# The Role of English Language, Networking and Internationalization in Globalizing Private Universities in Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

In the current education scenario, the private high education institutions in Malaysia are seeking to enhance their internationalization in their efforts to adapt to the developments taking place in the country and worldwide. These developments include the response to globalization, the emergence of an international network and the role of English language that has resulted in universities to incorporate international collaboration. The aim of this paper is to highlight the impact of globalization on the internationalization of Higher education in Malaysia and summarize and describe some of the potential challenges in this regard to highlight Malaysia's effort in internationalization to produce competent work force in its efforts to intensify globalization. Furthermore, the quality assurance framework in the Malaysian blueprint and its efforts in the upward mobility of higher education are discussed. To achieve this aim, relevant literature was reviewed, and conclusions were drawn in a critical review process. The solutions for the enhancement and futurity of globalization in higher education are summarized and suggestions are provided for policies and practices that can be adopted by private universities to enhance the recognition in the global market.

**Keywords:** English; globalization; higher education; internationalization; Malaysia; private university

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An incredibly wide range of higher education institutions throughout the world are interested in the phenomena of internationalisation. According to Rumbley et al (2012), this is a noteworthy development, especially within the past few decades. We have witnessed the swift growth of global university ranking systems in the last decade. The procedures related to internationalization in the global landscape of higher education are associated with the commodification and marketization of education; as such, we also see increased competition between the higher education institutions which in turn have led to new modes of governance to improve rankings (Larsen, 2016). This in turn has led to changes in the way these institutions employ the latest available technologies in all aspects of the business to achieve their revamped objectives.

Related to the notion of internationalization in higher education is globalization of it. The

simple definition of internationalization is when an institution expands beyond its borders and that of globalization refers to the flow and exchange of commodities such as products and services, capital, and technology worldwide (Difference Between Internationalization and Globalization (with Comparison Chart) - Key Differences, retrieved 20 July 2022).

In our paper, we refer to the internationalization of Higher education beyond the Malaysian borders. The impact of the commodification and marketization of Higher Education to other countries such as China and those in the Middle East and Africa, and this seems to be growing rapidly. We note this happening in the Malaysian private universities. These private institutions in Malaysia may have a slight advantage in that English is used almost exclusively as the medium of instruction. English is the second most important language in Malaysia, after its official language, Bahasa Malaysia. Being the lingua franca in many parts of the world, it is acknowledged that non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers (Dewey, 2007). In view of its importance, it is not surprising that English is adopted as the medium of instruction in private universities in Malaysia. In the final analysis, it cannot be denied that these institutions of higher learning, being private enterprises, are also concerned with profit.

Adopting English as the medium of instruction makes these institutions attractive to international students as they do not have to spend time learning the local official language before they enrol on the program of their choice, which may be the practice in some other countries that offer similar programmes. But potential international students do need to have achieved a certain level of proficiency in the English language to be accepted into any programme at these institutions. This has made our higher education programmes in the private universities more competitive and attractive to international students.

In the past two decades, before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, international students enrolled on higher education programmes physically, and then moved on upon completion of their studies. However, during the pandemic in 2020-2021, majority of the continuing international students have had to continue their studies online. This was the same for those who enrolled on graduate programmes during this period. In fact, the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in an influx of graduate international students, particularly from China to private universities in Malaysia.

The advent of technology and the prevalent use of the various online platforms during the pandemic and the lockdown has encouraged this influx as graduate students need not be physically present for their classes and supervision sessions. Although the use of technology was inevitable during the partial and full lockdown periods, this mode of communication was

the only viable one and it was a certainty that all meetings between lecturers and supervisors and students were conducted online, mainly via the Teams or Zoom platforms.

Going back in time, before the pandemic of 2020-2021, much of the developed world was already dominated by technology. The education sector is no exception to this domination. Schools at all levels had resorted to technology to aid the process of teaching and learning. With the onset of the pandemic, the need for the technology was greater than ever as children and older students were all locked down at home. Graduate students were not exempted.

Despite the pandemic, networking among people, including students, did not stop as this is aided by social networks afforded by the web; and as noted by Gaftandzhieva et al. (2020), social networking has become a powerful tool for communication, sharing of information and discussions on various topics. This is particularly true for our graduate international students.

In the meantime, the race to the top of the global university ranking systems among the private universities continues.  Despite the prevalence of technology in higher education, and as we move into the endemic stage after the pandemic, we also need to view this situation with new lens.  It is advocated that we now must move beyond this mode of teaching and learning, in particular higher education.  According to Dervojeda (Feb 3, 2021), we should now "look beyond technology and bring humans back to the centre of the educational process". She opines that although "the potential of technology-enabled learning is immense", it is nevertheless just "a great tool for education" and as such, it may be misused or even abused. Although technology, which include AI, robotics, automation, and Big Data, have helped us move educational institutions, including the private universities, to full digitalization mode during the pandemic, this has occurred with corresponding implications in terms of quality and students' performance (Dervojeda, 2021).

Further, students' motivation, as well as their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing may be compromised.  The same could be happening to our graduate students, particularly those from abroad.  The teachers, lecturers and supervisors only meet them online during the pandemic.  This has continued to this day, particularly to students of countries with strict zero covid policy.  This mode of teaching and learning is definitely not the same as meeting the students face-to-face.  The latter allows the teacher or supervisor to gauge the student's motivation, progress in his or her work, and physical and mental well-being up close and personal.  When we meet them online, we are deprived of such personal touch, and we are not able to render the appropriate aid to the students who are affected.

Although technology has aided the education process to a great extent, we still need "a common vision and systematic approach" for the education system and process to be

successful (Dervojeda, 2021). As educators of higher education, it should be what we want to ultimately gain with the aid of technology, not what technology will attain for us in higher education. If before and during the pandemic, the aim was helping equip our graduate students with technology (IR4.0), now is the time that we change our perspective and try to rehumanize the higher education process with expeditious collaboration between us and technology (IR5.0). It is only through this process that the change that ensues will have a long-term impact on higher education.

IR5.0, in particular Education 5.0 begins with us, the educators, not technology. It is now imperative to focus on what is to be achieved by our graduate students as humans, i.e. it is about helping them to be intellectual and creative beings, and to be socially and emotionally strong, as well as physically and mentally healthy all in one fell swoop. In this perspective, technology enables the process but does not play the main role.

To achieve our objective, both supervisors and graduate students, including the international students, now must be mindful of the type of content they want to study. They must identify and perhaps develop content that pays attention to topics such as, "questions of ethics, social inclusion, diversity and sustainability" (Dervojeda, 2021). It is through such a concerted effort to move us back to ourselves that we feel that we can produce a competent work force in our endeavour to intensify globalization of skills that our graduate students, both local and international, can bring to the marketplace. However, there are challenges of globalization in this scenario.

According to Zolfaghari, et al., (2009), the absence of required specialisations, low levels of education and consciousness, as well as a lack of science and technology, are major issues in today's cultures. The majority of people in countries, especially those that are underdeveloped, lack access to education, despite the fact that specialisation and skill development are the foundation of every community. Therefore, it is essential for states to prepare for the advancement of education, heightened awareness, and the development of both technical and professional abilities.

## 2.    AN OVERVIEW OF GLOBALIZATION IN UNIVERSITIES

Globalization's pressures push the state to implement policy changes to improve the quality, applicability, and marketability of the higher education system, but local and ethnic polarizations operate in diagonally opposing directions by calling for equality in opportunities, access, and treatment. The word "globalization" has come to stand in for the current situation,

indicating that some global processes have started to influence every aspect of our lives. Given how significantly globalization has changed our world, it stands to reason that educational systems would also be impacted (Guo and Guo, 2017). The organization, management, and supervision of educational systems are now undergoing a change in several countries.

Fundamental changes in the form and nature of educational institutions, the way the curriculum is organized, the nature of teachers' work and professionalism, and the goals and objectives of assessment all occurred in the era after the 1990s. Additionally, this time period has been marked by significant and frequently contentious The nature and goals of higher education in society have also been the subject of extensive and sometimes heated discussions, notably those involving education, the economy, and society. Particularly, institutions of higher education are now subject to new expectations and challenges regarding accountability, accessibility, quality, and the adoption of new technologies and curricula (Chin, 2019).

Governments must now ensure that public higher education institutions are competitive and on par with their international counterparts due to demands from globalization. As policymakers consider the rising cost of supporting these public institutions, there is a growing desire for increased accountability and transparency of public institutions on the local level (Chin, 2019). By 1998, five of the oldest public universities had been corporatized, thanks to an amendment made to the Universities and University Colleges Act of 1971 in 1995. These institutions are likely to incur an increasing percentage of their operational costs from sources other than the government because of corporatization. The push for world-class universities in Malaysia is also reflected in the increasing importance of research and the increased accountability for research output. To enable more dynamism at the institutional level and enable rapid responses to changes, this calls for greater liberalization of public higher education from the administrative restraints of the central administration. Public universities' corporate cultures are increasingly incorporating business processes including quality control, capital budgeting, governance, and many others throughout this period of corporatization (Arokiasamy, 2011).

**English Language and Globalization in Malaysia**

Fast economic growth in the 1990s increased demand for widespread higher education, particularly among those populations that choose English-language higher education (Jamshidi et al., 2012). For universities in emerging nations, language is a constant source of

complexity. Without exception, these colleges must possess the necessary proficiency in English, the universal scientific language. Universities cannot effectively participate in the global knowledge network if both academic staff and students lack a reasonable degree of English proficiency. Many colleges in developing nations require English language proficiency from applicants. International students cannot enroll in these universities unless they have mastered the English language because it is one of their primary requirements. Hence the private educator sector also complements the efforts of the government in its effort to be the hub of education globally. The development of globalisation is significantly aided by the English language. The relevance of using the English language has expanded due to the globalisation of trade and commerce and the growing diversity of the labour force with various cultural values. Prior research demonstrated that foreign students improve their English skills before leaving to study abroad, but they encounter language difficulties that have a detrimental effect on their academic success (Bista, & Gaulee, 2019).

What is more, universities in industrialized countries expect that their international academic relations will take place in English; as a result, they are increasingly offering some courses and frequently entire degree programmes in English (Doiz et al., 2013). This is true even in countries where English is not used as the language of instruction in universities. In general, it is expected that programmes will be given in English when joint degrees or branches are established. While many research institutions in emerging nations provide all or most of their courses in English, others are placing more and more emphasis on the language as the standard for academic discourse (Altbach, 2013). While Francophone and Lusophone Africa, for instance, are mostly still committed to their respective languages, these nations are worldwide outliers. Although English is becoming increasingly common, instruction in Latin American nations still takes place in Spanish or Portuguese. However, English is now more frequently employed in several courses and programmes as the language of instruction. For instance, a select number of courses across all disciplines are increasingly being offered in English to Chinese students at top research institutions in China. Professors are encouraged—and occasionally required—to publish their research in English, ideally in journals that are acknowledged by the global businesses that assess usage and effect (Altbach, 2013).

The native language of Malaysia, Malay, or Bahasa Melayu is utilized extensively in the country's educational system as the medium of instruction, particularly in public universities and national schools. The government feels that employing the Malay language in all facets of the educational system might improve nation-building and national integration. A plural society such as Malaysian needs a robust mechanism for communication and integration reasons.

The government has permitted the use of English as a language of teaching, particularly at private universities, as the nation enters a new period marked by the transition from a production-based economy to an innovative and knowledge-based one. Malaysia is an intriguing example, which switched from English to Bahasa Malaysia and is currently reintroducing English at universities. Although English is often given more priority in developing nations, this is not always the case (Altbach, 2013). This transformation is necessary because the government must adapt to internationalization and globalization.

Additionally, English must be the language of teaching in private universities in order to fulfil the government's goals of making Malaysia an educational center in the area and luring foreign investment in education. As a result, the primary goal of luring international students to Malaysia is language. The use of English as a language for teaching technical subjects in post-secondary courses is permitted under both the Private HEIs Act and the Education Act of 1996. Additionally, courses offered through twinning partnerships with foreign universities and online campuses are permitted to be taught in English. However, according to Section 23 of the Education Act of 1966, "the national language should be taught as an obligatory subject in the educational institution if the major medium of the instruction in an educational institution is other than the national language". Since Malay is the official language of Malaysia, this clause is in place to prevent it from losing all significance (Grapragasem et al., 2014).

Academic publications are significant because it has long been accepted wisdom in academia—across all fields of study and national contexts—that one must "publish or perish." The development of the knowledge-based economy, which is dependent on knowledge creation and distribution, has made the reinforcement of this heritage even more important. However, due to the rapid speed of globalization, academic publications can no longer be seen in isolation from the many globalizing practices and processes that have a significant impact on the creation of academic texts. Producing more research also implies disseminating it more widely, which is tied to the function of English in academic contexts and publications once again (Finardi & Rojo, 2015). These globalizing systems and activities, Due to its status as the language of academic and scientific study, as well as the creation and transmission of information, English plays a crucial part.

The enormous influence of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), located in the United States, as well as the growth of the impact factor, which favors academic papers in English, are all contributing to English's growing prominence. To acquire international respect for their research, academics in non-Anglophone nations are under increasing pressure to publish in English, which harms academic publications that are published in local tongues.

These journals will cease to be relevant from a worldwide perspective unless and until they are indexed by ISI (Tan and Goh, 2014).

In today's globalised society, communication with others is a need. The growing use of English in Malaysia seems to support the idea that cultural exchanges are one-way in the web of activities that make up modern globalization (Mandal, 2000). The globalization of higher education has the potential to aid in the creation of an ASEAN area that is cohesive, as stated by Khalid et al (2019). Academic mobility is improved by concentrating on modernising partnerships between partner universities, which also raises the appeal of higher education systems in European nations. The Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia is entrusted with providing quality education for the people of Malaysia. Education in Malaysia begins from preschool and continues to university. The vision of the MOE is to make Malaysia a center for education excellence (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013). On the basis of equality and improved academic mobility among member nations, Malaysia needs consistency in its internationalisation and regional development strategies. Harmonization across countries with different cultures, customs, and languages can be aided by a complete international strategy at the institutional, national, and multi-regional levels. ASEAN countries can join forces to build one higher education forum through significant networking, collaborations, and digital transformation of HEIs (Khalid et al. 2018), which may result in unification.

It is difficult not to overstate the importance of English as a global language in this process of interdependence on a global scale if globalization is regarded as the connectivity of peoples, communities, and states. English has affected many aspects of life, directly or indirectly, in many regions of the world, much as globalization has influenced all aspects of current life (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016). English is the most used language in the world for mass entertainment, worldwide telecommunications, scientific publications, as well as the publication of newspapers and other literature. It is the first global lingua franca and the first world language. In this era of globalization, the widespread use of English as an international language and the development of the internet as a quick, boundary-less communication channel are mutually reinforcing new trends and bringing about enormous changes (Rao, 2019).

In view of the above, the relationship between English and globalization is symbiotic and mutually beneficial, regardless of whether English is the driver of globalization or vice versa. If English provides the linguistic and communicative infrastructure for globalization, the latter promotes the cause of English by making the language necessary for participation in globalised networks, markets, and resources. The driving force behind the English-in-

education policy in Asia may be observed in these discussions on English and globalization (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016). An open educational system is necessary since there are many academic transfers and exchanges that take place across international borders in an open society (Hoàng, 2013). English is a key component of the globalised and integrated world. It plays a variety of functions in higher education, some of which are included below: the facilitation of student and faculty exchange programmes, the promotion of intercultural exchanges in the academic setting, the carrying out of cooperative education and research initiatives, the creation of course equivalency and course transfers and for preparing of students for international study (Hoàng, 2013).

**Internationalization In Higher Education**

At the institutional, national, and regional levels, internationalisation has become more and more influenced by East Asia during the past ten years. For instance, more Vietnamese students are travelling to China and Malaysia to further their education. Malaysia has placed a strong emphasis on several internationalisation strategies, notably student mobility/exchange and research partnership, as it works to establish itself as a regional educational powerhouse (Khalid et al., 2019). Higher education institutions have been impacted by global influences such as worldwide economies, global political conflicts, and global communication networks. To satisfy the political, economic, and social demands, higher education institutions (HEIs) must adapt to the changes brought about by the globalization (Othman et al., 2011). In order to compete in the global information society, Malaysia is aggressively upgrading its educational systems. Due to a lack of adequate resources for internationalisation practices, language barriers, low funding, and a lack of regional scholarships, as well as ineffective national and institutional policies to implement internationalization, less developed countries are currently not competitive on a global scale (Khalid et al., 2019).

Internationalization has gained considerable prominence at the highest levels of institutional leadership and policymaking in many parts of the world after occupying a relatively minor place on the agendas of institutions, countries, and international organisations (Rumbley et al., 2012). Moreover, raised internationalisation initiatives have boosted the intensity of internationalisation, which has increased student, programme, and institutional mobility (Tham, 2013). Internationalisation of higher education was mostly understood in terms of idea connections, cultures, knowledge, and values. As a result, this commodity is now a sign of

high-quality higher education. It appears that multiple levels and sizes, including the global, region, nation, state, community, organisation, and person, are considered while considering internationalisation (Shahijan et al., 2016). The higher education system in Malaysia has changed as a result of internationalisation. Students, academic members, education and mobility programmes, and higher education providers all encounter the phenomenon. In this regard, Malaysia has started to improve methods for international cooperation, student mobility, and academic programmes since the 1980s (Munusamy & Hashim, 2019).

Furthermore, Shahjahan, and Edwards (2022) stated that by creating an assumed sense of security as a consequence of investment in capitalist employment and economic systems, globalization of higher education promotes pre-caution, pre-emption, and readiness. The ability to foresee one's future value-such as knowledge, talents, and abilities—seemingly ensures one's future. Another element influencing the internationalisation of universities is the increasing use of world university rankings. They add that an examination of race as the structuring factor underpinning this global phenomenon is still missing among increased discussions about how the globalization of higher education reproduces disparities (Shahjahan, & Edwards, 2022).

Higher education development stakeholders think that the internationalisation process might strengthen connections and ties between the domestic and foreign higher education sectors (Jana et al., 2017). As a result, higher education providers must now actively participate in the internationalisation of higher education to preserve its standing, quality, and visibility on a global scale (Girdzijauskaite, & Radzeviciene, 2018). Additionally, the idea of internationalisation in higher education has been promoted to attract more foreign students and produce qualified graduates who can compete and survive in a globalised society (Robson & Wihlborg, 2019).

Employers are increasingly looking for university graduates with global perspectives and cross-cultural competency, according to research, and students themselves are becoming more interested in travelling abroad. Therefore, internationalisation is motivated by both global and local intercultural interests. A modern university's commercial and entrepreneurial endeavours, as well as its service delivery, research, and teaching, may all benefit from internationalisation. The idea works best when it is implemented as part of larger objectives rather than as a stand-alone goal. Internationalization is more likely to be successful if it is integrated into everyday university practice by altering the institutional language, culture, and attitudes. An overarching topic of this series is internationalisation as a potent force for change, as opposed to the economic or brand-enhancing benefits of foreign participation (Ziguras, &

McBurnie 2015).

**Networking in Globalizing Higher Education in Malaysia**

Universities today form connections with one another to form alliances to compete for resources, faculty members, and students. Since many years ago, the internationalization of higher education has included the mobility of students, university faculties, knowledge, and even ideals (Siemens et al., 2013). The changes to the flow of foreign students are numerous and complicated, according to network research. However, despite the expansion of new study abroad locations, the network of foreign students has grown more centralized, less densely connected, and less "small world"-like. Its structural parallels to those of the global commerce and political networks, particularly the latter, are striking. The contemporary environment presents several new prospects for improved access to higher education, global strategic collaborations, and the growth of institutional and human resource capability. While the provided an account of international student and faculty flows, it falls short of providing a thorough analysis of the situation in a world driven by neo-liberal principles. This is partly because of the decreased financing and neo-liberal governance frameworks that have gradually created the conditions for universities to become globally recognized. Nation states' interests in incorporating other ideologies and cultures are served by recruiting and educating overseas students (Ng, 2012).

One of the main components of a university is networking. They have a crucial role in fostering communication within the national academic system since they are at the top of the academic hierarchy in their respective nations, but they are also the channel via which a national academic system may interact with the global knowledge network. As a result, networking is a key component of the university. Unsurprisingly, academics in institutions, particularly in the most important knowledge hubs globally, control the primary knowledge networks in many fields. Universities in underdeveloped nations have access to these networks since they are a member of this nexus (Altbach, 2013). Universities throughout the world engage in a variety of communication methods that allow access to the most recent developments in research and scholarship and allow casual conversation to contact with coworkers throughout the world. Academics at other, lesser-known universities can access worldwide scientific information, but they have a considerable disadvantage when it comes to actively engage in intellectual discourse. With more direct connections to peers around the world and better access to informal academic and scientific networks, research institution

professors find direct contact to be more convenient. Therefore, research institutions frequently serve as the entry point for international knowledge into global academic systems and as a channel for the dissemination of information from emerging nations to a larger global knowledge network. The "democratization of science" and the new era of information sharing on a global scale have both been discussed extensively. While to some extent this is true, it would be more accurate to refer to the current situation as the "anarchy of science." Therefore, there is an abundance of information available that comes from several sources, but there are few means to evaluate the worth or veracity of much of the vast array of information. In some respects, anarchy strengthens the existing networks, which are essential for deciding what knowledge is useful (Altbach, 2013).

To increase the capacity of their workforce in university administration, most institutions have set up systems to ensure the competence of their academic personnel. Institutional networking and internationalization have been incorporated as one of the institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPI) in most universities' blueprints for higher education in Malaysia, while also ensuring that the missions and vision of the universities are in line (Hassan et al., 2015). The eighth shift made it very evident that networking and collaboration with foreign higher education institutions should be stepped up globally. To support institutional personnel in obtaining the top university ranking and maintaining networking and internationalization, it is not just necessary to forget about foreign funding. It goes beyond the mobility of the students and covers a larger range and capability, including the transfer of information, technology, academic research, and educational resources. Sharing educational materials would benefit institutional staff competency even if networking and globalization are desirable for the university as an educational institution (Hoover, E., & Harder, 2015). The staff mobility programme, for example, really achieves practically all the networking and internationalization goals. Staff members have excellent possibilities to develop their skills and learn via experience throughout the mobility period. Depending on the focus and objectives of the mobility programme, this competency development would increase the number of skill categories. The mobility programme, which places more of an emphasis on research and development, would boost staff proficiency in research abilities, which would be beneficial for both teaching and learning (Hassan et al., 2015).

Thus, the network society encourages universities to deepen their connections with key stakeholders and to communicate with partners, such as other academic institutions and business partners (Pucciarelli, & Kaplan, 2016). Not only that to achieve better results and to draw people, research opportunities, and financing, tighter collaboration and networking must

be expanded worldwide when applicable. To support this strategic approach, postgraduate education and training have taken on a new significance. Malaysian academics must advance toward the global frontiers of science and take a leading role in global networks for the generation of new knowledge (Azman et al., 2016). By maintaining academic offices abroad and working with partner universities to boost student enrollment, Malaysia has developed worldwide networks. It is currently one of Asia's leading private higher education providers for international students (Chin, 2019).

As more connections take place throughout the world via social networks, people are no longer exclusive; rather, the entire idea of inclusion has to be thoroughly studied (Harun et al, 2018). The networking viewpoint in the process of internationalisation has grown over the past few decades as a management tool for the higher education industry. Due to funding and resource restrictions, this is being done to boost its global engagement. To mitigate the dangers of global expansion, higher education providers and administrators collaborate on sharing information, resources, and technology (Girdzijauskaite et al., 2018). Higher education institutions responded fast to global prospects in the early 1980s by setting up networks for a variety of activities, including staff and student mobility, course and curriculum development, cooperative research, and organisations. Therefore, by establishing a robust internationalisation network, Malaysia can raise the standard of higher education in order to draw in more foreign students and foster innovation through R&D activities (Shahijan et al., 2016).

In the higher education sector, which includes stakeholders at the ministries, departments, agencies, and higher education institutions, there are numerous administration and bureaucracy, lively collaboration, and extensive networking elements. The hiring of international students, followed by the advantages for economic and sociocultural reasons, is one of the main drivers influencing the internationalisation of higher education (Girdzijauskaite et al., 2018). For higher education institutions to collaborate closely with their foreign partners and attract more international students, international networking is essential. The bridging mechanism that characterises networking in internationalisation may prove to be a very effective strategy and method for attracting more foreign students. To attract targeted international students, market intelligence and penetration strategies are also key networking tools in internationalisation. The networking's intermediate function has helped higher education organisations learn more about foreign students all across the world and encourage them to enrol in educational institutions (Sarkar, & Perényi, 2017).

The quickest method to adopt internationalisation techniques and tactics is through

institutional networking between domestic and international higher education institutions. The networking of higher education institutions in internationalisation is now a positive kind of international collaboration that opens doors to the foreign higher education market. Through international networking, higher education institutions may also raise their reputation abroad in order to benchmark programme quality, accreditation standards, and curricular requirements. It also establishes strategic and multilevel cooperation amongst partners that may maximise the method, justification, and tactics for higher education globalization (Kristensen & Karlsen, 2018).

Chin and Lim (2012) developed a model which emphasises on collaboration between academia and industry within the framework of state-sponsored educational programmes and initiatives that support knowledge transfer to transform Malaysian SMEs, particularly those that serve as contract manufacturers for global firms, and provide the stakeholders a solution that is least expensive, fast, competent, and long-lasting.

**Challenges of Globalizing Private Universities in Malaysia**

Malaysia's goal of being a top international education destination by 2025 is being strengthened by the increasing international acclaim for its higher education system. By 2025, the Malaysia Education Blueprint for Higher Education 2015–2025 seeks to enroll 250,000 foreign students (Chin, 2019). In Malaysia, the development and quick expansion of private higher education institutions have drastically altered the scene. In fact, emerging countries often exhibit a shared trend of globalization in the education sector (Halid et al., 2020). Adopting the higher education of overseas developed nations has been one of the significant shifts in Malaysia's private higher education in recent years (from the middle of the 1990s). This adaption has led to the establishment of several foreign campuses that can accommodate the great majority of local students as well as some international students. Foreign partners that are eager to collaborate closely with private education institutions for a win-win outcome, therefore, regard Malaysia as an "educational center" (Foo, 2013).

A rising number of foreign students are choosing to study in Malaysia because of the difficult global economy and shifting geopolitical tendencies, giving Malaysia the opportunity to build on its strengths in higher education and attract more international students. The economic impact of international students in Malaysia is now estimated to be RM 5.9 billion and is projected to increase to RM 15.6 billion by 2020. They support cultural awareness, competition, and networking those benefit students and the community in addition to contributing to the

Malaysian economy (Chin, 2019).

The Malaysian education industry is conscious of the strain to satisfy the high expectations of this economic sector in terms of attracting and keeping a knowledgeable and talented workforce due to the severe competition in this industry. To satisfy the economic, political, and social needs of the modern day, PHEIs—along with public higher education institutions—must be able to react and adapt fast to the changes in the dynamic outside world (Halid et al., 2020). According to Abd Aziz and Abdullah (2014), higher education has become more globally focused, making it difficult to discuss changes in the field without taking into account the global, national, and local levels of operation that higher education institutions experience, the cross-border movement of talent, academic programmes, and brick and mortar institutions, the growing influence of institutional rankings on decision-making and marketing, and the quick adoption of technology through massive open online courses (MOOCs). Since this sector is one of the twelve pillars that define a country's competitiveness, the stakes for this sector in national growth are much higher. The phenomena are characterized under the more general idea of "internationalization of higher education," a word that has undergone many operationalizations and definitions by various authors. Despite the many interpretations, institutional development strategies will continue to include the internationalization of higher education as a key component (Abd Aziz and Abdullah, 2014).

The public university system, nevertheless, has not been able to meet these needs. Through the adoption and reform of legislation pertaining to universities, the government began to acknowledge the importance of private higher education and created an integrated legal framework in 1996. The Malaysian government supported the private higher education industry to supplement the public higher education system in 1996, as stated in the Private Higher Educational Institutions Act. Since the middle of the 1990s, one of the biggest changes in Malaysia's private higher education has been the opening of numerous branch campuses of reputable foreign universities from developed countries. The entry of these foreign universities has increased competition between local and international public and private higher education institutions (Jamshidi, et al., 2012).

There have been several locations across the world where private higher education has grown and expanded. Private higher education looks to bridge the gap between supply and demand in the most demanding study disciplines when public higher education's capacity is unable to keep up with demand from the increasing population. According to Jamshidi et al. (2012), the government's support for the expansion of private higher education is a result of several factors, including the need to increase access and enrollment despite growing

budgetary constraints, meet social demand for higher education, which enables students (buyers) to pay for tuition, and self-funding by private providers. Since the 1990s, the private sector has been a major player in higher education in several nations. The key causes of the rising participation of the private sector in higher education internationally are the widening gap between government budget increases and enrolment growth. However, most of them have decreased their share, and as the number of gross enrolment snowballs, the funding per student from the government was seen to decrease dramatically as well. Some developing countries that have paid attention to basic education over the past few decades could concentrate on higher education (Kaplan, & Haenlein, 2016).

In many nations across the world, the private sector is the area of higher education that is expanding the quickest. In the past several years, developing countries and growing economies throughout the world have built more private organizations than state ones. Global demand for higher education is rising overall, and private institutions and international studies are filling a sizable piece of that need. Higher education-related publications, papers, and meetings (seminars, colloquia, and conferences) in recent years have hinted at a worldwide "dilemma" the system is confronting. The "dilemma" is that when nations increase their efforts to improve the availability, quality, and visibility of their various higher education systems, they run the risk of forgetting the fundamental principles and purposes of higher education.

Countries rely on higher education to provide the necessary intellectual ability for a knowledge-based economy and fields like science, technology, and innovation (Siemens et al., 2013). This necessitates deliberate plans to increase access to higher education for as many people as feasible, as well as methods to improve the standard of higher education offered for both home and export markets. For instance, allowing private operators to absorb the exponential demand for higher education, opening the nation's higher education to foreign academic programmes and international branch campuses, exporting higher education as a commodity, and quality assurance mechanisms in regulating the provision of higher education are some examples. The unpleasant fact is that, in terms of attracting foreign students and generating knowledge, higher education systems are either at the centre or on the periphery of the global higher education landscape.

The spread of rankings has had a significant impact on how higher education institutions operate and allocate resources. As a result, universities are encouraging students to enrol, teachers to teach, and researchers to conduct research that will help them rank better on league tables. In the past ten years, market forces have increasingly played a role in the development of higher education policies, placing the preservation of rich indigenous or

traditional knowledge at risk on top of other challenges like graduate unemployment and elitism in higher education to the privileged few (Abd Aziz, & Abdullah, 2014).

A number of difficulties have been brought on by the globalization of HEIs, including the commoditization of tertiary education, commercially controlled research that can restrict the flow of knowledge, rankings of HEIs and world-class universities that appear to have attracted significant public attention, as well as issues with transparency (Othman, et al., 2011). According to Altbach, and Knight (2007), the majority of demand-absorbing programmes are found in the less esteemed end of the higher education spectrum. Foreign companies, which nearly always seek to make a profit, may collaborate with local business people or public, or private universities, or they may create their own branch campuses. Malaysia is creating plans to draw in students and export educational institutions and programmes. Malaysia, as a country that receives cross-border education, has created methods to record and keep track of the calibre of foreign instruction. Similar cross-border initiatives are sponsored by American higher education institutions in Malaysia (Altbach, & Knight, 2007).

The nation's growing need for higher education cannot be met by the public institutions. The first private colleges appeared in Malaysia in the early 1980s, but it wasn't until the Private Higher Educational Institutional Act (PHEIA), which opened the door for the private sector to compete in the higher education market, went into effect in 1996 that they really began to take off  (Arokiasamy, 2011). The adoption of higher education from other industrialised countries has been one of the most significant shifts in Malaysia's private higher education since the middle of the 1990s. To accommodate the great majority of local students and some international students, several foreign campuses have been established. Foreign partners that were eager to collaborate closely with private education institutions for a win-win outcome then saw Malaysia as an education hub (Arokiasamy, 2011). Furthermore, according to Rumbley et al (2012), Asian nations tended to export their human capital to the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia.

During the 1990s, famous colleges from those regions expanded to establish satellite campuses in Asian nations like Singapore and Malaysia. Malaysia is one of several Southeast Asian nations that have already created or put in place their own quality control systems. A flexible employment structure being developed by trends like combining universities in Malaysia has made it simpler to hire teaching professionals and researchers from outside as well. Although the trend for educational programming to flow North-South still predominates, one of the more intriguing phenomena is a noticeable increase in South-South movement, like the trends in student mobility (Rumbley et al, 2012).

The research by Tham (2013) revealed that, despite a growing emphasis on research and knowledge creation, government strategies still largely centre on attracting more international students to boost export income. Public and private institutions respond differently to internationalisation goals set by the government because the former have access to research funding while the latter is much more fee-dependent and thus tends to focus on international students as an additional source of revenue. Nevertheless, both view internationalisation goals set by the latter as an end in themselves. As a growing nation, Malaysia must put more emphasis on the need of lifelong learning in order to fulfil the changing demands for skilled employees and additional knowledge workers (Othman et al., 2011). Harun et al. (2018) explored Malaysian university students' descriptions about their cross-cultural interactions with other students on campus. The researchers concluded that the students controlled their social connections on campus by self-implemented and individual tactics for a variety of reasons. Harun et al. (2018) added that as a result of globalization and digitization, the concept of groupism appears to be quite nebulous.

**Globalization of Private Universities in Malaysia**

With the global reorganisation of higher education, the idea of education as a purely welfare or social benefit has given way to one that is governed by market principles (Arokiasamy, 2011). As stated by Zolfaghari, et al., (2009), the causes for the globalization of higher education are numerous and varied. These factors are always evolving and interconnected; they can be complementary or incongruent depending on the objectives of various stakeholder groups. Governments have been urged to switch from a public policy focused on social good to one based on economic good with the help of the World Bank and OECD. The 1994 World Bank Report on Higher Education advised governments to diversify their university financing sources to include more money from tuition, consulting fees, and donations rather than relying too much on a single (public) source. This results from the notion that education has both societal and individual advantages. Centralized bureaucracies are being dismantled in favour of quasi-markets that place a strong focus on parental choice and competitiveness (Arokiasamy, 2011).

Due to Malaysia's transformation from a sending to a receiving nation in the 3 decades, the internationalisation of higher education in terms of student mobility has undergone a significant transition. The number of international students enrolled has grown steadily over time, with most of the students coming from other emerging nations, particularly China (Tham,

2013). The broad economic, technical, and scientific tendencies known as globalization are understood to have an impact on higher education and are generally unavoidable in the modern world (Guo, & Guo, 2017). It includes markets and rivalry between institutions and between countries, but it also contains much more. The Internet did not exist when the new public management and marketization began, therefore they cannot be attributed to globalization in and of itself. Both can happen simultaneously.

However, changes based on modern public management have been generatively linked to a certain type of globalization in significant ways. The worldwide size of the reform template dissemination has increased the structural and organizational similarity between the various national systems. One argument for change is that institutions and processes are better equipped for the global challenge thanks to competition, performance financing, and openness. Higher education systems have developed into venues for competition and contestations of many types in diverse nations against the backdrop of globalization. Higher levels of demand for fewer openings in higher education and employment have made competition and contestation for access and equality inevitable (Konstantinovskiy, 2012). As a result, policymakers and sociologists should pay close attention to the effects of globalization on strategies adopted to include historically excluded social, ethnic, and racial groups on the one hand, and to meet the needs of the emerging labor market, industry, and the global system on the other. In this regard, studying Malaysia offers a chance to learn from and comprehend the experiences of nations that have implemented neoliberal economic reforms to confront and balance the issues brought on by globalization.

According to Prathap and Ratnavelu (2015), higher education is being impacted by globalization in so many nations. Higher education is facing problems because of globalization in every nation, area, and location. Malaysia's higher education has evolved into a knowledge-based economy because of the competitiveness of the global economy. Malaysia has no universities at all when it became independent in 1957. Since the 1980s, tertiary education has changed from being an elite to a mainstream higher education. Massification has a significant influence on governance, finances, quality, curricula, faculty, and student enrollment, whereas globalization involves the creation of international marketplaces that function in a single financial system with cross-border production mobility.

"The extension and deepening of social, economic, and political interactions across regions and continents" are what is meant by "globalization". It is a multifaceted phenomenon that is supported by the first global networks of communication, information, knowledge, and culture and is geared at creating a single global community. Additionally, it causes changes in

various processes and at various time frames (Ng, 2012). They also emphasize how the new paradigm of governmentality shows a change from flat structures with collegial governance to hierarchical models with imposed management standards for worker performance. Although globalization has good effects on education, some academics contend that the nature of globalization is largely incompatible with the justification for internationalizing higher education and that academic standards and work are under attack. For instance, the marketization and massification of higher education have intensified rivalry among institutions for resources, students, and professors. Faculty members then participate in international marketing initiatives in addition to teaching and research. Globalization is viewed as the universalization of capitalism since it is a market-induced phenomenon (Ng, 2012).

After the University of Malaya was founded in 1959, the first wave of new higher education establishments started. The character and roles of higher education in Malaysia have undergone significant and dramatic change because of the effects of globalization and the growth of the knowledge-based economy. The higher education sectors in most nations confront several issues in a globalized economy, including the growing rivalry between domestic and foreign institutions, gaining a competitive edge in better worldwide rankings, and, finally, the establishment of prestigious institutions as a result. Universities across the world, have started internationalization projects that might result in the creation of branch campuses, cross-cultural collaboration projects, and student exchanges for foreign specialists, the introduction of degree and programme offerings in English (Ziguras, & McBurnie, 2014). By electronically eliminating geographical barriers or through physically located campuses, higher education is a key factor in managing the difficulties of globalization, which has boosted transnational travel. Higher education services exporting first appeared in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but it is currently developing into a Malaysian private, market-driven, and international sector (Chin, 2019). In Malaysia, private higher education has shifted from a supplementary to a primary role in the government's reaction to globalization. Globalization has a significant impact on Malaysian higher education institutions, either directly or indirectly. They support the development of a knowledge society that trades in symbolic products, global brands and images, and scientific expertise (Chin, 2019).

Although the phrase "internationalization" was initially intended to describe businesses growing globally, it is now used in a wide range of sectors. According to Munusamy and Hashim (2019), the internationalization of higher education in Malaysia began in the 1980s. It has been a subject that has gotten a lot of attention over the last 10 years and how it has been transforming higher education, despite how it has been defined and changed over the years.

The goal of international integration is to enhance intercultural, quality, and fairness in higher education, even though internationalization is poorly defined and highly neutral from the standpoint of any position concerned. The term "internationalization" may be defined as systematic and persistent effort aimed at making higher education responsive to the needs and problems associated with the globalization of societies, economy, and labor markets (Hauptman, 2018).

However, there are significant differences in how higher education is delivered today and in earlier decades. Universities support a multi-cultural sensibility, which is increasingly significant and has helped to broaden the diversity of their student body. A student's capacity to compete in the international market may be improved through internationalization, which has the potential to promote cultural awareness. More than simply a fad, internationalization in higher education has become a key focus for academic institutions all around the world. The different programmes that make up global higher education include study abroad, student exchanges, international admissions, and outsourced campuses. This phenomenon might promote cross-cultural understanding and, more significantly, higher levels of knowledge for bright and motivated students (Munadi, 2020).

In addition, internationalization was seen by many nations as essential to reaching global academic standards. In the case of many institutions in affluent nations, doing so will enable students to get the information, skills, and experiences they need to succeed in the global economy and contribute positively to a varied global community. It has been discovered that this just affects institutional assessment systems both internationally and domestically. Numerous institutions of higher learning claim to have plans to become world-class universities by a specific date or that they have already attained this status because of the widespread internationalization of higher education providers worldwide spurred by globalization and the lack of uniformity in ranking systems. The main challenge for scholars currently is the lack of a complete set of indicators and data sources for assessing the level of internationalization of an institution. The wide range of settings, perceptions, justifications, and priorities influencing institutional attitudes and practices tend to constrain such models' ability to analyze the amount of institutional internationalization implementation and perceived relevance in various circumstances.

Regarding emerging nations like Malaysia, internationalization has altered the higher education system's landscape in terms of the makeup of the staff and students, the mobility of the programmes and curricula, and the variety of higher education providers (Ramanathan, 2012). In Malaysia, the internationalization of higher education has mostly focused on boosting

export income through an increase in inbound students, according to research by Tham (2013). This was confirmed by Munusamy and Hashim (2019) in their study on the reasons for the internationalization of higher education in Malaysia, where they discovered that the main reasons for the internationalization of higher education in Malaysia were economic, i.e. revenue generation from international students and the view of higher education as a platform for producing skilled workers for the economy. The basis for income creation may be evident, but the notion that higher education serves as a platform for developing skilled labor for the economy is not; this begs the question of whether the local or global economy is meant. Universities have grown more internationalized in the age of globalization. The idea of a knowledge-driven, global economy has increased demand for universities, which are considered essential institutions in the corporate world, the creation, use, and distribution of knowledge, to enlist the help of talent outside the country (Da Wan, & Morshidi, 2018).

According to Munusamy and Hashim (2019), Malaysian internationalization is not primarily driven by academic justification, one of the four reasons for internationalization. A limited understanding of the notion of internationalization, wherein internationalization is still perceived solely in terms of the number of international students at its higher institutions, may explain why Malaysia's internationalization efforts are focused on economic goals. According to Foster and Carver (2018), the definition of internationalization has changed in recent years to include curriculum issues like curriculum content, pedagogy, how students interact, and the values promoted by the programmes offered, in addition to student recruitment (i.e., where students come from). If properly created and implemented, internationalization of the curriculum might considerably improve the learning environment for all students, assist students in developing a global focus and competencies, and prepare them for the global economy (Munadi, 2020). A country's education system must be able to meet the expectations of the economy in terms of knowledgeable and skilled people if it is to compete in a globally competitive economy (Othman et al., 2011).

## 3.    CONCLUSION

The concept of "internationalization" has changed and developed over time. Internationalisation of higher education is defined differently by different stakeholder groups, including the government, private industry, institution, faculty, academic field, and students. We are at a turning point, and new initiatives and methods must make sure that global higher education serves the public interest as well as financial gain (Altbach, & Knight, 2007).

Implementation of internationalization has increased in education during the course of this century. Governments now place a strong emphasis on developing global interchange and cooperation in higher education, and as such, institutions and universities create their own strategies to internationalise their research and teaching. It can be concluded that the causes for the globalization in higher education differ across and within nations. In certain nations, international higher education will be widely accessible, while in others it will only be a "niche market." These are the driving forces behind the expansion of higher education abroad and the range of courses and institutions in Malaysia. The upward mobility of higher education follows the trends of globalization and private universities play a pivotal role as a education hub in promoting English to attract more international students as well as to enhance students' mobility. Universities in ASEAN must understand and admit that academic institutions have always been a component of the global knowledge system, and that they are even more related to global trends in the age of change and digitization, as supported by Khalid et al. (2019).

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