor students, the internal culture influenced young students and do not accept the idea of mingling with different nationalities student in the future if allowed.

### Existing student's constructivist and collaborative learning

As Rob and Rob [16] shed light on the innovative learning environment that brings the best and a lot of opportunities for the students to collaborate and constructivism, however, on a daily basis these interactions are very narrow with the domestic student's interaction with the opportunities and advantages to students for traveling another country and interacting or socializing with the international community. To take part in multiple national and international competitions students are motivated and encouraged, but most of them resist just because of t tackling competitors and the community which are considered to be multinational. For each program, the curriculum has already been broken into smaller sets and tasks to promote constructivist learning compared with different foreign universities appears to be easier at the international level [17]. The perspective of other academic faculty and the staff are considered to be national students related to the country (UAE) are been spoiled and pampered from their school and show problem-solving, skills of critical thinking and the approaches of international self-learning bring difficulty in challenges for faculty during the learning courses of constructivist.

### Higher education effects on social transformation

Higher education's major role is considered to be recognized as a key to the development of process to benefit society entirely [18], while few themes that are discussed of social transformation effects just because of higher education and are high impact on internationalization, innovation, gender empowerment, and inequality. Highly education has substantially affected social transformation through transformative leadership influence. However, it is true that transformative is not only limited to promoting the reforms of individualist producing champions but encompasses the movement of social and coalition that can

challenge entirely the obstacle to progressive social changes. As Lauder, et al. [19] Briefly discussed digitization for higher education is considered to be effective because it can bring positive changes as a whole process to provide the extension of access to tertiary education more than the established universities and provide society with ethical leaders of next-generation supporting the transformation with a mission to improving and engaging other people's lives.

Other different activities engaging the society and involving the community at an institutional level are conducted all at the initiative of HEI of increasing the relationship with communities including mainly the voluntary program of community service where the activity is mandatory for non-academic to complete 100 hours for each student of the society's voluntary service just to graduate from the college. Several other hubs of voluntary at college are created, where these hubs in college are responsible for promoting social awareness, social values as well as social responsibilities. Moreover, the program of the community also supports building more connections between HEI and the approach by the corporation and creates values where HEI gains more knowledge from different past experiences and adds more value to other experiences. However, the activities on the dark side revolve around HEI marketing only for national students. Furthermore, the community of international part is wholly avoided, and the activities around the different national organizations. This means that directly to social transformation HEI does not contribute but helps the cultural paradox and makes it more robust. The "Emiratization" is considered to be the sense of racism and inequality as well as added as an indicator of key points to the institute as well as the evaluations of each division's performance. In critical analysis, there is considered to be resistance to include the students of HEI of societal norms or discuss the required cultural perspective changes which is completely from a side of non-national that looks like absurd, instead, the students are influenced to create differentiation in several other nationalities.

The perks of internationalizing education are very well known all across the globe since it not only brings to institutions of monetary policy but also explores the learning environment and adds value to institutions and society as a whole. Therefore, by cultural norms, HEI is influenced highly by cultural norms, in the institution's fearing effects it also resists non-national students' acceptance of international students on religious values, dress, and culture as well as understand the difference between the students of national and non-national can be a difficulty. Furthermore, HEI can be questioned as being a federally funded institution on valid use of federal funds for national students only and balance on the fund's utilization through the programs of scholarship and financial aid between the national and non-national. However, the policy and procedures define clearly international students' living style within the universities and colleges, and their access to the services of institutional money can support to mitigate the problems while international student recruiting will bring the most significant benefits to all educational institutions. In addition to this, the recruitment program for the international audience can be developed to promote and encourage the students to reflect on several other cultural influences and norms to build

stronger relationships with other communities by interacting in collaborative problem-solving and learning. Moreover, it's all about mindset shifts and accommodating specific skills to make students resilient more. Increasing the curiosity of students about the changes that have a high possibility and involving them in the emphatic realization of human diversity generally. This means that throwing money consistently on higher education institutions will never help to develop a robust competitive learning environment but determining the difficulties and taking the steps in the right direction to examine the difficulties can support in the bigger run. However, usually, it takes more individuals to influence the changes while working on other elements but gradually the transformation comes with a bunch of opportunities and guidance to think creatively.

## Conclusion

The exploration of globalization's impact on higher education institutions (HEIs) and its role in social transformation has unraveled multifaceted dynamics, presenting both challenges and opportunities. This conclusion encapsulates the key findings of the study, and their implications, and offers clear recommendations for future research, emphasizing practical implications for real-world educational settings. The study unearthed the intricate relationship between globalization and HEIs, revealing how institutions navigate the evolving educational landscape. Globalization, as a multifunctional force, has catalyzed shifts in educational paradigms, urging HEIs to grapple with cultural diversity, internationalization, and educational innovation. Findings underscored the challenges faced by HEIs in adapting to globalized learning environments. The reluctance to fully embrace internationalization, cultural norms, and language preferences often hindered the creation of inclusive educational settings. Limited exposure to diverse cultures impeded students' preparedness for a globalized workforce, impacting their cross-cultural competencies and critical thinking skills.

## Implications and recommendations

**Implications:** The implications of these findings reverberate across multiple domains, urging HEIs to recalibrate their approaches and policies. Embracing global diversity emerges as a pivotal necessity for fostering inclusive learning environments. Cultivating cross-cultural interactions, promoting international student exchange programs, and incorporating diverse perspectives into curricula are imperative steps toward creating culturally enriched educational settings. Furthermore, the study accentuates the need for HEIs to reassess their institutional policies and practices. Strategies aimed at internationalizing the curriculum, providing language support, and facilitating intercultural dialogue among students and faculty can foster an inclusive educational ecosystem conducive to holistic learning.

**Original contribution to the field:** This research brings forth a novel perspective on the nuanced interplay between globalization, HEIs, and societal transformation. It contributes by shedding light on the challenges faced by institutions in aligning with globalized learning paradigms while emphasizing the significance of embracing cultural diversity for educational

enrichment. The comprehensive exploration of barriers hindering internationalization within educational settings fills a crucial gap in the existing literature, offering insights into strategies for fostering inclusive learning environments.

**Practical implications:** The practical implications of this study extend beyond academic discourse, impacting real-world educational settings. HEIs can leverage the findings to revamp their institutional strategies, curriculum development, and student engagement initiatives. Cultivating a global mindset among students through experiential learning opportunities, cultural exchange programs, and interdisciplinary collaborations can equip them with the requisite skills for navigating a diverse, interconnected world. Moreover, integrating practical aspects of internationalization within academic frameworks, such as language support programs, intercultural workshops, and faculty training on diverse teaching methodologies, can enhance the educational experience for both domestic and international students.

**Recommendations for future research:** Moving forward, future research endeavors could delve deeper into comparative analyses of internationalization strategies across diverse educational contexts. Exploring the impact of cultural immersion programs, evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive pedagogical approaches, and assessing the long-term outcomes of cross-cultural experiences on students' professional trajectories constitute promising avenues for further investigation. Additionally, longitudinal studies examining the evolution of globalized learning environments and their influence on graduates' employability and global citizenship could provide valuable insights into the sustained impact of internationalization efforts.

In conclusion, this research underscores the imperative for HEIs to embrace cultural diversity, foster inclusive learning environments, and adapt pedagogical practices to equip students with the competencies necessary for thriving in a globalized world. By leveraging the study's insights, institutions can navigate the complexities of globalization, contributing to the holistic development of students and fostering societal transformation.

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