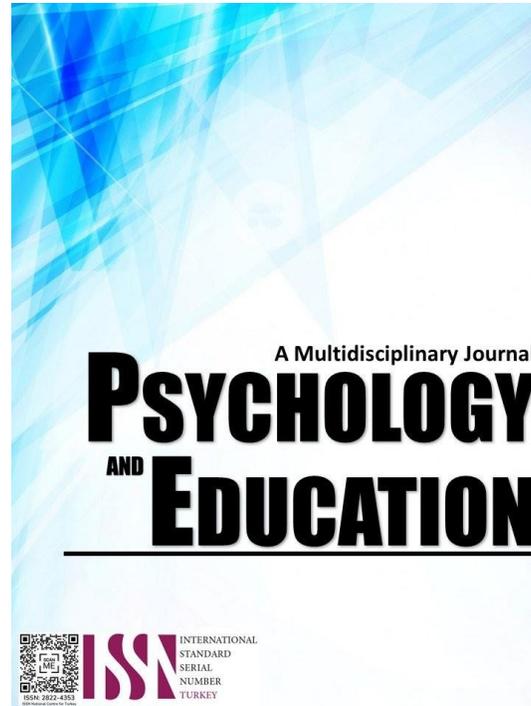


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Contemporary Issues in Curriculum Planning: A Comparative Study of Global Education Policies and Practices

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Abstract

This study examines contemporary issues in curriculum planning, particularly global education and curriculum development. The study is conducted using document analysis and data mining methods. The various education policies and programs of some countries worldwide about internationalization, employability of graduates, technological innovations, and integration of 21st-century skills were examined and analyzed. At least three (3) countries from each continent are subjected to the study. The data gathered from various nations are compared by identifying the similarities and dissimilarities. The analysis reveals that not all countries have effectively implemented internationalization policies as part of their educational system. Hence, it is noted that an efficient internationalization program requires thorough curriculum planning and enhancement. Similarly, university-industry partnerships concentrating solely on internships do not provide a comprehensive solution to the employability of graduates. Hence, the analysis showed that many countries have failed to deliver work-ready graduates due to a mismatch between the school's curriculum and the needed skills in industry. Furthermore, the current priorities in curriculum development are the need to innovate instructions using technology and the integration of 21st-century skills. Overall, the study revealed a need to synchronize curricula and education programs globally to meet the demands of the current educational landscape and labor markets.

Keywords: *global education, curriculum development, labor market outcomes, internationalization, technological innovations*

Introduction

Curriculum planning is an integral part of educational advancement. The curriculum is the heart of education wherein teachers engage themselves in the process, allowing learners to experience the fundamentals of knowledge acquisition. While several studies were conducted on contemporary issues in curriculum development, limited literature focuses on the comparative impact of internationalization, graduate employability, technological innovation, and 21st-century skills on global education. A well-balanced curriculum provides a systematic way of organizing things that leads students' educational process and helps them obtain essential knowledge, skills, and values. A well-designed curriculum aligns with the educational goals, considers the diverse learning needs, and establishes an immersive learning environment (Boon, 2020).

Curriculum administration should dwell on customizing the national curricular program to each locality's specific needs and context. This decentralized approach allows local governments and educational institutions to develop and implement projects that enhance educational quality. Curriculum development participants include government agencies, school administrators, teachers, and students. Effective curriculum management leads to smooth foundational coordination for school-wide operational tasks, and the end goal remains to improve education quality (Sabrina et al., 2022).

Additionally, with the pace of technological advancement, societal shifts, and the emergence of new areas of knowledge, curricula often become quickly outdated. Such rigidity may hold students from developing key competencies like critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and adaptability, which are necessary for success in the 21st century. Overemphasis on rote learning and memorization that stifles the development of higher-order cognitive skills such as creativity, innovation, and critical thinking. Often, this approach does not equip students with the skills needed to navigate a complex and networked world. Additionally, inadequate teacher involvement in the curriculum development process may lead to implementation challenges owing to resistance and low ownership (Sukarno & Mirza, 2018).

Curriculum planning allows educators to develop meaningful and engaging learning experiences that equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the 21st century by closely analyzing learning outcomes, strategically choosing teaching methods, and incorporating appropriate assessments. Student assessment addresses teachers' training and professional development, the nature and characteristics of textbooks and additional materials for learning, the organization and management of schools and the education system, and the distribution of adequate resources for the system to function (Seyyedrezaie & Barani, 2017). A more responsive and comprehensive approach to curriculum design is vital to address these questions meaningfully. It should focus on student-centered learning, foster critical thinking, and ensure continuous review and adjustment to meet the needs of both learners and society.

Furthermore, the study's results will help educational institutions review and synchronize curricula and education programs to meet the global demands of the current educational landscape and labor markets. It will also encourage policy-makers and school leaders to include technological innovations and integrate 21st-century skills in curriculum planning.

Research Objectives

The aim is to derive some general conclusions about the design, implementation, and diffusion of best practices and the strategies and interventions of different countries facing education challenges. In addition, this research will provide answers for the following aims:

1. Analyze the different factors that affect the curriculum development and implementation of different countries worldwide.
2. Compare the different practices and policies implemented by different countries to improve and align their curriculum in the context of global education.

Literature Review

This study is anchored to Tyler's Rationale on curriculum planning, which Ralph Tyler proposed in his book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* in 1949. The theory provides practical steps in curriculum planning, which should focus on a more progressive and developmental approach to learning. Thus, setting goals and objectives is important in the education process and curriculum development. Additionally, the current trend of global education includes internationalization, technological innovations, integration of 21st-century skills, and employability of graduates.

Internationalization of Curriculum

Education is enhanced through global perspectives, cross-cultural experiences, and international relationships. These aspects can be attained through a well-structured curriculum that leads toward internationalization. A study reveals the need for establishing a comprehensive structure for internationalization. It represents pragmatic guidance and recommendation for the academia and education providers on representing international relevance in higher education curricula, their presented curricula, and personal experience self-analysis (Fragouli, 2020). It prepares students for a dynamic and globalized world. Today's educational programs cannot ignore the impact of internationalization. A global approach, cross-cutting of cultures, and inclusion of international aspects within a syllabus enable the learners to adapt to a rapidly evolving world and become more integrated. It means using global issues, different perspectives, and international relations in teaching and learning. Using international case studies and international databases and setting up cross-cultural collaborations are ways students can increase diversity in their views and build important global skills, such as intercultural skills and critical and creative problem-solving skills within the international context.

Internationalization stresses the inclusion of global perspectives in all curriculum areas, making it possible for students to acquire the values and skills necessary to function in the world inside their classrooms. Internationalization in higher education refers to integrating various components such as services, research, and education in a quest for "globalizing." It is important to distinguish between the process of globalization and its result, even if both terms "internationalization" and "globalizing" refer to the process of becoming increasingly internationally integrated (Rezaei et al., 2018). It also necessitates advancing intercultural competencies, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in a planetary context toward introducing global issues, a variety of perspectives, and cross-border interactions in the classroom. A set of students gain knowledge and skills needed to move forward toward a global population.

Education Curriculum and Labor Market Outcomes

Interestingly, the curriculum and the labor market have both a reciprocal and unidirectional relationship. Graduates need to have the vital skills and knowledge needed for a successful career so the job market's demand can be met, and for that, curriculum planning needs to be done with this focus. A dynamic approach is of great importance so that the programs are appropriate to the industries' requirements. This means that skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability, deemed crucial by employers, are included in the curriculum. By identifying the gaps in skills through analyzing the job market and developing effective industry-academia relations, the people who develop the curriculum can equip the students with the relevant knowledge and skills that will enable them to operate efficiently in an ever-changing and highly competitive job market.

Although the employability of graduates differs from country to country, strong linkages and partnerships between universities and industries lessen their unemployment risk (Bol et al., 2019). It is also crucial for a dynamic curriculum to develop in-demand skills, such as critical thinking and problem-solving, among graduates. Better working agreements between businesses and academia are needed to identify talent shortages and map a scenario where education aligns with market demands. The link between the curriculum and the employment market affects graduates' employability and global economic competitiveness to a large degree.

Technological Innovations as part of Curriculum Development

Integrating technology into the classroom allows educators to tailor curriculum, creatively engage students through multimedia and interactive experiences, and offer alternative learning avenues. Study reveals that technology has a positive impact on educational outcomes. It is also recommended that teachers, learners, and educational institutions take advantage of these innovations (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). To do this, we should guarantee equitable technology access, provide adequate educator training, and critically consider how technology advances can be felt in how learners are incorporated into new curricula. Their products make it possible to customize the learning experience, increase the level of interest, and extend the limits of learning. Weaving technology into the curricula enables teachers to create enriched interactivity by utilizing multimedia, simulations, and virtual reality, making learning more engaging and effective.

In addition, setting technology in place helps design customized learning paths that allow learners to move quickly and explore topics that interest them. Such systems include online platforms and learning management systems that provide ample educational material, allowing learners to study at different places and times. It is necessary to ensure an equitable distribution of technology and adequate preparation for the teachers to use the tools within the work effectively. Given that these innovations are introduced with due consideration and responsibility, educators can make learning more dynamic, engaging, and effective for each student (Timotheou et al., 2023).

Integration of 21st-Century Skills in the Curriculum

The incorporation of 21st-century skills is essential in contemporary curriculum development. Critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills are fundamental for success in today's fast-paced environment. Integrating these skills into the curriculum enables educators to provide students with the essential knowledge, abilities, and dispositions required for success in higher education, the workforce, and as engaged and informed citizens. The transition from conventional, content-centered teaching to a more comprehensive method that prioritizes practical application and advanced cognitive skills is essential for equipping students to navigate the complexities and possibilities of the 21st century. According to studies, the dynamic changes in the educational systems worldwide require basic and life skills. Thus, integrating 21st-century skills into the curriculum is necessary (Pardede, 2020). Moving from traditional content-teaching pedagogy to a broader view of these competencies, educators would be better able to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be successful in further education, the labor market, and civic life. This shift is necessary to cater to the growing demand of a globalized and rapidly transforming world in which agility and higher-order thinking are becoming more important.

Methodology

Text mining and document analysis methods are used to analyze policy papers, reports, and academic literature of different education programs and policies of the identified countries. Three (3) developing countries from each continent were chosen as study subjects. An analysis was conducted to determine similarities and comparisons between policies and practices implemented. Qualitative data is then used to validate and provide context for the data mined.

Results and Discussion

This study aimed to gather data on the different issues and concerns of developing countries worldwide regarding curriculum development. We collated and analyzed the gathered data to develop more sustainable information on curriculum planning and globalized education.

Global Education

Globally, the practice of curriculum design is transitioning from a traditional knowledge-transfer model to a more student-focused one. It shifts the focus towards skills development, building skills with critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-world application, and instilling core values and subject matter. With a focus on active learning, student participation, and collaborative learning experiences, teachers aim to instill within students the knowledge, competencies, and dispositions that will enable them to successfully navigate the challenges of the 21st century. This evolution emphasizes the importance of continuous curriculum development and reform and ensures that education institutions provide sufficiently prepared students (Mitchell & Buntic, 2023).

A.1 Internationalization

Higher education must play a fundamental role in this enormous undertaking. The physical environment that we all rely on is under a great deal of stress. It may be reaching a tipping point (hopefully, it has not gone beyond the point of redemption), and higher education must take the lead by adapting its role, purposes, governance, and access policies while maintaining the core research function. As was mentioned, the world of work is transforming, and how society responds to change is currently at a high level of stress (de Wit & Deca, 2020).

Table 1. *Internationalization*

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Reasons</i>
Canada	Internationalization as part of curriculum development has been introduced in Canada for many years. However, its focus directly concerns simplified and isolated international and exchange programs. Hence, studies reveal that a thorough and deeper integration of global perspectives and experiences to the very core of the educational system will be more helpful in understanding the context of internationalization (Elnagar & Young, 2021).
Peru	Universities and Colleges in Peru have directed their perspectives to internationalize their education. Most teaching and learning modalities have started to shift from face-to-face to Hybrid Models. This setup allows students and teachers worldwide to participate and join classes without barriers created by distance and borders. Hence, many schools are also aiming for a gradual shift in curriculum to cope with the demands of the current system of education (Fernandez, S. S).
Congo	The introduction of internationalization policies to the Congolese education system has faced many challenges. These issues include a lack of clear policies and guidelines, poor organizational structures that implement internationalization programs, and the lack of financial capability to maintain such programs. These problems call for more systematic policy development on

internationalization and sustainable financial appropriation for these programs (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2024).

Although globalization has transformed access to higher education through international students, faculty exchange, and research partnerships, its effect is not homogenized, as its influence varies widely among institutions and countries. It emphasizes the need to balance global influences with national and regional settings while acknowledging the historical roots of internationalism within higher education. It also reveals the conflict between pragmatic goals like recruiting international students and idealistic goals such as promoting intercultural understanding. However, while the higher education sector increasingly intersects with the global community, the mass of research focused on higher education tends to be narrowly drawn in substance and geography, especially in the US(Tight, M. (2021).

A.2 Education Curriculum and Labor Market Outcomes

So that educational programs deliver good outcomes, they should be led in step with the dynamic needs of the labor market. This dependency must be recognized so that we can craft educational strategies that allow people to make sense of and survive in the fluid landscape of the labor market. This is to ensure that learning and professional success go hand-in-hand with harmonic synergy. However, the worldwide job market is becoming more demanding of workers regarding their skill set.

Hence, student success in school is not just about acquiring knowledge but also resilience, adaptability, and a sense of purpose, which helps them to be more competitive in their future endeavors. Effective educational institutions are widely believed to be those with high graduate rates (Han et al., 2022)

Table 2. *Education Curriculum and Labor Market Outcomes*

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Reasons</i>
Mexico	The performance of graduates from universities and colleges when joining the labor force is considered a strong indicator of schools' commitment to producing work-ready students. However, many graduates cannot cope with the attributes that industries and companies need after hiring. With this, a significant recommendation based on studies is to strengthen collaboration between universities and industries to address the gaps in the skills of newly hired employees (Cardenas et al., 2019)
Peru	Universities and HEIs in Peru are shifting to a more progressive and developmental approach to education. These academic institutions are beginning to embrace modernizations, new entrepreneurial approaches, and future-ready curricula. Peruvian HEIs continue to make innovations despite limitations brought by politics and economic disparity. Thus, systemic problems with leadership and budget hinder these improvements and limit educational development even in universities with high potential (Rojas, 2021).
Spain	Job mismatch between graduates' profiles and labor market demands for workers has been an issue in many developing countries. The curriculum leading to internship and on-the-job training has been polished to meet the standards provided by industries and companies. In Spain, an intensified study was conducted to examine the impact of internships on the employability of graduates. The study reveals that internships did not adequately help graduates in preparing them for real-life work. It was noted that necessary skills about the student's specialization must be embedded in the curriculum and be slowly integrated along the education process (Dos Santos et al., 2023).

Historically, competitive ability was examined under highly controlled laboratory conditions. This research outlines new methods for quantitatively measuring competitiveness using online information-gathering instruments. Not only are these new procedures faster and cheaper, but they also eliminate the need for testing to be done on-site. The study found competition to be one of the key criteria for educational success, career paths, and earnings. It also provides further insight into gender differences in competition, potentially accounting for gender gaps in school and the professional world. This novel approach provides the way for further investigations into competitiveness's core determinants and consequences (Buser et al., 2024).

Curriculum Trends and Development

In the curriculum design phase, more attention should be paid to the importance of curriculum development, specifically to the need for a nuanced approach that accepts the interplay between national policies, local realities, and teachers' autonomy. It underlines trust and support in education and joint efforts to produce curriculum and promotes balanced regulation. The authors highlight the need for flexibility, mobilization, and a balance between direction and autonomy to create good curricula. They do this from lessons learned across Europe (Alvunger et al., 2021).

B.1 Technological Innovation

The claims highlight the critical role of multiple factors in successfully transforming practice in education. Primarily, practical innovation should abide by transformation requirements, that is, mastery of curriculum design. Secondly, the central government requires a comprehensive educational policy that lays the foundation and fosters transition at the school level. Thirdly, clear conceptual understanding and innovative implementation are key to successfully executing educational innovations.

In addition, as part of education transformation, the curriculum needs to be purposely designed based on available resources, considering the impact of digitalization on ensuring continuity of learning. Finally, the comments acknowledge the limitations of any data provided and submit the request for feedback from readers to improve (Lubis et al., 2022).

Table 3. *Technological Innovations*

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Reasons</i>
Indonesia	Around the globe, the role of the government is moving towards a low-risk, content-rich system. It was vital for achieving more complex learning goals and engaging in active pedagogy. An assessment rubric helps to delineate three levels of commitment, providing a framework for assessing initiatives to change educational plans. For a prescription to educational innovators, the need for an alignment of institutional strategies with discipline expertise and skill and language acquisition as a pre-condition of implementation(Lubis et al., 2022)
Germany	After the advent of COVID-19, schools are slowly shifting to different learning modalities in education. The rapid pivot to digital learning forced by the COVID-19 pandemic revealed several critical factors needed for success -- strong school leadership, reliable technology, and teacher training on digital technologies. Some issues remain even if this movement has speeded up the digitalization process. First, addressing equality for all students, especially those from disadvantaged homes, is important. Addressing the digital divide will require a lot more: a comprehensive, multi-layered approach. This means expanding access to the internet, promoting environmentally responsible use of technology, and considering the broader socio-economic landscape of public education (Delcker & Ifenthaler, 2021).
Brazil	A significant sign of the gulf between academia and the jobs market is the precarious connection between universities and businesses. To remedy this, universities must increase their partnerships with industry, work closely with companies to understand and meet their needs and include core competencies in entrepreneurship and tech innovation in the curriculum. These changes allow colleges to better equip their students with helpful proficiency in both digital and non-digital realms for the changing conversation economy (Goulart et al., 2022).

Whether through embracing new technology, a correspondence with industry needs, or an emphasis on student engagement and critical thought, all three statements emphasize the need for educational institutions to be attuned to the evolving needs of the demographic they serve. This innovation will motivate students to learn independently and develop their knowledge, corresponding to how students' wants are changing. This must happen with the role of institutions, adapting their lessons and the way teachers teach them, and governments must guarantee they have the proper facilities to enable these new learning methods. (Grimus, 2020).

B.2 Integration of 21st-Century Skills

This statement emphasizes the importance of a multi-disciplinary framework to incorporate talents required for the 21st century. This allows them to practice, receive feedback, and engage in formative assessment by integrating them across multiple topic areas. This form of instruction needs a curriculum that is well organized and an active participation by students using the principles of constructivist learning. Social constructivism, a theory, is defined as knowledge co-constructed and co-produced through interaction and cooperation, and one of the most important factors in developing these essential competencies. (González-Salamanca et I., 2020).

Table 4. *Integration of 21st-Century Skills*

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Reasons</i>
Turkey	The Turkish Ministry of Education aims to define the essential competencies needed for a "21st-century individual" by modeling student and teacher qualifications. This includes several stakeholders working together in validated workshops. The study highlights how critical the learning environment is to skill acquisition. It encourages activity-centered learning environments incorporating modern technologies like augmented reality and simulations. Educators are critical to this and require a deep grounding in 21st-century competencies (Agaoglu & Demir, 2020).
Philippines	Aside from being globally competitive, introducing global perspectives in the Philippine educational system is important. It is essential to provide trainers with knowledge and resources to teach about world issues, and it is necessary for all students to have equal access to technology. A curriculum that mirrors 21st-century competencies and global trends that highlights the need for global Education: a complete approach involving continuous assistance for teachers and inclusive technology, as well as an agile curriculum to produce internationally competitive Filipino learners.(Diano et al., 2023)
Kenya	Educators know that critical thinking skills cannot be taught in a vacuum but should be embedded in the questions during interaction. Engage students in critical thinking with actual assignments such as community initiatives, creative pursuits, and environmental solutions, and assess students' critical thinking skills with projects, presentations, and argumentation. So, to try to provide teachers with so that they will know the information, skills, and resources to teach critical thinking on every topic and to promote inquiry and collaboration between teachers to share the information with students and the whole effect of community in fostering and developing critical thinking. By incorporating critical thinking in the curricula and offering a supportive learning environment, schools can help students become autonomous, introspective, and responsible citizens. (Ongesa, 2020).

In Turkey, the Ministry of Education underscores the importance of stakeholders and the learning environment in the developmental process of essential competencies. They also promote activity-based learning and the use of technology tools. Global education programs are focused on providing teachers with the knowledge, skills, and resources to address global challenges better, ensuring all students have equitable access to technology, and linking the curriculum to 21st-century competencies. Critical thinking is essential in any environment.

To this end, it is important to guide students through the cognitive process, utilize real-world and inquiry-based tasks, and promote collaboration. Teacher training, a helpful learning environment, and curricular integration are essential to produce an independent and accountable citizenry. To facilitate problem-solving and alleviate social deficits, there is a need to take the path of educational models that strive to accompany the development of complex reasoning abilities and auto-systemic thought. However, skills frameworks for

the 21st century are designed in such a way that they sufficiently prepare individuals for the future with integrative elements of the paradigm of Education 4.0 (González-Pérez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2022).

Distinct Points

The sub-variable under global education and curriculum development has one distinct point: (1) teacher training.

Teacher Training

These remarks shine a light on the importance of the role that teacher competency has in the successful implementation of 21st-century skills practices. Not only can competent teachers teach these abilities well, but also they can serve as role models by demonstrating their practices in the workplace. To truly realize the promise of 21st-century skills and education, we need a strategy that is far more inclusive and connected to the real world. This method needs to be led by very motivated and qualified professionals. The assertions highlight the necessity of more study on 21st-century skills in teachers. It should be a more extensive research study to examine the multiple determinants of teacher adoption and create frameworks that successfully develop 21st-century skills culture within educational establishments (Sulaiman & Ismail, 2020).

Table 5. *Teacher Training*

Countries	Reasons
Cambodia	Importance of Teacher Training Teacher training is an essential part of curriculum development for implementing ESP courses in higher education in Cambodia (page no. 201). The study highlights the importance of collaboration and joint decision-making among all parties involved in academia, administration, and industry partners through documents and stakeholder interviews. This approach investigates administrative and institutional barriers to designing and implementing context-relevant ESP curricula (Petraki & Khat, 2020).
Spain	However, since we are in the digital age with data impacting our society widely, teaching practices must also change. To equip children for the digital age, teachers must understand a great deal about technology. To achieve this, teachers must continue to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge to integrate technology into their lessons quickly. Digital tools and pedagogical methods enable teachers to make learning more enjoyable, personalized, and effective for their students. This will ensure they thrive in an increasingly globalized world (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022).
Kenya	An article in Kenya concluded that delivering a competency-based curriculum requires pedagogical changes. Teacher training positively and significantly impacted the implementation of CBC in Kericho County, Kenya, but some areas need improvement. The study recommends mandatory Early Childhood Development (ECD) training for instructors, the presence of resource persons in the classroom, and longer overall training. It also underscores the need for CBC-compliant and adequately trained teachers to expedite successful implementation. These results highlight the importance of ongoing training for curricular changes and align with Dewey's (1938) approach to continuous and interactive learning. This study suggests improvements in teacher preparation approaches to ensure quality CBC delivery (Ngeno, 2023).

Teachers play an essential part in the learning process. People think that teaching is one of the most honorable jobs you can have. Nevertheless, being a teacher comes with many duties, so you need to have the qualities of a great teacher. One of the traits is having the proper credentials and teaching skills. Students are likelier to do well in school if their teachers have more skills and credentials. As a result, a teacher with more skills can teach students more (Lee, S. W., & Lee, E. A., 2020).

The figure shows how curriculum alignment with current trends in global education will address issues related to the employability of graduates and the development of future-ready curricula.

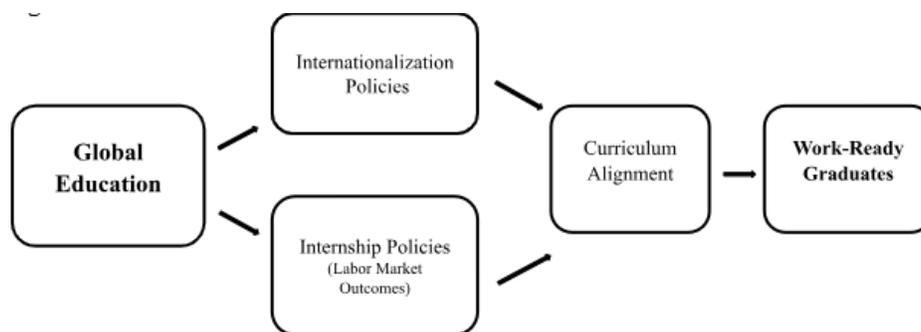


Figure 1

The study's findings reveal critical aspects of globalization and the current gap in higher education, especially internationalization. Some educational policies emphasize exchange programs, while others harness technology to engage with the global community and highlight the need for curricular adaptation. Given the poor infrastructure of some countries, internationalization does not come without a serious amount of policy, organization, and financing to support its successful development. Nevertheless, a significant gap exists between workforce needs and academic education. The gap, defined as colleges' failure to give graduates skills that matter to the business, is supported by global studies wherein some countries face financial constraints and political pressure in implementing new curricula. It is recommended that industries and universities work together to close this gap. These partnerships should be centered on

aligning curricula to the needs of the industry and providing opportunities for internships. Meanwhile, curricula should include job-specific abilities throughout the program to sufficiently prepare graduates for lucrative professions.

Conclusions

The analysis reveals that not all countries have effectively implemented internationalization policies as part of their educational system. Hence, internationalization strategies vary significantly; some countries focus on exchange programs, while others center the narrative on technological advancements and internship policies. Thus, an efficient internationalization program requires thorough curriculum planning and enhancement to meet the demand of global education, especially on the employability of graduates. The challenge is how good university-industry partnerships deliver the goods for their students and graduates to be work-ready. Furthermore, the current priorities in curriculum development are the need to innovate instructions using technology and the integration of 21st-century skills.

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