

## Research Article

### THE ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY: THE CASE OF MONGOLIA

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Received 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023; Accepted 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023; Published online 30<sup>th</sup> December 2023

#### ABSTRACT

The analysis of higher education policy documentation offers insights into the alignment between stated objectives and implemented measures, addressing the effectiveness of policy instruments in achieving intended outcomes. We assessed the clarity and coherence of higher education policies through a systematic review of official documents, unveiling potential areas for refinement and enhancement in the formulation and communication of educational strategies.

**Keywords:** higher education, education policy, pedagogy.

#### INTRODUCTION

The study of public policy in the field of higher education is a new direction that is developing at the intersection of sciences such as political science, history, pedagogy, and sociology. The study of public policy in the field of higher education involves examining the decisions, actions, and regulations that shape the structure, function, and outcomes of higher education institutions. This area of study is relatively new and is characterized by its interdisciplinary nature, drawing on insights from various fields such as political science, history, pedagogy, and sociology.

**Political Science:** Public policy in higher education is closely tied to political processes and decision-making. Governments and policymakers play a crucial role in determining funding, governance structures, and regulatory frameworks for universities and colleges. Political scientists analyze the political dynamics that influence higher education policies, including the role of government agencies, legislative bodies, and political ideologies.

**History:** Historical perspectives are important in understanding the evolution of higher education policies. Examining the historical context helps researchers and policymakers identify trends, patterns, and the impact of past policies on the current state of higher education. Historical analysis can shed light on how certain policies were formulated, implemented, and revised over time.

**Pedagogy:** The study of teaching and learning methods is essential in higher education policy research. Policies often influence the curriculum, assessment methods, and teaching practices in universities. Researchers in this field may explore how education policies impact the quality of instruction, student engagement, and the overall learning experience.

**Sociology:** Sociology contributes to the study of higher education policy by examining the social dynamics within academic institutions. This includes analyzing issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as understanding the societal implications of policies on different groups of students. Sociological perspectives help researchers assess the broader social impact of higher

education policies. Higher education policy refers to education policy for higher education institutions such as universities, specifically how they are organized, funded, and operated in a society. According to Ansell (2006) there are "three different institutional forms of higher education provision: the Anglo-Saxon, Continental and the Scandinavian education system.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released the Higher Education Policy Observatory in December 2023. This online platform gathers information on national higher education systems in 146 countries from all world regions. It contains around 40 indicators related to 8 dimensions of higher education policy:

1. Governance structures of higher education systems,
2. Legislative frameworks regulating higher education,
3. higher education quality assurance,
4. higher education system planning,
5. key principles for access to higher education,
6. Gratuity of public higher education,
7. Admission pathways to higher education.

#### PRACTICAL STUDY(comparison).

We compared best practices that were commonly associated with higher education in European and Asian countries five best practices:

**There are five best practices in Europeans countries as below:**

**Emphasis on Quality Assurance:** European countries often prioritize quality assurance in higher education. There are various mechanisms in place, such as accreditation agencies and quality assessment frameworks, to ensure that academic programs and institutions maintain high standards.

**Bologna Process:** The Bologna Process is a series of agreements among European countries to create a harmonized and standardized higher education system. It aims to facilitate the mobility of students and promote collaboration among institutions. The process includes the implementation of a three-cycle system (bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees) and the adoption of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

**Student-Centered Learning:** European higher education often emphasizes student-centered learning approaches. This involves interactive teaching methods, group projects, and a focus on developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Many institutions encourage student engagement and participation in the learning process.

**Internationalization and Mobility:** European countries place a strong emphasis on internationalization, encouraging students to study abroad and promoting cultural diversity within campuses. Programs such as Erasmus+ facilitate student and staff mobility across European countries, fostering a more interconnected and globally aware higher education community.

**Research and Innovation:** European universities are often recognized for their commitment to research and innovation. Many countries invest heavily in research infrastructure and programs, fostering collaboration between academia and industry. Research-led teaching is also a common practice, ensuring that students are exposed to the latest developments in their fields.

**There are five best practices in Asian countries as below:**

**Emphasis on STEM Education:** Many Asian countries, such as China, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, have placed a strong emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. These countries often invest in research and development, aiming to produce a skilled workforce that can contribute to technological advancements and innovation.

**Collaboration with Industry:** Asian countries frequently foster collaboration between higher education institutions and industries. This collaboration helps ensure that academic programs align with the needs of the job market, providing students with practical skills and facilitating research projects that have real-world applications.

**Internationalization:** Similar to European countries, many Asian nations recognize the importance of internationalization in higher education. They encourage the exchange of students and faculty across borders, establish partnerships with foreign universities, and often offer programs in English to attract international students.

**Innovative Teaching Methods:** Some Asian countries have embraced innovative teaching methods, incorporating technology and interactive learning approaches. Blended learning, online courses, and the integration of educational technology are becoming more prevalent to enhance the overall learning experience.

**THE ANALYSIS OF POLICY GOAL**

Goals are the specific result or purpose expected from the project. The project goals specify what will be accomplished over the entire project period and should directly relate to the problem statement and vision. The goal is achieved through the project objectives and activities.

Objectives are the specific steps that lead to the successful completion of the project goals. Completion of objectives result in specific, measurable outcomes that directly contribute to the achievement of the project goals. Setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives is a good way to plan the steps to meet the long-term goals in your grant. It helps you take your grant from ideas to action. Setting SMART objectives keeps the project moving forward, helps with accountability and timing, and lets you know that you are accomplishing what you set out to accomplish.

SMART stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

- **Specific** – Objective clearly states, so anyone reading it can understand, what will be done and who will do it.
- **Measurable** – Objective includes how the action will be measured. Measuring your objectives helps you determine if you are making progress. It keeps you on track and on schedule.
- **Achievable** – Objective is realistic given the realities faced in the community. Setting reasonable objectives helps set the project up for success
- **Relevant** – A relevant objective makes sense, that is, it fits the purpose of the grant, it fits the culture and structure of the community, and it addresses the vision of the project.
- **Time-bound** – Every objective has a specific timeline for completion.

It is emphasized that the participation of customers and consumers is very important in policy development. It includes:

- Employer
- Graduate
- Researcher
- University representatives

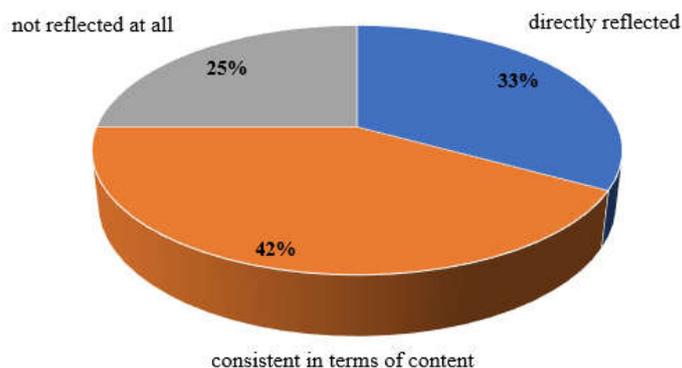
Mapping the policy outcome framework shows that planning is not a straight line from decision-making to evaluation, but rather a flexible process that can be adjusted and improved as a result of monitoring during implementation. In the implementation of policy and planning documents, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation is carried out in the following stages according to the following indicators.

1. Collecting, classifying and integrating information
2. To evaluate the achievement of goals
3. Assess the effectiveness of implementation
4. Assess the impact of external and internal factors
5. Assess the level of fulfillment
6. Development of specific proposals to improve planning and implementation of policy documents.

We compared Government Program Objectives between 1990-2000, 2001-2012 and 2013-2023 in our study as below:

Objectives (10) included in the strategy document for the development of the higher education sector in 2000-2005, goals (3) and directions (11) included in the master plan for the development of Mongolian higher education in 2006-2015 by the Government of Mongolia. 32 percent of the agenda's goals and objectives (33) are "directly reflected", 42 percent are "consistent in terms of content", and 25 percent are "not reflected at all" (Figure 1).

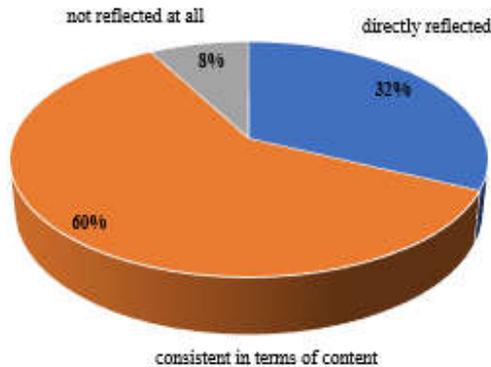
**Figure 1. Coherence of Government Program Objectives (1990-2000)**



The results of study.

Objectives (10) included in the strategy document for the development of the higher education sector in 2000-2005, goals (3) and directions (11) included in the master plan for the development of higher education in Mongolia by the Government of Mongolia in 2000-2012. 32 percent of the goals and objectives of the agenda (33) are "directly reflected", 60 percent are "consistent in terms of content", and 8 percent are "not reflected at all" (Figure 2).

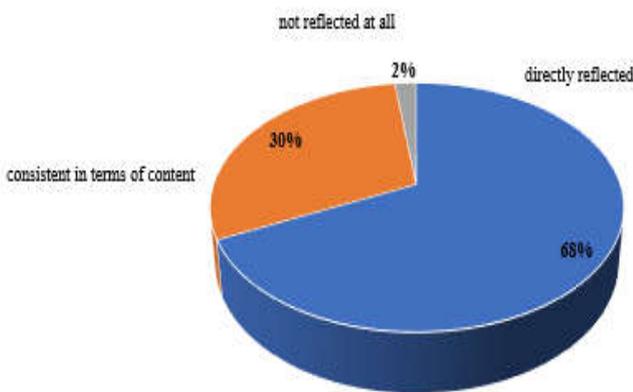
Figure 2. Coherence of Government Program Objectives (2001-2012)



The results of study.

Objectives (3) and directions (11) included in the master plan for the development of Mongolian higher education in 2006-2015 by the Government of Mongolia, objectives (5) of the government's policy on education (2014-2024), medium-term plan for the development of the education sector (2014) -2024 goals (5) to the goals and objectives of the government agenda for 2012-2024 (16), 68 percent are "directly reflected", 30 percent are "consistent in terms of content", and 2 percent are "not at all" not reflected" is shown in (Figure 3).

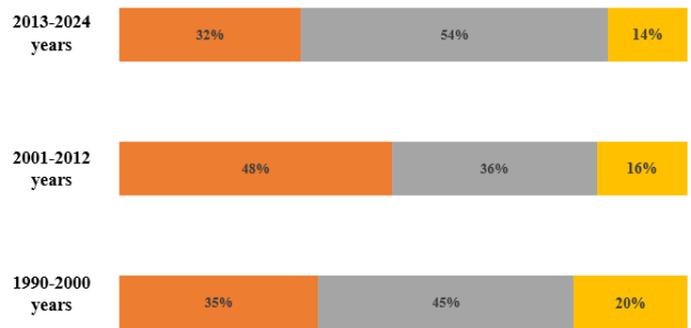
Figure 3. Coherence of Government Program Objectives (2013-2023)



The results of study.

Based on the report of the Government of Mongolia's agenda, when studying the impact of the goals, in 1990-2000, 35 percent were "weak", 45 percent were "moderate", 20 percent were "above average", in 2000-2012, 48 percent were "weak", 36 percent is "moderate", 16 percent is "above average", 32 percent is "weak", 54 percent is "moderate", and 14 percent is "above average" in 2012-2024 (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Results of the impact analysis of the government's agenda (Higher Education)



The results of study.

## DISCUSSION

According to the legal framework, the mechanisms for ensuring the implementation of higher education policies and their functions are becoming clear, but the quality, access, and capacity are not being strengthened. There is insufficient monitoring, guidance, mentoring, evaluation and reporting of the implementation of the higher education policy.

Therefore, the lack of unified guidelines and methodology for higher education policy implementation, weak human resource capacity, insufficient operational management, and weak monitoring and evaluation are pressing issues. We emphasized few suggestions in our study as below:

### In the area of supporting the public policy environment:

- According to the mission of the Constitution to develop an intelligent and humane civil democratic society in support of the Global Sustainable Development Policy, as a member of the United Nations, actively participate in the expansion and development of activities supporting higher education within the framework of national and international cooperation;
- International policy in the field of higher education policy development, cooperation with other countries' research, monitoring and evaluation government organizations that carry out similar activities, cooperation in this field, exchange of knowledge and experience, and learning;
- Develop a scientific and comprehensive policy and concept for higher education in Mongolia with the support of academics and a professional team, taking into account the international development approach of higher education policy, national characteristics, and unique conditions.

### Regarding improvement of the legal framework:

- To objectively determine the situation by conducting a scientific assessment and analysis of the state of the higher education system
- Promoting policies and laws related to higher education to the society, providing them with knowledge and information, and making effective regulations for quality education continue to be reflected in other laws and operational rules to be made accessible,
- Creation of conditions to reflect the principles of higher education and involve employers in the process of developing and resolving the content and concept of any policy, law, and legislation;
- Coordinating multi-scientific interdisciplinary areas of higher education.

### On improving **policy implementation**:

- All parties involved in the higher education system (by improving the management of formal and informal activities, by improving the management of the activities of managing, coordinating, supporting and monitoring, and by improving the coordination of higher education programs and planning of the participating sectors and institutions) to ensure the activities aimed at the policy goals with unified guidelines and methodologies ;
- To prepare employees and specialists through higher education, to retrain, to change attitudes, to update policies and training programs, such as granting service rights and degrees, to create personnel resources and to improve the legal environment for stable operation;
- To improve the legal framework for the expansion of the policy, implementation strategy, and unified methodology of the quality of higher education, to protect the quality of higher education from risk, and to expand the professional services based on the participation of all organizations and communities, and to modernize the management of implementation activities;
- Creating a unified information system for monitoring the progress and results of higher education implementation, extracting detailed news and information about each stage of implementation and analyzing it, as well as involving scientists and researchers in all stages of policy planning, influence, promotion, implementation and control, supporting and developing research work on higher education policy reforms;
- Within the framework of specialization activities, develop and work on a unified methodology and guidelines for services to improve their quality and accessibility by establishing, determining and concluding programs, plans and effects based on professional characteristics, psychological and cognitive development;
- Providing professional and methodological support to higher education policies and activities of communities, organizations, and communities, coordinating programs and measures with projects and programs implemented by employers, and improving the effectiveness and returns of higher education policy implementation by allocating additional budgets development of methodology and guidelines.

### CONCLUSION

Higher education acts as a cornerstone in the development and execution of effective public policies, providing the expertise needed to address contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges. Through research and academic inquiry, higher education institutions generate evidence-based insights that inform policy decisions, ensuring a more thoughtful and comprehensive approach to societal issues. A highly educated workforce, a byproduct of robust higher education systems, enhances a nation's capacity to innovate and adapt, key elements for crafting policies that promote sustainable economic growth.

Higher education nurtures a diverse and inclusive intellectual community, fostering a pluralistic perspective that is essential for crafting policies that address the needs and aspirations of a broad spectrum of society. Universities and colleges play a vital role in shaping the values and civic responsibilities of individuals, contributing to the creation of an informed and participatory citizenry crucial for the success and legitimacy of public policies.

Legally guaranteeing the right to be free from any improper attitude, political dependence, or improper attitude affecting the higher education system, and demanding the obligation to fully recognize

and fully implement it, is a new problem, concept, idea, and method of higher education in the world. is developing from a natural basis.

During the past 30 years, the higher education policy developed and implemented by the government of Mongolia has been divided into 3 main stages. Research-based understanding and knowledge have been created and gradually expanded since the mid-nineties.

Related to this, the official structure and mechanism of the government organization will be created, and the main functions will be implemented within the framework of a few sectors, and then after 2020, the legal framework on the quality of higher education will be updated further, focusing on strengthening the components of the higher education system, and specialization based on quality, access, and results. It aims to make education services such as retraining and mentoring comprehensive and unified.

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