

## ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR OF MONGOLIA

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### ABSTRACT

Mongolia's education sector has undergone major changes in the 20th century. As of 2018 there were 140 thousand students acquiring higher education in over 96 institutes in Mongolia. This study focuses on qualitative inquiry aims at identifying the main issues in the higher education sector from academic leaders of Mongolia. In this study, three open-ended questions were distributed among 97 academic leaders in 5 universities. More than 125 completed questionnaires were collected. Through a quantitative content analysis approach, the records were categorized using NVivo software. This resulted in the emergence of 13 categories. The top four categories with maximum frequencies of records were focused for further evaluation by SPSS. In addition, the comparison of the issues in Mongolia and its segments revealed that some of the issues were common in all the segments.

**Key Words:** High education, academic leader, issues, Mongolia

### INTRODUCTION

It's early yet higher education was primarily provided by the religious and royal institutions of Mongolian history. After the victory of 1921 People's Revolution was increased recognition of the need for educated people for the development of the country (Baasanjav, 2003). As a result, the Mongolian higher education sector was modernized and made more accessible to the general public (Baasanjav, 2003). It was strongly influenced by the former Soviet Union and in which two educational paths were stipulated: the academic and the vocational. Formal higher education was exclusive and selective.

In the 21st century, universities all around the world are facing new challenges. The shift from the elite higher education paradigm to mass higher education (Daniel, 1993; Ramsden, 1998), internationalization and globalization (De Wit, 2011; Enders, 2004; Karim & Maarof, 2012), wide utilization of information technology (Scott, 2012; Stensaker, 2007), and the new fundraising approaches in higher education (Keener, 2002; Shin, 2009; Teixeira, 2013) deem to be a few of the main sources of the change forces for the newly emerged challenges.

The issues of higher education, to a considerable degree, do have an undue influence over university functions, operations, inputs, outcomes, and processes (Baasanjav, 2003). In this case, identifying the main issues and problems in higher education has attracted the attention of

scholars and practitioners of education and social science., numerous researchers have focused on probing higher education issues as well as proposing recommendations to shatter these impeding factors (Harbour, 2003; Malm, 2008; Shin, 2015).

Given the fact that the conducted studies in Mongolia context did extend the literature noticeably and are considered as a great contribution to the knowledge generation, still, there is lack of research about Mongolia higher education issues and challenges. Namely, work priorities which demonstrate the routine activities and practices in universities, as well as the values with their great impact on the daily practices (Lazaridou, 2007), need to be focused and explored. More specifically, it aimed at identifying the major areas of focus through ranking the issues in Mongolia higher education and its segments to provide a more precise picture of the current situation in higher education industry in Mongolia for the new policy-making purposes. Remarkably, through this research, a descriptive comparison will be made to compare the viewpoints of academic leaders in Mongolia higher education and its segments in terms of priorities, values, and challenges to provide a more meaningful picture of the current situation in Mongolia higher education. This comparison will be beneficial in making informed decisions and policies toward promoting Mongolia higher education.

## **METHOD**

### **Data Collection**

In this study, deals with descriptive data collected through the distribution of a survey containing three open-ended questions through a qualitative inquiry. The study focused on, a quantitative content analysis (Schreier, 2014; Newby, 2014) and a descriptive statistics approach were adopted (Field, 2013) to show a quantitative representation of what respondents wanted to communicate in terms of the main issues in higher education of Mongolia. That is important which quantitative content analysis has been described as a tool to explore communication with the implication being that the greater the frequency of event of a word or phrase, the more important that element is from the viewpoint (Newby, 2014) of the connection.

To collect the data, the list of private and public universities in the website of Mongolia Ministry of higher education was considered and 5 universities were selected randomly. After, a database of 96 e-addresses of the potential respondents was created. Next step, using an e-data collection platform, the following three open-ended questions were distributed among the potential respondents.

1. What are the values that you consider important in doing your work effectively? (You can mention up to 5 values)
2. What are the priorities for doing the work in your current role? (You can mention up to 5 priorities)
3. What are the point issues that you face in doing the work in your current role? (You can mention up to 5 issues)

According to the total respondent, a person of, 128, 127, 127 and 126 respondent answered question 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively. The study, more than 80% of the professors without current leadership role have held leadership roles as their previous immediate role in their respective institutions, indicating the relevance and importance of their opinions in terms of higher education in Mongolia context. Also, the relevant proposed ethical principles (Newby, 2014). in conducting qualitative inquiries. The research results were followed throughout the entire steps to minimize the level of inaccuracy and increase the level of dependability also, the reliability of the findings.

**Data analyze**

This collected data were exported for data purification and cleaning by Microsoft Excel. For this purpose, spelling errors were identified and corrected and the exactly phrased statements were evaluated. This study, necessary words were capitalized and shortenings were also corrected. Also, because a few of the respondents had answered the questions in Mongolian, one professional translator cooperated with the research team to translate these words and phrases into English in the **Table 1**. Next step, the answers were evaluated for their managerial and semantically relevancy. This procedure yielded to identify and eliminate unimportant records from the data.

**Table 1. Selected Errors and Corrections data of Issues in higher education in Mongolia.**

Error	Correction
Accreditated	Accredited
Amanah	Trust
Appt	Appointment
Commadarie	Camaraderie
critiem	Criticism
Ibadah	Worship
incooperative	Uncooperative

**RESULTS**

**Important sectors**

Concerning, the entire higher education sector, the results showed that the top important sectors in Mongolia higher education sector were exactly analogous to the top sectors identified within the context of Mongolia public and comprehensive higher education sector. This study focusing on the public, the results revealed that research purpose, Standards; Teaching was the top common priorities identified within the context of Mongolia public and comprehensive higher education and public higher education issues. Regarding Mongolian private university focused issues in higher education. It was yielded that Monitoring such as Teaching, Staff, Performing, and Standards. It was the top priorities of academic leaders in this context. In this purpose, the

study was the common top priorities from the viewpoints of the academic leaders in all the sectors of the higher education sector of Mongolia.

**Importance of Values**

The results of this descriptive this study analysis was very great about work values. The main resulting was that the category of Integrity and Honesty had the maximum frequency in Mongolia higher education sector. This studying was and in alignment with the findings of the study conducted by (Ghasemy, 2016) in which the item it had been identified as important behavior rated by the academics researchers. Also, three categories including Integrity and Honesty; Truthfulness, Sincerity; and Hard-Working, also Persistence were common in all the contexts.

The improvement was only among the top values in the context of Mongolia public higher education issues, and a few other values such as creativity-innovation, punctuality-timeliness, also discipline were only among the top values in the context of Mongolia private Focused higher education sector.

**Problems of Higher Education of Mongolia**

This study focusing on Mongolian higher education problems, inefficiencies, and shortages related to issues such as finance, management, budgeting, purpose were common problems in the entire higher education sectors in the Table 2. Also, the problem related to Workload and Assignments was common in the entire higher education sector, public and comprehensive higher education also, public higher education sector. In addition, problems related to the lack of Passion, Commitment, and Loyalty also providing support were only among the top problems in the context of Mongolia public higher education sector in the Table 2.

**Table 2. Top Five Work Challenges in Malaysian HE and Its Sectors.**

Rank	Malaysian HE system (N = 95)	Frequency
1	Management	36
2	Finance, Budgeting	32
3	Standards	16
4	Workload and Assignments	11

**CONCLUSION**

In this study, some similarities and differences in terms of issues were identified among Mongolian higher education sector and its sectors. These issues, mostly, emphasized the fact that in university leadership, the context matters and to lead universities effectively, the issues must be addressed exactly. Also, some similarities were also identified between Mongolian higher education and the higher education sector in other countries. To provide a better picture of Mongolian higher education issues from the perspective of the participated academic leaders, the

word cloud of 13 categories of priorities, values, problems, and solutions have been illustrated. Those categories were focused from a different angle also. [In reality](#), they were evaluated from a thematic perspective to identify the categories containing similar concepts. That, as the unique contribution of this study in comparison with similar studies, suggested the consideration of these issues by the Mongolian higher education policymakers in developing and updating professional development programs and making new policies to secure a quality provision of higher education in Mongolian universities.

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