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2 **Taiwan's COVID-19 Success**

A Lifeline for Its Higher Education Sector?

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Abstract

Taiwan's success in preventing and containing the COVID-19 outbreak within its borders has drawn unprecedented international attention and recognition. This achievement presents many important prospects for Taiwan to counter escalating diplomatic isolation from the increasingly hardline governance of China's Xi Jinping. Taiwan's feat in crisis management also opens a critical window of opportunity to increase mutual cooperation with the international community. Particularly with regard to Taiwan's higher education sector, this is a moment not to be missed. Taiwan's universities are facing seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the coming decade as university student populations are expected to drop by 40%, due in part to Taiwan's declining birth rate. This chapter explores the potential for Taiwan to capitalize on its COVID-19 success by attracting students internationally to strengthen its higher education sector and thereby further bolster its reputation and prestige in the global community.

Keywords

COVID-19, Taiwan, Higher Education Sector, Soft Power

Introduction

Taiwan's university sector is in a crisis. Registration across the country is plummeting, partially due to low birth rates and smaller cohorts (Green, 2020), and because university degrees are overabundant and therefore becoming less valuable. Even as this downward trend seems to continue, a potential reversal has begun to show. One of the most unexpected side effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is the renewed position of Taiwan's education system within East Asia and beyond. Taiwan is one of the only places in the world to successfully manage COVID-19 due to a combination of robust institutions, historic learning from earlier pandemics, and a civil society that cooperated with government mandates (Aspinwall, 2020). Taiwan has boasted such success with fighting COVID-19 that it has begun to export its assistance programs

around the world, donating millions of masks and policy strategies to countries in need (Woods, 2020). Most importantly, Taiwan's education system remains intact and is one of the only systems to have fully in-person classes in 2020, both with regard to K-12 education and in the higher education sector (Taylor et al., 2020). Increasing tensions between Washington and Beijing have also further solidified Taiwan's position as a Mandarin education hub (Lim, 2020). Contentious attitudes between the U.S. and the People's Republic of China (PRC) have made Taiwan a more attractive and feasible option for Mandarin language learners instead of going to China. COVID-19 has unexpectedly given Taiwan a strong soft power boost that carries a number of important implications for both its education system at home and abroad (Hernandez & Horton, 2020). Could this COVID-19 success story serve as a much-needed boost for Taiwan's institutions of higher education that are suffering at a tragic nexus point of decades of over-expansion coupled with one of the lowest birthrates in the world? This chapter will explore how Taiwan managed to fight against COVID-19 successfully, and the potential it has to help its hurting higher education sector if capitalized upon in due fashion.

Taiwan's Imperiled Higher Education Sector

Taiwan's higher education sector has not always been a source of concern, but two decades of policy missteps at the confluence of a number of growing forces have given rise to an impending alarm that current trends are unsustainable and will result in the closure of many institutions, departments, and programs. Historically, Taiwan's higher education sector has been an invaluable asset in furthering economic growth and aiding vast portions of Taiwan's populace to contribute to its world-class technological sector (Lin, 2004; Liu & Armer, 1993). Taiwan's near-total enrollment rate in higher education is one of the highest in the world, perhaps only rivaled by South Korea (Chou, 2014). However, this nearly universal level of post-secondary school attendance has not resulted in universal benefit for Taiwan's society, and the high level of enrollment has mostly favored the already privileged groups (Chou & Wang, 2012). The benefits of a university degree are relegated primarily to more prestigious university placements (Cheng & Jacob, 2012; Pretzer-Lin, 2015). As such, the expansion of access to higher education has also resulted in an expansion of social inequality (Smith et al., 2016) and decreased social mobility (Lin, 2020). The overabundance of university degrees has unsurprisingly led to inflation in the value of university credentials thereby decreasing their worth (Chan & Lin, 2015). Therefore, the crisis faced by the higher education sector is not one that can be blamed simply on Taiwanese families' lack of progeny but is an inevitable result of growth that was overextended, to begin with.

There were contextual factors that contributed to this misguided policy trajectory. Taiwan's rapid expansion of universities in the 1990s was arguably a reaction to the heavily centralized control of Taiwan's higher education sector over many decades of the Chinese Nationalist Party, *Kuomintang* (KMT) rule (Wu et al., 1989). Taiwan's birth rate began declining alongside

government policies to rapidly expand university placements. (Huang et al., 2018). Between 1994 and 2004, there was a 44% increase in the number of universities, growing from 67 to 151 (Tsai, 2015). In 2006, the number of universities peaked at 163 (Chen, 2015). Enrollment peaked in 2012 at approximately 1.35 million university students, numbers have been in consistent decline with 2018 numbers at 1.24 million (MOE Taiwan, 2019). Taiwan's hunger for democratization and equity of opportunity therefore fed into the assumptions that higher education credentials were the sole means of individual and collective prosperity. A newly formed, democratically accountable government simply had no choice but to acquiesce to this popular and, at face value, entirely reasonable demand.

However, the myth of universal higher education leading to universal benefit was soon exposed. Taiwan's rapid massification of university placements occurred mainly in the private sector (Chou & Ho, 2007), and now the government is looking at ways to systematically shut down excess private universities (Maxon, 2018). Course cancelations among private universities have been especially severe in the technical and vocational training colleges (Drillsma, 2018). The overall population of college age students is expected to drop by 40% by 2028 due to the declining birth rate, and plans are in place to help close failing institutions of education as well as help students transition from those institutions (The Straits Times, 2017). Therefore, those who have benefitted the most from access to higher education are those who have been able to secure placements in public institutions of higher learning, while those who were forced to pay more for inferior private higher education slots are now the ones also most threatened as the higher education crisis begins to crescendo.

Although Taiwan's higher education has been on a continual quest to bring its universities to world-class status (Zhou & Ching, 2012), there have been additional factors complicating their ambitious goals. The problems due to the declining birthrate are exacerbated by the increased flow of students to universities in China (Fulco, 2018b). China has introduced attractive incentives for both students and academics to migrate to China's higher education sector, while conversely Taiwan and China have *both* instituted measures to restrict those able to come to Taiwan *from* China (Hsueh, 2018). Taiwan's university students are not only headed to China but many other places as well. In 2018, more than 40,000 students were studying at universities overseas, with the United States as the top destination attracting nearly a third of all Taiwanese students heading abroad (Li, 2020). Therefore, Taiwan's higher education sector has not only been drained by overexpansion and declining population but also through a plethora of enticements abroad that have given their own students many incentives to pursue higher education elsewhere.

Taiwan's COVID-19 Success

Taiwan's shortcomings in higher education policy stand in sharp contrast to its policy victories in containing the COVID-19 epidemic within its borders.

At the height of the pandemic elsewhere in July 2020, Taiwan had seen a total of only 449 cases, with only seven deaths and the majority of cases imported from Taiwanese returning after traveling abroad (Rowen, 2020). While there was some alarm in January 2020, daily life returned to normal as early as late February, with only a few alterations, such as required mask use on public transportation. By the *end* of 2020, Taiwan *still* had less than 800 reported cases totally since the pandemic's onset, *still* only seven deaths, and had reached over 200 days without a single local infection. Taiwan's ability to swiftly and effectively mitigate harms from COVID-19 can be attributed to a number of important factors, but three key variables are its robust public healthcare system, historic memory of the 2003 SARS pandemic, and good governance.

Taiwan's strong public healthcare system is an indispensable factor in considering its COVID-19 success. Taiwan has a population comparable to Australia and stands 23rd among the highest GDP growth rate countries in the world (Horton, 2018). Taiwan is one of the most progressive democracies in East Asia despite constant threats by the PRC. One of the key features of Taiwan's democratic development has been its comprehensive and advanced healthcare system. Established in 1995, it is a government-administered insurance-based healthcare system. It gives every Taiwanese citizen and residency cardholder access to healthcare. Individual costs are low, access is high, and coverage is widespread. This system is not cheap, and it is one of the biggest challenges that Taiwan faces with its healthcare professionals being overburdened coupled with high taxes (Leong, 2018). Yet despite these weaknesses, Taiwan was ranked as the number one healthcare system in the world for two years consecutively by the Health Care Index (Yeh, 2020).

Taiwan's healthcare system and governmental capacity were put under a stress test during the 2003 SARS crisis. In Taiwan, SARS had a far higher mortality rate than COVID-19 and resulted in 73 deaths. Some of the strategies Taiwan used in 2002 were demonstrated in their 2019 response to COVID-19. For example, in 2002 the government ordered an immediate ban on mask exports in order to ensure enough domestic supply, a tactic that was repeated again in 2019. Of course, not all of the government's handling in 2002 was laudable, and many hard lessons related to hospital management and isolation control were partially responsible for the relatively higher mortality rate (Chen et al., 2005). However, not only did SARS give Taiwan an established pandemic response policy but also the man who designed the policy, Chen Chien-Jen, who was Taiwan's Vice President during the time of the COVID-19 outbreak. Chen, a Johns Hopkins trained epidemiologist, served as one of the health officials in charge of the SARS response. After SARS, he was responsible for pushing reforms to prepare Taiwan for its next pandemic. Despite a relatively quiet career as Vice President, his last six months in office put his expertise to use, cementing his name as a politician who helped navigate Taiwan through two perilous pandemics.

The good governance practices developed by politicians such as Chen extend far beyond just mask regulation. As soon as Taiwan got a whiff of a potential quick-spreading virus in Wuhan, China, the current administration began to take drastic actions to minimize domestic exposure. On January 20th, 2020 Taiwan established a Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC). Flights from hard-hit countries were quickly banned, including China and soon after Japan and Hong Kong. Mandatory two-week isolations became required for *all* persons entering Taiwan, without exception. Taiwan required those in quarantine to regularly monitor and record their temperature and used cell phone towers to keep track of locations to ensure they stuck to quarantine. The Taiwanese government also sent care packages to everyone in quarantine, including practical items such as food and free Netflix passes. For those outside of quarantine, masks became required in public transportation. Most public businesses and restaurants were sent wireless thermometers to take everyone's temperature upon entry and identify anyone with a potential fever. Early on, mask and sanitizing alcohol productions were vastly expanded. Although the Taiwanese government regulated mask distribution at the outset in order to ensure a safe quantity, its boost in mask production soon became strong enough that mask control was lessened. In early January, Taiwan was already making 1.9 million masks a day, and by April it was making 15 million masks per day. By the end of March, these good governance approaches led to public approval for the CECC at almost 80% and approval for the president at 75% (Rowen, 2020).

Despite not being formally recognized as a country, Taiwan handled its response to COVID-19 arguably on par with, if not better than, the world's most developed sovereign states. The statistics speak for themselves; no other country can boast of the kind of low exposure or effective governmental response. Taiwan's success has not gone unnoticed. For the first time in decades, Taiwan began to pop up in media headlines as a COVID-19 success story, a positive, non-militarized framing of Taiwan rarely seen. The Taiwanese government has tried its best to capitalize on the good publicity to further Taiwan's normalization within the global order. "Mask Diplomacy" was a program started by the Taiwan government to send millions of masks abroad and resulted in dozens of countries making formal statements thanking Taiwan for their assistance (Woods, 2020). Countries have begun to see Taiwan in a new light, not as a military flashpoint, but as a contributing member to an imperiled global community that needs help fighting a horrible disease.

COVID-19 Success and Possibilities for Aiding Higher Education Sector

Taiwan was looking abroad for help with its higher education woes long before the COVID-19 pandemic. International integration and fostering of global consciousness have been primary drivers for higher education

reform in Taiwan for many years (Law, 2004). The “internationalization” of Taiwan’s university campuses has already been a chief goal of the Department of Higher Education (MOE Taiwan, 2012). In 2007, there were only about 18,000 international students enrolled in Taiwan universities (Chou, 2015). There have been attractive subsidies to encourage the enrollment of international students (MOE Taiwan, 2013) and a goal for 2020 to have 150,000 international students (Magaziner, 2016). Taiwan universities have been actively recruiting from the Philippines (NSYSU, 2018), and other Southeast Asian nations (DeAeth, 2019), as part of its “Southbound Policy,” which seeks to offset Taiwan’s bipolar reliance on either China or the US (MOFA, 2016). This policy has not been without incident, as there was an accusation of racism when students from these countries were touted as ideal for undesirable manual labor (Green, 2020). Despite this minor setback, a survey at the end of the 2020 school year indicated that 83.6% of departing international students wished to remain in Taiwan if given the opportunity, a figure up more than 10% from when the survey was conducted two years ago. More than 130,000 international students were registered in institutions of higher learning in Taiwan during the 2019–2020 school year and they indicated that the biggest factors influencing their desire to continue in Taiwan were the “safe and free environment” and the high standards of healthcare (Chen & Chiang, 2020a).

Taiwan’s success in handling COVID has already begun to be marketed as a reason to make it a destination for study (Study in Taiwan, 2020). The United States, the most popular destination for Taiwanese university students (Li, 2020), will see a decline in foreign student numbers (Anderson, 2020) due in part to COVID difficulties and also capricious government policies threatening the visa status of international students (Joung & Rosenthal, 2020; Treisman, 2020). Attracting and enrolling international students in most countries during the COVID-19 pandemic is arguably and fundamentally an unethical endeavor (Mason, 2020), but one that Taiwan can face with confidence and a clear conscience knowing that its universities are housed within a public health infrastructure that is capable of protecting visitors, as well as its population. In recognition of Taiwan’s unmatched success, Antipodean nations are considering a mutual COVID-19 “travel bubble” (Brady, 2020; Smith, 2020) despite concerns that lauding Taiwan’s success may incur the disapprobation of Beijing (Reuters, 2020). Similar preferential treatment could become normalized in the near future from countries wanting their students to have an international experience while simultaneously ensuring their access to quality healthcare.

Nye (2004) has written on the importance of “soft power” as the ability of a nation to achieve influence through “attraction” rather than coercion, and he and others have since argued that soft power and international exchange through higher education are interlinked (Li, 2018; Nye, n.d.) Taiwan would do well to consider joining other East Asian nations such as Japan (Sawahel, 2018), Singapore (Sheng-Kai, 2015), and China (Hartig, 2016; Luqiu &

McCarthy, 2019) who are looking to increase soft power initiatives through higher educational exchange. More soft power resources should be utilized rather than strictly relying on hard power military options (Lee, 2005), particularly as its soft power diplomacy is sorely underfunded (Cole, 2018). President Tsai's administration is beginning to focus more on its cultural soft power resources rather than fixating on political limitations (Rawnsley, 2014), as shown in its Southbound Policy and diversification of international alliances (Manantan, 2019). However, the possibility of higher education being used as a tool of government legitimization may be fraught as the relationship between the government and universities in Taiwan has been a complicated one, with universities gradually asserting their independence from state control over many decades of reforms (Law, 1995). Moreover, some question the efficacy of higher education as a tool for soft power, stating that students who travel to another country for study don't necessarily develop a higher opinion of their host country and, even if they do, they may not necessarily be in a position of power to influence the policies of their home country towards their host country regardless (Lomer, 2016). Admittedly, although culture and higher education may be the entry point for soft power influence, ultimately they need to result in political influence to be useful (Wang & Lu, 2008). However, by focusing on culture, Taiwan could usurp some of China's tremendous investment in public diplomacy, by arguing that Taiwan has all the admirable qualities of Chinese culture, without the problematic baggage of authoritarianism and human rights abuses (Tiezzi, 2016).

Although Taiwan's soft power influence on China is ultimately muted *in* China by extensive counter campaigns (Tsang, 2017), Taiwan could gain a much-needed victory in the realm of public relations with respect to other nations. China's very expensive investments in soft power initiatives are obviously not achieving their intended outcomes, as indicated by the need to completely rebrand their signature Confucius Institutes due to suspicion and expulsion from higher education institutions across the globe (Volodzko, 2015; Zhuang, 2020). Healthcare was already helping Taiwan to achieve soft power prominence (Lin, 2019), as even before its success in preventing the outbreak of COVID-19, Taiwan was already asserting its status in biomedical advancement and technology (Fulco, 2018a). Taiwan's success in COVID-19 has already spared the economy from much of the damage faced by other locations (Hille, 2020). Their success should be further leveraged to reap similar dividends in sparing their higher education sector from the impending COVID-19 devastation faced by many higher education systems (Adams, 2020; Murakami, 2020; Price, 2020).

Taiwan has successfully incorporated higher education into its COVID recovery plan. The possibility of Taiwan as one of the only countries in the world able to confidently offer face-to-face higher education classes during the pandemic offers an additional soft power asset for the island. Initially, in March, international students were not allowed back into Taiwan out of concern for potential pandemic spread. By August, however,

Taiwan's quarantine protocol had shown to be effective, and the ministry of education slowly began to let more students back into Taiwan. For the Fall 2020 term, international students were allowed back into Taiwan (Chen & Chiang, 2020b). This reflects not only Taiwan's confidence in its ability to trace and prevent COVID spread but its ability to push its international image as one of the only places where international students can study in person, not online. Students from China, however, were not allowed back in for the Fall term. The ministry was unclear about whether limiting Chinese students was from COVID spread-related concerns or geopolitical considerations. Despite this shortcoming, Taiwan still celebrated a higher education win by not only allowing in-person classes but also by including international students within their equation. Moreover, another way that President Tsai's administration indicated that it will leverage its COVID-19 soft power success, and the concurrent COVID-19 soft power disaster for China, with respect to higher education is through its commitment and investment in the U.S. sponsored Fulbright program. In response to the Trump administration's controversial decision to halt this important avenue of scholarly exchange (Redden, 2020), Taiwan has now pledged more than \$350,000 USD to increase the Taiwan Fulbright program, partly as a way to redirect and absorb some of the higher educational exchange that was originally intended for China (林, 2020). Even with the late-2020 joyous news of imminent and numerous vaccines on the way, and the possibilities for in-person learning to resume globally as early as 2021, Taiwan's COVID-19 success has nonetheless left an indelible mark on global consciousness. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront neglected areas of public infrastructure worldwide, and Taiwan has positioned itself as a global leader in advancing knowledge and strategies of how to safeguard vulnerable populations from contagious disease. Taiwan's higher education sector should be placed in lockstep with this global recognition, both as a means for alleviation of domestic education policy failures, but also to ensure increased international interconnectivity.

Conclusion

Taiwan's COVID-19 success offers its higher education sector a unique and necessary opportunity to increase enrollment and funding by reaching out internationally. Moreover, Taiwan's diplomatic isolation could experience a much-needed reprieve by capitalizing on the soft power credibility established through successfully navigating the perils of a potential public health disaster encountered by many other nations of otherwise stronger international standing. Taiwan's example and experiences in dealing with the infectious disease have much to offer the world. Therefore, its precarious higher education sector should be brought into consideration both to receive additional investment and extend the benefit to others. Taiwan can and should do this in a number of ways. First, Taiwan should continue to diversify

its international student portfolio by not only attracting students from the “South,” but also from wealthier nations from the global “North.” Taiwan’s commitment to bolster its capacity to foster Mandarin language education and increased investment in the Fulbright program is a step in the right direction with regard to its U.S. relationship, but the government should also consider similar such measures with other wealthier nations as well. Second, Taiwan should position itself as a gateway and regional hub for access to not only China but also to Southeast Asia and the wider Pacific region. Their COVID-19 success should be used as a way to market their expertise in the advancement of biotechnological and public health knowledge, and not solely as a place to study Mandarin. Third, Taiwan should use this opportunity to increase investment in and placements at *public* higher education institutions. The massification of privatized universities was a policy fraught, to begin with, and any advantages brought by current successes should not be misdirected towards these inherently problematic institutions. Taiwan has the opportunity now to revive and propel its public universities to avenues of international success and recognition that have long been the explicitly sought after, yet under-achieved, policy goals.

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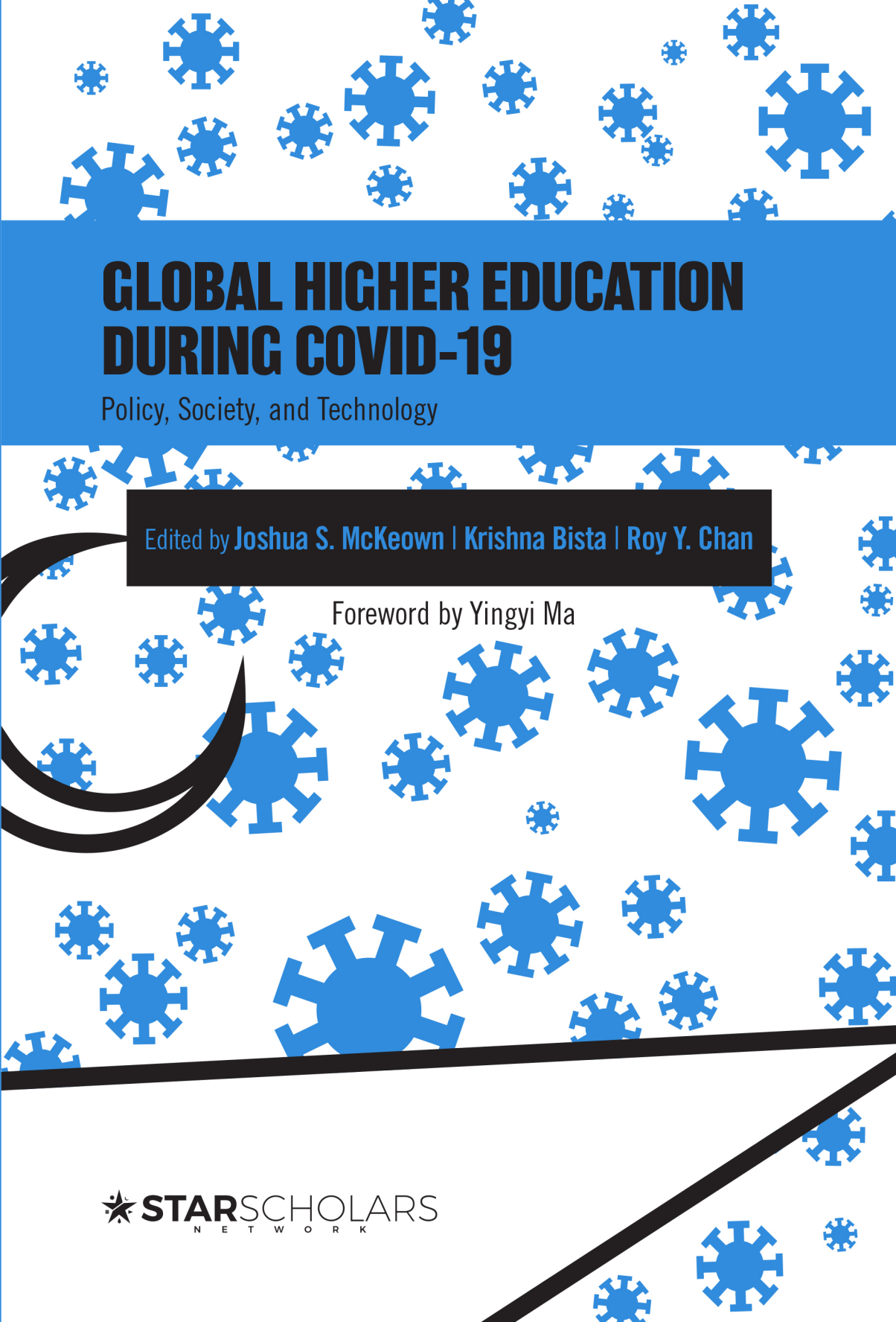
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GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

Policy, Society, and Technology

Edited by **Joshua S. McKeown** | **Krishna Bista** | **Roy Y. Chan**

Foreword by Yingyi Ma

Praises for this volume

COVID-19 pandemic and digital innovation are making unprecedented disruption to the global higher education landscape. These disruptions have increased academic discussion on how to reimagine the future of higher education after post-COVID 19. Thus, the book, *Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology* problematized these realities from a global policy context with policy recommendations on issues of racial justice, funding, technology among others. Therefore, I would like to congratulate the editors: *Joshua S. McKeown, Krishna Bista, and Roy T. Chan* for this excellent publication.

*Dr. KS Adeyemo, Senior Lecturer, University of Pretoria,
South Africa*

Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology is a highly recommended resource for higher education institution policymakers and educators around the globe. Not only does this book provide invaluable insights from higher education institution policymakers, educators, and students during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it also offers useful suggestions on dealing with possible challenges and seeking opportunities in future higher education.

*Dr. Misty So-Sum Wai-Cook, Centre for English Language
Studies, National University of Singapore*

It's a timely book reporting the most recent responses of international higher education across the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides providing the theoretical contributions, the book also offers practical implications for stakeholders, including policymakers, education managers and practitioners, international students, and parents.

*Dr. Hiep Pham, Director, Center for Research and Practice on
Education, Phu Xuan University, Vietnam*

Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology is timely and relevant providing a critically engaged reflective account of geographically diverse higher education institutions' response and practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. This book illuminates some of the current

impediments to higher education internationalization within the context of COVID-19 and provides insights into shared learning experiences that address new challenges to internationalisation imposed by the pandemic. A must read for international higher education specialists, practitioners, scholars and researchers.

*Dr. Tasmeeera Singh, Advisor, International Office,
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*

A worldwide phenomenon: Strategies and inspiration to address the challenges and opportunities for the new normal in the field of global higher education. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

*Dr. Daisy Kee Mui Hung, Associate Professor,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia*

The movement of people across borders furthered the spread of Covid-19. This inevitably impacted international higher education, which although not reducible to student mobility is its primary form. *Global Higher Education during COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology* is therefore a timely edited collection that begins to unpack the multifaceted impact the pandemic has had on higher education worldwide. It adds to the growing conversation on reimagining higher education. The collection will be valuable to current and future scholars of higher education, offering an important snapshot of policy and practice during the pandemic.

*Dr. Will Brehm, Lecturer of Education and International
Development, UCL Institute of Education, UK*

With the COVID-19 crisis having upended higher education around the world, this timely book provides a deep and much-needed analysis of the roles and responsibilities of universities going forward. It sheds light not only on the shared challenges countries have faced, but also reveals how the impact of the pandemic has varied in important ways across countries.

*Dr. Rajika Bhandari, Author/Advisor,
STAR Scholar Network, USA*

Case studies provide valuable baseline information for practitioners of higher education as the world begins to emerge from the pandemic. A must-read for those looking to understand how various regions reacted, and how institutional systems changed their models to survive.

*Dr. L. Amber Brugnoli, Assoc Vice-President and
Executive Director for Global Affairs
West Virginia University, USA*

This book presents a comprehensive and rigorous worldwide account of Covid-19 impact, challenges and new opportunities. It stands out as a ground-breaking valuable companion for all those involved in the future of internationalization in higher education.

*Dr. Elena de Prada Creo, Vice Dean for International Affairs
Facultad de CC. Empresariales y Turismo, Spain*

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We value linguistic diversity. Although many of the volumes that we publish are written in English, we welcome proposals in any language. More information at <https://starscholars.org/open-access/>

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Challenges COVID-19 and Higher

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Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and
Technology

Joshua S. McKeown, Krishna Bista, and Roy Y. Chan

Global Higher Education During COVID-19

Policy, Society, and Technology

Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology explores the impacts of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) for institutions of higher education worldwide. Specifically, this book responds to the growing need for new insights and perspectives to improve higher education policy and practice in the era of COVID-19. The sub-theme that runs through this book concerns the changing roles and responsibilities of higher education leaders and the demand to rethink global higher education post-COVID. Topics in this book include: international student experiences, pedagogical innovations through technology, challenges to existing organizational cultures and societal roles, international academic relations, and shifting national policy implications for global higher education.

With the increasing threat of COVID-19 on all aspects of the global economy and workforce, this book serves as an opportunity for teacher-scholars, policymakers, and university administrators to reconsider and reimagine their work and the role of higher education in a global context. The ultimate goal of this book is to provide a critical reflection on the opportunities and challenges brought by COVID-19 and how tertiary education systems around the world learn from each other to address them.

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Global Higher Education During COVID-19

Policy, Society, and Technology

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Joshua S. McKeown

Krishna Bista

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In memory of those who lost their lives during the COVID-19 global pandemic (as of August 2021):

4.38 Million

And to the 204 million heroes worldwide who recovered from the disease.



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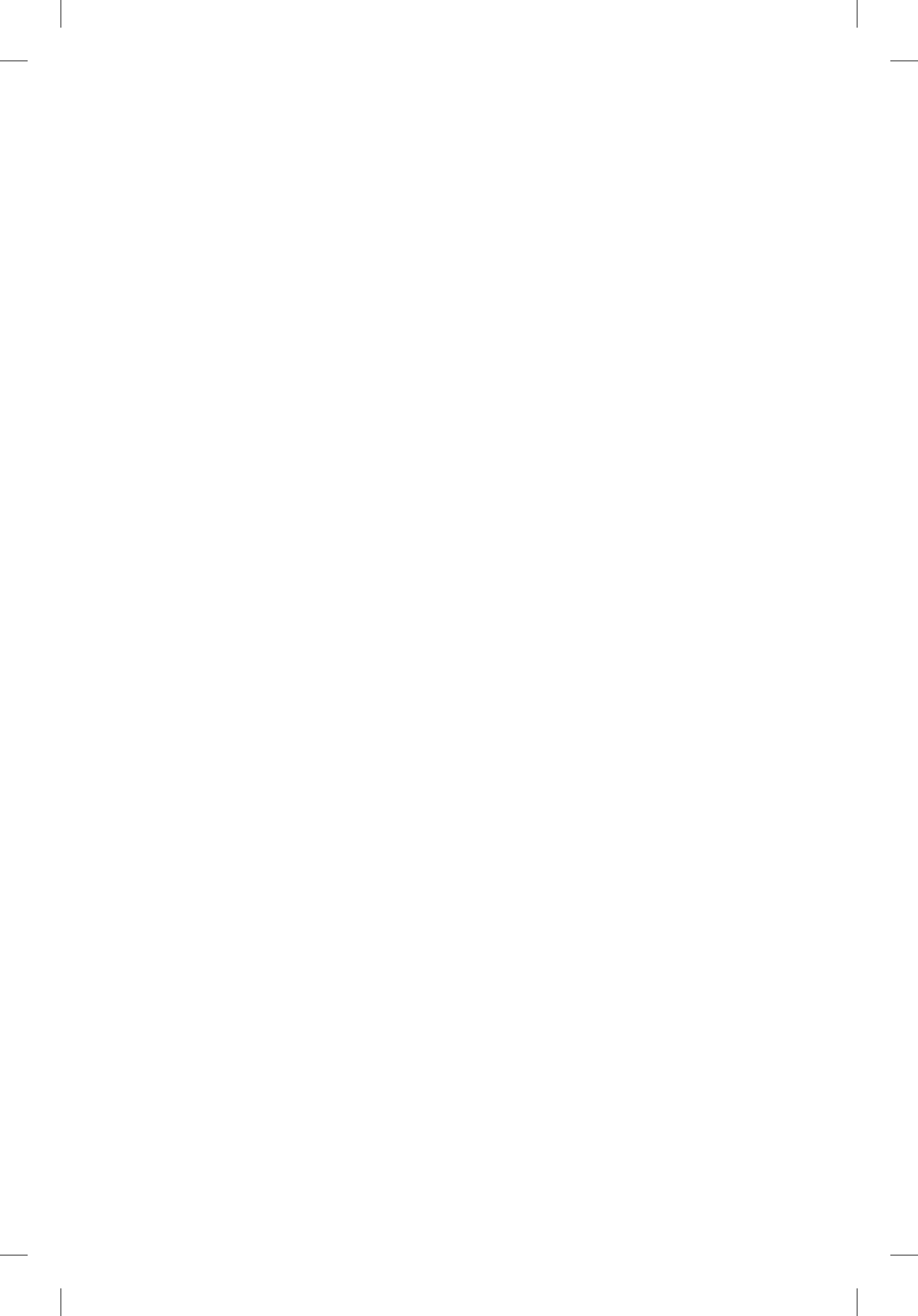
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Foreword

Yingyi Ma

COVID-19 is upending daily life, and its impact on global higher education (HE) is seismic. How to understand the impacts and improve policy and practice in the field of international HE during and post-COVID? Colleges and universities around the world are wondering about the above questions, and this book has provided a much-needed discussion for those questions.

The editors of this book have done a tremendous job in assembling a wide range of in-depth studies, both in terms of substantive topics and geographic regions. The topics range from the role of HE in society, crisis and innovation through technology in HE, international student experiences navigating the pandemic, national policies, international academic relations, public and private university responses, and the innovative engagement efforts of global HE institutions. Despite the expansive topics, various articles share the theme of exploring the traditional and changing roles of HE in society. Part I presents a few studies grounded in diverse national contexts that show how HE operates and adapts to society changed by the pandemic.

I commend the editors for their efforts to include a wide variety of contexts of HE institutions in different countries. While the impacts of COVID-19 on HE may be uncertain, what is certain is the increasing inequality among countries in dealing with the pandemic due to the unequal access to resources, technologies, and public health management. Part II in this book, in particular, focuses on the Global South (lower-income countries). The studies have shown the devastating impact on HE in countries of the global south due to the faltering economy during the pandemic as well as the incredible resilience of faculty and students in these countries to lessen the hardship through impressive innovations.

Technology-powered online education has been the quintessential innovation of 21st-century HE. Technology is liberating as much as limiting. COVID-19 has forced global HE to confront, leverage, and manage the power of technology to engage with students, experiment, and explore new pedagogy. The editors of this book have presented a wide range of empirically based studies in different HE settings to show that technology is indeed the double-edged sword, and it is incumbent on global HE leaders and educators to figure out innovative ways to use technology well, while fully recognizing and managing its limitations. Part III has been devoted to this theme.

This book is for anyone who is interested in HE in the global world, including but not limited to scholars, teachers, administrators, and students, and for any concerned citizens to reimagine and redesign the global HE in a new era.

Bio

Yingyi Ma is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of Asian/Asian American Studies. She is the Provost Faculty Fellow on internationalization at Syracuse University (New York), carrying the term between 2020 and 2022, where she leads and supports culturally responsive pedagogy and programs for international education and partnership. She received her Ph.D. in sociology from Johns Hopkins University in 2007. Ma's research addresses education and migration in the U.S. and China and she has published about 30 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, in addition to books. She is the author of *Ambitious and Anxious: How Chinese College Students Succeed and Struggle in American Higher Education* (Columbia University Press, 2021). This book has won multiple awards from the Comparative and International Education Association and has been featured in national and international news media such as *The Washington Post* and *Times Higher Education*. She is the co-editor of *Understanding International Students from Asia in American Universities: Learning and Living Globalization* (2017), which has won the honorable mention of the Best Book Award from the Comparative and International Education Association's Study Abroad and International Students Section.

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“Global Higher Education during COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology is a timely edited collection that begins to unpack the multifaceted impact the pandemic has had on higher education worldwide. It adds to the growing conversation on reimagining higher education.”

—**Dr. Will Brehm**

UCL Institute of Education, UK

“This book is a highly recommended resource for higher education institution policymakers and educators around the globe.”

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