

5th International Conference on World-Class Universities

3-6 November, 2013

Shanghai, China

Regional Reflections on WCU Initiatives



Anchoring globalization in Hong Kong Research Universities



The Hong Kong case

- Managed to establish several WCRU
 - in a Cantonese speaking migrant society
 - no natural resources or major manufacturing
 - High research productivity/low GDP% for R&D

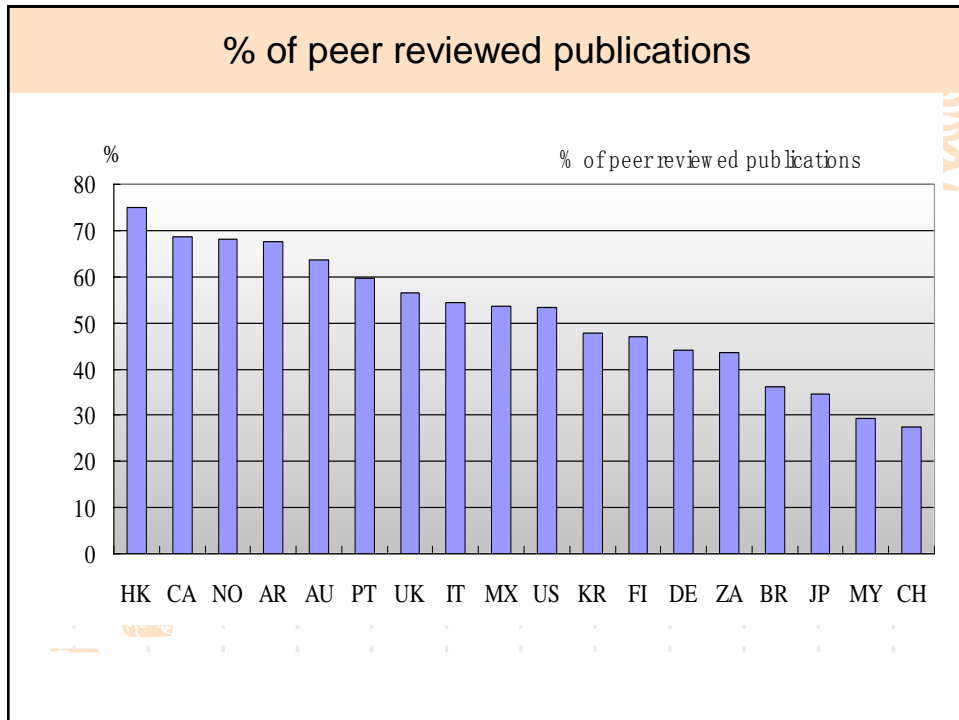


3 decades of change

- 1981 Two universities (2% of age cohort)
- 1988 Research Grants Council
- 1989-1994 Expansion of places 8%>16%
- 1991 University of Science & Technology
- 1994 Upgrade of Colleges&Polytechnics > Univ.
- 1997 Sovereignty retrocession
- 1998 Asian economic crisis+2003 SARS
- 2008 Global economic crisis
- 2012 University re-alignment (Mainland&USA)

Balancing quality&quantity

- Mass higher education 60+%
 - government funded degree places 18%
 - self-funded sub-degree places 42%
- Teaching+Learning
 - Cultural tradition - stress on examinations
 - Extra year for liberal arts education
- Research
 - GDP for R&D 0.7%
 - High output of refereed research publications



Enabling environment

- Government steering
- Institutional autonomy
- Academic governance
- Academic freedom
- Academic leadership
- English medium
- **Internationalism**
- Brain circulation
- Knowledge networks
- Amphibious
 - academics
 - administrators
 - entrepreneurs

Sources: P. Altbach and G. Postiglione, Hong Kong's Academic Advantage, *Peking University Educational Review*, 2011;
 Postiglione, G. A. (2006) The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China: Context, Higher Education, and a Changing Academia, in *Quality, Relevance and Governance in a Changing Academia: International Perspectives*, edited by Huang Futao, (Hiroshima: Research Institute for Higher Education, Number 20, COE Publication Series), Sept, pp. 97-114.
 Postiglione, G. A. (2007) Hong Kong: Expansion, Reunion with China, and the Transformation of Academic Culture, in William Locke and Ulrich Tischler (Eds.) *The Changing Conditions for Academic Work and Careers in Selected Countries*, (Kassel: International Centre for Higher Education Research), pp. 57-76;

Internationalism

- 40% expatriate academic staff
- Chinese mainland 1% international staff
 - source: CASS
- International (non-local) students – 20%
 - 10% Chinese mainland
 - 10% International

主要的研究语言

Primary research language (%)

Chinese	14.9
English	88.8
German	0.5
French	0.1
Others	1.3

(Multiple Responses Allowed)

中文

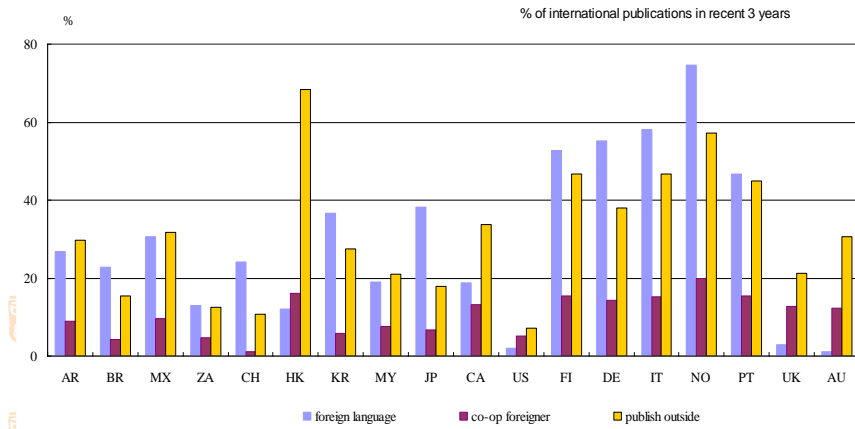
英文

德文

法文

其他

% of international publications



除了与自己同事合作之外，
是否与其他国家的同事合作过？

Do you collaborate with colleagues in
other countries?

	%
Yes	60.4
No	39.6

你是否与中国其他地区学术机构的学者合作？

Do you collaborate with scholars at institutions in
other parts of China?

	%
Yes	44.9
No	55.1



2013 -- A large drop in the global
& regional rankings

**Can it continue to
sustain 3 or 4 WCRU?**



Times Higher Education 2013

- Hong Kong's top research university
 - From #1 Asian university to 4th rank
 - From 21st to 43rd (four years ago) PKU 45
 - Below Tokyo, Singapore, Melbourne.
- “significant drop”
 - Phil Baty (Ranking editor, Times Higher Ed)
- It matters - British heritage of Hong Kong

- One university fell off the list from previous 182nd place
- Another university rose up 15 places to 109th place

Why the drop in rankings?

- Switch from British 3-year model to USA 4-year model with liberal studies?
- Drop in quality or competitors rising?



Why the drop in rankings?

- Research universities do not seem to be competitive working with industries
 - Ranked below Singapore, Korea, Mainland
 - Sourcing funding for business:
 - 57 points out of 100 point score.



Response from top university

- “The general list [rankings] will serve as a reference. We will continue to seek excellence in teaching, learning and research.”
- Coincidence or response:
 - Appointment of first non-ethnic Chinese president in the history of PRC

University response

- President of one of the universities that rose 8 places to 57th:
 - “We have to keep running to stay in place.”

Government response

- \$23 billion fund for research in universities
- \$50 million for efforts on:
 - research transfer
 - Collaboration with industry”



Univ. Grants Comm. response

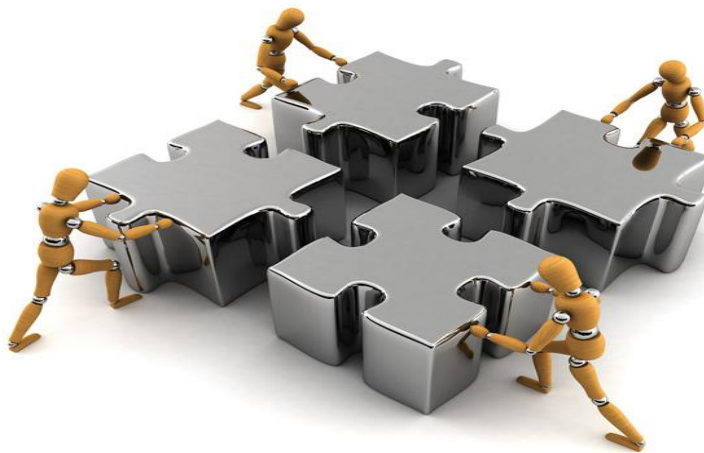
- “Hong Kong has an unprecedented opportunity to leverage its celebrated geopolitical location to continue its success story.”



Media response

- “It is impossible to compare universities around the world.”
- “University heads should not fret.”
- “Thomson Reuters is biased toward the West, ..should not take it seriously”
- “Unusual, unrealistic to say the least”
- “Dartmouth is 10th by US News &WR, and 126th in THE, Brown 14th but 52nd on THE, Tufts 28th but 80th on THE

De-anchor & re-anchor globalization



Volatility and future challenges

- Competitor academic salary rises
- Competitor internationalism rise
- Returnees doctorates and experience
- Academic freedom trends
- Privatization and student body composition
- Research funding sources (incl. industry)
- China 973 plan
 - Ministry of S&T & National Science Foundation
 - agriculture, health, information, energy, environment, resources, population, etc.
- Future global recession?

New recognition: Potential shift in regional focus

- Current regional focus:
 1. USA + Anglo-English world
 2. Chinese mainland
 3. Other areas of Asia and Europe
- Future regional focus:
 - Chinese mainland
 - Other Asia (East, Southeast, South, Central)
 - USA, Anglo-English, and other Europe
 - Africa and Latin America

- Anchoring Globalization in Hong Kong's Research Universities: Network Agents, Institutional Arrangements and Brain Circulation, *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2013, pp. 345-366.



■ Global Recession and Higher Education in Eastern Asia: China, Mongolia and Vietnam, *Higher Education*, 2011, Vol.62 No.6 pp. 789-814.



Thank you.

postiglione@hku.hk

www.edu.hku/postiglione





CONTEXT

- SAR---1C+2S
- Tiny land mass
- 7-million population
- Migrant heritage
- 95% Chinese nationality
- 3 languages, 2 scripts
- Low fertility
- Post-colonial legacy
- Free speech
- Free movement
- Open internet access
- High integrity civil service
- Semi-democratic
- Rule of law
- Vibrant civil society
- Highly unequal (Gini Coef)
- Semi-ethnocracy
- Capitalist economy
- Few natural resources
- Little manufacturing
- Service economy
- Global Center Financial, Trade, Transport
- Low unemployment
- Low violent crime
- Low taxes
- Low corruption
- No terrorism
- Cosmopolitan
- Concerns about H5N1, etc.
- World highest longevity for women
- Free schooling Pre-School +9 years
- Top tier PISA ranking
- 8 public (1 priv) research universities