



A Study of the Experience of China in Opening up the Higher Education Market and Vietnam's Experience with Policy Mechanisms to Encourage Foreign Investment and Cooperation



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Abstract

International joint training plays a very important role in the effort to improve the quality of the education sector, thereby enhancing the prestige and status of the industry and the nation. In recent times, departments and universities have continuously strengthened their expansion efforts, seeking the best partners and cooperation opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of managing international joint training programs. In addition to the achievements in enhancing management capacity, there are still many limitations. Therefore, thoroughly researching and evaluating the experiences of some countries in international joint training activities, and subsequently proposing appropriate solutions for the next phase, especially regarding policies to promote cooperation and foreign investment, is one of the urgent requirements for higher education in Vietnam.

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1 Introduction

Education has always played a crucial role in the development of society throughout all historical periods. Countries with effective education management strategies and policies, which prioritize education and training, often achieve remarkable development. In the world, many countries have achieved significant accomplishments in the field of educational management, including the management of international joint training programs. For example, Western countries have achieved great success through the continuous innovation of educational management methods. In the Asian region, besides countries like Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore, China has also quickly risen to become one of the countries with an advanced education system, with an effective training management system, contributing to the socio-economic development. The study and learning of management experiences from developed countries, particularly China, is extremely necessary and practically significant. By absorbing international management experiences, Vietnam can select models that are suitable for the domestic context, in order to further improve the education and training system, in accordance with the Party's guidelines in the context of international integration.

2 General Legal Information on Education and Training in China

1. Strategy, incentive policies, and current data

Education and training in China have achieved significant accomplishments in recent years. Regarding general education, the completion rate for the 9-year compulsory education in China is 95.5%. At the primary level, there are up to 149,100 primary schools across China with 17 million new students each year and 107 million currently enrolled. As for secondary education, there are up to 52,500 high schools across China with 17 million new students each year and 51 million students currently enrolled. Although there have been many improvements, the number of classes with an average of 56 students per class remains high, specifically 13,800 classes for elementary school and 4,522 classes for middle school. As of 2022, there are 15,000 secondary schools across China, an increase of 441 schools compared to 2021, with 9.5 million new students enrolling and 27 million attending. At the university level, there are up to 3,013 higher education institutions across China, with 46.55 million students enrolled. In addition, more than 1 million students are enrolled in postgraduate programs (Ministry of Education of China, 2023). To promote education development, the Chinese government has long encouraged international exchange and cooperation in the field of education through various forms of transnational education. (QAA, 2020).

Transnational education is a rapidly developing field and increasingly occupies a significant proportion of China's education system (Clayburn, 2022). At the local level, transnational education is encouraged by the authorities of many provinces/cities. It has become part of the overall investment and development plans of the localities, alongside other sectors and fields. According to Clayburn (2022), investment in educational cooperation is considered a key factor for provinces and cities in China to enhance their status and competitiveness with other localities.

The development of transnational education in China began nearly 30 years ago. In 1995, the Ministry of Education of China issued temporary regulations on international cooperation in educational activities, officially incorporating transnational education into the country's education system. (British Council, 2022). In 2000, after becoming an official member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), China's education market officially opened to the world through the Commitment to Open the Services Market (see Table 1-C1). (British Council, 2022). Accordingly, China committed to not restricting the provision of cross-border educational services, having no barriers to the acceptance of foreign education, and not hindering cooperation between Chinese and foreign organizations and individuals in the management of educational institutions (Ding et al., 2009).

Table 1
China's Commitment to Opening the Education Service Market

Method of supply: (1) Cross-border supply; (2) Consumption outside the territory; (3) Commercial presence; (4) Presence of individuals			
Major and sub-major	Market access restrictions	National treatment restrictions	Supplementary commitment
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (Except for special educational services such as military education, police, political education, and Communist Party schools)			
A. Primary education services (CPC 921, except for national compulsory education in CPC 92190) B. Secondary education services (CPC 922, excluding national compulsory education in CPC 92210) C. Higher education services (CPC 923) D. Adult education services (CPC 924) E. Other educational services (CPC 929, including English language training)	(1) Not committed (2) No restrictions (3) Schools affiliated with majority foreign ownership are allowed to be established. (4) Not yet committed, except for general commitments, and individual foreign education service providers can enter China to provide educational services when invited or recruited by Chinese schools and other educational institutions.	(1) Not committed (2) No restrictions (3) Not committed yet (4) Professional qualifications as follows: -a Bachelor's degree or higher; -and a relevant professional title or certification, with two years of professional experience.	

Source: Compiled by the WTO Task Force (2023)

The commitment to open the service market under the WTO has had both positive and negative impacts on China's education market. According to Xu (2009), these impacts include:

- *Offshore consumption*: The lack of restrictions on market access and national treatment has led many international educational institutions to intensify their efforts to attract Chinese students to study abroad. This leads to the risk of brain drain in China. However, affiliated schools also help China become a destination for many international students.
- *Commercial presence*: The allowance of opening international educational institutions (even in the form of affiliated schools) has created a wave of investment in the Chinese education market from foreign investors.
- *Presence of individuals*: The presence of individual foreign education service providers will help Chinese educational institutions attract more talent. However, Chinese educational institutions will also have to face higher demands regarding the quality of education.

To promote and support the development and control of transnational education activities, the Chinese government has introduced and revised the legal framework in four phases (British Council, 2022), specifically:

- In 2003, the National People's Congress of China passed the "Regulations on the Cooperation in Running Schools between China and Foreign Countries." This law allows internationally affiliated schools, as independent entities, to reinvest profits into their parent organization (Ministry of Education of China, 2010).

- In 2004, the National People's Congress of China passed the "Implementation Measures for the 2003 Regulations";
- In 2007, the Ministry of Education of China approved the "Notice on the Cooperation in Running Schools between China and Foreign Countries";
- In 2009, the Chinese Ministry of Education issued the "Handbook for Quality Assurance in Transnational Education";
- In 2021, the Ministry of Education of China announced the "Regulations for the Implementation of the Private Education Promotion Law" (Haywood et al., 2021; British Council, 2021).
- In 2019, the Chinese government introduced two education sector development plans for the 2018-2022 period and the 2035 goal. These two Plans are the foundation for China's education reform. The Chinese government is also intensifying its search for opportunities to improve the quality and inclusiveness of education nationwide, emphasizing the goal of skill training and development oriented towards Internet technologies. At the same time, the country emphasizes the importance of teaching political subjects such as "Xi Jinping Thought." China aims to boost foreign investment in the vocational education sector while restricting the primary and secondary education sectors, and strengthening the review process for selecting foreign teachers.
- In 2021, China enacted the Law on Promoting Private Education, effective from September 1, 2021. These new regulations will restrict foreign investment and the use of foreign curricula in tutoring activities operated by private entities. According to regulations, China's compulsory education program for children aged 6-15 includes primary and secondary levels. (K-9).

The new restrictive regulations introduced by China include:

Prohibiting foreign-invested enterprises and social organizations of foreign companies from establishing or operating private educational institutions that teach compulsory education programs.

- Foreign nationals are not allowed to participate in the school board/board of directors.
- Foreign-invested educational institutions are not allowed to teach full-time but can only provide supplementary subjects outside the main curriculum schedule.
- Private educational institutions in China are not allowed to use foreign educational curricula and materials for primary and middle school levels. For international students or high school students, the government allows the use of foreign educational materials but must comply with Chinese laws.

The above requirements also apply to online teaching activities (including the teaching staff and educational materials).

Policies encouraging foreign investment in private general education:

To encourage foreign investment in general education, the Chinese government has introduced a series of incentive policies regarding land, taxes, and credit for joint ventures between Chinese and foreign investors (Reis, 2001; Goldstein & Razin, 2006). Specifically, the government grants local authorities the power to implement land incentive policies and tailored support policies suitable for local conditions for non-profit private educational institutions and to establish credit incentive policies for general educational institutions set up in the western provinces, remote areas, and ethnic minority regions. Especially, the non-profit private educational institutions non-profit private institutions enjoy tax benefits similar to public institutions.

Table 2
Some basic information about transnational education in China

Population (millions)	1.439
The percentage of the population under 16 years old	18%
The percentage of the population under 25 years old	/
Higher education	
Number of international universities or branches of international universities	47
Number of the international joint program	1,154

Secondary and high school education	
The number of students enrolling in secondary education	84,321,859 + 348,4086 (Hong Kong)
Number of international schools	1,028
International schools in the cities Total: 148	Total: 148 Beijing (40), Shanghai (44), Guangzhou (47), Hangzhou (72), Hong Kong (18)
Curriculum	United Kingdom (A levels, IGCSE), United States (AP), IB, Canada, Australia
Number of students studying at international schools	372,000 (66% Chinese citizens)

Source: Clayburn (2022) và The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education(2017)

2. Regulations on the conditions for affiliation/establishment and operational conditions

Table 3

Regulations on the conditions for establishing/setting up and the operational conditions of transnational education forms in China

Transnational education	Regulations on finance, ownership forms, facilities	Regulations on academic matters
Higher education		
Higher education institutions established by foreign investors/higher education institutions	Can only be established under the name of a school affiliated with a domestic partner (which can be a business or a higher education institution).	/
International joint programs or licensing programs	/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The "one-third rule": Requires international partners to commit to providing at least one-third of teaching and educational resources for affiliated individual programs, institutes, and collaborative universities. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The joint program between China and foreign countries, with the participation of foreign entities, must account for more than one-third of the total credits. + The foreign core academic units must account for more than one-third of the total core units for the Sino-foreign cooperative education program. + The number of core professional units of the teaching staff responsible from foreign institutions must account for more than one-third of the total units in the China-foreign cooperative education program. + The teaching hours of the faculty from foreign institutions must

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		<p>account for more than one-third of the total teaching hours of the China-foreign cooperative education program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although this rule is considered comprehensive, it is also seen as strict and rigid. However, institutions have found creative ways to meet the requirement for a high proportion of undergraduate teaching. One example is a linked institute that has adjusted its new program to meet not just one-third but 50% of the teaching requirement.
Remote learning	/	/
High school education		
International School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The required investment ranges from 600,000 CNY (equivalent to 84,000 USD) to 1,000,000 CNY (equivalent to 140,000 USD). - A campus area of at least 300 m2 - Typically, the Chinese partner will provide land ownership and facilities, while the managing unit of the affiliated schools will provide intellectual property (such as course design, teacher training, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are at least 5 staff members, including at least 2 certified teachers. - Can only be established under the name of an affiliated school. - The principal and legal representative must be Chinese. - Training centers owned by foreigners can be established in the Free Trade Zone. - Internationally affiliated schools are allowed to issue Chinese diplomas or foreign diplomas. If issuing a foreign degree, it must have equivalent value to the degree issued at the main institution abroad. - In cases where it is not possible to issue a foreign degree with equivalent value, the transnational educational institution will be granted a "Chinese Partner Degree," with the phrase "in cooperation with foreign educational organizations" printed on the degree.
Remote learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is at least 1 employee. - No minimum investment required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be established and controlled by foreigners - Established under the name of Value-Added Telecommunications Services and Internet Information Services

3. Practice of Some Typical International Education Models in China

1. *The international education model in Hainan Island, China*

According to current regulations, a foreign higher education institution that wants to establish a branch in China must partner/joint venture with a domestic partner (which can be a higher education institution or a business, such as the University of Nottingham Ningbo, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, etc.). However, recently, China has adopted more open policies, such as the new transnational education policies in Hainan Island.

In 2018, the Chinese government announced that Hainan Island (with a population of 9 million) would become the largest free trade zone in the country. (British Council, 2022). In 2019, the Chinese Ministry of Education and the Hainan provincial government issued a document titled "On Supporting the Implementation of Extensive Education Reforms in Hainan," which focuses on implementing the "International Education Island" policy. This policy calls for support and encouragement in expanding the training scale of international cooperative educational institutions in the fields of medicine and healthcare; establishing general educational institutions for foreigners; setting up laboratories and research institutes on the marine economy, tropical agriculture, healthcare, tourism, and culture; and piloting the establishment of an independent international university or vocational school focused on engineering without needing to be affiliated with Chinese schools. The goal of this policy is to attract high-quality education providers to establish educational institutions on the island. Policymakers also believe that this policy will help mitigate the brain drain and attract talent to Hainan Island (Ministry of Education of China and Hainan Provincial People's Government, 2019).

In August 2020, the Hainan provincial government and Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences (Germany) signed a cooperation agreement to establish a new campus in the Yangpu Economic Development Zone. This is the first higher education institution in China owned and operated by a foreign organization (Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016; Subhash & Cudney, 2018). This school will teach according to the German applied teaching model and can confer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees (Hainan Provincial People's Government, 2020).

The pilot program allowing foreign higher education institutions to operate independently in Hainan Island may signal that similar policies will be implemented in other regions in the future. In order to ensure the benefits brought by transnational educational institutions as well as educational sovereignty, the Chinese government aims to strengthen its influence over autonomous transnational educational institutions and limit the number of subjects these institutions can teach. (Yang, 2023)

2. *Nottingham University, Ningbo*

The University of Nottingham Ningbo China was established in 2004 by a partnership between the University of Nottingham (UK) and Zhejiang Wanli University, a private university in China.

According to Huang's (2008) research, the University of Nottingham Ningbo is not a branch of the University of Nottingham but an independent university owned by the Zhejiang Wanli Group. Accordingly, the Zhejiang Wanli Group is responsible for the location, construction of facilities, documentation, and administration. Nottingham University is responsible for academic-related issues such as curriculum, quality assurance, assessment and evaluation, and faculty training and development. In addition to the programs fully imported from the University of Nottingham, the Chinese degree programs are taught entirely in English. Students who complete the course will receive a degree from the University of Nottingham.

In 2022, the University of Nottingham Ningbo had over 8,000 students from 70 countries and territories around the world. Regarding the teaching staff, the University has more than 900 researchers, lecturers, teachers, and support staff. At the same time, the School also has a total of 880 lecturers, including 25 world-renowned professors, appointed through the Li Dak Sum Chair Professorship Program.

Source: Compiled by the team from Huang (2008) & Đặng Quế Anh (2011)

3. *Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University*

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJLU) began teaching its first cohort in 2006. The school is the result of the collaboration between the University of Liverpool (UK) and Xi'an Jiaotong University (China), with the aim of teaching and training experts and managers with technical expertise, management skills, international thinking, and

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strong competitiveness to meet the global demand and development in economics, society, business, technology, and research in fields where humanity is facing challenges. The school is also a new model of higher education aimed at influencing contemporary education in China and the world (Javorcik & Spatareanu, 2008; Li et al., 2022).

XJLU focuses its teaching on science, technology, and management, and the applications of these fields rather than pure liberal arts. XJLU aims not to become a replica of the University of Liverpool or a second Xi'an Jiaotong University, but to self-position its brand based on the existing strengths of its two parent universities, specifically: The University of Liverpool: A member of the Russell Group - a group of research-intensive universities in the United Kingdom that have received numerous awards and research contracts; Member of the N8 group - a consortium of eight research universities in Northern England. The University of Liverpool has 22,000 students, making it one of the largest public universities in the United Kingdom. Ranked 190th in the 2023 QS World University Rankings, the University of Liverpool is placed in the TOP 101-150 of the world's leading universities according to the ARWU rankings.

Xi'an Jiaotong University: One of the oldest and most prestigious universities in China; It is a member of the C9 League - a group of the top 9 universities in China (China's Ivy League). Every year, the University enrolls 32,000 students, offering 200 Master's programs and 100 Doctoral programs in the fields of Science, Engineering, Medicine, Economics, Management, Arts, Languages, and Law. Ranked 302nd among the world's top universities in the 2023 QS rankings. According to the ARWU 2023 rankings, the university is ranked 10th among the best universities in China and is in the top 101-150 best universities in the world (Onyinyechi, 2021).

Xi'an Jiaotong University is the top institution in the engineering field in China and ranks 90th in the world according to QS. Meanwhile, the University of Liverpool ranks 197th. (theo QS). The higher ranking of Xi'an Jiaotong University explains why the name "Xi'an Jiaotong" precedes "Liverpool" in the university's name.

The collaboration between the two universities is described by the phrase "qiang qiang he zuo" (strong-strong cooperation), in contrast to the imbalanced academic collaboration between the University of Nottingham and the Zhejiang Wanli University. Based on the existing strengths of the two parent universities, Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University focuses on fields such as science, engineering, management, and the development of training programs in biotechnology, computer science, software engineering, electronics engineering, language and culture, mathematics, civil engineering, civil design, and business and economics.

Source: Compiled by the team from Feng

4 Recommendations

Based on international experience, as well as proposals and recommendations from management agencies, educational institutions, investors, and embassy representatives, the author would like to present some recommendations for promoting high-quality foreign investment cooperation in education while ensuring effectiveness and positive impacts on the domestic education system.

1. Innovate and enhance the effectiveness of state management activities in international education

- a. Proactively and actively creating a favorable environment for foreign cooperation and investment in the education sector; selectively attracting foreign investment based on national priorities and interests; Implement targeted investment promotion activities aimed at certain partners with potential, strengths, long-term investment commitments, and contributions to the development of education and training in Vietnam;
- b. Develop specific policies and plans to attract foreign higher education institutions to establish branches in Vietnam. Specifically, (1) establish an information portal on foreign cooperation and investment in the education sector; (2) research and implement a joint investment model to establish branches of foreign higher education institutions; (3) Encourage higher education institutions to use English as a medium for teaching specialized training programs; (4) Coordinate with relevant ministries and sectors to develop policies to attract international students to Vietnam, including student visa regulations, residence permits, and work permits...
- c. Focus on developing educational cooperation relations with partners, especially neighboring countries, major powers, strategic partners, comprehensive partners, and other important partners; create breakthroughs in educational cooperation, strengthen educational cooperation with some traditional partners commensurate with the level of political-diplomatic-economic relations, in line with socio-economic development priorities, and serve the maximum national interests; Build a management information system to collect information on foreign

cooperation and investment activities in the education sector; focus on applying information technology in processing procedures for investors, computerizing statistics, forecasting, management, and reporting in education.

- d. Develop a team of management officials to promote investment in the education sector and organize training courses to enhance the skills of this team; encourage individuals both domestically and internationally with knowledge and experience in promoting investment in education to participate in supporting these activities..
- e. Strengthen the training of legal and professional knowledge, enhance the capacity for the staff and civil servants of management agencies and educational institutions in attracting and managing cooperation and investment activities in the field of education;
- f. Compile and issue a set of documents providing knowledge and skills for internationalization and investment promotion in the field of education; training materials for managers and lecturers of educational institutions on internationalization
- g. Organize study sessions, exchanges, and share experiences in promoting investment in the field of internationalization in education with reputable higher education institutions in the region and the world

2. *Perfecting the institution, promoting the environment for international education investment and business cooperation*

- Proactively and actively create a favorable environment for foreign cooperation and investment in the education sector; selectively attract foreign investment based on national priorities and interests; Implement targeted investment promotion activities aimed at certain potential partners with strengths, long-term investment commitments, contributing to the development of education and training in Vietnam;
- Review, develop, and finalize regulations on the establishment and operation conditions of foreign-invested educational institutions to attract reputable foreign educational institutions and supplement operational conditions.
- Review investment conditions in the education sector by cutting unnecessary or outdated conditions, researching amendments and additions to certain regulations to make them more appropriate, enhancing competitiveness in attracting foreign cooperation and investment in education, and improving the effectiveness and quality of state management of cooperation and investment activities in education. Some specific proposals are as follows:

- ***Regarding legal entities and ownership:***

For higher education institutions with foreign investment or branches of foreign educational institutions, continue to maintain the relatively open policy as it is now regarding legal entities and ownership (not requiring investors to be higher education institutions or to collaborate with domestic higher education institutions). However, additional policies are needed to encourage joint ventures and partnerships between Vietnamese and international partners to leverage the capabilities and capital of both sides, similar to the models in China and Indonesia. Especially, it is necessary to encourage investment in education through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model from international investors.

For the joint training programs, there should be regulations regarding the names and brands to avoid confusion between a program and an international university or a branch of an international university (Björkman & Lu, 1999; Leung & Kwong, 2003).

There should be more specific regulations regarding the naming of international high schools to avoid misunderstandings. For example, we can learn from Indonesia and China about not using certain words like "international" in the names of schools.

- ***Regarding investment capital and facilities:***

Reduce the investment capital requirement for international universities (1 trillion VND) or branches of international universities (500 billion VND). As analyzed above, the capital requirements in Vietnam are currently quite high compared to other countries in the region, which is an unattractive point for investors, leading to an increase in recent mergers and acquisitions (as they usually have lower costs). In the new decree, this capital requirement should be reduced or divided into multiple stages. For example, at the time of license issuance, a lower investment amount could be required, and investors would only need to invest the full amount after a certain operational period (e.g., after 5 or 10 years). Consider reducing the area requirements for facilities to make them more attractive to investors.

- **Regarding the lecturing and management staff:**

The current requirements for the quality of the teaching and management staff are considered moderate, not too strict, and even somewhat more lenient compared to other countries in the region. However, the current regulations on work permits still have many shortcomings. The duration of the work permit needs to be extended. The procedures for issuing work permits also need to be simplified and made more convenient for schools to attract talented lecturers and administrators to work. It is necessary to introduce appropriate incentive mechanisms, increasing the duration of work permits from 2 years to 5 years to align with international standards; to study the conditions for exempting work permits for at least 1 year for teachers, lecturers, and scientists with the title of professor, holding a doctorate, or having received international awards in scientific research; to reform administrative procedures for issuing work permits to encourage the recruitment of foreign lecturers, experts, and intellectuals with high professional qualifications to participate in teaching and research at educational institutions, and to promote cooperation in teaching, scientific research, and technology transfer at educational institutions and higher education institutions..

Similar personal income tax incentives in Indonesia and China also need to be studied. Finally, for joint training programs, there may be additional requirements for research collaboration between partner institutions and Vietnamese universities to enhance research capacity and innovation for Vietnamese higher education institutions.

In addition, the regulations regarding foreign native-speaking lecturers should be reconsidered. Currently, education is open, so those who are qualified do not necessarily have to be native speakers

- **Regarding students:**

Consider adding a requirement for a certain percentage of international students similar to Indonesia, especially for international universities or branches of international universities. It may be considered to set the ratio of international students at 10% to ensure the international character of the higher education institution.

- **Regarding the training program and quality assurance:**

Consider adding the following requirements and policies:

- (i) There should be priority policies and support for joint training programs in basic sciences, social sciences, and humanities, as well as fields crucial for the sustainable development of the country such as sustainable development, climate change, innovation, heritage, culture, and educational sciences.
- (ii) There should be priority policies and support for joint training programs in basic sciences, social sciences, and humanities, as well as fields crucial for the sustainable development of the country such as sustainable development, climate change, innovation, heritage, culture, and educational sciences.
- (iii) In order to help domestic higher education institutions learn from foreign experiences and open new majors in the future, allow Vietnamese higher education institutions to open joint training programs in the field of high technology that the school does not yet have corresponding programs in or that are trending globally but do not exist in Vietnam.
- (iv) Advancing the requirement that foreign programs, international universities, and their subsidiaries perform recurring quality evaluations by global standards.

For general education, consider adding the following requirements and policies:

- (i) Research and reconsider the naming of schools, limiting the situation where educational institutions excessively use the term "international" in their names as is currently the case.
- (ii) Consider developing specific regulations to allow public general education institutions to engage in educational partnerships.

Distance education: Maintain the existing rules and do not yet approve international education programs that are entirely online.

3. Strengthen research, advisory work, and enhance analytical and forecasting capabilities

Continue to strengthen research, monitoring, and evaluation of trends and the role of international education in the development of national education systems in countries around the world; study and assess the impact of training linkages on economic, social, and labor market development; survey and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of educational linkage programs (including the dual diploma program of Vietnamese and British high school diplomas) and training linkages, thereby proposing measures and policies for the development of international education suitable for Vietnam, contributing to the overall goal of international integration in education and the development of education

and training in Vietnam; recommend appropriate policies, strategies, and measures in response to new global development trends.

Continue researching and summarizing the experiences of other countries regarding policies and measures to promote investment cooperation in education; intensify research and advisory services to support the major guidelines and policies of the Party and State on enhancing foreign cooperation and investment in education; Enhance policy dialogue on foreign cooperation and investment with international organizations, reputable experts, and scholars, ensuring substance, effectiveness, and alignment with domestic needs. Enhance the effectiveness of high-level policy dialogue programs and strengthen the activities of ministerial-level policy dialogue.

4. Increasing collaboration and international investment in local education

Localities need to have policy mechanisms, create a transparent and open environment, and have a comprehensive land use plan for education to attract foreign investment in the education sector; Localities need to proactively compile a list of projects to attract foreign investment, including education investment projects; actively organize conferences and forums to promote and call for foreign investment; Simplify administrative procedures for issuing investment registration certificates and educational operation licenses; Maximize support for the operations of foreign-invested educational institutions currently operating in the locality, creating a ripple effect and attracting potential investors; Issue a unified coordination regulation for the management of foreign-invested educational institutions: which clearly defines the responsibilities of each sector and functional agency of the province and city in coordinating management, inspection, and auditing (to avoid a business being inspected or audited multiple times with the same content by different functional agencies) and handling violations, as well as stipulating the obligations and responsibilities of investors and educational institutions; Continue to prioritize training and fostering for the team working on international integration; Issuing policies for recruiting and employing foreign experts in general education schools. Issuing policies for recruiting and employing foreign experts in primary and secondary schools; To instruct the integrated education program, localities must review the rules pertaining to educational linkage, quickly assist qualified educational institutions in creating educational linkage projects, carry out their authorized duties, have the project approved, and put it into action. In order to help educational institutions execute the educational linkage project successfully and teach the integrated educational program effectively and in compliance with regulations, it is essential to monitor, supervise, support, and coordinate with specialized departments throughout the implementation process.

5 Conclusion

The research results have shown that compared to other countries in the region, Vietnam's regulations on the international education market have some "more open" aspects, but also some "more closed" aspects compared to other countries in the region. For example, regarding legal entities and ownership, Vietnam's regulations are somewhat "more open" as they do not require legal entities to establish educational institutions, and foreign-invested higher education institutions do not have to be educational institutions; Vietnam also does not require that the establishment of the aforementioned types of educational organizations be in collaboration with a Vietnamese entity. Similarly, another example showing that Vietnam is "more open" compared to other countries in the region is that Vietnam does not require foreign-invested higher education institutions to have international students; or that Vietnam allows the proportion of Vietnamese students studying foreign educational programs at foreign-invested educational institutions to reach up to 50%.

On the contrary, some regulations show Vietnam is more "closed" than other countries in the region. For example, the regulations regarding the financial and material requirements in Vietnam to establish a higher education institution with foreign investment or a branch of a foreign higher education institution are considered stricter compared to other countries in the region. Similarly, the regulations on work permits for foreigners in Vietnam or the regulations on distance education.

In the aforementioned regulations, not every "opening" is good or every "closing" is bad. Due to the specific nature of the education sector, each country needs to have a reasonable strategy for "closing" or "opening" its education market, on one hand, to learn from and receive support from advanced education systems, and on the other hand to ensure the development direction of its education system. Therefore, in the recommendations section, we do not

suggest fully "opening" all international education regulations in Vietnam; in fact, there are some regulations that we recommend tightening (or in other words, "closing") more, as previously mentioned.

Propose the next research topics

This research is conducted in the context of the Central Government summarizing 10 years of fundamental and comprehensive reform in education and training according to Resolution 29. With international education, the government is also drafting a new strategy for international integration in education to replace Decision 2448/QĐ-TTg and a new decree to replace Decree 86. Based on that, the author proposes several directions for further research to provide scientific foundations and international experiences to help manage international education better and more effectively, specifically:

- Research on internationalization strategies in some countries in the region and recommendations for Vietnam.
- Research on the experience of attracting international students in some countries in the region and recommendations for Vietnam.
- Research on public-private partnership mechanisms to attract international investors in the education sector.
- Research the quality assurance mechanisms for integrated education programs.
- Research, and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of integrated education programs.
- Research survey on the demand for establishing branches of foreign higher education institutions in Vietnam

Conflict of interest statement

The author declared that he has no competing interests.

Statement of authorship

The author has a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The author has approved the final article.

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