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## **Students' shifting towards Chinese Higher Education Institutions: A pivotal change in the traditional setting.**

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### **Introduction**

In this paper we are going to thoroughly elaborate on the fundamentals of China's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) dramatic growth by addressing the phenomenon of students' shifting towards Chinese HEIs which happens to bring in the frontline the pivotal change in the traditional setting of students going to Europe for higher education. We will explore the various perspectives of all the changes taken place by unveiling the milestones of this venture. We will proceed with giving emphasis to real facts and supporting them with our situational judgement and critical thinking.

To conclude, we are going to address the learning outcomes of this topic. This paper touches upon the generic overview of the HEIs however it gives out a strong signal on how future would be like in the sector of Higher Music Education Institutions.

### **Describing the phenomenon**

China has slowly, gradually and steadily become one of the super competitive players of the worldwide setting. It is going without saying that USA and Europe are on the ropes, very near to being defeated by China which will globally be the new leader in terms of political and economic leverage. In accordance, the geopolitical power relations around the globe have given place to the emerging Chinese Higher Education Institutions.

Through strategic partnerships with top class European Universities, together with a well - planned recruitment of eminent professors coming from all over the world, over the last three decades, has brought Chinese HEIs among the top ranking institutions in the globe.

Apart from the human resources put in action, tones of investments have taken place in order to provide the infrastructure needed for building from the scratch a new empire in Higher Education Institutions. In addition, plenty of technological breakthroughs strongly boosted the blooming of innovation in all the fields of this profession.

Furthermore, the economic immersion of China which has been translated into a huge financial leverage over the heavily wounded economies of Europe and USA, has played a significant role on the development, expansion and rapid rising of Chinese Universities.



Despite the basics steps taken towards the new era of Chinese Higher Educations Institutions, loads of changes were put in action varied from re - evaluation of hierarchies in the academia to significant organisational changes in terms of academic and administration management such as the following:

- To utilize HEIs resources more effectively and efficiently
- To keep students' satisfaction as the top priority of the HEIs
- To focus on long - term strategic planning activities and to develop future strategies for growth of the HEIs
- To identify the areas that need to be improved
- To set stretch goals (ambitious goals that are clear, compelling and competitive) for excellence

On a strategic level, the political establishment of China, had determinedly invested in country's Higher Education Institutions in order to make China the new international hub for higher education. The so called "Study in China" plan was a governmental initiative for attracting students all around the globe. The goal was to increase the number of foreign students by 500K within the decade 2010 - 2020.

Standing at the end of this strategic plan, we could name it as extremely successful due to the number of students reached so far. According to the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the most recent statistics by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China shows that the total number of International students in Chinese HEIs is appr. 492,185 (Source: [Statistics of International students in China 2011-2018](#), Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. Chart by Yuzhuo Cai).

At the moment, China has overtaken the UK to become the host of second largest international student population, after the USA. This trend shows clearly that in the near future, China will be the global leader in higher education. In addition, according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities, Chinese Universities are listed among the top 100 Universities all over the world, year 2019. (Source: <http://www.shanghairanking.com/World-University-Rankings-2019/China.html>). With regards to the late publication of Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2020, Tsinghua University has climbed up to rank 23 and Peking University to rank 24.

### Learning outcome

Taking into account all the aforementioned, it is crystal clear that China has become a world class giant in the field of Higher Education Institutions. If we dig deep into the steps followed to bring China on the top of the list with regards to HEIs around the globe we will face an extreme resemblance to the famous Toyota Way.

One can wonder what could be the similarities between an Higher Education Institution and a motor company, however the following rational will make it clear that there is an emphatic matching. In specific, Toyota Way is all about the continuous improvement



(“kaizen”) and slowly, gradually and steadily growth (“jojo”). Therefore, no matter how big the discrepancies of Japan and China are, the latter seems to - probably not intentionally - have implemented the above believes on a strategic level in order to bring its HEIs in the frontline.

Apart from the above, we should underline the cultural attractiveness of the country which is among the oldest civilisations in the history of our mankind. Moreover, the development of top-quality international study programmes in which institutions share expertise and resources and the clear signal that the focus of modern Higher Education Institutions should now be on developing new content and tools for education instead of just bringing students and teachers together, led to the creation of a highly competitive educational environment which is crucial in terms of attracting new cohorts within the academia.

In a nutshell, China’s Higher Education Institutions are agents of continuous transformation. The change of the traditional setting of students gathering to Europe to receiving education of high quality is already happening. The previous analysis of the current situation is emphatically giving the signal of the new trend. This brings China to the centre of interest in potential students all over the globe. With mathematical precision, China’s Higher Education Institutions would be the leading destinations for undergrad and postgrad students till the mid of this century.

In addition, the geopolitical and business emergence of China, which is steadily becoming the leading power on international level, was the driving force to drag and lift off the educational system of the country. Therefore, the impact on the higher education industry was huge and the large - growth of it was inevitable.

The moving sand of geopolitics needs to be dealt with consciousness and thoughtful mindset. This is the only successful path chosen by the Higher Education Institutions of China in order to extrapolate and invest in the opportunity given by China’s current upper hand in the global setting. Europe is gradually losing ground against China in the field of education but still is too early to give in to the pressure coming from Asia.

Nevertheless, the question is what would be the exact setting in the next decade. This brings to my mind the quote of the French author, André Gide:

*“Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore.”*

*Internationalisation*

*#education #internationalisation #strategy*