Regional Cooperation or Competition?
*The Rise of Transnational Higher Education and the Emergence of Regulatory Regionalism in Asia*

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Introduction

Well aware of the growing pressure for internationalization and the need to strengthen their global competitiveness in attracting, retaining and nurturing talents in the highly competitive knowledge-based economy, many governments in Asia have introduced different strategies not only to transform their higher education systems to become more responsive to external changes but also to engage in developing regional education hubs to assert their regional / global influences. The rise of transnational higher education and the quest for regional education hub status among Asian countries has suggested more competition arising from these regional projects. Meanwhile, we have also observed more regional cooperation emerging through various kinds of bilateral and multilateral collaborations among Asian states. Similar to their European counterparts, university governance in Asia is now more global in scope; they are increasingly subject to new external standards of measurement while their own internal governance procedures have become more managerial. One of the major trends of changing university governance is the emergence of regulatory regionalism, which is reflected by the striking features of recent developments in regional governance which transcend territorial spaces of nation states. This paper sets out against this policy context to examine major policies introduced and strategies employed by governments in selected Asian societies — Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia — in expanding transnational higher education programmes and actively

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involving in regional collaborations. More specifically, this article also reviews major developments of deepening regional cooperation among Asian countries / societies to assert their regional influences in the globalizing world.

**Regional Response to Global Pressure: The Rise of Transnational Education**

With a strong conviction to turn their countries / societies into regional hubs of education, the Singapore government has proactively engaged in the ‘global school project’ to transform the city-state into ‘Boston of the East’, while the government of Malaysia has tried to develop two mega-education cities at its capital city and city in the South just across the border between Singapore and Malaysia (Mok, 2011). Similarly, the Hong Kong government has started contemplating the regional education hub project by enhancing the city-state not only in internationalizing its higher education but also establishing more international schools to attract more talents from overseas to stay and work for the territory (Mok and Yu, 2011; Lai and Maclean, 2011). In view of the declining student population in high schools, together with the need to internationalize the higher education system, the government in Taiwan announced a new policy in January 2011 to engage the island state to establish into a regional education hub by recruiting more overseas students from South East Asia and China mainland (Chen, 2011). Similarly, we also witness other Asian governments attempt to invest more in education to raise their international profile. South Korea has invested heavily in ‘Brain 21 Project’ in promoting research and scholarship, while China has kept on its strategic investments in major universities through the ‘211’, ‘985’ and other forms of strategic development investment in grooming a few universities to rank higher in the global university ranking exercises (Chen, 2011a; Mok, 2011a). All these measures adopted by Asian states are to enhance their global competitiveness. One way to enhance their global competitiveness is related to the quest for regional education hub projects in Asia.

**The Quest for Regional Education Hub: Malaysian Experience**

Malaysia’s ambition to become a regional education hub was first sketchily noted in the grand development blueprint of *Wawasan 2020* (Vision 2020) initiated by the Mahathir administration in 1991.\(^\text{ii}\) According to Vision 2020, the government is keen to meet the policy target of having 40% of youth aged 19-24 admitted into

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\(^\text{ii}\) *Wawasan 2020* as an ambitious national goal of development was introduced by the then Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mahathir Mohamad, during the tabling of the Sixth Malaysia Plan in 1991. The vision envisages the achievement of a self-sufficient, industrialized and well-developed Malaysia by the year of 2020. In terms of economy, it set the target of eightfold stronger by 2020 than the economy in the early 1990s.
tertiary education. By 2020, it hopes that 60% of high school students will be admitted into public universities, with the rest going to private colleges and universities. The publication of the National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2020 and the National Higher Education Action Plan, 2007-2010 (both launched in August 2007) are the most recent responses to the changing socio-economic and socio-political circumstances in Malaysia. Given that the global higher educational environment has significantly changed, the National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2020 outlines seven major reform objectives, which are: widening access and enhancing quality; improving the quality of teaching and learning; enhancing research and innovation; strengthening institutions of higher education; intensifying internationalization; enculturation of lifelong learning; and finally, reinforcing the MOHE’s delivery system.

In terms of the development of transnational higher education in Malaysia, the Report by the Committee to Study, Review and Make Recommendations Concerning the Development and Direction of Higher Education in Malaysia (Halatuju Report) was published in July 2005, which contained 138 recommendations. Though it was a controversial report (Wan Abdul Manan 2008), central to this report is about the need for local higher education institutions to engage in self-promoting activities in the outside world. In addition, the report also recommends the government to invest more in international student and staff exchange programs which would promote more collaborations between local and transnational education institutions. Based on inputs from the Cabinet, another report named the Transformation of Higher Education Document was issued in July 2007 to combine the relevant elements in the Ninth Malaysia Plan and recommendations from the Halatuju Report. Subsequently, the latest publication for this long-term plan, the National Higher Education Strategic Plan, was put together in August 2007. According to the plan, the Malaysia government is trying to attract 100,000 students from overseas by 2010.

In Malaysia, distance learning arrangements, notably twinning programs, has long been prosperous ever since the mid-1980s. Yet the establishment of international branch campuses could only become possible after the construction of new legal framework in 1996.iii Since then, various forms of transnational higher education

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iii Before 1996, private higher education institutions in Malaysia had no degree-awarding power. Even right after the enactment of the Private Higher Education Act 1996, the undergraduate degree program could only be offered by private institutions with their degree-awarding foreign partners, with students
have swiftly emerged in Malaysia, especially in the Klang Valley where Kuala Lumpur is a major component. The development of international branch campuses here is particularly impressive. In Malaysia, branch campuses of foreign universities can only be established by an invitation from the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Higher Education (after 2004). The invited foreign universities, however, need to establish themselves as Malaysian companies, with majority Malaysian ownership, to operate their campuses. For instance, the University of Nottingham has run its programs in its Malaysia campus since 2000, with a new campus recently set up at Semenyih, Negeri Sembilan for the 2005-2006 academic year. The other three international branch campuses in Malaysia, to date, are all Australian universities, namely the Monash University (Petaling Jaya campus, 1998), Curtin University (Miri campus, 1999) and Swinburne University of Technology (Kuching campus, 2000).

According to the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (2002), Monash University cooperates with the Sunway Group — a pioneer of twinning arrangements in the field of education as early as the late 1980s — and the latter provides funding for its Malaysia campus. Similarly, the local partner of Swinburne University of Technology in Malaysia is the Sarawak state government, which cooperates indirectly with the university through its Yayasan Sarawak (Sarawak Foundation) and Sarawak Higher Education Foundation.

Malaysia’s increasing cooperation with foreign universities has coincided with the increased regulation regarding transnational provision (Lee 1999a; McBurnie & Ziguras 2001). After establishing the partnership with local corporations, foreign university campuses in Malaysia have done well. For instance, Monash University was the first to build its overseas branch campus in Malaysia. With its five faculties including Medicine & Health Sciences, Engineering, Information Technology, Business, and Arts & Sciences, the Monash University – Malaysia now offers various undergraduate and graduate programs to almost 4,000 students. Its purpose-built campus was opened in 2007, which provides a high-tech home for the University. The Nottingham Malaysia campus has also successfully recruited more than 2700 international students from more than 50 countries. According to the Malaysian Qualifications Agency, as on 21 April 2009, there are altogether 4 branch campuses being required to transfer between Malaysia and another country to complete their studies (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 1999). It was only since 1998 that the Ministry of Education allowed private institutions to deliver degree programs through the so-called ‘3+0’ arrangement with their foreign partners.
(having 1 set up by the UK university and 3 by Australia), running 84 programs in the country (Interview conducted in Malaysia, April 2009). Official statistics also indicates that the private sector has played an increasingly important role in enhancing access to higher education in Malaysia. In 2004, 32% of students were enrolled in private higher education institutions in Malaysia. Furthermore, 27,731 international students were studying in Malaysian private higher education institutions in 2004. I was also informed during my recent visit to the Malaysian Qualifications Agency that 19 UK universities are now running 110 twinning programs accredited in the list of the Malaysian Qualifications Register (MQR); while 18 Australian universities are offering 71 programs of this kind in the country. Institutions from other countries like New Zealand, USA, Egypt and Jordan are also offering twinning programs in Malaysia (interview conducted in Malaysia, April 2009).

And finally, the government has also initiated a general regulatory framework for quality assurance of higher education. In fact, the private education sector was initially the only focus of this regulatory framework. Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (National Accreditation Board) was established under the Lembaga Akreditasi Negara Act of 1996 as a statutory body to accredit certificate, diploma and degree programs provided by the private institutions of higher learning. Yet later on in April 2002, the Ministry of Education also set up its own Quality Assurance Division to coordinate and manage the quality assurance system in public institutions of higher learning. With the rise of transnational education programs and the rapid expansion of private higher education, the government eventually decided to streamline these existing regulatory frameworks in 2003, and thereafter adopted the unified Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) in 2004, governed by the newly established Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) in 2007 to accredit qualifications awarded by all institutions of higher education. In short, the most recent achievements of TNHE in Malaysia are as follows:

- Two major projects that the Malaysian Government has engaged in establishing itself a regional hub of education, namely, the development of Educity in Iskandar Malaysia, just next to Singapore, and the Kuala Lumpur Education City (KLEC), incorporating a new commercial and residential project in the Klang Valley south of Kuala Lumpur.
- Newcastle University in the UK is the first foreign institution signed on to be part of Educity and the Dutch Maritime Institute also plans to offer programmes
with foreign degrees, while international schools such as Britain’s Marlborough College will be set up in the Educity (Pekwan, 2009).

- In 2007, there were 47,928 international students from around 150 countries studying in Malaysia. Among them, 14,324 enrolled in public HEIs, 33,604 enrolled in private HEIs.

- In 2007, Indonesians represented 17.6% (8,454) of the population of international students in Malaysia. It was followed by students from China 13.5% (6,468), Iran 7.7% (3,678), Nigeria 6% (2,884) and Bangladesh 5.2% (2,506).

- However, while student population from Indonesia continues to expand from 2003 to 2007 (+50.1%), student population from China has shrunken significantly (-37.5%).

- The growth of student population from Middle East has also been hindered by latest HE developments in Middle East.

- The number of private universities/university colleges in Malaysia (branch campuses of foreign HEIs inclusive) has increased dramatically from 0 in 1998 to 37 in 2007, with a vast majority of them offering THE programs particularly in business and Science & Technology.

- Obviously, the two regional development projects mentioned above reveals Malaysia’s ambition to develop a multi-use commercial, academic, residential complex (Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia, 2009).

**Powering Education in the Region: Hong Kong Experience**

Comparing with other Asian societies, the University Grant Committee, a public organization responsible for developing higher education development in the city-state, believes the strong competitive edge of Hong Kong over its regional competitors in this regard was first and foremost, ‘its strong links with Mainland China’ (ibid.), followed by other elements such as its geographical location and cosmopolitan outlook, its internationalized and vibrant higher education sector which are also frequently claimed by Singapore on its bid for the Global Schoolhouse aspiration. To the Government of the HKSAR, it seems that as far as transnational

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*iv Since the issue of the Higher Education Review 2002, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) between Hong Kong and Mainland China was signed on 29 June 2003 and brought into force. Hong Kong political leaders, thereafter, has worked towards the policy direction of*
higher education is concerned, it was initially regarded by the government as some sort of supplementary means to meet the domestic demands under the tide of massification of higher education (Chan & Lo 2007), rather than as a tool for other more aggressive strategy. With limited resources due to its low-tax policy and particularly after the Asian financial crisis, the Hong Kong government has to rely more on non-state financial sources as well as service providers (including overseas academic institutions) to cater for the further development of its higher education.

Another feature that worth mentioning is the fact that institutional collaborations between Hong Kong and Mainland China had seized much attention from the policy makers throughout the first decade of post-handover Hong Kong, which has resulted in a population of non-local tertiary students, consists mainly of Mainland Chinese. It was only until 2007 that Donald Tsang, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, explicitly stated his intention to expand the population of international students by ‘increasing the admission quotas for non-local students to local tertiary institutions, relaxing employment restrictions on non-local students, as well as providing scholarships’ (Tsang 2007: 40). And most recently (June 2009), based on recommendations made by the Task Force on Economic Challenges set up after the distressing impacts of global financial tsunami, the government has declared its resolution to develop six economic areas where Hong Kong still enjoys clear advantages, in which ‘educational services’ is one of them.

Different to Malaysia, transnational education in Hong Kong is mainly provided in the form of joint programs, distance learning as well as twinning programs. In the context of financial constraints, all the local publicly funded higher education institutions have to develop more self-financing programs or joint programs offer with their overseas partners in order to recover costs and generate incomes (Yang 2006; Chan 2008). For instance, continuing education units as well as community

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vi For instance, there were 7,293 non-local students enrolled in the UGC-funded institutions in the academic year 2007/08, while 2,811 others attended various programs at different higher education institutions on a self-financed basis. For the former, only 542 of them (7%) were students who came from countries other than the Mainland China; while for the later, only 619 of them (22%) were non-Mainland Chinese (Cheng, Ng, Cheung, et al. 2009: 41 & 45).

Vii These six areas are educational services, medical services, testing and certification, environmental industry, innovation and technology, and finally cultural and creative industries (Task Force on Economic Challenges, Hong Kong 2009).

Vii The budget cuts on government funding in higher education from 1999 to 2004, in particular, had driven the higher education sector in Hong Kong to look to the market for additional funding.
colleges have been established in turn by these institutions, and the full-time self-financing local programs that they offer have steadily increased from 41 in 2001/02 to 347 in 2008/09, with academic qualifications ranging from higher diploma (128), associate degree (161) to bachelor’s degree (58).\textsuperscript{viii} As for the non-local higher education and professional courses, the expansion of their numbers is even more impressive. Recognizing the fact that Hong Kong can offer very good market conditions for transnational higher education, especially with its geographical proximity to Mainland China, overseas institutions have become increasingly proactive in setting up their academic programs in Hong Kong during the last few years to attract mainland students (Yang 2006). However, on the other hand, top universities from Mainland China have also begun to offer programs in Hong Kong and expanding their market share (currently occupy 5% of those registered courses and 7% of exempted courses), which is such a phenomenon that unequivocally reflects the closer ties between both sides, particularly after they struck a memorandum on mutual recognition of academic degrees in higher education in 2004. For example, Tsinghua University and Peking University, in collaboration with the HKU SPACE\textsuperscript{ix} and Hong Kong Shue Yan University, offer academic programs ranging from professional certificates to master’s degrees in law, economy, literature and architecture respectively. Likewise, universities in Hong Kong have also started to export their education programs to the mainland.

Yet despite the exuberance of non-local courses, the Hong Kong government has, by far, set out only a code of practice for these courses (HKCAAVQ 2007), which is considered as moderately liberal.\textsuperscript{x} Foreign universities can easily enter or quit Hong Kong’s market. Currently, all courses conducted in Hong Kong leading to the award of non-local higher academic qualifications (i.e. associate degree, degree, postgraduate or other post-secondary qualifications) or professional qualifications must be properly registered or be exempted from registration. Any overseas institution is required to obtain accreditation or other formal permission from the Education


\textsuperscript{ix} HKU SPACE refers to the School of Professional and Continuing Education, the University of Hong Kong.

\textsuperscript{x} For instance, in its preamble, the code of practice clearly states that it has ‘no mandatory effect and institutions should be able to put in place policies and guidelines to reflect their own mission and philosophy’ (HKCAAVQ 2007: 1).
Bureau (EDB)\textsuperscript{xii} prior to its operation. However, this category is diverse, ranging from compulsory registration to formal assessment of academic criteria. The EDB will normally seek the independent expert advice of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)\textsuperscript{xiii} as to whether a course can meet the criteria for registration or be exempted from registration. Yet again, the relevant requirements are considered to be straightforward and non-burdensome. In short, the most recent achievements of TNHE in Hong Kong are as follows:

- While to date, not even a single foreign university has been approached and invited by the Hong Kong government in setting up any branch campus in the territory.
- By the end of August 2009, a total of 1,230 non-local courses have become available to both the local and overseas students, with the breakdown of 405 registered courses and 825 exempted courses.
- Among them, 49\% and 66\% respectively are offered by institutions from the United Kingdom, whereas Australian institutions take up another 30\% and 20\% correspondingly.\textsuperscript{xiii}
- Comparing Hong Kong’s hub project with its neighbouring countries, Hong Kong could be seen as a late comer and the city state has to struggle to face a strong competition in the region to achieve its goal in asserting its brain power in the region (Hackett, 2007).

\section*{Global School House Project: Singapore Experience}

As a city-state with meager natural resources, the Singapore government has always taken the quality of its human resources very seriously. Being aware of the importance of a more inclusive, energetic and creative higher education, it has initiated various comprehensive reviews of its higher education system since the late

\textsuperscript{xii} EDB was previously the ‘Education and Manpower Bureau’ (EMB). Its manpower portfolio was transferred to the new Labour and Welfare Bureau in July 2007, thus streamlined to become the Education Bureau.

\textsuperscript{xiii} HKCAAVQ is a rather new statutory body established under the HKCAAVQ Ordinance (Chapter 1150) which came into effect on 1 October 2007. It was previously the ‘Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation’ (HKCAA). The new HKCAAVQ is appointed by the Secretary for Education as the Accreditation Authority and Qualifications Register (QR) Authority under the current Qualifications Framework (QF).

Two major policy directions have been set in this regard: first, the expansion of postgraduate education and research at the universities; and secondly, the enhancement of undergraduate curricula with a stronger emphasis given to students’ creativity and thinking skills.

Yet as far as the quest for a regional hub of education is concerned, policies of quality enhancement and corporatization of public universities alone may far from sufficient. The provision of more opportunities for higher education, both in terms of the number and variety, has to be delivered to domestic Singaporeans as well as foreign learners from the region. The mid-1980s school-leaver boom saw the beginnings of transnational higher education in Singapore, and as Richard Garrett pointed out, this school-leaving cohort (20-to 24-year age group) will rise again and reach its peak around 2010 (2005: 9). However, by 2003, Singapore’s public universities and polytechnics could only enroll around 40,000 and 56,000 students respectively; while on the other hand, 119,000 students were enrolled by around 170 private tertiary providers, in which 140 of them offered programs in collaboration with foreign institutions and enrolled 75% of the total student population in this section (ibid.: 9-10). The importance of transnational education provision in Singapore has therefore become obvious.

Meanwhile, in order to tap in the lucrative education market more aggressively, the Singapore government had launched its Global Schoolhouse initiative in 2002. In fact, ever since 1998, the government, through efforts taken by its Economic Development Board (EDB) instead of its Ministry of Education, has strategically invited ‘world-class’ and ‘reputable’ universities from abroad to set up their Asian campuses in the city-state. As a result, Singapore is today home to 16 leading foreign tertiary institutions and 44 pre-tertiary schools offering international curricula. The prestigious INSEAD (Institut Européen d’Administration des Affaires, established its Singapore branch campus in 2000), the University of Chicago Booth School of Business (2000), S.P. Jain Center of Management (2006), The New York...
University’s Tisch School of the Arts (2007), DigiPen Institute of Technology (2008) are among the list of these foreign tertiary institutions, ranging impressively from business, management arts, media, hospitality to information technology, biomedical sciences and engineering.

In 2003, a further and more integrated step was taken by the government to promote Singapore as a premier education hub. ‘Singapore Education’, a multi-government agency initiative, is led by the EDB and supported by the Tourism Board, SPRING Singapore, International Enterprise Singapore and the Ministry of Education. According to the official website of Singapore Education, EDB is responsible for attracting ‘internationally renowned educational institutions to set up campuses in Singapore’, whereas the Tourism Board is tasked with overseas promotion and marketing of Singapore education, and the International Enterprise Singapore in charge of helping quality local education institutions (e.g. Anglo-Chinese School [International] and Raffles Education) to develop their businesses and set up campuses overseas. And last but not least, the SPRING Singapore is given the role of administering quality accreditation for private education institutions in the city-state.

Another significant strategy adopted by the government in promoting transnational higher education is the joint-degree program arranged between the local universities and their overseas partners. Local Singapore universities are actively collaborating with peer universities across the world in a diversified spectrum of academic programs, bringing together affluent resources in such fields. Students are granted with the freedom to study at both campuses and receive supervision and teaching of faculties from both universities. A representative example is the Singapore-MIT Alliance (SMA), an innovative engineering education and research enterprise jointly founded by the National University of Singapore, the Nanyang Technological University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1998. This alliance has so far developed five graduate degree programs, and has complete their core curriculum in Dubai, and then transfer to Singapore campus for their specialized curriculum; while those from the streams of Marketing, Global Logistics, and Human Resources Management will do the reverse. In addition to study in Dubai and Singapore, students enrolling in either category would also be given the option to study core curriculum in Toronto. This one-year three cities program thus exposes students to varied business cultures, multinational companies, cross-national networking, and international market challenges.

xviii This task is entrusted to its Education Services Division.
created a distant learning environment at the forefront of current technology.

And finally, as part of its policy to support transnational higher education, the Singapore government also offers a comprehensive package of financial-aid to international students through several public channels (Cheng, Ng, Cheung, et al. 2009). The tuition fees for them are only 10% above local rate, and they can apply for whatever financial assistance schemes open to local students, including scholarships provided by the ‘Singapore Scholarship’ and tuition grants conditional on the agreement of working for a Singapore-registered company for at least three years upon graduation. Moreover, there are numerous bursaries provided by individual tertiary institutions, and student loans are also available at favorable interest rates. Interviewing senior administrators of selected transnational education institutions like James Cook University Australia and ESSEC IRENE Business School (Institute for Research and Education on Education) from Paris, the author learned that both institutions have received financial subsidy and other forms of assistance like providing them good amenities or identifying them very good sites for campus building. Seeing great potential developing their campuses in Singapore as a solid platform reaching out to Asian students, these overseas institutions, therefore, are attracted with preferential treatment given by the Singapore Government to venture into the Asian soil (Filed Interviews conducted in Singapore, August 2010). Recent immigration policies that aim to attract talented and skilled individuals to live and work in Singapore, in addition, have also facilitated the development of its transnational education industry. In short, the most recent achievements of TNHE in Singapore are as follows:

- In 2007, it was estimated to have 86,000 international students from 120 countries studying in Singapore, approximately had 1120 crossborder education programme arrangements in the city-state.
- Over 1,200 private HEIs and 44 pre-tertiary schools offering international curricula in Singapore.
- Raffles Education Corp, the largest private education group in Asia, has established its international headquarters in Singapore. About 61,000 students are studying in its 28 colleges around the Asia-Pacific region.
- Public Universities have also played a role in the quest for regional hub of education. The 3 autonomous universities enroll 20% international students who mainly come from ASEAN, China & India. Most of them enrolled in
Engineering & Science courses.

- As of 2008, the education sector (all levels) contributed about 2% of Singapore’s GDP and is forecasted to reach 5% by 2015.

  (Source: Lasanowski, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2010; MTI, 2003)

Obviously, the Global Schoolhouse is a multi-faceted and ambitious project, with multiple objectives to recruit ‘foreign talent’, generate income and foster economic growth and attract research and development firms as well as multinational companies specializing in knowledge economy and service industries (Gribble and McBurnie, 2007). The rise of transnational higher education in Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong in general and the quest for regional hub status in particular has clearly suggested these Asian governments are particularly keen to expand the education market not only for income generation but also for ‘soft power’ assertion to enhance their national competitiveness in the global market place. Whether such a quest for regional education hub in Asia would promote more regional cooperation or create additional tension among Asian countries in competing for students and human capital very much depends upon how nation states see others as competitors or partners (Lo, 2011). Our above discussions clearly suggest potential tensions among these Asian economies are growing when they are pursuing a similar agenda to assert their regional / global influences. Nonetheless, we also observe more regional cooperation fostering among Asian countries through different forms of regional collaborative frameworks.

The Emergence of Regulatory Regionalism

Having an examination of the recent higher education transformations and the rise of transnational higher education in Asia, we could analyze such changes as part of the wider contemporary trend to ‘reinvent the state’ or to enhance the ‘competition state’ projects in the globalizing world (Mok 2008a). Yet another contemporary inclination, as we can see in the accelerated integration of the European Union, is regionalism within the wider context of globalization. Thus accordingly, is there any sign of the emergence of regulatory regionalism in terms of East Asian higher education? I would argue that up to the moment, while the tendency is clear, it is however much less solid than the present case established in the European Union.

Admittedly, not only in East Asia, the European higher education as a whole has
also been dwarfed by its American counterpart since the end of World War II. Higher education in America today is not only the most developed, but renowned for its great diversity and flexibility in governance. This successful American model, particularly in regard to research universities, has increasingly posed a challenge to the relatively stagnant and conservative European institutions based largely on their heritage from the 18th and 19th centuries. In face of these pressures, one of the recent responses from the European Union is its attempts of regulatory regionalism that try to synergize the competitive edge of European universities. The quest for world-class universities is particularly relevant in this regard, and the first effort set to improve the research quality of European universities could be found in the ‘Lisbon Strategy’ first initiated by the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000 (Deem, Mok & Lucas 2008). The 1999 Bologna Declaration and its subsequent ‘Bologna Process’ could be regarded as the second effort concerning university learning and teaching, as well as the creation of a common higher education market and research area. Academic degree structures of EU universities have henceforth been harmonized to enable learner and worker mobility, facilitate credit transfers, and ensure quality assurance (Robertson 2008, 2009). More importantly, the Bologna Declaration, with its goal of achieving a ‘European Higher Education Area’ by 2010, has for the first time created a common ground for the EU to promote its higher education to a global market, particularly to Asia. By 2009, membership of the European Higher Education Area has remarkably increased to now include 46 countries containing around 5,600 public and private institutions with more than 16 million students. Since Russia and southeast Europe are now also part of the European Higher Education Area, it thus extends far beyond the EU as a constitutional entity (Robertson 2009: 8).

In comparison, to date, mechanisms to promote East Asian integration in higher education have not yet been developed. However, signs of regulatory regionalism could be traced in related collaborations via certain regional organizations, or in the institutional interactions undertaken within a wider framework of ASEAN + 1 or ASEAN + 3. For example, the formation of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a regional collaborative framework is a case in point.

ASEAN and cooperation in higher education

ASEAN was established in August 1967 as a formal regional inter-governmental collaboration between five non-communist countries in South Asia primarily over issues of security in the region but later expanded to have ten members. Originally, it was not intended as a legal entity with sovereign power but only an organization with
regional member countries to discuss common issues and come up with regional approaches to solve these issues. However, ASEAN evolved into a legal entity with the signing of the ASEAN Charter with its members in November 20, 2007. This charter elaborates principles and rules for ASEAN, giving it a stronger collective voice in the international community and promoting compliance with ASEAN agreements (ISEAS, 2008a). Adhering to the principles of the United Nations Charter, ASEAN’s purpose is to collaborate in accelerating economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region, especially promoting regional peace and stability among the countries in the region. ASEAN works through the process towards a regional agenda to attain goals revolves around dialogues, understanding common problems/interests, identifying mutual gains to be derived from regional cooperation, and achieving compatible national approaches by member countries (ASEAN, 2004).

In 1997, the ASEAN Vision for 2020 was to create a concert of Southeast Asian nations, bonded together in a partnership of dynamic development, outward looking, peaceful, stable and prosperous in a community of caring societies. The three pillars of the ASEAN community: ASEAN security community (ASC), ASEAN economic community (AEC) and the ASEAN socio-cultural community (ASCC) were also established. The ASEAN socio-cultural community was tasked to ensure that its workforce shall be prepared for and benefit from economic integration by investing more resources for basic and higher education, training, science and technology development, job creation and social protection. The ASCC believes that the development and enhancement of human resources is a key strategy for employment generation, alleviating poverty and socio-economic disparities and ensuring economic growth with equity (www.aseansec.org).

In order to strengthen the cultural cooperation among its member states, ASEAN identified a few areas including manpower development, teacher education and the education system for deep collaboration in 1977. However, it had taken a while to further develop the ideas into concrete deep cooperation. Until the January 1992 summit, coinciding with the creation of AFTA, that cooperation in the field of higher education began among ASEAN member states. Deeper cooperation had also led to the establishment of the ASEAN University Network (AUN) in November 1995 with the objectives to promote cooperation, develop academic and professional human resources in the region through information dissemination among the ASEAN academic community as well as enhancing the ASEAN identity among member countries.
In December 1998, ASEAN passed the Hanoi Plan of Action, which further suggests the priorities for education under the heading *Promote Human Resource Development*. According to the Plan, ASEAN members are committed to strengthen the AUN and move forward to transforming it into the ASEAN University. To realize the goal of deep collaboration among member states, major focuses were identified on equal access to education, establishing and strengthening networks in education and training by 2004. More importantly, the Bali Concord II, adopted in October 2003 under the AEC heading, clearly stated “the realization of a fully integrated economic community … There is a need to enhance cooperation & integration on activities in other areas, human resource development & capacity building; recognition of educational qualifications… and enhancing private sector involvement”.

More importantly, the Vientiane Action Program 2004-2010 (VAP) was adopted by ASEAN members further enhances deep cooperation among member states in education. According to the document, it clearly states: “There is a need to enhance human resource development through the networking of skills training institutions and the development of regional assessment and training programs and the development of mutual recognition arrangements shall facilitate labor mobility in the region and will support the realization of the AEC”.

Stressing regional assessment, training programmes and mutual recognition arrangements, ASEAN’s higher education agenda is closely connected to achieving its economic goals to promote the regional economic community to compete in the global environment. With particular reference to higher education structural reforms in the area of governance, access to higher education, focus on science & technology and private sector participation and geared towards manpower development, ASEAN is keen to promote human resource development and capacity building among member states. Accreditation, quality assurance and internationalization of higher education are part of the ASEAN’s agenda of getting the programmes recognized internationally.\textsuperscript{ix}

Working not only with other countries in East Asia, ASEAN has also branched out to work with regional NGOs. For example, the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL) has covered major public universities from all the selected East Asian territories except the Mainland China and South Korea as its members, and serves to foster academic cooperation among its member institutions particularly through regional fellowships and academic exchange programs. A newer

\textsuperscript{ix,x} Discussion related to the ASEAN in the text is based upon historical documents and policy documents from the official website of ASEAN.
yet more relevant organization, the Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU), was founded in January 1996 as a forum for presidents of the leading research universities in East Asia, which also carries out mutual exchanges among these institutions. AEARU has put an emphasis on the common academic and cultural backgrounds of its member universities, thus it is composed of the leading universities from only five territories in East Asia, namely the Mainland China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, which could also be seen as an university union specifically for the Confucian Cultural Sphere. Nevertheless, AEARU is hitherto a rather loose union with only a total of 17 leading research universities from the region.5

Compared with the non-governmental ASAIHL and AEARU, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) has offered another framework of collaboration with semi-official functions in the region. Given the fact that all its members, except the Timor-Leste, are also members of ASEAN, SEAMEO is by and large acts as the educational wing of ASEAN. And among its 19 specialized regional centers, the Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (SEAMEO-RIHED) is particularly relevant in initiating regional reforms on higher education governance. For instance, SEAMEO-RIHED has recently tried to establish an ASEAN Quality Assurance Network (AQAN) for the future development of a common set of quality assurance guidelines. After the first ASEAN Quality Assurance Roundtable Meeting at Kuala Lumpur in July 2008,6 the ‘Kuala Lumpur Declaration’ was adopted to recognize the crucial role of quality assurance in advancing the process of harmonization in regional higher education. Moreover, overseas study visits, regional workshops and seminars regarding university governance or institutional restructuring have also been held frequently by SEAMEO-RIHED over the past few years (SEAMEO-RIHED 2009).7

SEAMEO-RIHED moved a step further in exploring the ideas of creating a common space of higher education in Southeast Asia when it published Harmonisation of Higher Education: Lessons Learned from the Bologna Process (Supachai & Nopraenue 2008) after a preliminary study. A further research project on that theme was then followed, and SEAMEO-RIHED subsequently initiated a conference series to raise ‘awareness’ among the key stakeholders in the process of higher education harmonization in Southeast Asia (SEAMEO-RIHED 2009: 6). However, as the phrase ‘raising awareness’ implies, though discourse on constructing an overall higher education framework within this region is now underway, if compared with the EU’s Bologna Process, concrete achievements remain to be seen in ASEAN.8 In fact, before 2007, much of the initiatives regarding higher education in
ASEAN were centered around creating a level-up playing field for its Indo-China members (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar) with others in terms of infrastructure and human resource development, rather than a systematic mechanism for policy harmonization (IPPTN 2008: 1).

**Deep inter-university collaborations in Asia**

Our above discussions related to the quest for worldclass status among selected Asian university systems have suggested that major university systems in Asia have tried to grasp the opportunity against the context of the quest for worldclass university status to reach out in the region for strengthening the ‘Asian presence’ in the global scene. During such processes, we have witnessed both competition and collaboration between different higher education systems in Asia. In order to strengthen their global competitiveness, major Asian universities have proactively reached out not only to the major university systems based in Europe, Australia and North America but also to the region. For instance, Yonsei University in South Korea has set up an international college offering Korean studies in English to attract overseas students. Meanwhile, Yonsei has also reached a regional collaboration with Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong and Keio University in Japan to launch a 3 campus programme in Comparative Asian Studies by recruiting students from these three partnering institutions for enhancing students’ learning experiences and overseas exposure (Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong 2009). Similarly, more regional collaborations emerge among various university systems in Asia such as founding new regional research consortium related to Asian Education and Development Studies in Asia, with participation of major comparative education societies in Asia including Japan, China Mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand (National Chung Cheng University 2009). After forming the consortium since 2009, this new regional research network has expended with the launch of a new international journal entitled *Asian Education and Development Studies*, published by an international publisher Emerald with an attempt to create a platform to engage academics in the region to rediscover the unique contributions of Asian scholarship.

Meanwhile, we also witness more frequent collaborations and interactions among university systems of China Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan, with more student and staff mobility through academic exchange and research collaborations. The author of the paper is also currently involved in setting up a new research
consortium with major emphasis on comparative Greater China Studies, with positive responses from institutions based in China Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan through which they hope to become leading institutions offering research programmes in Greater China Studies. During a recent visit to Taiwan, the author met the Dean of College of Social Sciences of National Taiwan University to discuss further collaborations in terms of joint-programmes. One possible area for joint-venture is related to executive master degree for civil servants from China mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong. In view of the improved relationship between China mainland and Taiwan, the academic institutions consider Hong Kong as an ideal platform to facilitate academic exchange and professional training for students and civil servants from Taiwan and China mainland. Hong Kong, being seen as a place practicing political neutrality, is well positioned to facilitate more regional collaborations for Greater China. Meanwhile, Taiwan has started developing its own TSSCI as indicator for assessing publications in Chinese, while the academics in China mainland have also engaged in developing CSSCI to benchmark refereed publications written in Chinese. As Lo (2011) has rightly pointed out, with the growing number of publications entering these indexes promoted by Taiwan and China mainland, together with the growing influence of Greater China area (including China mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau and other overseas Chinese communities like Singapore), such newly developed research performance indicators would become increasingly important to form a regional platform (‘Chinese axis’ in Lo’s term) to offer alternative benchmarking for Asian scholars.

In addition, we have also witnessed similar trend evolving in Asia through the efforts in the quest for regional hubs of education. Our above discussions have already highlighted that Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong are particularly keen to turn their societies into regional hubs of education, making education services as part of their economic pillars and state capacity building in terms of strengthening ‘soft power’ (Mok 2011b). In order to diversify their university systems, transnational higher education is becoming increasingly popular not only in the above candidates for regional hubs of education but also in developing economies like China Mainland, India and other Southeast Asia. Realizing depending upon the state alone would not be sufficient in terms of capacity to meet the pressing educational demands / needs, different Asian societies have allowed overseas academic institutions to mount off-shore programmes in order to create additional education opportunities.

One major regional cooperation initiative is the United Board for Christian higher education in Asia. With a strong conviction to support a Christian presence in
colleges and universities in Asia, the United Board was founded in 1922 as a Christian organization which works in partnership with higher education institutions across Asia to express values such as justice, reconciliation and harmony between ethnic and religious communities, gender equity, care for the environment, and civil society. With more than 100 partners in Cambodia, China, East Timor, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Myanmar, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The United Board works closely with its partners to promote Christian value in higher education across Asia, it has been successfully organizing leadership training, faculty development and various programmes addressing issues related to globalization and higher education (United Board, 2011). The author was invited as member of the task force of the United Board since 2010. Through the involvement in the United Board meetings and activities, the author has witnessed the growing importance of such a regional network of Asian universities. Having a common vision and mission, these partnering institutions have worked together to promote core values they believe. The synergy released from this regional cooperation framework has clearly suggested another form of regulatory regionalism in the forming (Field observation in New York, April 2011). All in all, the developments outlined above have clearly shown the recent changes in university governance have given rise to the emergence of regionalism in higher education, by which we mean closer collaborations have been fostered among major university systems in the region and similar regional trends are evolving in higher education developments in Asia.

Given the rapid expansion and improvement of higher education in East Asia as a whole, in particular the prosperity of the region’s network of transnational higher education, together with a gradual convergence of the modes of higher education governance, it is expected that this trend for East Asian regulatory regionalism will persist. Moreover, in prospect, China may gradually become the center in this regional drive in repositioning higher education due to its remarkable size in the first place, and its aggressive strategies to achieve world-class status and applying higher education as a means to exert its cultural ‘soft power’ in the second. The most probable platform for further integration, in this respect, may well be the mechanism of ASEAN + 3. Most recently, the changing trend revealed in various international university rankings and in the global higher education market may deserve to be explored. For the former, taking The Times’ World University Rankings 2009 as example, it is shown that American supremacy is slipping, since efforts taken by certain East Asian governments have begun to pay dividends. While in this rankings, the US still has the most institutions in the top-200 list (a total of 54), yet if compared
with the 2008 rankings, it has lost five institutions from the top 100, and four have dropped out of the top 200 altogether. On the other hand, institutions from Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia have all improved their showings noticeably, as shown in Table 1 (Baty 2009):

Table 1: Number of Institutions in the top-200 list of The Times’ World University Rankings, 2008 & 2009 (Selected Cases)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Territory</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adapted from data presented in the official website of Times Higher Education: [http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/Rankings2009-Top200.html](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/Rankings2009-Top200.html) (Last accessed on 18 December 2005).*

As regards the transformation in the global higher education market, it seems that Bologna Process has successfully boosted the attractiveness of the Europe’s higher education market as a common area, particularly among the Asian students. For instance, the numbers of Chinese students studying in France and Germany has increased by more than 500% each since early 2000; while in comparison, the figures in the US grew by only 50% (Verbik & Lasanowski 2007, quoted in Robertson 2008). Likewise, after examining the enrollment trends of international tertiary students in five top destinations: the US, UK, Germany, France and Australia, a report issued by the Center for International Initiatives at the American Council on Education (ACE) in 2009 also warned that competitions from others has begun to erode the United
States’ position as the premier destination for international study. Moreover, this report talked about the trend of ‘regionalization’ in the mobility of international students, and the examples of regional hubs, as it mentioned, were Singapore for Asian students, and the United Arab Emirates and Qatar for students from the Middle East. Again, this tendency towards regionalization of a common market of higher education may spur a further collaboration on regulation in East Asia.

Our above observations / discussions have suggested that new modes of higher education governance are emerging in Asia, characterized by evolving features of “regulatory regionalism”. Based upon Ravenhill’s (2005) definition of regionalism as a formal inter-governmental collaboration between two or more states definition, Robinson (2008:720) further enhances this definition by arguing that regionalism should be viewed as an outcome of integration processes involving the coalition of social forces such as markets, private trade, investment flows, policies and decisions of organizations and state led initiatives. ASEAN, being an organization with a formal collaboration between 10 member countries which involves the coalitions with the East Asia Big Three and other forms of regional cooperation has clearly indicated not only the growing statue of this regional International Organization but also emerging regional forces fostering for a more consolidated regional cooperation platform.

**Discussion and Conclusion: Regional Cooperation beyond Education**

Regional cooperation has not confined only to education among ASEAN members but it has moved beyond to other aspects and also cooperation also moves beyond ASEAN members. Growing out of the annual ASEAN summit meeting are the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) process, with the involvement of China, Japan and South Korea. In addition, other forms of regional cooperation have emerged such as the ASEAN-sponsored East Asian Summits (EAS) with the participation of India, Australia and New Zealand to the APT (Arase, 2011). ASEAN further extends beyond East Asia region by organizing multilateral consultations through the participation in the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting. ASEAN also sponsors 27-member ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to promote dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern in the Asia and Pacific region. As Arase (2011) points out, “ASEAN is the linchpin of the most important regional cooperation processes” (p.36), while Ellen Frost (2008:251) remarks that “Asian governments cannot afford not to pursue the integration because the consequences of not doing so are too risky”. Without engaging in regional cooperation, the region would be destabilizing which would
leave smaller countries in the region at the mercy of unrestrained rivalry among the regional powers, particularly in the context of the rise of China and the potential rift between the rim democracies and non-democratic forces.

Although many political scientists or political economists are still skeptical of the regional cooperation in Asia, questioning such a loose framework has no credible plan among Asian governments in building regionalism (Aggarwal & Koo, 2007; Solingen, 2005). Similarly, Paul Evans (2005: 211) argues “East Asian regionalism is at a modest and early stage of development, faces formidable obstacles, and is unlikely to be a key factor in the balance of economic and political power in the region”, while Edward Lincoln (2004, 251, 232) writes that because East Asia is so diverse and dependent on trade with the United States, East Asian regionalism as presently constituted amounts to little more than “Talking and becoming familiar with one another...”. Nonetheless, our above discussion has suggested that regulatory regionalism is evolving in Asia, especially when the Asian countries have realized the rise of China and the economic difficulties confronted by the USA and Japan would certainly influence their engagement in regional cooperation (particularly in the context that China has made serious efforts in extending its influence in the region). After the Asian financial crisis, Hu notes that ASEAN-led efforts have begun to gain substance since “these projects were driven by the shared sense of purpose among East Asian countries to construct a more Asian-oriented community, with the emerging ASEAN+3 process as its anchoring framework. As the countries in East Asia have become increasingly interdependent, leaders in the region have become more determined to build a framework for greater regional cooperation and integration”.

Similarly, Oros (2011) also argues along the same line that Asian countries have put aside personal prejudices or political dogma in favour of practical and forward-looking cooperation. For instance, the now annual ‘Asian Davos’ meeting of the World Trade Economic Forum in China provides a good platform for leaders from the region to engage in dialogue and conversation to devise solutions to pressing regional and global problems outside of rigid government-led dialogues. More frequent meetings among leaders in the region like attending the opening of the United Nations General Assembly, ASEM leaders meeting in Brussels, the Group of 20 meeting in Seoul, and at the APEC annual meeting would certainly promote better understanding among leaders in Asia and Pacific. Other organizations such as Proliferation Security Initiatives (PSI) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) further enhance regional understanding and cooperation in Asia.
Our above discussion has shown how Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore have quested to become regional leaders in education and cultural dimension, the development of which may induce more intense competition among these Asian economies. However, we have also witnessed regional cooperation not only in economic aspect but also in political and security, social and cultural dimensions flourishing through the ASEAN sponsored projects or other regional collaborative frameworks outlined above. Although the question related to ‘whether the emerging regulatory regionalism is strong enough to promote regional integration’ is a legitimate one, the above empirical evidence clearly shows more frequent dialogues and interactions happening among Asian leaders and people. We would appreciate deep collaboration among Asian countries could result in both competition and cooperation. In contrast, Asian states are well aware the importance to assert themselves in the growing influences of global regionalization, particularly when they realize the significant implications having established a stronger voice and leadership through engaging in deep collaborations with other partners in the same region in order to form a more cohesive and united regional framework in coping with the growing inter-regional competition and rivalry.

In conclusion, our above discussions have clearly indicated more regional collaborations have begun and different forms of regional cooperation frameworks are in the making in Asia to assert the ‘soft power’ through the rediscovery of Asian scholarship’ projects operating in Asia. Despite the fact that the global regionalization is only at a relatively inception phase in Asia, we should not underestimate the importance of the growing prominence of these regional collaboration initiatives especially when these forms of organizational / institutional arrangements may well facilitate new governance model through ‘network governance’. The growing hybridization of organizations being involved in shaping global regionalization processes would considerably render the conventional governance model inappropriate and new forms of governance would lead to the emergence of super or mega regional governance structures to govern the growing complexity of regionalized activities and increasingly transnationalized education offerings in Asia (Ball, 2009).
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The Lisbon Strategy aims at making the EU the world’s ‘most dynamic and competitive economy’, and in respect of higher education, it has particularly focused on the challenges of knowledge economy and the necessity of innovation.

In 1999, the education ministers of 29 European countries and European university heads met to discuss the future development of European higher education, and subsequently issued the Bologna Declaration.

Convinced that the establishment of the European area of higher education required constant support, supervision and adaptation to the continuously evolving needs (Bologna Declaration 1999), the European education ministers decided to meet regularly to assess progress, thus transforming this commitment into an ongoing policy process.

AEARU’s membership includes 5 top research universities from Mainland China (Peking, Tsinghua, Fudan, Nanjing, University of Science & Technology of China); 6 from Japan (Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, Tohoku, Tsukuba, Tokyo Institute of Technology); 3 from South Korea (Seoul National University, Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology, Pohang University of Science & Technology); 2 from Taiwan (Taiwan, Tsing Hua); and 1 from Hong Kong (Hong Kong University of Science & Technology).

This roundtable meeting in 2008 was co-organized by SEAMEO-RIHED and the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). Since then, it has become an annual roundtable meeting with specific theme related to quality assurance of the region’s higher education.

For instance, the Regional Seminar on University Governance in Southeast Asian Countries was held at Luang Prabang, Laos on 14 October 2008 (SEAMEO-RIHED 2009).

For example, while academic mobility within the region has been improved and efforts have also been taken towards establishing a regional quality assurance system, there is by far no regional agreement on the comparability of degree programs.

Japan counts eleven institutions in the top 200, and its representatives in the top 100 rose in number from four to six. As regards Hong Kong, despite having only a total of eight public tertiary institutions, it has five institutions in the top 200, up from four in 2008. And most remarkably, its tally includes three in the top 50. South Korea has four universities in the top 200, up from three in 2008. Malaysia returned to the top 200 with its Universiti Malaya entering at 180th place (Baty 2009). Taiwan eventually secured a place in the top 100 (National Taiwan University, 95), yet it is also the only score for Taiwan in the top 200. As for the Mainland China, there remain two institutions in the top 100 and a total of six in the top 200. Singapore has also continued to secure two institutions in the top 100.

http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ProgramsServices/cii/pubs/ace/SizingUptheCompetition_September09.pdf