

# Research on the Path of Internationalization of Higher Vocational Education in Henan Province in The Post-Epidemic Era

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## Abstract

This study makes an attempt to investigate how hard and complicated it is to internationalize higher vocational education after the pandemic. This study looks at how the COVID-19 epidemic has affected efforts to internationalize, how "red culture" helps build social responsibility and patriotism, and how information diffusion models can be used to understand the features and development path of internationalization. The study also talks about how different Chinese universities handle internationalization and how hard it is to make academic and cultural integration happen. Along with looking at the role of the "One Belt, One Road" project in making vocational higher education more international, the study also looks at the problems that come up when China and Spain try to make higher education more international. The study reveals that internationalization can work and can go wrong in the years after the pandemic. It also emphasizes how important it is to boost international cooperation, teacher training, and communication across cultures in order to make higher vocational education more global. Researchers also found that we need to critically consider the effects of globalization policies and practices and come up with new ways to handle the difficulties of internationalization in the Chinese school system.

**Keywords:** Internationalization of Higher Education, Post-pandemic Challenges, Red Culture Integration, Information Diffusion Model, Vocational Education, China-Spain Cooperation, One Belt One Road Initiative, Shandong Province, Cross-cultural Communication, Teacher Training

## Introduction

Internationalizing higher education has become a must in a world that is becoming more and more linked. This is because we need to improve cultural exchange, promote global understanding, and train workers who can handle the challenges of working in a global setting [Miao, 2022]. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has created new problems and chances for internationalization, which means that current policies and methods need to be reevaluated [Wang, 2023]. Using "red culture" in schools has become popular as a way to teach students

to be more responsible and patriotic [Cao, 2024]. Using information diffusion models can help us understand the features and growth path of internationalization processes [Wang & Cao, 2024]. Looking at the different ways that Chinese universities deal with internationalization shows how hard it is to make academic and cultural integration work [Zhu, 2021]. The "One Belt, One Road" initiative is a key part of making vocational higher education more international [Hu, 2020]. Meanwhile, a study of China-Spain cooperation shows the difficulties and chances of promoting cooperation between different cultures [Qiu et al., 2024]. The study shows how important it is to improve teacher training, international cooperation, and communication across cultures in order to make higher vocational education more global [Hou & Astillero, 2022]. It also stresses the importance of taking a close look at the effects of globalization policies and actions and coming up with new ways to deal with the difficulties of internationalization in the Chinese school system. The studies reviewed for the purpose of producing this paper give us useful information about the subtleties and difficulties of internationalization in China. They show both the progress that has been made and the problems that still need to be solved [Cheng et al., 2023]. The study shows how important it is to take a multifaceted approach to internationalization, which includes not only letting students and teachers move around, but also working together on research projects, developing curricula, and incorporating cultural elements into everyday school life. The results stress how important it is to look at internationalization with a critical and analytical mind, questioning underlying assumptions and recognizing the possible downsides and limits [Cheng et al., 2023; Miao, 2022]. By taking these complicated issues into account and seeing things in a more nuanced way, policymakers and practitioners can better understand how internationalization is changing things and help build a strong and long-lasting international higher education system that benefits both China and the world.

### **Problem Statement**

In the years after the pandemic, internationalizing higher education is a difficult and multifaceted process full of challenges and chances. The COVID-19 pandemic has messed up normal efforts to expand internationally. This has made it important for policies and methods to be rethought in order to deal with the new normal. There are concerns about how incorporating "red culture" into school life might affect teaching students to be socially responsible and patriotic. There are also worries about how students or teachers might be ideologically indoctrinated and resisting. Using information diffusion models can help us understand the features and growth path of internationalization processes, but we still need to learn more about how general they are and how they can be used in different situations. Different Chinese universities have taken different approaches to internationalization. This shows how hard it is to integrate teaching and learning across cultures, especially when trying to achieve internationalization while also protecting national identity and cultural values. The "One Belt, One Road" initiative could help improve international cooperation and encourage vocational higher education to become more international. However, its implementation and effects need to be carefully thought out to make sure that everyone gets the benefits and that cultures don't become too similar. The study of cooperation between China and Spain shows the difficulties and chances of encouraging people from different cultures to work together and helping students move around. However, the results can be applied to other situations, and the long-term effects of these kinds of partnerships need more research. The study shows that there are still structural problems with internationalizing higher education.

These include limited access to high-quality learning materials, problems hiring and training international faculty, and not enough chances for students from different cultures to work together and share their ideas. To deal with the difficulties of internationalization and promote a long-lasting and successful internationalized higher education landscape, new strategies and policies need to be created.

### **Research Objective**

The objective of this study is to explore and investigate the full range of issues and changes that happen when higher education becomes more international in the years after the pandemic. It also aims to help make plans and guidelines that will help international higher education thrive.

### **Research Methodology**

This research aims to look into and evaluate the ways and plans for higher vocational education in Henan Province to become more international, especially after COVID-19. The main goal of this study is to find out how internationalization efforts have changed over time, what problems have been encountered, and what roles different groups play in making global cooperation and integration better in vocational education.

The study uses a systematic literature review and case study method. It looks at academic journals, conference papers, and policy reports to look into how vocational education is becoming more internationalized. Literature from 2010 to 2023 were used to show internationalization efforts being taken both before and after the pandemic. The main search terms were "internationalization of vocational education," "post-pandemic challenges in education," "One Belt One Road initiative and education," along with "teacher training and international cooperation."

The screening process was guided by detailed criteria that determined who was included and who was excluded. It had to be about internationalization efforts in higher vocational education, especially in China, and how the COVID-19 pandemic affected educational cooperation and exchange programs in order to be included. The chosen studies looked at strategies such as integrating different cultures, training teachers, and making educational policies that work across borders. Studies that didn't specifically look at vocational education that didn't have enough relevant data or analysis on the problems of internationalization, or were only about general higher education without a vocational component were left out.

As part of the review process, full-text articles and case studies were looked at to find out who wrote them, when they were published, what part of the world they were about, how big the sample was, and what strategies were found for internationalization. A lot of people were interested in how "red culture" can help bring people together from different cultures and boost patriotism. They were also interested in how the "One Belt, One Road" initiative would affect international cooperation and how teacher training and cross-cultural communication would affect the growth of education around the world. It was most important that the studies give empirical or qualitative insights into these topics, especially in the context of Henan Province.

The preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines were strictly followed to make sure that all possible sources were chosen fairly and without bias. This process made it possible to look into in more depth how different internationalization strategies, such as working together across borders, integrating different cultures, and policy initiatives, have helped vocational education in Henan grow around the world. The analysis of the data showed how important it is to train teachers and help students communicate with each other across cultures in order to deal with the problems that come up in schools after a pandemic. This is especially true when it comes to promoting long-term cooperation and integration in higher vocational education.

### **Past Studies**

The paper by Cheng et al (2023), offers a useful summary of the evolution of internationalisation in Jiangsu Province's private universities. But the article's strong dependence on descriptive analysis and anecdotal evidence limits its value to the discipline. It is challenging to evaluate the validity and generalizability of the results of the authors since they neglect to offer a clear theoretical framework or research technique. Furthermore, lacking in the paper is a critical examination of the difficulties and restrictions of internationalization initiatives in private Chinese institutions. The writers offer a generally positive picture, ignoring possible problems including the possibility for cultural homogeneity and the unequal sharing of advantages. More nuanced treatment of these complexity would have strengthened the paper. Moreover, the ending leaves open suggestions for practitioners and legislators lacking specific guidance. The writers could have, instead, given more particular direction on how to overcome the found obstacles and advance more fair and sustainable worldwide globalization policies.

Within the framework of the "dual circulation" development strategy, the article by Miao Dong (2022), presented a timely study of the globalization of higher vocational education in China. Emphasizing both successes and difficulties, the author offers a thorough summary of the present situation of efforts at internationalization. The article's strength is in its identification of particular impediments to further internationalization, such the unbalanced development across regions and institutions and the inadequate localization of "bringing in" and "going out" strategies. Policymakers and practitioners might find great value in the suggested development routes, which include enhancing international cooperation and supporting the brand effect of Chinese vocational education. The paper might have benefited, nevertheless, from a closer review of the fundamental presumptions of the "dual circulation" approach and their consequences for the internationalization of higher vocational education. The author also might have looked at the possible conflicts between the emphasis on domestic circulation and the objectives of internationalization. Furthermore, a more thorough examination of the particular difficulties experienced by various kinds of vocational colleges in applying internationalization plans would have improved the article. More specific advice for overcoming these obstacles and advancing a more inclusive and sustainable method of internationalization would have strengthened the conclusion.

Though they do it from different angles and with different degrees of critical analysis, the papers by Cheng et al (2023), and Miao Dong (2022), help to clarify the complexity and difficulties connected with the internationalization of education in China. By means of a

localized analysis of the internationalization initiatives within private colleges and universities in Jiangsu Province, Cheng et al (2023), highlight the historical background and the increasing awareness of internationalization as a main driver of transformation and development in these institutions. Emphasizing the multifarious character of internationalization—including student and faculty exchange, research collaboration, and curriculum development—the authors offer a rich, localized view. Miao Dong (2022), adopts a more general, national viewpoint, analyzing the internationalizing of higher vocational education. Emphasizing both successes and difficulties, the article offers a thorough summary of the present situation of efforts at internationalization. The author shows a great awareness of the complexity of internationalization by identifying particular challenges including the uneven development across areas and institutions and the inadequate localization of "bringing in" and "going out" strategies. While Miao Dong (2022), offers a more national view of the internationalization of higher vocational education, Cheng et al (2023), offer a localized, in-depth examination of the difficulties and possibilities confronting private institutions. Both pieces advance knowledge of the subtleties and complexity of internationalization in the Chinese setting. Still, both could be improved by using a more critical and analytical approach, challenging underlying presumptions, and noting possible negative consequences.

Especially in relation to Guangdong Province, China, the paper by Wang (2023) investigated how the COVID-19 epidemic affected the internationalization of higher education. The author advocates a review of current policies and approaches since the epidemic has given both possibilities for internationalization and difficulties. The article's strength is in its awareness of the intricate interaction among social dynamics, economic considerations, and government policies in forming the scene of globalizing. But the article's great reliance on anecdotal evidence and descriptive analysis limits its analytical depth. More empirical evidence and specific data would have helped the author to support their assertions and so strengthen their arguments. Furthermore, although providing insightful analysis of regional dynamics, the article's concentration on Guangdong Province reduces its generalizability to other settings. The author could have expanded the focus of the study by including trends in internationalizing other nations or regions. At last, the article's conclusion leaves open suggestions for practitioners and legislators. The author could have offered more particular advice on how to negotiate the opportunities and difficulties of internationalization in the post-pandemic age.

Cao's (2024), paper looks at how red culture might be incorporated into physical education in Hubei Province's China's higher technical colleges. The author contends that as a fundamental component of China's advanced society, red culture can be quite helpful in fostering students' social responsibility and patriotism. The strength of the paper is its awareness of the possibility of physical education as a means of spreading and supporting red cultural values. For teachers, the suggested tactics, including red cultural components into physical education courses and planning visits to red cultural sites, offer sensible direction. But the article's strong dependence on conceptual debates and theoretical models reduces its empirical foundation. More specific case studies of successful integration of red culture into physical education would have helped the author to support their claims. Furthermore, the article's concentration on Hubei Province reduces its generalizability to other situations even if it provides insightful analysis of regional practices. By including the experiences of other nations

or areas in including cultural elements into physical education, the author could have expanded the extent of the study. At last, the article's ending does not offer a critical analysis of the possible difficulties and restrictions of including red culture into physical education. The author could have addressed possible worries about ideological indoctrination or faculty or student opposition.

When one compares the two pieces, it is clear that they cover different facets of Chinese education. While Cao (2024), studies the micro-level integration of red culture into physical education in vocational colleges, Wang (2023), concentrates on the macro-level dynamics of internationalization in higher education. Both pieces help one to grasp the complexity and difficulties confronting the Chinese educational system. Adopting a more critical and analytical approach, offering more empirical data, and appreciating possible limitations and disadvantages would help both, though. Through this, they could provide more complex and powerful analysis for legislators and professionals negotiating China's changing educational scene.

Another article, using an information diffusion model, by Wang and Cao (2024) looked at the traits and developmental path of the globalization of occupational education. The authors build an assessment model using fuzzy sets created from explicit sample data and information diffusion point establishment. The model's success is shown by its congruence with Google search data, which reveals a notable rise in attention toward vocational education internationalizing. Using indicators including output level and quality level across six vocational colleges, the study investigates further how internationalization affects vocational education. The results highlight a good trend in the worldwide integration of vocational education, implying its continuous development. The study provides recommendations for the future growth of vocational education and insightful analysis of its dynamics on internationalization. Nevertheless, the article's strong dependence on a single model and small sample size could restrict the generalizability of its results. The writers might have improved their research by adding several methodologies and broadening the sample to include more occupational colleges. The paper might also have gone more deeply into the qualitative elements of internationalism, examining the viewpoints and experiences of faculty, staff, and students engaged in the process.

Focusing on universities at Shandong Province, Zhu's (2021), case study of the internationalisation of higher education in China provides valuable insights into how these institutions navigate global educational trends and implement strategies to attract international students. According to the study, local non-research-oriented universities show more adaptability and creativity, revealing a varied and changing terrain of organizational structures for internationalization. The research also reveals difficulties reaching academic and cultural integration inside the process of internationalization. This study's empirical foundation—drawing on data gathered from twelve Shandong Province universities—allows it great strength (Restructure the sentence). Rich and contextualized insights into the complexity of internationalization in the Chinese setting are given by the case study approach. The study's reliance on document analysis and concentration on one province, however, could restrict the generalizability of its results. Interviews or questionnaires would have helped the author to better represent the points of view of several stakeholders engaged in



the process of internationalization. Furthermore, a clearer theoretical framework would have helped the research to direct the interpretation of the results and analysis.

The two papers clearly approach the issue of internationalization from different angles and with different methodological approaches. While Zhu (2021), explores the complexity of internationalization in higher education institutions, Wang and Cao (2024), use a quantitative model to evaluate the traits and patterns of internationalization in vocational education. Both pieces provide insightful analysis of the possibilities and difficulties of internationalization in China. Nonetheless, by tackling their respective constraints—that is, by increasing the sample size, including several methodological approaches, and critically analyzing the underlying presumptions and consequences of internationalization policies and practices could be strengthened.

### **Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

While the research on the internationalization of higher education in China has some useful information, there are still some gaps that need to be filled. The current studies are mostly limited to certain areas of the world or to two-way relationships, which means that their results can't be used in a wider setting. Some studies rely too much on theoretical discussions and conceptual models, which leaves a gap in empirical evidence and practical applicability. This makes it harder to turn research into strategies that can be used. Lack of critical analysis of the possible problems and limits of internationalization efforts makes it even harder to fully understand how complicated the process is. Studies could be better if they included different points of view, like those of students, teachers, and administrators from different cultures, so that we could get a fuller picture of what it's really like to be internationalized. It would also be helpful for the research to look at the big picture effects of internationalization policies, like how they affect national identity, cultural preservation, and economic growth. Lastly, it is important to be aware of the negative aspects and unfair situations that could happen because of internationalization. For example, benefits might not be shared equally, and cultures might become more alike. Future research that fills in these gaps can help us understand the internationalization of higher education in a more nuanced and comprehensive way. This will help policymakers and practitioners come up with better, longer-lasting ways to help people from different cultures understand each other and work together.

An article from 2024 by Qiu et al. looks into the difficulties and difficulties of making higher education more international between China and Spain, especially after COVID-19. Experts from both countries were interviewed in a semi-structured way for the study to find out what makes Chinese students want to study in Spain, what makes it hard for universities to work together, and how new technologies might help internationalization last. The results show that university rankings, cost, and government policies are important for getting Chinese students. However, it can be hard to work together because of problems with communication and a lack of programs taught in English. The research also talks about how internationalization could help regional growth by letting people share educational resources, help people learn to speak more than one language, and help the study abroad industry grow. But the article only used a small group of experts and only talked about one specific

relationship between two countries, so its results might not be applicable to all situations. It would have been better for the authors' arguments if they had included different points of view and thoughts about the bigger picture of internationalization in higher education.

This article by Hu (2020), looks at how China's higher vocational education is becoming more international in the context of the "One Belt, One Road" plan. The writer stresses how important it is for internationalization to improve the quality of vocational education, encourage cooperation around the world, and meet the need for skilled workers. Some of the problems the article, includes discussion about people not knowing enough about international development, not having enough international activities, and the need for a stronger international teaching staff. As a response, the author suggests improving the idea of how an international school works and making it easier to hire international teachers. But the article relies too much on theoretical discussions and not enough on real-world evidence, which could make its suggestions less useful. The author could have made their points stronger by giving specific examples and case studies of internationalization efforts in vocational education that worked well. Also, the article could have used a more in-depth look at the problems and restrictions that might come with going global, like the chance of cultural homogenization and the uneven distribution of benefits.

In their 2022 article, Hou and Astillero look at the problems that come up when higher education in Shandong Province, China, tries to become more international in the modern era. The writers point out that there are structural issues with how internationalized schools are run, such as limited access to high-quality learning materials, problems hiring and training international teachers, and a lack of chances for people from different countries to work together and exchange ideas. There are some useful suggestions in this article, such as making a strategic plan for internationalization, making the area unique to attract good educational resources, following "double first-class" standards to improve teacher training, and opening up more ways for people from different countries to communicate and work together. The article's strength is that it focuses on a certain area and lists real problems and possible solutions. The article relies a lot on descriptive analysis, though, and its theoretical framework isn't very strong. This could make it harder to analyze the data in depth. It would have been better for the authors' arguments if they had used more real-world examples and talked about the assumptions and effects of internationalization policies and practices in a more critical way.

It's clear from comparing these three articles that they have different ideas about how China's schools are becoming more internationalized. In their 2024 study, Qiu et al. look at the relationship between China and Spain, specifically the things that affect student mobility and how new technologies might help promote long-term globalization. In 2020, Hu looks at the "One Belt One Road" initiative in a broader sense and what it means for the internationalization of vocational higher education. In 2022, Hou and Astillero looked at the problems and ways to fix them that come up with internationalization in Shandong Province. All two articles give us useful information about how hard and complicated internationalization is in China. They could be better, though, if they were more critical and analytical, gave more real-world evidence, and admitted any possible flaws or limitations. By doing this, they could give policymakers and practitioners more nuanced and useful advice on



how to deal with the changing landscape of internationalization in the Chinese education system.

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