

QUALITATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE WORLD'S BEST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT

This thematic analysis explores the qualitative elements defining the world's best educational systems, aiming to identify emerging factors that contribute to their success. The research question centers on understanding the distinctive features that characterize these top educational systems. Through a comprehensive thematic analysis, eight key qualitative elements emerged as integral components shaping the landscape of the top 10 educational systems globally. The identified elements include the international attraction of these systems, emphasizing global, diverse, and multicultural appeal. A robust credit system enhances academic transparency and mobility, while a diverse course offering provides students with a wide array of educational options. Affordability and accessibility play a crucial role, with low or zero tuition fees ensuring broader participation. Global recognition of degrees from these educational systems underscores their prestige and quality. Furthermore, a pronounced focus on research and innovation contributes to the dynamic and progressive nature of these institutions. Cultural and language considerations, particularly the availability of English-taught courses, enhance accessibility for a global student body. Lastly, a strong emphasis on post-graduation job opportunities underscores the practical application of education. In conclusion, recognizing and incorporating these emerging qualitative elements into educational frameworks can pave the way for the development of high-quality, inclusive, and globally competitive educational systems. This research provides valuable insights for educational institutions and policymakers, offering a foundation for fostering excellence in education on a worldwide scale.

Keywords: Qualitative elements, Educational Systems, Emerging Factor, Thematic Analysis, Global Competitiveness

INTRODUCTION

The most powerful force that has the power to influence not only individuals but entire societies is education (UNESCO, 2023). It is a universal right that needs to be given priority all across the world because its influence transcends regional boundaries. Education opens doors to a world of lifelong learning, allowing people to broaden their horizons in knowledge, advance in life, and develop a complete grasp of the world (Sinha, 2023).

Additionally, education gives us the skills to think critically and behave sensibly, going beyond simply being a collection of information. Through education, people can develop their logical reasoning abilities, which will help them analyze events, come to wise conclusions, and meaningfully contribute to society (Susino, 2022). It serves as the

foundation for the growth of innovative ideas and encourages a culture of creativity and problem-solving.

Furthermore, it empowers people to overcome prejudice and ignorance by fostering empathy and understanding. In a world that is becoming more connected, it encourages tolerance and acceptance, paving the road for peaceful cohabitation. With such, education is not simply a personal asset; it is also an investment in society that drives communities toward development, enlightenment, and social cohesion (Darling-Hammond & Rothman, 2011). As a result, it is crucial for all societies to prioritize and fund educational activities.

However, education is intrinsically complicated; it encompasses a diverse journey of growth and development and goes far beyond the boundaries of grades and test results. An excellent educational system goes beyond merely imparting knowledge; it develops into a nurturing environment for creativity, a laboratory for sharpening critical thinking abilities, and a refuge for promoting emotional intelligence among students (Kaur, 2022).

With such, this qualitative investigation explores the complex components that make up an exceptional educational framework. Beyond the conventional measurements, it focuses on the qualitative elements that foster a climate in which both educators and students can flourish at par with the Global Quality Index, and Global Opportunity Index (Sinha, 2023). Global Quality Index is a measure designed to evaluate the overall quality of education in different countries based on various factors like health, education, job opportunities, economic security, and etc. Additionally, Global Opportunity Index assess the opportunities provided by a country's educational system for personal and professional growth including economic, financial, institutional, and regulatory (Team Leverage Edu, 2022). This investigation aims to create a comprehensive model of educational excellence by investigating the emerging qualitative elements of the best educational system of the world.

Research Question:

This investigation aims to create a comprehensive model of educational excellence by investigating the emerging qualitative elements of the best educational institutions of the world. Specifically, it aims to answer the following question:

1. What are the emerging qualitative elements of the best educational systems of the world?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a thematic analysis as the functional research design in answering the research question. According to Caulfield (2023) it is a method of analyzing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as an interview or transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly.

Data Sources

The study used the Google search as the main database-search platform in seeking relevant institutional websites which can be included in this study. The selection criteria is the country's ranking of the best educational system in terms of the global quality index and global opportunity index.

Sampling

This study utilized purposive sampling of top-ranked countries in terms of global quality index and global opportunity index. Purposive sampling refers to a non-probability sampling strategy where units are chosen because they possess the qualities your sample needs. In other words, in purposive sampling, units are chosen "on purpose" (Palinkas et al., 2023)

Data Extraction Procedures

For convenience in reference, navigation, and citation, this systematic review has extracted the names of the rank, country, global quality index, and global opportunity index of the best educational systems as reflected on table 1. All of them were taken from Google search,

Table 1.

Top 10 best educational systems in terms of Global Quality Index and Global Opportunity Index

ID	Rank	Country	Global Quality Index	Global Opportunity Index
1	1 st	United Kingdom	78.2	69.79
2	2 nd	United States	72.0	68.74
3	3 rd	Australia	70.5	67.52
4	4 th	Netherlands	70.3	67.21
5	5 th	Sweden	70.1	66.96
6	6 th	France	69.9	69.3
7	7 th	Denmark	69.8	62.54
8	8 th	Canada	69.8	61.01
9	9 th	Germany	69.5	60.64
10	10 th	Switzerland	68.3	60.12

Source: Author's research work (2023)

Data Analysis

This study utilized thematic analysis in determining the emerging qualitative elements of the best educational institutions of the world. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that involves reading through a set of data and looking for patterns in the meaning of the data to find themes. It is an active process of reflexivity in which the researcher's subjective experience is at the center of making sense of the data (Kiger and Varpio, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 10 reviewed educational systems came from countries with the top 10 ranks in terms of global quality index and global opportunity index. With ratings of 78.2 and 69.79 in the Global Quality Index and Global Opportunity Index rankings, respectively, the United Kingdom tops both lists, highlighting its exceptional educational system and wide-ranging prospects. With scores of 72.0 for quality and 68.74 for opportunity, which reflect a broad educational landscape, the United States comes in second. Australia, which emphasizes excellent education and promising futures, is in third place with ratings of 70.5 and 67.52. The Netherlands, Sweden, France, Denmark, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland also exhibit a strong dedication by giving their inhabitants access to top-notch education and major opportunities as shown in table 2.

Table 2

Ranking of the top 10 best Educational Systems in the World.

Rank	Country	Global Quality Index	Global Opportunity Index
1 st	United Kingdom	78.2	69.79
2 nd	United States	72.0	68.74
3 rd	Australia	70.5	67.52
4 th	Netherlands	70.3	67.21
5 th	Sweden	70.1	66.96
6 th	France	69.9	69.3
7 th	Denmark	69.8	62.54
8 th	Canada	69.8	61.01
9 th	Germany	69.5	60.64
10 th	Switzerland	68.3	60.12

Source: Author's research work (2023)

Findings

This section presents the results of the subdivisions of the framework in this section as follows. This focuses on the identified emerging qualitative elements of the best educational systems of the world.

Emerging Qualitative Elements of the Best Educational Systems

Based on the comprehensive thematic analysis of the identified to 10 educational systems. International attraction, credit system, diverse course offering, affordability and accessibility, global recognition, focus on research and innovation, cultural and language

consideration, and job opportunities are the eight (8) emerging qualitative elements as shown in table 3.

Table 3

Emerging Qualitative Elements of the Best Educational Systems

Qualitative Elements of the Best Educational Systems	Characteristics	Country ID	Number of countries
International Attraction	Global, diverse, multicultural appeal.	[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]	10
Credit System	Enhances academic transparency, mobility	[1][4][5][6][7][9][10]	7
Diverse Course Offering	Variety of course options	[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]	10
Affordability and Accessibility	Low or zero tuition fees	[1][3][4][5][6][7][9][10]	8
Global Recognition	Internationally recognized degrees	[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]	10
Focus on Research and Innovation	Emphasis on research and innovation	[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]	10
Cultural and Language Consideration	English-taught courses	[1][2][3][4][5][7][8][9][10]	9
Job Opportunities	Post-graduation employment	[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]	10

Source: Author's research work (2023)

International Attraction. Attraction on a global scale. Due to their lively multicultural backgrounds, countries including the US, UK, Australia, Canada, and other European countries have emerged as global educational hubs. These nations attract international students not only for their high standards of education but also for the chance to experience a variety of cultural traditions. Students' worldwide perspectives are enriched by being a part of this melting pot, which promotes a vibrant exchange of ideas and cultures.

Moreover, these countries offer extensive networking opportunities, allowing students to build connections with peers from around the world. The presence of a large international student community creates a dynamic global atmosphere on campuses, encouraging the exchange of cultural values and promoting understanding among different nationalities. This multicultural exposure not only enriches the educational experience but also prepares students for the interconnected global landscape they will navigate in their future careers.

Credit Systems. The dedication of European nations to establishing an open and transferable academic environment is demonstrated through the European Credit Transfer

System (ECTS). Credit standards allow students the freedom to earn credits from a variety of sources, fostering academic mobility and improving the overall educational experience. The obligation to finish a certain number of credits each semester acts as a driving force, teaching discipline and pushing students to make consistent progress in their academic pursuits.

In addition to streamlining credit transfers, ECTS encourages justice and uniformity in the assessment of academic performance, guaranteeing equal chances for all students. This approach promotes a sense of academic mobility by enabling students to experience various learning contexts while guaranteeing that their accomplishments are acknowledged consistently. As a result, it helps to create a consistent and open educational environment throughout European nations.

Diverse Course Offering. The educational landscape in top international locations is characterized by a variety of course options, in addition to chances for practical experience and research. These nations have educational systems that place a high priority on knowledge applications in the actual world, which benefits students. Students are strongly encouraged to take part in practical learning experiences, internships, and research projects because these activities are prioritized. This practical approach not only enriches their academic experience but also greatly improves their employability and skill set.

Moreover, through these immersive learning opportunities, students deepen their knowledge of their subject areas and improve their ability to think critically, innovate, and solve problems. These hands-on learning experiences help students not only get ready for the demands of the job market but also build a culture of creativity and knowledge, giving them the tools they need to successfully traverse the challenges of the working world.

Affordability and Accessibility. Accessibility and affordability are essential components of higher education, especially in nations like Germany. The idea is based on the practice of low or free tuition prices, which guarantees that education is affordable for people from all socioeconomic backgrounds. For instance, Germany has eliminated excessive tuition costs for both domestic and foreign students, in line with the country's dedication to open access to education. This policy has potentially revolutionary effects. Tuition fees can be eliminated or greatly reduced, making education more accessible and allowing people from all socioeconomic backgrounds to pursue higher education without having to pay costly expenditures.

Furthermore, inclusion suggests that no one's access to a high-quality education is hampered by financial limitations, fostering a more egalitarian society where everyone has equal access to educational possibilities. This strategy enhances the overall educational experience and contributes to a more equal society while also democratizing education and cultivating a talented and diverse student body.

Global Recognition. In the context of higher education, "global recognition" refers to the widespread acceptance and respect that diplomas from particular nations have on the global arena. The US, UK, Australia, Canada, and other European countries are among those that are renowned for providing education of extraordinarily high quality. Employers all throughout the world acknowledge and hold in high regard degrees earned from

colleges in these nations. This recognition transcends national and geographic boundaries, demonstrating the significance and applicability of the skills and knowledge gained during the course of education.

As such, this international degree certification is extremely beneficial for international students. Their education's value is greatly increased. International students find it simpler to obtain career prospects abroad when firms around the world recognize the caliber of education received in these nations. Students benefit from this recognition by feeling more assured and confident, knowing that their credentials are recognized outside of the country where they studied and are valuable wherever their professional aspirations may lead them. In the end, it encourages students to research job opportunities around the globe and fosters mobility, helping to create a workforce that is more interconnected and aware of the world around them.

Focus on Research and Innovation. Innovative research is prioritized in nations like Sweden, which also provides students with cutting-edge equipment and encourages active engagement in creative projects. This method gives students practical knowledge and problem-solving skills, which improves their comprehension of the courses. Real-world research is important for advancing society and the economy as well as fostering creativity inside academics. The involvement of students equips them to face new problems and make significant contributions to society.

Cultural and Language Consideration. The demands of international students who might not be native speakers of the local language are addressed by cultural and linguistic considerations, particularly the availability of English-taught courses in non-English speaking nations like the Netherlands. This program guarantees that education is inclusive and accessible to non-native speakers. Universities in these nations welcome a greater range of students from different linguistic origins by offering English-language courses. By removing linguistic obstacles, this accommodation recognizes the international character of education and makes it possible for people of other cultures and tongues to pursue higher education.

Practically speaking, this strategy improves the educational experience for international students by helping them to fully engage in their studies, take part in debates, and properly understand course contents. It encourages a welcoming and inclusive learning atmosphere where students may concentrate on their academic goals without being hindered by language barriers. The interaction of pupils from varied language backgrounds in a common educational setting also promotes cultural interchange and understanding. Overall, providing English-language classes helps international students study more easily and also enhances the educational environment by fostering diversity and cross-cultural exchanges.

Job Opportunities. A practical approach to higher education is highlighted by Job Opportunities, particularly the focus on Post-Graduation Employment in nations like France. These nations actively build avenues for students to find jobs after completing their studies rather than only concentrating on delivering education. This strategy guarantees that students can use the knowledge and abilities acquired throughout their academic

journey in practical settings, improving their employability and increasing the effect of their education.

For instance, in France, this emphasis on employment following graduation means that students obtain both a theoretical education and preparation for the working world. Universities and other organizations work in partnership with businesses to provide students with networking opportunities, workshops, and internships. Students are more marketable to companies thanks to this practical experience that helps them bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and actual implementation. Additionally, this strategy synchronizes learning with industry expectations, guaranteeing that graduates have the knowledge and abilities to excel in their chosen fields right away. These nations enable students to effortlessly move from academia to the workforce by emphasizing post-graduation employment, improving their job chances and general employability.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research sought to examine the newly emerging qualitative components of the world's best educational systems. Eight significant aspects emerged as crucial shaping features of the top 10 educational systems through a thorough thematic study. These factors include international attraction, a strong credit system, a diverse course offering, affordability and accessibility, global recognition, a focus on research and innovation, cultural and language consideration, and job opportunities. These results lay the groundwork for promoting educational excellence on a worldwide scale in addition to giving educational institutions and policymakers insightful information. A high-quality, inclusive, and globally competitive educational system can be developed by recognizing and incorporating these components into educational frameworks.

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