

Governance and academics' research competitions in South Korea

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1. Research Purpose

● Shift to managerial governance

- Universities have been sharply transformed into **new public management (NPM)** with emphasis on the institutional governance.
- **Strong institutional governance and management** is now considered as a key performance indicator of higher education (Kruecken and Meier, 2006).
- Higher education governance has been politically more visible, economically more strategic, and managerially more evaluable (Enders, de Boer, and Weyer, 2013).

● Influence of global neoliberalism ➡ Strong power of global market

- Faith in the market & business-based approaches: **Growing reliance on competition and performance based approaches**
- Influence of **world university ranking**
- Emphasis on **internationalization**

1. Research Purpose

- Each national HE systems are also anchored in country-specific regulatory and coordinative regimes, which to a great extent reflect national historical and cultural context (Dobbins, Knill & Vögtle, 2011; Neave, 2003).
- There are similarities and differences in managerial reforms, and path-dependencies across countries while neoliberalism and NPM are major political issues in reshaping the configuration of higher education systems (Musselin, 2013; Paradeise, Reale, Bleiklie, & Ferlie, 2009).
- This study is carried out in South Korea, a country with strong managerialism and neoliberalism based on government driven policies.

1. Research Purpose

- The core feature of the changing governance of higher education is the development of managerialism and multiple competitions (Kruecken, 2019).
- This study brings these two main streams together in order to examine what governance types are associated with academics' research competitions in South Korea.
- **Three Research Focuses**
 1. We examine what governance types have been shaped in Korean higher education system for the last two decades.
 2. We analyze what are academics' research competitions in higher education.
 3. We investigate which governance types are associated with academics' research competitions.

2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.1. Korean Higher Education Context

- The influence of German higher education models during the Japanese colonial period and Anglo-American models since the second world war
- The Korean higher education system continues to show an important Confucian influence, which is reflected in four interrelated features of the system(Marginson, 2011; Shin, 2012)

(1) strong government initiatives

(2) high tertiary education participation

(3) a highly competitive national entrance examination system

(4) large public investment in research science

- The Korean higher education strongly depends on private universities. There are total 191 universities (156 private universities) in 2019.

2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.2. Changing Higher Education Governance

- Traditionally, the Korean government has maintained tight control over both public and private universities. Until the early 1990s, almost all aspects of university management were subject to detailed government regulations (Byun, 2008).
- **The May 31 Educational Reform Plan (1995)**
- The plan pointed out that ‘the universities as the prime source of knowledge production and delivery should be encouraged **to become more market-oriented and to link their development more closely to societal needs**’ (Byun, 2008; Park, 2000).
- **The plan aimed at increasing the autonomy of the universities, in particular for private universities.**
- Private universities might have considerable autonomy in a wide range of their management while public universities have still been controlled by the government.

2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.2. Changing Higher Education Governance

- The Korean government has initiated competitive grant programs based on performance-based evaluation since mid-1990s.
- One of main performance-based research funding initiatives is **the Brain Korea 21 (BK21) project** (Shin & Lee, 2015). The BK21 project is a comprehensive master plan for restructuring Korean universities (Shin, 2009).
 - **First stage (1999-2005)**
 - **Second stage (2006-2012)**
 - **Third stage (2013-2020)**: In 2013, BK21 merged with the World-Class University project to become BK21 PLUS
 - **Fourth stage (2020-2027)**: Qualitative evaluation, New innovative human resources development project based on the Fourth Industrial Revolution

2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.2. Changing Higher Education Governance

- The BK21 project is designed to increase research productivity of faculty and graduate students. Since its establishment, the number of articles published in Science Citation Index journals in South Korea has grown rapidly, reaching 63,311 in 2018 (12th place worldwide) (KISTEP and KAIST, 2018)
- With this series of projects, an **academic meritocracy**, in which the standards of success are based on the individual's research productivity, was embedded in Korean higher education.
- In response to such funding initiatives, Korean universities have adopted **private corporation management styles, such as executive leadership, performance-based management, and professional management** (Shin & Jung, 2014).
- Over the past two decades, **Korean universities have been transformed by new public management under government-driven policy initiatives** (Lee, Jung, & Shin, 2020).

2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.2. Changing Higher Education Governance

- **Three aspects representing NPM governance models in HE**
(Boer & Huisman, 1999; Braun & Merrien, 1999; Byun, 2008)

Market-oriented model

- Performance based evaluations
- High competition
- Customer service

Increased procedural autonomy

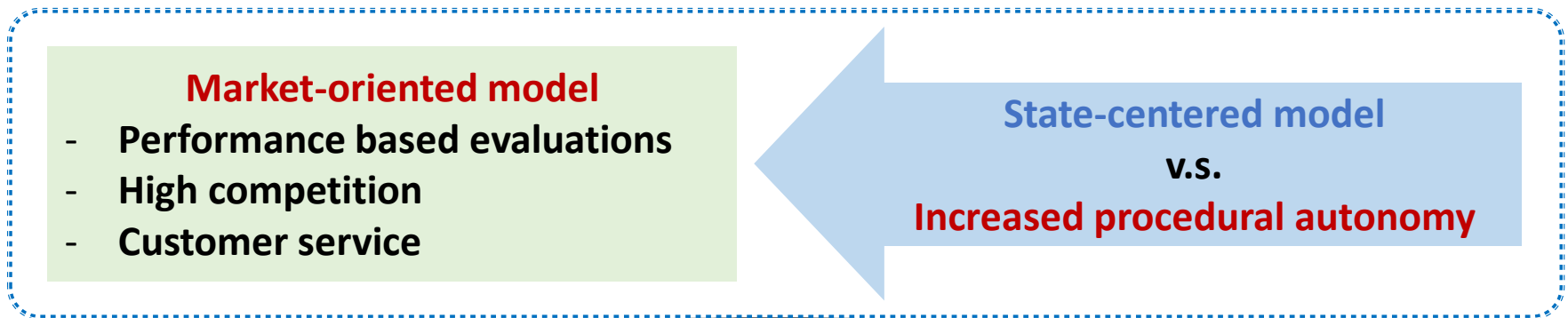
- Management of a university
- Enrollment quotas
- Qualification of professors



2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.2. Changing Higher Education Governance

- Three aspects representing Korean pseudo NPM governance models



2. Changing HE governance in South Korea

2.3. Academics' research competitions

Massified higher education

- **Government-driven policy** to meet the equilibrium of demand and supply
- Demand for quality improvement of university

Excessive dependence on private universities

- High tuition fee → a tuition freeze
- Declining number of college freshmen



**financial
deterioration**



Global marketization

- **Internationalization / University ranking**
- Research performance-based evaluation
- Emphasis on the international journal article publications (e.g. SCI/SSCI/AHCI)

Academics' research competitions

- Competitions for reputation and ranks - publications, citations etc.
- Emphasis on external funds
- Emphasis on applied or commercially-oriented research

3. Method

3.1. Data

- The APIKS survey data in 2018 (847 full-time faculty members)

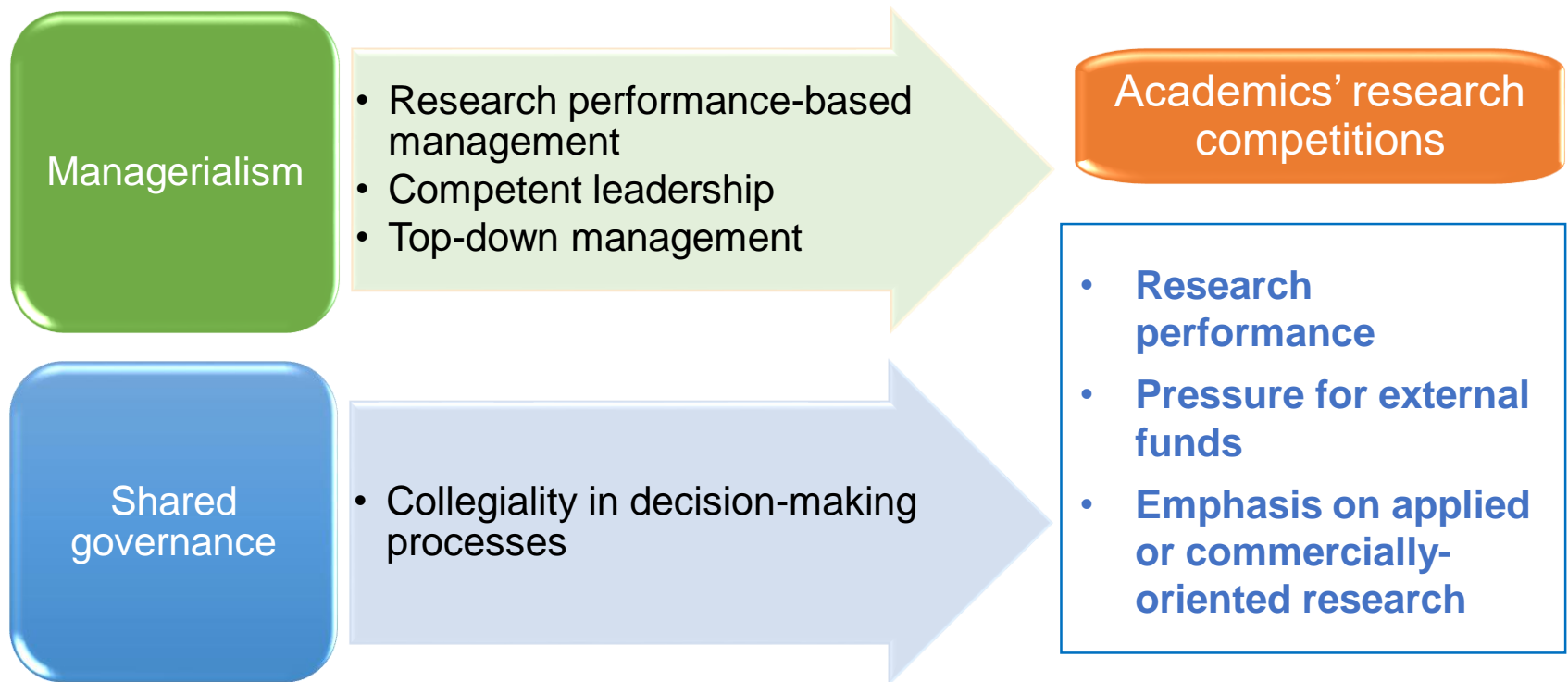
| Population | Sample | Full-time faculty members | Response rate |
|------------|--------|---------------------------|---------------|
| 66,795 | 12,714 | 847 | 6.66% |

| Variables | | No (%) |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Gender | Male | 594 (71.48%) |
| | Female | 237 (28.52%) |
| Age | 60 or more | 129 (15.67%) |
| | 50 to 59 | 295 (35.84%) |
| | 40 to 49 | 313 (38.03%) |
| | Below 40 | 86 (10.45%) |
| Rank | Professor | 381 (44.98%) |
| | Associate professor | 198 (23.38%) |
| | Assistant professor | 205 (24.20%) |
| | Lecturer and others | 63 (7.44%) |
| Discipline | Hard discipline | 462 (54.55%) |
| | Soft discipline | 385 (45.45%) |
| Total | | 847 (100.00%) |

3. Method

3.2. Analytical strategy

- We examine which governance types are associated with academics' research competitions.
- Analysis method: OLS regression



3. Method

3.3. Variables

| Variables | | Measurement |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Independent Variables | | |
| Managerialism | Research performance-based management | “At my institution, there is a strong research performance orientation” (5-point Likert scale) |
| | Competent leadership | “At my institution, there is a competent leadership” (5-point Likert scale) |
| | Top-down management | “At my institution, there is a top-down management style” (5-point Likert scale) |
| Shared governance | Collegiality | Mean of two APIKS survey items; (1) “at my institution, there is good communication between management and academics”, (2) “at my institution, there is collegiality in decision-making processes” (5-point Likert scale) |

3. Method

3.3. Variables

| Variables | | Measurement |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| • Dependent Variables | | |
| Academics' research competitions | Research performance | Number of articles published in an academic journal (KCI, SCI, SSCI, SCOPUS) (log form) |
| | Pressure for external funds | "I got pressure to raise external funds from my institution" (5-point Likert scale) |
| | Emphasis on applied or commercially-oriented research | "I got expectation on conducting applied (and possibly commercially oriented) research from my institution" (5-point Likert scale) |

3. Method

3.3. Variables

| Variables | | Measurement |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| • Control Variables | | |
| Demographic background | Gender | Male = 1; female = 0 |
| | Age | 2018 – birth year |
| Academic rank | | Professor, Associate professor, others (criterion variable) |
| Affiliated discipline | | Hard discipline = 1; Soft discipline = 0 |
| Institutional characteristics | Sector | Public = 1; private = 0 |
| | University rank | Highly reputed university (Within 200 in the World University Rankings) = 1; other = 0 |

4. Findings

4.1. Descriptive analysis results

| Variables | | N | Mean | SD | Max | Min |
|------------------------|---|-----|-------------|------|-----|-----|
| Managerialism | Research performance based management | 735 | 3.90 | 0.94 | 5 | 1 |
| | Competent leadership | 735 | 3.10 | 0.98 | 5 | 1 |
| | Top-down management | 735 | 3.67 | 1.06 | 5 | 1 |
| Shared governance | Collegiality | 735 | 2.51 | 0.89 | 5 | 1 |
| Academics' Competitons | Journal publications | 836 | 9.91 | 9.95 | 103 | 0 |
| | Pressure for external funds | 833 | 3.55 | 1.06 | 5 | 1 |
| | Emphasis on applied or commercially-oriented research | 822 | 3.18 | 1.03 | 5 | 1 |

4. Findings

4.2. Results of OLS regression on academics' competitions

| | | Research performance | | External funds | | Applied or commercially-oriented research | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------|----------|---|----------|
| | | Coef. | Std.Err. | Coef. | Std.Err. | Coef. | Std.Err. |
| Managerialism | Research performance-based management | 0.06 | 0.03 | 0.17*** | 0.04 | 0.14** | 0.04 |
| | Competent leadership | 0.01 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.05 | -0.04 | 0.05 |
| | Top-down management | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12** | 0.04 | 0.08* | 0.04 |
| Shared governance | Collegiality | 0.08* | 0.04 | -0.06 | 0.05 | 0.00 | 0.05 |
| Demographic background | Male | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.17 | 0.09 | 0.22* | 0.09 |
| | Age | -0.04*** | 0.01 | -0.01* | 0.01 | -0.02** | 0.01 |
| Academic rank | Professor | 0.41*** | 0.10 | 0.30* | 0.12 | 0.16 | 0.12 |
| | Associate professor | 0.22** | 0.08 | 0.31** | 0.11 | 0.17 | 0.11 |
| Affiliated discipline | Hard discipline | 0.21** | 0.06 | 0.32*** | 0.08 | 0.39*** | 0.08 |
| Institutional characteristics | Public university | 0.06 | 0.07 | -0.05 | 0.08 | -0.20* | 0.08 |
| | University rank | 0.27** | 0.08 | -0.08 | 0.10 | -0.02 | 0.10 |
| Constant | | 2.95*** | 0.32 | 2.73*** | 0.40 | 3.12*** | 0.39 |
| N | | 677 | | 698 | | 687 | |
| R-squared (Adj. R-squared) | | 0.159 (0.145) | | 0.098 (0.084) | | 0.109 (0.095) | |
| F value | | 11.46*** | | 6.79*** | | 7.52*** | |

5. Concluding Remarks

- Universities are taking a managerial approach to transform themselves into strategic actors in the global marketplace (Kosmützky and Krücken, 2015; Lavigne and Sa, 2020).
- Korean universities mainly adopt the **market-oriented model** based on **government driven policies**.
 - **Performance-based evaluation and ranking schemes**, which are based on neo-liberalism, influence the overall management of universities in Korea.
 - **Marketization and global competitiveness** have become key words in the management practices of Korean universities.
 - Korean universities have reorganized in order to be able to meet and actively respond to market demands.

5. Concluding Remarks

- **Korean universities pursue NPM, but it seems to be not a typical style but a pseudo style.**
- The government is the prime actor to introduce the NPM in Higher Education, and so academics and universities have been less committed to the reform and they reacted passively.
- Korean universities have increased procedural autonomy, but the government is still strongly controlling them by the University Structural Reform Plan and the tuition freeze policy.
- Korean universities have relatively weak institutional governance in terms of executive leadership and professional management.

5. Concluding Remarks

- **Academics' perceptions of performance-based management and top-down management has remained high while shared governance and competent leadership were relatively low over the last decade.**
- In this study, we found that shared governance are positively associated with academics' research publications while research performance-based management and top-down management are positively related to pressures for external funds and emphasis on applied or commercially-oriented research.
- The university governance has been changing and will influence academics' activities and competitions. The governance patterns are interrelated to global environment and national characters, and academics' responses are various according to national context.

Thank You!

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