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**Abstract**

The discourse on the internationalization of higher education emphasizes revenue generation while neglecting other diverse rationales pursued by governments and institutions. For countries that are seeking to venture into a knowledge economy or accrue greater competitive advantages under globalization, many policymakers view cross-border higher education as a platform for developing human talent. In this pursuit, education hubs stand out as large-scale initiatives supported by extensive planning and investment. By comparing the developments of Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong as education hubs, three distinct objectives are apparent: to develop local talent, to attract foreign talent, and to repatriate diasporic talent. Despite the attention directed at the recruitment of international students, developing local talent remains a fundamental goal among education hubs. Talent development includes manpower planning as well as more inclusive provisions that support the diverse interests among local students. On the other hand, education hubs do not share the goals of attracting foreign and repatriating diasporic talent. Contextual factors such as distinct political

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economies and ethnic sensitivities mediate the recruitment of external talent. Comparing the policy rhetoric of talent development against the realities of implementation reveals sharp misalignment in some cases. More importantly, the political inertia in Singapore and Hong Kong exerts a gravitational pull that is increasingly turning sentiments against some foreign talent. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Lee, Jack, T., E-Mail: jacklee.oise@gmail.com