

Chapter 19

Transnational Higher Education Trends in the Internet Era: Case Studies in China

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ABSTRACT

Under the trend of global integration, transnational higher education has become a research upsurge in recent years. In this chapter, the author focuses on the implementations and influences of the modern information technology in transnational higher education. Current research is mainly based on traditional textual research and data collection analysis. Few research mentioned the influences and changes that modern information technology could bring to the developing of transnational higher education. Furthermore, the global outbreak caused by 2019-nCOVID has also brought a full range of impacts to the whole world and profoundly affected the current situation and future process of transnational higher education. Consequently, the aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of transnational higher education trends in the internet era. The author will analyze it through several cases studies, taking China as an example, and conclude those findings to highlight efficient methods using internet technologies to contribute building a better educational world.

INTRODUCTION

Development of Transnational Higher Education

In 1985, the economist Theodore Levitt created the term ‘globalization’ to describe the changes in global economics (Tedlow & Abdelal, 2004). Furthermore, as Spring (2014) stated, transnational higher education has become another hot research topic apart from the corporate globalization trend in the economy. It has been around for a long time. Today, educational practices at different levels are far from satisfactory and effective at a universal level. In this respect, distance education is an important academic tool

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that provides education options and learning environments for people with different interests, needs, skills, ages, and geographical, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds or those with limited access to education (Durnalı et al., 2022; Orakcı, 2020; Susam et al., 2020). Thanks to distance education, without leaving their countries of residence, students have the chance to achieve a degree from a foreign post-secondary institution. As indicated by Cruz (2010) and Keller (2011), mainly in western countries, transnational higher education is considered a way of generating extra income to overcome budget cuts for some market-oriented universities. In addition, new forms of technology also facilitate the transformation of science-oriented industrial processes into international endeavors, which encourages higher education institutions with an international stance to offer a more educated workforce for global markets and ideas (Taylor, 2011).

In the past 30 years, transnational higher education has developed rapidly in China and played a significant role in developing the internationalization of higher education worldwide (Guo & Jiang, 2010). Up to 1995, the growth and development of transnational higher education in China has evolved from an informal, casual, laissez-faire activity to a more systematic and regulated program now (Huang, 2003). Under this series of the evolution of TNHE (Transnational higher education) and the trend of growing global integration, transnational higher education in running schools has become a new research upsurge. Huang (2003) took a perspective from China to analyze the primary source countries and regions that provide TNHE services in China, ranging from the USA to Australia and Hong Kong, and pointed out that Australia and Hong Kong may finally compose a significant market share in China. Yin (2014) investigated the historical development of transnational higher education in running schools from a typical period between the 19th century to now. Guo and Jiang (2010) have analyzed the status quo, problems, and countermeasures of transnational higher education based on the data published by the ministry of education. According to the official data, they found significant differences in the level of transnational higher education in different economic development regions. In economically underdeveloped regions, transnational higher education often faces problems such as the small scale of development, unbalanced structure, and lack of international courses and teachers (Gong, 2020). Adams and Song (2009) also reveal the key developments and challenges of sino-foreign cooperatively running schools in China behind the international collaboration. They pointed out that cooperative partnerships in transnational higher education need a more explicit strategy and goals by correctly assessing their contribution to the country's educational capacity building, education, and knowledge exchange.

However, in the era of rapid internet development, research on how the Internet affects transnational higher education is inadequate and limited. Current research is mainly based on traditional textual research and data collection analysis. Few studies have mentioned the influences and changes of modern information technology on the development of transnational higher education. Especially with the advent of the 5G era, the internationalization of education should usher in new challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, in 2020, the global outbreak caused by 2019-nCOVID has allowed educators to rethink education and address paradigms of education (Orakcı, & Gelişli, 2021). It has had an overall impact on China and the world, profoundly affecting the current situation and future course of transnational higher education. All of these serve as the primary motivation for this chapter.

Different Delivery Modes of Current Transnational Higher Education

Before discussing and studying the technologies used in transnational higher education, it is essential to clarify the different delivery modes in transnational higher education programs. By understanding

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