GOVERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN SE ASIA

State Capacity, Devolution and Transparency in the Global Era.

HIGHER ED. CONTEXT

• Higher Ed. as a pillar of the much touted 21st. Century knowledge economy.
• Worldwide demand for Higher Ed. continues unabated.
• But states find it increasingly difficult to maintain sufficient funds, thus widening gap between enrolments and resources.
GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (1)

• Worldwide inequalities mean that not all systems, nor all universities are equal.
• The elite, research-intensive university is very limited (USA perhaps 60, UK Russell Group, Australia G8).
• Strong connections exist between them, and they account for much knowledge production (national performance indicators, + international indices SSCI, SCI etc)

GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (2)

• This elite group of universities is entirely restricted to most developed countries.
• Informal definitions of quality, traditionally: the best staff, students, & facilities (cultural as well as academic).
• Thus, socially as well as academically elite (cf. role of University of Tokyo in Japan, Oxford in UK, Harvard in the USA).
GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (3)

• The cost of developing such universities, with their expensive libraries, research facilities is huge, and has been built up over centuries:

  “By their very nature, science and technology have always demanded significant and ongoing investment to establish, maintain and expand the ‘engine’ of physical infrastructure — including laboratories, libraries and classrooms. They also need a rich (and expensive) fuel of textbooks, computers, equipment, and other supplies.”[1]


p. 71.

GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (4)

• No SE Asian university is in the top 100 of the Shanghai Jiaotong Index, only 1 among the top 200.

• In each of the 5 SE Asian countries (I., M., T., P., and V.), there is a vast range in quality.

• In each, one or two universities are national icons: U. Malaya in Malaysia, VNU. in Vietnam, Chulalongkorn U. in Thailand, etc.

• Each is the pinnacle of national H/Ed. system, produces much of the country’s social and econ. elite. (cf. Castells’ 4 functions of the University)
GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (5)

• The North has ten times the proportion of R & D personnel (scientists and technicians) per capita as the South (3.8%, compared to 0.4%)
• It spends about four times the proportion of GDP on R & D (2.0% compared to 0.5%).
• It registers 97% of all patents in the USA and Europe, and, together with the newly industrialising countries of East Asia, accounts for 84% of all scientific articles published.[1]

[1] Ibid., p. 69

THE ASIAN CONTEXT

• 900 million Asians still live on less than US$1 per day (75% of the global total)
• nearly 40% of the population is under the age of 18
• 75% of the world’s illiterates, two thirds of whom are poor women, live in Asia
• millions of children who complete primary school can neither read or write, and millions more drop out each year, due to poverty
• half of all children in the region are not enrolled in secondary school, most of them poor.
• almost 40% of children aged under five are malnourished, and hence unlikely to achieve their full intellectual potential
• some governments expend more on their military, than on their children
• only 6.5% of Asian Development Bank (ADB) spending has been for education.[1]

GLOBALISATION EFFECTS

(1)

• Several forms of globalisation (Sklair), of which 2 are critical to H/Ed reforms:
  – 1. Economic (the extension of global capitalism), fostered by international agencies such as WB and ADB:
    “Long term and concessionary loans for higher education can help governments invest in higher education, in a more sustained and consistent fashion, while debt relief can be negotiated in exchange for systemic higher education reform.”[1]


GLOBALISATION EFFECTS

(2)

• Cultural globalisation, in particular how identity is being re-shaped by the ‘Global- Local nexus.’ It is sustained by two trends:
  1. the rise of ICT, leading to a sense that time and space are now compressed.
  2. The rise of English as a global language.
• The combination of the above are leading to a rise in (trans-border) H/Ed programmes in English (OECD 2002).
DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES
S-E Asia 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>134.6</td>
<td>212.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compiled from UNDP Human Development Report 2002

Students at Public and Private HEIs, S-E Asia 5, 1997-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- Private H/Ed in the Philippines now comprise over 80% of total enrolments.
- Private H/Ed enrolments in Viet Nam now total 12%, but gov’t. plans are for much more growth: 30%+ by 2010.
- Malaysia now has 11 private universities, 5 branch campuses and more private H/Ed. enrolments than public (if Diploma and Certificate levels included).
- Indonesia has also seen significant growth in private H/Ed.

### PAPERS AND CITATIONS

**S-E ASIAN 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Papers 1981</th>
<th>Number of Papers 1995</th>
<th>Number of Citations 1981-85</th>
<th>Number of Citations 1993-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>3,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>1,332</td>
<td>2,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>1,379</td>
<td>2,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>2,419</td>
<td>8,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>1,657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Higher Education in Developing Countries, Pp. 125-7).
EXPLAINING DIFFERENCES

• How do we account for the differences?
1. Viet Nam poorest, and only free of war for 25 years. A socialist market system, committed to public H/Ed.
2. Philippines high coverage, but very little quality (e.g. NOOSR accepts 2 of approx. 1,000 Philippines HEIs, as of degree standard). (Crony) capitalist system, 80%+ private enrolment.

SOME SIMILAR PRESSURES

I  INTERNAL
1. Demographic (as indicated above)
2. Increasing gap between demand, and gov’t. capacity (willingness?) to pay.

II  EXTERNAL
1. Pressure for (more) structural adjustment
2. Pressure for more programmes in English, including by foreign providers. (GATS)
THE RESULTS of PRESSURE

- Swiftly changing balance of public and private H/Ed. (Malaysia, Viet Nam).
- Blurring of borders between public and private HEIs. (Indonesia, Thailand public HEIs offering ‘extension’ courses, as state inputs decline in real terms.
- Regulatory pressures increasing. Examples of corruption (Indonesia, Viet Nam).

CONCLUSION

How is governing H/Ed system in 21st. Century different, especially in SE Asian context?

1. Reduced state capacity, but increased demand --&gt; privatisation
2. Low income, limited state capacity, and training --&gt; difficulties in governing for quality, exacerbated by rise of private (trans-national) Ed., and corruption
3. In this context, challenges to governance in SE Asian H/Ed. remain profound