

THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS IMPACT ON EFFICIENCY OF WORKING FORCE (CASE STUDY: JOHN NAISBITT UNIVERSITY)

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the phenomenon of internationalization of the university and multiple benefits it provides to both society and students. It also looks into the phases of the development of John Naisbitt University, the leader in education and the oldest private university in Southeast Europe. The focus of the paper is on the on-going phase, the phase of internationalization and achieved results, together with future plans. It will also show, how this process is reflecting on the efficiency of future work force (students) that are attending those programs at the University.

Keywords: *efficiency, higher education, internationalization, University, work force*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important aspects in people's everyday life. The society cannot improve progress, if it doesn't have a proper educational system, qualified teachers and good students. In order to achieve that, a country needs to invest heavily in its educational system. John Naisbitt University has been the leader in higher education in Southeast Europe for more than two decades. Over the period of time, we have witnessed a tremendous progress, overcome barriers and cultural differences, and facilitated access to information and its exchange in modern world and its fast paced environment. Currently, John Naisbitt University is in the phase of development and internationalisation where we endeavour to expand our operations globally. John Naisbitt University has internationally recognized educational, arts and science programs, harmonized with Bologna declaration. John Naisbitt University collaborates with most distinguished national and foreign universities and scientific institutions, and thus has an international academic network, which allows circulation of its scientific research in educational processes. Cultural cooperation and exchange programs organized by University's International Cooperation Department actively contribute to the improvement of relations between our country and the rest of the world. In the on-going phase of internationalization, John Naisbitt University can boast an outstanding network of partner institutions comprising over 200 most renowned universities from all over the world, membership in the most prestigious university networks around Europe and the world and participation in a number of international student mobility projects, teaching and research staff and programs.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

During the last decades, universities worldwide are forced to keep up with the rapid changes in social, technological and economic achievements and increasingly dynamic international academic environment. The changes which are hard to predict, the complexity and competitiveness of global economy affect political, industrial and other spheres. They also have a permanent impact on higher education institutions and require from them to respond to the changes in the environment promptly. In the light of the current global trends, international inclusion and competition between higher education institutions is becoming an increasingly significant aspect of everyday life. This is precisely the reason why the internationalization of the university is becoming more intense in both global education industry and its promotion through various rank lists of universities. The implementation of education that can be recognized internationally and the initiatives for international educational coordination activity with organizational consistency are considered vital when universities continue to work on internationalization based on their strategies. Promoting internationalization steadily is expected by establishing a specific goal including setting the numerical targets related to the initiatives which aim at developing international competitiveness and achieving them at universities. International exchange is also essential in order to give students and teachers access to international academic environments and to remain competitive in an increasingly globalized education market.

3. THE INTERNATIONALIZATION PROCESS AT JOHN NAISBITT UNIVERSITY

The expansion of the activities that contribute to internationalization of universities is a global trend which has been on the increase in recent years. In order to boost competitiveness of higher education institutions and offer attractive and high-quality education to international students, it is vital that universities develop as internationalization centres where professors, researchers and students will be provided with high quality education, research and mobility. John Naisbitt University is the oldest and the biggest private university in Southeast Europe. It consists of 14 higher education institutions, has 400 permanent employees and over 25,000 students. The university has successfully completed the first two phases of development - the first phase which involved gathering distinguished professors holding various academic degrees and prospective teaching associates and teaching assistants. The second phase resulted in modern, state-of-the art buildings with cutting edge equipment where students attend their lectures. Having completed these two phases, John Naisbitt University has started the third phase - the internationalization phase. Our vision is to have an internationally recognized academic institution that will provide our students with comprehensive knowledge of languages, other cultures and international relations in Serbia and worldwide. We have developed the 2013-2017 Plan aiming to achieve the following objectives:

- Developing our capacities to generate and share knowledge in Serbia, Europe and many other countries worldwide;
- Working effectively with other institutions and organisations, where such partnerships can lead to outstanding research and teachings;
- Enhancing structures for collaboration across departments and colleges within our University;
- Ensuring, through commitment to the personal education of each student, that the values, skills and intellectual disciplines they have acquired at John Naisbitt University are applied in their future lives and careers;
- Contributing effectively to the cultural, social and economic development of our country;

- Recruiting and retaining the best academic staff and ensuring that underrepresented groups have equal opportunities in recruitment, personal development and career progression in all fields of employment within the University.

Although not completed yet, the third phase - internationalization phase of the University, has already delivered the following excellent results:

- Over 200 concluded cooperation agreements with most prestigious foreign universities worldwide
- Participation in international projects TEMPUS/ERASMUS/IPA funded by the European Union
- A very active program of student and staff exchange with other universities - strategic partners
- A large number of guest professors and lectures of distinguished scientists, Nobel prize winners and academicians
- Organization of summer schools for both foreign and domestic students
- An increasing number of foreign students at doctoral studies at Megatrend University
- Joint master's program with Franklin University, Ohio
- Joint master's program with University Primorska, Kopar, Slovenia
- Joint doctoral studies with Libera Università Mediterranea Jean Monet, Bari, Italy
- John Naisbitt University has won numerous domestic and foreign acknowledgements, one of them being the award from American Quality Association – AQA and European Quality Award.

The above mentioned suggests that JNU implements the internationalization phase on all three levels - internationalization of students, internationalization of staff and internationalization of curriculums. This phase of development requires a new project which would focus on more intensive internationalization of the first level, i.e. student internationalization. So far, JNU has been the leader on the market, pushing the boundaries of higher education in Serbia by introducing innovative programs and new ideas. The project is precisely the next step in the process of differentiating JNU from other universities in the region.

The project involves launching the program of undergraduate studies at Graduate School of Business Studies and Graduate School of Computer Sciences in the English language and online distance learning program which would enable foreign students from all over the world to study at John Naisbitt University.

3.1. Project objectives

This project has many objectives but the most important are:

1. Increasing mobility of both foreign and domestic students
2. Increasing competitiveness and quality of studies at John Naisbitt University
3. Creating a program of undergraduate studies in the English language
4. Continuous influx of foreign students to John Naisbitt University
5. Increasing the revenue of John Naisbitt University
6. Introducing international and intercultural elements in teaching, research process and John Naisbitt University services
7. Strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation
8. Encouraging brain circulation instead of brain drain

3.2. The analysis of student mobility

The term “internationally mobile students” refers to students who have crossed a national border to study, or are enrolled in a distance learning programme abroad. These students are not residents or citizens of the country where they study. Internationally mobile students are a

sub-group of “foreign students”, a category that includes those who have permanent residency in the host country (1). Nowadays, it is more than evident that number of students crossing international borders to attend institutions of higher education has risen significantly in the last few decades. According to the data of UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2) the number of mobile students in the world increased from 2.1 million to 3.4 million in the period from 2002 to 2009. However, this percentage decreased by about 50% in 2002 due to increased competition on the international level. It is likely that during economic crisis students will take into account economic aspects of mobility, which makes Serbia a good academic destination. In 2012, at least 4 million students went abroad to study, up from 2 million in 2000, representing 1.8% of all tertiary enrolments or 2 in 100 students globally.(3) Five most common destination countries are: United States (18% of total mobile students), United Kingdom (11%), France (7%), Australia (6%) and Germany (5%). (4) That means that those countries together attract more than 45% of mobile students. When it comes to the countries where foreign students come from, the top five are the following: China (694,400 students studying abroad), India (189,500), Republic of Korea (123,700), Germany (117,600) and Saudi Arabia (62,500). (5) Using the same source, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, there is also a list of regions that host the largest number of mobile students: North America and Western Europe (57% of total mobile students), East Asia and the Pacific (20%) and Central and Eastern Europe (10%). It is particularly important to emphasize that year after year China and India have marked a double digit growth of the number of mobile students. It is estimated that China and India together will have 40% of all foreign students in the OECD and G20 countries by 2020. (6) On the other hand, the share of foreign students in the countries of the European Union is 6.7%. When it comes to the region, the situation is similar to ours. John Naisbitt University has, therefore, recognized the need for overcoming obstacles and strengthening international mobility. To support this goal John Naisbitt University is paying special attention to student mobility statistics regarding Serbia, provided from UIS for 2014. According to this source, total number of students from Serbia studying abroad is 11879, which gives outbound mobility ratio 5 (mobility ratio is total number of tertiary students from the country studying abroad, expressed as a percentage of total tertiary enrolment in that country) and gross outbound ratio of 2.8 (outbound ratio is total number of tertiary students from the country studying abroad, expressed as a percentage of the population of tertiary age in that country). Furthermore, Serbia is hosting 8930 international students, which gives inbound mobility rate of 3.7.

Key Indicators	
Students abroad:	
Total number of mobile students abroad	11,879
(% of total mobile students)	...
Outbound mobility ratio	5.0
Gross outbound enrolment ratio	2.8
Students hosted:	
Total number of mobile students hosted	8,930
(% of total mobile students)	...
Inbound mobility rate	3.7

Picture 1: Flow of tertiary-level students in Serbia

(<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/international-student-flow-viz.aspx>, retrived 20.11.2015.)

3.3. SWOT analysis of the project

The SWOT analysis is basic stage for pointing out major strategic issues to be addressed in before mentioned internationalization process plan. As it is known, SWOT analysis is a tool that identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an organization. The method of SWOT analysis gives both, the internal and the external analysis on factors that give an organization advantages and disadvantages in realizing target goals.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excellent infrastructural preconditions - Good geographic location - Quality education at affordable prices (Low tuitions fees) - Literature in English - Lecturers who have excellent knowledge of the English language - Experience in European exchange programs - Experience in joint programs with European and global institutions - Contacts with partner and other institutions - Broad subject range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aversion to studying in the English language - Lack of administrative personnel who speak the English language - Lack of diversity among staff - Faculty workload - Lack of space for holding parallel lectures - Alumni network is not active
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower costs of living in Serbia - European funds for science and mobility - Increased number of mobile students worldwide - Building a brand - Gaining further experience - Knowledge transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political and economic instability - State bureaucracy - Complicated administrative procedures - Visa regime - Lack of institutional support by the Ministry of Education - Competition on both domestic and foreign market - Budget constraints

Picture 2: SWOT analysis - Internationalization process at John Naisbitt University

As it can be seen in table, John Naisbitt University has a strong foothold in its strengths. Serbia has great geographic location, and university itself is situated in the capital city. All hosted students can enjoy low cost of living and above all, they can gain quality education with very low tuitions fees. It is obvious that the introduction of the program of studying in the English language is the most significant measure for increasing the number of foreign students, both those who attend exchange programs and those who come to complete their studies. The decision to introduce this program of undergraduate studies is the result of comprehensive analyses of potentials of academic staff and literature and the analysis of profitability based on

the needs and interests of foreign students. These factors give excellent preconditions for further plan of internationalization possibilities such as: gaining more experience, establishing knowledge transfer, and finally, building recognizable brand in the area of successful and quality education programs.

All of this strengths and possibilities should be used to overcome the identified weaknesses (faculty workload; lack of administrative personnel who speak the English language, inactive alumni network, lack of diversity among staff...) and to create safe environment in which University can be ready to deal with external threats. Reviewing and adjusting business philosophy of the University, captured through business plan steps, could be one of possible paths in battle against threats, specially if we are talking about issues like budget constraints and wide competition.

4. THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONALIZATION PROCESS OF HIGHER EDUCATION ON THE EFFICIENCY OF WORKING FORCE

Thanks to the process of globalization we are witnessing the great improvement in mobility of working force all over the world. Trends are showing us that number of the people who are going to other countries to work is increasing. This part of the paper will provide information's regarding this process and its connection to the efficiency of working force.

During the Turkish G20 Presidency, there was an initiative among G20 countries to find out what is current situation regarding the contribution of labour mobility to the economic growth of this countries. Countries involved requested that three international organizations – ILO, OECD and the World Bank Group prepare analytical report about this subject. Their findings were next (7):

- More than half of the world's migrants (55 per cent or 128 million people) live in the G20 countries, and remittances to and from G20 countries account for almost 80 per cent of global remittance flows.
- Migrants today are younger and better educated, and women are increasingly migrating for employment, with domestic work being a major occupation.
- Evidence suggests that in most countries migrants pay more in taxes and social contributions than they receive, and contribute substantially to destination countries' economies by providing the labour and skills needed in critical occupations and sector.
- Across the advanced countries, the number of highly educated immigrants has increased rapidly over the past decade, which has important implications for productivity and innovations.

We can see that these findings suggest that the mobility of working force within G20 countries is growing, and there are some changes in the structure of foreign labour force (e.g. more women and higher educated people than before).

Besides that, if only take into the account EU countries, we will also see that situation is similar there. According to the European Commission and its EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review (ESSQR), that was issued in 2014, in year 2013 there were slightly over 7 million EU citizens who were working and living in an EU country other than their own. They represented 3.3% of total employment in the EU.(8)

In the analysis that was given by ESSQR in that issue we can find that they identified several advantages of mobility of working force within EU (9):

- Free movement of workers brings benefits both to the workers and employers concerned.
- The right to work in another Member State can bring new job opportunities for individuals. It also offers other advantages, such as acquiring new types of working experience, and improving their skills, notably learning languages. All this enables them to take up more internationally oriented jobs. With the experience gained, they may also find a job more easily in their countries of origin later on.
- Labour mobility helps address labour shortages and skills gaps. From a macro-economic point of view, it helps address unemployment disparities between EU Member States and contributes to a more efficient allocation of human resources.
- In the host country, incoming workers benefit the local economy by addressing skills shortages and labour market bottlenecks. They help widen the range of services available and boost competitiveness. In the countries of origin, mobile workers alleviate the burden on public accounts (if previously unemployed) and help to revive the national economy by sending remittances.

Judging by this numbers and conclusions we can see that emigration of working force is a process that will not stop in next years, and that we can only expect that it will increase.

So, what then will be the role of the Universities all over the world in next couple of years, and how will this process of globalization and internationalization affect their way of working and teaching? How it will affect students way of learning and their efficiency?

In the analyses shown in previous passages the authors of this paper showed that the process of internationalization at John Naisbitt University was the only logical move in our Universities strategy, and it changed the way that we were teaching and dealing with problems.

After the years of developing at the domestic market, we realized that the next thing that needs to be done is attracting students that are coming from abroad. Of course we still could use some of teaching stuff that was already working here, but we also need to employ new people, and to redevelop Department for International Cooperation.

So what we can tell about the advantages of studding abroad and how we can improve the efficiency of foreign students that are coming to John Naisbitt University?

- First of all, students that are coming to our University are mostly coming from Mexico and China. These are the countries that have some things in their educational program that are similar to ours, but most of them are different. So, by coming to our country, they will learn more new stuff, that otherwise they will not have the opportunity to learn in their country. By doing that they will be more prepared for this globalized world and competitiveness at the work force market.
- Since they have classes in English and in Serbian, their ability to communicate and learn and present stuff in foreign languages is improving. In Serbia, we have an old saying that claims: "You are rich as much as how many languages you know." So taking that into account, they will be richer for knowledge of two languages, and they will also be more competitive at the job market.

- Thirdly, for many students this is the opportunity to leave their home country for longer period of time. This will be also great opportunity for them to be more self-sufficient, to be more innovative and to accept new things as they happen. They will learn to leave among strangers. They will learn how to accept and understand different cultures. In today's society in which we have increasing number of MNC, this is a very useful skill.
- Managing money issues when they are abroad is also something very useful for the students. When staying abroad they know that they have a budget, and they need to stick with that. Or they can, if that is permitted by the law of one country, try to find part time job in order to earn more.
- Their knowledge about some foreign country or region can be a very helpful in their finding jobs. For example, if they stay in our country to find a job here, they will be prepared not only for doing business here, but they can also use connections that they have in their home country to bring new investors here. Or, if they return to their country, they can use connections coming from Serbia, to work together on joint projects.
- Also, domestic students from our University are grateful to the scholarship that we are giving to them - through the international agreements that we have with different Universities all over the world. They are more capable to do different types of jobs when they return home. For most of them this is also the opportunity to experience new stuff, to learn different languages and to make connections. When they return, they usually have more chances to find the job, because for most companies who are working all over the world international experience is something that they value very much.

We can summarize all the above mentioned by declaring that internationalization process in the field of higher education, is a first step towards internationalization of the young, educated students to become international working force. Their ability to adopt new things, to learn, to network, to socialize and to become organized will help them in their future positioning at the world labour market.

5. CONCLUSION

Having in mind that John Naisbitt university celebrates its 26th anniversary this year, and the fact that it was established and survived during the most difficult times for our country, we believe that the new cycle in the phase of development of our university will be marked by new achievements, modernized method of work and a significant contribution to development of higher education in the Republic of Serbia with regards to foreign students. Recently, there has been a lot of talk in Serbia about the need for changing image in the field of law, economics and education. Serbia used to have an outstanding image in higher education and this is just one of the ways to restore the old glory.

The achieved results of the internationalization process at John Naisbitt University prove that the process was approached meticulously, with a clear strategy and activity plan. During this phase, the program of undergraduate studies in the English language should be implemented, which will certainly be the most demanding implementation process so far. The paper provides the analysis which shows high chances of success of this project and positioning John Naisbitt University in the global scientific and higher education sphere.

Also, this process is good not only to University per se, but also to our domestic and international students. New way of learning, educating and working in different countries will help them to become more efficient students and at the end to become more efficient and

effective working force. Their competitive knowledge will help them to find job more easily and to pursue better carrier.

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