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Development and Philosophy of Higher Education of Public Universities in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Globalisation, internationalisation, market forces and western conception about philosophy of higher education have exerted much influence to make believe that the philosophical orientation of public universities mainly revolves around academic and market-based philosophy of higher education. This conception has resulted in tendencies to conceptualise and treat universities to be the same without due recognition of their philosophical differences. This paper intends to demonstrate the existence of multiple philosophies among the Malaysian public universities and challenge the presently accepted view of public universities' philosophical orientation focusing just on academic and market-based philosophy. Analysis on relevant documents and universities' institutional websites, found that public universities in Malaysia are pivoted on public philosophy of higher education that is uniquely inherent to the universities. This implies that Malaysia uses diverse higher education system. Understanding diversity of higher education philosophy of public universities is crucial because diverse philosophies of higher education serve different needs of multiple racial groups, types of students, industries, and global societies. Hence, the performance measurement system must be flexible enough to accommodate the varying and diverse philosophies of higher education in such a way that whilst these universities perform according to the needs of the nation, they are also allowed to preserve their original philosophy of higher education. Collectively, all of these universities positively contribute to the performance of Malaysia higher education system.

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INTRODUCTION

An establishment of a university is often connected to the very principle or philosophy of higher education that a university intends to pursue. The philosophy of choice is then cascaded down into the various areas such as teaching and learning, research, industrial linkages and community engagements (Mwangga, 2011; Scott, 2006). Massive development of higher education through globalisation and internationalisation (to name a few) has exerted much pressure to make believe that the philosophical orientation of public universities mainly revolves around academic and market-based philosophy of higher education.

Given the diversity of universities and possibilities of having different philosophical paradigms, belief systems and views, the belief that public universities' philosophical orientation revolves around just academic and market-based philosophy requires a further analysis. As is, there are various types of universities with different governance mechanisms, varying sizes and academic programmes on offer, suggesting the existence of diversity within the sphere of higher education. Although it is possible, it is hard to imagine that all these higher education institutions have succumbed to the pressure of the marketisation. Thus, it is the objective of this paper to demonstrate that even within the seemingly similar higher education environment, there are possibilities that multiple philosophies could be at work.

Academic and Market-Based Philosophy of Higher Education:

Blackmore, Brennan and Zipin (2010) claimed that wide discussions have been made about the underlying philosophical underpinning behind university establishment. While, this is largely true, yet, closer investigation on literature found that many of the debates (such as by Aldila, 2007; Birnbaum, 2004; Carnegie and Tuck, 2010; de Boer and Goedegebuure 2001; Jensen, 2001; Stensaker, 2012) in this area, revolves mainly around

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academic philosophy of higher education and market-based philosophy of higher education. The former, concerns on knowledge production through teaching and research activities (Carnegie and Tuck, 2010; Scott, 2006). Within the context of academic philosophy, production of knowledge is meant for scholarship purposes (Birnbaum, 2004; Carnegie and Tuck, 2010). Meanwhile, market-based philosophy of higher education is now, emerged as an acceptable paradigm across the globe. Market philosophy of higher education concerns on production of knowledge via teaching, research and public service, mainly for economic prosperity. In the age of globalisation, these activities become internationalised (Scott, 2006). The main reason for this is that, within market perspective, knowledge is no longer confined to the local needs, but must reach global societies (Scott, 2006).

Society has always accepted that the philosophy behind university establishment would be; academic and market-based philosophy of higher education. Nevertheless, in contrast to this narrow prism, the history and current observation on the idea behind the establishment of public universities suggested that, there is wide variety of higher education philosophies behind the establishment of public universities. This appreciation, however, has not been properly recognised and discussed. This therefore, resulted in tendencies to conceptualise and treat universities to be the same.

The Philosophy of Higher Education of Public Universities:

Literatures advocate that public universities were established during the emergence of the German state in the 19th century. Since then, the government-owned universities became a norm across the globe. History shows that many of public universities were established and pivoted on public philosophy of higher education that is uniquely inherent to the universities. Public philosophy of higher education concerns on government intervention in the provision of higher education (Muwagga, 2011). This is so because, government is the legal entity that is able to safeguard the interest of the nation, as well as to champion the powerless group in a society and to tackle equity and equality issue (Muwagga, 2011; Scott, 2006; UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2014).

The government of Germany, for instance, built their university system in the 19th century mainly for nation building purpose (Borhan, 2009). The main aim was to idealise the *Bildung* (self-formation) or citizenship ideology (an obedient and loyal citizens) in order to create a harmonious relationship between German and the state (Borhan, 2009). While, the passing of the Morrill Act of 1862 by the federal government of the US, has led to the establishment of state-owned public university known as land-grant university in the US. The establishment of this type of institution was meant for public service purpose (service to the public of the nation-state) (Spanier, 1999; Woodward, 2009). The prime motive of setting up this type of institution was to serve the regional needs of the people of the state (Spanier, 1999; Woodward, 2009). While, far less heard university; Scotland; has developed public institution of higher learning in the 18th century. Creating a universal public education which was meant for increasing access to university, social mobility of the population of the state, and national capacity building, were the main reason for having this type of institution in Scotland (Fallis, 2005).

While, in today's setting, it is found that many of public universities, while embracing market idealism, is still keeping the philosophy of higher education that is uniquely inherent to the universities. Cai (2009; 2012) stated that, many Chinese universities still valued the Chinese philosophy of higher education; (the *ti*; Chinese or the Confucianism moral, values), and the the *yong* values (the Western values on science and technology) (Cai, 2009; 2012). In Uganda, Muwagga (2011) in his study, found that different universities are pivoted on public, religious, and the community philosophy of higher education. While, Marginson (2002), stated that, public universities in Australia while embracing the contemporary philosophy of higher education, these institutions are still hinge on the state nation-building mission (Marginson, 2002). Similarly, observation on the development of public universities in Malaysia, suggesting that, different public universities have different philosophical orientations.

Public Universities in Malaysia:

Public universities in Malaysia are statutory body, which are owned, funded and governed by the federal government. According to Siti Naaishah, Shad Saleem, and Nazura (2010), Malaysia public universities are separate entity from the government and not a sub-unit-department of the Ministry of Education (MoE). The governance of majority of public universities in Malaysia is placed under the University and University College Act (UUCA) (Siti Naaishah *et al*. 2010). Unlikely, UIA was established under the Company Act. While UiTM, was established under the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Act 173.

Currently there are 20 public universities in Malaysia. All of the institutions are categorised into research, focused and comprehensive university. Table 1, shows that five public universities, namely Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) are placed under the research university (RU) category. Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) are grouped as the comprehensive university. While others public universities namely Universiti Utara Malaysia, (UUM), Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

(UPSI), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UteM), and followed by others are listed in the focused university category.

Development And Philosophical Orientation Of Malaysia Public Universities:

Philosophical orientation of public universities in general, could be traced in four phases of public university development. Figure 1, shows that university in Malaysia, was firstly developed, purely, for academic purposes. Then, in the two phases of university development; 1970-1995 and years before the 21st century, majority of universities were established for public philosophy of higher education. Currently, philosophical orientation of majority of public universities in Malaysia, are directed towards, public and market-based philosophy of higher education. The following paragraphs elaborate further the philosophical orientation of public universities in Malaysia.

Malaysia Public University 1957 – 1969: Academic Philosophy of Higher Education:

In the period of 1957-1969, the government used laissez-faire policy to steer the governance of the state (Morshidi and Sarjit, 2010). This policy, concerned on the limitation of government interference in social and economic sectors, which eventually created a fully autonomous public university; institution with higher degree of autonomy, and self-governing scholars (Sato, 2005). Philosophical orientation of UM (the only public university at that time) was academic philosophy (Selvaratnam, 1985). This philosophical was directly adopted from the civic universities of the colonial British, which was also known as the metropole model of university governance (Selvaratnam, 1985, Morshidi and Sarjit, 2010).

Malaysia Public University 1970 – 1996: Public Philosophy of Higher Education:

The government then tuned the operation of public universities to public philosophy of higher education in the period of 1970 until 1996. The initial motive to move towards this philosophy of higher education was, to resolve socio-economic gap of the races, which led to the 13th May racial riot. Under the guise of the New Economic Policy (NEP:1970-1990) and subsequent policies in the forms of acts, and plans such as the First Long-Term Perspective Plans (RRJP) (1970-1990), the University and University College Act (UUCA) 1971, and other relevant documents, the government intervention in the provision of higher education was legalised. In the perspective of the government, their intervention in the provision of higher education was highly crucial as to safeguard the interest of the society and the new developing nation. The government quickly recognise the capability of university to instil and to educate the Malaysian population with nationalisation, unification, harmonisation values in intellectual discourse, to minimise socio-economic gap of the society by producing skilled and professional workers required by the new developing state. Hence, the relationship between government and public universities which was used to be separated, became sharper.

This led to an expansion of publicly funded higher education, as shown in Table 1 (Sivalingam, 2007). Universities, namely, USM, UPM, UTM, UUM, UNIMAS and UMS, for instance, were firstly set up to produce skilled and professional graduates to fulfil workforce demand of the state. USM, established in 1969, played a critical role to produce scientists and technologists in several field of studies such as science, education, industry, social and welfare, and health. UPM was firstly developed for producing professional graduates for agriculture sector. While, UTM, was responsible for producing skilled scientists and technologists. UUM was set up in 1984. This institution was created to produce graduates in management education. While, UNIMAS and UMS, were established to produce skilled and professional workers for the rapidly growing economy and massification (due to democratisation of secondary education) in the 1990s.

Economic development was not the only concern of the state in establishing state-owned university. Believing the importance of unification between multiple races, as well preservation of cultural values especially the use of the Malay language and the protection of the interest of the *Bumiputera* ('sons of the soil', refers to the natives population of Malaysia) (Mohd Nazim, 2011), the government set up, UKM, and UiTM. The former was set up as the intellectual platform to safeguard the sovereignty of the Malay language (Sharifah Hapsah, 2007; Sivalingam, 2007). The role of UiTM, (upgraded to university status in 1999), as the institution for the survival of the *Bumiputera*, was recognised by the government. Hence, the governance of this institution is placed under the UiTM Act 173, not the UUCA (Army Fahmy, 2011; Mohd Nazim, 2011). The UiTM Act 173, is in pursuant to Article 153 of the Federal Constitution which was created to reserve quotas for the Malays and *Bumiputera* of Sabah and Sarawak (Army Fahmy, 2011; Mohd Nazim, 2011).

Interestingly, within the period of the 1970-1996, the government has also developed a public university to championing the Islamic philosophy of higher education. Thus, UIA was created in 1983. One of the interesting points about UIA's establishment, is that, this university is an international institution. It was set up by the government, not merely for the development of the state, but also to produce good Muslim or Muslim with *adab* (good conduct), for the benefit of the *ummah* as a whole. Due to this, UIA was established under the Company Act. This therefore allows the institution, to accept foreign students and to use English as the main language of instruction.

Table 1: List of Malaysia Public Universities; Their Past and Current Philosophy Higher Education.

Research University		
University	Initial Philosophy of Higher Education	Current Philosophy of Higher Education
1. Universiti Malaya (UM) (1962)	Academic Philosophy	Vision: to be an <i>internationally renowned</i> institution of higher learning in <i>research, innovation, publication and teaching</i> . Mission: to advance knowledge and learning through quality <i>research</i> and education for the nation and for <i>humanity</i> .
2. Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)(1969)	Science education; later industry, social and welfare, health and education	Vision: Transforming <i>higher education for a sustainable tomorrow</i> Mission <i>empowers future talents</i> and enables the bottom billions to transform their socio-economic well-being.
3. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) (1970)	To champion the use of Bahasa Melayu in Intellectual Discourse	Vision committed to be <i>ahead of society</i> and time in leading the development of a learned, dynamic and moral society. Mission to be the <i>learning centre of choice that promotes the sovereignty of Bahasa Melayu and internationalises knowledge rooted in the national culture</i> .
4. Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) (1973)	Agriculture	Vision to become a <i>university of international repute</i> . Mission to make meaningful <i>contributions towards wealth creation, nation building and universal human advancement</i> through the exploration and dissemination of knowledge
5. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) (1973)	Science and Technology	Vision to be recognised as world-class center of academic and technological excellence. Mission: to be a leader in the development of human capital and human resource
Comprehensive University		
6. Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) (1999)	To provide <i>Bumiputera</i> or "sons of soil" with relevant skills and knowledge	Vision a premier university of outstanding scholarship and academic excellence capable of providing leadership to <i>Bumiputeras's dynamic involvement</i> in all professional fields of <i>world-class standards</i> in order to produce <i>globally competitive graduates</i> of sound ethical standing. Mission to enhance the <i>knowledge and expertise of Bumiputeras</i> in all fields of study through professional programmes, research work and community service based on moral values and professional ethics.
7. Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIA) (1983)	Islamic Philosophy	Vision to become a <i>leading international centre of educational excellence</i> which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the <i>Muslim Ummah</i> in all branches of knowledge and intellectual discourse. Mission: (i) Integration; (ii) Islamization; (iii) Internationalization; and (iv) Comprehensive Excellence
8. Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) (1994)	Manpower requirement – for the state	Vision to be an <i>innovative university of global standing</i> Mission to achieve <i>academic excellence and international recognition</i> through its attention to <i>learning and teaching, research and publications, social services</i> and balance in knowledge specialisation. The university also prioritises the <i>personal growth of its students</i> , resulting in greater innovation and productivity for the benefit of society and the nation as a whole.
9. Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) (1992)	Manpower requirement – for the state	Vision to become an exemplary <i>university of internationally acknowledged</i> stature and a scholarly institution of choice for both students and academics through the <i>pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and scholarship</i> . Mission to generate, disseminate and apply knowledge strategically and innovatively to enhance the quality of the nation's culture and prosperity of its people.
Focused University		
10. Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) (1984)	Management	Vision to become an <i>Eminent Management University</i> Mission to be a consistently pre-eminent centre of academic excellence in <i>teaching and learning, research, consultancy, and publication</i> in the field of management, and, at the same time, to bring forth highly <i>competent human capital</i> that is committed to serving in the development of the nation and all humanity.
11. Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) (1997)	Education	Vision to be a <i>prestigious university</i> providing exceptional leadership in education, based on the advantage of broad experience and high level of competency in <i>meeting global changes</i> . Mission to <i>generate and foster knowledge</i> through <i>teaching, research, publication, consultancy and community services</i> to achieve the vision of the nation.
12. Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) (2007)	Technical Education (engineering)	Vision Towards a <i>world class university</i> in engineering, science and technology for sustainable development. Mission committed to <i>generate and disseminate knowledge, to meet the needs of the industry and the community</i> and to nurture creative and <i>innovative human capital</i> , based on the <i>tauhidic paradigm</i>
13. Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UteM) (2007)	Technical Education	Vision to be one of the <i>world's leading innovative and creative technical universities</i> Mission to lead and contribute to the wellbeing of the country and the world by: 1. <i>promoting knowledge</i> through innovative <i>teaching and learning, research and technical scholarship</i> ; 2. <i>developing professional leaders</i> with impeccable moral values; 3. <i>generating sustainable development</i> through smart partnership with the <i>community and industry</i> .
14. Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) (2002)	Technical education (engineering)	Vision to be an <i>internationally competitive academic and research institution</i> . Mission to produce a <i>holistic human capital</i> that contributes to the <i>nation's development and industrial competitiveness agenda</i>
15. Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) (2007)	Science and Technology	Vision to become locally and globally renowned focused university in marine technology. Mission <i>generation of knowledge</i> for the benefit of the community and sustainable environment.
16. Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) (2006)		Vision to be a <i>world-class technological university</i> . Mission to provide high quality <i>education, research and services</i> in engineering and technology in a culture of creativity and innovation.
17. Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) (2007)	Islamic Philosophy	Vision integrating Naqli (revealed) and Aqli (human) knowledge to transform and create value for country, ummah and humanity. Mission becoming a global reference centre for Islamic science with Al-Abrar (noble) leaders capable of <i>creating knowledge and innovations</i> to transform the country, the ummah and humanity
18. Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA) (2005)	Islamic Philosophy	Vision to be a <i>world class institution</i> of higher learning that produces and shapes talented leaders who are knowledgeable, refined and noble. Mission <i>enhance and nurture the talent of future leaders</i> in various disciplines through reengineering of knowledge promotion of transparency and openness, instillation of diversity for the <i>benefit of humanity</i>
19. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) (2007)	Entrepreneurship and Enterprises	Vision championing human capital development with entrepreneurial activities for <i>global prosperity</i> . Mission UMK provides: 1. <i>Quality and relevant academic programmes</i> 2. <i>Research and innovation of high commercial values</i> 3. <i>Service that fulfil social obligation</i> to enhance competitiveness in entrepreneurship
20. Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM) (2006)	National Strategic Interests	Vision to be the <i>premier defence university in the region</i> for education, training and knowledge creation. Mission: 1. <i>servicing the nation</i> as a premier defence university for leadership and professional development, <i>knowledge dissemination and application of defence science and technology</i> , as well as <i>policy research</i> . 2. <i>Quality integrated military education and training in producing graduates</i> . 3. <i>Instilling greater professionalism</i> among the academics by stimulating the pursuit of scholarly excellence through a greater flourish of <i>academic and policy research activities</i> resulting in quality publications in <i>refereed journals</i> . 4. <i>center for policy research and post graduate studies</i> in defence and security. 5. <i>Striving for R&D success</i> through <i>research collaboration</i> . 6. <i>Striving for enhanced internationalization and collaborative networking</i> with <i>reputable international universities and research centers</i> .

		7. ensure greater cross functional coordination, good service delivery and customer focus to support UPNM's effort to be a knowledge hub.
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Source: Mohd. Nazim (2011); Sato, 2005; Sharifah Hapsah, 2007; Sivalingam, 2007; All public university websites

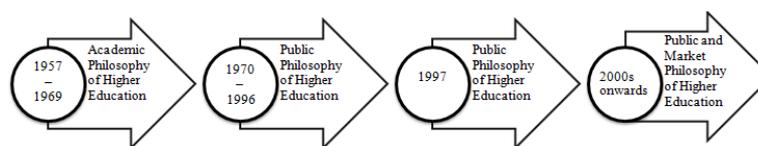


Fig. 1:Development and Transition of Philosophy of Higher Education of Public Universities in Malaysia.

Arguably, the used of universities as the main agent to accelerate the government national aspirations in the period of 1970-1996 did received substantial critics. The most common critic was, the biasness of such policies towards certain racial group, which was believed to have been sideline the interest of other races in Malaysia. Nevertheless, the operations of Malaysian public universities towards national aspirations have been acknowledged as effective and success by the World Bank (Sivalingam, 2007).

Malaysia Public University 1997; Public Philosophy of Higher Education:

The ever-growing demand for higher education due to several factors namely democratisation of education, and rising cost of overseas education (Ainun and Mohd Adam, 2013; Ka, 2009; 2010; Ng, 2004; Sivalingam, 2006) have raised the concern of the capability of public universities in fulfilling the demand for university in the late 1990s. Such demands, however, did not lead to the expansion of public universities. Instead, to tackle the so-called ineffectiveness and inefficiency issue of public universities, the government decided to corporatise these institutions by adopting the idea of market which is brought to the fore, by the New Public Management (NPM) agenda.

Corporatisation of public universities in Malaysia involves at least three elements of market idealism. These were (i) generation of multiple funds from non-governmental sources (ii) managerialism and (iii) the use of market mode of university governance. The former involves provision of flexibility to public universities to borrow money, to enter business venture which include set up companies, and to hold investment shares (Morshidi, 2006; Sivalingam, 2007). Second, the idea of managerialism involves the adoption of business and corporate values and cultures such as mission statement, strategic planning, total quality management, ISO certification into universities (Ng, 1997). This then, led to the third element of market idealism; the use of market mode of university governance to smoothen and fasten university decision-making process. Under the market mode of university, the vice chancellor has the role of the chief operating officer in the business entity (Berkeens, 2010; Ng, 1997). University is led by board of directors; which involve the inclusion of members recruit from community and business community (Berkeens, 2010; Wan Abdul Manan, 2008). While, number of senate was reduced from 300 to 40 (Berkeens, 2010; Ng, 1997; Wan Abdul Manan, 2008).

Corporatisation of public universities however, did not change the philosophical orientation of public universities. Instead, the operation of public universities was still strongly pivoted on public philosophy of higher education and the philosophy of higher education that is uniquely inherent to the university. The government remained as the main entity that regulated and controlled the public universities (Ainun, and Mohd Adam, 2013). Thus, it is not surprise to see that several scholars would label Malaysia corporatisation policy as symbolic in nature (Berkeens, 2010) and half baked policy (Wan Abdul Manan, 2008).

Malaysia Public University 2000-onwards; Public and Market-Based Philosophy of Higher Education:

Within the era of the 2000s, globalisation, internationalisation, the emergence of global-knowledge-based economy, direction from the World Bank and OECD, and the government pro-market policies have exerted much pressure for public universities to govern their institution based on market idealism. Driving by market logic, the government is now occupied with the common believe that knowledge is a crucial source for advancing the process of a productive high income economy, to strengthen global competitiveness and innovativeness of the state. Public universities, therefore, becoming more corporatised, and running like a business entities. Hence, market-mode of governance rises as a well-established structure of public university governance.

In the process, public universities in Malaysia tend to arrive to a common philosophy of higher education; market-based philosophy of higher education. Greater concern is now given on research outputs and graduates employability. This is to fulfil the local demand and to push public university to make significant contribution to the global society. This led to the implementation of marketlike strategies like graduate education, creation of higher education hub, research-based university, APEX university, key performance indicators, hiring and retaining the best faculty members, strengthening industry and research collaboration; collaboration with international universities and establishment of research center as to guide the operation of public universities towards the new economic policy. All of these strategies were documented in various policy documents.

Amongst the policy documents were, the Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3) for 2001–2010, the New Economic Model Policy, the ninth (2006-2010) and the tenth Malaysia Plan (2011-2015), the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP) (2007-2020), and the National Higher Education Action Plan (NHEAP) (the first phase of the NHESP (2007-2010)).

***Discussion Of The Current Philosophical Orientation Of Malaysia Public Universities:
The Rise of Market-Based Philosophy of Higher Education:***

Analysis on the public universities official website finds that, many of the operation of public universities are now inclined towards market-based philosophy of higher education. As Table 1 shows, almost all public universities, envisioned that in future that their institution will be a globally renowned institution. UM for instance aims to become ‘an internationally renowned institution of higher education learning’. While UPM, expresses that they will be ‘a university of international repute’. USM, however, did not directly express their intention in becoming a world class university in their vision statement. Yet, the APEX status obtained by this institution in 2008 is the platform developed by the government for preparing USM as one of the world best universities (Wan Abdul Manan, 2008). Meanwhile, newly-emerged public universities, namely, UTHM, UTeM, UMT, UMP, UMK and UPNM express that, their institution would be a world-class university in the field that their institution is currently specialising. UTHM, stated that their institution would be a world-class university in engineering, science and technology. UTeM, would be a technical world-class university. UMT, will be a global renowned university in marine-based field of study. While, UMK intended to becoming one of the best global universities that is specialised in entrepreneurship education. Based on the analysis, it is seen that, in becoming a world-class university, all public universities place greater concern research, teaching and public service activities. This is clearly evidence in their institutional mission statement.

Retaining the Very Philosophy of Higher Education:

Interestingly, despite the eagerness of many of public universities to become a world-class renowned university, UKM, UIA, UiTM, USIM, and UniSZA, on the other hand, show different intention in expressing the philosophical orientation of their institution. In appreciating the current national aspiration, these universities also place greater emphasis on the importance of their institution in preserving the so-called ‘cultural mission’ or the philosophy of higher education that is uniquely inherent to the university. UIA, USIM and UniSZA for instance, stressing on the idealisation of the Islamic philosophy of higher education. UIA for instance, greatly expresses their stance to champion the Islamic philosophy of higher education. In their institutional philosophy statement; UIA stresses that, ‘knowledge shall be propagated in the spirit of *Tawhid*, leading towards the recognition of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of mankind’ (International Islamic University Malaysia, n.d., p. 1). In a focus group interview with several Malaysia public universities officers in 2012, one of the UIA representatives stressed on the vital role of UIA in idealising the agenda to develop a good human being based on the Islamic principles. In this regards, the officer stated that it is importance for the institution ‘to educate student based on the Islamic principle (spiritual, soul and moral-excellent with soul)’ (UIA Representative, public universities focus group interview, 2012).

While UiTM, which is well-known for the *Bumiputera* identity, greatly emphasise the importance of their role in preserving the interest of this social group. In the similar focus group interview, the representative of UiTM, stated that they are indeed realise the importance of their institution to contribute to the global-human-capital-driven economy. At the same time, the representative of UiTM stated that, the existence of UiTM to protect the special agenda of *Bumiputera* is highly vital. This is so, because, they feel that this is their accountability to enhance the socio-economic standard of this group of society. UiTM intends to safeguard the benefit of *Bumiputera* by providing professional education in various field of world-class standards.

Similarly, UKM, also stresses on the importance of their role in preserving the philosophy of their institution in which their institution has been found; to safeguard the Malay language. In their institutional mission statement, UKM stresses that their institution ‘is the National University that safeguards the sovereignty of the Malay language while globalizing knowledge in the context of local culture’. In the same vein, the then Vice-Chancellor of UKM, Prof. Tan Sri Dr. Sharifah Hapsah Syed Shahabudin, mentioned that UKM is not denying the emergence and the importance of English as the main language for instruction in higher education. Similar with UiTM, she also believes that UKM plays critical in preserving the very national identity of the state; the Malay language (Sharifah Hapsah, 2007).

The dilemma:

The use of market idealism, especially the introduction of performance measurements tools have indeed, offered a shortcut for the state and public universities to advance their system of higher education in order to be more responsive to the developmental needs of the state. Nevertheless, it is deems essential to assure that the idea of the market do not sideline the very philosophy of higher education of public universities in Malaysia.

This is so because, the integration between market and the original philosophy of higher education has the potential of creating tension and dilemma for many universities. Often, the former may sideline the idealisation of the latter. The main reason for this, is that, the paradigms that constitute market idealism and the very philosophy of higher education is rarely consistent. On one hand, the idea of market could lead to the creation of an elite form of higher education which concerns more on commercialisation of research outputs and graduate education rather than on undergraduate education (Hazelkorn, 2013; Toma, 2009). Moreover, the indicators that are used to measure university performance are commonly developed without fully capturing the educational outcome that is in line with the original philosophy of higher education. Rather, many of the indicators skewed more towards positioning or improving university's image, status, and prestige at the national and global level, and their capability in generating more income and attaining commercial values (Carnegie and Tuck, 2010; Marginson, 2002; Toma, 2009). On the other hand, the original philosophy of higher education often places greater concern on participation in higher education, equity and equality issue, conservation of culture and values that are uniquely inherent to the society and nation as well as the importance of developing an individual as a good human being. Thus, greater concentration on the idea of market in coordinating university's operation may devalue the efforts to recognise the differences of philosophical orientation of public universities.

Concern on the loosening of original philosophy of higher education due to the overconcentration on market idealism is growing (e.g. Birnbaum, 2004; Bok, 2003; Carnegie and Tuck, 2010; de Boer and Goedegebuure, 2001; Jensen, 2001; Shukran, 2013; Spanier, 1999; Woodward, 2009). In the US for instance, land-grant universities are constantly being critiqued due to their negligence in preserving their public service mission (community reach out) (Spanier, 1999; Woodward, 2009). Several Muslim universities, has also raised their concern on the implication of the use of market in higher education on the development of Muslim with *adab* (Arfah and Aizuddin, 2013; Shukran, 2013). While, in many cases in the west, scholars reported that, instead of fulfilling traditional values of higher education, namely, teaching, scholarship, learning and public service, the idea of market always push universities of the west towards pleasing economic and material needs of the state and post-modern societies (Birnbaum, 2004; Carnegie and Tuck, 2010; de Boer and Goedegebuure, 2001; Jensen, 2001).

In Malaysia, it is seen that when internationalisation agenda is put forward by the then Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education, is currently caused the universities to compete on the international ground for more international students to come and study in Malaysia. In this regards, the internationalisation activities act as the catalysts and pressured the Malaysian public universities to follow the demand of the marketisation in order to fulfil the internationalisation agenda. Similarly, the quest to becoming World Class Universities has pressured the public universities to follow the "global standards" including having publications in top tiered journals as a primary focus and compromising on the original philosophy of higher education (e.g. nation building) with lesser intake of undergraduate students in order to make way for more postgraduate students.

In the process, the system of public universities tend to move towards convergence, or the tendencies of becoming more alike, as to conform the operation of these institutions with market and especially reputable world university. Thus, the way public universities is organised would display similar pattern of governance. Across public universities, similar pattern of governance such as delegation of more institutional autonomy, reduction of state involvement, application of corporate and business culture, stronger managerial roles (i.e. to vice-chancellor, and dean), competition, use of performance-based funding and private funding), and introduction of performance indicators are evidenced.

Integration of the idea of market within the sphere of public universities is indeed warrant a close attention. This is so, because the history and the current development of Malaysia public universities has clearly shows that intellectual activities namely, teaching, research and public service do not exist for the sole purpose of obtaining economic benefits or merely for scholarship purposes. Instead, these intellectual activities are meant for championing different philosophical orientation that is uniquely inherent to a particular university. Hence, it could be concluded that, within the seemingly similar higher education the system of higher education in Malaysia contain wide variety of public universities which are pivoted on different philosophy of higher education.

Diversity of philosophy of higher education of public universities in Malaysia indicates the capability of Malaysia higher education system to champion the interest of the society and the state, which is socially desirable. This include, serving the marginalised group, and preserving cultural and historical values that are unique for certain societies and nation as well as highly fundamental to serve different needs of multiple racial groups, types of students, industries, and global societies. Hence, it is importance therefore to has a flexible system of performance measurement to accommodate the varying and diverse philosophies of higher education in such a way that whilst these universities perform according to the needs of the nation, they are also allowed to preserve their original philosophy of higher education.

Therefore, it emphasizes that careful consideration should be taken in integrating market idealism into the system of HEIs. Otherwise such a condition could lead HEIs into a chaotic state (neither here or there). These include the loosening of public trust and respect of students, academicians and the communities.

Conclusion:

This paper has demonstrated that even within the seemingly similar higher education environment, there are possibilities that multiple philosophies could be at work. This therefore challenges the presently accepted view of public universities' philosophical orientation which focuses just on academic and market-based philosophy. The emergence of public universities with different philosophical orientations implies that Malaysia uses diverse higher education systems. It is fundamental therefore to pay significant attention on the diversity of philosophical orientations of public universities in Malaysia. This is so because some of the institutions serve different needs of multiple racial groups, types of students, industry, and global society. Together, all of these public universities that are established with different philosophies of higher education would positively contribute to the performance of Malaysia's higher education system. Hence, it is important to have performance measurement systems that are flexible enough to support the idealisation of diverse philosophies of higher education that are unique to the university, and at the same time allow them to perform in accordance with the global-human-capital-driven-economy.

Due to the time constraint and lack of necessary data, this paper is only able to provide a brief overview of the development and philosophical orientation of public universities in Malaysia. Thus, it is suggested that a descriptive case study research design is needed to be used in future research. The use of this methodology would allow one to grasp deeper understanding on the variety of types and the multiplex of philosophies of higher education of public universities in Malaysia.

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