
University Restructuring in East Asia: trends, challenges and prospects

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ABSTRACT This concluding article aims to pull together the analysis undertaken in the preceding articles in this special issue. By sketching an overview of the university reforms and developments revealed in the sectoral articles, it draws out the trends of university restructuring in East Asia. It then projects the significances of these trends in terms of cautions to be raised. Finally, the article provides some comments on the ways the university sector in East Asia moves forward.

Introduction

One major task of the articles in this special issue is to look in some detail at some trends in higher education in the selected East Asian countries and those parallel developments in their counterparts in the West. Given that neoliberalism has been a very strong ideology driving the development of social policy and the delivery of public services, some Western scholars have heavily blamed the neoliberal model of marketized higher education and businesslike universities for depriving citizens' access to the services and undermining democracy (see Giroux, 2002; Haque, 2004; Lynch, 2006 for example). From the same perspective, Morrison writes:

if the university does not take seriously and rigorously its role as a guardian of wider civic freedoms, as interrogator of more and more complex ethical problems, as servant and preserver of deeper democratic practices, then some other regime or ménage of regimes will do it for us, in spite of us, and without us. (Morrison, 2001, quoted in Giroux, 2002, p. 456)

However, owing to the traditional Asian practices of compliance with the mandarin and the lack of democracy in some of the East Asian countries, the defence of democratic values seemingly is not the primary concern to many academics in the region, though neoliberalism's negative effects on academic freedom are taken into account (Petersen & Currie, in this issue). Instead, scholars in the region have put much effort into illustrating the tasks of higher education and the relevant government tactics, within the context of a highly competitive environment at both national and institutional levels. Their approaches sufficiently reflect the circumstances that the East Asian countries are situated in. On the one hand, the East Asian countries face the same global challenges that the Western countries are facing. Higher education, therefore, is inevitably given a mission of nurturing elite personnel for the economic development of these countries (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2004). On the other hand, there still remains a high demand for higher education from the masses, owing to the conventional shortage of provision. In this regard, the university sectors in these countries are facing a dual target of development in both quality and quantity. Also, in response to the mixtures of the concepts of modernization, globalization, internationalization and Westernization, East Asian countries and

their university sectors are required to make a choice between 'new' and 'old' as well as 'global' and 'local'. These circumstances can be summarized as the divergent missions of 'catching up' and of 'moving ahead'. And, the complexities of the higher education developments in East Asia lie at these crossroads.

In this concluding article, we attempt to pull together the analysis undertaken in the preceding articles. In the first section, we draw out the trends of university restructuring in East Asia by sketching an overview of the university reforms and developments revealed in our sectoral articles. The second section then projects the significance of these trends in terms of cautions to be raised. The final section provides some comments on the ways the university sector in East Asia can move forward.

Trends

Building World-Class Universities

Building world-class universities has become a mission but also a challenge to many governments and universities in the East Asian region. As developing higher education is seen as a way to enhance countries' global competitiveness, governments in the region have started to reform and restructure their higher education systems with the quest for world-class universities. Universities in East Asia, therefore, are under pressure to compete for an internationally recognized status. However, the identity of 'world classness' is not yet well defined, though some scholars have attempted to provide a clearer definition of 'world-class' university (see Niland, 2000; Altbach, 2004; Watson, 2006 for example). In this regard, global league tables are taken as a symbolic and powerful indicator to prove and advertise the standard of universities in the marketized global education market. In fact, commercial university rankings have existed in the West for a number of years, while official evaluations, such as the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and Teaching Quality Assurance (TQA) in the United Kingdom, have emerged since the early 1990s. Though there are criticisms that many of these ranking exercises are still far from systemic and scientific (Lynch, 2006), they are taken seriously by many governments and universities in East Asia and their influences are expanding rapidly in the academic field of the region (Mok, 2007). This is not exaggerated if we recognize that some Asian governments, like those of Taiwan, mainland China and South Korea, take higher ranks in global league tables as their goals of higher education development (Chen & Lo, 2007; Ngok & Guo, in this issue; BrainKorea21 (BK21), 2007).[1] Meanwhile, university systems and related sectors in the region are attempting to produce their own global ranking systems. The league tables produced by *Asiaweek*, a respected Hong Kong-based magazine, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University are examples of the emerging marking systems in the university sector in East Asia, though the former was 'so widely criticized that it stopped' (Altbach, 2004), and the latter is criticized that it narrowly and selectively focuses on sciences and engineering but neglects arts, humanities and social sciences (Lynch, 2006).

In addition to the emergence of marking systems, another implication of the quest for world-class universities is the differentiation policy adopted by many East Asian countries. This is owing to the recognition that the number of top-tier universities is limited, and this is particularly true because many universities are public institutions or rely heavily on public finance. Thus, it is fair to say that it is impossible for the governments to treat all universities the same in terms of budgets and mission. Such an understanding then leads the governments to differentiate higher education by setting stratified missions within the sector. Research-intensive universities are usually picked as top-tier institutions and for achieving the quest for world-class universities. This is because in the knowledge-based economy, research has a function of promoting economic and social development through commercialization of research results. This sort of transaction not only represents the development of entrepreneurship and the engagement of industry and the business sector in the higher education sector, but more importantly, also reinvents the missions of the universities and the definition of academic excellence (Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz, 2001; Etzkowitz, 2003).[2] Although the selected countries in East Asia adopt different strategies to build their world-class universities, all of them have stratified their higher education sectors. Singapore's three-tier university system is considered as a combination of policies of building world-class universities and of stratifying the higher education sector (Lee & Gopinathan, in this issue). Similarly, in Hong

Kong and mainland China, the governments adopt a differentiation policy to identify those research-intensive universities and divide the higher education sectors into different layers by assigning specific roles to the institutions (Mok, 2005a; Chan, 2007). In Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, the governments launch competition-based funding schemes to provide off-budget funds to universities. Funded universities are expected to reach a world-class status within an agreed period of time (Oba, in this issue; BK21, 2007; Chen & Lo, 2007).[3]

No matter how 'world-classness' is defined and what policies have been adopted to compete for higher ranks in global university league tables in different countries, it is clear that the East Asian governments or the societies at large have a new expectation of universities. Generally speaking, universities are required to play a role of providing educated and trained personnel to enhance the countries' global competitiveness in the knowledge-based economy. Universities also need to act as a knowledge base for research and development projects of the industrial and business sector. In these circumstances, the major objective of building 'world-class' universities is to provide a site to concentrate top professors and students so as to meet the societies' needs for elite personnel, knowledge and technology. This strategy is particularly necessary, given the rapid expansion of higher education in many East Asian countries and the accompanied quality decline in the recent decades. Instead, in the cases of Hong Kong and Singapore, the governments' further target is to transform higher education into a service industry for export. Regarding their call for making the cities a regional education hub, their quest for building 'world-class' universities is more likely to be a strategy to advertise and to attract students from other regions and countries.

Internationalization

In the past, academia in East Asia was locally based. Prestigious universities were satisfied with their predominant positions from a local and/or regional perspective. The lack of competition caused an elitist but isolated atmosphere in the academic field (see Postiglione, 2007; Yonezawa, 2007 for example). Nevertheless, globalization has broken down national borders and has blurred the differences between societies (Urry, 1998). This has led to a systemization of world knowledge, by which ideas, people and resources have been fused (Denman, 2000). In response to this global trend, local academia now needs to establish linkages with the international academic communities. This internationalism in higher education is interpreted and implemented as the strategy of building world-class universities, which has been discussed in the previous section, in terms of achieving the global standards of teaching and research. However, as Knight & de Wit (1995) point out, internationalization of higher education is 'the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of an institution of higher education' and the international dimension is introduced to higher education as 'a perspective, activity or programme which introduces or integrates an international/intercultural/global outlook into the major functions of a university or college' (p. 15). This statement reiterates that internationalization should not be limited to a dimension that focuses on climbing the world university league, but should be targeted at building an international setting in the higher education sector. In this regard, internationalization of higher education in East Asia has two implications. The first is that of promoting the mobility of personnel within the academic field. Conventionally, students move from developing countries, where the higher education sector usually cannot meet the demands for tertiary education in the society, to Western countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, where their advanced education system, prestigious academic status as well as English teaching environment are important incentives for students. Today, this circumstance has not fundamentally been changed. There are still many students in East Asia, including those from more developed parts in the region like Hong Kong and Singapore, seeking tertiary education in the English-speaking countries. However, we recognize that countries in the region have been attempting to expand their international student population. Taiwan's Program for Expanding Overseas Student Recruitment is an example of the government's policy initiatives on promoting student mobility (Song & Tai, 2007). Meanwhile, to achieve the goal of developing the city-state as a regional education hub, the Singaporean government established a multi-government agency, namely Singapore Education, to promote the country and its education system to international students (Singapore Education, 2007). Having the same goal

of being a regional education hub, the Hong Kong Chief Executive, Donald Tsang, recently decided to expand the population of international students by 'increasing the admission quotas for non-local students, to local tertiary institutions, relaxing employment restrictions on non-local students, as well as providing scholarships' (Tsang, 2007, p. 40). In addition to attracting international students, internationalization of higher education has also been promoted in East Asian countries in other aspects. For example, Ngok & Guo's article in this issue reports that the top Chinese universities, like Peking University and Tsinghua University, have speeded up their pace to attract overseas scholars. Similarly, Oba's article also notes that the recent 'World Premier International Research Centre (WPI) Initiative' in Japan serves a mission to 'attract top-level researchers from around the world, by providing concentrated support to a limited number of proposals'. Furthermore, promoting the use of foreign language (mainly English) on campus and requesting faculty members to publish in international publications (mainly academic journals in the American and the British systems) exist in the higher education sectors of many East Asian countries as the ways to construct an international teaching and learning environment and to facilitate and strengthen the linkages with the international academic community, though these policies are controversial (Chen & Lo, 2007; Yonezawa, 2007; Ngok & Guo in this issue).

The second implication of internationalization in East Asia is the erasing of boundaries between different educational systems. This is reflected by the rapid growth of transnational/cross-border higher education in the region, given the circumstance that higher education is treated as a part of tertiary industry under the framework of the General Agreement on Trade in Service (GATS) (Knight, 2002). Indeed, academics in Taiwan have realized the growing competition from overseas higher education institutions since the island-state's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 (Chen & Lo, 2007). Meanwhile, Hong Kong, Singapore and mainland China have actively opened their education market to foreign education providers in the forms of establishing off-shore campuses, running twinning programmes and so on. However, we should realize that these countries have slightly different considerations in the expansion of transnational education. For Singapore, establishing off-shore campuses of foreign universities is a tactic of building world-class universities in the country. Hence, those entering the market are top universities and are invited on the initiative of the Singaporean government (Lee & Gopinathan, in this issue). As for Hong Kong and mainland China, transnational education is taken as a sort of supplement to the local higher education sector in the tide of massification of higher education. Therefore, the quality of institutions and the forms of delivery of transnational education are rather diverse in these places (Huang, 2006; Chan & Lo, 2007).

In sum, internationalization of higher education in East Asia reflects the fact that higher education sectors in the region are facing more pressure and competition from their counterparts across the globe. However, the divergent approaches to and diverse motives in promoting internationalization lead us to a bitter controversy about what 'internationalization' and 'world-classness' mean within a non-Western context or the East Asian context in particular. We will return to this point later.

Corporatizing Public Universities

The rise of neoliberalism in social policy has formulated strong impulses with which universities in many parts of the world are required to reform their structure, management and finance so as to deal with the global tide of marketization (Lynch, 2006; Hawkins, in this issue). Therefore, public universities in East Asia, which used to be closely directed by the Ministry of Education or equivalent government bodies, are now required to become more proactive and dynamic in exploring new financial resources. The conventional governing models along the lines of 'state-oriented' and 'highly centralized' approaches in higher education therefore are no longer capable of dealing with the situation. Instead, the East Asian governments have introduced 'corporatization' and 'privatization' measures to run their state universities, thereby making national universities more flexible and responsive to rapid socio-economic changes (Mok, 2006).

An important development of this process of re-engineering in universities is that of the blurred boundary between public and private universities. For those higher education systems conventionally with a predominant public sector, such as those of Hong Kong, Singapore and

mainland China, corporatization has taken the form of fostering entrepreneurship in public universities in order to generate additional revenue sources from the market. For example, public universities in Hong Kong have adopted a market-oriented and business corporation model, by which programmes at various levels, mainly taught postgraduate and sub-degree programmes, are run on self-financing and for-profit basis. In addition, in line with the development of university–industry partnership, many of Hong Kong’s universities have established their commercial extensions and subsidiaries in providing commercial services and commercializing their research results (Mok, 2005a; Chan & Lo, 2007). Similarly in mainland China, state universities have established their extension arms, in the second-tier colleges (*erji xueyuan*), in order to expand their share of the growing higher education market. These second-tier colleges are affiliated to well-established public universities, but many of them are operated with partners from the private sector (Mok, 2005b; Lo & Chan, 2006). In Singapore, corporatization was enforced by the law. Through the legislation, the two principal universities in the city-state, namely, the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University, were incorporated as university companies, while the Singapore Management University, an institution solely funded by the government, was founded as a private company (Lee & Gopinathan, in this issue). These cases have significantly reflected the changing relationship between the state and public universities, in which public universities are required to be autonomous, mainly in terms of financing, despite the fact that they are still accountable to the government and ultimately to the general public. The blurring of the boundary between public and private has led us to rethink the publicness of public education.[4]

Yet, for those places where private universities account for a significant proportion of the higher education sector, like the Japanese, Taiwanese and Korean systems, the governments have tried to promote competition among higher education institutions, regardless of whether they are public or private in nature. In Japan, the government is attempting to narrow the gap between public and private universities, in terms of financial resources, by transforming national universities into national university corporations (NUC), introducing a more flexible funding mechanism, and reducing the budget for NUCs (Oba, 2007). In Taiwan and South Korea, the governments cut their funding to public institutions, but increased their subsidies to private institutions in return. Meanwhile, plans for incorporating public universities were proposed and discussed, though they met with strong opposition in the sector (Tien, in this issue; Kim, in this issue). The government-led pro-competition policies adopted in these countries apparently represent the continuing strong state capacity in steering the development of higher education, despite the fact that these policies are presented as paths towards a neoliberal, market-oriented architecture. In this regard, incorporation of public universities does not necessarily mean the retreat of the state in higher education, although universities would transform into legally independent and autonomous corporations or legal entities.

Furthermore, a development parallel to the corporatization of public universities is the governments’ strong will in streamlining the higher education sector through restructuring. Proposals of merger and deep collaboration between higher education institutions were initiated by the governments in many East Asian countries. Some of them were implemented smoothly (such as those in mainland China), whilst many of them met strong oppositions (such as those in Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea). Nevertheless, whether or not these restructuring plans were implemented successfully, these cases indicate that the states in East Asia are trying to retain their steering role through proactive intervention. In this sense, we argue that the policy of corporatization is taken instrumentally by the governments, while the value of institutional autonomy has not been authentically upheld in the process of autonomization.[5]

Challenges

Homogenization of Academia

The calls for building world-class universities and internationalization of higher education are executed by promoting research culture and emphasizing the so-called international standards in universities through concentration of funding and strengthening the evaluation system in East Asia (Mok, 2007). Whereas ‘world-classness’ and international standards have been something inevitably

to be accepted by academia, we still have not reached a concrete answer to the basic question about what world-class university and international standards mean, particularly within a local context. Though there are definitions to be given, the dilemma is about the value of local dimensions under the strong trends of regionalization and globalization together with market fundamentalism. On the one hand, academics are warning of the 'McDonaldization' of higher education and the practices of devaluing academics' national and local studies in their own languages (Hayes & Wynyar, 2002; Lynch, 2006). It is believed that internationalization does not necessarily mean surrendering to the homogeneity of the international standard and giving up a distinctive cultural framework. International students who come to a foreign country are willing to experience the local dimension instead (Niland, 2000). Thus, to prevent standardization or colonization in education, academics in East Asia urge that there should be a contextualization during the process of policy adaptation, whilst stressing the global connection (Mok, 2007). They advocate that Asian academics should assume confidence in their works and pursue the real sense of internationalization by proactively contributing the cultural essences of Asia to scholarship (Tong, 2007).

On the other hand, the opened market and the globally competitive environment have been transforming higher education from a national-based project to an institutional-based project (Huang, 2007). This means that, as discussed earlier, higher education institutions and their personnel can no longer be satisfied with their predominance in an isolated and protected environment, but must engage in global competition at institutional or even individual level. Such a circumstance thus links the pursuit of world-class status and internationalization with the survival and prospects of the institutions and their personnel. As a consequence, though criticized as McDonaldization, it is merely logical for both the university's customers and managers to seek for a widely accepted standard because it means efficiency, calculability, predictability and control, thereby providing a quality guarantee (Ritzer, 2002). For the university's workers, the standardized requirements enable them to flow freely and globally in the labour market with high mobility. In this regard, the interests of different stakeholders in the sector are consistent.

Giroux (2002) criticizes that such a market-driven discourse and its impact of corporate culture on higher education absorb 'the democratic impulses and practices of civil society within narrow economic relations' (p. 429). He says, 'neoliberalism taints any civic-inspired notion of educational leadership because it represents a kind of market fundamentalism based on the untrammelled pursuit of self-interest' (p. 440). However, even beyond the self-interest of organizations and individuals, it is obviously not easy to reverse the marketized social settings which citizenship has been embedded in and integrated with.[6] In addition, in the globalized environment, it is our responsibility to provide an objective and reliable track record for helping students to choose, given that there are numerous and various higher education institutions and programmes in the increasingly chaotic academic world. This is essential for them to uphold their right of choice indeed, while we should not neglect the publicness in education, in terms of democratic values and equal right to access.

In short, based on the above observations, we think that it is not easy to release the tension between homogeneity and uniqueness of higher education systems. This is why we term it a 'dilemma' above. Some scholars provide their views on how to go beyond this deadlock. Their opinions together with our perspectives will be elaborated more fully below.

Bureaucratic Constraint

Under the global tide of neoliberalism, corporate culture has become an ensemble of ideological and institutional forces transforming the organizational life and the power relationship in universities in both the East and the West (Hawkins, in this issue). As discussed above, universities in East Asia are transforming themselves into corporate-like organizations. In accordance with the policy agenda of the governments, these corporatization projects would grant more institutional autonomy and freedom to universities. However, in reality, the corporatization projects always come along with the managerial ideologies of 'efficiency, effectiveness and economy'. Given that governments usually are the major funder and regulator of higher education, the strategies of incorporation and corporatization being employed by universities do not necessarily mean

autonomization, but more likely are some sort of bureaucratization, by which the governments can curb the university sector at a distance through strengthening evaluation and auditing systems in the name of upholding accountability to the public.

It is noteworthy that bureaucratic control in the higher education sector within the Western context can mean the justification for subjecting the university sector to the culture of auditing (Furedi, 2002). Thus, academics in the West have put much effort into blaming bureaucratization plus consumerism for the 'mis-education' (Lustig, 2005), 'deprofessionalisation of academics' (Readings, 1996) and 'anti-humanity' (Scott, 2004) in higher education. Their focus of discussion is how the appearance of managerialism and corporate culture in the university sector erodes the conduct of higher education. They indicate that the business-like running model and the faculty's role of academic entrepreneurs in the higher education sector makes academics and students unable to distinguish their role of citizen from consumer (Giroux, 2005). Bureaucratic constraint in this regard is a type of institutional force accounting for managerial control over the university sector in a depoliticized but marketized policy setting.

In East Asia, in addition to the rise of consumerist culture and the utility of auditing and evaluation, the incorporation and corporatization of higher education commonly involve government-led organizational restructuring, by which the governments attempt to stratify the university sector in order to fulfil the policy goals of role differentiation and fund concentration. However, though streamlining the higher education sector becomes a common mission shared by many governments in the region, the academic communities' responses to the higher education restructuring are divergent in different societies. In the countries traditionally having a strong state but a relatively weak civil society, like China and Singapore, the higher education restructuring projects were merely understood as an administrative strategy to enhance the quality and competitiveness of higher education, and therefore have been implemented without strong resistance. In contrast, in those places with a stronger civil society, including Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea, the restructuring plans met tremendously strong resistance from the academic fields, and hence many of them have been turned down. These phenomena may be simply considered as reflections of different political environments and educational administrative systems in the East Asian region. In the cases of Taiwan and South Korea, for example, the representative structures in the education sector and the vocal stakeholders, which are seen as the results of democratization, provide academics channels to resist the university and government's policy (Lo & Weng, 2005; Kim, in this issue). Yet, in socialist China, higher education institutions were originally constructed as an extended part of the government under the Soviet model. Higher education restructuring hence is simply taken as a kind of administrative tool within the government authorities (Ngok & Guo, in this issue). Nevertheless, higher education restructuring in Hong Kong is taken seriously as a sort of bureaucratic constraint restricting and undermining academic freedom (Chan & Lo, 2007; Petersen & Currie in this issue). In fact, the recent HKIED inquiry [7] reflects the interventionist governing philosophy towards universities held by the Hong Kong government. Although the results of the incident reflect that academic freedom remains a chief concern of the local academia and the society at large, the local academics express a view that bureaucratic constraint in terms of less tolerance to criticism is considered to be acceptable and reasonable within the traditional Chinese cultural context (Petersen & Currie, in this issue).

Considering the effect of restructuring in the East Asian context, we argue that the neoliberal pattern of market-driven reforms is adapted instrumentally by the government as a carrot-and-stick approach to curb the higher education sector. The case of Hong Kong provides an example of how the bureaucratic constraint coming along with the university restructuring can pose a threat to academic freedom. Given the lack of democracy and/or the conventional interventionist mode of governance in many East Asian countries, the compliant academics and the passive citizens are too weak in determining the future of higher education, but comply with the economic rationalism and managerial control imposed by the governments in the name of the market.

The Road Ahead

Our discussions above have brought out two issues about reforming the university sector in the East Asian context. The first is of how to position the local dimension in the process of

internationalization of higher education. The second is about how to strike a balance between the principles and practices of the market and intellectualism.

We analyse the first issue in light of Altbach's framework of 'centre-periphery' in the international intellectual network. According to this framework, the global intellectual network is unbalanced, where the English-speaking countries in general and the United States in particular have a predominant position in the global academic community. These countries occupy most of the top tier of world-class universities. Whilst these 'chosen few' function as the major international academic centres in the world academic system, the majority of universities around the world are placed on the periphery of the system (Altbach, 2002). Along with this international structural pattern of higher education, we argue that the calls for internationalization of higher education and building world-class universities in East Asia are a kind of attempt to transform the 'centre-periphery' structure into a 'multi-centre' pattern. The transformation hopefully would inaugurate the elimination of regional and/or national borders between higher education sectors, not only in terms of institutional barriers but also preconceived notions and stereotypes. This means when we talk about internationalism in East Asia, we should think about 'East Asia in the world', instead of 'East Asia and the world' (Marinelli, 2007). With this concept, the East Asian academics and students are capable of approaching knowledge from a transnational perspective, which includes but is not limited to a local dimension. The foreign language requirement in this sense is a tool to reach multiple perspectives. Its ultimate goal is to strength the global connection, but not to devalue the local language and studies. In practice, among the 'insiders', those who work on China studies, for example, are expected to be able to communicate and exchange their views fully from both Chinese and Western perspectives in both Chinese and English (taken as the international language). This is how a centre of a subject/discipline forms and operates. In these circumstances, it is not necessary for universities in China to be the centre of China studies, but the Chinese dimension must not be neglected. At the same time, experts in China studies should be able to share their ideas with the 'outsiders', practically in English. This is necessary because, in the globalized settings, we need to bridge the numerous centres in a 'multi-centre' pattern without linguistic and cultural barriers. Such an understanding of internationalism in higher education is more likely but not exclusively relevant to the studies in arts, humanity and social sciences. It can also be applied to other disciplines, given the emphasis on a multi- and trans-disciplinary approach. Ultimately, a university can reach the status of world class when it has many of these centres.

As for the second issue, about intellectualism in the neoliberal settings, we tend to be pessimistic. Though scholars cry out for reasserting democratic values and the public in education (Kelly, 1995; Giroux, 2002; Lynch, 2006; Painter & Mok, 2007, for example), we realize that higher education is undergoing a more rapid progress of de-publicization owing to its high potential for profit generation. When we consider the strong mindset favouring learning and education and the eagerness to pay for better education commonly shared among the East Asian societies (Cumming, 1996; Mok & Lo, 2007), we would agree that higher education is a big business venture in the region. Nevertheless, different to other public services, such as health care, housing and school education, higher education is less essential to the masses and therefore the market-oriented mode of delivery is less likely to be seen as biased (Haque, 2004). To bear these circumstances in mind, it seems impossible for us to reverse the tide of marketization and its implications for higher education. Furthermore, as Kirp points out, the relationship between university and student is not only the one between 'seller' and 'buyer', but student also is the 'input' and 'output' of university simultaneously. Hence, 'elite university needs top students every bit as much as top students need them' (Kirp, 2003, p. 3). This co-dependence has already formulated a winner-take-all market, in terms of student recruitment, for higher education. Then, the state interventionist approach together with the differentiation policy and the concentration of funding taken by many East Asian countries would amplify the winner-take-all effect in other aspects, mainly funding. Consequently, 'success breeds success and failure breeds failure' (Frank, 2001, p. 3).

Notes

- [1] The Program for Developing First-Class University and Top Research Centers, in Taiwan, targets the development of at least one university ranking among the world's top 100 within 10 years, while the BK21 in South Korea and the 985 scheme in China generally state that selected institutions would be

- competitive globally or world-class universities within the twenty-first century (Chen & Lo, 2007; BK21, 2007; Ngok & Guo, in this issue).
- [2] Leydesdorff & Etzkowitz (2001) suggest that the partnership between government, university and the industry sector forms a 'Triple Helix' network system, in which 'industry itself is now increasingly present within academia ... the university through these institutional innovations is also co-constitutive of its industrial environment' (p. 7). This formulates a circumstance of university-embracing-industry and vice versa. In this regard, contributions to industrial development should be taken into account when talking about academic excellence. Etzkowitz (2003) further suggests that promoting economic and social development has become the third mission of university, while the old missions of teaching and research continue.
- [3] Although the funding schemes in the three countries are granted on a competition basis, the selected institutions are traditionally ranked as top universities in the countries (Lee, 2000; Song & Tai, 2007; Oba, in this issue).
- [4] The value of publicness can have distinct meanings in different education systems. In some settings, publicness means the right of choice, while in others publicness talks about the equal right to access (Stewart, 2005).
- [5] Instead, we argue that the changing university governance model in East Asia is to enable the governments to govern at a distance.
- [6] From Giroux's view (2002), citizenship is independent from neoliberalism's market-driven discourse. Hence, he believes that university as a part of the democratic public sphere should resist the consumer-oriented and instrumental approach of governance by upholding the democratic values in citizenship. However, Ritzer, based on Weber's idea of the 'iron cage of rationality', argues that the spiritual life of the public is dependent on the material possession. In this regard, it is impossible for universities to resist the trend of McDonaldization because the relationship between the university and the students (and their parents) is a sort of economic relation under the rule of neoliberalism. It means university is a means for students and their parents to consume education (Hayes & Wyniar, 2002).
- [7] The HKIEd inquiry investigated allegations that the then Secretary for Education and Manpower, Professor Arthur Li, threatened Professor Paul Morris, the then president of HKIEd, to merge the institute with the Chinese University of Hong Kong or he would allow Mrs Fanny Law, the then Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, to cut the institute's student numbers. It also was alleged that Mrs Law pressured the institute to dismiss four academics who publicly criticized the government's education policies, and that Professor Li told HKIEd vice-president Professor Bernard Luk, 'I'll remember this; you will pay' when Professor Luk refused to issue a statement condemning redundant teachers who went on strike in 2004. The report made by the commission of inquiry on the allegations concluded that Mrs Law had improperly interfered with academic freedom, whereas the commission has found the allegation against Professor Li not established.

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