

CHANGE LEADERSHIP IN UNIVERSITIES – THE CONFUCIAN DIMENSION

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Abstract

The intensified competition of the global, market-based knowledge economy requires changed leadership practices in universities and colleges everywhere in the world. National policy makers increasingly see knowledge as the core resource and dynamic of modern economies, and prerequisite for nations' global competitiveness. The main source of productivity and competitiveness is knowledge production and production of human capital. Universities are seen as "power stations" for these production needs. By implication, the quality of their leadership turns crucial. At the core of organizational change is the quest for a renewed capacity to make relevant decisions about visions and missions, find adequate strategies for production, marketing and ways of restructuring available resources. On this backdrop it has turned interesting to wonder whether the leadership of universities located in "Confucian cultural Lands" has an advantage in the increasing global competition. Due to certain characteristics of Confucianism, university leaders in these countries may prove more effective and efficient than their competitors in other world regions in terms of changing their organizations to become more effective means for national policies. In this paper dominant university rationales are presented. Then university leadership competence is attempted linked to Confucian ideas, and it is discussed whether this is a clear-cut advantage, or, if these ideas also might be counter-productive...