

Students' Participation in Higher Education Governance in Mainland China

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Abstract : Universities have been one of the most important institutions in society. They shoulder the responsibility to do research and teach further generations. Therefore, the governance of universities has been a heated topic and has been learned for years. Recently, it witnessed great changes, for example, the massification of Higher Education, marketization, and privatization. As a result, more stakeholders are involved in the governance of Higher Education, among which students' participation in HE becomes more important. However, the research about students' participation in HE governance in China is not sufficient, and the situation requires improvement. The paper aims to not only fill in the research gap but also put forward practical suggestions to follow the world's trend of HE governance. The methodology of this paper is literature analysis with comparative studies between China and western countries. The research points out that the current situation of students' participation in HE governance is unideal due to problems in three fields, values and concepts, mechanisms and systems, as well as student unions. Then, the policy implications are based on these reasons: universities should highlight students' status, respect their subjectivity and adhere to the service awareness; the government requires to build a sound legal system while universities should establish complete mechanisms and systems; student unions should be encouraged by universities to take part in HE governance affairs with sufficient funds, and autonomy. On the one hand, this paper is a further application of four rationales (consumerism, political-realism, communitarian, democracy, and consequentialism) created by Luescher-Mamashela for the inevitable trend of students' participation in HE governance. On the other hand, the suggestions it made benefit the students, universities, and society in practical ways.

Keywords : students' participation, higher education governance, Chinese higher education, university power

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