

# Thinking of University and President Administration Bound by Marketization

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## ABSTRACT

Higher education marketization is a double-edged sword. Universities' involvement in the marketization wave brings both opportunities and challenges. This study attempts to provide ideas for the governance of universities and principals. Through investigation and research, this study finds that higher education marketization not only provides a competitive environment, but also has a certain impact on the educational, scientific research and service functions of universities, as well as the gradual decline of humanistic education which is not closely related to the market. As the supreme leader of a university, the President of a university can seek ideas for university governance from the following three aspects: Insight into the situation of running schools and correct understanding of higher education marketization; Clear school objectives, leading the university to pursue excellence; Strengthen the characteristics of running schools, strengthen the integration of science education and humanities education.

**Keywords:** *Marketization of higher education, The President of the University, School management ability, thinking*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the process of higher education popularization, the relationship between universities and society is getting closer and closer, and marketization has become the research object of many scholars and the trend of modern higher education. Under the background of higher education marketization, universities and the whole higher education system have undergone some changes. Modern universities are no longer subordinate to the government. Since the promulgation of the *Higher Education Act*, they have become independent legal persons to participate in the education market and society. Universities have to be involved in the trend of higher education marketization, and have been bound to it. University president's governing ability is an important dimension of university president's competence. As the helm of a university, university president's governing ability determines the strength and decline of a university, and is also the key to establish a world-class university. Many opportunities and challenges are faced by the universities which are surrounded by the market. Whether the university president can have a certain degree of sensitivity and insight to identify the real opportunities for university development in the marketization of higher education is undoubtedly a test of the university president's ability to govern the university.

## 2. CONNOTATION ANALYSIS OF HIGHER EDUCATION MARKETIZATION

First of all, we must understand what the marketization of higher education is. With the development of society, the connection between universities and society is getting closer and closer, and the marketization of higher education has gradually become a trend of higher education in the world. The marketization movement of higher education emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. The worldwide "economic crisis" led all countries in the world into financial difficulties. The government had to cut the expenditure on higher education, and at the same time, the funds needed for university scientific research and teaching also kept rising, and the income of tuition fees could not make both ends meet. At this stage, the government had a heavy financial burden, and the allocation fund was reduced, so many universities chose to earn funds from the market instead of relying on the government allocation all the time [1]. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has defined the precise connotation of marketization of higher education as follows: "By introducing the market mechanism into higher education, the operation of higher education has at least one of the following distinct market characteristics: competition, choice, price, decentralized decision making, monetary incentives, etc., which excludes absolute socialization and absolute privatization." The marketization of higher

education has brought benefits as well as competition to universities. The most important factor of higher education marketization is the market, and the most important characteristic is competition [2]. This study holds that higher education marketization means to introduce the market mechanism into higher education, so as to use the market mechanism to configure the supply and demand relationship between higher education institutions and consumers, causing competition among higher education institutions and obtaining greater benefits.

### **3. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF UNIVERSITIES UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF MARKETIZATION**

#### ***3.1. Competitive Environment, University Opportunities Under the Influence of Marketization***

The marketization of higher education introduces competition into universities, to a certain extent, this will stimulate the "self-motivated" of universities, help to improve the overall strength and running level of universities, and produce good performance, such as the output of more scientific research achievements. Under this background, universities pay more attention to innovation, cultivate innovative talents and promote the combination of industry, education and research. To some extent, the marketization of higher education can broaden the sources of university funds, alleviate the shortage of higher education funds, reduce the dependence of universities on government grants, and thus enable universities to gain greater autonomy. Universities have greater autonomy in setting majors and recruiting students, and they can better perform their duties, train talents, conduct scientific research and provide better social services according to market demands.

#### ***3.2. University Functions are Vague, University Challenges Under the Influence of Marketization***

The functions of universities are gradually blurred under the market, and training talents, scientific research and

servicing the society are all affected to some extent. Under the background of marketization of higher education, even some profit-oriented universities have set their sights on the market, adjusted their curriculum, set up a large number of majors and courses with high market demand and high voice, and paid a lot of money to hire "masters" and "big cows" in professional fields to decorate their facades and form brand effects. In the market-oriented higher education, the relationship between students and teachers is more like a relationship between customers and businesses than a thirst for knowledge. Universities seem to provide more consumable products for students [3]. There is also an obvious tendency of utilitarianism in students' learning motivation. There is a "certificate craze" among college students, in which they get all the certificates that they can take in college exams in order to get more attention from employers. Not only students, but also university teachers are forced to write a large number of academic papers in a short period of time and obtain more scientific research results in order to achieve more performance and complete the examination. Teachers also have to choose research with short cycle and quick results, which seriously violates the initial intention and law of academic research. In the marketization of higher education, universities are getting more and more eager for quick success, focusing on pragmatism. In order to meet the needs of society and students, the knowledge used by universities, that is, the logical starting point of higher education, advanced knowledge has been transformed into general knowledge, "the idea of university" has been transformed into "the use of university", and its education has also been transformed from elite to mediocrity, which is a university challenge brought about by the marketization of higher education.

#### ***3.3. Humanistic Education Declined, University Challenges Under the Influence of Marketization***

School education culture construction is one of the important hidden classrooms in school education and the most important link to improve the quality of school moral education. A survey of 105 middle-level management leaders in different universities was carried out, "the construction of education culture is highlighted in their universities", and the results are as follows:

**Table 1.** Survey of educational culture construction in universities

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Effective percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
<b>Extremely inconsistent</b>	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Less inconsistent</b>	6	5.7	5.7	6.7
<b>Partly compliance</b>	22	21.0	21.0	27.6
<b>Mostly compliance</b>	49	46.7	46.7	74.3
<b>Fully compliance</b>	27	25.7	25.7	100.0
<b>Total</b>	105	100.0	100.0	

From the above table, it can be known that 25.7% of middle-level leaders think that the university where they work really highlights the construction of education culture, while in the eyes of most middle-level leaders, their university has the construction of education culture, but it has not been truly highlighted. Education culture has not been really built, and humanities education, as the most important course of education culture in schools, is obviously not valued in universities. Under the background of marketization of higher education, a society that pursues rapid economic development, scientific knowledge has made an important contribution to the economy, and scientific education has been paid attention to accordingly. In the choice of majors, students focus on subjects or majors valued by employers, such as foreign languages, computer science and medicine, which have more employment opportunities and future development space. The status of humanistic education in universities is getting lower and lower, and less and less attention is paid to it. The strong business environment has threatened the traditional humanities, and the humanities, which represent the university spirit, are in an awkward position. [4].

**4. THE THINKING OF UNIVERSITY AND PRESIDENT ADMINISTRATION BOUND BY MARKETIZATION**

The universities, which are trapped by marketization, are either eager for quick success and instant benefit, exile

their adherence to traditional ideas, and become the subsidiary of market and money. or they are blindly conservative and indifferent and become more mediocre. Facing the opportunities and challenges brought by the marketization of higher education, the governance ability of university presidents is also being tested. In order to better develop universities, university presidents can look for ideas from the following three aspects: observing the situation of running schools, clarifying the objectives of running schools and strengthening the characteristics of running schools.

**4.1. Insight Into the Situation of Running Schools, A Correct Understanding of Higher Education Market**

Sharp insight is an important factor for university presidents to make decisions and judgments, and it is also an ability to predict current and future school development. The marketization of higher education is both an opportunity and a challenge. It is very important for university presidents to have an insight into the situation of running a school and correctly understand their influence on universities. A survey of 105 middle-level management leaders of different universities was conducted. "The President of the university he works for adheres to a pragmatic approach in running school and is not controlled by short-sighted or impetuous environment." The survey results are as follows:

**Table 2.** Questionnaire on the situation that university presidents are not influenced by impetuous and short-sighted in running schools pragmatically

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Effective percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
<b>Extremely inconsistent</b>	2	1.9	1.9	1.9
<b>Less inconsistent</b>	6	5.7	5.7	7.6
<b>Partly compliance</b>	26	24.8	24.8	32.4
<b>Mostly compliance</b>	42	40.0	40.0	72.4
<b>Fully compliance</b>	29	27.6	27.6	100.0
<b>Total</b>	105	100.0	100.0	

It can be seen from the above table that 27.6% of middle-level leaders think that the presidents of their schools can run schools without being influenced by short-sighted and impetuous, while in the eyes of most middle-level university leaders, the presidents of their schools cannot really run schools without being influenced by short-sighted and impetuous. In such an impetuous environment of higher education marketization, university presidents should have a good insight into the situation of running schools, have a correct understanding of higher education marketization, and avoid being influenced by short-sighted and impetuous.

Although the marketization of higher education has brought some investment benefits to universities, it is really tempting for a university, but these are short-term benefits. Under the background of marketization of higher education, university is more like a profit-making organization. Although the material progress continues,

the spiritual value has been devalued. Higher education is not the same as the economic field. It can't completely introduce the market, but only regulate the market to a limited extent and in a limited field. As university President, should have forward-looking strategic vision, to avoid short-term, the market is characterized by short-term and blindness, while higher education is characterized by long periodicity and lag. There is a big contrast between the market and higher education, which needs to be adjusted well. We should take a scientific view of the "benefits" brought by the marketization of higher education, correctly understand the marketization of higher education, not focus on the immediate "benefits", but also see clearly the "threats" brought by marketization to universities [5].

#### **4.2. Clearing School Objectives, Leading the University to Pursue Excellence**

Leading a university towards outstanding development is one of the important tasks of a university president as a "leader". Under the background of marketization of higher education, universities want to be truly "excellent", which requires university presidents to define scientific goals in the process of running the university.

Under the impact of the marketization of higher education, the "Excellence" of universities is reflected in the rise of rankings in major rankings, which repeatedly reflects mediocrity. In the true sense, the concept of "Excellence" has been abandoned to a certain extent, and universities have weakened their pursuit of truth, kept catching up with the society and actively catered to various social desires, thus transforming from "university in ivory tower" to "university in society". As a result, various training courses have grown wildly in universities, and universities are competing to provide consulting and technical support services for enterprises, governments or individual employers, and academic waste is constantly being produced.

Universities should not be influenced by the marketization of higher education and only devote themselves to cultivating practical talents. Fichte, a famous philosopher, once said that education should not focus on practicality and impart knowledge and skills first, but awaken students' strength. Universities should cultivate "rational people", cultivate their wisdom, courage, tolerance and other good qualities, so that they can better adapt to society and become better people. The president of a university should make clear the goal of running a school, stick to his own educational direction, not follow the trend, always demand himself with lofty ideals, proceed from reality, obey the laws of education, perfect his mission, and lead the university to pursue true "excellence".

#### **4.3. Strengthening School-Running Characteristics, Strengthen the Integration of Science Education and Humanities Education**

Under the background of marketization of higher education, universities are the same. If university presidents can strengthen all the school-running characteristics of their own schools and distinguish them from those of other schools, it will contribute to the healthy and long-term development of universities.

Strengthening the integration of science education and humanities education and strengthening the construction of education culture is one of the ways to strengthen the characteristics of running a school in the marketization of higher education. Jaspers believes that education is the education of human soul, rather than the accumulation of irrational knowledge and knowledge. In the modern society of pursuing rapid economic development, the university is more like a profit-making organization. Although the material progress continues, the spiritual

value has been devalued, and the humanities education is declining compared with the science education. [6]. Humanistic education not only undertakes the important mission of nourishing students with elegant culture and enhancing their spiritual realm, but also has far-reaching significance in cultivating students' independent thinking and lifelong learning. Although its cycle is long and its effect is slow, the market demand is far less than that of science education, and although it can't bring great benefits in a short time like science education, the influence of humanities education is very profound for students, social atmosphere, national outlook and even the whole world.

Science education plays a superficial role in promoting economic development, while humanities education plays an opposite role, which leads to the widespread division of "useful" knowledge and "useless" knowledge, namely "scientific knowledge" and "humanistic knowledge" [7]. In the university curriculum, only scientific education is given to students while humanistic education is neglected, which is not conducive to the construction of students' correct three views, the formation of students' sense of social responsibility and the formation of social harmony. Only to the students for science education, training out of the talent is more like a machine, a machine without feelings. However, if only humanistic education is given to students and science education is ignored, the talents trained may not be able to adapt to modern society. Therefore, we cannot arbitrarily separate humanities education from science education. It is suggested that humanistic education should be incorporated into science courses.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

In his book *The Bottom Line of Higher Education Marketization*, David Kirp pointed out that the market should have a place in higher education, but at the same time, it should abide by the boundary and not exceed the bottom line of higher education. Universities are involved in the trend of marketization, so the President should have insight into the situation of university running, fully realize that marketization of higher education is a double-edged sword, and make proper use of market mechanism to provide better development for universities.

Facing the negative impact of higher education marketization, university presidents should correctly deal with it, make clear the goal of running a school, strengthen the characteristics of running a school, pay attention to the declining humanistic education, regain the lost spirit of university, and lead universities to pursue true excellence.

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