

27.7.2025

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Title

Higher education in East Asia and Singapore : rise of the Confucian Model

Publication year

2011

Source/Footnote

In: Higher education. - 61 (2011) 5, S. 587 - 611

Inventory number

30086

Keywords

Ausland : China : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Hongkong : Hochschulwesen allgemein ;
Ausland : Japan : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Korea : Hochschulwesen allgemein ;
Ausland : Singapur : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Taiwan : Hochschulwesen allgemein ;
Ausland : Vietnam : Hochschulwesen allgemein

Abstract

The paper reviews Asia-Pacific higher education and university research, focusing principally on the 'Confucian' education nations Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong China, Taiwan, Singapore and Vietnam. Except for Vietnam, these systems exhibit a special developmental dynamism?still playing out everywhere except Japan?and have created a distinctive model of higher education more effective in some respects than systems in North America, the English-speaking world and Europe where the modern university was incubated. The Confucian Model rests on four interdependent elements: (1) strong nation-state shaping of structures, funding and priorities; (2) a tendency to universal tertiary participation, partly financed by growing levels of household funding of tuition, sustained by a private duty, grounded in Confucian values, to invest in education; (3) 'one chance' national examinations that mediate social competition and university hierarchy and focus family commitments to education;

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(4) accelerated public investment in research and "world-class" universities. The Model has downsides for social equity in participation, and in the potential for state interference in executive autonomy and academic creativity. But together with economic growth amid low tax regimes, the Confucian Model enables these systems to move forward rapidly and simultaneously in relation to each and all of mass tertiary participation, university quality, and research quantity and quality. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Marginson, Simon, E-Mail: s.marginson@unimelb.edu.au