



# Transforming Greater Bay Area into Regional Hub of Higher Education and Development: Role of Universities and Call for Public-Friendly Policies

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## Introduction

- ❖ Central Government's 14<sup>th</sup> Five year plan of transforming GBA into regional educational hub.
- ❖ Roles/status of universities in Hong Kong (HK) and Mainland China (MC) for higher education development.
- ❖ Affordable housing issue inside and investment outside HK in housing .
- ❖ Reflections, methodological questions and potential research area
- ❖ Policy recommendations to facilitate internationalization and attract aspiring talents for higher education leading to development of the country.

## Summary of Selected Seminar: 1

- ❖ Historical background of GBA and Beijing plan of incorporating nine small islands and two SARs at Pearl River Delta into mega hub of innovation, education and economic to make China a global leader maintaining the promised quotation "one country with two systems" (Shih & Chow, 2019).
- ❖ Inspiration from other Bay areas in Singapore, San Francisco and Silicon Valley in USA with the aim to build a regional hub.
- ❖ Higher Education hub: Innovation, student and talent
- ❖ Difference between the universities in both regions in terms of quality, international students, faculty and medium of instructions and programs and world ranking. 4 universities in HK rank 50 in "Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2020", while 20 top in Asia. Contrarily, none of MC universities includes in the list (University Ranking, 2020).
- ❖ Students' enrollment in Hong Kong Universities in 2020 academic year.

| Name      | Mainland | O/ Asia | R/ World | Total |
|-----------|----------|---------|----------|-------|
| C y-U     | 1938     | 863     | 187      | 2988  |
| HK- BU    | 838      | 146     | 36       | 1020  |
| Lingnan U | 262      | 35      | 29       | 326   |
| ChU HK    | 2992     | 957     | 120      | 4046  |
| E UHK     | 475      | 68      | 8        | 551   |
| HKPU      | 1650     | 817     | 134      | 2601  |
| HKUST     | 1596     | 1068    | 169      | 2833  |
| U of HK   | 3162     | 1482    | 182      | 4826  |
| G/Total   | 12913    | 5436    | 865      | 19191 |

Source: The University Grants Committee (2020).



Source: Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area - Home

Figure 1. Cities of GBA

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## Relevance & Reflections

- ❖ My study: reforms in higher education of Pakistan and Hong Kong via policy borrowing and lending and colonization.
- ❖ My understanding of higher education and its various drivers and qualitative study.
- ❖ Quality of housing supports education.
- ❖ University autonomy/academic freedom for taking independent decisions and to deal with the pressures.
- ❖ Higher Education Reforms will facilitate to transform GBA in to regional Education Hub and Development in the era of Globalization?
- ❖ Policies are multi-prong and interrelated, one policy creates niche for another policy issue.
- ❖ How will GBA respond to the current issues and challenges?
- ❖ The researcher on Housing being an insider and known to the local setting developed rapport with participants and collected data, however, he attended a property conference for data collection where many people attend, in such situation how ethically a searcher ensures the privacy and confidentiality of the participants?

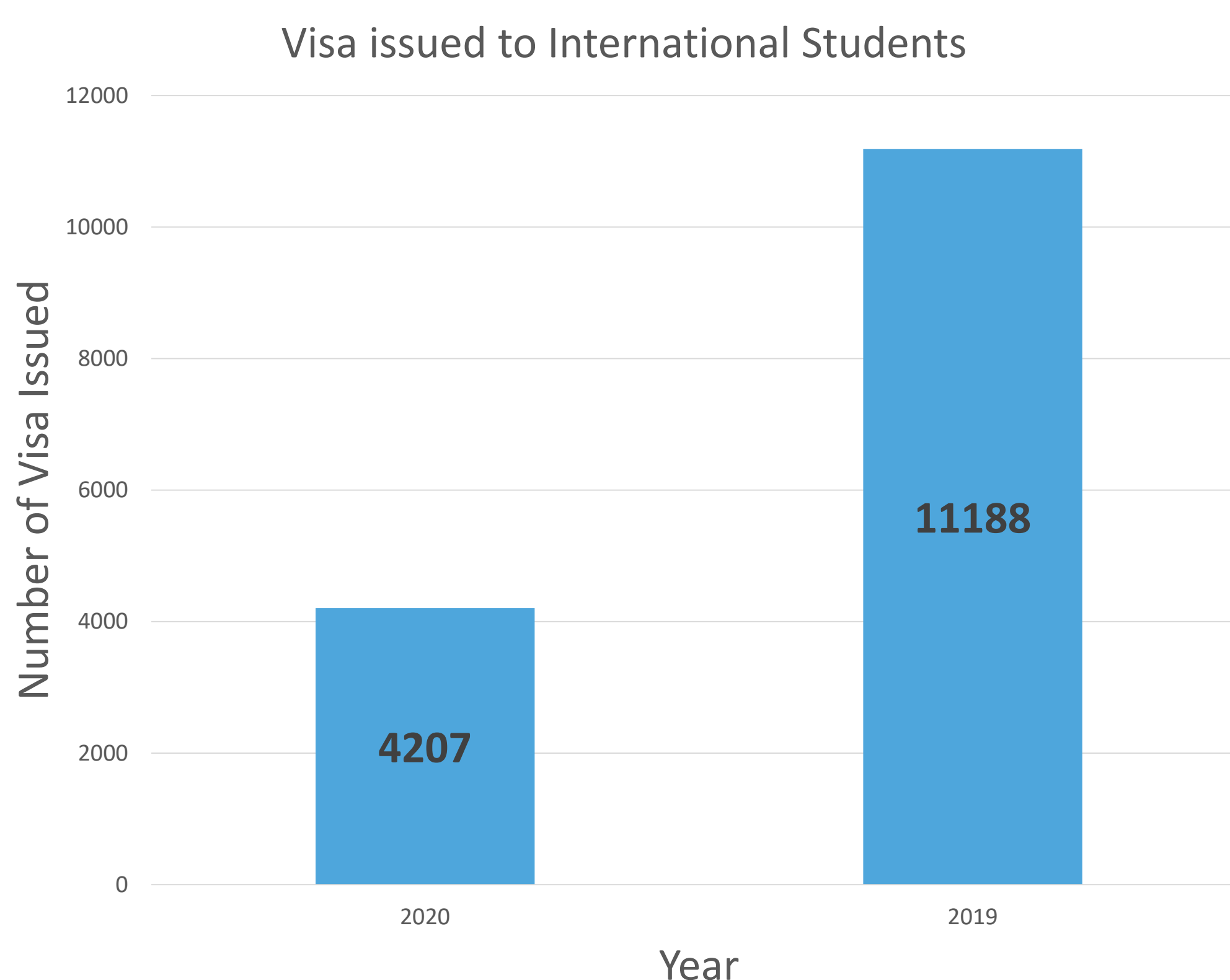


Chart 1. Visa issued to International Students  
Source: Immigration Department Hong Kong (2020)

## Summary of Selected Seminars: 2 & 3

- ❖ Seminar 2 on writing a convincing story: the charm of qualitative research highlighted Case study as a phenomenon, selecting topic, data triangulation, findings-sticking to the thread & research ethics
- ❖ Qualitative study: "role split phenomenon of academic staff" political socialization and academic freedom of teaching staff (Xiaoxin, 2018).
- ❖ University faculty demonstrate various role and behaviors for multiple compliance.
- ❖ Seminar 3 highlighted high price of housing issues and investment of most of the middle-class Hong Kongers in UK in three phases: 1990,2000 and 2009.
- ❖ Middle and aspiring class
- ❖ Colonial ties and familiarity with the legal system are contributing factors.
- ❖ Migration started before the handover in 1998. Due to uncertain future people prefer to leave HK. People send their children to UK for studies and want a house for them to avoid rent (Ho, 2020).
- ❖ Post Brexit euro has dropped drastically down which has attracted more Hong Kongers to invest in lower price, however, some cautious investors are still on thinking due to market instability.
- ❖ Being owner of a house in Hong Kong is a dream for most of the inhabitants. They live on high rent in private apartments.
- ❖ Some oligarch have grasp on private housing market, consequently they influence policy formulation on housing.
- ❖ The study argued that some political figures associated the social movement of youth with housing and employment opportunities but that is not the case, the youth wanted their due rights and privileges which other independent nations enjoy.

## Policy Implications

- ❖ A policy of recruiting international students and faculty should be in placed for Mainland China universities. Moreover, a policy to raise the standards of university to achieve world ranking is needed.
- ❖ Initiation of Inter regional university collaboration policy for collective projects and programs to learn from each other experiences and expertise will yield better results.
- ❖ Government should announce affordable housing policy e.g. Lantau island and fulfill the dream of home ownership of many people.

## Conclusion

- ❖ Multiple contributing factors/policies for GBA transformation.
- ❖ Students and faculty enrollment will not serve the purpose.
- ❖ Need of multi level policy input for youth, education, health and housing are key.
- ❖ State positionality (government definition of internationalization or regional hub) under the rubric of "one country with two laws".
- ❖ Right to own house and live needs to be ensured.
- ❖ Public reaction and social movement for universal rights.

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