

Patent Strategy in Chinese Universities: a Comparative Perspective

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Abstract

Patenting and licensing is not only a significant method of university knowledge transfer, but also an important indicator for measuring academic R&D strength and knowledge utilization. The methodologies of quantitative and qualitative analysis, including a special patent *h*-index indicator to assess patenting quality, were used to examine university patenting worldwide. Analysis of university patenting from 1998 to 2008 showed a significant overall global increase in which Chinese academia stands out: most of the top 20 universities in patenting in 2008 were in China. However, a low rate of utilization of Chinese academic patents may have roots in: (1) university research evaluation system encourages the patent production more, rather than the utilization; (2) problems in the formal mechanisms for university technology transfer and licensing, (3) industry's limited expectation and receptive capabilities and/or (4) a mismatch between the interests of the two institutional spheres. The next action to be taken by government, university and industry in China will be to explore strategies for improving academic patent quality and industry take-up.

Keywords

Patentometric, University patenting, Patent quality strategy, University technology transfer, Academic patent industrialization