

# Comparative Study of Internationalized Talent Cultivation Models in International Higher Education Programs

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**Abstract:** The internationalization of talent cultivation in the field of international higher education is a widely discussed topic among higher education institutions worldwide. This paper conducts a comparative study of domestic and foreign higher education institutions and identifies some differences in the internationalization of talent cultivation among different countries and regions. Firstly, the study summarizes the changes in talent cultivation through domestic study abroad programs and overseas study programs. Then, this paper introduces the “Knowledge-Practice-Research” international talent cultivation model in China and the international talent cultivation model in Japan as an example. Finally, this study compares the international talent cultivation models in domestic and foreign higher education institutions. The results indicate that the internationalization of talent cultivation models needs to be adjusted according to different training objectives, specific countries, and even regional circumstances to adapt to local characteristics and the international environment. Overall, different countries and regions have different emphases and characteristics in the internationalization of talent cultivation in higher education institutions. However, regardless of the country, higher education institutions should focus on enhancing students’ international perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills to adapt to the globalized economic and social environment.

**Keywords:** International higher education; “Knowledge-Practice-Research” international talent cultivation model; International perspective; Practical ability; Cross-cultural communication

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## 1. Introduction

With the accelerated process of globalization, exchanges and collaborations in the fields of economy, politics, and culture among countries have become increasingly frequent <sup>[1,2]</sup>. As an important method of talent cultivation, higher education also needs to adapt to this trend and provide better opportunities and platforms for nurturing talents with international perspectives and cross-cultural communication abilities <sup>[3,4]</sup>. Therefore, the internationalization of talent cultivation models has become a widely discussed issue in domestic and foreign higher education.

The internationalization of talent cultivation models in the field of international higher education is a global issue. The comparative study of the internationalization of talent cultivation models in international higher education is still in its early stages. Still, some scholars have already started to pay attention to this issue and conducted exploratory research. In foreign countries, higher education institutions in developed countries and regions such as Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia have conducted in-depth

and mature research and practice on the internationalization of talent cultivation <sup>[5]</sup>. Among them, European higher education institutions focus on fostering cross-cultural communication and language abilities, encouraging students to participate in global exchanges and collaborations actively <sup>[6,7]</sup>. Higher education institutions in the United States emphasize the development of students' leadership and innovation spirit, encouraging them to actively engage in social practices and research projects <sup>[8,9]</sup>. In countries like Australia and Canada, higher education institutions pay more attention to cultivating students' career aspirations and social skills, advocating their active participation in social activities and volunteer services <sup>[10,11]</sup>. In China, many scholars have researched and explored the internationalization of talent cultivation models in international higher education, mainly involving curriculum design, educational methods, and faculty development <sup>[12,13]</sup>. Additionally, domestic higher education institutions have also actively explored and practiced the internationalization of talent cultivation models by offering programs such as cross-cultural communication training, overseas study, and international internships, striving to enhance students' international competitiveness and global perspectives <sup>[14]</sup>.

Overall, research and practice on the internationalization of talent cultivation models in international higher education are quite active both domestically and internationally. Countries have certain differences in emphases, methods, and strategies. Still, they all aim to provide better opportunities and platforms for students and cultivate talents with international perspectives and cross-cultural communication abilities.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. The current situation of training internationalized talents in international higher education majors**

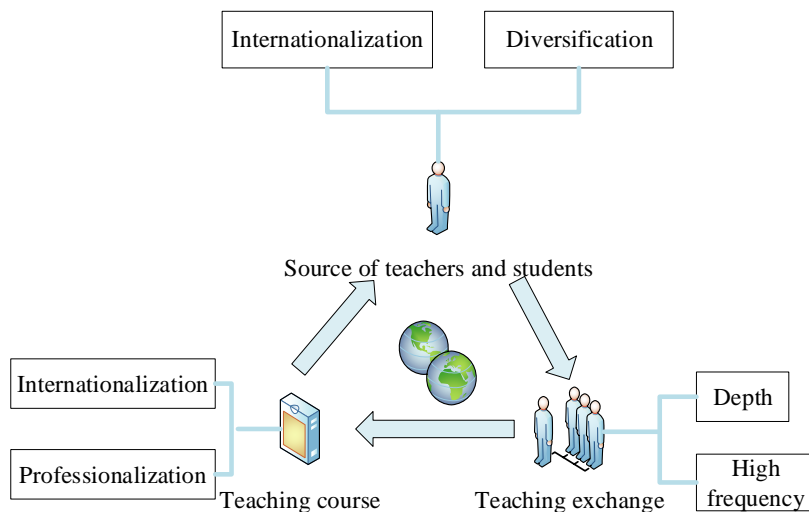
The internationalization of talent cultivation in international higher education refers to the cultivation of high-quality talents with international perspectives, cross-cultural communication abilities, and global competitiveness through establishing cooperation and conducting academic exchanges worldwide <sup>[15]</sup>. Such talents possess sensitivity and understanding of different cultural backgrounds and social environments, enabling them to adapt and integrate into diverse global work and living environments. They demonstrate outstanding performance in various fields, positively contributing to global sustainable development and international peace and cooperation <sup>[16,17]</sup>. Achieving the internationalization of talent cultivation in international higher education requires universities to innovate and reform education, teaching, and cultivation models emphasizing interdisciplinary learning and cross-disciplinary studies, actively engaging in international exchanges and collaborations, and enhancing students' international literacy and competitiveness <sup>[18]</sup>. This paper focuses on the current status of internationalized talent cultivation by comparing the number of Chinese students studying in foreign countries and international students studying in China.

### **2.2. Internationalized talent cultivation models in foreign higher education**

Internationalized talent cultivation has become an important indicator to evaluate whether a country's higher education possesses international perspectives and global competitiveness. As a member of developed countries, Japan holds a leading position in education, economy, technology, and various other aspects <sup>[19,20]</sup>. This paper analyzes a series of internationalized talent cultivation policies launched by Japan in recent years, such as the Global Human Resource Development Program, the Top Global University Program, and the Study Abroad Aid System. It summarizes the characteristics of its internationalized talent cultivation model. It provides references for constructing a new model of internationalized talent cultivation in China from the perspectives of the government, universities, and teachers.

The Japanese government considers internationalized talent cultivation as a fundamental strategy for 21st-century school education. Accordingly, it has formulated corresponding policies to promote

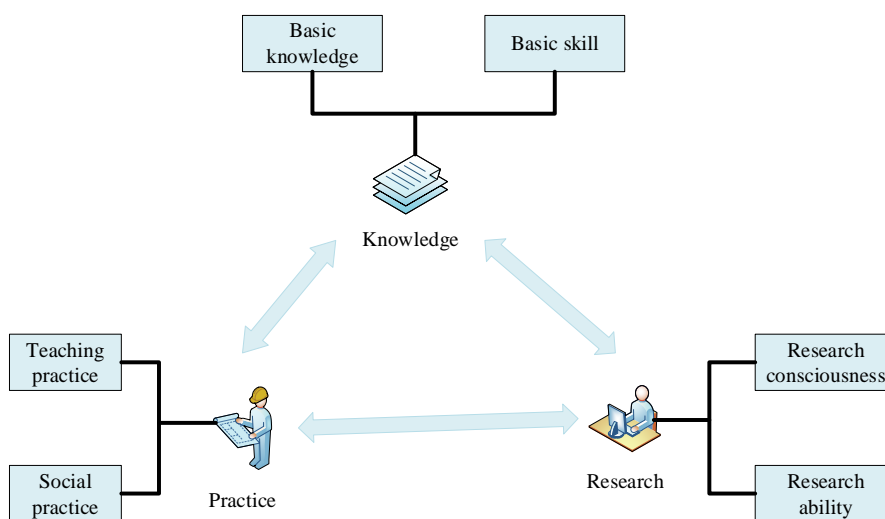
international exchanges in schools at all levels and actively cultivate students' international perspectives. In 2014, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology formulated the Global Human Resource Development Program to enhance the internationalization level of Japanese universities and provide financial support for various international education programs. **Figure 1** illustrates the indicator system of the internationalized talent cultivation model in Japanese higher education.



**Figure 1.** Internationalized talent cultivation system in Japan

### 2.3. Training model of domestic “Knowledge-Practice-Research” international talent

The talent cultivation model is based on the ideas, goals, and requirements of talent cultivation and represents the formalization of a certain set of ideas, goals, and requirements for talent cultivation. In the undergraduate program of Chinese International Education, although there are overall requirements for talent cultivation goals and specifications, the diversity of schools offering this major, their learning environments and employment prospects lead to diverse talent cultivation models in this field. Taking the Chinese International Education program at the Minzu University of China as an example, this paper proposes the “Knowledge-Practice-Research” internationalized talent cultivation model. **Figure 2** presents the system of the “Knowledge-Practice-Research” talent cultivation model.



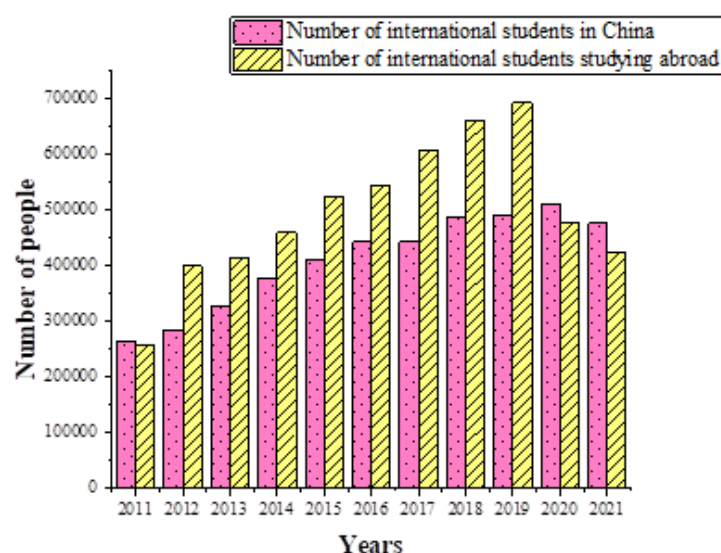
**Figure 2.** “Knowledge-Practice-Research” talent cultivation model

In **Figure 2**, “Knowledge” refers to the cultivation of basic knowledge and skills in the field, including Chinese and English language proficiency, as well as theoretical knowledge in literature, culture, and educational instruction. “Practice” involves students applying the knowledge and skills they have learned in specific teaching and practical activities under the guidance of teachers, testing their grasp of the knowledge and skills. “Research” has two implications: first, cultivating students’ research awareness and certain research abilities to prepare them for academic and professional Master’s programs, and second, developing students’ research abilities to identify, analyze, and solve problems encountered in teaching and practical activities.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. A summary of the current situation of nationalized talent training in international education majors

The major of international education aims to develop talents with international vision and intercultural communication skills to meet the needs of various industries in the context of globalization. Currently, International Education has gained recognition and development in many countries. There are also some differences in talent cultivation approaches among different countries. **Figure 3** illustrates the changes in the number of outbound and inbound students in China from 2010 to 2021.



**Figure 3** Situation of Outbound Study and Inbound Study in 2011-2021

In **Figure 3**, the number of Chinese students studying abroad showed a rapid increase followed by a slight decline and then a rebound. In 2019, the number of Chinese students studying abroad reached a record high of 665,000. It is expected that in the future, with further globalization and the strengthening of international educational cooperation and exchanges, the number of Chinese students studying abroad will remain relatively high. From 2010 to 2020, the number of international students studying in China showed an increasing trend year by year. Although the number of international students studying in China decreased significantly in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is expected that with the control of the global epidemic and the deepening of China’s opening-up policy, the number of international students coming to China to study will maintain a relatively high level.

### 3.2. Comparison of internationalized talent cultivation models in domestic and foreign higher education programs

There are some differences in the internationalized talent cultivation models between domestic and foreign higher education programs. However, education needs to focus on cultivating talents with international competitiveness to adapt to the development trend of the globalized economy. This paper will compare the “Knowledge-Practice-Research” internationalized talent cultivation model in domestic education with the internationalized talent cultivation model in foreign higher education programs, taking Japan as an example, in terms of talent cultivation objectives, main training directions, study courses, support for training programs, and competency requirements. The comparison is summarized in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** Comparison of Internationalized Talent Cultivation Models in Domestic and Foreign Higher Education Programs

Index	“Knowledge-Practice-Research” Model (Domestic)	Japan (as an example) Internationalized Talent Cultivation Model (Foreign)
Talent Cultivation Objectives	Cultivating talents with international perspectives and cross-cultural communication abilities to meet global demands.	Cultivating talents with international perspectives and global competitiveness.
Main Training Directions	Focuses on the cultivation of basic knowledge and skills, practical application of knowledge in teaching activities, and research abilities.	Emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, practical experience, and research-oriented education.
Study Courses	Includes Chinese and English language proficiency, literature and culture, and theoretical knowledge in education.	Offers a wide range of courses with a focus on international affairs, language proficiency, and specialized knowledge.
Support for Training Programs	Provides support for academic and research activities, teaching internships, and opportunities for international exchanges and cooperation.	Offers funding support for various internationalization programs, such as global talent development plans and scholarships for studying abroad.
Competency Requirements	Requires research awareness and abilities, problem-solving skills, and preparation for academic or professional master's programs.	Focuses on developing global competence, including language proficiency, cross-cultural communication, and adaptability to diverse environments.

In **Table 1**, regarding the comparison of internationalized talent cultivation models in domestic and foreign higher education programs, talent cultivation aims to strengthen international cooperation and cultivate globally competitive and high-quality academic talents. However, there are slight differences in the objectives and approaches to cultivation due to national circumstances. Language proficiency and professional competence are essential in domestic and foreign programs. However, in domestic programs, there is a certain level of expectation for academic attitudes. Additionally, there are differences in policies, with domestic policies primarily focusing on government and university collaboration in establishing or participating in internationalization projects, while government initiatives primarily guide foreign policies.

### 4. Conclusion

In the context of globalization, an increasing number of countries are adopting transnational cooperation to integrate the advantages of different nations and provide students with diverse educational experiences and opportunities. This paper first analysed the current status of internationalized talents in higher education.

The results indicated an upward trend in international talent exchange in recent years, despite a decline in 2019–2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the overall recovery in recent years, the trend of talent exchange is expected to continue to rise. The paper then introduced the “Knowledge-Practice-Research” internationalized talent cultivation model in domestic education and the internationalized talent cultivation model using Japan as an example, followed by a comparison of these two models. The results show that internationalized talent cultivation models need to be adjusted according to specific training objectives and the specific circumstances of different countries or regions to adapt to local characteristics and international environments. This provides valuable experiences and insights that can be learned from other countries and regions, thereby promoting the global internationalization and exchange of higher education. However, it should be noted that most comparative studies have focused on developed countries, while there is relatively little comparative research on developing countries and regions. In the future, it would be beneficial to strengthen comparative research on developing countries and regions in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of talent cultivation models in various countries and regions worldwide.

### **Disclosure statement**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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