

Is Asia Ready to be a Higher Education Power?

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With over 50 million students studying in universities within Asia today, the numbers alone would qualify Asia to be a higher education power. Per capita expenditure on those students, however, suggests that it may be premature to draw that conclusion. Also, the different ages of the established institutions and the uneven distribution of students must raise further questions. A brief comparison of major universities in Japan, India, China and select number of others would bring out the contrasts.

The most rapid growth in almost every aspect of higher education during the past two decades has taken place in the Peoples Republic of China. If that speed of growth is an accurate measure of determination and will, then Chinese universities should be the most ready to be the next powerhouse in Asia. A closer examination of how various groups of Chinese pursue advanced learning should show us whether China is getting ready to take on the mantle of a higher education power. If there are still serious obstacles in the way, how will the Chinese deal with them?

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Diasporic Chinese Ventures Edited by Gregory Benton and Liu Hong (2004);
Divided China: Preparing for Reunification, 883-947 (2007);
China and Its Cultures: From the Periphery (2007, in Chinese);
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