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Globalisation and Equity in Higher Education

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I. Significance and Issues of Globalisation in Higher Education

Globalisation in higher education is the necessity of the development of higher education. It refers to a kind of modern way in which countries in different parts of the world promote and strengthen their academic exchanges, co-operation, common recognition and sharing ideas in worldwide higher education.

According to statistics of OECD, about 1.64 million students studied abroad in 2001. Their tuition, accommodation and inter-transportation formed a large market of millions of USD. Meanwhile, about 500 thousand foreign teachers or educators worked abroad, spreading and studying knowledge, values and social conceptions to have multicultural exchanges. Our research results show that the standards of recognition of certificates or diplomas in higher education of world countries have become more and more unified, which certainly leads to the unity of course standards and teaching material exchanges. Especially, the course standards and teaching materials of many universities in the developed countries are getting widely introduced, recognized and used in the developing countries. In China, many universities have introduced courses and teaching materials from famous universities in America and Europe to promote the development of internationalization. In addition, there are many international co-operative programs. According to a rough statistics in 2006, more than 3000 key programs were sponsored between universities in China and other countries. Thus we can see globalisation in higher education is progressing and it will have a bright future.

The development of globalisation in higher education brings obviously tremendous benefits to both developed and developing countries with distinct deference in contents and levels.

The main benefits to the developed countries lie in enlarging their influence in

politics, economics and culture of the countries of foreign students and thus producing tremendous profits in economy. According to OECD statistics, the annual income in America, British, Canada and Australia from the fees of foreign students, including their tuition and accommodation, are respectively 12.3 billion USD, 37.6 billion USD, 7.96 billion USD and 21.6 billion USD, which respectively account for 3.5%, 3.2 %, 2.1% and 11.8% in their total annual export service.. And the major benefits to the developing countries depend on the fact that they quickly learn and master the advanced technology and science by sending their students to the developed countries. In this way, the developing countries can quickly cultivate qualified personnel whom they need most to support the development of their own. Meanwhile, they promote the development in their traditional culture and the innovation in the their politics, legal system and the construction of spiritual civilization.

However, globalisation in higher education also results in severe issues which can not be neglected, namely inequality and inequity. Most developed countries are relatively situated in the center of world scientific technology, having the advantages of politics and economics, and holding a dominant position in globalisation. In case of student globalisation, mose of the foreign students come from developing countries, or even from under developed countries. According to the related survey, the United State, UK, and Germany attracted 54.7% of world students in 2001, which was added up to 71% by those in France and Australia. As far as the language is concerned, the three major English-speaking countries, USA, UK and Australia, attracted 50% of world students that year. As for the continents, six out of the ten are European countries. They attracted 40% of world students in 2001. While the continents with relatively low-level economic and technological development have less world students. Thus it is easy to see that the flowage of world students causes inequality and inequity in economy, languages and regions. When the flowage of world students brings direct and long-term benefits to the developed countries, it also leads to more and more serious loss of qualified personnel in the developing countries. For instance, about 60% foreign students in USA who specialized in doctoral degree finally settled down there after their graduation. This “*Matthew effect*” also appears in other developed countries. Another example is that the return rate of Chinese students in USA was only 14% from 1978 to 1996. This negative influence caused by the inequality and inequity can only be solved by mutual and multilateral coordination with international organizations. Thus, the results of Globalisation in higher education will be shared in more widely and diversely and the process of globalisation will be even more equal and more beneficial.

II. Suggestion to promote equal development of globalisation in higher education

Globalisation in higher education is inevitable. And the problem can be solved. Here

are some suggestions as follows:

1. To use various ways to lighten the economic burden of students from the developing countries. One of the methods is the cooperation between the universities of high level in the developed countries and the common ones in the developing countries. Under the conditions of keeping the learning standards, the students who want to study abroad are given the chance to take courses of foreign universities in their own country and issued the same diploma or certificates when they complete all the required courses. In this way, it greatly lowers the cost of learning abroad. It is also regarded as a kind of support to the developing countries in higher education from the developed countries. In addition, to increase the amount of scholarship and stipend is another effective way for the developed countries to support or favor the developing countries in higher education.
2. To encourage the developed countries to increase the scale of sending their own students abroad, while receiving foreign students. It is advisable to send students to those countries who have larger amount of students studying abroad. In doing so it can decrease their "adverse balance" and realize some balance of exchange students.
3. To coordinate the flowage of world students with the help of international organizations such as UNESCO and reach the bilateral agreements of exchange students on sharing the cost of the whole education, including that of basic education, bachelor degree or master degree. That is to say, the countries who approve foreign students' employment after their learning abroad, should pay relative amount of money to the countries where they come so as to keep balance of cultivating qualified personnel. And the developed countries should adopt some proper policies to encourage the foreign students to return and serve their own country when they finish their learning abroad.