

A Borderless and Creative Education

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Competition is rising in the world education market more than ever. One of the reasons for this is that the number of domestic applicants is lacking or diminishing, due to the demographic changes in many countries. This propels the acceptance of more international students, in turn, requiring universities to globalize. A possible solution to cope with this problem is to share the best education through information technology, like E-learning or to set up a branch campus of well-established universities, although this methodology has struggled to solve the problem of language.

From the perspective of a knowledge service provider, E-learning appears to be cost-effective. When E-learning is conducted in one's mother tongue there are many issues that need to be addressed: the cost for translation and dubbing must be considered, time difference, cost sharing in regards to intellectual property, and potential sensitivities of the information being shared. The most prominent risk factor that is taken into consideration is the possible compromise transferring language may take on the quality of education. Despite its advantage of being able to provide education anywhere at any time, there is a fundamental problem to overcome.

Recently, Philip Altbach, an expert in higher education from Boston College, raised issues on the sustainability of international university branch campuses based on the economic downturn of the United Arab Emirates, in which a quarter of the worldwide total of branch campuses are located. According to his article, many branch campuses have become limited, specialized programs focused on a location believed to have potential. Furthermore, some branch campuses have been closed and others have reported difficulties in attracting qualified students to maintain quality education. Despite the prestigious names established, including Cornell, Georgetown, and Michigan State University, many only offer curricula in fields with low set-up costs and high demand, lacking much of what a full-scale university can offer. In addition, education without a common language brings upon an underlying problem in transferring quality education. This is a fundamental problem that must be addressed to provide students with proper education that will prepare them for the future.

While taking problems with previous methods into consideration, a modified approach must be taken to provide a solution. A renowned Professor, Michael J. Sandel of Harvard University, through a lecture entitled, "Justice: what is the right thing to do?" questions if providing E-learning will reduce international mobility. Despite the vast amount of change that it may bring to the higher education market, the advantages of a physical institution will prevent that from happening. The advantages of a physical institution must be kept and intertwined with existing programs and institutions, to establish infrastructure and internal control. The reputation

and tradition of an entity is also a great merit to add to its physical presence. Dual degree programs can substitute branch campuses by developing reciprocal curricula, providing various cultural and educational experiences, and etc. Also hiring well-trained bilingual/bicultural personnel will be a feasible solution to provide the proper transfer of knowledge in E-learning. Both of which can be integrated with the existing curricula. Yet, the socio-cultural issue, in addition to language, might be the most difficult barrier for a borderless and creative education after all. As a result, it will be interesting to watch how higher education might evolve, for better education in the future.