

Trends in International Higher Education and Regionalism: Issues and Challenges for Malaysia

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Introduction and Context

- Increasing interest on IHE
- In relation to Asia: “Asia is Hot”, “Asian Century”
- About comparative analysis of IHE issues of common concerns
 - HE that transcends national borders (flows of human resources) (most visible form of IHE)
 - HE framework that prepares graduates for interconnected world

Emerging Issues

- Rise of regionalism; inter-regionalism (Europe/Asia) connected with HE (for what purpose?)
- Shift from old to new regionalism
- Economic regionalism a precursor to regionalism in HE (for example, EU)

Implications for Countries in Asia

- Different reactions and responses to IHE and arguments for regionalist approach to development of HE
- What does EU has that we do not have in Asia?
- Regionalism in Asia: Limitations and possibilities of using HE?

Objectives of Presentation

- Outline salient trends in IHE
- Highlight tendency towards regionalism
- Assess opportunities and challenges to regionalism in HE
- Discuss Malaysia's (re) positioning in relation to opportunities and challenges
- Way Forward

Premise

- Idea of regional cooperation and integration is not new in Asia (Mahathir's EAEC is just one of the many)
- In view of increasing regionalism in the world in HE), what about using HE as a vehicle for constructing regionalism in Asia (Asian Higher Education Area?)
- There are opportunities for sharing resources, a common framework etc.

Global Trends in HE

- Demographics
 - Increase in global demands: 97 million (2000) to 263 million (2025)
 - China and India (over half of the global demand by 2025)
 - Increase in transnational students: 1.7 million (2000) to more than 8 million (2025)

Global Trends in HE

- Alternative delivery systems
- Increasing regionalism and inter-regionalism
- Increasingly competitive environment
- Quality assurance
- Consumer awareness
- Lifelong learning/Open learning

Trends in IHE

- Increase student mobility; IHE is expanding (estimates varies)
- Nature of student mobility is changing away from conventional to commoditized models (market-driven HE system)
- Relative composition of sending and receiving countries has changed some what
- Ascent of Asia and shift to Asia (dominant consumer/producer)

Reasons for Expansion (supply-side)

- Among industrialized countries: to provide their students with global consciousness, experience with other countries in order to compete globally (for example the EU)
- Among universities in mainly English-Speaking destination countries: result of gov't intervention and policy, regulating domestic tuition fees, deregulation of international tuition fees

Reasons for Expansion (demand-side)

- Excess demand within fast-growing developing countries (massification, national wealth, income)
- Capacity constraints in these countries (gov't policies)
- Status of foreign degree (highly sought after)