Challenges and Strategies of Chinese Higher Education under the Globalization Background

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Abstract. With the development of globalization, Chinese higher education encounters both opportunities and challenges. This study examines the major challenges and possible coping strategies for the current higher education in China through an extensive literature review and thirty in-depth interviews with higher education stakeholders, including educators from Chinese academia, international academia, universities and local governments as well as international business representatives in China. Based on qualitative analysis, this study concludes that what Chinese higher education really need is to establish a world-class university system based on the modernization of higher educational administrative system, rather than merely to establish a group of world-class universities. Findings also suggest a need to enhance the diversity in what ways different types of universities in China may develop, and a demand to establish a quality assurance system which promotes which promotes to form culture of assessment within Chinese higher education.

Introduction

Globalization as a phenomenon has been acquiring much significance in all the spheres, especially in higher education. [1] Nowadays, with the development of globalization, new waves of higher education internationalization worldwide are appearing. So like it or not, nearly all higher education institutions are involved in globalization process: some may be as the active participants, others as the passive receivers. Analysis of the scientific literature has shown that the mission of a scientist is inherent to an individual and is oriented towards institution and activity or performance being implemented in higher education. Every higher education school defines its mission and vision, thus the aim of a scientist is to act according to the provided institutional mission.[2] Many scholars distinguished the concepts of globalization and internalization, they thought that the globalization is the strength of social relationship worldwide and internationalization places emphasis on the intercourse between country and country or the connection between institution and institution. Generally speaking, internationalization is a process which could be easily controlled by the government, but the influence of globalization is dynamic, and no country or institution could avoid it. According to the concept from famous international comparative education expert Jane Knight: higher education internationalization is a connection process of ideas and atmosphere of transnational and cross-culture and other major functions such as teaching jobs, research jobs and social service. Under the background of globalization, the intercourse and cooperation from different nations and districts are becoming frequently.

This study examines the major challenges and possible coping strategies for the current higher education in China through an extensive literature review and thirty in-depth interview with higher education stakeholders, including educators from Chinese academia, international academia, universities and local governments as well as international business representatives in China. These 30 stakeholders who accepted semi-structured interview contains China scholars, international scholars and managers from universities and government, international managers in cooperation universities and international businessmen. On the base of qualitative analysis to the interview contents, the study summarized the analysis of Chinese higher education status from different stakeholders under the globalization background, and analyzed the questions, challenges and
possible strategies in the process of internationalization of Chinese higher education from the prospect of interviewee. Globalization has increased the competitions of knowledge and economy between countries, and these competitions in turn made higher education become an important tool of enhancing the competitiveness of every country. [3]

There are Many Challenges in the Process of Chinese Higher Education Internationalization

One, the seriousness of the brain drain. During the past 20 or 30 years, Chinese higher education system develops rapidly, becoming the hugest higher education system all over the world. The gross enrollment ratio of higher education(GER) enhanced from 7.2% in 1995 to 26.5% in 2010. In 2014, The gross enrollment ratio of higher education(GER) in 2014 had already break 37.5%. China higher education realized the prominent promotion in quantity through mass, but how to enhance the quality of higher education has become the most important challenge. With the rapid development of China social economy, people have strong pursuit towards excellent higher education resource than ever before, and there are many methods of accepting education to choose. In recent years, more and more excellent students choose to study abroad. With the development of globalization, universities all over the world spread a furious fight towards excellent resources. More and more foreign higher education institutes cave up higher education market through cooperation running school or attract students to learn abroad though other alluring condition.

With the competition to the developed countries, our country is in the obvious disadvantage when it comes to the talent-flowing. According to the statics from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization(UNESCO), amount to 712,157 students went to abroad in 2013, and only 96,409 students came our country this year. Global Politic and Safe Report showed that China had become the country which outputs more and more talents than any other countries, and the drain of Chinese elites lies in the first place. Since 1978, 1.07 million students went abroad, and only 0.275 million came back after they finished their studies, more than 3/4 talents stayed in foreign. Universities in China has low attraction towards foreign students and excellent scholars.

Two, Recently, there have been several efforts to develop ranking systems for universities. Increasing competition and need for competitiveness as a result of globalization, knowledge based economy and growing interest of information related to higher education institutions due to increasing mobility of people all served for the remarkable popularity of ranking systems.[4] higher education system has not yet been in line with international standards. After internationalization development, Chinese higher education level increases sharply. However, there are substantial disparity in the whole running school system, evaluation mechanism and management model compared with international standard. The key of higher education system has not been in line with developed countries. Many developed countries accumulated created advanced experience in subject construction, creation thinking cultivation, academic talents selection, certification system, combination of production, learning and research, incentive system and competition system. Some of them were accepted and imitated, others had become the general regulation and international convention. However, higher education certification system based on international regulation in our country is in start-up stage, and evaluation index used to measure teaching quality had not been in line with developed countries, which affected our country’s teaching quality and acceptance to a certain extent, and decreased the affection of Chinese higher education in international education service market.

Three, talents cultivation quality needs to be strengthened forward. Today, globalization is coming, and labor market in our country experienced drastic changes. Creative talents who owned global horizon and international idea, know international rules are need all over the world, which put forward a deep requirement towards university’s cultivation. Especially under the effect of one belt and one road new policy, Chinese higher education has unique mission. On one hand, universities need to provide wisdom support for one belt and one road engineer construction, on the other hand, we need to attract more and more international students to study in China to promote the effect of Chinese higher education in international market.
Analysis to the Strategies and Suggestion. Now, Education is Becoming a Global Service

Delivered by quasi-companies in an ever-more complex and competitive knowledge marketplace. To cope with these challenges, higher education institutions need an appropriate strategy, a necessity reflected in numerous calls for research on strategy in the higher education sector.[5]

One, build world-class university system. Some scholars who were interviewed said that China is in need of building modern higher education management system. We need to build some world-class universities, what’s more, we are in badly need of building world-class university system. Our higher education or university need to create class in management and incentive mechanism, creation of university, creation of science research culture and teaching culture oriented students. The key to build world-class university is how to stimulate teachers and students internal scholar interesting and creation power, construct bold and innovative academic atmosphere and teaching environment with rigorous doing scholarly research, let university do what they should do. Only the method could world-class university come into being.

We could promote the activity of universities through enlarging the sovereignty of college autonomy. For example, in the aspect of lead and management, France higher education experienced from power centralization to autonomy. After reform, government allocates funds to different universities according to the contract. And the universities finished their tasks according to the contract. Through the way of contract, on one hand, universities own more autonomous right, on the other hand, universities adapt to the need of government, which could provide some experience for our higher education expansion autonomous right.

Two, encourage university to develop in diversify. Diversity development of university based on the diversity development of talents. Some university set up the same or similar majors, which aims to cultivate the same person who owned the similar ability and bring the problem of finding jobs. Some interviewees said that not all universities should be developed into comprehensive university, and it is impossible for every university to achieve the status of Peking University or Tsinghua University. Our government should encourage universities to pursue diversity. Let university compete freely and take full advantage through reasonable competition and suitable lead. As a whole, a well-organized higher education system could avoid cut-throat competition between university and university, lead healthy competition, avoid repeated construction and resource waste, to cultivate different types and level talents and promote all universities run school according to its advantage and characterize.

Three, Construct university quality guarantee system and evaluation culture. Universities are the object of accepting quality evaluation and guarantee. What’s more, universities are the subject of this process. It is an important method to motivate university’s activity and promote university education quality. Universities need to build inter quality evaluation guarantee in order to develop themselves and make self-government, which formed a multiple evaluation system with the government supervisor institution and external organization. Information technology (IT) has become essential in supporting the growth and sustainability of all types of organizations. Higher education institutions are a special type of organization where technological infrastructure consists of a variety of applications, different platforms, academic systems, cloud applications and heterogeneous technologies.[6] What’s more, evaluation culture which put the quality as the key was formed. All these motivate universities’ endogenous power, promoting university development with well self-development.

As a whole, in the process of higher education internalization, China encounters many challenges such as severe brain drain, backward in running school system, low in talent cultivation. Realizing these problems, our government tried to build world class university for creative economic development and creative talent cultivation. However, for a long time, Chinese universities lack of autonomy, and teaching method was fall behind of the need of times, which all hinder the process of Chinese higher education internalization and the promotion of quality. In order to break through these hinders. Higher Education Institution plat an important role in the promotion os sustainability and an increasing number of stakeholders expert them to be sustainable organizations. However, this can only be achieved when barriers are faced and challenges overcome.[7] China must aim to
build the system of world class university, not one or two top university. Our university need fair competition environment and diversity development. Only through the deep reform in autonomous right and running school structure can China step into higher education with quantities and qualities.

References

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