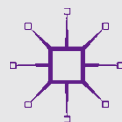


Gender and the
Changing Face of
Higher Education
in Asia Pacific

Edited by
Deane E. Neubauer
& Surinderpal Kaur



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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to introduce another volume in the Palgrave Macmillan International and Development Education book series. In conceptualizing this series we took into account the extraordinary increase in the scope and depth of research on education in a global and international context. The range of topics and issues being addressed by scholars worldwide is enormous and clearly reflects the growing expansion and quality of research being conducted on comparative, international, and development education (CIDE) topics. Our goal is to cast a wide net for the most innovative and novel manuscripts, both single-authored and edited volumes, without constraints as to the level of education, geographical region, or methodology (whether disciplinary or interdisciplinary). In the process, we have also developed two subseries as part of the main series: one is cosponsored by the East West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, drawing from their distinguished programs, the International Forum on Education 2020 (IFE 2020) and the Asian Pacific Higher Education Research Partnership (APHERP); and the other is a publication partnership with the Higher Education Special Interest Group of the Comparative and International Education Society that highlights trends and themes on international higher education. The issues that will be highlighted in this series are those focused on capacity, access, and equity, three interrelated topics that are central to educational transformation as it appears around the world today. There are many paradoxes and asymmetries surrounding these issues, which include problems of both excess capacity and deficits, wide access to facilities as well as severe

restrictions, and all the complexities that are included in the x Series Editors Introduction equity debate. Closely related to this critical triumvirate is the overarching concern with quality assurance, accountability, and assessment. As educational systems have expanded, so have the needs and demands for quality assessment, with implications for accreditation and accountability. Intergroup relations, multiculturalism, and gender issues comprise another cluster of concerns facing most educational systems in differential ways when one looks at the change in educational systems in an international context. Diversified notions of the structure of knowledge and curriculum development occupy another important niche in educational change at both the precollegiate and collegiate levels. Finally, how systems are managed and governed are key policy issues for educational policymakers worldwide. These and other key elements of the education and social change environment have guided this series and have been reflected in the books that have already appeared and those that will appear in the future. We welcome proposals on these and other topics from as wide a range of scholars and practitioners as possible. We believe that the world of educational change is dynamic, and our goal is to reflect the very best work being done in these and other areas. This volume meets the standards and goals of this series and we are proud to add it to our list of publications.

Los Angeles, CA, USA
Memphis, TN, USA

John N. Hawkins
W. James Jacob

This volume is dedicated to Professor John N. Hawkins whose vision and sound guidance has been a vital factor in the East–West Center engagement of higher education research, of which this volume is a part.

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In specific, we would like to acknowledge the support of Professor Mok Ha Ho, Vice President Lingnan University, for his long-standing encouragement and contribution of the physical means for this meeting to take place. Professor Mok has been a supporter from the beginning of the Asia Pacific Higher Education Research Partnership (APHERP) which is the organization through which this research seminar was organized and conducted. Professor Jin Jiang was also importantly instrumental in seeing to a wide range of important arrangements for the seminar and its aftermath.

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
	Deane E. Neubauer and Surinderpal Kaur	
2	Framing Gender Issues in Asia-Pacific Higher Education	9
	Denise Cuthbert, Molly N. N. Lee, Weiling Deng and Deane E. Neubauer	
3	Gender Issues in Asia Pacific Higher Education: Assessing the Data	23
	Deane E. Neubauer	
4	World-Class Universities and Female Leadership in the Academic Profession: Case Studies of East Asian Higher Education	41
	Hei-hang Hayes Tang	
5	Gender Equity Instrumentalism and (Re)Building the Nation Through Innovation: Critical Reflections on Women in STEM Policy in Australia	57
	Denise Cuthbert and Leul Tadesse Sidelil	

6	Gender and Higher Education in India: Negotiating Equity with Access	73
	Manasi Thapliyal Navani	
7	Thinking of Gender: On the Way to Emancipatory Higher Education in the Globalizing China	89
	Weiling Deng	
8	Gender, Higher Education, and Earnings: The Case of Hong Kong	107
	Linda Chelan Li and Iris Chui Ping Kam	
9	Gender and Leadership in Research Universities in Malaysia: The Case of University of Malaya	127
	Surinderpal Kaur	
10	Changing Landscape of the Malaysian Higher Education: An Overview of Women's Glass Ceiling	145
	Hazri Jamil, Ahmad Firdaus Ahmad Shabudin, Santhiram R. Raman and Ooi Poh Ling	
11	The Beginning of the End? Changes in Junior Colleges in Japanese Female Higher Education	167
	Shangbo Li	
12	Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions: Current Status and Key Issues in South Korea	181
	Minho Yeom	
13	Women in Higher Education: A Vase-Breaking Theory by Female Technologists in Taiwan	199
	Ya-Hsuan Wang	

14 The Glass Ceiling Facing Women Leaders in Thai Higher Education	213
Promptilai Buasuwan and Ratikorn Niyamajan	
15 Conclusion	231
Deane E. Neubauer and Surinderpal Kaur	
Index	237

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LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 8.1	Population aged 15 and over by sex and educational attainment (1996 vs. 2015) (<i>Source</i> Census and Statistics Department 2016, 63)	110
Fig. 8.2	Sex ratios of population aged 15 and over with post-secondary degree education [men per 1000 women] (<i>Source</i> Census and Statistics Department 2016, 66)	110
Fig. 8.3	Hourly wage levels and distribution of employees by sex and educational attainment (<i>Source</i> Census and Statistics Department 2016, 274–275)	116
Fig. 10.1	Number of students enrolled in Malaysian public HEIs from 2012 to 2016, by gender (in 1000) (<i>Source</i> The Statistics Portal, n.d.)	149
Fig. 10.2	Percentage of STEM enrollment in Malaysian HEIs for 2016 (the current data available) (<i>Source</i> Ministry of Higher Education Statistics 2016)	152
Fig. 10.3	Tertiary education, academic staff (% female) (<i>Source</i> UNESCO, n.d.; Ministry of Higher Education Statistic 2016)	157
Fig. 10.4	Gender distribution of senior positions (professor and associate professor) in Malaysia public universities (<i>Source</i> Ministry of Higher Education Statistic 2016)	158
Fig. 12.1	Percentage of Female Students in Higher Education Institutions (<i>Source</i> Ministry of Education and Korean Educational Development Institute (2017). <i>Statistical Yearbook of Education</i> (each year))	184

Fig. 12.2	Percentage of Female Graduate School Degree (<i>Source</i> Ministry of Education and Korean Educational Development Institute (2017). <i>Statistical Yearbook of Education</i> (each year))	185
Fig. 12.3	Percentage of Female Professors in Higher Education Institutions (<i>Source</i> Ministry of Education and Korean Educational Development Institute (2017). <i>Statistical Yearbook of Education</i> (each year))	186
Fig. 12.4	Percentage of Female Professors in four-year Universities (<i>Source</i> Ministry of Education and Korean Educational Development Institute (2017). <i>Statistical Yearbook of Education</i> (each year))	187
Fig. 13.1	Vase-breaking theory	209
Fig. 14.1	Female tertiary graduates (<i>Source</i> UNESCO 2016)	218
Fig. 14.2	Percentage of female graduates with doctoral degree equivalent (<i>Source</i> UNESCO 2016)	219
Fig. 14.3	Academic position by gender (<i>Source</i> Office of the Educational Council 2014)	219
Fig. 14.4	Comparing the number of women in HE leadership positions	220
Fig. 14.5	Numbers of female deans in social science and natural sciences	220

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Gender Gap Index	26
Table 3.2	Countries ranked by Index Gap score	27
Table 3.3	Percentage of students in tertiary education who are female	27
Table 3.4	Rank order of countries by percentage female	28
Table 3.5	Percentage of female graduates in tertiary education	29
Table 3.6	Rank order of countries by % female graduates	29
Table 3.7	Percentage of female students enrolled in programs	30
Table 3.8	Percent graduates who are female by field	30
Table 3.9	Comparison of % female enrollment in selected fields with % female completion	31
Table 3.10	Recommendations and good practices for addressing gender disparities in agricultural programs in higher education	37
Table 4.1	Case-study universities as world-class universities in East Asia	50
Table 4.2	Presence of women leaders at various levels	51
Table 4.3	Presence of women leaders from STEM and non-STEM backgrounds	52
Table 6.1	Stage wise enrolment of students (percent to grand total)	80
Table 8.1	Percentage of female students enrolled in government-funded higher education programs in 2015/16	111
Table 8.2	Students enrolled in programs funded by University Grants Committee by academic program category and sex	111
Table 8.3	Labor force participation rates by sex	112
Table 8.4	Labor force participation rates by educational attainment (with post-secondary degree) and sex	113

Table 8.5	Employed persons by selected industries, educational attainment (with post-secondary level), and sex	113
Table 8.6	Median monthly employment earnings of employed persons and median hours of work by sex	115
Table 8.7	Median monthly employment earnings and medium hourly wage (MHW) in community, social, and personal services by sex	117
Table 8.8	Estimated number of female in Office of the President, Council, and Senate women in the eight government-funded universities in Hong Kong (as of October 2016)	122
Table 10.1	Total male and female intake, enrollment, and output in Malaysian public and private HEIs (public university, private HEI, polytechnic and community college), 2016	149
Table 10.2	Women researchers in Malaysia, (%)	155
Table 11.1	Numbers of junior colleges	169
Table 11.2	The number of university students and junior college students and the share of female students (2001–2016)	170
Table 11.3	Composition by discipline of four-year universities and junior colleges students (May 1, 2001)	175
Table 13.1	Object of study	203
Table 13.2	BEM's gender role scale results by university teachers	204
Table 13.3	BEM's gender role scale results by university students	205
Table 13.4	BEM's gender role scale results	205
Table 14.1	Fields of study by gender in Thailand	217



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Deane E. Neubauer and Surinderpal Kaur

This volume of essays was developed from a seminar held at Lingnan University, Hong Kong, on October 2016. The contributors were representatives from a higher education policy organization named the Asia Pacific Higher Education Research Partnership (APHERP). The modality of this group has been to develop two “seminars” per year, convened somewhere in Asia, organized by a common thematic which in turn is “triggered” by a brief concept paper to which participants are encouraged to frame their contributions including contesting any of its presumptions. The relative success of this methodology has been demonstrated over a number of years and served to organize the development of the 2016 meeting focused on gender issues. The primary substance of that so-called concept paper appears in a somewhat revised version as Chapter 2 of this volume. In addition, those contributing to this effort are also encouraged, if they are so moved, to develop their own

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independent contributions to the seminar and its subsequent publication. For this volume, this has been the case for the additional chapters provided by Neubauer, Deng and Cuthbert. The overall organization of the book in general follows the major themes introduced within Chapter 2.

In the following chapter, Neubauer examines a range of empirical studies conducted throughout the region over the past several years and in doing so seeks to illustrate with these studies a range of issues introduced in the previous chapter. Additionally, he looks at several empirical studies that go beyond the mere reporting of the data to suggest methodologies and pathways that HEIs and ministries within the region could pursue to further meet patterns of inequality frames in and around gender issues. In seeking out such studies, he has located several that go beyond the manner in which gender is framed within specific institutional contexts, even as they are distributed over broad organizing categories such as gender distributional issues across academic fields and endeavors. In one such study, he cites a broad range of factors that the authors offer as “enabling practices” that HEIs of widely varying hues could pursue to promote greater gender equity. In yet another, he cites an intense study of good practices that may be promoted to address a wide range of gender discriminators within Agriculture, Education and Training programs to render them both more available to women as well as also more effective in their successful pursuit of degrees and placement. In a final study cited, he reviews recent research on the relative success rate by gender of both publication and grant submissions when submission processes are both open and blind, studies that document the extent to which gender distinctions can and do affect the relative academic success rates of candidates and participants in all aspects of such structures.

Hei-hang, Hays Teng follows the more generalized chapters with the first of others that focus on gender issues within a national or regional setting, in this case focusing on better-know “world class” universities including: National Taiwan University, the National University of Singapore, Peking University, Seoul National University, the University of Hong Kong and the University of Tokyo. In this review, he underlines a major issue that is to be repeated throughout subsequent chapters, namely the relatively constant phenomenon of a significant gender imbalance in higher leadership positions, and he explores the range of factors that lead female academics at all levels to experience greater

relative burdens within the academy than that of their male counterparts, of which family and household responsibilities continue to loom large.

In Chapter 5, Denise Cuthbert and Leul Tadessi focus on a theme that is constant through the whole of the volume, namely the role of women within Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. While the relative imbalance of women in such fields appears to stretch across countries and their various levels of HEIS, in this particular instance the authors focus on the specific needs Australia has had over the last several decades in building out its innovation sector to remain an internationally competitive economy. Whereas historically, the country has focused actively and significantly on in-migration to fill its growing needs for such talent, over more recent years in a climate in which an “ideas economy” is viewed as a necessary alternative to its “historical dependence on extractive industries” specific governmental policy has sought both to underscore the importance of STEM fields within graduate education and to emphasize increasing both the recruitment and success of women in such fields. The authors provide an extensive review of the “reframing” of such issues within Australian HE.

In the following chapter, Manasi Thapliyal Navani provides an extensive overview of the HE system in India, which like China, finds itself in the midst of a significant and continuing increase in the number HEIs and the postsecondary sector itself, fueled by a continuing increase in the number of students engaged in both tertiary and postsecondary institutions. This transition has been further complicated by India’s aggressive embrace of economic liberalization since the 1990s, resulting in a society that continues to be further challenged by continued demographic expansion. Despite the country’s overall renewed attention to gender education spurred by the reality of the large number of illiterate women in the country at its “neo-liberal” turn, two daunting challenges remain: The continued disparity between genders within higher education and especially at higher levels, and that affecting women from the most disadvantaged sections of communities to reach higher education who at that attainment “will find fewer public institutions to sustain and support them through their educational journeys.” These themes are played out in a detailed analysis of contemporary higher education in India, replete with abundant supporting empirical data.

Chapter 7 provided by Weiling Deng complements many of the critical perspectives introduced in the preceding chapter and allows them to become a defining framework for the reach across the many decades

since the late Qing Dynasty. This becomes the location point for the emergence of “the women’s problem” in modern China which continues to play out in its current manifestations within the society as a whole and in this case, specifically within higher education environments. As the dynamic of the creation and articulation of sexual differences and gender continues through the extraordinary interactive complexities of modern China, fueled by the forces of intense economic development and a continued process of emergent political definition and institutional change, difference, gender and education become a complex vortex for the realization of new and changing notions of all three. Deng provides both a historical and critical setting for her analysis that seeks to provide the reader with useful perspectives and tools for comprehending both the reach and significance of such changes as well as emphasizing both the importance of recognizing gender as a social construction that in many cultural settings (echoed in other Asia settings as well) is contested with its historical conflation of a sexual differentiation.

The subsequent chapter by Kam and Li provides another window on gender and society, examining the relationship of earnings, HE and gender within the case study of Hong Kong. They point out that in the past several decades the enrollment of female students enrolled in Hong Kong HE has come to exceed that for males. However, in a pattern that, again, is observable throughout the rest of Asia and Australia, they fare less well in both employment opportunities and placement, and in employment earnings. In reviewing these data for the past several decades for Hong Kong, they focus on both the trends that have emerged and seek to explore the kinds gaps that exist in employment earnings for women as well as identify other factors that also affect employment.

In Chapter 9, Surinderpal Kaur reprises a theme that has occurred previously in multiple chapters, namely the gender imbalance prevalent in HE leadership roles, in this instance those within Malaysian HE. In line with data reported previously in other chapters, women are “far from being underrepresented” in those structures. Indeed, in line with data reported in previous chapters in many respects Malaysia is a leader among Asian countries in the numerical representation of women across a variety of fields, most especially social sciences, linguistics and business. This trend includes the nation’s leading universities. However, this is not the case in both the upper professorial ranks or within top university leadership positions. In this chapter, Kaur seeks to provide both a broad but inquiring frame for the complex relationships between leadership and gender.