

Chapter 21

Envisioning and Exploring Future Transnational Higher Education and Management Models: The Transformation of Higher Education in the UACC World

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to envision future transnational university educational and management models. In the background section, a general review of international universities in China would be outlined followed by an overview of a specific example, international Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. In the literature review section, an evaluation of relevant literature will demonstrate how the examination of key concepts like knowledge, truth, education, and enlightenment could contribute to deepened understanding of future transnational higher education. In the third section on discussion, a detailed analysis of HeXie education model, HeXie mindset model, and HeXie management model would be addressed followed by an application of these models in XJTLU's management systems. Fourthly, challenges and opportunities would be outlined in terms of student-centered and research-led education, the teaching of research, quality education, future education in the uncertain, ambiguous, complex, and changeable world, and future education, before conclusion is drawn.

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INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 pandemic disruption prompted large scale online learning replacing the usual campus life and teaching with the digital technology, which raised questions of the value of the physical campus or university when learning could take place at home on a computer. Will the traditional university have a future? It was recently predicted that half of the United States’ universities could face bankruptcy in the next decade (Horn, 2018). This could be problematic because the modern university has been an essential part of the society in its role to advance technology development, promote social transformation, shape culture and ideology, and support economic development. However, the development of society also brings new problems which entail creative and effective solutions to solve unprecedented problems like extreme weather and natural catastrophe caused by global warming, sustainable development for equality, security, and well-being of global citizens, and geopolitical conflicts and emergencies like refugee crisis due to wars such as the Ukraine war that taking place in Ukraine at present challenging humanities and civilization with possible nuclear crisis. Santos (2016, p.295) wrote in 2012 that “the university is undergoing a period of paradigmatic transition” and raised 12 questions (Figure 1) concerning whether the university has a future.

Figure 1. 12 critical questions concerning the future of universities

<i>Is the global university a possible answer for the mission of the university in a globalized world?</i>	<i>Which qualifications will be generated by which universities when job prestige goes together with job qualification and scarcity?</i>	<i>How to balance the marketable knowledge and the nonmarketable knowledge in university education?</i>
<i>Can the university retain its specificity and relative autonomy while being governed by market imperatives and employment demands?</i>	<i>Is it possible to standardize procedures and criteria across such different university cultures without destroying diversity and innovation?</i>	<i>Many universities play a role in disseminating certain views of the world. What is the role of knowledge of the Other in university education?</i>
<i>Are we creating endless illiteracy in the same process that we create endless knowledge? Will peripheral and semi-peripheral universities be charged with solving the illiteracy problem, while the core universities will have the monopoly of highly qualified knowledge?</i>	<i>Is the university prepared to recognize that the understanding of the world by far exceeds the Western understanding of the world? Is the university prepared to re-found the idea of universalism on a new, intercultural basis?</i>	<i>How does the idea of a knowledge society impact a modern university which was created on the premise that it was an island of knowledge in a society of ignorance?</i>
<i>The university has historically been embedded in the three pillars of modern social regulation—the state, the market and civil society; Is the Bologna Process a creative response to neoliberal, one-dimensional demands or, on the contrary, a way of imposing them through a transnational European process that neutralizes national resistance?</i>	<i>Should universities become a transnational corporation or a transnational cooperative or non-profit organization, given the modern university has been serving international flows of ideas, teachers, students and books as well as different power relations behind the distribution of the costs and benefits of globalization?</i>	<i>Modern universities have been both a product and a producer of specific models of development. The question is: In such a tumultuous time, is the university’s serenity possible? And, if possible, is it desirable? Will the European university contribute to a dialogue among different models of development?</i>

Post Covid-19, many scholars have expressed various thoughts about future universities (Orazbayeva *et al.*, 2020) as the home base supporting lifelong learning, helping individuals’ re- and up-skilling for employment, diffusing into the society with individualized and accessible education, helping various sectors in the society to provide solutions for the current crisis.

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