Chapter 7
The Evolving Knowledge Cities

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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the emerging models of knowledge cities in many countries of the world and the potential challenges posed by them for the existing as well as the future academic institutions of higher education (universities) in those countries in particular and in the in world in general. Specifically, this chapter is dedicated to the study of various issues and themes that concern the evolving knowledge cities such as the long-term and short-term objectives behind the establishment of knowledge cities and their potential benefits (i.e., social, economic, financial, environmental, and knowledge) for their societies. The chapter concludes that the development of knowledge cities are beneficial for all stakeholders including the academic institutions of higher education that directly or indirectly associated with such programs.

INTRODUCTION

We are living in knowledge societies and economies. The workforce is increasingly becoming knowledgeable hence, the availability of knowledge workforce for learning organizations. Knowledge is power and a source of power as an individual, an organization or even as a nation. For the last few years and decades the issue of managing knowledge (creation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge) has become an important subject both in the academy and industry. Organizations having better knowledge management system in place are likely to be more competitive and productive than their rivals both in short and long terms as well as nations with better education programs are found to be more

innovative and competitive than nations with low education. In order to catch up with knowledge and innovation based societies and economies in the world some nation states have initiated their own national level wide ranging programs in collaboration with local industries and universities. Such initiatives are widely acknowledged as academic and knowledge cities. The contribution of academic institutions to regional and local economies is not a new phenomenon. For example, for centuries, universities have had a deep and dynamic relationship with the economic, social and cultural life of the cities in which they are based. However, the relationship among the key pillars in national building including university, government, community and city has never been direct and strong as they were supposed to be. In the changing world universities alone should not be

left to be the source of the creation of knowledge, skills and innovation. Rather it is imperative for nation states to follow an integrative approach which brings the key players and pillars such as universities, government institutions, community and industry together in building competitive and sustainable societies for their respective citizens. The creation of knowledge and academic cities is a right move in achieving this long-lasting goal of nation building. Definitely such strategic initiatives deserve continuous support and guidance from the national leadership. In this chapter, the readers are introduced to several interesting issues with regard to the subject of evolving knowledge cities:

- What a knowledge city is?
- What are the key objectives behind knowledge cities?
- How do they operate or function?
- What are the potential benefits of knowledge cities?
- What are the potential challenges facing them?
- What do they need to operate successfully?
- What are the potential impacts of knowledge cities on institutions of higher education including business schools?
- The basic ingredients of knowledge cities.
- The pitfalls of knowledge cities.
- What is the future of knowledge cities?

A KNOWLEDGE CITY: THE CONCEPT AND SCOPE

As the name or title suggests, a knowledge city can mean a city or a geographic location or an area in a country where different players like universities, government institutions, community support systems and industries joint forces in order to develop knowledge and skills and promote innovative efforts and initiatives. Kostas and Kostas (2008) define the concept and practice of knowledge cities

as "Cities in which both the private and the public sectors value knowledge, nurture knowledge, spend money on supporting knowledge dissemination and discovery and harness knowledge to create products and services that add value and create wealth". A knowledge city is a geographic location, region or city in a particular nation or country that uses its knowledge resources to create wealth (Chatskel, 2004). It involves different stakeholders including business organizations, government, society and academic institution coming together in order to build a network and infrastructure to generate, grow and share knowledge leading to creativity and innovation in the city or nation. A knowledge city is "a permanent settlement of relatively higher rank in which the citizenship undertakes a deliberate, systematic attempt to identify and develop its capital system in a balanced, sustainable manner"(Chatskel, 2004)". "A knowledge city is a city purposefully designed to encourage the nurturing of knowledge (Henley, 2003)". "The term knowledge city is short hand for a regional economy driven by high value added exports created through research, technology and brainpower. Compared to other cities in advanced economies, knowledge cities invest significantly more of the community's income (GDP) in education, training and research (SGS Economics, 2002". "A knowledge city is a city that aims at a knowledge-based development, by encouraging the continuous creation, sharing, evaluation, renewal and update of knowledge. This can be achieved through the continuous interaction between its citizens themselves and at the same time between them and other cities' citizens. The citizens' knowledge-sharing culture as well as the city's appropriate design, IT networks and infrastructures support these interactions (Ergazakis, Metaxiotis, & Psarras, 2004)". Summing up these various definitions and interpretations of the term "knowledge city", one can easily draw a quick conclusion about the scope and importance of a knowledge city. Furthermore, a knowledge city is established to make sure the provision of the

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