



Sharing the emerging educational market in China

Cross-border EMBA programmes in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan

Sheng-Ju Chan and Fang-Min Chang

*Graduate Institute of Education, National Chung Cheng University,
Chiayi, Taiwan*

Abstract

Purpose – During the past two decades, China has been rapidly rising in nearly every aspect. With the growing prominence of economic prosperity in China, numerous multinational corporations and companies across the globe have entered this vast market in order to benefit from this enlarging economy. This development also creates an emerging market in China to educate senior managers of these transnational firms in the form of cross-border partnerships among regional universities. The EMBA programme, a more internationally oriented educational product, is thriving in the Greater China Area. This study aims to examine how universities in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan are partnering with other institutions in order to deliver collaborative EMBA programmes for this educational market.

Design/methodology/approach – The article uses case study as research approach by selecting ten famous cross-border EMBA programs from elite universities in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan for analysis.

Findings – The result shows that distinctive patterns of organisational behaviour are present in terms of how selective universities in Greater China organise their cross-border EMBA programmes. By combining abundant academic resources with their partners, Chinese institutions aim to enhance their programme reputation and mainly serve the territorial needs of executive managers within China. Hong Kong, serving a bridging role, is inclined to cooperate with leading universities in Western countries and attract all kinds of students across the globe, including Chinese ones. Alternatively, Taiwanese universities cooperate with major universities or institutions in China in order to serve the needs of Taiwanese businessmen in China instead of Chinese nationals or foreign students. These different approaches indicate a labour division among universities in these three societies, with China targeting primarily the domestic market, Hong Kong aiming at the global market, and Taiwan seeking to serve its country's population.

Originality/value – The different approaches employed by universities reveal how neighbouring societies react to the rise of China respectively. The uneven division of universities among these three societies might to some extent reflect the concepts of “centre” and “periphery” developed by Philip G. Altbach.

Keywords Internationalization, Cross-border education, Educational market, Regionalization, Education, China, Taiwan

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Given the advance of information and communication technology and the rise of globalization, the world has become increasingly interdependent and interconnected. With the intention of removing the barrier of international trade systems and connecting the economic integration at the global level, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was formally established in 1995 and “provides a forum for negotiating agreements aimed at reducing obstacles to international trade and ensuring a level playing field for all, thus contributing to economic growth and development” (WTO, 2012).



This multilateral framework has been an important player on the international stage in line with the World Bank and OECD in promoting the idea of the free market. Under this macro discourse, education sectors were included and regarded as one type of service industry tradable with monetary values. Based on the mutual benefits, some countries began to open their domestic educational markets, ranging from primary to tertiary education, to foreign providers and countries (Knight, 2008). Thus, the regulation and framework provided by the WTO has substantially increased the activities of cross-border education in the form of independent investment or joint business ventures around the world, particularly in developing countries.

China, one of the rapidly developing entities, retains a vast internal market, cost-effective labour force, and promising economic prospects attracting a great deal of multinational corporations and companies across the globe to enter its market in order to benefit from the enlarging economy (Wu and Yao, 2011). This development also creates an emerging market in China for educating senior managers of these transnational firms in the form of cross-border partnerships among regional universities. The Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme – a more internationally oriented educational product – is thriving in the Greater China Area (Alon and McIntyre, 2005). In fact, the EMBA programme is a high-end product in the educational market with limited providers, usually focusing on well-known universities. Low-tier universities are not capable of offering such courses due to their low institutional reputations and weak social networks that top leaders of industries require. Top universities in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan retain relative advantages in providing these educational services to the leading figures of business companies. Investigation into how these leading universities run cooperative EMBA programmes in China can have significant implications for cross-border education activities of other universities in sharing this enlarging Chinese educational market. It is against this wider context that this study aims:

- to explore how universities in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan partner with their counterparts to deliver cross-border EMBA programmes for the Chinese market;
- to examine the different approaches in cross-border programmes used by these three societies to share this emerging market; and
- to analyze the impacts and implications of how rising China influences its neighbours using these selective cases.

According to these research objectives, this paper is organized as follows. The next section starts with an analysis of the growing economic prosperity in China for the past three decades and its increasing needs of management education for supporting continuous social and economic development. This is followed by an exploration of the different facets of cross-border education in a globalized world, where collaborative EMBA programmes are striving. Third, research design and methods are explained in relation to how selective EMBA programmes were chosen and data and information generated. The focus then shifts to the concrete collaborative EMBA programmes provided by major universities in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Based on these previous analyses, diverse approaches employed by these three societies are presented so as to understand their main rationales or motivations in sharing the emerging educational market in China. The final section presents conclusions and implications of different positions of the three societies with regard to centre-periphery theory and practical effects upon market competition in education.

The growing economic prosperity in China and the needs of management education

The major backdrop of the emerging educational market in EMBA programmes is highly related to the rapid rise of the Chinese economy. The EMBA programmes have been part of the mainstream development of business and management education in the Western countries since the early 20th century (Hedmo *et al.*, 2005). This section will first analyze the rapid rise of economic growth in China followed by a brief introduction to the development of management education after economic reform and opening since 1978.

Rise of the Chinese economy

The major changes and reforms in the Chinese economy can be traced back to the dramatically ideological alteration adopted by Deng Xiaoping in 1978. Understanding the difficulties that Marxism-Leninism and Communism have, he outlined a new discourse that China has to improve its relationship with the outside world through “reforms and openness” using a new ideology – namely, the “socialist market economy” (Hung, 2011). Under his leadership, the “four modernizations” in agriculture, industry, science and technology, and the military were initiated, producing great impacts upon domestic social, political, and – most notably – economic systems. The main change to the existing systems under Deng Xiaoping was allowing the presence of “market forces” in the entirely state-monopolized trade mechanism. This opening strategy substantially inspired the vitality and productivity of the Chinese economic sector (Garnaut, 2011).

According to current statistics, China is the second largest economy after the USA (since 2011). Thanks to the economic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping, China’s economic growth has exceeded the East Asian Tigers, such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, with an estimated annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 9.5 per cent from 1978 to 2005. Figure 1 clearly shows that the increase of GDP in China gained greater momentum from the economic reforms and began to increase the developmental pace. In further realizing the economic opening and boosting foreign investment in China, Shenzhen special economic zones (SEZs) – geographic regions adopting more free market-oriented laws exempt from the typical national

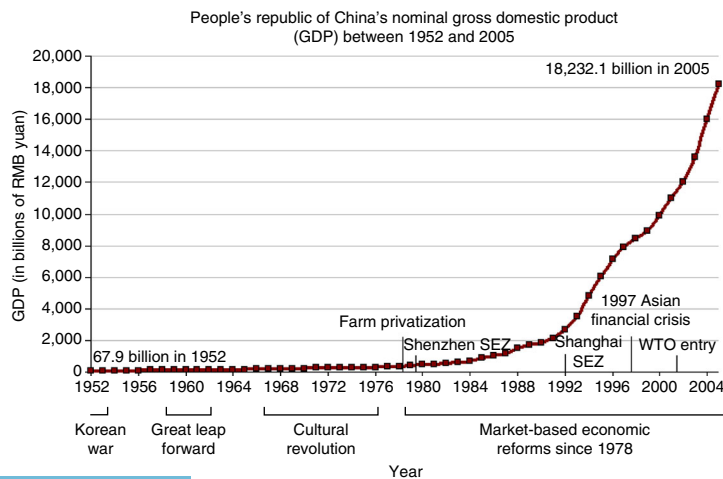


Figure 1.
China's nominal GDP trend from 1952 to 2005

Source: Wikipedia (2011)

regulation – were established in 1980 to attract business investment from other developed countries and enhance domestic employment. In light of the success of this experiment, SEZs were expanded to cover the entire Chinese coast, including Shanghai, in 1992. This new initiative has been acting as a stimulus in greatly boosting Chinese GDP growth at a steep rate, as shown in Figure 1. Even faced with the Asian financial crisis in 1997, China did not suffer from this regional setback, prevailing in Southeast Asia and even South Korea, due to its previous solid developmental infrastructure. In order to further remove trade barriers and reduce tariffs, China gained access to the WTO in 2001 in an attempt to benefit from greater liberalization and deeper economic integration with other countries. As a whole, China's GDP enhanced ten times between the opening policy proposed by Deng Xiaoping in 2005 (People's Daily Online, 2005). During the same period of time (1978-2005), the GDP per capita in China improved from 2.7 per cent to 15.7 per cent of the US GDP and from 53.7 per cent to 188.5 per cent of India's GDP (Herston and Sicular, 2008). In addition, the average income for this period has risen six times while absolute poverty declined from 41 per cent of the population to 5 per cent from 1978 to 2001 (Cai *et al.*, 2008; Brandt and Rawski, 2008).

Increasing needs of management education in China

Due to the successful economic development in China during the past three decades, more multinational companies are operating in the Chinese market. Some of them have even set up major branches in China for nationwide coordination due to the country's vast domestic market. An increasing number of senior managers and executives of corporations have emerged in China. Moreover, given the promising economic outlook of China, multinational corporations across the globe are keen to know how to run a business in the Chinese economy. In addition, some major domestic companies in China are interested in expanding their business to foreign territories. Based on these developments, educating managers and leading executives of foreign and domestic firms has led to the emergence of management education in China. Since the opening policy was first adopted, Chinese leaders have become aware of the serious shortfall of highly educated management personnel. In his visit to the USA in 1979, Deng Xiaoping asked President Jimmy Carter for assistance and cooperation by setting up a joint senior management development project (Wang *et al.*, 2005). The initial establishment of management education was based on the technical assistance from the USA. By importing their expertise in business and management education, China can train its staff and workers not only in the public sector, but also in the growing private sector. Western thoughts of management education, which did not exist in Communist society, have been introduced into China. "Several major developed countries such as United States, Canada, Japan, and Germany have been involved in assisting the development of management education in China since 1978" (Wang *et al.*, 2005, p. 166). Therefore, considering the need to cater to the demands of enlarging private sectors in line with the economic development in China, management education becomes an inseparable element of nurturing managers and leaders for the business companies. A recent survey carried out by *The Economist* showed that:

Today, China is still a relatively small market for many multinationals, but this is expected to change quickly. Analysis of the financial results of 70 [multinational companies] MNCs³ showed that in 2010 only ten had China revenues that accounted for more than 20% of their global revenues. For more than half, China accounted for less than 10% of global revenues. Companies do expect this to change (*The Economist*, 2011).

According to this report, multinational companies expect to be able to generate more revenues from the Chinese market in the future. This means they have to invest more production line, staff, and resources in the Chinese market in order to benefit its economic prosperity. The prevalence of management education – the EMBA programme in particular – significantly relates to such vibrant transnational economic activities. The increasingly borderless movement of economic linkage in China paves the way for providing collaborative EMBA programmes for those who are Chinese-based managers or interested in doing business with China. The focus of the next section will be analyzing the nature and types of cross-border education and its relation to collaborative EMBA programmes.

The emergence of cross-border education and collaborative EMBA programmes

The emergence of cross-border education is not a recent phenomenon. After the Second World War, developed countries in the West tried to maintain smooth diplomatic relationships with developing countries in Africa and Asia and provided technical assistance to promote their social and economic development (Burn, 1980; Knight, 2008). Education experts, external programmes (distance education), or field training programmes have been sent to or offered in these developing countries in the form of a collaborative endeavour between donor and recipient nations. These initial types of cross-border education were characterized by strong political and social development motivation, which are quite different from the modern forms inspired by the logic of economic rationale (Chan, 2012). The emerging educational market of EMBA programmes in China relates to the latest development of cross-border education. This section will highlight the relevant concepts to be used later in this study.

Cross-border education

Along with the rise of globalization, educational activities are no longer confined to a national jurisdiction or territory. We are witnessing the increasingly global flow of international students, collaborative research ventures, distance education, joint teaching programmes or dual degrees, and even branch campuses beyond the traditional national boundary (Tubbeh and Williams, 2010; Johnstone *et al.*, 2010). Due to the encouragement of international organizations such as the WTO and World Bank, these educational activities are dramatically proliferating across the globe (Knight, 2008; Robertson, 2009). In maintaining the quality of cross-border education provided, UNESCO/OECD (2005) published a report entitled *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education* to guide member states to ensure the quality of these cross-border educational activities. In this report, they define cross-border education as:

Education that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders (p. 7).

This is a well-defined operational statement useful in identifying the relevant initiatives or programmes. In her seminal work published in 2008, *Higher Education in Turmoil: The Changing World of Internationalization*, Knight presented four types of cross-border education according to the mobility of people, programmes, providers and project. The first category (see Table I) indicates that people's mobility includes students, scholars, experts, and consultants with respect to study abroad, research work, sabbaticals and consulting work. The nature of the cross-border programme,

Category	Types of mobility
<i>People</i> Students, professors/scholars, researchers/ experts/consultants	Semester/year abroad, full degree, field/ research work, internships, sabbaticals, consulting
<i>Programmes</i> Course, programme, sub-degree, degree, postgraduate	Twinning, franchised, articulated/validated, joint/double award, online/distance
<i>Providers</i> Institutions, organizations, companies	Branch campus, virtual university, merger/ acquisition, independent institutions
<i>Projects</i> Academic projects, services	Research, curriculum, capacity building, educational services

Source: Knight (2008, p. 99)

Table I.
Forms of cross-border
education

listed as the second category, relates to courses and degrees at the undergraduate and postgraduate level through the popular forms of twinning, franchised, articulated, joint, and distance courses. The most dramatic type of cross-border education is the movement of providers, referred to as the third category in Table I, including institutions, organizations, and companies. These providers physically cross legal and juridical boundaries into foreign/overseas markets in offering educational services to local students and personnel by setting up branch campuses, pursuing acquisitions and mergers, or establishing independent institutions. The final – relatively small-scale – category is project mobility in relation to research, curriculum, capacity building, and educational services.

By examining these cross-border activities in education, people can easily understand that collaboration and partnerships among individuals, institutions, nations, and even regional entities are essential for achieving mutual benefits and objectives (Eddy, 2010). de Wit (2002) once stated that these “strategic partnerships in research, teaching, and transfer of knowledge between universities and of universities with business and beyond national borders, will be the future of higher education in order to manage the challenges that globalization will place on it” (p. 205). The main focus of cross-border programmes is the delivery of “instructional programmes”, generally through student and faculty exchange, joint or dual degree programmes, and occasionally branch campuses (Sakamoto and Chapman, 2011, p. 5). In other words, collaborative instructional programmes can be provided through the movement of people, programmes, and providers according to Knight’s classification. In this study, our focus on China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan will be specifically on the “programme” category, which gains joint efforts from different countries or societies.

Providing collaborative EMBA programmes

The EMBA programme is a kind of specialization in business and management education. The main concerns of this course are designed to meet the educational needs of managers and executives, allowing students to earn an MBA or another business-related graduate degree in two years or less while working full time. The MBA programme consists of various areas of business, such as accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, and operations management. However, EMBA students typically have a higher level of work experience – often ten years or more – than other MBA students (MBA courses, n.d.). This higher requirement for admitted students

makes the provision more competitive, making it possible for only leading universities or institutions to survive in this market. One can confirm this point from recently released rankings produced by *Financial Times* (2011). Those programmes and universities rated within the top 100 tend to be prestigious worldwide in terms of their institutional reputations. Moreover, there is an obvious tendency that some high-ranking programmes are cross-border with joint efforts from two or more countries or societies. Among the top ten in this ranking, seven EMBA programmes are collaborative while only three programmes are single country-based. For example, the top-rated programme in the world, the Kellogg-HKUST EMBA programme, is jointly offered by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology's School of Business and Management (HKUST Business School) and the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. This trend clearly indicates that international cooperation retains certain advantages in providing such high-end courses.

The increasingly expanded markets in developing countries such as China have drawn a great deal of collaborative ventures (Holland, 2010). These prestigious universities in developed countries are keen to expand their shares in these emerging markets through this transnational cooperation (Chan, 2004). In addition, in order to cost-effectively establish their institutional brand in the foreign market, local partners' "know how" and "context knowledge" become valuable resources for this strategic partnership. As to the local providers in the developing countries, professional expertise, faculty, or modularized courses of advanced societies are usually imported into the domestic market so as to attract the local students. Therefore, the motives for this collaborative relationship across the border are diverse for different parties involved. However, a successful collaboration will undoubtedly result in mutual benefits and confer competitive advantages on the partners, particularly during this economically competitive era, as universities are being forced to be more entrepreneurial and generate more income for their own development (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004).

Research design and methods

In order to answer the research questions of this study, several research designs are utilized. First, by adopting Knight's previously discussed framework, "programme" instead of "provider" is the main concern of this current study. Second, since we focus on the emerging educational market in China, all the EMBA programmes chosen must be based primarily in China and attempt to attract either Chinese nationals or foreigners in China as students. Third, in reflecting the trend of cross-border education, all these programmes have to be jointly offered with at least two institutions from different societies; we also examine how the synergy of multiple parties involved has been utilized. Finally, with the intention of analyzing the behaviour and implications with respect to cross-border education, only programmes offered by leading universities in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan are included.

Based on these selection criteria, only a limited number of EMBA programmes are targeted for further analysis: three programmes in China, four programmes in Hong Kong, and four programmes in Taiwan. Universities engaged in the three societies are Fudan University, Tsinghua University and Shanghai Jiao Tong University in China, University of Hong Kong (HKU) (two programmes) and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) (two programmes) in Hong Kong, and National Taiwan University, National Chung Hsing University, National Central University, and National Sun Yat-Sen University in Taiwan. Case study research, an effective research method, is employed to investigate these limited programmes (Yin, 2012). We compile

relevant data for these programmes from web sites, brochures, flyers, templates, and newspapers or advertisements. We contrast these different programmes by society in order to examine whether any particular pattern can be identified in terms of partners chosen, starting year, student sources, delivery location, instructors involved, and degree awarded.

Selective EMBA programmes in the Greater China area

In this section, our intention is to summarize the common traits respectively drawn from the selective cases in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. It is quite striking that these three societies retain different characteristics while sharing the EMBA market in China. Table II shows the overall picture of transnational EMBA programmes provided in China by top universities. The foreign partners chosen by these Chinese institutions are diverse in terms of countries, including the USA, France, and Italy. These moves demonstrate the motivation of establishing multiple strategic alliances at the national level rather than favouring any single nation such as the USA (since it has many prestigious EMBA programmes according to world rankings produced by *Financial Times*). An in-depth investigation into the sources of students and delivery location reveals that these EMBA programmes in China mainly cater to the needs of local students. At the same time, the delivery sites are confined primarily to China (Tsinghua is an exception). Nevertheless, instructors for these programmes come from both institutions so as to broaden the international outlook of participants and ensure the quality of provision. After finishing their courses, enrolled students are eligible to receive dual degrees from both participating universities. This may greatly help local students recognized internationally without study abroad.

Hong Kong's experiences are dramatically different from China. Although located in the Greater China area, universities in Hong Kong are not particularly interested in selecting partners from China. In contrast, their collaborators mainly come from Anglo-Saxon countries such as the UK and USA – namely, English-speaking universities that are leaders in management education across the globe (*Financial Times*, 2011). Moreover, the location of teaching seems to be more international orientation including all participating countries involved. Despite enrolling Chinese students, EMBA programmes in Hong Kong also welcome global ones leading to quite a diverse student body. Faculty from all collaborative universities are required to teach in these joint programmes so as to share valuable expertise in human resources. Unlike dual degrees awarded in Chinese EMBA programmes, Hong Kong's programmes vary significantly

University	Fudan U	Tsinghua U	Shanghai Jiao Tong U
Partners	Washington U (USA)	INSEAD (France)	CUOA (Italy)
Starting year	2002	2007	2010
Source of students	China (64%) and other countries	Mainly from China	Mainly from China
Delivery location	Mainly in Shanghai	Beijing, Shanghai, Singapore, and France	Mainly in Shanghai
Instructors	Both	Half from each	90% from professionals
Degree	Both	Both	Both
Web site information	www.fdsu.edu.cn/topemba/	http://tsinghua.insead.edu/	www.studyget.cn/vip/brand/

Table II.
Cross-border EMBA
programmes in China

from joint degrees to single degrees awarded by one university, such as HKUST (Table III).

Unlike experiences in China and Hong Kong, EMBA programmes in Taiwan are designed to meet the unique needs of the greater China area. All partners of these programmes are Chinese universities and institutions without other countries. They started these joint efforts quite recently (i.e. since 2007). The majority of students enrolled in these programmes are Taiwanese businessmen in China, presenting a unitary composition of student body. Reflecting on the teaching locations, Taiwan and Shanghai, China, are the most common choices, without other international destinations. Although teaching faculty mainly come from both institutions, the degree tends to be awarded exclusively by universities in Taiwan instead of joint or dual degrees, which prevail in transnational higher education. Therefore, these generalized characteristics in Taiwan vary significantly from those in China and Hong Kong. The next section discusses the differences among these three societies and interprets the underpinning meanings and rationales (Table IV).

Diverse approaches toward sharing the emerging market in China

After examining the selective EMBA programmes of China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, we can identify three different approaches in sharing the emerging educational market in China. The main focus of Chinese universities is to bring “international” into the local market in order to strengthen the operation of local programmes and enhance the institutional reputation. On the contrary, “aiming global” is the strategic objective of these cross-border EMBA programmes in Hong Kong by collaborating with the best business schools in the world. Finally, the behaviour of Taiwanese universities seems to be “domestic extension” by mainly admitting Taiwanese businessmen in China.

China: bringing in international

As previous analysis has shown, management education in China has been substantially enhanced along with the rapid growth of the Chinese economy. According to one report produced by McKinsey in 2004, enterprises in China will require 75,000 management personnel in the next 15 years in order to maintain their continuous development overseas; this number does not include the needs of foreign companies in China (Business Next, 2005). This means that the domestic market of EMBA programmes for Chinese universities is huge and expanding. In addition, its EMBA education is still in the early stage, requiring valuable inputs from non-local universities and institutions such as consultants, faculty, curriculum, and global

University	HKU	HKUST	HKUST
Partners	LBS (UK) Columbia U (USA)	New York U (America)	Northwestern U (America)
Starting year	2009	2007	1997
Source of students	Across the global	Free	Free
Delivery location	London, NY, HK	HK, NY, Beijing	HK and Illinois, America
Instructors	All	Both	Both
Degree	Joint degree	HKUST	Dual degree
Web site information	www.emba-global.com/asia	www.globalfinance master.com/	www.bm.ust.hk/emba/

Table III.
Cross-border EMBA programmes in Hong Kong

University	Taiwan U	Chung Hsing U	Central U	Sun Yat-Sen U
Partners	Fudan U (China)	Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences	Nanjing U (China)	Tongji U (China)
Starting year	2010	2010	2007	2010
Source of students	Taiwan and China (half)	Taiwanese businessmen	Taiwanese businessmen	Taiwanese businessmen
Delivery location	1/3 (Taiwan) 2/3 (Shanghai)	Shanghai	Taiwan and Suzhou, China	1/3 (Taiwan) 2/3 (Shanghai)
Instructors	Both	Taiwan	Both	Both
Degree	Respectively awarded	Chung Hsing U	Central U	Both
Web site information	www.emba.ntu.edu.tw/ FUDAN/	http://emba.nchu.edu.tw/ about_4.php	http://emba.ncu.edu.tw/03/ main.php	http://emba.nsysu.edu. tw/files/11-1107-5942.php? LANG = zh-tw

Table IV.
Cross-border EMBA
programmes in Taiwan

perspectives. Therefore, most Chinese universities investigated are keen to attract diverse foreign universities into the local market, serving the territorial needs of executive managers within China and some international students. In other words, the main task for this kind of cross-border collaboration is “bringing in international” with the following objectives:

- importing foreign expertise, faculty and competence, and curriculum design so as to strengthen their own;
- providing abundant academic resources through the assistance of their foreign partners;
- aiming to enhance the programme reputation; and
- preparing for international ventures.

Due to these characteristics, the student sources primarily originate from China; their teaching locations based primarily in China are not equally distributed among international partners. What they want to do is to bring valuable academic resources from the outside world into China through cross-border collaboration of EMBA programmes. This kind of belief is clearly reflected in the mission statement of the School of Economics and Management, Tsinghua University (n.d.): Creating knowledge, cultivating leader, changing China and influencing the world. The design of this EMBA programme, therefore, is first producing knowledge and leaders by sequence and then changing China and the world. The approach that Chinese universities have adopted is immersion into the world by bringing in international practices and standards.

Hong Kong: aiming global

In contrast to the approach employed by Chinese counterparts to embrace the world, Hong Kong's universities are “aiming global” by cooperating with leading universities in English-speaking countries, which are usually highly ranked in global rankings. Although concerned with the development of EMBA programmes in China and interested in attracting Chinese students, the scope of these Hong Kong-based programmes is globally oriented having admitted diverse student constituents instead of students from a single source. Based on this assumption, the enrolled students are required to take courses globally in line with the collaborative partners. This approach, although under the assistance of foreign universities, aims to achieve the following objectives:

- enhance global branding (Fong and Postiglione, 2011);
- expand the global market;
- attract all kinds of students from across the globe, including Chinese ones; and
- act as a bridge to link China and the world.

The strategic goals of Hong Kong's programmes are to use their geographic, academic, and linguistic advantages as instruments to reposition Hong Kong's place in the world's academic competition. Similar to Chinese universities' moves, Hong Kong's cooperation with these leading institutions can increase their programme reputations. However, this reputation refers to the “global” market rather than domestic market in China that most Chinese universities are purchasing. At the same time, due to its unique relationship with China in terms of politics, language, and location, Hong Kong

actually serves a “bridging role” (Fong and Postiglione, 2011), connecting China with the world. On the one hand, Hong Kong can provide Chinese students with the latest professional knowledge and skills of management education developed in the West while, on the other, it retains “context knowledge” of the Chinese market which is lacking in Western universities. Hong Kong intends to cover this “gap” or “market niche” in the form of cross-border collaboration.

Taiwan: domestic extension?

Dramatically different from the approaches employed by its counterparts in China and Hong Kong, Taiwanese universities seem to regard the Chinese market as a “domestic extension” by mainly meeting the needs of Taiwanese business in China instead of Chinese nationals or foreign students. Although faculty of participating institutions are required to teach for the programmes, the main teaching sites are located in Mainland China in order to facilitate the admission of these mobile businessmen. Furthermore, only the Taiwanese degrees are awarded, thereby deepening the concerns of treating Chinese market as an extension of the Taiwanese domestic one. Indeed, these “conservative” behaviours of Taiwanese universities are highly related to the strict regulations imposed by the government. Given the long-standing political uncertainty between the Taiwan Strait and the fear of losing more students to China as a result of its expanding economy, the Taiwanese government was reluctant to recognize degrees awarded by Chinese universities until 2010 and has not established a systematic dialogue framework for educational issues with China (Chan, 2011). These policies’ restrictions have prevented Taiwanese universities from setting up EMBA programmes to accommodate diverse study components, including Chinese nationals. Professor Seng-Cho Chou, the former Executive Director of the EMBA programme at the National Taiwan University, once stated in 2005 that “more than five years ago we would have liked to establish a programme in China while the government rejected the proposal” (Business Next, 2005). This statement explains why the Taiwanese EMBA programmes in China can only act as a domestic extension and lack global vision or strategy as a consequence of governmental restrictive policies. The main function these EMBA programmes play thus far is to link Taiwan and China.

Conclusion and implications: positioning between centre and periphery?

The rising China along with the expanded economic sectors has created different conditions and opportunities for its neighbours, including Hong Kong and Taiwan. Due to the increasing economic growth and the demands of professional management personnel in China, EMBA programmes have been gradually emerging since the late 1990s. In order to benefit from this new business, some collaborative programmes across the national border have been established through the joint efforts from different societies and countries. Research findings from the previous analyses demonstrated that different societies have chosen different approaches to share this emerging market. Local providers in China tend to bring in international expertise for domestic needs so as to improve their programme reputation and prepare for business ventures at the international stage while Hong Kong is inclined to act as a bridge or portal to China, with the intention of expanding the global market. Alternatively, Taiwanese universities adopt a unique strategy primarily to serve the Taiwanese businessmen in China instead of foreigners or Chinese nationals. In addition, global players from America and Europe have also played a major role in the Chinese EMBA market

through transnational higher education in partnership with universities in China and Hong Kong (Taiwan is an exception).

However, it is clear that the labour division among universities in these three societies is differentiated and even hierarchical, with China targeting primarily the domestic market, Hong Kong aiming at the global market, and Taiwan seeking to serve its country's population. Their different approaches illustrate the uneven distribution of the relative positions within the world order. In using the terminology of the centre-periphery concept proposed by Philip G. Altbach (1998), universities in Hong Kong are moving towards the centre with the assistance of leading Western institutions while Chinese universities and their huge domestic market are also moving away from peripheral locations by immersing in international standards and practices. Taiwan, as a unique case here, is constrained by its own regulations and restrictive policies and stands at the peripheral position with respect to the emerging educational market in China. The EMBA programmes in China are generally expected to grow in line with the development of its economy. If this is the case, then Taiwan must change its approach with an eye towards enjoying the positive effects and altering its position with respect to the labour division of universities among these three societies.

References

- Alon, I. and McIntyre, J.R. (Eds) (2005), *Business and Management Education in China: Transition, Pedagogy and Training*, World Scientific, Singapore.
- Altbach, P.G. (1998), *Comparative Higher Education: Knowledge, the University, and Development*, Ablex Publishing Corporation, Greenwich, CT and London.
- Brandt, L. and Rawski, T.G. (2008), "China's great economic transformation", in Brandt, L. and Rawski, T.G. (Eds), *China's Great Transformation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1-26.
- Burn, B.B. (Ed) (1980), *Expanding the International Dimension of Higher Education*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco and London.
- Business Next (2005), "Top academic resources + business elites in greater China area = Chinese EMBA", available at: www.bnnext.com.tw/article/view/cid/0/id/3625 (accessed 25 April 2012) (in Chinese).
- Cai, F., Park, A. and Zhao, Y. (2008), "The Chinese labor market in the reform era", in Brandt, L. and Rawski, T.G. (Eds), *China's Great Transformation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 167-214.
- Chan, S.J. (2011), "Cross-border educational collaboration between Taiwan and China: the implications for educational governance", *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 311-323.
- Chan, S.J. (2012), "Internationalizing higher education sector: explaining the approaches in four Asian countries", *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, (in press).
- Chan, W.W.Y. (2004), "International cooperation in higher education: theory and practice", *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 32-55.
- The Economist* (2011), "Multinational companies and China: what future?", available at: www.managementthinking.eu.com/sites/default/files/downloads/Multinationals%20and%20China%20ENGLISH_0.pdf (accessed 25 April 2012).
- Eddy, P.L. (2010), *Partnerships and Collaboration in Higher Education. ASHE higher Education Report*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Financial Times* (2011), "EMBA ranking 2011", available at: <http://rankings.ft.com/business/schoolrankings/emba-rankings-2011> (accessed 25 April 2012).

- Fong, P. and Postiglione, G. (2011), "Making cross-border partnerships work: the case of China's Hong Kong system", in Sakamoto, R. and Chapman, D.W. (Eds), *Cross-border Partnerships in Higher Education: Strategies and Issues*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 169-190.
- Garnaut, R. (2011), "Thirty years of Chinese reform and economic growth: challenges and how it has changed world development", in Wu, H.-M. and Yao, Y. (Eds), *Reform and Development in China: What can China Offer the Developing World?*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 82-98.
- Hedmo, T., Sahlin-Andersson, K. and Wedlin, L. (2005), "Fields of imitation: the global expansion of management education", in Czarniawska, B. and Guje, S. (Eds), *Global Ideas: How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy*, Liber and Copenhagen Business School Press, Lund, pp. 190-212.
- Herston, A. and Sicular, T. (2008), "China and development economics", in Brandt, L. and Rawski, T.G. (Eds), *China's Great Transformation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Holland, D. (2010), "Notes from the field: lessons learned in building a framework for an international collaboration", *New Directions for Higher Education*, Vol. 150, pp. 31-41.
- Hung, X. (Ed) (2011), *The Institutional Dynamics of China's Great Transformation*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Johnstone, D.B., d'Ambrosio, M.B. and Yakoboski, P.J. (Eds) (2010), *Higher Education in a Global Society*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA.
- Knight, J. (2008), *Higher Education in Turmoil: The Changing World of Internationalization*, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- MBA courses (n.d.), "The executive MBA", available at: www.mba-courses.com/executive_mba.htm (accessed 23 April 2012).
- People's Daily Online (2005), "China has socialist market economy in place", available at: http://english.people.com.cn/200507/13/eng20050713_195876.html (accessed 27 April 2012).
- Robertson, S. (2009), "Market multilateralism, the World Bank Group, and the asymmetries of globalizing higher education: toward a critical political economy analysis", in Bassett, R.M. and Maldonado-Maldonado, A. (Eds), *International Organizations And Higher Education Policy: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally?* Routledge, New York, NY and London, pp. 113-131.
- Sakamoto, R. and Chapman, D. (2011), "Expanding across borders: the growth of cross-border partnerships in higher education", in Sakamoto, R. and Chapman, D.W. (Eds), *Cross-Border Partnerships in Higher Education: Strategies and Issues*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 133-152.
- Slaughter, S. and Rhoades, G. (2004), *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD.
- Tsinghua University (n.d.), "School of economics and management", available at: www.sem.tsinghua.edu.cn/portalweb/appmanager/portal/semEN (accessed 23 April 2012).
- Tubbeh, L. and Williams, J. (2010), "Framing issues of international education", *New Directions for Higher Education*, Vol. 150, pp. 7-16.
- UNESCO/OECD (2005), *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Crossborder Higher Education*, UNESCO, Paris.
- Wang, X., He, W. and Yu, K. (2005), "East meets west: the dilemma of management pedagogy in China", in Alon, I. and McIntyre, J.R. (Eds), *Business and Management Education in China: Transition, Pedagogy and Training*, World Scientific, Singapore, pp. 165-180.
- Wikipedia (2011), "Chinese economic reform", available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_economic_reform (accessed 20 April 2012).
- de Wit, H. (2002), *Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: A Historical, Comparative, and Conceptual Analysis*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT.

WTO (2012), "About the WTO – a statement by the Director-General", available at: www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/wto_dg_stat_e.htm (accessed 23 April 2012).

Wu, H.M. and Yao, Y. (Eds). (2011), *Reform and Development in China: What can China Offer the Developing World?*, Routledge, New York, NY.

Yin, R. (2012), *Application of Case Study Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

About the authors

Sheng-Ju Chan is Associate Professor in the Graduate Institute of Education, The National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan. His areas of special interest are higher education policy and management, and comparative education. He is the author of over a dozen publications in Chinese and English, and also a policy advisor to the Ministry of Education in Taiwan for university merger. His recent publications focused on cross-border education, internationalization and student mobility in Asia and were published in well-known journals such as *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *Higher Education Policy* and *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. Sheng-Ju Chan is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: ju1207@ccu.edu.tw

Fang-Min Chang is currently a doctoral student in the Graduate Institute of Education, The National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.