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**Abstract**

Since the 1990s when transnational institutions and programmes (TNIPs) proliferated in China, they have been closely related to the capacity building of the local higher education system. The government encourages local higher educational institutions (HEIs) to import educational resources from overseas partners and to innovatively transplant the partners' good practices into local programmes. The study reported here uses Shanghai as an example to explore the teaching and learning process of TNIPs in China. TNIPs are found to respond mainly to market demands rather than to the governmental intention of capacity building. When making efforts to fulfil the needs of students, TNIPs sacrifice the construction of their academic ability and therefore are unable to serve as examples for local HEIs. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)