



<b>Title</b>	<b>University and College Admission Policies and Practices in Hong Kong: Opportunities and Challenges in Moving from Secondary to Tertiary Education</b>
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<b>Citation</b>	<b>The Annual ERI-Net Meeting of UNESCO Bangkok, Bangkok, Thailand, 17-19 October 2013</b>
<b>Issued Date</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>URL</b>	<b><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10722/204532">http://hdl.handle.net/10722/204532</a></b>
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**University and College Admission  
Policies and Practices in Hong Kong:  
Opportunities and Challenges in  
Moving from Secondary to Tertiary  
Education**



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# HK: Basic Facts



- ∞ 1997 - reintegrated into China, but retains jurisdictional autonomy as SAR (including independent education system)
- ∞ Intensity of global flows and networking (3<sup>rd</sup> in the GAWC)
- ∞ 7 million people and 13% of youth in the age of 15-24 year old
- ∞ Declining youth population and increasing immigration (mainland and Asia)
- ∞ 3M households (a world's most expensive real estate)
- ∞ GDP per capita = approx. \$40,000USD

# HK: Basic Facts



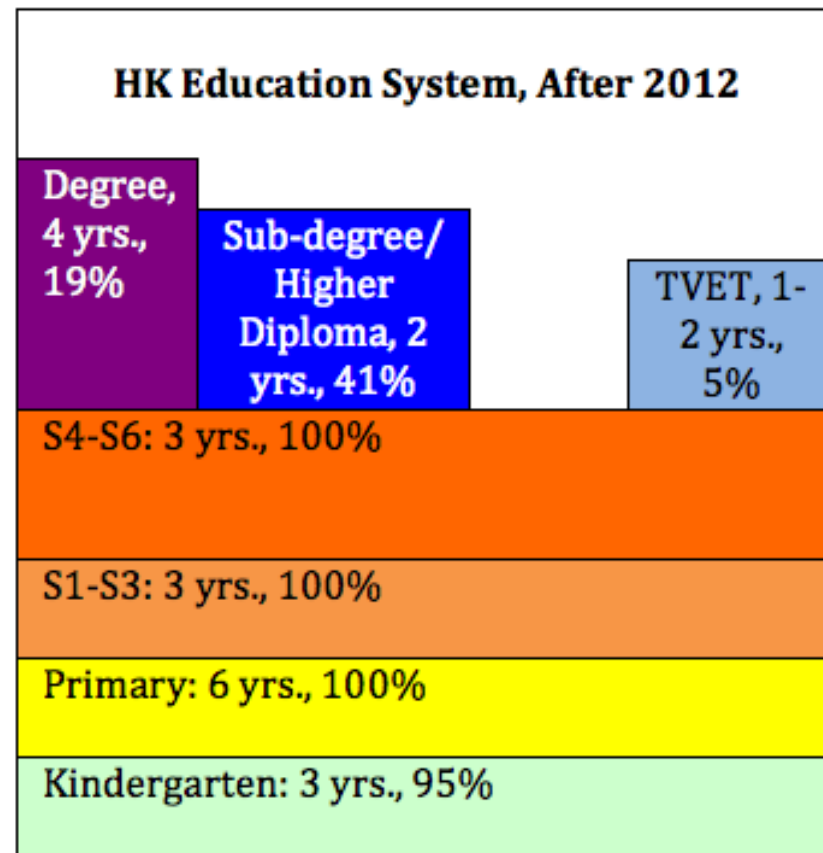
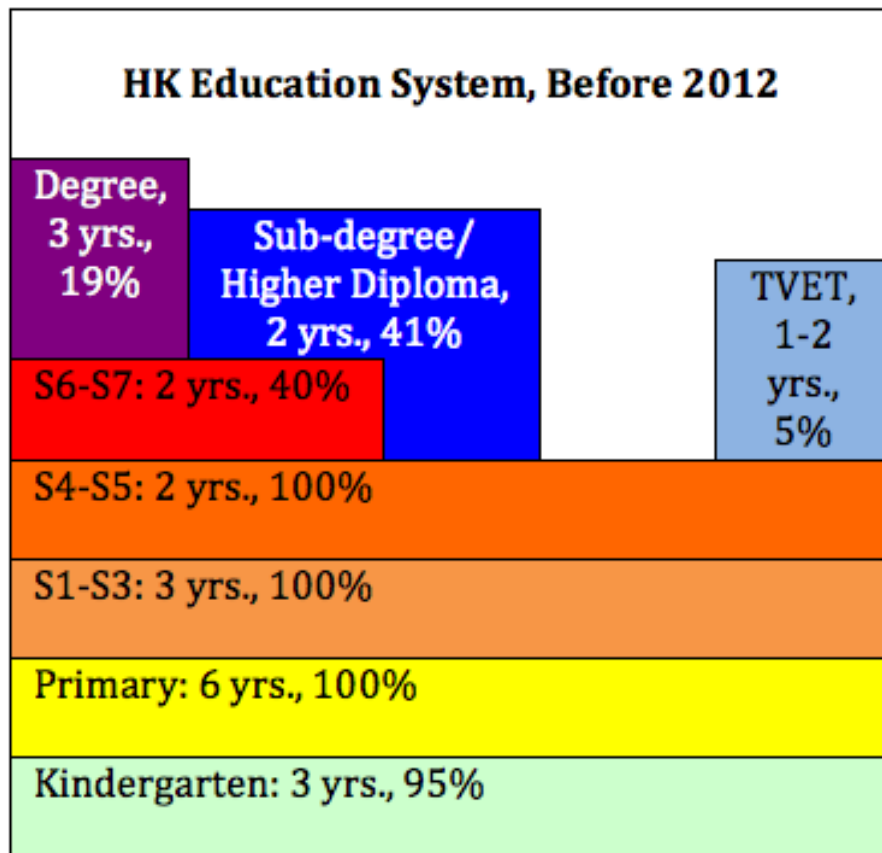
- ⌘ c. 1,100 schools (governmental, direct subsidy, catholic, international)
- ⌘ 12 universities (8 UGC funded) and 21 [community] colleges (12 university-affiliated)
- ⌘ Access: 19% - universities + 41% - sub-degree colleges (2000-2006)

# HK: Changing Context



- ❧ Highly competitive exam-oriented education system with a mega private tutoring sector
- ❧ Cultural predispositions for higher learning (Confucian cultural heritage) and competition (Marginson 2013)
- ❧ Global network of cities - high income jobs and social status require multimodal competencies (e.g., multi-lingual, multi-cultural)
- ❧ In a move from elite to mass higher education – making local educational industry (hub) more internationalized to increase quality and reduce the outflow of local talent
- ❧ 33,000 young people leave HK annually to study abroad

# HK: Changing Context



# Research: Questions



- ❧ How does HK higher education system use admission policies and practices to mitigate tensions between elite and mass higher education?
- ❧ What do universities and colleges gain and lose while trying to reconcile these tensions?

# Research: Data



- ❧ Current literature
- ❧ Institutional materials (admissions web-sites)
- ❧ Participants' (co-authors') observations (teachers, students; local, international)



# Research: Sample

## UGC-FUNDED UNIVERSITIES

University of Hong Kong

Hong Kong University of Science and Tech

Chinese University of Hong Kong

Lingnan University

## UNI-AFFILIATED COLLEGES

HKU SPACE

## PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Open University of Hong Kong

## INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

Caritas Institute of Higher Education

Hang Seng Management School

# Findings: Current Pressures



- ❧ Where do students come from?
- ❧ EMI vs. CMI (Cantonese and Mandarin)
- ❧ British & Chinese heritages, and US-ranking generated pressures
- ❧ Uneven opportunities: school autonomy and differences in curricula, resources, governance, cultures
- ❧ HKDSE as a unified graduating exam (away from HKCEE and HKALE): 4 core – English, Chinese, Mathematics and Liberal Studies, and 1 elective - Economics, Geography, Biology

# Findings: Admissions Eligibility

## UGC-FUNDED and PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

### Scores:

Level 3 – English and Chinese  
Level 2 – other subjects  
Differentiated elective scores  
(decided by schools and programs)

### Qualities:

Leadership  
Communicative Skills  
Creativity  
Interactivity

## UNI-AFFILIATED COLLEGES

### Scores:

Level 2 – English and Chinese  
Level 2 – other subjects

### Qualities:

Less important  
Second chance – mature students

## INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

### Scores:

Level 3 – English and Chinese  
(transition to Bachelor's)

# Findings: Application Process

## UGC-FUNDED UNIVERSITIES

Online JUPAS and non-JUPAS  
(December)

Mainland China applicants  
(early June – gaokao)

## PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

“First come-First served”

## UNI-AFFILIATED & INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

Online “E-App”  
Walk-In Admissions  
Recruitment events in Beijing,  
Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou  
By mail

July –mid August  
(after HKDSE results) and ongoing

# Findings: Screening Mechanisms

## UGC-FUNDED UNIVERSITIES

Highest scores = scholarships

“First Choice”

Follow-up interviews

Focus group discussions

## PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

More flexible

## UNI-AFFILIATED & INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

Interviews (with second chance)

Immediate offers at the recruitment sites

# Findings: Admission Notifications

## UGC-FUNDED UNIVERSITIES

Can be immediate

January – August  
(some in December)

JUPAS main round – early August  
and confirm - by end August

Mainland China - July

Appeal to HK Examinations and  
Assessment Authority

## PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

More flexible

## UNI-AFFILIATED & INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

No specific schedules

Self-financing/ongoing process

# Findings: Race or Balance?

## UGC-FUNDED UNIVERSITIES

**Both**

**Rankings vs. Fairness**

**Scores vs. Personal Qualities**

**Increasingly, leadership predispositions**

**Balanced messaging of expectations**

**Balancing scholarships and self-financing**

**Encouraging ambitious students with disabilities**

## PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

**No rankings**

**Emphasizing service to professional communities**

## UNI-AFFILIATED & INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

**No rankings**

**No competitiveness**

**Emphasis on professional skills**

**Social responsibility**

**Self-financing**

**Disability students are cautioned about facility capacities**

# Dilemmas and Further Resaerch



- ❧ **Scores vs. Qualities:** institutional variability in admissions (across public/private research and teaching universities; sub-degree colleges; faculties, departments, programs)
- ❧ **Institutional** capacities, missions and resources vs. **students'** capacities, expectations and resources
- ❧ **Admission** numbers vs. **employability** results
- ❧ Student **mobility** vs. retention of local talents at the time of global **competition** for talent
- ❧ The increasing need for more **sophisticated** student advising centers, career counseling services, and alumni networks at universities and colleges



# THANK YOU!



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