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Academic Salaries, Academic Corruption, and the Academic Career

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If the academic profession does not maintain adequate income levels, academic performance throughout the system inevitably suffers. Academics must receive sufficient remuneration to live an appropriate middle-class lifestyle—not that they must be paid according to the highest international standards, local levels are generally adequate. In many, perhaps most, countries salary levels have not kept up with inflation and the academic profession has lost ground to other professional occupations. In many countries, especially in the developing world and the middle-income nations of the former Soviet Union, academic salaries are entirely inadequate to live on. In such circumstances, academic performance deteriorates, the normal life of universities becomes difficult or impossible, and the temptation of corruption lures many academics. The harsh reality is that academics must find other sources of income.

Worldwide, the design of the academic career, built up over centuries, is under threat—indeed, it is being systematically dismantled in many countries. The traditional view of academic work sees it as more than a job—instead as something of a calling. The idea that professors are devoted to "the life of the mind" is part of professional identity. These goals may seem quaint and romantic in the market-oriented 21st century, but the concept of the university as an intellectual institution and something more than a degree-granting machine underlies them. If academics are allowed to pursue their traditional job of teaching and, for some but by no means all cases, research, universities can perform their traditional duties of educating the next generation of professionals, providing general learning, and creating new knowledge. For this to be sustained, however, the conditions for a "normal" academic career must survive—adequate remuneration, a realistic career path offering the likelihood of promotion and stability of employment, academic freedom to pursue teaching and research, at least a modicum of autonomy and participation in institutional governance, and the respect of society.

This does not mean that professors equal mandarins, who are free of accountability and create their own ivory tower utopias. The realities of mass higher education make this impossible. The professoriate must be differentiated by function and role, with most academics performing mainly teaching and only a minority involved in research. Accountability for academic work is necessary and appropriate. Some who work in universities are part time, and others have limited-term appointments. The argument here is that the core academic profession in every country must receive payment from the university adequate to sustain middle-class life. A substantial full-time cadre of university teachers and researchers can maintain the essential teaching, research, and governance functions of any university.

An Egyptian Example

A recent example from Egypt exemplifies the inevitable consequences of inadequate academic salaries. According to an article in the *Egyptian Gazette*, "university professors in Egypt have been accused of violating their code of ethics by greedily demanding large sums of money from their students." The article provides examples. Professors profit from selling, at high prices, their textbooks and lecture notes. These purchases are mandatory for students, since examinations are based on the books, and classes are often too crowded for students to attend. The texts are changed each year to prevent re-sale of the books. Students are also forced to pay extra to attend off-campus classes offered by professors—where the real information is provided. Sometimes theaters or even conference rooms in five-star hotels are rented to hold these off-campus tutoring sessions. One dean describes private tutoring as an "infectious disease that is gnawing away at the flesh of society." Academic staff interviewed for the article pointed out that they could not live on their academic salaries even though salaries were recently increased—an assistant professor in a public university earns around US$260 per month—hardly enough to support a family.

In many countries, especially in the developing world and the middle-income nations of the former Soviet Union, academic salaries are entirely inadequate to live on.

Other Activities

While little in-depth research has been produced on academic corruption, throughout the world newspapers and other news media are replete with examples of it. Our concern here is with professorial practices that stray from standard academic ethics. Professors in some countries routinely demand bribes to help with admissions, to raise exam grades, or to permit student cheating. Money is paid to obtain academic appointments or promotions. Decisions concerning the purchase of equipment or supplies are sometimes influenced by payoffs, and selling scientific equipment occurs. Corrupt practices of many kinds take place so that academics can supplement inadequate salaries.

Causes and Effects

It is, of course, difficult to pinpoint the causes of academic corruption. In some societies, ingrained corrupt practices at all levels influence the universities, and inadequate salaries may be just part of a larger problem. Universities cannot be insulated from societal corruption. But the root cause in many developing and middle-income countries is related to academic salaries. If that problem were solved, it would be possible to deal with professorial corruption.

In most instances, universities are not corrupt institutions. They have strong traditions of meritocracy and shared academic values. But they cannot survive systematic starvation without ethics being damaged. Providing a living wage for the academic profession, as well as maintaining the core idea of the academic career, is a necessary prerequisite for an ethical academic culture.

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Adequate salaries are, however, not enough. Well-paid professors are not always productive. A culture of productive academic work necessarily includes accountability, an internal ethic of hard work, a system of evaluation that includes an objective assessment of all kinds of academic work, and a merit-based system of promotion and salary allocation. Promoting academic staff on the basis of seniority alone, the practice in many countries, works against productivity.

The case of India is illustrative. Academic salaries for full-time staff were increased several years ago to levels able to minimally support middle-class life, although at the same time, salaries for highly skilled professionals outside of the universities increased much faster. However, little was done to ensure productivity or accountability on campus. As a result, the campus culture in many universities and colleges of modest productivity, favoritism in appointments and promotions, and a lack of high academic standards remains despite salary improvements.

Conclusion

The current practice in many countries of asking academics to become entrepreneurs—by teaching in profit-making parallel programs, consulting, creating private companies, or focusing on contract research—in order to enhance their salaries may solve immediately funding shortfalls but it damages the long-term health of the university. Overreliance on part-time staffing means that there will be no one on campus who takes responsibility for the institution—there is no stability and no institutional commitment. These, and other, practices lead directly to academic corruption, not only forcing professors to enhance their incomes "by any means necessary" but also by jettisoning the traditional values and orientations of the university. The simple reality is that a healthy academic institution is an organic whole that requires adequate financial support, rigorous enforcement of traditional academic values, and at its core an academic profession committed to these values. Without this, corruption is likely to flourish and academic quality will inevitably suffer. ■

International Student Experiences of Neo-Racism and Discrimination

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While there is considerable investment and effort devoted to attracting international students, far less attention is paid to the experiences of international students once they arrive at the host institution. Thus, there remains little accountability and responsibility in place on institutions once they successfully attract the students they work so hard to recruit. There is limited literature on the international student experiences, and the problems associated with adjusting to a new environment. Some articles even offer a pathological diagnosis of international students as lacking coping skills. Far less research critically examines the inadequacies within host countries or institutions that perpetuate the difficulties for many international students. Understanding the experiences, especially the negative ones, of international students has been largely neglected but is central not only to ensuring their satisfaction but also fostering positive relationships between sending and receiving countries.

International Students' Challenges

A few studies have documented the tremendous hardships experienced by international students, not only in the United States but across the world—ranging from language and cultural barriers, feelings of isolation and loneliness, different ways of teaching and learning, and so on. However, most of these studies have framed these problems as stemming from an inability of these students to successfully "adapt" or "cope," which presumes that international students bear the sole responsibility to persist, overcome such challenges, and then blend into the host society. The underlying assumption is that host institutions are impartial and without fault and the primary burden is on the international students to navigate their ways through various cultural and institutional barriers. Few studies critically consider how institutions and individuals within these institutions may purposefully or inadvertently create a hostile climate that marginalizes international students.

Experiences of Neo-Racism

In a recent study of a research university in the southwestern region of the United States, we uncovered many disturbing examples of discrimination. Among our interviews with 24 students from 15 countries, we found that most of the students from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East experienced at least some discrimination whereas none of the students from Europe, Canada, or Australia experienced any discrimination and were generally more satisfied with their decision to study in the United States. We examined these different experiences as evidence of neo-racism, or "new racism" on the basis of culture and national order. Beyond traditional racism, neo-racism justifies discrimination on the basis of cultural difference or national origin rather than by physical characteristics alone and appeals to "natural" tendencies to preserve group cultural identity—in this case the dominant group. Underlying neo-racism are notions of cultural or national superiority and an increasing rationale for marginalizing or assimilating groups in a globalizing world. In the case of international students, their experiences of discrimination were largely based on stereotypes and negative perceptions about their home countries rather than solely originating from the color of their skin. One of our informants from the Netherlands explained, "Well, I haven't experienced discrimination. But then again, I take a cynical view that I'm a White guy who speaks English. So that makes you less a target for discrimination. But if you're a non-White and you have troubles with the language then, yes, I suppose you can be even singled out."

Neo-racism can come in many forms, ranging from feelings of discomfort to verbal insults and direct confrontation. Many international students reported not only feeling unwelcome but also spoke of countless incidents of insulting jokes and statements about their home country, particularly Third World countries perceived as lacking basic resources—such as running water and adequate textbooks. Negative remarks were made not only by fellow students but also by faculty and administrators. For example, an international student described how a faculty member mentioned "wiping out the whole Middle East." Several others described reactions of frustration and contempt from faculty, students, and administrators for their language accents. Too often, a "foreign" accent, particularly Asian accents, was equated with "stupidity" and sometimes even ridiculed, whereas European accents were more tolerated and appreciated. Many international graduate students described how domestic students were favored over international students in securing teaching positions and the difficulties international students faced in securing academic jobs (i.e., research and teaching jobs) on campus. Other students recalled more overt forms of neo-racism, such as being yelled at to "go back to your country." International students also reported multiple accounts of sexual harassment, firing from jobs without just cause, and even physical attacks.

But perhaps most surprising and disheartening was that in most cases, these incidents were never reported in the past. As mentioned by one of our interviewees, "being international students, you get used to it." Beyond the actual cases of neo-racism, we found that many international students also lack agency and awareness of their rights. Because many see themselves as temporary visitors, they did not feel that the rights of students applied to them. According to one of our informants, "As an international student, your rights are so few." Others kept silent because of fears about creating more trouble and possibly becoming at risk of losing their jobs and any financial support or being deported. One of our international students explained, "If you speak up you basically make it more difficult on yourself because they cut off your funding. . . . If you just toe the line then you get it really simple and easy." Several international students explained that while they noticed mistreatment from some faculty and administrators, they do not bother to file complaints or negative reports. Their reasoning is that faculty and administrators are above reproach, similar to the higher education system in their home countries or because they felt that unequal treatment and discrimination is the norm.

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Conclusion

Despite such concerns, it is important to keep in mind that international education produces many benefits, not only for the institution and countries involved, but also for the individual students. The positive stories certainly outweighed the negative ones. But the purpose of this article is to shed light on the negative side of international study for many students, particularly those from countries viewed negatively by the host society.

All members of institutions should be made aware of the added challenges that international students face as well as institutions' responsibilities in creating a welcoming climate for all students, especially international students. Moreover, the difficulties that international students encounter need to be reframed as not solely a lack or inability of these students but as possible consequences of neo-racism within the host culture. The most common cases are subtle ones and may include "harmless" jokes about a foreign accent or culture, excluding international students from classroom participation and social events, and using dominant frames of reference that leave out other cultural perspectives.

Ultimately, successful international student exchange is not simply a headcount of international student enrollments but also involves the cultural and intellectual exchange of international students. This means paying greater attention to the experiences of those already enrolled and fostering positive, enriching interactions between international students and members of the host institutions. ■

The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa

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In 2000, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York launched an initiative to coordinate their support of higher education in Africa: the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA). Responding to, and contributing to, trends of democratization, public policy reform, and the increasing participation of civil society organizations in a growing number of African countries, the partnership aimed to support the priority given to education—especially the indispensable contribution of higher education to social and economic development. The foundations wanted to encourage the innovation and creativity witnessed in "universities on the move."

While maintaining each foundation's unique strategic focus, the four agreed to work together toward accelerating the processes of modernization and institutional revitalization of universities in selected African countries, committing $100 million over five years. The issues to be addressed included curriculum reform; training and retraining of faculty members and technical and support staff; participation of African experts in international research and scientific networks; improved internal governance and accountability; increased access for students and higher quality of academic activities; diversification of sources of universities' income and greater responsiveness to societal needs; and improved contribution to the alleviation of poverty.

To ensure that PHEA interventions address the priorities identified by leaders of higher education in Africa, the foundations have adopted a multilayered strategy. First, they selected seven countries—Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda—that accentuated trends of democratization, public policy reform, participation of civil society organizations, priority of higher education, and innovative university leadership. These criteria do, unfortunately, omit countries and institutions that would qualify for support under other valid but less-stringent requirements.

Second, PHEA consulted with university leaders through such means as workshops organized to develop studies of their higher education systems. Local experts and scholars authored the studies, which were reviewed by leaders and experts from other partnership countries. This process has allowed members to benefit from the insight and guidance of African colleagues, has limited the negative influences of power imbalances stemming from foundations' control of financial resources, and has helped build a level of trust and comfort between foundations and African leaders.

Third, we have learned to celebrate accomplishments by attributing success to the agency of the grantees rather than to the foundations. Visibility is essential for successful interventions to encourage other African governments, donors and investment agencies to support higher education and to reassure the foundations' trustees and leaders that money is being effectively invested. On the other hand, too much publicity might raise the expectations of other needy institutions and countries, leading policymakers to steer resources away from partnership universities toward other pressing needs not presently addressed by donors.

Fourth, we decided that our investment should be allocated

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first and foremost to select African institutions, which would then identify partners in other countries and allocate resources for working with them. Admittedly, this decision is hard to enforce when many well-intentioned leaders and experts from the United States and other developed nations approach the partnership or individual foundations with truly valid and viable ideas. But to remain true to the principle of working directly with African institutions, even promising initiatives must be denied support.

An assessment of PHEA in 2005 revealed that since 2000, the four foundations have invested $150 million, 50 percent above their initial pledge, benefiting 40 universities in 6 countries, with 23 countries receiving significant funding for systemic change. Nearly one-third million students benefited directly, including more than 1,000 female scholarship beneficiaries. The assessment also found that the foundations invested more on higher education than would have been possible without the partnership.

One leading initiative is in the area of information and communications technology identified as a priority intervention at a joint workshop with the UN Economic Commission for Africa. With an initial investment of more than $5 million, the partnership commissioned the African Virtual University to consolidate bandwidth demand from several universities and negotiate its acquisition from satellite companies at a significantly lower cost. No single foundation would have had the network and the human resources to start and sustain this effort over time.

PHEA has also attracted the attention of other foundations and agencies. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation formally joined the partnership in April 2005. The six foundations have pledged to continue the partnership though 2010 and to invest $200 million over the next five years, expanding the number of beneficiary countries to include Kenya, Egypt, and Madagascar. Four special initiatives will receive joint support: (a) provision of broadband and utilization of information and communication technology to improve access to information and production of knowledge in African universities; (b) development of research on higher education innovations, institutional transformation,

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and universities' contribution to development; (c) support to regional networks for research and training; and (d) a university leadership forum to expose academic leaders and policymakers to relevant science and technology innovation.

Despite our best efforts, the partnership has not done enough to coordinate its initiatives with wider and more far-reaching strategies such as those for poverty alleviation, the 2020 national development plans, the Millennium Development Goals, or the sector-development approaches by which government-to-government resources are allocated according to national priorities. Foundations have the advantage of operating "outside" the bureaucracy of government-to-government relations and the flexibility to experiment with new and sometimes risky ideas and projects; however, this does not diminish the importance of keeping a country's strategy in mind. Equally, the partnership has a long way to go in coordinating with other African regional institutions (e.g., the African Development Bank), the World Bank, and other major development agencies that also support education.

When the partnership was formed, there was, as is often the case with new endeavors, some skepticism about the venture. As we have worked together and honed our relationship over these past five years, even the most cautious observers began to appreciate the benefits of collaboration. While the African universities will ultimately determine whether our efforts have been successful, there are many signs that our collaboration is bearing fruit. ■

Academic Staff Attrition at African Universities

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African universities continue to contend with a shortage of academic staff and so do not seem capable of mobilizing the intellectual strength needed to drive capacity-building efforts on the continent. To address this situation of a declining professoriate, a study was conducted at five African universities, with support from the World Bank, to identify mechanisms for university staff retention that are feasible in Africa under currently severe financial constraints. The institutions were the Universities of Botswana, Ghana, Ibadan, Kwa-Zulu Natal, and Makerere. The study was limited to particular fields of expertise, which have been identified as the most vulnerable to brain drain: health sciences, engineering, business, economics, and computer/information science. We sought to understand factors behind staff attrition, analyze what the case study institutions are doing to address them, and suggest feasible responses to the problem. This article focuses on the first two objectives.

Self-administered survey questionnaires were distributed to all academic staff in the targeted disciplines, at each of the selected universities, who did not hold administrative positions. They were anonymously completed, and the response rates were as follows: University of Botswana, 16.2 percent; University of Ghana, 20.14 percent; Kwa-Zulu Natal, 19 percent; and the University of Ibadan, 62 percent. In addition to the surveys, personal interviews were conducted with department heads, deans, and provosts in charge of the units representing the targeted fields of expertise, as well as with pro-/deputy vice-chancellors, vice-chancellors, and presidents of faculty associations.

Following the surveys and interviews, we organized workshops on each of the campuses to share our preliminary results with a representative group from the target units, as well as other members of the university community—including graduate students, members of senate, and human resource personnel. This forum provided an opportunity to revise or validate earlier findings and to get further input from those who did not participate in the surveys or interviews.

Recruitment and Retention

All the target units and disciplines appear to have difficulty recruiting staff at the same time as some of them are losing existing staff. Ten members of staff in the Economics Department at the University of Ghana, most of whom were of the rank of senior lecturer have, for example, resigned over the last three years, mostly to take up positions with local and international organizations outside of academia.

In those departments where there is no significant attrition, the problem of recruitment is nevertheless a reality. They cannot compete with other institutions because of relatively poorer conditions of service. According to a senior lecturer at the University of Ghana, "compared with our colleagues in other public institutions in the country, what lecturers receive as salaries are peanuts." Even the University of Botswana, which has been quite successful in attracting and retaining staff, is beginning to see its attractiveness as an employer eroded and is looking at a future that could be more challenging. The recruitment problem, in all cases, is compounded at senior levels, because the services of individuals at those ranks, in the target disciplines, are in high demand in a competitive job market.

A number of respondents indicated that they had thought about leaving their institutions over the past five years, but the number that had actually sought other jobs, or received offers, was very negligible. This suggests that most academic staff think that they have chosen the right profession and will remain in it, unless conditions become unbearable. Findings show that academic staff at the junior ranks (i.e., assistant lecturers and lecturers) are more likely to leave than their more senior counterparts. This pattern could be attributed to the fact that mobility is maximized by the potential for promotion among the junior ranks.

In addition to the difficulties universities are encountering in attracting and retaining younger academics, there is evidence that some academic staff, approaching the decade prior to retirement, get very anxious about the financial trepidations that tend to accompany retirement. As noted by a respondent at Makerere, "what happens to people when they retire has not been a good testimony to people who may want to stay longer in this University." They, therefore, make decisions about quitting academia at a good enough time and taking up positions that are better paying and thus will ensure a more comfortable retirement, even if they do not get a large pension.

A disconcerting trend is the small number of students in graduate programs at African institutions. Part of the reason for this state of affairs is the lack of resources to maintain significant research-based graduate programs, but the unattractiveness of academic jobs, because of unappealing salaries, is another factor that does not excite students to enter the existing programs.

This means that most graduates are not choosing academic careers, which implies that the existing stock of academics will not be replenished at a rate that is capable of sustaining their operations at optimal levels. The University of Botswana's Staff Development Fellowships and Makerere University's Staff Development Fund, which is supported from internally generated income, are examples of initiatives that have helped staff to obtain advanced training. Makerere University has, since 1998, set aside 7 percent of its privately generated funds each year to support staff development. Since its inception to date, the Staff Development Fund has been able to support 400 staff members to attain doctoral degrees, both from Makerere and other institutions around the world. The Leadership and Equity Advancement Program at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is a commendable formal mentoring effort aimed at staff recruitment and development.

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Institutional Climate and Governance

The findings reveal that there are benefits to devolving some decision-making authority to units, instead of centralizing everything at the top. Devolution helps expedite action on issues and gives the units the latitude to be innovative in ways that are germane to their particular circumstances.

Expanded enrollments, without a commensurate increase in the capacity of universities to handle them, have resulted in an atmosphere that is not conducive to learning. Complaints about workload seem to center not so much on the number of courses that staff members teach, but more on the burden that is imposed by teaching large classes. Respondents expressed serious concerns about the impact of workload on their health and that of their colleagues. One respondent from KwaZulu-Natal intimated that "the load drove me to depression and I was booked off work." There was also disenchantment in some institutions about inadequate facilities for teaching and research.

One of the ways that some institutions are addressing the concerns expressed is through the levying of Academic Facilities User Fees on students. The proceeds are then disbursed to departments to help them improve facilities. Some governments have instituted innovative schemes that are directed specifically toward supporting infrastructure development and research capacity in universities. Examples are the Ghana Education Trust Fund and Nigeria's Education Tax Fund.

Remuneration and Benefits

Dissatisfaction with salaries is a key factor undermining the commitment of academics to their institutions and careers and, consequently, their decision or intent to leave. Some institutions offer various allowances that supplement staff members' base salaries. Other creative ways of rewarding academic staff include salary "top-ups," which come from income generated through students enrolled in fee-paying programs. While highly commendable, these efforts should not be seen as a substitute for providing academics with "livable" salaries.

While salaries feature prominently in responses, staff are clearly willing to subordinate higher salaries to very good benefit packages that will enable them to live relatively comfortably during their working lives as well as after retirement. They, therefore, put a high premium on good health care coverage, car and housing loan schemes, support for children's education, and a reasonable pension. The idea of merit pay and market supplements for academics has met with a lot of controversy and resistance in various universities around the world. Because of the politically charged reaction that they evoke, all of the case study universities shy away from them, certainly in explicit ways.

Dissatisfaction with salaries is a key factor undermining the commitment of academics to their institutions and careers and, consequently, their decision or intent to leave.

Conclusion

The situation described above is not peculiar to African universities, but has resonance, albeit at different degrees of resolution, across tertiary educational institutions around the world. African universities should take the initiative in addressing some of the problems identified above, which are within their ability to solve. These include decentralizing authority, promoting communication among different groups, fostering transparency in decision making, and rewarding excellence. They must adopt creative ideas to mobilize resources from the public and private sectors, as well as international partners, to enhance their core mandate. However, the responsibility for revitalizing higher education, in general, and promoting recruitment and retention, in particular, does not lie exclusively with universities. African governments have an obligation to support these institutions with the investment needed to shore up their human resources and other capacities—so do the private sector and the international community, because they all stand to gain from a solid research infrastructure and an adequate complement of excellent teachers and researchers within African institutions of higher education. ■

Beyond Brain Drain: Possibilities and Challenges of Remitting Migrant Taxes

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African migrants around the world contribute to the economic, social, political, and educational development of their home countries, albeit largely in an unorganized manner. Currently, both the migrant communities and their respective home governments—which largely failed to contain their massive flow—are making efforts to maximize their impact. Governments of host countries, however, are yet to play a visible role in mobilizing the resources of migrant communities for the socioeconomic development of host countries. This article explores a new frontier to help revitalize higher education in Africa by proposing the channeling of a certain portion of taxes paid by migrants to their home countries.

Channeling Migrant Taxes

Numerous well-thought-out and poorly conceived initiatives have been taken to address the challenges of excessive flow of high-level experts—widely known as brain drain. While the effort to stem the tide of expert migrants continues, albeit with limited success, the interest to tap their resources is gathering momentum. Some countries, especially in Asia, are doing a good job of tapping and channeling the financial, technical, and intellectual resources of their migrant communities for the development of their universities and research institutions.

In a large number of countries, especially in Africa, a more coordinated and efficient way of tapping resources is woefully lacking. And yet, most African intellectual migrants in the North, who are graduates of public institutions at home, are keen to give back to their communities and play an important role in the socioeconomic development of their native countries.

Mobilization of resources from diverse sources is central to maintain the growing needs of higher education development. African institutions, which face chronic financial problems, are currently grappling with a variety of resource mobilization mechanisms. It should be cautioned that exploring the mobilization of diverse "nonpublic" resources should never be construed as either shifting or diminishing the responsibility of governments as the sole providers for the higher education sector. To reiterate, it must be unambiguously clear that government support to the higher education sector is critical and should never be diminished.

Massive brain drain has posed serious challenges to African socioeconomic development in general and higher education in particular. Virtually all views on brain drain dwell on the magnitude of the problem with limited perspectives on how to contain it. It has always been the case that the burden of addressing the challenge of brain drain has fallen on the losing countries.

Channeling to their home countries a certain portion of taxes already being paid by migrants, for the explicit purpose of higher education and research development, is a new frontier. This uncharted territory is, of course, predicated on the political goodwill of host governments.

Channeling tax monies of migrants, if implemented, has a tremendous potential benefit for many African universities. This proposal advocates the channeling to home countries (a percentage of) the host-country tax money *already* being paid by migrants.

Relevant Precedence?

The success of this initiative depends heavily on a strong political will and a sympathetic leadership. A major lesson can be drawn from a relevant initiative undertaken recently by France. In a laudable measure, which has around 70 supporters, France is imposing taxes on regional and international flights that will be channeled directly to international development aid. This became a reality, despite some resistance, due to strong backing of the top leadership in government.
Thus similar initiatives, as "ground breaking" as the one proposed here, could succeed if they have the full backing of those in power.

The Actions

What, therefore, are the underlying measures that need to be taken to implement this idea? Migrants need to actively lobby their host governments to participate in such an initiative. Their role in pushing the agenda, as taxpayers and members of the host communities, is critical. The role of organizations in host countries—such as the Africa-America Institute, TransAfrica Forum, and the UK-based African Foundation for Development—is paramount.

As potent internal forces, migrant communities need to inspire their host governments and their legislatures. They also need to publicize the idea through major public and academic media outlets. Working hand-in-hand with respective host governments, regional bodies, and home governments, the migrant communities can play a catalytic role in promoting the agenda from within and build constituency around it.

Home-country governments should work closely with their migrant communities on many fronts. They should put in place conducive policies to intensify the contributions of their migrants. Dual citizenship, for example, is the major one being considered in some African countries.

Regional and international organizations could also play an important role to help realize this initiative. Organizations such as the African Union, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa need to lobby, negotiate, and create awareness in mobilizing resources of migrant communities for development.

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The Concerns

Countries that have been draining talent and skills on a massive scale will find redirecting migrant resources very attractive. It should, however, be cautioned that migrant communities themselves may resist such arrangements for fear of possible conflict with their own interests, employability, or status—directly or indirectly.

It is possible that some nationals may worry that employers—be it government or business—might discriminate against them, when and if they realize that their tax money would not be flowing to the national treasury. It is conceivable that some critical entities in host countries may thwart the initiative by, among other means, overblowing or even misrepresenting the initiative and causing some resistance from the migrants themselves.

The Issues

Such new ideas and proposals raise many questions. How significant is the migrant community (from potential beneficiary nations) to warrant such a policy initiative? What is the nature of political will in respective host countries to push such an agenda forward? Who might be potential political power brokers to help realize this concept? What existing forms of employment, tax, and other issues may pose a hurdle or foster the initiative? How should the matrix of the tax remittance be developed for the diverse nations from which migrants originate? What other forms of existing tax incentives need to be activated? Who should manage, govern, and oversee the funds and resources that may be generated? Who should monitor the flow of funds for their intended objectives? How should the funds be channeled: through existing or new forms of organizations? Which guarantees should be put in place to safeguard the resources from possible embezzlement and mismanagement? What mechanisms should be developed to give migrants a chance to opt in or out of the program? What provisions need to be developed for migrants who assumed citizenships of their host countries to participate in the program? These are a few of the details that need to be worked out.

Conclusion

Channeling tax monies to home countries of migrants to help build their knowledge institutions is simply an act of solidarity and fairness. Materializing such a grand scheme would essentially require the goodwill and commitment of host-country governments, regional and international institutions, Diaspora communities, and home countries. ■

Cambodian Higher Education—Growing Pains

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Cambodian higher education has recently been described by different experts in education as "vibrant and lively," "a cause for concern," "plagued with difficulties," and "in a ferment of reform." Like the six blind scientists describing an elephant, the truth is probably that all are accurate. It just depends on which parts of the sector you are describing and your point of view.

The private sector in general is certainly experiencing "lively" growth, diversification, and expansion to provincial centers, while the government institutions are certainly "plagued with difficulties" such as strangulation by government control and increasing politicization. The quality of many institutions throughout the sector is still "cause for concern," considering the high unemployment among graduates and the fact that there are still some "universities" that occupy only a single building. But recent moves by the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC) are stirring up a "ferment of reform" throughout the sector.

Cambodian higher education is still in a phase of rapid, largely unregulated, expansion with an estimated 60,000 students in just over 50 institutions, of which 80 percent are private. Most growth is in the private sector. Until recently, almost all higher education institutions were located in the capital Phnom Penh, but increasing competition and huge unmet demand have resulted in rapid expansion of the private sector into provincial centers. Competition has resulted in a lowering of fees and also at least one bankruptcy. An apparent reluctance to apply the regulations outlined in the law for establishment of universities has meant that a number of these institutions are extremely weak, as indicated by unemployment data. Accurate figures are notoriously difficult to obtain in Cambodia, but estimates at present put unemployment among graduates from public universities, one year after graduating, at about 30 percent and as high as 90 percent from the private universities, in spite of the relatively small proportion of students in higher education. Many graduates only get employment in fields unrelated to their study, indicating a mismatch between higher education provision and labor force needs.

Public institutions remain handicapped by centralized ministry control, underfunding, and the fundamental weakness—given that lecturers' base salaries (US$75 per month) are still not liveable wages. But they are enrolling increasing numbers of students in courses for which fees are charged, to supplement teachers' salaries and provide much-needed funds for capital works—blurring the distinction between public and private. In fact, all public institutions are expected to become quasi-government institutions, called public administrative institutions (PAI). But the expectations of greater transparency in governance and management that go with PAI status has led to some resistance to change.

An encouraging sign in the system is the recent activity of the ACC, which is charged with providing an accreditation process for higher education institutions in Cambodia. Formed in 2003, its position within the government, answerable to the Council of Ministers and not as an independent statutory body, was initially problematic—as was the selection of its members, chosen along party lines, and although highly qualified lacking the necessary experience. But with the help of some foreign technical assistance, the ACC has made some positive first steps. The terms "university" and "institute" have been defined, which caused some smaller institutions to change their names to "schools" or "centres." Minimum standards for a foundation (first) year of broad liberal education have been defined and disseminated. External assessors have been recruited and are being trained by foreign experts from India and Australia. Credit transfer mechanisms have been established. Minimum standards for all higher education institutions are being defined, which will begin to provide a much-needed framework on which more orderly development can proceed.

Analysis

Opinions vary widely, perhaps as a result of the lack of accurate published information about higher education in Cambodia. Pessimists tend to see how far from international standards the present situation is, and the numerous obstacles in the way of ever achieving them. They tend to evaluate the present situation very poorly and give little recognition of the fact that reconstruction of higher education after the disastrous Pol Pot regime only began in 1980, and the oldest private institution is less than 10 years old. They see the increasing politicization of the sector, which threatens to undermine efforts to introduce a more rule-based regulatory environment. For example, recent statements made by the Cambodian Higher Education Association (CHEA), a supposedly independent representative body for all institutions of higher education, denounced the leader of the opposition party. These statements were unrelated to higher education and in conflict with CHEA's bylaws. Another indication of how politicized the sector has become is the recent appointments of senior positions in the ministry and public higher education institutions according to a power-sharing formula between the two ruling parties that had little reference to competence and expanded an already bloated and inefficient civil service bureaucracy.

Alternatively, optimists tend to see how far higher education in Cambodia has progressed in such a short time. They see increased international linkages, cooperation, and assistance—such as investment by US Cambodian communities and the recent US$3 million World Bank grant to higher education. They see as cause for celebration rising numbers of returnees from graduate study overseas injecting new ideas into the system, increasing competence in management and

The mismatch between higher education provision and labor force demands has produced an oversupply of poorly trained graduates

quality assurance in some private institutions, the annual Education Sector Review conducted this year for the first time without foreign technical assistance, a growing body of graduate research being produced by the better higher education institutions, the establishment of at least one private institution as a nonprofit university, diversification of course offerings and even preparation of an "open university" by one private university, and the very existence of CHEA and the ACC.

Then there are the unashamedly probusiness types, who have great faith in the belief that universities run as commercial enterprises, "like bread shops," will automatically deliver quality or else fail as businesses, as evidenced already. They tend to see a majority of the private institutions being run by businessmen committed to educational quality and are dismissive of the public institutions as being so crippled by government control. On the other hand, there are those who see that the commercial drive to "pack 'em in" in the private institutions is crippling their administrations and is encouraging them to accept unqualified students, employ under- or unqualified teachers, and pass students after minimal evaluation.

There are also the idealists who focus on educational quality and social justice. They see the dangers of a future in which higher education becomes a preserve of the rich and are concerned with such things as the low participation rate of women (33 percent) and the disabled; the number of government "scholarship" places for the brightest students, which are static in absolute terms but declining in relative terms and are still in fact unfunded; the inequitable access to higher education in rural areas; and the effect of corruption on entrance procedures, the conduct of exams, and the issuing of degrees.

Conclusion

The state of Cambodian higher education is a tricky elephant to describe. There are many causes for concern but also for hope. The mismatch between higher education provision and labor force demands has produced an oversupply of poorly trained graduates that may have the potential to threaten social stability. The relevance and quality of many of the degrees being granted have produced serious concerns. Tension is rising between the aging political elite, increasingly desperate to cling to power by political manipulation, and a younger generation of more qualified and capable officers, who are concerned with a sustainable future for higher education and are increasingly trying to introduce merit into decision making. There is growing international influence, perceived by some as assistance and by others as a threat to local interests, as well as rapid expansion, diversification, and the start of more orderly development in a system experiencing understandable growing pains.

The immediate future of Cambodian higher education during this phase of rapid growth will be affected by the following challenges: assuring quality and equitable access while encouraging expansion and regulating a balance between commercial self-interest and public long-term benefit. ■

A 2020 Vision for Higher Education in Vietnam

Martin Hayden and Lam Quang Thiep

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Vietnam has recently adopted a higher education reform agenda that, if successful, will bring about a transformation of the higher education system by 2020. The agenda reflects themes in the experience of many less-developed economies seeking to mobilize their intellectual capital through a sustained investment in higher education. What is striking about Vietnam's agenda is its ambitiousness, but herein also lies a threat to its success.

The Setting

Since the mid-1980s, Vietnam has vigorously pursued goals of industrialization and modernization. As a consequence, it is now experiencing high annual rates of economic growth, low rates of inflation, a reducing incidence of poverty, a slowing down in the rate of population growth, and, most importantly, an increase in export income. It remains, however, a poor country and one that is heavily reliant on intensive agriculture to support its population of nearly 83 million. Its per capita income level in 2004 was only US$550.

Vietnam's higher education system has undergone dramatic change during the past decade. High growth rates have seen enrollments increase from 162,000 in 1992/93 to 1,045,382 in 2002/03. At the same time, large multidisciplinary universities have become dominant in a system once characterized by small, specialized institutes and colleges. Fourteen universities, out of the more than 200 institutions in the sector, have been designated as "key universities." These universities are generally quite large, even by international standards, and there is an official expectation that they will lead the process of modernization of the higher education system, particularly by developing a strong research culture and capability. These 14 institutions enroll almost one-third of all higher education students, and they include the two national universities—one in Hanoi and the other in Ho Chi Minh City.

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Problems remain, however. Only 10 percent of the relevant age group participate in higher education, mainly because of the lack of available places; young people from rural areas and poor backgrounds are less likely to be included among enrollments; management processes are severely constrained by an excess of regulatory controls; there is a lack of depth in leadership experience and skills within institutions; articulation arrangements within the system are poorly developed; legislative provisions for the rapidly expanding "nonpublic" (private) sector are weak; graduates are poorly prepared in terms of their range of skills and capacities beyond those required for narrowly academic pursuits; the staff-student ratio (about 1:30) is too high; teaching methods continue to be very traditional; the process of curriculum renewal is slow moving and bureaucratic; academic salaries are not sufficiently attractive to elicit a strong professional commitment; and most academics are not involved in research.

The Reform Agenda

In broad outline, the higher education reform agenda envisages a system that by 2020 is three to four times larger than at present, better managed and better integrated, more flexible in providing opportunities for course transfer, more equitable, more financially self-reliant, more research oriented, more focused on the commercialization of research and training opportunities, more attuned to international benchmarks of quality, and more open to international engagement. A total of 32 specific objectives are proposed, addressing nearly every aspect of the system. Of interest here are those objectives concerning the "renewal of management."

First, the reform agenda proposes to confer legal autonomy on higher education institutions, "giving them the right to decide and be responsible for training, research, human resource management and budget planning." This objective builds on repeated expressions of government policy over recent years concerning the need for decentralization of decision-making authority within the higher education system.

Second, the agenda proposes to "eliminate line-ministry control and develop a mechanism for having State ownership represented within public higher education institutions." The implications of this objective are potentially far-reaching, though many unanswered questions remain. This objective especially raises the question of what future role will be played by the 13 or so ministries that currently have quasi-proprietorial responsibilities for individual universities and colleges.

Third, the agenda calls for developing a system of "quality assurance and accreditation for higher education; improve on the legislative and regulatory environment; and accelerate the State's stewardship role in monitoring and inspecting the overall structure and scale of higher education." These objectives also represent a major commitment to reform, though much of what is implied by them must be construed contextually. Official commitment to a national quality assurance and accreditation system is especially noteworthy—this being an area that is very much in need of urgent attention.

Fourth, the agenda proposes to "develop a Higher Education Law." There is a pressing need to codify in one law the many official decrees that have impacted the sector over recent years. Laws in Vietnam are not, however, designed to be definitive and absolute. The laws jostle with other influences, including the "will of the people," as expressed by the Communist Party of Vietnam, and firm regulatory control exercised by the state.

This reform agenda contains numerous other specific objectives that are of note. It proposes, for example, that by 2020 the nonpublic (private) higher education sector should enroll 40 percent of all higher education students (currently, the proportion is about 10 percent). It proposes also that public higher education institutions should regulate their own expenditure and revenue and should diversify their income streams by engaging in the sale of contract services and the commercialization of technological developments.

Concerns

What is missing in the higher education reform agenda is a strong sense of how its objectives are going to be implemented. The decision to remove line-ministry control from public higher education institutions, for example, though an extremely bold decision in the Vietnamese context, is not backed up with any detailed explanation about how this objective will be achieved.

There are also questions related to how some of the initiatives will be funded. The proposed growth of the system will place a huge strain on Vietnam's public finances, even if, as is proposed, much of the growth takes place in the private sector and is paid for entirely by tuition fees, supplemented by land grants and taxation concessions from the state. Even this prospect raises further questions: how are so many students going to afford private higher education? what baseline standards of quality will be applied to the private sector? what is the intended balance between "for-profit" and "not-for-profit" providers?

Another notable feature of the agenda is the lack of a sense of priority regarding of the objectives to be achieved by 2020. It is of concern that quality assurance and institutional accreditation, for example, are not close to the top of a priority list for the system. The experience of other countries in the region should be enough to alert Vietnam to the importance of strict institutional accreditation processes during a phase of rapid expansion, especially one that relies heavily on growth in the private sector.

Finally, it is difficult to see how Vietnam will achieve institutional autonomy in the higher education system, given the relative lack of an effective governance infrastructure across the system, and given also the precarious position of university rectors, whose authority it seems will remain forever circumscribed by Communist Party policies and processes and a state disposition to govern by means of tight regulatory control. Vietnam is not lacking in energy and commitment. Its 2020 vision for higher education may, however, be a case of trying to do too much, too quickly. ■

US Institutions Find Fertile Ground in Vietnam's Expanding Higher Education Market

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Unscrupulous companies often make unsubstantiated and sometimes false claims about their products and tend to prefer uninformed consumers. Conversely, reputable ones provide accurate information and call on their customers to educate themselves about what they are selling—even encouraging them to engage in comparison shopping. In fact, one well-known US discount clothing company has adopted this concept as its slogan: "An Educated Consumer Is Our Best Customer."

Unfortunately, in the borderless world of international higher education, many institutions prefer that the whole truth not be known about the circumstances under which they were established and the nature and quality of the programs they offer. This goal is much easier to achieve once they begin operating in a foreign country. In a sense, these institutions are preying on "uneducated consumers" (students and parents) who yearn for the quality and prestige of a US education and degree at an affordable price.

Vietnam's Higher Education Market

In Vietnam, the "education business" is booming, opportunities for expansion are vast, but reliable information and guidance are difficult to obtain. Demand for higher education is strong, and as the government has acknowledged, the current system is unable to meet it. According to a survey conducted by Vietnam's Ministry of Health, the General Statistics Office, the World Health Organization, and UNICEF, 90 percent of general students in Vietnam want to enter a university; in reality, only 10 percent fulfill their dream. In Vietnam, 30.7 percent of urban young people graduate from high school, while only 21.11 percent of their rural counterparts achieve that goal. Similarly, about 14 percent of urban youth graduate from university; that figure is 1.5 percent for rural areas.

Since the cost of higher education in the United States is prohibitive and there is no guarantee of obtaining a student visa, US degree programs offered in-country or through distance learning are attractive options for many students in Vietnam. Furthermore, because Vietnamese are brand name conscious, US institutions naturally have a competitive advantage in the higher education market. For many, "made in the USA" is synonymous with quality. Vietnamese universities, in turn, are actively seeking US and other foreign academic partners to develop these programs for the many tangible (e.g., quality academic programs, additional revenue, training future professors and researchers for the university) and intangible benefits (e.g., prestige, improved academic discourse) that accrue.

A growing number of US universities and colleges, most accredited but some not, are looking to Vietnam as a lucrative market for online and in-country education and training programs. Most of these institutions are well intentioned; their primary goal is to meet an urgent need and provide a quality education at the lowest possible cost.

Other US higher education institutions, however, see a golden opportunity to reap substantial profits from a market that has rosy long-term prospects. Those institutions are well aware that there are many parents who cannot afford to send their child for overseas study but can afford the price tag of an in-country degree program or would prefer that their child earn a foreign university degree at home. There are also many employed people with families and other commitments for whom overseas study is not an option.

Unaccredited (or University in Name Only)

A number of unaccredited US institutions have either attempted to do business or are currently doing business in Vietnam and many other countries. They actively seek out markets around the world in which consumers are uninformed, unsophisticated, keenly interested in foreign degree programs, and, in a word, vulnerable. It is in countries like Vietnam that these higher education providers find fertile ground, receptive audiences, and profit potential.

American Capital University (ACU), which was based in the diploma mill haven of Wyoming, once cooperated with the Singapore Management Training Centre (later called the "Senior Management Training Centre") to offer an MBA program in Vietnam. (The ACU and SMTC, which was affiliated with Michael Yu's SITC, are now defunct.) Like the SITC English-language training centers, students involved with the SMTC MBA ended up losing thousands of dollars, as victims of fraud.

Accredited but Questionable

This is yet another category of institutions: those that have entered (or wish to enter) Vietnam's education market but offer very different programs in the United States than in Vietnam. The analogy would be a doctor whose specialization is podiatry in one country but who practices heart surgery in another.

For example, one US private, for-profit institution has negotiated partnerships with several well-known Vietnamese universities to offer BA and MBA programs. In the United States, this institution is an online university, but in Vietnam it is offering instruction with the use of US "mentors," Vietnamese teaching assistants, and some combination of distance-learning tools.

There are two factors to consider with this type of institution. First, what is the quality of the education and training being provided? What are the standards for hiring teachers? Second, the quality of the institution awarding the degree affects the value of the degree now and in the future. If this institution is not taken seriously or viewed as substandard, the diploma and degree holder will be viewed in the same light.

Conclusion

In the wake of the recent SITC scandal, the Ministry of Education and Training has requested inspections of licensing, fees, and curricula at foreign-owned training centers. According to the Ministry of Planning and Investment, 72 foreign-invested training projects have been licensed, including one higher education project, five international general schools, three kindergartens, and 63 short-term training projects in IT, foreign language, and vocational training. As with their Vietnamese counterparts, foreign institutions—both in-country and in their country of origin—must be held accountable for their actions. A free market does not mean freedom to exploit and to defraud.

It is my hope that the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training remains vigilant and makes every effort to approve only programs that benefit students, host institutions, and Vietnam as a whole. Quality programs that produce well-trained professionals and add to intellectual diversity are essential for Vietnam's development.

It is also my hope that the financial well runs dry and the doors begin to close for unaccredited institutions and education businesses that aim to take advantage of "uneducated consumers." My fear, however, is that these educational enterprises will continue to operate because of inadequate oversight, too much money, and the reality of credential inflation.

As we do with our educational advising, IIE-Vietnam will continue to provide free, unbiased, and accurate information about US institutions, be they in the United States or Vietnam, so that more Vietnamese will become educated and empowered consumers of foreign degree and other training programs. Vietnam is a poor country that can ill afford to squander precious resources, which inevitably results when programs make promises they cannot keep and replace the pursuit of knowledge with profit. ■

Declining Demand and Private Higher Education: The Portuguese Case

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IHE devotes a column in each issue to a contribution from PROPHE, the Program for Research on Private Higher Education, headquartered at the University of Albany. See http://www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/.

The decline in private higher education has become a timely policy issue in several countries with a strong private sector. The situation is striking since this occurs in countries where private institutions emerged in a context of fast expansion of the overall higher education system and where there was no apparent lack of demand for new programs and institutions. It is therefore interesting to analyze what happens to private higher education when the demand changes, either due to economic or demographic factors.

This phenomenon is illustrated by the Portuguese case. From the mid-1980s onwards there was a massive expansion of higher education in general and an even faster expansion of private higher education. However, by the mid-1990s the situation changed. The stabilization and the subsequent slight decline in the number of applicants to higher education, plus the steady expansion of public institutions, reduced the number of potential candidates to private institutions. During the last decade, many private institutions have experienced significant difficulties, and some of them eventually closed down.

The decline in enrollments in Portuguese private higher education seems to be the result of several forces. First, the current demographic decline has surfaced later in Portugal, where mass education also emerged later than in most of Europe. Second, the bottlenecks in lower levels of education have significantly reduced the number of potential candidates for higher education. Despite several policy initiatives, a sizable portion of Portuguese students do not finish compulsory education and less than half of the corresponding age cohort finishes secondary education. Third, there is the issue of regulation. During the period of expansion, private higher education was allowed to develop in an almost uncontrolled manner. However, recent governments seemed keener in making private institutions more accountable, and this forced some institutions to be more restrictive in their admissions procedures.

Vulnerabilities of Private Higher Education

The current difficulties faced by Portuguese private higher education are also partly explained by the system's own profile. The heyday of expansion saw a strong propensity to focus on cheap and popular degrees that positioned private institutions as demand absorbing, as has frequently happened in other countries that experienced recent expansions of the private sector. Likewise, private institutions have become strongly concentrated from a regional and disciplinary point of view. This has led to saturation in certain areas and made it more difficult to find alternative ways to attract students. The situation was made worse by the fact that, despite the increase in the level of cost-sharing, public institutions remained a much cheaper and prestigious alternative that students preferred in contrast to private ones.

The scale of the problem has forced private institutions to rethink their profile. The initial response was either one of denial or viewing the problem as a temporary one. Many institutions expected that the demand would recover and ignored the further decline of enrollments in pre–higher education levels. Eventually many institutions realized that the problems were persistent and started to contemplate some changes. One of the major possibilities has been a restructuring of the private higher education landscape through a process of mergers and acquisitions. The few cases thus far suggest that the merger strategy is far more complex than the acquisition one. Some mergers have even been reversed after an experimental period, confirming the difficulties in linking institutions with different organizational identities that had previously regarded themselves as competitors. Most changes seem nevertheless more directed toward downsizing the scale of the private sector, by closing down programs or campuses that failed to attract a minimal number of students.

The Portuguese experience suggests that allowing private institutions to expand in an uncontrolled way may be damaging even for themselves.

However, it appears that many institutions may have learned insufficiently from their recent misfortunes. Many of them kept flooding the Ministry of Higher Education with proposals for new programs, apparently disregarding the fact that this would only shift applicants from existing programs to new ones without changing the overall context of declining demand. Yet, while it seems logical that most institutions would reduce their staff numbers in the face of declining student numbers, there are indications that the reduction in the former has been more than proportional—leading to increases in the average faculty workload. Moreover, to cut costs, many institutions have shifted from the best and most expensive faculty to less qualified and cheaper ones. This is hardly a route toward stronger credibility and attractiveness.

Hard but Necessary Changes

Molded in times of rapid expansion, private institutions seem to experience difficulties in developing strategies to deal with the declining student demand. Since the tight market in terms of student demand is unlikely to change significantly in the forthcoming years, private institutions risk becoming increasingly cornered in the few low-cost areas for which some unfulfilled demand in the public sector still exists. Thus, although in many countries private higher education may still thrive by positioning itself as a demand-absorbing sector, in some places the sector will have to rethink its mission and profile—so as to survive.

These developments should also provide some food for thought for governmental authorities. The Portuguese experience suggests that allowing private institutions to expand in an uncontrolled way may be damaging even for themselves. The system should be steered in a way to stimulate the private sector to develop sustainable and diverse institutions not excessively driven by demand-absorbing, short-term strategies. This approach will require a more rigorous assessment of private higher education projects in terms of staff, facilities, and academic orientation, instead of the usually prevalent pattern of lax regulation that stimulates opportunistic behavior and adverse selection. ■

The Achilles Heel of India's High-Tech Future: World-Class Universities

Philip G. Altbach

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Ten thousand American expatriates are now working in India for high-tech companies. Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services, the Indian high-tech giants, will together hire and train more than 50,000 college graduates from abroad, including more than 1,000 from the United States, in the coming year. Why? Because Indian universities are not producing the quality graduates needed for the top end of the new economy. India produces many university graduates—in 2004 there were almost 700,000 degrees granted in science and engineering alone. However, with few exceptions, the institutions themselves are not of high quality. According to recent international rankings, only the Indian Institutes of Technology are noted at all, and even these are not anywhere near the top of the charts. It is not quantity, but rather quality that is lacking.

India does not spend enough on higher education—only 0.37 percent of GDP. The United States spends 1.41 and the United Kingdom 1.07 percent. Only countries such as Japan and Korea, where more than 80 percent of students are in largely unsubsidized private universities, approach India's low spending levels. China spends considerably more than India.

India has never seriously cared about the quality dimension of higher education. All countries are faced with the dilemma of catering to mass demand while at the same time maintaining and enhancing quality. India has consistently supported access over quality. There has been no recognition that all modern nations must have a differentiated academic system, with an elite sector at the top, mass-based and less selective institutions in the middle, and vocationally oriented postsecondary schools at the bottom. Patterns of funding, government support, and management will necessarily vary. At the top, the research universities aspire to the highest international standards of quality, follow a meritocratic code, and are ready to compete with the best universities worldwide.

The Current Debate

The tiny quality sector in Indian higher education is now being severely undermined. The new policy, introduced by the government without consulting the academic community, has been hotly contested and overwhelmingly opposed by the higher education community. The policy will increase the proportion of places reserved for lower-caste economically disadvantaged groups at India's small number of top institutions and will make it impossible for India to develop internationally competitive "world-class" universities. Government policies, when implemented, will mandate awarding more than half the seats in entering classes to disadvantaged groups. However laudable the goal of lessening social inequality, this policy destroys international competitiveness at the top institutions. The problem involves not only the specific reservations and the ideology behind them but also the effect on the meritocratic ethos of the research universities and other elite institutions such as the institutes of technology and management. It also leads to such absurd consequences as students with zero scores on admissions tests being admitted and the creation of two distinct sets of students in the same class, with an adverse impact on teaching and learning. If India wishes to play in the international big leagues and to economically compete in a globalized world, it will need higher education institutions that prepare graduates to function in this environment, conduct advanced research that serves to advance the Indian economy, and participate at the top levels of international science and scholarship.

> *India does not spend enough on higher education—only 0.37 percent of GDP.*

What Is Needed

For a start, there must be a recognition that elite higher education is necessary. A small part of India's higher education system must function at the upper international levels—as elite institutions in the best sense of the term. This does not mean that the entire system should be elite. Serving the needs of mass access and social mobility for disadvantaged groups is important, but it is not the only goal of higher education. India is now wealthy enough to support both educational goals.

Research universities everywhere have some common characteristics.

- *Meritocratic values.* A meritocratic university seeks to hire the most qualified faculty members, enroll the brightest students, and reward both students and staff for top performance. Fairness and consistency are central supports of academic meritocracy.
- *Governmental support.* Almost everywhere, research universities are public institutions. Even in the United States, where some research universities are private, they received significant government support for research. In India, only the government has the resources to support research universities. Funding must be consistent and sufficient to support a vibrant research agenda. Research universities cannot be built on the cheap.

• *Internationalization.* Research universities are by their nature international institutions, linking with other similar universities in other countries and participating in the international scientific community. India has the advantage of its use of English, the world's language of science, and its possession of a large group of academics who have received training at the best universities abroad. India must take steps to broaden its international reach.

• *The public good.* Research universities serve the interests of society, and they require public support. They should not be forced to engage exclusively in applied research and to pay for themselves by charging high tuition and producing income from all research activities. An effective mix of basic and applied research is needed. Scholarship funds for needy but able students are also required to supplement tuition fees.

• *The academic profession.* Top-quality professors are central to the success of a research university. Professors must be adequately paid so that they can devote their full-time attention to academe, and so that the "best and brightest" can be attracted to the profession. There must be a stable, and competitive, academic career path that rewards merit and productivity—and punishes poor academic work by ejecting those unable to adhere to the highest standards.

• *Research and teaching.* Research universities emphasize and reward top-quality research, but they are also teaching institutions. Both research and teaching are necessary and contribute to the institution's goals.

• *Autonomy and accountability.* Research universities require a significant degree of autonomy—more than they have traditionally had in India's highly bureaucratic environment. At the same time, accountability is needed to ensure effective performance.

> *The tiny quality sector in Indian higher education is now being severely undermined.*

The Indian Institutes of Technology are a uniquely Indian contribution to higher education. While they are not quintessential research universities, they play a key role in India's elite higher education sector. They must be supported and strengthened as institutions that support India's high-tech development.

Conclusion

India is truly at a turning point. If the nation is to fulfill its economic and technological potential in the 21st century, it must have an elite and internationally competitive higher education sector at the top of a large and differentiated higher education system, with a mixture of public and private support. The elite sector requires support and recognition. It cannot afford being used as a tool for partisan political policies. World-class research-oriented universities are the spearhead of India's international competitiveness. ■

Political Crisis at the University of Buenos Aires

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The University of Buenos Aires (UBA), Argentina's largest and most prestigious public university, has failed to gather an assembly of 236 elected professors, alumni, and students to elect a new president for the next four years. The left-wing-dominated student union has been blocking the university assembly, in opposition to the candidate most likely to win—Atilio Alterini, the dean of the Faculty of Law. They argue that he had held a position in the Buenos Aires city government during the last military dictatorship. During the fourth attempt to initiate the assembly, a violent fight ensued between members of the university staff unions and the students who had taken over the building. After this serious event, Alterini dropped his bid in order to unlock the political crisis. Nonetheless, the student union continued to block other attempts to hold the assembly by making new demands for greater democracy in the university. Student union activists are calling for some extreme measures, such as more student participation in decision making via a direct election of the president on a "one man, one vote" basis.

Other layers of the conflict involve ideological opposition and vested interests among the 13 UBA deans and academic authorities of the faculties, or *facultades:* most of the professional ones (politically conservative) support the dean of the Faculty of Law's candidacy, and the scientific faculties (politically left-wing) seek the candidacy of the prestigious molecular biologist, Alberto R. Kornblihtt. This confrontation reflects the struggle between two visions of the university—the scientific and the professional—that have paved UBA's trajectory over the last century since its foundation in 1821.

These episodes, which have been front-page news over several weeks since the beginning of April 2006, were mere symptoms of something more profound and more basic: the failures in the governance of a mega university.

Professional vs. Scientific Missions

UBA has absorbed the rapid growth of student demand since the restoration of democracy in 1983 through a policy of open admissions and cost-free education. Public resources devoted to sustain this expansion have not been able to maintain the expenditure per student. Under these financial constraints, UBA hired part-time and *ad honorem* (unpaid) faculty, especially in the lower-level ranks (assistantships). At the same time, in response to student demand, UBA has increased the openings in the traditional professional fields such as law, accountancy, medicine, architecture, and psychology. Most of the 300,000 students at UBA are now concentrated in these professional fields in faculties with scarce research activities. These professional faculties have average enrollments equivalent to those of large universities in other countries. For example, the Faculty of Economics and Business Studies has 45,000 students. In contrast, the Faculty of Exact and Natural Science has only 6,000 students, and the research activities are highly developed. Moreover, unlike the professional faculties, the majority

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of the academic staff at the Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences work full-time, and there are no *ad honorem* faculty. But, as the expansion of UBA enrollments has taken place mainly in the professional fields, the actual structure of the university is clearly biased toward the professional-oriented model. As a consequence, given UBA's huge size and complexity, it is quite difficult to reach a consensus on the university's institutional mission. The present political conflict at UBA clearly reveals a cleavage between the professional faculties (which back the candidacy of the dean of the Faculty of Law) and the academic-research-oriented ones (which support the candidacy of the molecular biology researcher in the Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences).

Partisanship and Corporate Interests

According to the UBA statute, the president is elected by the university assembly, which is composed of the deans and academic bodies of the 13 faculties and the university council. In the tradition of the 1918 Cordoba Reform, the university council and the faculty bodies are tripartite bodies formed by representatives of professors, students, and alumni. One characteristic of these representatives, as well as those from student unions, has been their ties with major political parties. Consequently, there has been an element of partisanship concerning the way votes from the constituencies have been cast. Likewise, the majority of the student population and the faculty are not motivated to become involved in university elections and academic politics. Moreover, at least 60 percent of students work and study at the same time and 85 percent of faculty teach part time. They simply attend their classes and then return to their activities outside the university. The vacuum created by the faculty members' and students' lack of commitment to university governance has been filled by those actors who are more interested in their personal or political careers than in the well-being of the academic community.

The Political Representation Issue

Student leaders also protest the actual composition of the assembly, questioning the election mechanisms, and faculty representation on academic councils. The main issue revolves around the point that only "regular" faculty can participate in institutional governance. This means that they can be elected to political posts—such as president, vice-president, or dean—or become members of the academic bodies. They can also vote in the elections to these posts. As the 1966 UBA statute establishes, "regular" faculty are appointed on the basis of periodic open competitions. Nonetheless, at UBA, only half the professors hold regular posts (i.e., a stable tenure-like status). Given the complex set of factors, a large proportion of the faculty are currently employed as "interims," without having been appointed through open competitions and without the periodic reviews of their performance. Student leaders are now demanding that these interim professors and assistants should also be able to participate in the university governance. This could only worsen the partisanship of UBA's political life. Faculty could be hired or fired depending on their political sympathies with different political parties or corporate groups. The only possibility to deepen democracy at UBA is to increase the proportion of faculty hired under open competitive procedures.

Ultimately at stake in the present conflict are three key issues: first, whether UBA, given its huge size, should be a federation of autonomous institutions or a university with a clear-cut common institutional mission; second, whether the partisanship of university politics can be replaced by greater involvement and representation of university actors in academic decision making; and, finally, whether university authorities have the ability to address the issues posed by the failures in open competition so that faculty can be elected under more transparent procedures that guarantee both academic freedom and quality in performance. ■

Building a Regional Academic Credit System in Latin America

Jane Knight

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SICA and CAT are new tools that have been developed to help create a common academic credit system and a "community of higher education" in Latin America. SICA stands for Sistema de Creditos Academicos (System for Academic Credits) and CAT is an abbreviation for Complemento al Titulo (Complement to the Title). Both of these tools are part of the 6x4 UEALC (European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean Common Space for Higher Education) project—a "bottom-up initiative" of higher education institutions and organizations from across Latin America. The project's four major areas of work include the creation of (1) strategies to describe and evaluate competency-based learning, (2) a region-wide academic credit system, (3) a common reference framework for integrating the evaluation of competencies into quality assurance and accreditation systems, and (4) a list of key competencies for research and innovation and related training strategies. The lead organization to design and manage the project was CENEVAL (National Centre for the Assessment of Higher Education) in Mexico, and ASCUN (Colombian Association of Universities) is now taking the leadership for the next phase. The overall goal is to improve the quality of higher education in Latin America and to facilitate greater collaboration and mobility among the higher education institutions within the region and with the higher education sector in Europe.

SICA—Sistema de Creditos Academicos

Regionalization is an increasingly important phenomenon and is very evident in the higher education sector. New regional networks and initiatives for quality assurance, credit systems, research, recognition of qualifications, among others, are being implemented in all regions of the world. This is true in Latin America—but to a lesser extent. The development of SICA and CAT are important instruments to develop a regional community of higher education and to enable greater cooperation and harmony among the higher education systems in Latin America. SICA aims to contribute to the quality of higher education through using a common and transparent system for the measurement and expression of the academic work and learning outcomes achieved by a student in an academic program and to facilitate the mutual recognition of credits and qualifications. SICA has been developed in response to the particular needs and characteristics of the higher education institutions and national education systems in Latin America. At the same time, it is compatible with the European Credit Transfer system in order to promote further collaboration and student mobility with higher education institutions in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

By working directly with academics and higher education institutions, a bottom-up approach was used to develop SICA. The first step was to compare the existing credit systems used at institutional, national, or subregional levels in the different countries of Latin America. After an extensive information gathering and consultation process, common reference points among the diverse systems were identified in terms of duration of academic programs, definition of a common academic credit unit, and the range of credits for different levels of qualifications. A preliminary set of assumptions and criteria for the accumulation and transfer of credits was developed and tested by higher education institutions across the region. This was followed by a feasibility test of three different proposals for the measurement of student workload in hours. The results of this pilot indicated that one SICA credit equal to 32 hours of study was the optimal value. At the same time, an opinion survey was distributed to over 1,400 higher education actors in Latin America, and the results showed strong support for the development of a regional academic system based on student workload and the desire for it to be compatible with the European system.

The basic concept of SICA is based on the total amount of work that a student completes during a specific academic period in order to achieve the learning objectives and outcomes. A fundamental assumption is that an academic credit measures all of the work the student has completed including contact teaching hours with an instructor in classes, seminars, laboratories, or field work, as well independent study time in the library, group or individual work, and preparation for exams. SICA is based on the premise that agreements of equivalencies will be established for the common academic unit according to the norms of each country. Thus SICA acts as a common currency for the translation of student workload into academic credits that are recognized and understood across the countries in Latin America.

> *The basic concept of SICA is based on the total amount of work that a student completes during a specific academic period in order to achieve the learning objectives and outcomes.*

CAT—Complemento al Titulo

CAT is a document that provides data on the student; the name, level, and function of the qualification; the results obtained, the program of study; and the institution that is awarding the qualification and/or where the studies took place. The appendices give reference information on the higher education system of the country where the qualification was conferred and the type of quality assurance systems for higher education institutions and programs. This information adds value to the qualification in terms of facilitating access to the labor market and further education. CAT has used the Diploma Supplement from Europe as a guide but has adapted and added to it in order for CAT to be useful to the particular conditions and needs of students and higher education institutions in Latin America.

The intended purpose of CAT is to increase the transparency and comparability of different qualifications within and between countries in Latin America and to expedite the recognition of qualifications for further academic studies and/or professional purposes. CAT has been designed as both an electronic and paper document and will be beneficial for students, higher education institutions, employers, and professional associations.

Next Steps

The widespread adoption and implementation of SICA and CAT are critical next steps for higher education institutions, organizations, and governmental bodies at local, national, and regional levels. The work to promote the use of SICA and CAT will include a wide variety of activities that will differ from country to country and even from institution to institution. At the regional level there is an opportunity to have these two instruments directly linked to the Latin American Regional UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications. At the current time, important efforts are being made to update and promote the use of this UNESCO Regional Convention given the diversity of new providers, new programs, new types of qualification, and the increasing mobility of students and new graduates seeking further education or employment in other countries. It is timely that SICA, CAT, and the UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications can collectively and individually contribute to the quality of higher education in Latin America, facilitate a more transparent and common system for the recognition of qualifications and the accumulation/transfer of academic credits, and help create a vibrant regional community of higher education in Latin America.■

The German "Initiative for Excellence" and the Issue of Ranking

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In January 2004, the then minister for education and research of the federal German government—the social democrat, Edelgard Bulmahn—went public with the idea to organize nationwide competition among existing universities for considerable extra funding and thus to identify about 10 universities that showed potential to become elite universities. This proposal caused an outcry among most of the relevant stakeholders in German higher education and broke a longstanding social democratic taboo—by supporting and promoting elite institutions. Ever since (as well as prior to) World War II, the social democratic approach to education and higher education had been one of open access, equal opportunity, and education as a public rather than a private good—and hence no tuition fees, and treatment of higher education institutions of a single type as basically all the same. These perspectives did not necessarily equal a contradiction to rankings and elite institutions, but it was argued that the money given to the few would degrade the others and take much-needed funding away from them.

As the only stakeholder group supporting—even applauding—the initiative, the employers argued that German higher education institutions were good on average but that there was a lack of "lighthouses."

The ministers responsible for education and higher education of the 16 German states remonstrated immediately against the proposal.

The ministers responsible for education and higher education of the 16 German states remonstrated immediately against the proposal. While they were interested in getting money from the federal government for higher education, they strongly disliked what they interpreted as another attempt of the federal government to meddle in an area for which they considered themselves to be responsible. They insisted on negotiations, which were started immediately.

The Compromise

In March 2004 the federal government and state governments agreed on a compromise consisting of a concept of competition, although funding issues were still under negotiation. Basically, universities had the opportunity to compete within three categories for extra support, by submitting respective proposals: (a) graduate schools, (b) centers of excellence with international reputation, and (c) whole institutions aiming to become elite universities. To become eligible for the competition to become an elite university, an individual institution had to succeed in getting funding for at least one graduate school and one center of excellence. In addition, the institution had to submit a coherent and convincing development concept.

In June 2004, the funding issue was finally agreed upon. Until 2010, the federal government and the state governments plan to invest, altogether, €1.9 billion (about US$2.3 billion) into this initiative for excellence. From 2006 until 2010, the federal government will contribute €250 million annually to the project and the German states €130 million (together about

US$453 million annually). Extra funding was to be provided to the following three categories targeted by the initiative: (a) about 40 graduate schools, to promote the education and training of junior research staff, with each school receiving approximately €1 million annually; (b) about 30 centers of excellence, to promote cutting-edge research, with each center of excellence receiving approximately €8 million annually; and (c) the 10 top universities, on the basis of their profiles and research strengths, to promote the further structural development of higher education institutions in Germany—with each university receiving about €25 million additional funding per year.

Who Gets What?

A joint commission was formed, composed of representatives of the German Research Association (the equivalent of a research council) and the strategic commission of the Science Council (one of the most influential buffer bodies in German higher education). The task of the commission was to formulate guidelines for the submission of proposals in the three higher education categories and to organize the process. It was decided to organize the selection process in two stages. German universities were first asked to submit general concepts in any of the three categories (graduate schools, clusters of excellence and/or institutional development concepts). Only after the first round of selection, universities that had been successful would be asked to submit fully detailed proposals.

On January 20, 2006, the commission announced the results of the first round of decisions. For universities that had submitted a concept, this was a day of hope and fear because it had been made public already that not all proposals would be accepted. A rejection was expected to backfire on the reputation of the whole university. The mass media had already been speculating for weeks about which universities might be among the 10 chosen to become, officially, the first German elite universities.

For the category "graduate schools," 135 proposals were submitted, with few universities submitting more than one proposal. Of these proposals, 39 were accepted. For the category "clusters of excellence," 157 proposals were submitted. Again, some universities had submitted more than one proposal. Altogether 41 proposals were accepted. With 4 accepted proposals in this category, the University of Munich was the most successful higher education institution. Finally, 27 proposals were submitted in the category "institutional development concepts." On the basis of these proposals, the future elite universities were selected, and the results were disappointing for those universities that were rejected. The chosen 10 are: Technical University Aachen, Free University Berlin, University of Bremen, University of Freiburg, University of Heidelberg, Technical University Karlsruhe, University of Munich, Technical University of Munich, University of Tübingen, and University of Würzburg.

The regional distribution of these universities is interesting as well. Four of them are located in the state of Baden-Württemberg, three in Bavaria, and one each in Northrhine-Westfalia, Bremen, and Berlin. Looking at the subject distribution, about one-third of the successful applications in the category "clusters of excellence" came from the medical and life sciences, one-quarter each from the natural sciences and the engineering sciences, and somewhat more than 10 percent from the humanities and social sciences. In the category "graduate schools" it is notable that many of the proposals had a strong interdisciplinary orientation, and the others were approximately equally distributed over the subject groups.

Altogether 36 different German universities will be asked to submit fully detailed proposals in the respective categories. The next step of the selection will be finished in October 2006.

> *Basically, universities had the opportunity to compete within three categories for extra support, by submitting respective proposals.*

And Future Perspectives?

Although the initiative for excellence is not officially regarded as a move to introduce ranking into the German higher education system, it is an attempt to differentiate the institutional landscape to a certain extent. Interestingly, the direction of this type of differentiation tends to create a tension with the development triggered by the Bologna reform process—namely, the introduction of a tiered system of study programs and degrees according to three cycles: bachelor's, master's, and PhD programs and degrees. In Germany as well as in other European higher education systems that can be characterized essentially as binary systems consisting of universities and *Fachhochschulen* or their equivalents, the Bologna reforms have triggered a blurring of boundaries between the two institutional types. Although awarding doctoral degrees continues to remain the sole privilege of universities, both types of institutions can now offer bachelor's as well as master's programs and the distinction between professional master's programs and research master's programs is not always clear. This has led to a certain amount of competition between the two institutional types at the master's level.

The initiative for excellence, however, only targets universities. *Fachhochschulen* could not apply. Experts of the German higher education system basically agree that the initiative will eventually lead to a new form of differentiation. There will be a small group of top universities forming the "elite cluster." A larger group, mostly of universities in a sort of middle range, will exist that view themselves as solid research universities but will only have a slight opportunity to move into the top group. Finally, there will be another large group mainly of *Fachhochschulen* but also a number of universities that will be competing with one another largely for bachelor's-degree students. These institutions might offer some master's programs as well, but there will be little research and activities will concentrate mainly on teaching. The interesting areas in this kind of institutional diversification will be at the margins, involving movement from the top group to the middle group and vice versa as well as movement from the middle group to the lower group and vice versa. This does not necessarily entail a determination of a certain place for each individual institution on a given ranking list but rather a grouping or clustering.

What can be observed already now is the fact that this initiative did indeed trigger a lot more competition among German universities than ever before. Whether it will also turn out to be the first step in establishing a ranking of German universities remains to be seen. ■

Shaping a New Higher Education Policy for Jamaica

Terence Frater

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When Jamaica included its higher education sector in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), it exposed the sector to the regulatory framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The country became committed to GATS out of a political culture of liberalization and a desire to expand access in the sector. Greater participation by foreign providers was expected to facilitate this expansion, although there were no clear policy strategies or appropriate regulatory mechanisms to cope with the emerging dynamics within the sector. This commitment has recently been reaffirmed, however, at a time when the higher education system is required to support national development and serve as a foundation for social mobility. Jamaica must now endeavor to craft a policy framework for the sector that captures its strategic intent while complying with its obligations as a member of the WTO.

Higher Education Institutional Arrangements

Higher education of any sort did not materialize for Jamaica until the 1830s, when colleges began to be established for the first time in the small British colonies of the Caribbean. The first university, the University of the West Indies, was established in 1948 in Jamaica, to serve all these English-speaking countries. The country has done much since attaining independence in 1962, and more so since the reforms of the 1970s, to make higher education accessible to the average Jamaican. The higher education landscape now consists of four universities (two private and two public), and includes six teachers colleges, five community colleges, and several technical/vocational training institutes, specialist colleges, and professional educational associations. This is the most diverse institutional framework in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Foreign Higher Education Providers

In the face of limited public resources to expand access, the participation of foreign providers is fully supported by Jamaican policymakers. These providers supply higher educational services using all the modalities specified in the GATS classifications. Within the last decade, their number has climbed from 3 to 10, and others are in discussions to enter the marketplace. Owing to their flexibility, foreign providers attract students who fail to meet the matriculation requirements of the public institutions or who are excluded as a result of infrastructure limitations. More significantly, however, they meet the needs of previously underserved working professionals who can now pursue programs at times and places that more conveniently fit their home and work schedules.

Concerns have recently been raised about the role of these foreign providers and the quality of their programs. With the creation of the University Council of Jamaica in 1987, the country has managed to maintain a high standard of outcomes through a rigorous accreditation process. Thus far, foreign institutions have sought accreditation for all their programs.

> *Jamaica must now endeavor to craft a policy framework for the sector that captures its strategic intent while complying with its obligations as a member of the WTO.*

However, the institutional diversity that now exists and the increased complexity of supplying higher education services present challenges for the council based on its original mandate and regulatory authority. Steps are therefore being taken to strengthen the legislative framework that governs the council and to modernize its capabilities, which will ensure that it can continue to function effectively in the emerging paradigm. The government has committed to providing the necessary resources to accomplish this task.

Jamaica's Higher Education Policy Imperatives

Jamaica emerged from its ideological struggles of the 1970s and 1980s embracing the free-market economic model and determined to "free up" the economy with the acceleration of privatization and liberalization. The higher education sector today is a reflection of the country's colonial past and this independent-minded approach to the future. However, in the face of a conceptualization of liberalization that is framed and regulated by the WTO, and which impacts the way countries craft national policies and regulatory frameworks, Jamaica is striving to understand what this means for its 2.7 million population.

With increasing evidence that national considerations of more powerful developed countries shape and often take precedence over international arrangements in conflict with their national interests and global obligations, smaller developing countries like Jamaica appear disadvantaged, because they lack the knowledge capacity to participate equitably on the international stage. To cope with this dynamic, Jamaica must accelerate the process of providing greater access to higher education. Within this context, the sector is evolving as the underpinning of the socioeconomic development of the nation but needs to integrate more closely with other crucial sectors of society.

Policy Strategy

Jamaican policymakers acknowledge the need to expand participation in higher education if the country is to narrow the knowledge gap with its major trading partners in terms of economic development. Particular challenges arise because of the high levels of violent crime that exist (averaging 1,100 murders per year over the last 10 years), and the high rate of migration among its graduates (with some estimates as high as 80 percent). Thus, making progress will not be easy, but Jamaica has to find the wherewithal to craft a coherent and visionary higher education policy that takes these contextual factors into account. To develop the human capital necessary to sustain growth and strengthen the country's global competitiveness requires policies that result from a strategy that articulates the vision, purpose, and objectives of the sector. In a real sense, therefore, higher education has the potential to underpin the country's revival, based on a profound understanding of the dynamics that prevail.

> *Jamaica must accelerate the process of providing greater access to higher education.*

Jamaica is not the only country that needs to maneuver itself out of a difficult socioeconomic situation where higher education becomes the lever to facilitate recovery and even prosperity. However, the country also finds itself having to cope with WTO regulations, which impose obligations regarding liberalization, market access, and transparency.

At this juncture, Jamaica clearly needs consensus around its higher education policy, as only then can the policy environment honor the participation of all stakeholders, meet national objectives, and comply with WTO obligations. This policy framework must specifically address the concerns related to the GATS, clarify the role of foreign providers, ensure greater articulation in the system, strengthen the certification and accreditation mechanisms, and be more tightly linked with other key policy areas. ■

Expansion and Quality in Bangladesh

Yuto Kitamura

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Bangladesh appears to have realized a decent economic development since the late 1990s. The United Nations Development Program's *Human Development Report* recently ranked this nation in the middle levels of development. Reflecting the advances in economic and social development, higher education in Bangladesh has shown a significant expansion in recent years, particularly in the private sector.

Universities in the System

Bangladesh has two main, separate types of higher education institutions: the highly competitive universities and a large number of degree colleges affiliated with universities. This article examines only those educational institutions categorized as universities by the University Grants Commission (UGC)—this discussion does not address the affiliated colleges or other important streams in the tertiary level of the Bangladesh education system (i.e., *madrasah* education).

In Bangladesh, at present, there are 75 universities (21 in the public sector and 54 in the private sector), which grant diplomas in specific fields as well as bachelor's and higher degrees. For most individuals in this developing nation, access to a university education has been limited. *The Bangladesh: Education Sector Review* (2000), published by the World Bank, pointed out that less than 10 percent of the students who obtained the Higher Secondary Certificate were admitted to universities. The poor inevitably have been excluded from the education system prior to reaching the tertiary level.

Rapid Expansion of the Private Sector

The expansion of Bangladeshi higher education in recent years has largely been due to the rapid growth of the private sector. With the Private University Act in 1992, the government approved the establishment of North South University, the first private university in Bangladesh. During the 1990s, around 20 government-recognized private universities were established, with the number increasing to 54 by the end of 2005. The number of students attending private universities has also increased rapidly from 6,200 at 16 universities in 1997 to 44,600 at 52 universities in 2003. In comparison, the numbers for public universities increased from 74,000 students at 11 universities in 1997 to 104,700 at 21 universities in 2003. Although the number of students enrolled in public universities remains higher, the pace of increase for enrollment in private universities seems to have accelerated.

Some critics, however, question the quality of education offered at many private universities. Except for several private universities, many have offered programs in very limited fields; for example, business administration, computer science, information technology, and the English language. Such fields are considered "practical" and attract a large number of applicants in higher education, as increasing foreign investments in Bangladesh assist in expanding an economic market that requires a labor force trained in these fields.

Many private universities are actually established within one structure or, in some cases, only on several floors of a building. Such a constrained physical learning space affects the quality of teaching and learning at these private universities. Many have introduced a double shifting of class schedules, while others have even divided students into four groups with morning and afternoon sessions on alternate days. It should be obvious that students cannot enjoy enough time and space for their learning in such environments.

Less than 10 percent of the students who obtained the Higher Secondary Certificate were admitted to universities. The poor inevitably have been excluded from the education system prior to reaching the tertiary level.

Low Quality of Teaching and Research

Many of the faculty members in Bangladeshi universities appear unmotivated to conduct their own academic research due to such problems as a lack of research funding, absence of a staff development program, heavy teaching load, and an unclear system of recruitment and promotion. At a majority of the universities, many faculty members do not hold doctorates, and those who have finished their master's program are generally hired as new teaching staff. Although the UGC has established rules and regulations for recruitment and promotion, an obscure system remains in place for such practices, based on political connections rooted in political parties rather than on merit. Many faculty members remain involved in university politics, which is closely linked with national politics. In such an environment, faculty members tend to lose interest and motivation in producing research.

Moreover, a lack of academic research by faculty members has resulted in a low quality of teaching at universities, with limited knowledge and experience, particularly in science-based disciplines. At both public and private universities, most classes are conducted in a conventional lecture style in which students are expected to memorize knowledge delivered directly from the lecturers. Open discussion in a seminar style is rarely practiced.

Influences in the Public Sector

Furthermore, insufficient financial conditions for faculty members have resulted in a low quality of teaching at the public universities. The monthly salary of faculty members at a public university is considerably less than the salary of their counterparts in the private schools. It remains difficult, however, to increase compensation at the public universities because they already spend about three-fourths of their budget on staff salaries.

As a result of these limited financial benefits, many faculty members at public universities take on part-time positions at a private university, which offers better remuneration at most levels. Motivated by these economic benefits, such teachers often devote a larger amount of their time in teaching at the private university than their regular posts at public institutions. When possible, some instructors quit their posts at public universities and take up new posts at private schools. This tendency also lowers the quality of education at public universities.

Conclusion

Some scholars and practitioners observe that the expansion of the private sector in Bangladesh provides healthy competition for the public sector. This expansion may satisfy the social demand for improved higher education among the emerging middle class while relieving the public sector from some financial constraints in educating thousands of students. However, the main interest of many private universities is to make a profit, which in turn narrows the scope of the educational programs and lowers the quality of teaching and learning. This brief article suggests that the current situation of higher education in Bangladesh appears to form a vicious cycle in which both the public and private universities unintentionally lower the quality of education due to competition.

In order to improve the quality of education, both the public and private universities need to allocate limited financial and human resources in a more effective manner, set up a transparent system of recruitment and promotion, introduce dynamic and interactive teaching and learning styles, and reduce political activities inside the universities. ■

News of the Center

The Center for International Higher Education continues to be a highly visible source of information on higher education. Google, Yahoo, and other database managers place the CIHE at the top of their selections for themes like "international higher education." For example, Google currently places the CIHE first among 262,000,000 listings. Articles from *International Higher Education* are also prominently featured.

Work has been completed on the 2006 revision of our inventory of higher education programs and institutes worldwide. Leslie Bozeman, Laura Rumbley, and Natia Janashia of the Center staff have provided leadership on this project. We hope to publish the book version in the coming months. Final editing has been completed for our book on research universities in developing and middle-income countries. The book's title is *The Struggle to Compete: Building World-Class Universities in Asia and Latin America*; it is edited by Philip G. Altbach and Jorge Balan. The book is under consideration by the Johns Hopkins University Press. It will be published in Chinese by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press. The China Ocean University Press is publishing six of Philip Altbach's books in Chinese. Three of the titles were released at a ceremony in Qingdao attended by Philip Altbach during his recent visit to China. He also spoke at universities in Hangzhou and Shanghai.

Dr. Roberta Bassett, who received her PhD in higher education from Boston College and was a CIHE graduate assistant, has been appointed lecturer in the School of Management at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom. She will specialize on international higher education. Dr. Damtew Teferra has been promoted to associate research professor at BC—he directs the CIHE's Africa initiative and recently attended a conference on international education at the University of Bergen in Norway. He will travel to Tanzania for a meeting on higher education research in Africa in August. The CIHE welcomes David Fields as a doctoral student and graduate assistant.

CIHE Web Sites

The CIHE family of Web sites offers current analysis of key issues in higher education worldwide. All can be easily accessed through the main CIHE site (www.bc/edu/cihe). The International Network on Higher Education in Africa (INHEA) provides comprehensive information on research on African higher education, the names of researchers working in the field, news of current developments, and related information. The Higher Education Corruption Monitor focuses on all aspects of corrupt practices in higher education worldwide. It provides a compilation of information from many sources as well as background research on this theme. The International Higher Education Clearinghouse (INHEC) focuses on international issues in higher education—in particular on internationalization, world student flows, transnational higher education, and related fields. The CIHE also compiled a comprehensive list of journals in the field of higher education worldwide—this listing, which includes contact information, is also on our Web site.

New Listserv Will Provide Current CIHE Information and Access to *IHE*

We are launching a new listserv that will provide the higher education community with information concerning the CIHE, International Higher Education, and related publications. We will provide you with current information concerning new IHE issues and new publications. Please visit the following URL to sign up for the listserv: http://www.bc.edu/bc.org/avp/soe/cihe /listserv.html.

Internet Resources

Visit our Web site for downloadable back issues of International Higher Education and other publications and resources at http://www.bc.edu/cihe/.

New Publications

Beckman, James A. *Affirmative Action Now: A Guide for Students, Families, and Counselors*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2005. 450 pp. $55 (hb). ISBN 0-3113-33415-3. Address: Greenwood Publishers, POB 5007, Westport, CT 06881, USA.

A layman's guide to the immensely complex topic of affirmative action for minorities and women in US higher education, this book includes chapters discussing the history and current realities of affirmative action. Legal issues, approaches of various universities to affirmative action, guidelines for applications, and other issues are discussed.

Chapman, M. Perry. *American Places: In Search of the Twenty-first Century Campus*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006. 260 pp. $54.95 (hb). ISBN 0-275-98523-7. Address: Praeger Pubhlishers, POB 5007, Westport CT 06881, USA.

Focusing on campus design and architecture, combined with the mission of selected American colleges and universities, this volume analyzes how design can contribute to the overall mission of the institution. Case studies are used to illustrate these themes. The author, an architect who has worked on campus design, is able to bring relevant expertise to the analysis.

D'Andrea, Vaneeta, and David Gosling. *Improving Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: A Whole Institution Approach*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press and McGraw-Hill Education, 2005. 245 pp. (pb). ISBN 0-335-21068-6. Address: McGraw-Hill Education, Shoppenhangers Rd., Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 2QL, UK.

The focus of this book is on improving teaching in higher education—including an analysis of the organizational framework of the university and designing arrangements that affect the entire institution. The volume provides guidelines for improvement as well as an overall analysis of the issues involved. Based on the UK experience, the themes are widely relevant.

Ehrenberg, Ronald G., ed. *What's Happening to Public Higher Education?* Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006. 408 pp. $59.95 (hb). ISBN 95 0-275-98503-2. Address: Praeger Publishers, POB 5007, Westport CT 06881, USA.

Economist Ehrenberg points out that the share of funding from the states, devoted to education and to higher education, has declined over the past two decades, creating serious problems for the public research universities. They have been unable to keep pace on salaries for faculty, tuition charges have increased, and in general public higher education in the United States finds itself with serious problems. These and related issues are discussed by a group of higher education experts.

Fiedler, Werner and Eike Hebecker, eds. *Promovieren in Europa: Strukturen, Status und Perspektiven im Bologna-Prozess*. Opladen, Germany: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2006. 95 pp (pb). ISBN 3-86649-008-9. Address: www.budrich-verlag.de.

A study of the European higher education landscape with a focus on the process of degree structure and award mainly at the graduate (master's and doctoral) levels. The Bologna process has stresses the implementation of a better organized process for advanced study.

Golde, Chris M., and George E. Walker, eds. *Envisioning the Future of Doctoral Education: Preparing Stewards of the Disciplines*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006. 450 pp. (hb).ISBN 0-7879-8235-0. Address: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 989 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is engaged in a consideration of the future of doctoral education in the United States. This volume includes essays related to that effort. Among the themes discussed are broad trends of change in doctoral studies and the views of doctoral students and postdocs. The bulk of the book is composed of essays on doctoral education in key disciplines—including mathematics, chemistry, history, English, neuroscience, and several others.

Geen, Howard, and Stuart Powell. *Doctoral Study in Contemporary Higher Education*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press and McGraw-Hill Education, 2005. 274 pp. (pb). ISBN 0-335-21473-8. Address: McGraw-Hill Education, Shoppenhangers Rd., Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 2QL, UK.

An analysis of the nature of doctoral higher education in the United Kingdom, this book focuses on the current policy environment for doctoral education and plans for changes. Among the issues considered are funding doctoral programs, doctoral supervision, the diversity of doctoral study programs in the United Kingdom, and future directions.

Kapur, Devesh, and John McHale. *Give Us Your Best and Brightest: The Global Hunt for Talent and Its Impact on the Developing World*. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2005. 246 pp. (pb). ISBN 1-933286-03-2. Address: Center for Global Development, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington DC 20036, USA.

While this book is not directly about higher education, it is very relevant to universities everywhere. It concerns migration of highly educated talent from developing countries to the North. What used to be called "brain drain" is now considered cross-border flows of talent. Devish and McHale point out that 41 percent of postsecondary educated people migrate from the Caribbean, 27 percent from Western Africa, and so on. They argue that while remittances and other kinds of reciprocal arrangements ameliorate the situation, patterns of international migration are highly damaging to the developing world. They also analyze how the North often manipulates its immigration regulations to lure talent from the developing world.

Kelo, Maria, Ulrich Teichler, and Bernd Wächter, eds. *Eurodata: Student Mobility in European Higher Education*. Bonn, Germany: Lemmens, 2006. 192 pp. ISBN 3-932306-72-4. Address: Lemmens Verlag, Matthias-Grüewald Str. 1-3, D-53175 Bonn, Germany.

This comprehensive volume presents and analyzes data concerning student mobility in Europe—focusing on 32 European countries. Detailed information concerning foreign study trends is provided. The authors note that most studies provide data on foreign students but not fully on mobility, since there are many students who are not citizens but rather permanent residents of European nations, and this complicates data. Most of the 1.1 million foreign students enrolled in the 32 European countries are from outside of Europe—40 percent from Asia. There are several national case studies included—the UK, Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic—as well as comprehensive data chapters.

Keohane, Nannerl O. *Higher Ground: Ethics and Leadership in the Modern University*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006. 304 pp. $24.95 (hb). ISBN 0-8223-3786-X. Address: Duke University Press, POB 90660, Durham, NC 27708, USA.

A series of essays by Nannerl Keohane, the former president of Duke University, this book discusses such topics as the mission of the research university, the role of liberal arts, presidential leadership in higher education, academic freedom, and others.

Kovac, Vesna, Jasminka Ledic, and Branko Rafajac. *Understanding University Organizational Culture: The Croatian Example*. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang, 2006. 273 pp. $57.95 (pb). ISBN 0-8204-7665-X. Address: Peter Lang Publishers, Escheborner Landstr. 42-50, D-60489 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

This is a research study based on a survey of 476 Croatian university professors concerning attitudes toward the organization and culture of the universities, including academic leadership and prospects and directions for change. Discussed in the study are the changes being considered as Croatia seeks to enter the European higher education area.

Kwiek, Marek. *The University and the State: A Study into Global Transformations*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006. 424 pp. $76.95. ff64 (hb). ISBN 3-631-54977-6. Address: Peter Lang Publishers, 29 Broadway, New York, NY 10006, USA.

A wide-ranging discussion of the themes the relationship of the university with, society, the state, and the global context, this volume discusses not only themes of globalization and the knowledge economy, it also considers the German philosophical underpinnings to these themes. There is a special focus on the European context.

McNay, Ian, ed. *Beyond Mass Higher Education: Building on Experience*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press and McGraw-Hill Education, 2006. 240 pp. (pb). ISBN 0-335-21857-1.. Address: McGraw-Hill Education, Shoppenhangers Rd., Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 2QL, UK.

As the United Kingdom moves toward universal access to higher education, this volume examines the British experience with developing a mass higher education system. Among the themes discussed in this edited volume are differentiation and stratification in Scotland, the impact of technologies, assessment, academic staff in a mass higher education environment, governance and the role of the state, gender issues, and others.

Mizikaci, Fatma. *Higher Education in Turkey*. Bucharest, Romania: *UNESCO European Center for Higher Education,2006*. 187 pp US$20 (pb). ISBN 92-9069-83-2. Address: UNESCO-CEPES, 39 Stirbei-Voda St., RO 010102 Bucharest, Romania.

One of a series of books on higher education in European countries, this volume analyses such themes as the history of higher education, governance, funding, institutional patterns, degrees and programs, and the academic profession. A concluding chapter on the future of higher education in Turkey is included, as are useful statistics concerning Turkish universities.

National Education Association. The NEA 2006 Almanac of Higher Education. Washington, DC: National Education Association, 2006. 125 pp. $35 (pb). ISSN 0743-670X. Address: NEA, 120` 16th St. NW, Washington DC 20036, USA.

The annual publication, sponsored by the largest teachers union in the United States, focuses on key issues relevant to the academic profession as well as higher education generally. Among the themes discussed are trends in faculty unionization, retirement and benefits issues, faculty workload, financial issues facing public universities, faculty salaries in American colleges and universities, and international trends.

Nemec, Mark R. *Ivory Towers and Nationalist Minds: Universities, Leadership, and the Development of the American State*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006. 301 pp. $24.95 (pb) ISBN 0-472-06912-8. Address: University of Michigan Press, 839 Greene St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104, USA.

A fascinating history of the formative period of the American university, this book focuses on how the top US universities became national in their vision and focused both on research and service. The author argues that these universities played an important role in American public life, and in the shaping ideas at a key time both for the nation and for the universities.

Reinalda, Bob, and Ewa Kulesza. *The Bologna Process: Harmonizing Europe's Higher Education*. Leverkusen Opladen, Germany: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2005. 229 pp. ff19.90. (pb). ISBN 3-938094-39-7. Address: Barbara Budrich Publishers, Stauffenbergstr 7, 51379 Leverkusen-Opladen, Germany.

A valuable summary of the complex elements of the Bologna process, this book includes discussions of each of the key agreements and documents relating to European higher education harmonization from the Bologna agreement itself, to the many additional European arrangements. Also included are discussions of the WTO-GATS, the role of intergovernmental organizations such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO, and the NGOs, including the European Universities Association, trade unions, the International Association of Universities, and others. Texts of documents relevant to the topic are also included.

Schuster, Jack H., and Martin J. Finkelstein. *The American Faculty: The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. 572 pp (hb). ISBN 0-8018-8283-4. Address: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218, USA.

The most comprehensive analysis of American faculty in many years, this volume provides data-based information the structure of academic careers, the changing nature of academic work, salaries, new trends in academic appointments, how academics are trained, and other factors. The authors point out that the conditions of work in US universities have deteriorated in many ways over the past several decades.

Tomusk, Voldemar, ed. *Creating the European Area of Higher Education: Voices From the Periphery*. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer, 2006. ff106.95. 313 pp (hb) ISBN 1-4020-4613-8. Address: Springer Publishers, POB 17, 3300 AA Dordrecht, the Netherlands.

The Bologna agreement and related changes in European higher education are having an impact throughout Europe and beyond. This valuable book focuses mainly on how the European countries at the periphery are handling the changes. Case studies of such countries as Finland, Estonia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Macedonia, Russia, and others consider the structural, psychological, curricular, and other changes that are affecting these countries.

Walker, Melanie. *Higher Education Pedagogies*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press and McGraw-Hill Education, 2006. 164 pp. (pb). ISBN 0-335-21321-9. Address: McGraw-Hill Education, Shoppenhangers Rd., Maidenhead, Berks., SL6 2QL, UK.

Focusing on the human capability approach, this book discusses teaching and learning in higher education. Questions of which capabilities are valued in higher education, how they can be identified, and how this approach can lead to improved student learning are at the heart of this volume.

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The Center's award-winning website is a useful source of information and analysis on higher education worldwide. All back issues of *International Higher Education* are available, and an index provides easy access to articles by topic and country. Center publications are also available, and links to relevant higher education websites and information are provided. We are a featured e-link of the World Bank and other agencies.

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