

THESEB

HIGHER EDUCATION IN
SOUTHEAST ASIA AND BEYOND



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**What's new in higher education?
Southeast Asia and beyond**

INAUGURAL
ISSUE

MD's Message

Dear readers,

I am pleased to share with you the inaugural issue of *Higher Education in Southeast Asia and Beyond* (HESB), a bi-annual publication of The HEAD Foundation, in collaboration with the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) at Boston College. We are particularly pleased to have Prof Philip Altbach, the founding director of CIHE and a renowned authority on higher education issues around the world, as the publication's consultant editor.

Southeast Asia is an extraordinary growth region that has made huge strides in achieving universal education. Higher education is now rightly the next focus, as the region looks towards developing the full potential of our people, not only in preparing them for the workforce, but in nurturing all-rounded individuals.

Building on a unique blend of expert global insights and Asian ground knowledge, HESB aims to be a resource for all higher education professionals in Asia and for those interested in keeping updated in the higher education landscape in the region.

As an organisation that contributes to the study of education in Asia, The HEAD Foundation (THF) links the most updated global insights with well-established regional expertise to improve education across the spectrum, including in higher education and hence, the idea of this newsletter is a natural extension of our work and supports our mission broadly.

We hope that you will find the HESB helpful to your research and practice, and that it keeps you abreast of the exciting developments in this fast-growing part of the world.



Yu-Book LIM
Managing Director,
The HEAD Foundation

Editorial

HESB | JULY 2016 | ISSUE #01

It is my great pleasure to introduce the inaugural issue of *Higher Education in Southeast Asia and Beyond* (HESB). HESB is a biannual publication on higher education movements and developments in one of the world's most exciting regions for education researchers and practitioners. Through collaboration with our network of established partners and Fellows, we at The HEAD Foundation have curated this first issue to bring our readers unique insights into the developments in higher education in Southeast Asia and beyond. Our hope is that this newsletter will serve as a catalyst for building a network of ASEAN and Asian higher education scholars and practitioners, and a source of information for higher education developments in the region.

This issue highlights significant aspects of higher education reform in several countries, as well as best practices. From the Philippines to Singapore to India, higher education in Southeast Asia and beyond needs to be reconceptualised more imaginatively and effectively, to respond to such trends as internationalisation and massification. These are phenomena that are impacting higher education worldwide.

Philip Altbach, a distinguished scholar in the field of comparative higher education and editor of *International Higher Education*, has graciously agreed to launch this newsletter by responding to the important question of whether and how we can talk about a Southeast Asian "we", in his keynote article.

Other leading scholars in the field, **Bruce Johnstone**, **Mok Ka Ho** and **Satryo Soemantri Brodjonegoro** tackle the difficult questions on governance, financing, and autonomy to nudge us to think about whether change is actually too fast or too slow, and where policymakers need to focus to make changes more effective. **Arnoud De Meyer** writes about the role of technology.

Jason Tan, **Madeline Ong** and **Henrik Bresman** examine the case of Singapore, often viewed as an Asian model of education success, although they show us that there are still elements to be improved. **Rattana Lao**

questions the effects that international rankings have on higher education policy in Thailand, while **Thu T. Do** and **Duy N. Pham** bring the whole Southeast Asian region together as they ask what challenges student mobility poses to Southeast Asian institutions.

More and more students are graduating from higher education institutions, whether in middle-income countries such as Thailand, or in high-income countries such as Singapore. We expect that graduates would have the skills suitable for the workplace, but employers still face issues in finding skilled workers, as **Catherine Ramos** points out in her article on the Philippines. In Singapore though, the matching of skills training and the workplace has strengthened with the launch of the SkillsFuture initiative, as **Loke Hoe Yeong** writes in his article, but what if students insist on getting a degree anyway?

The issue of astronomic tuition fees in the US, and how that affects equitable access to higher education, is well known through the media. In her article, **Uma Natarajan** provides a comparison with the situation in Asia, sharing what important lessons may be gleaned from the US.

There is a need for policymakers to draw on an ever-expanding literature on higher education in the region to better understand the complex issues pervading Asian education, and to be able to integrate these truths and realities into effective policies. Our scholars have shown that higher education policy must be thought of both through the lens of Asia as an important social, economic and educational player for the world, as well as the lens of Asia within an international context. At the same time that each country is striving to attain its own standards of excellence, greater collaboration is also needed within our region to ensure that higher education meets societal and regional aspirations.



Prof S. GOPINATHAN

Editor, HESB

Academic Director, The HEAD Foundation

Contents

-
- 3** The Complex Diversity of Southeast Asian Post-Secondary Education
Philip Altbach
-
- 5** Technology and the New Learning Paradigm
Arnoud De Meyer
-
- 7** Higher Education Trends and Tensions in Southeast Asia
Bruce Johnstone and Loke Hoe Yeong
-
- 9** Higher Education Affordability in the US and Asia
Uma Natarajan
-
- 11** Countering Campus Extremism in Southeast Asia
Anthony Welch
-
- 13** Challenges of Student Mobility in Southeast Asia
Thu T. Do and Duy N. Pham
-
- 15** The Policy and Politics of the Cohort Participation Rate in Singapore's Universities
Loke Hoe Yeong
-
- 18** Higher Education and Skills Issues in the Philippines
Catherine Ramos
-
- 20** Singapore as a Hub for Developing Educational Leaders in Asia
Madeline Ong and Henrik Bresman
-
- 21** Higher Education Reform in Indonesia: Challenges and Opportunities
Satryo Soemantri Brodjonegoro
-
- 23** Ranking and a Reconceptualisation of University "Reputation" in Thailand
Rattana Lao
-
- 25** The Rise of Transnational Higher Education in China
Mok Ka Ho
-
- 27** Managing Markets and Massification of Higher Education in India
N.V. Varghese
-
- 29** Singapore's Global Schoolhouse Aspirations
Jason Tan
-
- 32** New Publications
-
- 33** Contributors' Biographies
-
- 34** About Us

The Complex Diversity of Southeast Asian Post-Secondary Education

Philip G. Altbach

Are there common elements in the higher education realities of Southeast Asia? In fact, the region may even be more divergent than convergent. This can be seen in the responses that the countries in the region have made to 21st century higher education challenges, and such an examination yields some useful lessons and models.

ASPECTS OF DIVERSITY

The region is diverse in almost every respect. Religious traditions include Muslim (Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei), Christian (the Philippines), Confucian (Vietnam), Buddhist (Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos), and mixed (Singapore) — with religious minorities in most countries. British, French, Spanish, American, and Dutch colonialism, and their academic traditions, have influenced the region. One country, Thailand, is one of the few in the developing world that was never colonised. Wealth varies dramatically from several high-income countries (Brunei and Singapore), some middle-income (Malaysia, Thailand), several that are close to middle-income (Indonesia, Vietnam, and perhaps the Philippines), and several that are still developing (Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos). Thus, it is not surprising that the variations in higher education realities across the region are significant — in many ways there are more differences than similarities. This is understandable as each country needs a different approach to higher education development to meet specific national needs.

HIGHER EDUCATION REALITIES

Access to post-secondary education varies considerably in Southeast Asia — from approximately 10% in Myanmar to 87% of the relevant age group in Singapore. No Southeast Asia country, except Singapore, enrolls post-secondary students at the levels of the most advanced countries. Thailand (around half), Malaysia (37%) and Indonesia (32%) come closest. The poorer countries, such as Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos, are all under 20% in gross enrolment ratios. The region, with one exception, still faces the overwhelming pressures of massification.

It is not surprising that the region has very few globally recognised research universities. With the notable exception of Singapore, which has two universities in the top 100, none rank highly, and only 15 are listed in the top 800 of the Times Higher Education ranking of universities worldwide. Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, along with Singapore, are represented. While these rankings are imperfect measures, they do indicate generally the standing of research universities globally. The fact that the region has few research universities is a serious disadvantage if it wants to participate at the top levels of global science, attract students and scholars from overseas, and, in general, be a serious player in the global knowledge economy.

Again, with the exception of Singapore, and to some extent Malaysia, investment in higher education in Southeast Asia has been modest — in general expenditure from government sources has been under the support levels of advanced countries. Only Singapore and Malaysia have provided higher levels of state investment in higher education — other countries, such as Indonesia and Vietnam, spend well under 1% of GDP on post-secondary education. These relatively low levels of investment have had important implications. There are few research universities in Southeast Asia, as pointed out earlier. It has also meant governments' response to the needs of massification — access to post-secondary education for large cohorts of

students — has been limited, and that the private sector has provided much of the facilities to absorb the demands of mass access.

The private sector has emerged as a key part of the post-secondary structure in much of Southeast Asia. Singapore, Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, Brunei and Malaysia are partial exceptions to this generalisation, although all have active and growing private institutions. In Thailand, Indonesia and Cambodia, private providers enrol more than half of the student population. In the Philippines, more than 80% of students are in private universities. Even socialist Vietnam plans to have 40% of enrolments in the private sector by 2020, although it is hard to see how that could be achieved without significantly lowering quality. In general, the private institutions are “demand-absorbing” as countries transition to mass higher education — accepting students with modest academic qualifications and often from families of lower socio-economic status. Many of the private providers are for-profit, and very few are high quality. In Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia, there are a few prestigious private universities, often affiliated with Christian religious organisations. Overall, little is known about the large and quite important private higher education sector in Southeast Asia.

Few Southeast Asian countries have coherent and well-designed academic systems that provide a range of academic opportunities. Few countries, in Southeast Asia or elsewhere, have figured out how to integrate the private higher education sector so that it can contribute coherently to the public interest. Further, even within public post-secondary education, there are seldom systems in place that effectively ensure that the various sectors intelligently interlock, so that research universities, teaching-focused institutions, vocational schools and others work together and are logically funded. Singapore, again, is perhaps an exception to this trend. Though actively developing the post-secondary sector over the last three decades, it recently appointed a cabinet minister with a portfolio for higher education and skills.

ISSUES AND DEBATES

Is there a “Southeast Asian model” for higher education development? With the diversity described here, the answer is negative. Yet, there are a range of higher education networks, including the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL), which includes institutions from all over Asia, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Plus Three (ASEAN+3) that discuss common issues that may be considered in a regional context, and aspects of cooperation that may be useful. However, few lasting regional initiatives have been developed, and the desire to retain national control tends to override regional ambitions.

With few exceptions, and despite the existence of ASEAN and several other regional organisations, there is surprisingly little accurate information or analysis concerning higher education in the region. Accurate and up-to-date statistics and careful analysis of key themes and issues are necessary prerequisites for effective policy making. Without good information, within countries and regionally, effective benchmarking is impossible. No Southeast Asian nation has an internationally visible higher education research centre, and there are very few higher education specialists, whether in government or in the universities. A partial exception is Malaysia’s IPPTN (*Institut Penyelidikan Pendidikan Tinggi Negara*, or National Higher Education Research Institute). There is thus an urgent need for a research and policy community in higher education.

The medium of instruction in higher education is a continuing issue in Southeast Asia, as it is in much of the world. The role of English, as the main world language of science and scholarship, is a particular dilemma. In general, Southeast Asian nations use their own indigenous languages for higher education. Two major exceptions are Singapore and the Philippines, which use English — as does Myanmar — although there is discussion

in Myanmar concerning the appropriate language. Multi-ethnic Singapore found English to be a logical choice from the time of independence in 1965 — a choice that helped the country build the most successful higher education system in Southeast Asia, and the only one with high international standing. Malaysia chose to jettison English and shift to the use of Bahasa Malaysia, a decision that prevented the country from becoming internationally prominent, and created other problems. In the 2000s, Malaysian policy swung back to English to some extent, but now seems to be shifting again — although private sector institutions continue to offer instruction in English. Indonesia moved from Dutch to Bahasa Indonesia following independence, although some English is now used.

The issue of language is discussed here not only because it is important in and of itself, but also because it is symbolic of the complexities of policy in the region. Language is, in some countries, a contentious political issue. On the one hand, local languages are a repository of local culture and history. On the other, English helps shape internationalisation as well as regionalisation, possibilities for hiring talent and attracting students from abroad, links to global science, prospects for access of local students, and others.

Few Southeast Asian nations seem to be positioned in the near future to join the ranks of the top leagues in higher education. Most continue to be concerned with coping with the continuing demands of massification, and thus pay limited attention to the global knowledge economy — with the significant exception of Singapore and to some extent Malaysia. No Southeast Asia country has sponsored an “excellence initiative” as have been initiated in such countries as Germany, Japan, China, Russia and others, as a way of quickly building top research-focused universities although most of the countries in the region have provided at least modest additional resources to their “flagship” universities. Malaysia, and particularly Singapore, have invested significant resources in them.

Southeast Asia is clearly affected by international trends. However, few countries have an international perspective or an internationalisation policy. Malaysia, for example, hosts several branch campuses of Australian universities — and has one local university, the International Islamic University Malaysia, that was established to serve students from abroad. And Singapore, through its Global Schoolhouse initiative, has had an active internationalisation policy that includes attracting international students and overseas academic institutions as well. But the region in general lacks an international perspective.

CONCLUSION

While there is little that links Southeast Asia’s diverse nations, there are common higher education realities that face them. But rather than thinking of the region as a whole, it may be more useful to think of groups of countries with similar challenges. A first step is to develop effective data and analysis, and then to consider carefully appropriate development strategies. While problems are national, solutions may be regional, and answers may be suggested by the experiences of countries and institutions in the region.



Technology and the New Learning Paradigm

Arnoud De Meyer

I was intrigued by my recent experience of teaching a course to undergraduate students at the Singapore Management University (SMU). It has been more than 20 years since I last taught undergraduates. When I entered the classroom, many students were

seated behind a laptop computer – and almost all had a smartphone if not a tablet computer as well.

Technology is not alien to me. I have actively participated in already three waves of using technology to change the nature of higher education: the development of videos for individual learning in the early 1990s, the first interactive online programmes in the late 1990s, and blended tailor made programmes for executives in the early 2000s, all with a somewhat mixed result. But I have to admit that what I lived through in the recent year is of a very different nature, a radically different learning paradigm.

IMPACT ON LEARNING

The student who is always connected, who has access to an overload of information, who wants to express freely his or her opinion on blogs, who combines living in virtual and face to face networks is a different person than the one who went to lectures to take notes, who studied from printed textbooks and wrote letters. If we accept this reality, we need to look for a different learning paradigm that optimises the learning of this new student.

We are moving from a teaching paradigm towards a student-centered learning paradigm. Our role evolves towards that of a guide and a facilitator: a guide to help students make the difference between the good, the bad and the ugly information; a facilitator to help make sense out of the overload of information available at our fingertips. As a consequence the initiative for designing a curriculum may well shift a bit from the academic supplier to the student-user.

The new learning paradigm will be no doubt be more experience-based. Project-based learning as a subcategory of experience based learning is not new. It was a hallmark of a lot of engineering education. The simple idea to start from a real as opposed to a stylised problem, and have the students learn from the experience they build up in solving these problems will get more and more

application in other disciplines. Related to this is the concept of the flipped classroom where we let the student learn the conceptual frameworks outside the classroom, thus freeing up time in the classroom to apply the concepts by solving problems, debating applications, and so on. This may not sound revolutionary to those of us who have been teaching by the case study method for example. The change is no doubt in the richness of what can be done outside the classroom though rich media and social networking.

“Going to the classroom” will be less and less identified with spending time in a well-defined and constrained physical location. The classroom has become virtual and may exist everywhere and at all times of the day.

Educators will have to spend much more effort and creativity on the use of learner data and analytics to predict and advice on students’ learning. While we may always have had some data and support systems to advise the students, it is imperative that in an environment where the responsibility for the design of the learning trajectory shifts from the educator to the student, we provide much more information to guide the student.

IMPACT ON RESEARCH

Future research will be internationally networked. This is a continuation of what already exists, but the tools for communication and for research support will enhance considerably the productivity of internationally networked research. Research, design and engineering support systems, for example, specialised social networks, Product Lifecycle Management Systems for design, cheap video communication systems or retrieval and document management systems have made huge improvements and have enabled a new generation of international research networks.

Both the way we ask questions and how we solve them will be adjusted. There are huge opportunities in this, because we can study phenomena that used

to be out of our reach. But there are also some risks. Pattern recognition rarely addresses causality and may thus be effective in prediction, without really being able to explain why. “Fishing”, a more colloquial word for data mining, is not yet accepted or acceptable. But it may only be a real problem when the datasets are too small or the sampling has been too weak to support any insights. I can foresee a future galactic battle between the galaxies of Big Data and Data Science and the traditional scientific approach. And the battlefield will be partially in our universities.

Another trend is the emergence of what some call Social Technology, or the application of Data Science and Big Data to social problems. In social sciences we were often limited by small sample sizes and costly and difficult access to subjects for experiments. How many psychological and sociological experiments have been carried out with undergraduate students at top US universities? I have no doubt about the rigour with which these were carried out, but one cannot but think that the samples were socially and culturally biased and generalisation was therefore difficult. The rapid diffusion of sensors to capture data on all aspects of life and society, and the creation of vast, varied and fast evolving databases of user behavior in social networks and online retailing open up tremendous perspectives for rigorous, relevant and truly revealing social sciences research. This development is not without risks. There are concerns about security, privacy and ownership of personal data.

CONCLUSION

The current opportunities offered by technology may lead to a fundamental change in our learning and research paradigms. What might we aspire to achieve with these new emerging research and learning paradigms? Participation in higher education has been “democratised” as access has increased across the world. Most governments invest significantly in research to remain competitive as

knowledge-based economies. As a result, research universities today educate a significant proportion of society.

Perhaps a key opportunity for the new research and learning paradigms is embracing and harnessing such diversity, and allowing students to learn how they can contribute not just as individuals, but also as bridges between cultures, disciplines, between theory and application, between stakeholders with different interests — while being keenly aware that every stakeholder shares the same future. University education should remain an important way to transform society. It is at risk of yielding to pressures to merely transform young adults to play a role in the workforce.

This article is an abridgement of Arnoud De Meyer’s original piece that was published in Luc E. Weber and James J. Duderstadt (eds.) 2016. University Priorities and Constraints, Glion Colloquium Series No. 9, Economica.

Higher Education Trends and Tensions in Southeast Asia

**D. Bruce Johnstone and
Loke Hoe Yeong**

Higher education throughout much of the world is expanding and changing at a dizzying pace — the situation in Southeast Asia is no exception. The states of this vital region vary dramatically, beginning with population: from the giant Indonesia and the populous countries such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar to smaller

countries of Laos, Singapore and Brunei. They also differ in economic heft and per-capita income, with Singapore and Brunei at a level commensurate with the world's leading industrialised economies, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines as middle-income, and the remainder of the region as low-income or developing economies. And the higher education systems also vary widely, with Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar still highly centralised and state-controlled, and others, most notably the Philippines, with substantial sectors of private colleges and universities including non-profit, for-profit and shades in-between that are prevalent in many countries in which governments rely on private institutions to absorb higher educational demand that their public sectors are unable (or unwilling) to accommodate.

The changes — many of which are politically and even ideologically contested — include the creation of new public campuses, many of them featuring accessible, short-cycle, vocationally-oriented programs, allowing and partially subsidising new private institutions, installing accreditation agencies, and introducing or expanding measures of cost-sharing, or the shifting of some of the burden of the rising instructional costs from governments to parents and students. This shift can entail the introduction of, or sharp increase in, tuition fees or the privatisation of student lodging or food services, or both. And along with the expansion of cost-sharing come efforts to preserve and enhance higher educational accessibility through the introduction of means-tested grants and governmentally-sponsored student loan programs.

Fuelling this expansion and these changes in the countries of Southeast Asia (and most other countries as well) are such forces as economic and political liberalisation, the globalisation of the world economy, changing labour markets and employment opportunities and surging numbers of youth completing secondary school and aspiring to further education. These forces feed upon each other. For example, increasing enrolments are

fuelled not only by demographics and increasing youth cohorts, but also by changing labour markets and rising higher educational aspirations, as agricultural and low skilled industrial jobs give way to service and high knowledge content employment opportunities requiring education beyond the high school level. Higher education is thus seen by students and their families as a means to social and economic advancement and is similarly viewed by governments as necessary to compete in an increasingly globalised world economy.

But with the expansion and change in tertiary education come economic, social, and educational dilemmas that may seem intractable — or at least impossible to solve simultaneously, as solutions to some problems become contributors to others. For example, the rapidly increasing enrolments that are meeting the rising aspirations of students and families, especially in the lower income countries of Southeast Asia, almost inevitably mean surging instructional costs — and with them rapidly rising college and university revenue needs. These rising needs are proving in the countries of Southeast Asia and elsewhere to be beyond the capabilities of public budgets alone to meet. Even those high-middle income countries are facing increasing demands from elementary and secondary education, public health, infrastructure, social welfare and other politically and socially compelling needs. The result in the region (as in most of the rest of the world) has been turning to parents and students for increasing shares of these escalating costs — with all of the consequent problems to access, persistence, and social equity as well as political opposition caused by increasing tuition fees and privatised provision of student living arrangements.

Even with the expanded revenue from increasing cost-sharing, the enrolment expansion puts strains on higher educational sectors and individual institutions that are unable to keep up with the needed increases in trained faculty (not quickly produced), lecture theatres, laboratories, residence halls and entire new institutions. And the economic

political and individual demand for new academic programs to meet the changing needs of the regional economies and the demands of students place even greater strains on faculty and institutional leaders. The shift away from the humanities and social science toward business, management, and computer science, while responsive to the changing interests of students and many political and business leaders, is dismaying to academic traditionalists and to some on the political left who decry the shift as a pernicious marketisation and commodification of higher education.

Another example of an unintended consequence and a political dilemma that can arise from meeting the surging demand for more higher education — ironically often seen especially in countries with rapidly changing economies and rising levels of per-capita income (which describes many of those in Southeast Asia) is that the rapidly increasing numbers of college and university graduates can greatly outpace even the growing numbers of high knowledge content jobs. The result is increasing numbers of graduates without employment opportunities commensurate with their education and training even in the high growth countries of the region.

And finally, the worldwide expansion of higher educational opportunities to students who had in the past been largely excluded from education beyond the secondary level (or even beyond the primary grades) has done little to close — and in some countries may have contributed to a widening of — the gap between the incomes, wealth and political influence of those families at the top, in contrast to the rural and urban poor and those marginalised by ethnic and linguistic minority status. Higher education works well for those benefitting from good secondary schools, from parents and peers who value learning and aspire to further education, and from families that have the financial resources to afford the necessary fees, living expenses and the foregone earnings associated with higher education. Thus, higher education's natural tendency is to perpetuate and even to accelerate

the intergenerational transmission of income, status, and influence. And the gap is not simply in academic preparedness, or in the aspiration to go on to education beyond the secondary level, or even being accepted and enrolling. The gap, as well, is in the choice of institution (elite or non-elite and open access) or major programme (selective, prestigious, and remunerative like medicine or advanced business, or minimally selective and less remunerative like teaching or the civil service).

Higher Education Affordability in the US and Asia

Uma Natarajan

Universities in the United States (US) are the envy of the world because they attract students from all over the world, due to the high quality of education that they offer. Many, however, are confronting severe challenges in the areas of affordability and access. In South Korea, since World War II, and in Singapore in recent decades, top-tier universities are increasingly modelling themselves after US research universities. It is therefore important that policymakers in Asia pay attention to issues faced in the financing of US higher education, though a number of fundamental differences should be noted.

The university systems in Asia, and particularly the prestigious, research-intensive universities, tend to be public ones. They were established in their current form after independence, in tandem with the setting up of national education systems and other administrative apparatuses. Although the direction has shifted towards greater institutional autonomy and corporatisation of the universities, in general, governments continue to exert considerable influence in their operations. This

has meant relatively more state control over the setting of tuition fees, which are lower compared to the US system. The quality of education in some universities in Asia may indeed be a long way from their counterparts in the US. Quality and access may even be seen by some as competing values in a zero-sum game.

I outline some of the current concerns around the problems of college access and affordability in the US in this article, and offer some policy perspectives to the problems now emergent in Asia.

In today's knowledge economy, earning a post-secondary credential has become a prerequisite for employment. There is much evidence pointing to a correlation between the educational attainment of a state's workforce and median wages; in general, additional years of education result in higher earnings. However, while most Asians still want a college degree, students in the West are questioning the value, given the mounting costs. Community colleges in the US, which are two-year public institutions offering skills training as well as a pathway to a four-year university, have been seen as important for students from low-income families, and have a large representation from minority groups.

INCREASING COST OF COLLEGE AND DEBT GLOBALLY

The cost of a college education has increased manifold over the years and exceeds the rate of inflation. Tuition has increased four times compared to the consumer price index, with the actual cost rise in the US at a staggering 1,100% since the 1970s. In April 2016, Times Higher Education reported that graduates in England face higher debts than do their counterparts in US — in fact higher than all English-speaking countries. There are a number of reasons for the exponential increase in debts related to college education worldwide. In private colleges and universities, the rising costs are attributed to the costs of professors and other personnel, the costs of new facilities and technologies and the

costs of other novel state-of-the-art facilities, such as campus-wide Wi-Fi. For public institutions, the cost increase to students is directly related to funding cuts at the government and state levels. The higher costs for operations are passed on by the institutions to the students, and this is reflected in tuition fee increases. This results in higher student loan and debt, and students graduate either being unemployed or underemployed in a weak economy.

The necessity to lower the costs of college is critical for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The policy reforms for increasing affordability should be targeted towards tuition cost reduction and alternate ways to lessen the debt burden for students. There has to be an alternative policy designed to restrain further tuition increases in colleges that would force the institutions to come up with creative solutions of cost-sharing and personnel sharing. Grant awards like the Pell Grant program need more funding to support the minorities and to keep up with inflation and the growing costs of college.

Some egalitarianism features of university systems in Asia may appear to trump those in the US. In terms of access for minorities, and considering the kinds of scholarships and grants available to them, these are guaranteed — sometimes by law — at a quota in a range of developing and developed countries, from Vietnam to Myanmar to China to Singapore. This usually stems from a national constitution that guarantees the rights and privileges of minorities in areas that include education, as well as from the socialist character of some of these countries. In Malaysia though, where affirmative action policies are available for bumiputera (“native”) Malays for public universities, there is clearly a negative impact on egalitarianism.

The situation surrounding the student loans in Asia is mixed. For example, in Singapore, which has two high-ranking universities, the government subsidises a huge fraction of university education through a major tuition grant scheme, and offers additional loans and grants to meet student

needs. The government’s Central Provident Fund (CPF) Education Scheme facilitates the payment of subsidised tuition fees for several full-time programmes for students. The government is also reviewing if there is scope to make its loan schemes more attractive as an additional source of funding, without imposing undue loan burdens on students.

In the Philippines, however, the sustainability of student loan schemes is a concern for the government. The passage of the American-sponsored Private School Law in 1917 during the colonial era, granting private colleges and universities full autonomy both in funding and control, spawned the widespread growth of private higher education institutions in the early 20th century. Today, a public higher university system exists alongside private universities, with tuition fees kept low, due in part to considerable political pressures and left-leaning ideologies prevalent in the country, especially after the end of the authoritarian Marcos era in 1986. The result of this is the prevalence of significant disparities between public and private higher-education institutions; there are major differences in unit costs per student, tuition fees charged and government subsidies. The Study-Now-Pay-Later student loan plan, administered by a government agency particularly for students attending private higher education institutions, had been plagued for years by repayment defaults — though more for reasons of weak debt collection reinforcement than because of insurmountable debt levels as in the US case.

CONCLUSION

The broad affordability and cost issues confronted by the US in the financing of higher education needs urgent attention by policymakers in Asia. While developing countries in Asia are undergoing, in most cases, rapid economic growth, an in-depth look at the focus on the quality of higher education vis-a-vis regulating cost structure when benchmarking with US universities is needed. It is important to consider these issues rather than just seek to emulate the top US universities. A realistic and unbiased perspective is required when considering

all alternatives for reducing tuition costs, and no one model is perfect. The question on the table is how these policies can be made sustainable in the long-term. A key policy dilemma will be balancing public access, quality and affordability in Asian higher education.



Countering Campus Extremism in Southeast Asia

Anthony Welch

Extremism has long been part of higher education. The suppression of Arabic and Jewish scholars in Spain during the 15th century, the Nazi persecution of Jewish and communist intellectuals, and the mass murder of scholars in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge, are potent reminders of the tyranny of intolerance.

Now, Islamic extremism on campus is troubling higher education systems around the world, including many Muslim nations. The storied Al-Azhar University in Cairo — a beacon of Islamic learning founded before Oxford or Cambridge — has just pledged to fight militant tendencies among its students. In acknowledging criticisms that it is fostering extremism, Al-Azhar president Abdel-Hai Azab, recently ordered the formation of academic committees charged with revising textbooks to purge them of radical jihadist ideas.

EXTREMISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

In Southeast Asia, too, rising campus radicalism has led to campaigns to curb its influence. But the present extremism did not spring from nowhere. Radical movements in the region are decades old and in some cases linked to the desire for regional

autonomy, or to fighting for Islam in far-flung places such as Afghanistan. Hundreds of Filipinos, Malaysians, and Indonesians — an unknown proportion of whom were young university students, volunteered as Mujahadeen warriors and returned radicalized.

Indonesia in the 1980s saw examples of radical Islamist movements, some associated with Hizb ut-Tahrir at universities such as Gadjah Mada in Jogjakarta and Bandung Institute of Technology. Hizb ut-Tahrir is currently banned in countries such as Germany, Russia, China, Saudi, Jordan and Egypt but legal in the United Kingdom, Australia and elsewhere, where repeated investigations have revealed no evidence of terrorist activities.

Most recently, a national deradicalisation blueprint was developed, with a national terrorism prevention program that focused on the 13 most-affected provinces. It included strengthening the capacity of universities to resist terrorism. Yet, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict Director Sidney Jones pointed out recently that training 575 trainers at Indonesian universities is of questionable value, since campuses have not been a particular target of violent extremists — partly because organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir are active in keeping them out — and, since, as well, the details of the training module seem, at least so far, rather vague.

It is also not clear that the recent visit of radical clerics from Egypt to Indonesia, including their involvement in a conference at Universitas Indonesia, had much effect in tempering radicals. More successful have been visits to universities from members of groups — such as the Survivors Foundation (Yayasan Penyintas) and Association for Victims of Terrorism Bombings in Indonesia, who have shared their stories with students and staff.

Islamic extremism in the Philippines can be partly traced back to effects of the Afghan war, during which hundreds of Muslim Filipinos, travelled to Pakistan and Afghanistan to join the mujaheddin. It is not clear how many may have been students.

The militant Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in the Philippines' south has openly pledged allegiance to Islamic State (sometimes called Da'esh), while Abu Sayyaf members were reported among slain jihadists in Syria. Nonetheless, the dean of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Islamic Studies expressed concern that media sensationalism provoked fear and potentially worsened the situation.

Like Indonesia, the Philippines also has used visits by prominent clerics, including from Egypt, recently at Mindanao State University. The visits have been attended by thousands of students and staff, with messages on the five pillars of faith, good governance and peaceful coexistence with other communities of faith. In an eerie reminder, however, their visits paralleled a firefight between government military and the BIFF, which forced thousands of villagers to flee.

Thailand, too, has its problems with Salafist jihadist groups and with clumsy responses by the Thai military, although there is little evidence of extremist activity in universities in the southernmost border provinces of Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani.

In Malaysia, an early example was Mohammed Fadly, a student at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, who, after taking an oath of allegiance to Jemaah Islamiyah, sought to fight for Islam in southern Thailand. Recently, increasing tensions between Malaysia's secular constitution and Islam as the state religion provoked a group of leading Malaysians, calling themselves the G40, to warn of increasing "Islamization". In response to the radicalization of its youth, the Malaysian Islamic Development Department established a cross-agency committee to explain misconceptions surrounding jihad, notably including to Malaysia's universities. A Mahasiswa Islam Tolak Keganasan (Muslim Undergraduates Reject Violence) campaign hopes to use Muslim student leaders at universities to disseminate the real meaning of jihad. Support also has come from clerics in the form of a nationwide fatwa declaring that the call of jihad and martyrdom

by Islamic State is un-Islamic. Malaysians who fought for Islamic State and died could not claim to be martyrs.

Malaysia has enhanced the scrutiny of international student applications, via the national agency Education Malaysia Global Services that manages all aspects of international student applications, including passport checks. As a result, rejection rates fell from 28% in 2012, and 24% in 2012, to only 3% in 2013. Nonetheless, despite these efforts, a captured Hamas terrorist recently revealed that the organisation is actively recruiting young Palestinians studying in Malaysia. In another case, a captured Hamas terrorist revealed that he had been sent to Malaysia, with 9 others, to train using hang gliders, in preparation for terrorist attacks against Israel. Some 40 Palestinian students were said to have been recruited in this manner. The recruitment and associated activities are allegedly centred on the International Islamic University of Malaysia, with one or two of its professors allegedly involved.

HEARTS AND MINDS?

Such recruitment activities give cause for pause, regarding the success of regional hearts-and-minds campaigns, aimed at countering extremism. Of more than 12,000 foreigners who joined the fight in Syria last year, perhaps 10% or more came from Southeast Asia. While the above shows that some terrorist recruits are international students (and some domestic), just how many were from the higher education sector remains unknown.

Ultimately, a solid foundation in what it means to be a good Muslim, as well as acceptance of Muslims within the wider society (in the case of Thailand and the Philippines), is needed to counter the attractions of groups such as Islamic State within the region’s universities.

But more work remains to be done to counter the effects of extreme Islamist ideologies in the region’s universities. If universities are sources of ideas,

there is a need to harness this energy to research the phenomenon more fully, to work with communities to promulgate a moderate Muslim message of peace and understanding, and to promote a more inclusive form of democracy — which can undoubtedly weaken the appeal of extremism for impressionable young university students.

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Challenges of Student Mobility in Southeast Asia

Thu T. Do and Duy N. Pham

Influenced by globalisation at the beginning of the 21st century, Southeast Asia has experienced a remarkable development of student mobility: the number of Southeast Asian students studying abroad is increasing significantly, and the number of international students in Southeast Asia is gradually increasing. While the benefits of student mobility programs are clear, Southeast Asian countries face several challenges when trying to develop them further.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Southeast Asian countries rank among the top 25 countries of origin for international students studying in the United States, including Vietnam (8), Indonesia (19), Thailand (20), and Malaysia (24). By 2011, these four countries, plus the Philippines, accounted for 214,000 students, primarily studying in the US, the UK and Australia. The increase in student mobility also results from international cooperative education programs via

franchising and twinning agreements, and branch campuses between Southeast Asian countries and foreign higher education institutions. There are currently 25 branch campuses in Southeast Asia: one in Indonesia, six in Malaysia, 13 in Singapore, three in Thailand, and two in Vietnam.

Southeast Asia is not only sending its students abroad, but it has also developed national academic systems to attract foreign students. Owing to their ambition to use English as a medium of instruction in higher education, and relatively low tuition fees and living costs, Southeast Asian countries have gained momentum in the global student market competition. Leading countries such as Singapore and Malaysia have aimed to become regional education hubs; they have also become education exporters. According to the Guardian, Singapore welcomed 52,959 international students from 120 countries in 2014. Similarly, Malaysia had 63,625 international students from 160 nations. Singapore and Malaysia ranked among the top 20 destination countries for international students. The majority of international students studying in Southeast Asia are from Southeast Asia, South Korea, China, and India.

The flow of international students from Western countries to Southeast Asia, though small (approximately 5,000), has also gradually increased in the last few years. These students are primarily American, Australian, and British, and are coming to emerging and developed Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. In addition, Southeast Asia has also experienced an influx of international students from Middle Eastern countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. In the wake of the events of September 11, 2001, the US adopted a more restrictive visa policy toward applicants from Middle Eastern countries. Consequently, the flow from some Islamic countries into Southeast Asia has gradually increased. Iran accounted for 21.44% of more than 61,000 international students in the

Philippines in 2012. In Malaysia, recruiters have widened their market search for international students, actively targeting countries in the Middle East.

CHALLENGES

The above-mentioned growth of student mobility is proof of the success of governments and higher education institutions in these countries in the internationalised higher education market. However, Southeast Asian countries encounter challenges that hinder them from reaping advantages, and from continuing to develop transnational education programmes.

Periphery. The peripheral status of Southeast Asia in knowledge production is the most significant challenge, and is considered the root of other challenges. In fact, not many Southeast Asian countries have been primary producers of new scientific knowledge and cutting-edge technologies. Among the list of top 500 research universities listed by the Academic Ranking of World Universities, only two Southeast Asian universities — both from Singapore — have ever appeared on the list. Since the ranking focuses on research productivity and prestigious awards for outstanding research, this fact reveals that higher education institutions in Southeast Asia are remarkably peripheral in expanding the borders of knowledge and in contributing to knowledge production.

The peripheral standing of higher education institutions in Southeast Asia also makes the institutions of the region less attractive for study abroad. For example, Southeast Asian students are less likely to go to other Southeast Asian countries for a degree or even an exchange program. Instead of selecting higher education institutions within the region, many wealthy families from Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia attempt to send their children to English-speaking institutions outside the region for an international degree. This is a problem for institutions in Southeast Asia, since

they tend to lose the best or the richest students to foreign institutions.

Brain-drain. In the last few decades, statistics show that most students move from East to West and from non-English-speaking countries to English-speaking countries. Also, many successful professors and academic staff currently working in the US, the UK, Australia, or Japan are coming from Southeast Asia. This is brain drain, and though the issue of brain drain varies among Southeast Asian countries, it poses a real challenge for them. The more developed countries in the region, such as Singapore, tend not to lose their best and brightest to Japan or Western countries. However, for other countries with institutions of lower academic quality, the fact that most of their bright students and outstanding academics go to study or work at foreign institutions represents a loss of human and financial resources to create and develop their own reputable universities. A majority of the more able students and productive academics from Vietnam are studying or working outside their home country. For instance, nearly 100% of the brightest high school graduates from the best high schools in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City go abroad for undergraduate education. Similarly, most of the Vietnamese students who achieved medals in the International Mathematical Olympiads are working as academics in developed countries.

English as a Language Barrier. The fact that English is not the official language of instruction and publication in many countries in the region is another obstacle to attracting international students and to participating in the broader scientific community. With the exception of Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand, most universities in the region offer very few courses in English. This is one reason why few international students come to those institutions for exchange programs, let alone a degree. If the effort to provide more courses in English at an acceptable cost is not successful, it is foreseeable that universities where English is not a language of instruction will not become attractive

places for a large pool of international students.

It is crucial that the countries of Southeast Asia recognise the challenges described in this article. Clearly, they should frame higher education policies in order to overcome the challenges to reduce negative impacts and improve quality and educational effectiveness. This is a way to improve their level of higher education and increase their contributions to social development.

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The Policy and Politics of the Cohort Participation Rate in Singapore's Universities

Loke Hoe Yeong

Considering the increasing rates of youth unemployment in Taiwan (12.7%) and South Korea (9.5%) as of 2015, it would appear that the Singapore government's long-time policy approach of capping the cohort participation rate (CPR) in universities in the 20%-to-27% range has been validated.

In comparison, Taiwan's and South Korea's gross enrolment ratio in universities — the term more commonly used internationally, but really the same as cohort participation rate in Singapore — stood at 85% and 70% respectively, over the same period.

This suggests that a qualification mismatch with the job markets in those countries is the primary explanation for graduate unemployment/youth unemployment.

Nonetheless the Singapore government has, in recent years, decided to raise the cohort participation rate in universities to 40% by the year 2020. What spurred it to shift its long-held stance? And what does it portend for the principle of institutional diversification that the government held on to?

THE CAPPED COHORT PARTICIPATION RATE: GENESIS OF AN UNWRITTEN POLICY

Already since the 1980s, the government had been warning that an oversupply of university places would lead to graduate unemployment and the debilitating social effects that would entail. That was at the point of time that Singapore was making the transition from an industrial economy to a more knowledge-based one.

The Singapore higher education system is not unique, of course. It bears some resemblance to the California Master Plan for Higher Education of 1960, a higher education architecture where the specific mission, purpose and redundancies for the research university, the state university and the community college are discouraged. The World Bank calls this institutional diversification, in the context of the massification of higher education.

There is a qualification to be made in the Singapore case. While the cohort participation rate in universities stood at around 27%, the rest of the cohort would go to polytechnics and Institutes of Technical Education (ITE) — institutions regarded as some of the best in the world, inspired by the much-admired German and Swiss models of technical education — for their post-secondary education. And these polytechnic and ITE graduates would still have the chance to attend private colleges, if they desired to obtain a degree, and

if they were still unable to make admissions into the public universities; the government calls this a “bridges and ladders” system, but they are less likely, however, to obtain a government tuition fee grant, unlike in the public universities.

When one considers the phenomenon of graduate unemployment and under-employment in South Korea and Taiwan, which have been linked to the “over-massified” university systems in those countries, this would appear to have been a blessing in disguise. Yet the vast majority of these diploma holders in Singapore graduating from polytechnics still felt the need to “upgrade” — to use the popular local colloquialism — to degrees. This phenomenon is usually explained by the “Confucian” socio-cultural contexts of these East Asian countries that place a premium on educational qualifications.

But the more likely explanation is the asymmetrical competition in the globalised marketplace of jobs, as Singapore is, that Singaporean polytechnic diploma holders had been facing.

A common, if anecdotal, grievance among Singaporean polytechnic diploma holders is that they have to compete for jobs with non-Singaporeans, especially as they progress along in the careers — non-Singaporeans who do not necessarily hold the kinds of bachelor degrees from the National University of Singapore (NUS) or Nanyang Technological University (NTU), for a long time the only choices for Singaporean students.

Rather, some of these degree holders from other countries hail from universities that were themselves converted from polytechnics. Examples that come to mind are the 35 universities in England that were converted from polytechnics, as a result of the British government’s 1992 exercise of ending the “binary divide” between universities and polytechnics. It therefore seemed grossly unfair for Singaporean diploma holders who were competing for jobs.

If unable to secure one of the limited places at the public universities after their polytechnic education, these diploma holders would fork out large sums towards the tuition fees at private degree institutions which, while not being degree mills, vary widely in instructional quality. Some have been outright dubious as a commercial entity, let alone a purveyor of the hallowed university experience. Some of these institutions have been shut down abruptly, to much media sensation, and to the great detriment of their students' academic progression.

RAISING THE COHORT PARTICIPATION RATE, WITHIN THE SKILLSFUTURE FRAMEWORK

While Singapore has maintained a commitment to skills-training and to fostering a well-resourced polytechnic sector and the technical and vocational education sector, the government announced in 2012 its plans to raise the cohort participation rate in universities to 40% by the year 2020.

Some observers read it as a reaction to the results of the 2011 general election in Singapore, at which the long-ruling People's Action Party (PAP) took a drubbing at the polls (though still a rather impressive performance by international comparisons). For observers, concerns in the area of education opportunities and job prospects were factors explaining the less-than-stellar PAP results, though the mood of the electorate that year was coloured by a wide range of issues beyond education.

The government expanded university places in existing ones, and two new "public-autonomous" universities were established by Acts of Parliament: Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) and the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT). The government also stepped in to expand the number of places at SIM University (UniSIM), a private college that subsequently grew into a university with significant state support.

All of these policy changes in the higher education scene in Singapore took place within the framework and language of "SkillsFuture", a major new cross-ministry programme for lifelong learning and skills training for the Singapore economy. In other words, the expansion of university places would be made with the proviso that internships would be central to the curriculum, and that the degrees on offer would be well-tuned to the job shortages in the economy.

CONCLUSION

Beneath these policy issues lie the fundamental questions on the purpose of universities and of degrees, in a globalised world run on neoliberal, market-oriented principles. Are they merely constructs of prestige in a game of mere credentialisation? Has utilitarianism strengthened within the Singaporean higher education system? How do these developments shape the university curriculum and course offerings?

The Singapore government rightly seeks to prevent the classic diploma disease (or, in the local colloquialism, the "paper chase"). It has, in the meantime, also sought to diversify the higher education landscape, such as with the establishment of the Yale-NUS College, the country's first liberal arts college. The one thing for certain, though, is that access to a university education — however defined — is an inherently political issue, even in the pristine "policy lab" that is Singapore.



Higher Education and Skills Issues in the Philippines

Catherine Ramos

Education and skills are important policy levers for sustainable socio-economic growth. With the right economic fundamentals, a highly educated population with the right skills is a powerful tool for economies to move from low-income to middle income, or for those who are already in the middle-income category, to avoid the middle-income trap, and move to the high-income category. While much progress has been made in the last few decades, many countries in Asia are still struggling to respond to the skills needs required for competitiveness, productivity and jobs which are related to issues of quality and access which, in turn, are related to insufficient government funding and the high cost of education.

ISSUES IN PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION: QUALITY, AFFORDABILITY AND FUNDING

The Philippine government admits that there are long-running weaknesses of higher education that include lack of overall vision, framework and plan, deteriorating quality, and limited access to quality higher education by those who need it most and have potential to maximise its benefits. The specific flaws in higher education include weak oversight and quality control, curricula misaligned with international norms and labour market demands, rote-based teaching, inadequate teaching materials and poor quality of facilities. Recommendations by many scholars include the need to improve quality via better funding and inputs into the education process such as faculty and facilities (laboratories and libraries), improve pre-college preparation, systematise accreditation and closure of non-

performing institutions, to foster greater university-industry linkages, and to undertake graduate tracer studies to learn lessons about relevance of education, among others.

Affordability of college education is also an issue, and there is still a big disparity in educational achievement across socio-economic groups. College education has become a luxury good for many Filipino families, given increasing tuition fees and a high incidence of poverty. Private college education in the Philippines is expensive, costing about Php 150,000 (US\$3,190) to Php 300,000 (US\$6,380) annually as compared with the average family income of only Php 235,000 (US\$5,000). Even for students in state universities with relatively cheaper tuition fees, it is not uncommon that students skip classes and meals due to lack of transportation and lunch money; not surprisingly, some of these students fail to complete. School drop-out in the Philippines is mainly due to poverty as students need to work to support family and take care of siblings. To expand accessibility, funding mechanisms need to be considerably improved, and address the other causes of dropping out or entirely not pursuing higher education must be addressed.

An insufficient government budget for education also raises other issues. It could mean increasing tuition fees, allowing facilities to run down, and freezing faculty hiring which all negatively contribute to student learning and welfare. Though there were budget increases more recently, issues in education such as quality and drop-out rates were not properly addressed mainly because the increase in budget did not match the increase in population or enrolment. The per capita overall education budget had actually decreased through the years 2000 to 2009; and in the recently approved budget of 2016 for state universities and colleges, the increases go to personal services or salaries while reducing the maintenance and operating expenses and capital outlay which means less improvements of facilities and the building of new and often much needed infrastructure.

SKILLS MISMATCH, UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT

The Philippines' workforce has become increasingly better educated over the last 20 years as the demand for education has been growing overall. With the changes in output and employment structure across and within sectors, the skills demand has been growing and changing, too. With these structural changes, skills issues have become more evident. According to the Philippines Skills Survey of 2008, difficulty in finding the right skills for the jobs were observable in the service and manufacturing sectors particularly in the export sector and subsectors like chemicals, trade and finance. Using the 2009/2010 Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics Survey, the occupations and industries that were experiencing a shortage of suitable workers are those related to science and technology, and professional workers at the high-end category such as managers, supervisors, professional and technical and associate professionals including specialists. An example of this in the health services are pharmacists, medical technologists, and medical doctors in different specialisations. In terms of surplus of suitable workers, nurses are the most evident group, but ironically, many parts of the country receive minimal or isolated health services, which is due to limited funding for public health care and hospitals.

Youth unemployment in the Philippines is high, with 50% of the unemployed in the 15-24 age group and 30% in the 25-34 age group. In terms of educational attainment, the unemployed individuals were comprised of 22.2% college graduates, 7.7% college undergraduates, 33.3% high school graduates, and 5.9% elementary graduates.

In terms of under-employment, the April 2015 data showed a rate of 17.8% or about 7 million under-employed persons. Of the 7 million under-employed, 41.6% worked in the agriculture sector, 39.8% were in the services sector and 18.6% were in the industry sector.

Another skills issue that Philippines faces is the brain drain phenomenon due to Filipinos going overseas to work for higher pay. Filipino workers overseas are more skilled but tend to accept less skilled jobs abroad due to big wage differences and limited employment opportunities in the Philippines. Between April and September 2014, there were an estimated 2.3 million overseas Filipino workers with an estimated total remittance of Php 173.2 billion (US\$3.67 billion). In the same year, about 487,176 new hires left the country to work abroad.

CONCLUSION

The problems and issues related to Philippine higher education, skills and employment are not new. Many of these issues together with corresponding policy reforms have already been identified by many studies of both local researchers and international organisations. Sadly, these excellent studies with policy recommendations and well-crafted educational reforms were not fully translated into successful outcomes, due to implementation issues, which, most of the time, involved corruption or institutional inefficiencies. The problems of skills and employment is not only a problem of the education system, but it is also related to economic growth, industry development and other social institutions. Thus higher education in the Philippines needs enlightened leadership and high quality institutions for policy implementation to be effective.



Singapore as a Hub for Developing Educational Leaders in Asia

Madeline Ong and Henrik Bresman

The education landscape in Asia is rapidly transforming. Driven by the need to respond to the complexities of globalisation and technological change, education reform has become a top priority for many Asian countries. Educational leaders play a vital role in facilitating these changes in education systems. Therefore, strengthening and improving leadership development at all organisational levels is a major priority for all educational institutions. While it is possible for educational leaders to develop their abilities through years of experience, well planned executive education can be a quick and effective way to fill the leadership skill gap.

With the mounting need for educational leaders to expand their personal capacities to be effective in leadership roles and processes, it is foreseeable that the demand for executive education for educational leaders in Asia will be on a rapid upward trajectory. Singapore is poised to become a leading hub for developing the effectiveness of Asia's educational leaders. This can be largely attributed to two crucial factors: (1) Singapore's status as one of the top education systems in the world, and (2) Singapore's status as a regional executive education hub.

Singapore's educational institutions — its schools, polytechnics, and universities — are among the most admired in Asia and the rest of the world. Singapore consistently ranks among the top performers in educational attainment, as measured by the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student

Assessment (PISA). Singapore's universities continue to move up on international rankings. The National University of Singapore (NUS) was recently named Asia's top university, and was the only Asian university in the global top 30 in the 2015 Times Higher Education World University Rankings. According to the recent Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings, NUS and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) are among the top 15 institutions in the world. In addition, NUS and NTU retained the first and second spots among the top universities in Asia respectively. For these reasons, educational leaders from other countries in the region often look toward Singapore and its education policies and practices as models and are eager to learn from the success of Singapore's education system.

Singapore's offerings of executive education are also among the best in the region. Following Asia's meteoric economic growth over the last decade, the demand for executive education for business leaders in Asia has been on a rapid upward trajectory. Singapore in particular, with its strategic geographic location and close proximity to key ASEAN growth markets, has developed into a hub for executive education in Asia. At present, high quality executive education courses are offered in Singapore by both local business schools (for instance, NUS Business School, Singapore Management University, Nanyang Business School) and international business schools with a local presence (for instance, INSEAD, ESSEC, IMD Business Schools). The Financial Times' latest Executive MBA Rankings feature all of the institutions listed above in the top 50. The presence of these institutions in Singapore allows people to pursue exceptional executive education, while gaining an in-depth understanding of the Asian business context. At present, these executive education programmes are housed within business schools and are generally targeted at leaders running business organisations — general managers, functional managers, C-level executives and Board-level executives. Leadership is certainly not restricted to the business world — we need effective leaders for education, too. Executive

education programmes therefore have the potential to benefit not just those leading corporations but those leading schools and universities.

At the intersection of Singapore’s prominence as a top education system and a top executive education hub lies Singapore’s potential to be a leadership development hub for educational leaders in Asia. Leadership development programmes for educational leaders are popular in the West. For example, The Principal’s Centre at Harvard’s School of Education offers a variety of leadership development programmes designed to strengthen the leadership skills of school principals and other school leaders; a Singapore variant was established at the National Institute of Education but it was short-lived. The Harvard Institutes for Higher Education offers leadership development programmes for higher education administrators, including department heads, deans, vice presidents, provosts and presidents. However, the leadership development programmes offered by institutions in the West are not necessarily tailored to address the leadership needs of schools in the Asian region. There are differences in leadership needs even across different countries in Asia — the leadership development programme for Indonesian educational leaders might focus on a very different set of leadership skills as compared to a programme for Thai educational leaders.

Singapore has the potential to emerge as an executive education hub for educational leaders in Asia. At The HEAD Foundation, we have signalled our steadfast commitment to the development of Asian educational leaders with a proposal for a leadership centre that will offer a dedicated learning space for educational leaders from the region. The overarching goal of the proposed centre is to build leadership capability in the region especially with regard to its educational institutions. Our underlying philosophic approach to leadership development is grounded in a belief that organisations are more effective when all the participants are treated with dignity, have meaningful work, can readily connect with and contribute to the community they serve,

and have opportunities to participate in shaping the future of the organisation and how it is governed.

We aim to be the premier leadership centre in the region predicated on the values described above. The intention is that the centre will deliver customised bespoke leadership programmes for educational leaders in all sectors, schools, post school institutions and relevant government and non-government organisations. It will also maintain relationships with alumni and offer them continuing development programmes, briefings on current trends and opportunities for voice and service. Finally, our plan is that the centre will convene leaders to explore pressing social and educational issues and develop and promote possible remedies. In short, the proposed leadership centre aims to be a platform for educational leaders from other countries in the region to meet and to learn from the successes of Singapore’s education system.



Higher Education Reform in Indonesia: Challenges and Opportunities

Satryo Soemantri Brodjonegoro

Higher education is considered a long-term investment in human capital, usually involving a large budget. This often becomes a cause for concern for stakeholders, who often perceive the indicators of higher education effectiveness to be intangible and perhaps invisible, particularly in the short-term. In Indonesia, higher education investment is both private and public, with public investment coming mostly from taxes.

Wanting their tax money to be properly employed for the benefit of present and future generations, taxpayers demand an accountable measure of how their tax payments are being used. Taxpayers (and other stakeholders) want to know the effectiveness of the funding of higher education institutions, the correlation between funding and output, and the correlation between output and outcome. Currently, there still is no consensus regarding the understanding of university accountability in Indonesia. Public HEIs report to the Ministry of Education and Culture, while private HEIs report to their respective funding foundations.

The definition of “accountability” is still not agreed upon by stakeholders, including the government and immediate members of HEIs, such as faculty members and students. Currently, consensus on the definition is still lacking perhaps due to each stakeholder’s unwillingness to give up its inward-looking self-interest for a more outward-looking definition that is more concerned with the public interest.

University autonomy and mission differentiation have been two topics for a strategic focus of higher education reform, as Indonesia’s higher education system attempts to achieve greater effectiveness. The current model, of regulation-driven HEIs could be replaced by accountability-driven HEIs, to strengthen HEI performance.

PROPOSED CHANGES IN ACCOUNTABILITY AND MISSION DIFFERENTIATION

To achieve greater accountability, HEIs should be provided with more autonomy, but with the support of government budgets, allocated based on such performance indicators, as the HEIs’ contributions to regional economic development, ability to supply high-quality graduates to the workforce, and improved research.

There has been support for the existence of boards of trustees as the main mechanism to obtain public

accountability. Members of the boards should represent stakeholders and fully represent the public, rather than be dominated by members of HEIs. Currently, the latter is the case.

Accountability could be achieved if HEIs can operate autonomously in terms of curriculum design, finances, and recruitment of staff, and if there is a legal framework to facilitate both the consistency and the application of all regulations, units and stakeholders.

It is acknowledged that the processes of change cannot be the same for all institutions in the country. There has been categorisation of Indonesian universities into three tiers (fully-developed, developing and less-developed), and each layer is expected to have its own target of achievement, as a result of the understanding that governments should not request change of HEIs beyond their individual capacities.

There are four areas of focus that HEIs should consider, and no HEI is expected to address all four, due to limited infrastructure, budget and time. The four areas of focus are: world-class research, national policy, creation of competitive human resources, and generation of highly educated people. HEIs should review their strengths and readiness before deciding on their focus. Fully developed HEIs can focus on any of the four areas, but developing HEIs should focus on either the generation of highly educated people or on national policy, working individually or collaboratively with fully developed HEIs. Focusing on these areas, Indonesian HEIs would be solving serious global issues, such as global warming and the global food crisis, as well as addressing national issues. Through these four focus areas, Indonesian HEIs would be financed by both international schemes and by national schemes, involving the government and different industries.

The expected results from these four focus areas has to be viewed both in the short-term, up to the year 2019, and in the longer term, from the

year 2019 to 2024. In the short term, Indonesian HEIs should produce high-quality PhDs, with high-quality scientific publications, participate in international research collaborations, with cross-sectoral collaboration and networking, and mobilise qualified graduates to minimise disparities among districts. In the longer term, Indonesia should produce world-class researchers, including award-winning scientists, and it should be viewed as a resource for world-class experiments and knowledge generation. By 2024, the nation should also have qualified researchers to implement Indonesia’s national research policy.

CONCLUSION

Changes in accountability and mission differentiation need to take place for Indonesian HEIs to reach their full potential. Mission differentiation is suitable where high variations of institutions are not a problem, but an opportunity to be seized, so that each institution can maximise its focus and capacity. Indonesia is a country with great diversity, and that diversity should become an opportunity for greater effectiveness in Indonesia’s higher education system.



Ranking and a Reconceptualisation of University “Reputation” in Thailand

Rattana Lao

Since Asiaweek magazine published reports on “The Best Universities in Asia” in 1997, international rankings of universities from various sources have been used as points of reference to compare and contrast Thai universities with others. These ranking results are used for at least two main purposes. On the one hand, politicians, policymakers, university administrators and the media use the results of international ranking to “scandalise” the low quality of Thai higher education. These rankings act as “external forces” in order to steer institutional change, as Gita Steiner-Khamsi notes in *Globalization in Education*. Thai policymakers use these negative reinforcement to incentivise universities to perform better, to become the “educational hub of Southeast Asia” or even more ambitiously to become “world-class” universities. On the other hand, as Suwimon Wongwanich and Nonglak Viratchai have shown, advocates of league tables believe that ranking results offer policy tools for better use of resource allocation and strategic planning. This paper analyses the implication of international ranking on the reconceptualisation of Thai universities.

LOOKING WEST, LOOKING EAST

Comparing Thai universities with those in the West is nothing new. In fact, it has been one of the major characteristics of Thai higher education. Since the inception in 1916 of the nation’s first university, Chulalongkorn University, Thai elites

accepted its inferiority with the West. Phrya Thammasak Montri, leading educator at the time, encapsulated this: “if we use Oxford or Cambridge as the standards, we are not yet ready to establish university... however, if we lowered our standards to be just like those newly established universities that have mushroomed in the West and in the East, we are capable of doing something”.

Rankings have accentuated Thailand’s educational inferiority in relation to other universities in the West. The results from ranking are used to indicate the “backwardness” of the Thai system. As one former Ministers of Education says, “Overall, the Thai system is really backward and badly ranked in the international league tables. Very few of our institutions are ranked well in the international competitions world-wide. In short, we have problems of quality students, curriculum, teaching and learning.”

To say that these league tables do not change Thailand is an understatement. I argue that these rankings do bring a change at the conceptual level — how Thai universities perceive themselves in relation to others. These rankings have shifted the “reference societies” for what Thailand perceives as “quality” and “good”. European and American universities have always been the exemplars of academic excellence. However, Asian universities have now begun to attract attention from Thai policymakers, academics and the media alike. It has been noted that as the University of Tokyo, the University of Hong Kong and the National University of Singapore have been ranked in the top 10 or top 20 of various world leagues; none of Thai universities are ranked at the top 50 of universities within Asia in the 2015 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. Hence, the different points of comparison induce Thai policymakers now to look eastwards for “best practices” and inspiration.

A reconceptualisation of university reputation has not only taken place at a regional level, but

it has also occurred at a national level. Prior to ranking, university reputation was closely related to its institutional legacy, particularly the years they were established. Chulalongkorn and Thammasat University, the first two universities in Thailand, stood at the apex of the reputation hierarchy. International league tables have challenged this mythical view. Over the year, universities such as Mahidol University, King Mongkut University of Technology and Chiang Mai University performed better than these two universities in various rankings. In the 2015 THE World University Rankings, for example, only King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi and Mahidol University are among the top 100 of best universities in Asia, with the former ranked at the 55th and latter ranked at 91st place. Policymakers and academics believed these results indicate new ways to perceive university’s quality as “evidence-based”, rather than being “emotions-based”.

THE ROLE OF RESEARCH

Rankings have in fact intensified the role of research in Thai higher education. Thai universities have been known to be teaching-intensive, and research was not considered as important. Thai academics have seen themselves more as lecturers than as researchers. In order to boost international ranking, more attention has been given to research and international publications. At the institutional level, more financial resources are now available to incentivise academics to conduct research and publish internationally. Interviews with academics at Chulalongkorn, Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen and Thammasat Universities reiterate the increasing importance of research in their universities.

In the light of these trends, Thai universities face institutional and individual challenges to transform their attention to research and rankings to tangible results. Firstly, research, particularly that involving publication in overseas journals, is considered as a rather new phenomenon in Thai

RECENT TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Comparatively, by 1995, TNE had increased nine times. By the end of 2007, about 31 countries/regions in different continents had reached agreements with the Chinese authorities for collaborations in joint-programmes or to offer TNE programmes in the mainland. In the latest list of approved Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools (CFCRS) institutions and programs from the Ministry of Education regarding higher education (including both undergraduate and postgraduate levels), among 27 approved CFCRS institutions currently operating in China, only two — the University of Nottingham-Ningbo in Zhejiang province and the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business in Guangdong province — were not established through collaborations between foreign institutions and local public higher education institutions. The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) was founded by the University of Nottingham from the UK and the privately-owned Zhejiang Wanli Education Group in 2004, and legally became the first CFCRS University in China. Intriguingly, the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business was founded in 2002 in Beijing by Hong Kong's most successful tycoon and entrepreneur, Li Ka Shing. According to the Chinese State Council and Ministry of Education, its "local partner" is Shantou University, but its foreign partner is the Li Ka Shing Foundation, not an educational institution, as required by the Ministry of Education. In addition, in its official website, the Graduate School identifies itself as "China's first private, non-profit, and independent business school."

With the encouragement of the Chinese government, different forms of cooperation, such as major Sino-foreign cooperation programmes, second-tier colleges and cooperation universities were established in mainland China to internationalise student learning. According to the Ministry of Education, up to March 2016, there were 1,180

Sino-foreign cooperative institutions and projects approved by it, with 751 Sino-foreign cooperative institutions and projects approved by provincial governments and local departments of education for a total of 1,931 cooperative institutions and projects. Recent statistics show that the number of students enrolled at all levels in all types of Sino-foreign cooperative educational institutions was about 550,000 in 2014, including 45,000 college students. With the rapid development of these TNE activities, there were more than 1,500,000 graduates from Sino-foreign cooperative educational institutions recorded in 2014.

RAPID RISE OF TNE AND CHALLENGES FOR UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

A) Educational Governance and Management

The rapid growth of TNE in mainland China has caused significant challenges for educational governance. If we put the rapid development of TNE into the wider context of the growing marketisation in higher education since the economic reform in 1980s, especially when different kinds of *minban* or quasi-*minban* (such as second-tier colleges or independent colleges in affiliation with national universities) higher education have increased in number, we would argue that the proliferation of higher education has inevitably challenged the conventional governance model of higher education. In critically reviewing the rapid development of TNE in China, we can discern the problems that have emerged during the process, such as the unclear share of profits, the undefined quality assurance agency, the excessive use of the brand names of the overseas partners, and the blurring boundaries between the public and private aspects of TNE. These could largely be ascribed to the failure of regulatory framework, particularly when the existing legal and regulatory framework is inappropriate and ineffective in governing these newly-formed institutions.

B) Quality Assurance and Academic Standard

One of the challenges confronting the operation of TNE in mainland China is related to the academic quality of these programmes, especially when some institutions face difficulty in finding sufficient high quality lecturers to teach students in English. There is also a concern as to whether students enrolled in TNE programmes are indeed well prepared, in terms of English proficiency. The growing diversity in the ownership structure of higher education institutions (public and private-run, overseas-run and different forms of joint ventures) has inevitably challenged conventional educational governance, such as supervision and quality assurance. Existing governmental instruments can no longer ensure quality standards effectively. Due to these circumstances a number of operating institutions offer substandard quality in teaching while charging high fees. The diversification of providers in higher education has rendered the conventional education governance model inappropriate. Therefore, the Chinese government should attempt to review its strategies in governing this increasingly complex and diverse higher education sector through adopting a corporate regulatory framework, civil society-led regulatory systems or international benchmarking that evolves to suit highly diversified sectors or markets.



Managing Markets and Massification of Higher Education in India

N.V. Varghese

The higher education system in India is at a stage of revival. The sector experienced an unprecedented expansion in this century. The double-digit annual growth rate in the previous decade helped the higher education sector enter a stage of massification. With more than 700 universities, nearly 37,000 colleges, 1.4 million teachers and 31 million students, Indian higher education is not only a massive system but also the second largest in the world after China.

MARKET-FRIENDLY REFORMS

The massification of the sector reflects a change in the public policy from a state-controlled, publicly-funded system that experienced slow growth and provided limited access, to a system led by market principles of operation. The liberalisation policies in the economic sector in the 1990s encouraged the permeation of market forces and market friendly reforms in the higher education sector, which led to a proliferation of private institutions and an explosion in student enrolment in India.

It may seem strange that while mature market economies relied on public institutions to absorb the massive demand for higher education, less developed market economies such as India relied on the market. At present, more than three-fifths of the enrolment is accounted for by private higher education institutions.

Initially, private sector involvement in higher education was in the form of sharing costs with the government. The next phase saw the emergence of self-financing and capitation (special fees that

student pay at some colleges prior to entry) fee colleges, followed by private institutions attaining the status of deemed-to-be universities (a special status that state authorities can give to universities not otherwise officially recognised), and finally the status of private universities in this century.

MASSIFICATION AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

Market-led massification promoted faster growth of market friendly study programmes in technical, professional and management domains leading to disciplinary distortions. This has also resulted in an increase in the unemployment of graduates from these streams leading to a decline in the demand for these study programmes and closure of some of the private institutions.

Further, massification promoted the expansion of non-university sector and study programmes which awarded diploma level certification. The non-university segment has been the fastest growing segment in higher education — the enrolment increased by 23 times and its share in enrolment by eight times between 2005 and 2012.

Higher education in India mainly refers to undergraduate education, which accounts for nearly 80% of enrolment. The share of enrolment in graduate study programmes is low and that in research programmes is declining. This trend may have implications for constraining further expansion of the sector due to the non-availability of teachers.

MASSIFICATION AND INEQUALITIES

The massification of higher education in India is accompanied by persisting, if not widening, inequalities. While all regions, social groups and both sexes improved their status, the rate of growth varied leading to the widening of relative inequalities in higher education development. For example, between 2002-2003 and 2011-2012, the GER increased by three times in some states, two

times in others and much slower in yet others. The gains in the GER are the highest among states which have a dominant presence of private institutions.

The disparities in enrolment among different social groups continue to be large and wide. However, the benefits of massification are more equally shared between sexes. Although inequalities still persist, the disparities in the share of enrolment of males and females are narrowing down. In fact, in some of the states where GER is relatively high, the gender parity index is greater than unity.

MASSIFICATION AND QUALITY

Massification has also contributed to deterioration in quality. The reckless growth of self-financing private colleges has resulted in a proliferation of institutions with poor infrastructure, less qualified teachers and zero research facilities. Forty-one universities, after physical verification, were recommended to close because of poor quality.

India has established mechanisms for external and internal quality assurance. Since accreditation is voluntary, a major share of the institutions is not yet accredited. Similarly, the internal quality assurance cells are not operational in a majority of institutions. This trend may change since the UGC has now made accreditation a necessary condition to obtain grants.

A new trend is that quality is affecting quantity in higher education in India. The enrolment in many private, especially in technical and professional colleges, is declining due to the questionable quality of education provided and severity of unemployment of their graduates.

CHALLENGES OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The existence of multiple regulatory bodies and funding arrangements poses challenges to institutional governance and management, and the system of affiliated colleges exacerbates these

challenges. The universities are responsible for developing curriculum, overseeing academic standards, conducting examinations and award of degrees for all those enrolled in the university departments and in the affiliated colleges. The number of colleges affiliated to some of the universities is too large to provide any meaningful academic guidance. India needs to plan for a larger number of small-sized universities, autonomous colleges and to restrict the number of colleges affiliated to any one university.

Institutional autonomy is essential for effective management. Except for selected institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), universities in India enjoy autonomy in theory only. State universities continue to be over-regulated and controlled by the government. Many institutions are starving for funds and are at the mercy of the government. At times, institutions complain that they receive more directives than funds from public authorities.

The capabilities and effectiveness of the exercise of institutional heads, no doubt, make a difference in autonomy. It may be that political influence in the selection of institutional heads is one of the reasons for the erosion of institutional authority and autonomy. Most of the institutions have their own governing bodies. However, the process of nomination of the members of the governing boards is not always free from political interference.

Oftentimes, the granting of autonomy is used as an excuse for not extending financial support. While autonomy gives better scope for institutions to engage in resource mobilisation, the government need to assure them with core funding to make them less vulnerable to donor pressures and more effective.

CONCLUSION

The compulsions to expand higher education in India will continue. The low GRE, an expanding secondary school system, and an increasing number

of youth provide fertile ground for further expansion of higher education India. In the 2020s, India will have one of the youngest populations and the largest tertiary-age population in the world. A majority of them will be in urban areas belonging to middle class families with a capacity to pay high fees. This implies that the era of decision making constrained by availability of public resources may come to an end in higher education in India. We may thus expect more of market friendly reforms in higher education in India.

The future challenge lies in expanding the system while containing inequalities and improving quality. The strategies for the future need to focus on regulating the system effectively for quality and targeting public investments towards underdeveloped regions and in favour of deprived groups.

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Singapore's Global Schoolhouse Aspirations

Jason Tan

Singapore's 'Global Schoolhouse' vision was outlined by the Ministry of Trade and Industry in a 2002 report. One of the sections in the report focused on the education industry. The ministry claimed that Singapore was well-placed to gain a piece of the estimated US\$2.2 trillion world education market. An ambitious target of 150,000 international full-fee paying students was set for the year 2015, up from the then-estimated figure of 50,000.

Several economic advantages for pursuing this vision were outlined. For instance, the increase in institutional spending and the spending of the foreign students would fuel economic growth and create high-paying jobs. Secondly, the influx of foreign students would contribute human capital to knowledge-based activities such as research and development, patent generation and enterprise development. Next, an increase in the number of educational institutions as well as a greater diversity of courses would help stem the outflow of domestic students to overseas universities. Lastly, foreign students would boost Singapore's pool of talented individuals and form a network of international alumni around the world.

The report recommended a three-tiered system of universities form the core of the global schoolhouse. At the apex would be the so-called "world-class universities". These universities would focus primarily on postgraduate education, and would be 'niche centres of excellence' contributing to research and development. The second tier would be the three pre-existing publicly-funded universities — the National University of Singapore (NUS), the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), and the Singapore Management University (SMU) — the so-called "bedrock" universities which would carry out research and development activities, supply the bulk of domestic university-educated manpower needs, attract regional students through scholarships, and fulfil the concept of education as a public good. Forming the base of the pyramid would be "additional private universities". These universities would focus on teaching and applied research, and cater to the bulk of the additional 100,000 foreign students envisioned in the global schoolhouse.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

The global schoolhouse vision was the latest in a string of policy initiatives that trumpeted the key role played by education in supporting national economic competitiveness. It also represented a move towards the marketisation and commodification of education. In 1996, the

then prime minister announced the government's intention to turn Singapore into the "Boston of the East," with Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology serving as role models for the NUS and the NTU to develop into world class institutions. Next, the state-affiliated Economic Development Board (EDB) announced in 1998 its intention to attract at least 10 so-called world class universities to Singapore within the next decade. This initiative managed to attract prestigious institutions such as Johns Hopkins University, the University of Chicago and INSEAD. Next, the global schoolhouse project fitted in well with the longstanding policy of welcoming foreign students.

OBSTACLES

Right from its inception, the global schoolhouse initiative was plagued with various difficulties. First, there were a few rather embarrassing high-profile cases of foreign universities withdrawing their campuses and programmes, or being asked to terminate their Singapore operations after a few years.

For instance, the state-funded Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) announced in July 2006 that it would be closing Johns Hopkins University's biomedical research facility due to the latter's failure to recruit the anticipated number of doctoral students. In addition, despite having received more than US\$50 million in EDB funding since 1998, the research facility had failed to meet eight out of its 13 performance benchmarks. In another debacle, four months after the opening of the University of New South Wales (UNSW)-Asia campus in February 2007, the home campus in Sydney announced that UNSW-Asia would close in June that year because of insufficient student numbers and worries over financial viability.

In the last few years, Singapore's global schoolhouse has suffered further setbacks with the announcement of yet another three campus closures. In 2012 the Tisch School of the Arts Asia decided to end its Masters courses in film, animation, media

production and dramatic writing. The School had been suffering financial deficits for all five years of its existence despite having received about US\$17 million in financial subsidies from the EDB and additional funds from New York University.

In 2013 the University of Chicago Booth School of Business said it would move its executive education programme from Singapore to Hong Kong, in order to be nearer the thriving economy of mainland China. At the same time, the University of Nevada at Las Vegas announced the closure of its Bachelors programme in hospitality management, citing financial viability as a reason. Yet another controversy involved the Yale-National University of Singapore (Yale-NUS) College. Established in 2011 as a collaborative venture between the two universities, it was criticised by some Yale faculty and human-rights advocates who doubted whether a liberal arts education dedicated to free inquiry could thrive within an authoritarian state with heavy restrictions on free speech and assembly.

Besides these high-profile controversies, a second difficulty facing the global schoolhouse initiative was quality assurance. The first decade of this century witnessed several cases of fraud involving private for-profit schools shutting down suddenly and leaving their students without any recourse to financial or academic redress. It took seven years from the initial announcement of the initiative before Parliament passed the Private Education Act to regulate all private educational institutions awarding degrees, diplomas or certificates.

A third, more recent, challenge has been increasingly acrimonious public debate over the sustainability of a liberal immigration policy. The ruling party has bowed to pressure in the last few years by tightening the reins on immigration. This change in immigration policy direction will have inevitable consequences for Singapore's hopes of becoming an education hub.

Thirteen years after the announcement of the global schoolhouse vision, the attainment of the target of 150,000 international students remains elusive. A press report in 2014 claimed that foreign student numbers fell from 97,000 in 2008, to 84,000 in 2012, and to 75,000 in 2014. An HSBC survey published that same year revealed foreign students' growing concerns over employment prospects and living costs in Singapore. Two years earlier, the Minister for Trade and Industry had told Parliament that the global schoolhouse initiative would emphasise quality of education and economic relevance rather than student numbers or GDP share. His statement was an implicit acknowledgement that the original target of 150,000 international full-fee paying students was nowhere in sight.



New Publications

Rattana Lao. *A Critical Study of Thailand's Higher Education Reforms: The Culture of Borrowing.* New York, NY: Routledge, 2015.

ISBN 978-1-138-02268-3.
www.routledge.com

This critical examination of Thailand's higher education politics and history fills in a significant gap in the studies of Thailand's colleges, universities and technical and vocational institutions. For Lao, the current model of Thai higher education rests significantly in foreign influences, which create direct impacts, via systems such as loans, and indirect impacts, via systems such as international rankings. Lao marshals diverse case studies and examples to demonstrate the connectivity of Thailand's higher education institutions with ideas and impacts of the West, in particular, highlighting influences of the western world on a system that may appear deeply Thai.

Philip G. Altbach. *Global Perspectives on Higher Education.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016.

ISBN 978-1-421-41926-8.
www.press.jhu.edu

Demonstrating the effects of international relationships and exchanges, Altbach offers a wide-ranging perspective on the implications of global trends on academe at both national and global levels. Altbach illuminates the effects of massification, highlighting specific challenges faced by countries that are becoming increasingly relevant for the global economy – Brazil, Russia, India and China. He considers the multiple implications of globalization, such as the use of English as the language of instruction, as well as cross-border higher education initiatives, showing how global movements in higher education have fundamentally altered education systems the world over.

John N. Hawkins and Ka Ho Mok, eds. *Research, Development, and Innovation in Asia Pacific Higher Education.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

ISBN 978-1-137-45708-0.
www.palgrave.com

Divided into two sections, "Policy Implications for Shifting Research Capacity and Development" and "Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Development in the Research Domain," this collection of essays critically examines recent policies and practices in promoting research, innovation, and entrepreneurial activities between industries and higher education in the Asia Pacific region. The authors offer critical reflections of the changing relationships among stakeholders, revealing how universities in Asia Pacific have responded to increasing pressure to be ranked well in global rankings, and to be relevant in the knowledge-based economy.

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About Us

The **HEAD Foundation** is an international charitable organisation set up in 2014 in Singapore to contribute to the development of Asia. We focus on issues around human capital, education, leadership and sustainability. With an in-house research and project management team, we support research initiatives and social projects related to the above issues. We also run workshops and training programmes with scholars, researchers and experts from around the world. To share our knowledge with the community, we publish books, produce research reports and host public events like this one on a regular basis. In the long run, we target to influence policies and create positive social impact which will contribute to the sustainable development of Asia.

In the area of higher education, we are currently running a research project on the Governance and Management of Universities in Four Southeast Asian Countries, led by Dr Molly Lee (Fellow, The HEAD Foundation); we have completed an update of the International Comparative Higher Education Finance and Accessibility Project, in collaboration with Prof Bruce Johnstone and SUNY Buffalo, from which ten Southeast Asian country profiles and an integrative article will be published on our website: www.headfoundation.org.

The **Center for International Higher Education (CIHE)** at the Lynch School of Education, Boston College, promotes the belief that an international perspective is needed to foster enlightened policies and practices in higher education. With this mission, CIHE was founded in 1995 to advance knowledge about the complex realities of higher education in the contemporary world through its research, publications, training programs, and advisory activities.

Its flagship publication, *International Higher Education*, is read widely around the world, in English as well as in Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese and Vietnamese. In addition to its collaboration with The HEAD foundation on HESB, CIHE is also in collaboration with the National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia, on *Higher Education in Russia and Beyond* (HERB). This year, CIHE will also start a similar collaboration with Latin American partners on Higher Education in Latin America. Visit CIHE's website at: www.bc.edu/research/cihe.html.

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