

# The role of higher education and social innovation in the development of emerging markets post Covid-19 in Vietnam and South East Asia

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# Overview

- During this talk we will explore:
  - Social innovation & its place in Higher Education.
  - The complex role of 21<sup>st</sup> century universities.
  - Data gathered from research across East and South East Asia into the social innovation landscape in HE:
    - Indonesia
    - Malaysia
    - Philippines
    - South Korea
    - Vietnam
  - What does this all mean for higher education & how can universities support the post-Covid recovery?
- Universities as ***anchor institutions***...



- Social innovation can be defined as *‘changes in the cultural, normative or regulative structures [or classes] of the society which enhance its collective power resources and improve its economic and social performance’* (Heiscalea, 2007:59).
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education Institutions need to be more than just research & teaching focused institutions:
  - Support the local economy.
  - Influence policy locally, nationally and globally.
  - Contribute towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
  - Co-create with communities, businesses & practitioners.
- Social innovation presents universities with an opportunity to leverage their resources in a post-Covid world to drive sustainable growth & impact.

# Social Innovation Hexagon



*Universities  
should achieve  
**ALL** of these six  
outcome pillars  
where possible*

# Research Overview

- **Objective:** is to understand the landscape of social innovation in Higher Education across East and South East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea & Vietnam).
- **Research Aims:**
  - analyse gaps in knowledge, capacity and future ambition of the academic community
  - Gauge the levels of trust and collaboration that currently exist in HE & beyond
  - identify the barriers to social innovation activities in research, teaching and incubation/community engagement
  - understand the key social challenges facing each of the five countries and how can these be addressed by social innovation (UN SDGs)
- Full report available online at:  
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/society/social-enterprise/reports/SIHE>

# Methodology

1

- **In-depth Literature Review**
- Explore global & local literature in relation to SI

2

- **Online Survey (n = 253) (Vietnam = 56)**
- Capture data from SI academics working in HE across the 5 countries

3

- **Interviews & Focus Groups (n = 193) (Vietnam = 44)**
- Explore perceptions of multi-stakeholder groups on the SI ecosystem

4

- **Ecosystem Mapping**
- Map SI research, teaching & knowledge exchange across East & SE Asia

5

- **Triangulation of Data**
- Triangulation of Stages 1-4 data into cohesive analytical discussion on SI

6

- **Develop Recommendations**
- Prepare recommendations for improving SI engagement in HE

- Many positives related to the research base on SI:
  - **growth:** a total of 351 publications focused on social innovation were identified across the 5 countries:
    - No. publications increasing over time (+54% per year)
    - **Vietnam (academic publications = +19% / year; non-academic publications = +63% / year).**
- A number of barriers to SI research:
  - **funding:** lack of institutional funding for SI research, with significant proportions of non-funded/self-funded research (**Vietnam = 66%**; Malaysia = 48%; Indonesia = 46%; South Korea = 32%; Philippines = 21%)
  - **impact:** there remains limited applied research and a lack of recognition amongst HEIs (and funding bodies) of research impact
    - *‘Think of why many scientific research topics are unusable. It’s because they didn’t research on the problems of the market...So, it’ll forever be a piece of paper, and can hardly be put into practice.’ (Vietnamese policymaker)*

**Key takeaway: research needs to be more applied, with greater market relevance to attract funding & deliver impact.**

# Teaching



- Teaching on SI is also one with positive outcomes:
  - **growth:** 311 modules/courses focused on social innovation were identified across the 5 countries:
    - SI teaching gives students communication skills, empathy, problem-solving, and analytical thinking
    - No. modules/courses increasing over time (+31% per year)
  - **real-world impact:** *‘I think universities and academic institutions really have responsibility to making sure that whatever they teach is relevant to the real world.’* (Filipino academic)
- A number of barriers to SI teaching exist:
  - **quality:** curriculum quality is often poor, with accreditation processes within HEIs limiting innovation (**Vietnam 58% rate curriculum as poor**)
  - **relevance:** remains limited engagement between academics & practitioners. Students learning needs to be experiential & place-based.

**Key takeaway: teaching needs to be embedded in the real problems of society & the economy.**



# Community Engagement

- HEIs are engaging with communities:
  - **impact:** 251 SI related community engagements across the 5 countries:
    - academics engage as board members, volunteers or officers (especially NGOs, schools and social enterprises)
    - **Vietnam:** training/capacity building (31%), forming alliances/partnerships/networks (20%), and service delivery (18%).
  - **collaborators:** main collaborations are with NGOs, schools & public bodies
    - Indonesia = 35%; Malaysia = 74%; Philippines = 62%; South Korea = 50%; **Vietnam = 75%**
- A number of barriers to community engagement:
  - **HEI support:** lack of institutional support for community engagement, with most collaborations being informal & pushed by academics themselves:
    - Concept of 'academic bricoleurs' driving these collaborations

**Key takeaway: Institutional ties with communities need to be strengthened; communities to inform support agendas.**

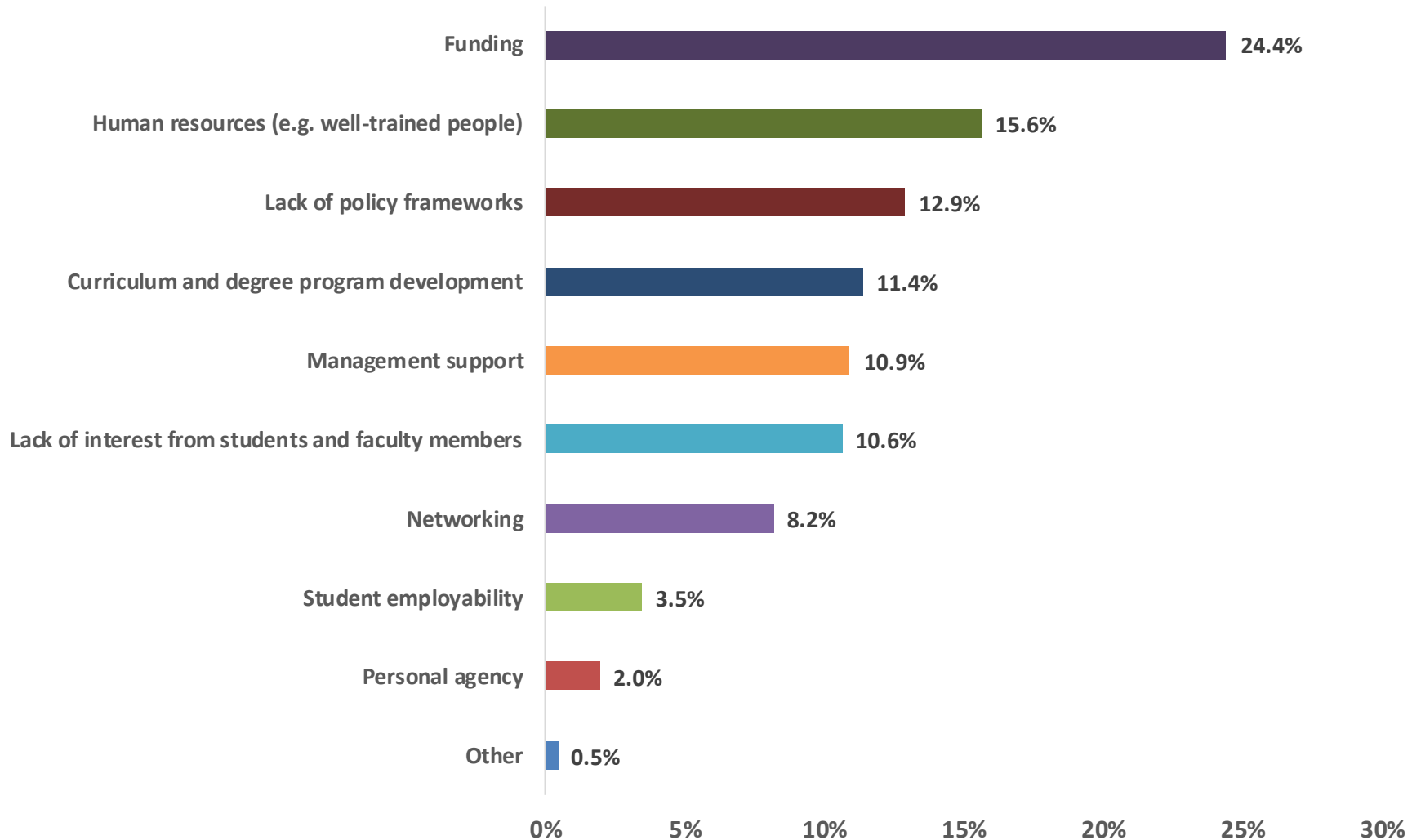
# Trust

- Scholar's trust of other stakeholder groups was explored:

Institution	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	South Korea	Vietnam
Parliament	5	5	5	3	6
Legal system	5	6	5	4	6
National government	6	6	6	5	6
Local government	6	6	6	5	6
Police	6	7	5	4.5	6
Politicians	4	5	5	3	5
Political parties	4	5	4	3	6
United Nations	7	5	8	5	7
Own HEI	8	7.5	9	7	8
Partner institutions	7	7	8	6	8
Civil society	7	7	8	5.5	7
Other higher education institutions	8	7	9	6	8

**Key takeaway: Trust is integral to developing partnerships & marketplaces, whilst there remains limited trust in institutions across the region there is high trust in civil society and HEIs.**

# Key Challenges for Social Innovation



# HEI Anchor Institutions

- Universities can play a critical role in the post-Covid recovery, particularly in relation to social innovation & sustainable growth.
- In order for this to happen, the sector needs to:
  - Focus more on **impactful, applied research** that has **tangible value** to markets & communities.
  - Ensure teaching is **high-quality & applied** i.e. it has relevance for students in the **real-world**.
  - Encourage **partnerships** with/between communities, government & business.
  - Partner with public, private & third sector institutions to **build trust**.
  - Engagement with the UN's SDGs.

**Universities can & should be *anchor institutions* in their local, national & global ecosystems.**

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    - **Universiti Teknologi Petronas**, Seri Iskandar, Malaysia (<https://www.utp.edu.my/Pages/Home.aspx>)
    - **University of the Philippines**, Manila, Philippines (<https://www.up.edu.ph/>)
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Thank you  
for listening

Any questions?

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