

football
(3), 265–

tion, 1(6),

the MBA.

donors

leges and

behaviour.

college:
view, 20,

lications.

unteers,
7(3), 20–

n, 23(2),

PUBLIC-PRIVATE EQUILIBRIUM: BALANCING GROWTH WITH QUALITY AND EQUITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

VIKNESWARAN NAIR, MOLLY LEE, THIAN LOK BOON, PARVINDER KAUR, THAVAMALAR THURAIKINGAM AND MAHADEVAN SUPRAMANIAM

Introduction

The idea of Malaysia becoming a regional education hub was first conceptualised at the Globalising Higher Education in Malaysia Conference in 2006 with its genesis in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (Down, 2009). Since then, similar concepts has mushroomed across the globe, namely the Dubai Knowledge Village (Kazim, 2013), Education City in Qatar (Education City, 2014), and Singapore's Global Schoolhouse (Ng & Tan, 2010). Over the years, the number of public and private universities offering higher education has increased rapidly in Malaysia to cater for the Ministry of Education target of 100,000 students studying at its higher education institutions (Ministry of Higher Education, 2010).

Although Malaysia's target to become an educational hub is lofty, the reality may make achieving it extremely difficult. Finding the right balance between public and private institutions of higher learning to coexist and contribute towards the vision of the nation as outlined in the Malaysian Higher Education Strategic Plan (Ministry of Higher Education, 2010) has proven to be a challenge. Malaysia's higher education system has some formidable hurdles to jump before it can consider making serious inroads into becoming a hub of any real note.

Privatisation of Higher Education

Financing higher education through private gain is believed to be the most effective way to maintain public good (Longanecker, 2001). Neoliberalists believe that the privatisation of public utilities can ensure quality, innovation, efficiency, and institutional flexibility (Sharma, 2012). However, there are others who