



Leading university's role in regional cooperation and integration

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Regional cooperation and integration

- ▶ Regional cooperation and integration is a term extensively used in political science and economy in relation with national policies between countries in a given geographical region or regions.
- ▶ Traditionally, countries according to their economic development level, governmental form, political structures or security need formed alliance.
- ▶ In the process of economic globalization, there appears a new situation for “regionalization.”
- ▶ My presentation will focus on leading universities’ role in the process of “regionalization.”

Economic Regional organizations and higher education

- ▶ Relatively from 1970s, there appeared different kinds of regional economic organizations: regional and cross regional organizations.
- ▶ Such as EU is very much a regional organization, and so does with ASEAN, ASEAN + 3 and NAFTA. APEC and Shanghai Cooperation Organization could be considered as cross regional organizations.
- ▶ No doubt, those organizations play very important roles in the integration of regional economy or global economy, and they also affect higher education in many aspects.

Glocalization and higher education

- ▶ Higher education is very much influenced by those regional organizations, such as now in EU, higher education just experiences an integration under the Bologna process.
- ▶ In Asia, there is no such a political framework as EU to provide support for higher education integration.
- ▶ So in the field of higher education in East Asia or specially in China, researchers seldom talk about regional cooperation, but internationalization and globalization, or sometimes localization.

Internationalization

- ▶ Internationalization for higher education has been defined in many ways. For this presentation, internationalization is considered “as a proactive effort on the part of universities to embrace their universal nature by opening their curriculum, research, classrooms, and networks to the world.” (Egron-Polak, E.2005, p59).
- ▶ First, internationalization (Englishnization) is very fundamental to Chinese leading universities, all of the students have to take English level 6 examination in order for them to secure a job after their graduation.

Globalization and students mobility

- **Economic globalization has produced great influence to higher education. In GATTs, higher education is viewed as a service sector of an economy.
- ** Higher education has been considered as a very important industry to many advanced countries, such as in Australia, Britain, Canada and the United States, thousand of Chinese students brought millions of dollars to those countries.
- **Statistics shows that just in mainland China, in 2007, 67,723 students went to the United States.
- ** But to Japan in 2007, for short term study, there was only 8,368, to South Korea, it was only 7000 students.

“Americanization” and localization

- ▶ Many research shows that higher education reform worldwide or institutional change has very much influenced by the US model, there are some concerns on the convergence of higher learning institutions, the concept of localization is used to preserve academic, institutional or system diversity.
- ▶ For this process, Simon Marginson creates a term “Glocalization” to describe the situation.

National policy change

- ▶ Due to those different developmental process, it is easy to observe national policy change either in developed or developing countries for higher education,.
- ▶ Such as in South Korea, there is BK21(Brain South Korea for the 21st century), in Japan, legalization of public universities in 2003, and the establishment of COE programs; and in China, 211 and 985 projects.
- ▶ Those are considered as country efforts to promote the growth of leading universities in East Asia and to further differentiate the internal system of higher education.

Leading universities

In the field of high education, “the flagship university”, “the world-class university”, “the emerging global research universities” are used to describe new developmental trend of leading universities both in developing or developed countries.

Networking of Leading universities

- Like regional economic organizations, leading universities are also organized together.
- Such as in East Asia, the four university presidents (Tokyo university, National Seoul university, Peking university, and Hanoi University) meet annually to discuss commonly concerned issues.
- There are regional or international university associations, such as AC21, APRU, Universities 21, Association of East Asia Research Universities, Eurasia-Pacific Uninet International Association of Research Universities.
- Those organizations provide cooperative frameworks for institutional cooperation regionally or internationally.

Internationalizing the campus

- ▶ Leading universities are trying to internationalize their campuses by strengthening English teaching, reforming their curriculum, adding new teaching or research programs.
- ▶ At Peking University, only in the past 5 years, 270 international meeting and conferences were held from University presidents forum to the symposium for culture study and environmental protections.

Develop joint training programs

- ▶ Developing joint programs between leading universities.
- ▶ At Peking university, there are Yale joint undergraduate program, Cornell joint undergraduate program, Stanford undergraduate program, and etc
- ▶ Similarly, at Waseda U. there is Confucius school for the promotion of cultural understanding.

Collaborative on research projects

- ▶ Developing multilateral collaborative projects among leading universities is another aspects for international collaboration.
- ▶ At Peking U, many research projects established with joint efforts from universities in other countries.
- ▶ Similarly, Waseda U, Singapore U, and Hong Kong University all set up many joint research projects, some are bilateral or regionally based and some are multilateral with global reach.

Becoming more socially involved

- ▶ In many cases, leading universities become more socially involved, they work as links or bridges between the local and the global communities for multi-cultural understanding, social change and economic development.
- ▶ Traditionally Chinese universities, especially leading universities seldom cooperate with local governments or pay attention to local communities, but the situation is changing now. Leading universities become more and more local focused by using their knowledge in helping communities to solve practical problems.

Global focused

For leading universities, in their strategic planning or daily operation, they are very much global focused,

Such as at Peking University, more than 200 hundred universities have signed exchange agreements with Peking University. The regional distributions:

In Asia, there are 57 institutions

In Europe, there are 69 intuitions

In North America, there are 44 institutions

In South America, there are 6 institutions

In Africa, there are 4 institutions

In Oceania, there are 8 institutions.


The cooperation are very much beyond the region.

The need to strengthen regional cooperation



- ▶ In Mainland, China, up to 2005, there were 1000 joint or cooperative programs in the country, Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools (CFCRS)
- ▶ Besides, Taiwan and Hong Kong regions, US, Australia, Canada, Japan, Singapore, England, France, German and South Korea are listed at the top.
- ▶ But the dominance of cooperation is still from North America and Australia. In many aspects, it is lack of regional cooperation in Asia



language issue to regional cooperation




In 2007, there was a survey at Peking U. asking students if they were given an opportunity to go abroad for another degree, where they want to go, United States , England, and Australia are still the first choice. As for the reasons, language is the first .




This indicates that for regional integration, we may come to the language challenge. In China, in the big cities, kids start English training at very earlier years.



Inclusiveness in regional cooperation



Another situation has to be pointed out when we talk about regional cooperation of higher education: smaller and less developed countries do not seem to have opportunities to participate in the process. Even in Asia, there are plenty of examples.




The need for mutual recognition

- ▶ Eg.: Countries which signed agreements on mutual recognition of academic degrees with China, in Asia, there were only Srilanka and Mongolia.
- ▶ If we want to see a real regional integration, mutual recognition of academic degree may be the first step to begin with.

Finance for Regional Cooperation

- ▶ The dominance of the global markets and the shrinking of appropriations from public sources for higher education create a hot competition between leading universities for human and financial resources worldwide.
- ▶ While the leading universities compete or co-operate regionally or worldwide in developing transnational or cross-border programs, leading universities in less developed countries are certainly in a disadvantaged position, because lack of resources.

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- ▶ In my previous research on the emerging global research university, I strongly feel the need of regional cooperation in higher education, so here I suggest that we should establish a mechanism to facilitate the ongoing discussions and I am willing to be part of the process.



Thank you