Globalization and Changing Governance:

Higher Education Reforms in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China

(MOK01403)

Joshua Ka-ho Mok & Michael Hiu-hong Lee

Comparative Education Policy Research Unit
Department of Public and Social Administration
City University of Hong Kong

Paper presented to the
Australian Association for Research in Education 2001 Conference

"CrossingBorders: New Frontiers for Educational Research"

2-6 December 2001
University of Notre Dame Australia
Fremantle, Western Australia
Abstract
Higher education systems are in a constant state of change nearly everywhere. In particular, the changes in the socio-economic context caused by the impact of globalization have inevitably led to changes to the university sector. Since capitalism has generated new global infrastructures that information technology has played an increasingly important role in the global economy, the popularity and prominence of information technology has unquestionably changed the nature of knowledge, and is currently restructuring higher education, research and learning. It is in such a wider policy context that an increasing number of institutions of higher learning are being established with new missions and innovative configurations of training, serving populations that previously had little access to higher education. Apart from accommodating a larger number of students, higher education institutions are required to improve their administrative efficiency and accountability in response to the demands of different stakeholders like government, business, industry, and labour organizations, students and parents as well. The present paper reflects upon the impacts of globalization on national policy, with particular reference to examine how the higher education sector in the Greater China, namely the three Chinese societies Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China, has been transformed under the increasingly popular / global tide of marketization and decentralization. More specifically, this paper sets out in this wider policy context to compare and contrast the similarities and differences in terms of the coping strategies that these Chinese societies have adopted in response to the growing impact of globalization, with particular attention given to multiple variables derived from both internally, regionally and globally that have shaped higher education policies and recent reform initiatives in these Chinese societies.

Introduction
Globalization and the evolution of the knowledge-based economy have caused dramatic changes to the character and functions of higher education in most countries around the world. However, the impacts of globalization on universities are not uniform though business-like practices have been adopted to cope with competitions in the global marketplace. The pressure for restructuring and reforming higher education is mainly derived from growing expectations and demands of different stakeholders in society. In the
last decade, government bureaucracy, public service institutions and higher education institutions and universities have been significantly affected by the tidal wave of the public sector reform around the world. Apart from improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public services, universities are confronted with a situation in which the principles of financial accountability and responsiveness to stakeholders prevail amidst the massification stage under the condition of global economic retrenchment. In response to such pressing demands for changes, policies and strategies of decentralization, privatization and marketization are becoming increasingly popular in university governance. Reform strategies and measures like quality assurance, performance evaluation, financial audit, corporate management and market competition are adopted to reform and improve the performance of higher education sector. This paper has chosen a theme "globalization and changing governance" by examining the most recent higher education reforms and restructuring in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China, with particular reference to examine issues related to globalization of decentralization and marketization in higher education. More specifically, this paper will reflect upon the impact of globalization on shaping and formulating local education policies in these Chinese societies.

Globalization and the Question of State Capacity

In the last decade or so, more people have begun to talk about the impacts of globalization on economic, social, political and cultural fronts. The liberalization of national economies, the domination of supranational institutions, the disempowerment of nation-states, the prevalence of the system and culture of liberal democracy, as well as the formation of a consumer culture across the globe have made the whole world in many ways more alike (Fukuyama, 1992; Ohmae, 1990; Waters, 2001; Sklair, 1999). Albeit no country is immune from the impact of globalization, there are heated debates about the positive and the negative consequences of globalization (Hirst and Thompson, 1999; Ekong and Clote, 1997; Sassen, 1998). No matter how we assess positive or negative impacts of globalization, it is undeniable that modern states are not entirely immune from the prominent global forces (Held et al., 1999; Giddens, 2000). As Bauman (1999) suggested, there is "no one seems to be in control" in the context of the present-day "new world order", whereby the intense flows of investment, industry, information technology and individual consumers fundamentally change the economic equation that the middlemen role of nation states become obsolete (Waters, 2001; Ohmae, 1995).

Scholars who support the ideas of globalization believe that there is an inevitable convergence of human activities. Many globalists strongly believe that the dissolution of territorial borders and the growing interdependence and interconnectedness of different countries have made the traditional national / territorial boundary inappropriate (Gray, 1998; Held et al., 1999). It is also argued that the growing impact of globalization has unquestionably weakened / limited the role of / capacity of nation state in managing the public domain. Instead of assuming the role as the driver for changes, modern states have to take a backseat role within the framework of rising regional economies and global marketplace (Ohmae, 1999; Faulks, 2000). The rapid globalization and the strong demands for economic and social developments, based on national survival and growth, in both international and regional competitions, have become increasingly keen. On the one hand, modern states have to compete for the huge sum of transnational capital of investment. On the other hand, they have to surrender some state autonomy in exchange for better position in the global marketplace. Harvey (1989) has rightly pointed out "the state is now in a more problematic position. It is called upon to regulate the activities of corporate capital in the national interest, to create a ‘good business climate’ to act as an inducement to transnational and global finance capital" (p.170). At the same time, modern states may encounter market failure since "greater international capital mobility made manipulation of the economy at the national level more difficult" (Slaughter, 1998, p.53).
It is in such a wider socio-political and socio-economic context that modern states are found to be in crisis and people have begun to question the state capacity. Notions like "wither the state" (Waters, 2001; Massey, 1997), "the decline of the state and territory" (Axford, 1995), "hallowing out of state" (Cerny, 1996); "dissolving the nation state" (McGrew, 1992) and "governance without government" (Rhodes, 1997) are employed by different scholars to conceptualize the weakening state capacity in the context of globalization. Therefore, it is believed that individual states have to change their roles and their constitutions in order to accommodate to, and not adapt to, the demands and pressures generated from external environments. Notions such as "reinventing government" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992) and "entrepreneurial government" (Ferlie et al., 1996) have become fashionable and the concomitant consequence is the initiation of reforms in public sector management. In order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery, new ways to maximize productivity and effectiveness comparable to that of the private sector are sought (Dale, 1997). More significantly, the politics of retrenchment in selected social programmes and the re-shaping of the private sector have caused the form of state intervention to be refined and the principles and practices of the market are adopted in managing the public sector.

**Globalization and Changing Governance**

The questioning of state capacity and the perceived challenges generated from the processes of globalization have driven modern states to reflect upon the ways they are managed by searching for new governance models to promote "good government". By "governance", we refer to "a change in the meaning of government...self-organizing, interorganizational networks" (Rhodes, 1997: 15). Central to the debate of "governance" is closely related to the changing relationships between the state and the non-state sectors and actors in terms of social and public policy provision. Unlike the classical approach of welfare state whereby the state had assumed a very dominant role in welfare provision (i.e. the primary social and public policy provider), the globalization challenges have urged modern states to find new alternatives for governance. According to Peters and Savoie (1995), the search for alternatives to the traditional system of governance has to deal with the following issues or questions:

- How should the public sector be organized?
- How should the members of the public sector be recruited, motivated, and managed?
- How should government seek to influence the private sector?
- How should these visions of governance each contains a conception of the public interest? (modified and quoted from Peters and Savoie, 1995: 292-293).

In order to search for new alternatives to promote "good government", different governance modes are emerging. As Peters suggested, the market model, the participatory state model, the flexible government model and deregulated government model are alternatives to the traditional system. The emergence of these models has suggested different kinds of problems embedded in the traditional governance system like self-interests of bureaucrats and ineffective management of government (Peters, 1996). Similarly, Rhodes (1997) also argues that modern states are experiencing "new process of governing" (p.46) and there has been a strong need to redefine the relationship between the state and non-state sector. During such a process of redefinition, different governance models are evolving, namely, the minimal state, corporate governance, the new public management, 'good governance', socio-cybernetic system and self-organizing networks (Rhodes, 1997: 46-47). In order to lessen the state’s burden, non-state actors and non-state sectors are mobilized and revitalized to engage in public policy provision and public management. The concomitant consequence of this process is "governing without government", hence the role of the state as the sole service provider and main funding provider has changed (Rhodes, 1997).
Like Rhodes, Peters and Savoie, Kooiman conceptualizes the recent state-civil society restructuring as "social-political governance". By "social-political governance" model, Kooiman (1993) refers to "the patterns that emerge from governing activities of social, political and administrative actors" (p.2). In other words, different non-state sectors and actors are involved in social and public policy provision as well as public management. It is argued that modern states, no longer assume the dominant role in social provision and public management, now act in conjunction, together and in combination to guide, steer, control or manage the society. Realizing the state alone can never meet the pressing demands from the public in social policy provision and public management, the revitalization process of civil society is underway, therefore co-arrangement between the state and the society is becoming far more popular public policy trend. Emphasizing the interactions between the state and society as a 'two-way' traffic or bilateral model, the 'one-way' 'command and control model' is replaced by the "social-political governance" model (Kooiman, 1993; Cooper, 1995).

Putting the above observations related to changing governance into perspective, we can argue that the major shift of national politics from maximizing welfare to promoting entrepreneurial culture, innovation and profitability in both the private and public sectors have led modern states to adopt the techniques of steering from a distance through the means of regulation, incentive and sanctions to make autonomous individuals and quasi-governmental and non-governmental institutions such as universities to behave in ways consistent with their policy objectives are the consequences of such a restructuring process (Marginson, 1999; Henry et al., 1999). Most important of all, such a restructuring could be characterized by a more flexible regulatory environment, whereby public policy formulation is reoriented towards a smaller and more business-oriented state machine (Marrow and Torres, 2000). In short, this paradigm shift is manifested by a more individualistic, competitive and entrepreneurial approach central to the new type of competitive contractual state settlement has become more prominent in public management (Robertson and Dale, 2000).

Since the philosophy of governance has changed from "big government, small individual" to "small government, big individual" (Flynn, 1997), there has been widespread skepticism about the capacity of government to achieve its goals and objectives on the ground that the autonomy of the nation state is undermined by the globalization of the world economy. It is also believed that the form of troubled modern states is changing and has lost its autonomy in a globalized world economy in tandem with a linked and integrated crisis of governance or of state capability. This is the end of the era of big government with the reduced state capability (Wilson, 2000a, 2000b). At the same time, modern states are becoming more involved in taking up the initiative role to facilitate competitive domestic economy in order to make their nation states more competitive in the global market. Such move has inevitably transformed modern states into "market-facilitating state" (Howell, 1993), "market-building state" (Fligstein, 1997), "competitive state" (Cerny, 1996).

Therefore, the role of the government / nation states has had a fundamental change from a "provider of welfare benefits" to "builder of market" role, whereby the state actively builds markets, shapes them in different ways and regulate them (Sbragia, 2000). Introducing market principles and practices to manage the public sector, together with the heavy weight being attached to quality control and "value for money" considerations, have inevitably transformed societies into "audit society" and "performative society" as Power (1997) and Ball (1998, 2001) respectively suggested. All these developments have revealed that the ideologies of managerialism and economic rationalism have become increasingly popular not only as governance philosophy but also as effective means or measures for public administration (Flynn, 1997; Hood, 1991; Pusey, 1991; Marginson, 1993; Deem, 2001).
Changing Governance and Educational Restructuring

In the face of global economic retrenchment and relatively weakened state capacity in social service and policy provision, there has been the pressure for restructuring and reforming education driven by growing expectations and demands of different stakeholders in society. Widespread concerns over widened access, funding, accountability, quality and managerial efficiency are perceived as prominent global trends for education. However, the impacts of globalization on schools and universities are not uniform even though business-like practices have been adopted to cope with competitions in the global marketplace. One popular public policy strategy commonly adopted by modern states is the decentralization policy even though there is no consensus on whether a policy of centralization or decentralization is more effective to improve the organization and management of the public sector (Fiske, 1996; Dill and Sporn, 1995).

The concept of decentralization is not only about devolution and deconcentration, but it is also related to privatization and marketization. For privatization, it refers to the form of deconcentration as responsibility and resources are transferred from public to private sector institutions (Rondinelli, 1990); whereas marketization indicates the adoption of market principles and mechanisms in running education (Mok, 1997, 2001; Whitty, 1997). The importance of choice and competition between diversified and specialized forms of provision is emphasized. Therefore, it is not surprising that an education market or quasi-market has emerged in the education sector in western countries (Le Grand and Bartlett, 1993; Ball, 1990; Bridges and McLaughlin, 1994).

In the face of the pressure for change, the further expansion of universities is built upon the basis of greater accountability but with lesser autonomy. Collegial processes of democracy within universities are taken over by stronger corporate management. Moreover, the role of universities has changed in such a way that it should act less as critics of society but more as servants responding to the needs of the economy, while contracting its main functions to supply qualified manpower and undergoing applied research in response to market demands. Instead of recognizing the new command-and-control managerialism as the only approach to save universities in post-modern society, the role of middle-level leadership to secure a better connection between administrators and academics is emphasized. In reality, universities are at a crossroad between the alleged democracy of a whimsical collegiality and the problematic efficiency of a hard-nosed managerialism (Dearlove, 1995). The present paper, as set out in this wider theoretical and public policy context, examines how educational governance modes have been changed in these Chinese societies, Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China.

Common Challenges to Higher Education in Greater China

The rise of the knowledge economy has generated new global infrastructures that information technology has played an increasingly important role in the global economy, the popularity and prominence of information technology has unquestionably changed the nature of knowledge, and is currently restructuring higher education, research and learning. The changes in the socio-economic context resulting from the globalized economy have inevitably led to changes to the university sector. It is in such a wider policy context that an increasing number of institutions of higher learning are being established with new missions and innovative configurations of training, serving populations that previously had little access to higher education. In addition, the rapid expansion of higher education in the past few decades in many countries has also created the need for reform. Apart from accommodating a larger number of students, higher education institutions are required to improve their administrative efficiency and accountability in response to the demands of different stakeholders like government, business, industry, and labour organizations, students and
parents as well. There are a few major challenges common to these Chinese societies, including:

- Ever-increasing rate for human progress;
- The rise of the knowledge economy and the changing university;
- The growing significance of information and technology in education delivery;
- Massification of higher education and the need for quality control;
- The East Asian financial crisis and the post-crisis adjustments;
- The social and political changes and the need to change higher education (Townsend and Cheng, 2000).

As we are heading into an age of communication and information, there is a strong need to rethink about the nature of knowledge and the way education is operated and run. According to Townsend (1998), we have successfully "conquered the challenge of moving from a quality education system for a few people to having a quality education system for most people" in the past few decades (p.248, italic original by the author). But what we are now confronting is to move from having a quality education system for most people to developing a quality education system for all. In order to promote life-long learning / continual education and to make the society a learning society, the way that education is managed should have undertaken a fundamental change.

In addition to the challenges outlined above common to all these three Chinese societies, each society has to tackle its unique educational issues and problems. The massification of higher education in Hong Kong by increasing its higher education intake by three times within a relatively short span of time (around 5 years) has caused social concern for quality assurance (Mok, 2000). With the challenges of rapid expansion in terms of both the size of student population and the number of universities in the early 1990s, the government and the University Grants Committee (UGC), the organization responsible for decision-making and monitoring of higher education in Hong Kong, have put more emphasis on achieving greater value for money and improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of universities and other higher education institutions. In addition, the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR, hereafter) has a strong belief in the importance of learning society, therefore another wave of higher education expansion was proposed in 2000 by doubling the number of higher education graduates in the future ten years (Tung, 2000). Undoubtedly, the quality and resource issues have become increasingly significant in higher education governance in the HKSAR.

Since the last decade, higher education enrolment has been expanding in Taiwan. In the 1950s, there was about 1 per cent of the population who could enjoy higher education. With the lifting of the martial law in 1987, coupled with the improved socio-economic conditions and accumulation of wealth resulting from the economic take-off in the last few decades, Taiwan people are more concerned about quality education and the need for higher education is pressing. By the late 1990s, there were around 70 per cent of secondary school leavers who were admitted to the higher education sector (MOE, Taiwan, 2000). The process of massification, together with rapid changes resulted from the domestic and global contexts, has led the Taiwan Government to reform its higher education system. Since the late eighties, Taiwan's higher education has experienced the process of denationalization, decentralization, autonomization and marketization (Mok, 2000a). A better understanding of the recent higher education reforms in Taiwan could be obtained from the socio-economic and socio-political changes resulting from the process of democratization in the island-state (Mok, 2000a). The expansion of the civil society, the autonomization process taking place in the higher education sector, together with the pressures and changes generated by the growing impact of globalization, have become driving forces for the Taiwan Government to initiate higher education reforms (Law, forthcoming).
Unlike Hong Kong and Taiwan, the most important challenges that the Chinese Government is facing is financial constraints. Since the economic reform was started in the late 1970s, the Chinese Government has begun to realize the important role of higher education. Openly acknowledging the fact that depending upon the central government alone in higher education provision and financing has never met the pressing demands for higher education, the Chinese Government has adopted a policy of decentralization, empowering local governments and revitalizing other non-state sectors, including the market and individuals, to engage in higher education provision and financing. In more recent years, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has endorsed the socialist market economy and the primary national agenda is to open up the mainland and to make the Chinese economy more prosperous. It is in such a relatively open socio-economic and political environment that different marketization strategies have been adopted or allowed to run higher education in the mainland (Chan and Mok, 2001; Mok, 2000b; Mok, 2001a, 2001b). Therefore, the recent marketization and decentralization projects in China mainland is closely related to the strong need for higher education generated from the fundamental transition to the socialist market economy. We have just discussed the challenges that these Chinese societies are now facing, let us now turn to how and what strategies that these Chinese societies have adopted in reforming their higher education systems in order to meet the challenges of globalization.

**Higher Education Reforms in Greater China in the Context of Educational Restructuring in the Asia-Pacific**

Although it is difficult to make generalizations about the patterns, trends and models in higher education developments in these Chinese societies since each society may have its own stage and own speed of development, different comparative studies of similar kind have reported some interesting patterns and trends common to the development of school education in the Asia Pacific Region. Some of the typical ones are as follows:

- The reestablishing of new aims and a national vision for education;
- The expansion and restructuring of education;
- The search for effective schools and a quality education;
- The assurance of education standards and a quality education;
- The use of market forces and the balance between education equality and encouraging of competition to promote excellence;
- The privatization and diversifying of education;
- The shift to decentralization and school-based management;
- The emphasis on the use of development planning and strategic management;
- Parental and community involvement in school education;
- The use of information technology in learning and teaching;
- The development of new curricula and methods of learning and teaching;
- The changes in examination and evaluation practices;
- The search to enhance teacher quality; and

Similarly, Mok and Welch compare and contrast educational developments in the Asia Pacific region, with particular attention given to examine the relationship between the growing of globalization and educational restructuring. After completing a series of comparative studies, they find that educational developments in the region, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea, Mainland China, Japan, the Philippine, Cambodia, New Zealand, Australia, have been affected by the trends of marketization and corporatization (Mok and Welch, forthcoming). Governments in these societies are increasingly concerned about the role of education in improving the competitiveness of their
countries, and their place in regional and global markets. Therefore, they are very keen to promote the idea of "life-long learning" and "quality education" in preparing their citizens for the knowledge-based economy (Mok, Tan and Lee, 2000; Tse, 2001; Weng, 2000).

Privatization of either whole, or parts of, educational institutions, or indeed sectors of education, (and other areas of social activity), is often now an instrument of economic and social (including education) policy, as is a more user-pays philosophy in education (World Bank, 1995a, 1995b: Mok, 1999). In many societies, even including socialist states such as Vietnam and China, this has been part of a wider set of changes, whereby foreign direct investment is encouraged, public sector activity has been pruned, often substantially, public sector wages held down, while private economic activities are encouraged within the climate of increasing de-regulation, and the economy re-shaped towards more export growth oriented industries, and away from state responsibility for areas of social policy such as health, transport, communications and education (Mok and Welch, forthcoming). In turn, state ministries and other public authorities are increasing subjected to efficiency principles, and made to compete, as though they were private industries (Welch, 1996; 1998). The following discusses how higher education in these selected societies has been going through the restructuring processes in the context of globalization.

(1) Comprehensive review of education systems and the fundamental reforms

One of the approaches accounting for the success in these East Asian societies is closely related to the purposeful governments. Similar to the field of comparative social security in East Asia, state-centric accounts are powerful explanations for the success of developments in these societies (Kwon, 1997; White and Goodman, 1998). Of course, the prominent role of education being heavily weighted in the traditional / cultural thought of these societies may reinforce the role of education and, subsequently, give the impetus for the states / governments in these societies to promote education (Morris and Sweeting, 1995). More interestingly, the governments of these societies are very "instrumental" in raising the quality of education and in promoting learning society with the intention to maintain the competitiveness of their countries / places in both regional and global markets, particularly preparing people for the future knowledge-based economy.

Corresponding to the latest challenges posed by either globalization or knowledge-based economy, the governments of the selected East Asian societies like Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and Mainland China have conducted comprehensive reviews of their higher education systems. In Hong Kong, the University Grants Committee reviewed its higher education system in 1996 (UGC, 1996) while another comprehensive review of Hong Kong's overall education systems was just completed in 2000 (Education Commission, 2000). Another round of comprehensive review of the higher education system was launched by the University Grants Committee (UGC, hereafter) in May 2001. The review will cover major aspects of higher education provision, including an administrative framework for a much expanded post-secondary sector and the governance of universities. More specifically, the latest review will examine issues like the definition of higher education, the role of higher education, governance structure for the higher education sector, university governance, research and identification of factors that will affect further developments of higher education in Hong Kong (UGC, 2001). After such a comprehensive review, the UGC hopes to formulate new policies and governance models in running the higher education sector in Hong Kong.

In Taiwan, the government has started to review and reform its higher education since the lifting of the martial law in 1987. The review of education system was started in mid-1990s. After the review, the government is keen to internationalize Taiwan's higher education, universities are therefore encouraged to establish links and academic exchanges with
universities overseas. In addition, the Taiwan Government has attempted to introduce reform measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its higher education, particularly in terms of funding methodology, modes of provision and new management strategies (Tai, 2000; Weng, 2000; Mok, 2000a). With the changing governance philosophy, the state-education relationship has been redefined when the government has introduced the policy of "privatization" in education. It reflects the revitalization of the private sector and the mobilization of other non-state sources to run education, by which the pressure of the state to meet the demands for higher education can be alleviated (Law, 2001; Mok, 2000, 2002).

Similar observations can be found in China. The higher education reform was started in the mid-1980s when the CCP had attempted to create more opportunities for higher education. Right after the Cultural Revolution in the mid-1970s, China was in lack of qualified staff and appropriate curricula, resources and facilities. Therefore, the Chinese authorities decided to borrow knowledge, techniques and technologies from the West. Teachers were brought into universities from overseas to provide Chinese staff and students with access to foreign learning. Meanwhile thousands of Chinese students were sent overseas to study for higher degrees. After restoration and consolidation for a few years, reforms of higher education were launched in the mid-1980s. In the past decades or so, a few major reforms related to higher education were introduced, with the central features of decentralization and marketization (Kwong, 1997; Yin and White, 1994; Mok, 1997). It is note-worthly that the comprehensive higher education reform blueprint places emphasis on local responsibility, diversity of educational opportunities, multiple sources of educational funds, and decentralization of power to individual higher education institutions in the governance of their own affairs despite the fact that the State Education Commission (SEC) still performed the role of "guiding" and "monitoring" the whole higher education sector (Mok and Ngok, 2001).

(2) Policy of decentralization and educational governance

The discernible trend of restructuring of the role of the state in running the public sector has undoubtedly affected the governance of education, and eventually led to a fundamental change in state-education relationships. One of the changes common to these East Asian societies is the adoption of decentralization policy. Educational decentralization is a popular reform of governments around the world even diversified strategies and outcomes that different countries have adopted (Hanson, 1998). One point that deserves attention here is that when talking about centralization and decentralization, they are processes of "-ization" rather than static situations. We must also note that the range of models for the governance of education is very wide. A scrutiny of the recent developments in these selected East Asian societies has suggested that even though the policy of decentralization has been adopted in these societies, the state’s role as a regulator and overall service coordinator has been strengthened rather than weakened.

In Hong Kong, the call for quality education and the launch of university-based management are initiated under the decentralization policy framework. Instead of a "micro-control", individual universities are now given more autonomy and power to running and deciding their daily matters and affairs. Nonetheless, such a development does not necessarily mean deregulation and retreat of the state’s control. Rather, the government can easily exercise its control through its executive arm, the UGC, to maintain a close watch of individual institutions’ performance. The approach to reforming the existing higher education system is a managerial or an executive-led model, attaching importance to the ideas of efficiency, effectiveness and economy in education (Mok and Welch, 2001). Starting from the self-monitoring assessment exercise to more formal quality assurance movement has suggested the government’s control is strengthened instead of being weakened. So long as the proposed education reform is still along the line of managerialism, one can easily
Imagine that the state’s role as a regulator and overall coordinator will certainly be strengthened (Tse, 2001; Mok, 2000).

The fundamental changes in Taiwan’s higher education sector since the late 1980s can be conceptualized by processes of denationalization, decentralization and autonomization. "Denationalization" implies that the state has begun to forsake its monopoly on higher education, hence allowing the non-state sector and even the market to engage in higher education provision. "Decentralization" refers to the shift from the "state control model" to "state supervision model", whereby educational governance is decentralized from educational bureaucracies to create in their place devolved systems of schooling or universities, entailing significant degrees of institutional autonomy and a variety of forms of school-based / university-based management and administration. The term "autonomization" means that university academics now have more academic autonomy and they are empowered to do research projects of any kinds and they have far more discretion to manage and operate their institutions. Although the role of the state is vital in education, it does not mean that the state should monopolize education and prohibit the operation of colleges / universities by private individuals and organizations. The processes of "decentralization" and "autonomization" have become increasingly popular on the island state, but the idea of song-bang (liberalization or autonomization) should not be understood as the total withdrawal of the state in education domain. Under the educational decentralization context, Taiwan Government is still the major provider of education services the government has tried to redefine the status of state-run higher education. The revised University Law stipulates that all national universities will become independent legal bodies and hence they are held accountable to the public, thus all state universities will be run by independent boards of directors and the state will gradually reduce its subsidy to these public universities. The proposed change will inevitably transform the way universities are financed, regulated and managed (Law, 2001; Weng, 2001; United News, 28 December 1999).

Before reform started to the higher education in the 1980s, higher education governance could be characterized a "centralized" or "state dominated" model in China. Under such a governing model, the Ministry of Education (MOE) took responsibility for the design of curricula and syllabuses, designing textbooks, student admission, graduate job assignment and exerted control over matters like budgets, salary scales and personnel issues (Mok, 1996). Provincial and local education commissions and bureaus were just mediators of national policy. In the post-Mao period, such a centralized governance model is found to be inefficient in administration and ineffective in service delivery. In order to create more higher education opportunities, the Chinese Government has adopted a policy of decentralization since the 1980s to transfer of authority (particularly financial) and decision-making from higher to lower levels. Under the policy of decentralization, local governments are given more flexibility and autonomy to chart the course of higher education development. It is particularly true for those socio-economically prosperous regions, i.e. the southeastern coastal areas, where the provincial or municipal governments can allocate more resources to finance higher education. Now the MOE is charged with responsibilities to coordinate higher education development; while the central government and local government are engaged into a new relationship in light of the principle of "gongjian" (joint administration). By "gongjian", we mean the local governments are charged with more responsibilities in higher education financing, provision and management while the central government only acts the roles of regulator and coordinator. In addition, local governments have to manage staff establishment, labour and wage of universities; while individual universities now enjoy far more autonomy and flexibility to run their own businesses (Mok and Ngok, 2001; Mok and Chan, 2001; Mok, 2001b).
(3) Marketization and privatization of higher education

In addition to the trend of educational decentralization, higher education developments in these East Asian societies have been affected by the strong tide of marketization and privatization. Universities in these societies nowadays experience pressures from governments, the main providers of higher education, to demonstrate maximum outputs from the financial inputs they are given. At a time of economic constraint, people begin to ask for better use of limited public money, thus more attention is given to the issue of "value for money" and how the investment in higher education can really facilitate social and economic development (Mok and Lo, 2001; Lee, 2000; Law, 2001). In order to make the delivery of higher education more efficient and effective, there has been an increasingly popular trend of marketization and privatization in the higher education sector in the region (Kwong, 2000; Bray, 2000).

Similar to the experiences in other countries, such changes are closely related to the "marketization" of education, hence private sector principles are adopted to run education (Whitty, 1997). In order to reduce the state’s increasing burden, different market-related strategies are adopted such as the increase of student tuition fees, reduction in state’s budget in higher education, strengthening the relationship between the university sector and the industrial and business sectors, and encouraging universities and academics to engage into business and market-like activities to generate more revenue / incomes. Obviously, the recent proposed reforms in these societies are concerned with the ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their higher education systems (Mok, 2000b, 2001; Bray, 2000; Hawkins, 2000; Su, 1999). Contrasting and comparing marketization and privatization projects of these societies, we may argue that for Hong Kong, the reform strategies along the line of marketization are to improve the efficiency and performance of the university sector instead of purely resolving financial difficulties (Lee, 2001; Mok, 2000).

It is noteworthy that with economic downturn in the recent years, particularly after the East Asian financial crisis and the "911 Incident" of terrorist attacks in the USA, the economy of the whole region has been badly affected. Despite the fact that the economy of both Singapore and Hong Kong is worsen after these economic crises, both governments are very keen to invest more in education. In his 2001 Policy Address, HKSAR Chief Executive Tung Chee-Hwa has made it clear that "regardless of the economic situation in the next few years, the Government should steadfastly continue to increase its investment in education. Education sits at the top of our social policy agenda" (Tung, 2001: 41). Similarly, the Singapore Government has always put human resources investment first and hence education has long been highly prioritized in its political agenda. Putting these observations together, the trend of marketization in Hong Kong and Singapore could be understood as the ways to promote effectiveness and efficiency of educational delivery and provision rather than purely strategies for revenue generation.

In the midst of economic crisis, coupled with the pressing demand for higher education, the HKSAR Government has recently announced the adoption of privatization policy in creating more learning opportunities for higher education. In 2000, Tung urged for expansion of higher education by doubling the number of associate degrees in the next ten years. However, how to expand the enrolment by nearly two times in ten years is the problem faced by the HKSAR (Tung, 2000). One major strategy is to adopt a self-financing model by the adoption of user-charge principle in meeting the demand for higher education. In October 2001, Mrs. Fanny Law, Secretary for Education and Manpower, mentioned that the government has taken into consideration about the possibility of privatizing the currently publicly-funded universities in Hong Kong (Ming Pao Daily News, 31 October 2001). In the meantime, the UGC has recently considered to shed the civil-service salary structures of the UGC-funded higher education institutions and pay according to performance and market
forces (Ming Pao Daily News, 15 October 2001). All these proposed measures have clearly indicated that privatization has begun to shape the higher educational development in Hong Kong (Mok and Lo, 2001).

The market strategies adopted in the university sector in Taiwan are not only to explore additional non-state resources to finance higher education but also to improve performance and effectiveness of university education (Tai, 2000; Weng, 2001). In Taiwan, with an increase in the enrolment ratio from less than 1 per cent to 40 per cent in 1998, the higher education sector in Taiwan has been expanding incessantly. In the reform context, the MOE has attempted to devolve the responsibility and power to individual higher education institutions, as well as autonomy, for educational financing. Multiple channels of higher education financing have been encouraged by the Taiwanese government as the MOE is now providing only 75 to 80 per cent of the total budget for national higher education institutions. National universities have to search for alternative non-state sources of income to support their operational costs. With the increasing pressures of financial autonomy, Taiwanese higher education institutions are becoming more marketized and privatized amidst the policy trend of decentralization (Mok, 2002; Mok and Lo, 2001; Tai, 2001).

In the post-Mao era, the reformers have taken significant steps to private social welfare services in China (Wong and Flynn, 2001). After the official endorsement of the socialist market system in the 1990s, strong market forces have affected educational development. Despite the post-Mao leaders’ discomfort about the term of "privatization", signs of state withdrawal from the provision of social welfare are clear. In the last decade or so, we have observed the Chinese Government has allowed the rise of the market in the education sector. The emergence of private educational institutions, the shift of state responsibility in educational provision to families and individuals, the prominence of fee-charging, the growth of minban (people-run) colleges and universities, as well as the introduction of internal competition among higher educational institutions have clearly suggested that China’s higher education has been experiencing a process of marketization. Our field visits and field research conducted in mainland China in recent years have repeatedly confirmed that Chinese people are very much concerned about higher education and there has been a very strong need for more higher education opportunities. Acknowledging the fact that depending upon the central government alone can never satisfy the pressing demands for higher education, Chinese residents are willing to spend their own savings on providing their kids with higher education (Zhu, 2000; Li, 2000). It is against such an socio-economic context that market principles and practices are adopted to run higher education in the mainland (Yin and White, 1994; Kwong, 1996, 1997; Mok, 1997, 1999, 2000; Mok and Chan, 2001; Chan and Mok, 2001).

**Discussion**

Putting our above observations together, there are many changes common to both higher education in these Chinese societies and that of elsewhere and its seems to suggest that higher education developments in these Chinese societies have been affected by similar global trends. Like what the hyperglobalists have argued that the increasing connections and interactions between different nation states and the freer and quicker interchanges and movements of capital, goods, services, people, technologies, information, ideas have inevitably transcended national borders, thus suggesting an inevitable convergence of human activities and the receding role of the nation-state (Ohmae, 1990; Fukuyama, 1992; Waters, 2001). Despite the fact some believers of globalization refer the growing impact of globalization has inevitably led to global convergence, other scholars hold a different view that the proposal of global convergence is "dominated by an Anglo-Saxon perception". Moreover, global convergence thesis is criticized as only a myth since individual countries should have their own stages and patterns of development. (Hesse, 1997, p.117; Sassen,
The following reflects upon how globalization challenges the state / government autonomy of these three Chinese societies, with particular reference to how and what strategies these governments have adopted in response to growing impact of globalization.

(1) Developmental state in East Asia

As highlighted earlier, one of the major explanations accounting for the success of these East Asian Tigers is related to the purposive government intervention and the developmental state thesis (Wade, 1990; Kwon, 2001). This comparative work reveals that the nation states / governments in East Asia still exercise a significant degree of autonomy to shape their own educational agendas and chart the development paths even though all of them are encountering pressures and challenges resulted from globalization. Although the continual questioning of the state capacity in the context of globalization has inevitably drawn people to believe the state is reduced to the role of the "night-watchman state" of classical liberalism, hence only taking care of law and order, protecting the sanctity of contract, and maintaining the minimum level of welfare to protect those really poor and vulnerable and facilitating the free operation of the market (Brown and Lauder, 1996), it is wrong to discard the states’ autonomy, especially in the East Asian context.

Our above discussion has indicated that even though we may observe similar strategies are adopted by different countries in response to the so-called tide of globalization, we can still see that different governments may use the similar strategies to serve their own political purposes. As Hallak (2000) has rightly suggested, modern states may tactically make use of the globalization discourse to justify their own political agendas or legitimize their inaction. As for Hong Kong, the call for quality control in higher education must be understood as part of the larger project of the public sector reform started since the late 1980s. The adoption of the managerial approach in university governance is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the higher education sector, thus Hong Kong could be maintained as one of the most dynamic and competitive international academic centres. For this reason, we must put the recent higher education reforms within the wider public policy reform / public management reform context in Hong Kong. Hence, reform strategies along the line of managerialism introduced in Hong Kong’s higher education could be understood as part of the reengineering project already developed since 1989 (Mok, 2000).

As for the case of Taiwan, the call for higher education reforms and quality assurance has to do with the particular socio-political environment of the island-state. As Taiwan has become a more politically liberal and democratic society, university academics are very keen to establish links with the external world, while the state is very keen to make the island-state more international. For this reason, the stress on the importance of international benchmarking and the significance of internationalization can be understood as the strategies to make Taiwan escape from being isolated by the international community. In addition, the rapid expansion of private higher education in Taiwan has caused the concern for improving / assuring quality in higher education. The recent reform initiatives attempting to promote quality assurance can be seen as the strategy of the government to assure quality of higher education (Weng, 2001; Law, 2001).

Unlike Hong Kong or the "marketization" experiences in the West, the Chinese "marketization of education" has not yet entirely oriented a "managerial approach" thereby reforms in managing educational institutions and the introduction of control mechanisms in the university sector are believed to be effective ways to improve the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery (Taylor et al., 1997; Welch, 1998). What really characterizes Chinese experience of "marketization" is closely related to the "institutional transition", meaning a transition from a highly centralized economic planning system to the
market economy (Li, 1997). In the midst of the transition, the Chinese Government has gradually retreated from the public domain, trying to mobilize non-state sectors and governments at the local level to engage in public service / policy provision. As such, market forces are being adopted to generate additional resources to run education. Thus, the marketization of higher education project in mainland China could be understood more fully by examining the interactions between the demonopolization of state's role in the public domain and the challenges and pressures resulting from the institutional transition, together with the need to create more higher education opportunities to further develop its economy. Seen in this light, the Chinese marketization project has been locally driven rather than purely driven by the growing impact of globalization.

Analyzing the current educational developments in these societies from a public policy perspective, we may find that the higher education reforms in these Chinese societies are pursued within the context of managing state-building (or government-capacity) and economic growth in a state-directed (or government-directed) paradigm of governance rather than to de-power the state / government. In addition, the introduction of higher education reforms in these societies can be interpreted as the strategies adopted by the government to cope with problems of political and bureaucratic governance instead of purely problems of severe economic and social difficulties.

Despite the fact that the governments in these societies have initiated policy of decentralization in the higher education sector in the recent years to allow individual universities to have more autonomy to be responsible for their own development plans, it is wrong to argue that the state / government has retreated entirely from the higher education domain. Instead, the governments of these societies have taken a rather proactive approach to review their higher education systems and started reforms to nurturing more creative and innovative citizens for future development. Even though we may identify similar patterns and trends in higher education developments in these societies, our above discussion has suggested that these Chinese governments are able to make use of the globalization discourse to package / shape the local political agenda. Despite the fact that similar approaches are adopted to reform their higher education systems, these government indeed skillfully make use of the globalization drive to push for local reforms.

Most important of all, our above comparative studies has revealed that the presence of diverse national and local agendas have given different meanings to common management jargons and statements or even so-called global trends (Cheung, 2000). If we accept diversities in domestic administrative agenda are the norm rather than the exception in global public management and governance, we may have a better reflection of the globalization impact. Perhaps, the usefulness of the globalization claim lies more in its rhetoric, such a globalization discourse is made use to facilitate the accomplishment of domestic purposes like to create a proper rationale or a legitimate claim for launching institutional reforms or to sustain a new discourse about the environment confronting institutions (Pratt and Poole, 1999: 540-3).

(2) Changing educational governance and strengthened state capacity

Unlike the hyperglobalists’ argument that the growing globalization trends will eventually weaken the capacity and lessen the autonomy of individual nation states, the present study argues that these Chinese governments can enjoy a considerable extent of autonomy and flexibility to direct / shape their own education reform agendas. One point which deserves particular attention here is that the mobilization of non-state actors / agents in engaging in public policy provision may not necessarily weaken the position of the nation state. Contrary to hyperglobalists’ arguments, the above discussion has presented institutionalized state-society linkages (i.e. the mobilization of non-state sources and actors to engage in education
provision in this case) do not diminish the state’s capacity to achieve better public management and social service delivery.

Our above discussion has suggested that these Chinese societies have tried to transform the traditional governance model into a social-political governance model as Kooiman (1993) suggested, such measures have indeed strengthened rather than weakened the state capacity. As Weiss rightly points out the problem of the institutional approach in conceptualizing the role of nation states in East Asian development, attacking those who would "kick the state back out", and argues that "in their haste to dispute the ‘developmental state’ idea --- to knock down the notion that the East Asian state is in some sense ‘strong’ or distinctive --- many recent studies fail to pay sufficient attention to the possible importance of cooperation in a theory of state capacity ... The danger is that in trying to bring capital back in, the state is being marginalized or diminished, in a negative-sum manner" (Weiss, 1995: 591-2). In contrast, Cooper has rightly pointed that "the old ‘command and control’ model is not dead yet, but it is rapidly being replaced by a new kind of institutional culture" (1995, p.174). Such an institutional culture does empower individual states to steer the public policy and public management at a distance. At the same time, the revitalization of the non-state sectors / actors has mobilized additional resources to solve the public policy problems originally faced and handled by nation states alone.

Instead of marginalizing the nation states or minimizing the state capacity in the globalizing economy context, our above discussion has also provided evidence of "connectedness" between states and societies not only generates additional resources for public / social policy provision but also strengthens nation states’ capacity to regulate and manage public service delivery. The system of "governed interdependence" or "governed market" between state and business (Wade, 1990) and the "social-political governance" model in the public sector (Kooiman, 1993) may well illustrate the new relationships between nation states and other non state sectors (market, community, family and individuals). Such interdependence and interactions between the state and other non state sectors have empowered and strengthened the state capacity, thus accounting for the strong state intervention of these Chinese governments in higher education.

(3) Changing state-education relations

Conceptualizing the processes of decentralization and marketization taking place in the higher education sector of the societies, deregulating some major aspects of education has indeed increased a limited number of state powers and, in turn, strengthened the state’s capacity to foster particular interests while appearing to stand outside the frame. As the major education service providers, what really changes the education sector of these societies is the different roles that the states / governments have played. All these developments suggest that "not only have changes in the nature of the state influenced the reforms of education, but the reforms in education are themselves beginning to change the way we think about the role of the state and what we expect of it" (Whitty, 1997: 302). As far as coordinating institutions is concerned in relation to different governance activities in education like funding, regulation and provision / delivery, the role of the state, market and community would normally be identified. Our above discussion has suggested that although the nature of the state / government does change in a very broad sense, what actually transformed is the state moving from the primarily carrying out most of the work of education itself to determining where the work will be done and by whom. In terms of control, we also observe that the state may take different roles in different governance activities, thus the extent of state intervention is found varied.

A plenty of comparative studies in education policies have repeatedly reported that while decentralization is usually understood as a form of decentralization, it can be a mechanism
for tightening central control of the periphery in stead of allowing far greater decision making for the lower levels of governments (Neave and van Vught, 1994; Hanson, 1999; Hawkins, 1999). It is also suggested that co-existence of both decentralizing and centralizing trends in education governance. Most important of all, this paper has found the changing modes of governance and the changing role of the state in education have rendered the conventional "public-private distinction" neither adequate nor convincing to describe the restructured state-education relationships especially when we analyze such changes in light of the dynamic and fluid nature of decentralization (Bray, 1999; Hanson, 1999; Dale, 1997; Mok, 2000b).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study leads us to conclude that the common contextual factors, particularly the increasingly popular global trend of decentralization and marketization, seem to have considerably shaped education policy throughout the world. There are a lot of changes in common in the higher education sector in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China and that of elsewhere, which suggests that higher education developments in these three societies have been affected by the similar trends of decentralization and marketization. But before we jump to this conclusion, maybe we should also bear in mind that an alternative hypothesis that local factors are crucial and determining factors for changes. Therefore, the considerable convergence at the policy rhetoric and general policy objectives may not satisfactorily explain the complicated processes of changes and the dynamic interactions between global-regional-local forces that shape education policy-making in individual countries (Green, 1999; Dale, 1999). Instead, a close scrutiny of the transformations and reforms in higher education of these Chinese societies has revealed similar trends but such common strategies are used to serve unique national social and political agendas.

Hence, while there are clear globalization trends, especially in the economy and technology, the nation state is still a powerful actor in shaping the nation’s development and in resolving global-national tensions. More importantly, this comparative study points out that not all nations have responded to globalization in the same way because of the specificities of national history, politics, culture and economy. Therefore, the so-called global tide of market competition, non-state provision of public services, corporate governance, system-wide and institutional performance management should not be treated as an undifferentiated universal trend. These different elements undoubtedly reinforce each other, though they are not equivalent or inter-changeable everywhere. Instead, they may take different configurations, which remain national-specific as well as global. As Gopinathan suggested, "even as educational paradigms and ideas take on a global character, the factors that determine educational policies are essentially national in character" (Gopinathan, 1996: 18). Instead of simply a process of globalization, the formulation of national policies is the results of the complicated and dynamic processes of glocalization (Mok and Lee, 2001). Therefore, we must not analyze "globalization practices" in higher education in terms of a one-dimensional movement from "the state" (understood as non-market and bureaucratic) to "the market" (understood as non-state and corporate). Rather, we must contextually analyze the interaction between a range of critical shaping factors in the local context and the impetus for change driven by global trends.
References:


Deem, R. 2001. "Globalization, new managerialism, academic capitalism in universities: Is the local dimension still important?" Comparative Education, 37, 1, pp.7-20


Perspectives and Dimensions in East Asia. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong, pp. 68-80.


University Grants Committee [UGC], 1996. Higher Education in Hong Kong. Hong Kong: University Grants Committee.

University Grants Committee [UGC], 2001. Document for Open Forum on Higher Education in Hong Kong, 23 October, 2001, Hong Kong Polytechnic University.


