Creating World-Class Universities in developing countries

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Natural lab experiment: U. of Malaya vs. NUS

- early 1960s: 2 branches of University of Malaya
- today:
  - NUS ranked # 19
  - UM only # 192
outline of the presentation

- defining the world-class university
- the path to becoming a world-class university
defining the WCU

- self-declaration
- reputation
- rankings
The University of South Carolina is a rising star in higher education. What's behind the momentum?

- More than $50 million committed through the Faculty Excellence Initiative and Centenary Plan to recruit 250 top faculty
- Our new 500-acre InnoVista research district, based on a "new urbanism" design, and representing a $250-million investment in excellence to solve problems and better society
- The new $22-million Arnold School of Public Health Research Center, a catalyst for leading research on childhood obesity, cancer, health disparities, and environmental threats
- The nation's only NSF-funded Fuel Cell Research Center, and a major research and funding push to build energy independence through alternative and more eco-friendly energy sources
- No. 1 rankings for international business and exercise science (U.S. News & World Report and Academic Analytics)
- A growing national recognition. The Wall Street Journal recently included the University as one of eight flagships experiencing rising academic success, and The New York Times reports that South Carolina is considered the leader in driving the potential of the hydrogen economy.

Momentum. The University of South Carolina has it. Explore more at www.sc.edu/momentum.
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia’s definition of a world class university:

- culture of excellence as a learning organization (meritocracy, exploration and creativity)
- top notch staff members
- financially able and well equipped
- smart partnership with industry and other stakeholders
- exemplary reputation and credibility (research excellence and quality of graduates)
- high quality student intake
results and performance

• top graduates
• leading edge research
• technology transfer
critical dimensions

- concentration of talent
- abundant resources
- favorable governance
Characteristics of a World-Class University
Alignment of Key Factors

Source: Elaborated by Jamil Salmi
U. Of Malaya vs. NUS

- talent
  - UM: selection bias in favor of Bumiputras, less than 5% foreign students, no foreign professors
  - NUS: highly selective, 43% of graduates students are foreign, many foreign professors
U. Of Malaya vs. NUS (II)

- finance
  - UM: $118 million, $4,053 per student
  - NUS: $750 million endowment, $205 million, $6,300 per student

- governance
  - UM: restricted by government regulations and control, unable to hire top foreign professors
  - NUS: status of a private corporation, able to attract world-class researchers (incl. Malaysians)
France and Germany

• low in the rankings
• civil service status and mentality
• no tradition of competition
Germany

- “Excellence initiative”
  - competition
  - additional resources

- governance reform
France

- world rankings have forced to ask questions
- dual structure
  - “Grandes Ecoles” with best students, more resources and favorable governance, but no research
  - universities: “second best” students, but research vocation
- autonomy reform
outline of the presentation

• defining the world-class university

• the path to becoming a world-class university
the path to glory

- upgrading existing institutions
- mergers
- creating a new institution
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Corey Sandler
upgrading approach

- less costly
- challenge of creating a culture of excellence
- focus on governance
mergers approach
creating a new institution

• higher costs

• getting the right culture from the beginning
who takes the initiative?

- role of the State
  - favorable regulatory framework
  - funding

- role of the institutions
  - leadership
  - strategic vision
  - culture of excellence
Clemson University

- land grant university focused on agricultural and mechanical crafts
- changing region
- strategic partnership with BMW to become premier automotive and sports car research U
- aims to become #20
conclusion

- what kind of institution?
- added value?
- alignment
- time dimension