Author

SONG, Jia

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Abstract

In recent years, creating world-class universities has been an important project on the Chinese mainland. With the all-encompassing internationalization of higher education in the global market, it is of the utmost importance that the quality of universities be improved and that some of the top universities are pushed to become world-class. Influenced by the stimulating policies and financial incentives, some of China's top universities are striving to earn the prestigious label of "world-class university" by conducting a series of reforms. The aim of the study discussed here was to explore the effects of the ongoing reforms and present the current dilemmas of top-down actions at elite universities. The data were obtained through in-depth interviews. First, we found that a personnel reform had been implemented to comply with the performance benchmark, but that it had subsequently been suspended owing to conflicts among different stakeholders. Second, it appeared that the humanities department at the selected university is at a disadvantage for both internal and

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external reasons. Third, it was found that the policy of recruiting returnees (graduates returning from study abroad) to lecturers' positions is partly responsible for the further decline in students' confidence in domestic universities. Fourth, the policy of admitting international students has triggered domestic tensions on the issue of educational quality and equality. Lastly, finding a way of coordinating the features of "World-Class" and "Chinese Characteristics" is not easy to be achieved. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)