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Backlash Against "Others"

Gary Rhoades

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With profound implications for higher education, politics in the West is marked and marred by a backlash against "others," against groups other than the traditionally dominant European ethnicities. Partly, that has been manifest in right-wing populist movements that have swept the world in the last year. Nationalistic campaigns and candidates have challenged established political parties, institutions (including universities), and orthodoxies about free flows of people and goods and the benefits of growing internationalization and diversity. Partly, the backlash has also intersected and animated the political deconstruction of the social democratic compact and the welfare state. That is evident in the systematic assault on, and disinvestment in, public sector institutions, including higher education.

Anti-Internationalization

The backlash against internationalization is, well, global. In one country and region after another, whether in the case of Brexit and the European Community, or in the campaigns and platforms, among others, of Donald Trump, Norbert Hofer of Austria's Freedom party, or Marine Le Pen of France's National Front party, there are countermobilizations against (im)migrants, Muslims, and the very idea of multiculturalism. At their core and at their worst, these campaigns express the ugliest and darkest elements of national and human history. And, in each, there is a strong theme of recapturing idealized glories of the nation's past by railing against the current and future influx of people and ideas that undermine the dominant historical culture.

What This Means for Universities

Universities have been largely absent or ineffectual in relation to these campaigns. Yet the discourse, policies, and practices of the right-wing populist backlash are antithetical to what universities at their best stand for. More than that, like the neoliberal public policies of mainstream politicians that have reduced funding for education, the right-wing populists frame and target tertiary education as part of the problem, not of the solution to what ails society. Indeed, universities' alleged progressive and politically correct, multicultural ideologies, as well as their internationalism, is demeaned and demonized, and provided as a rationale for reducing public support. The recruiting, hiring, accepting, and even celebrating of "others" and difference makes public higher education, at its progressive and inclusive best, anathema to the demagogues and ideologues of the right.

As universities have become more diverse in the above regards, they have received proportionately less government funding. Nowhere is that more clear than in the United States, where demographic change has been accompanied by public disinvestment. The increased, though still inequitable, access of the growth demographics of students—lower income, students of color, and immigrants—to postsecondary education has accompanied reduced public funding, mirroring developments in elementary and secondary education. That pattern is less evident in Europe, where universities have experienced far less of an infusion of domestic ethnic minorities. Yet, there is some evidence there as well of the increased recruitment of international students being accompanied by some tensions in local communities and national politics. That has particularly been true in Britain. But it is true on the continent as well, where universities and educational institutions more generally are more likely to articulate and support what German Chancellor Angela Merkel has termed a *Willkommenskultur* (welcome culture).

Recentering Class Inequities, and Including "Others"

At the same time, there is another side to universities, just as there is to the right-wing populism. Universities have a long history of exclusion by gender, ethnicity, and social class. To populists, universities are part of the establishment—they are effete elites. That characterization is not entirely inaccurate.

Despite expansion of tertiary education opportunities to the sons and daughters of working-class families, too many universities remain best at serving elites, nationally and globally. Moreover, like corporate business, when domestic markets of prospective consumers (i.e., in higher education, of traditional students) stagnated, universities turned to global markets of disproportionately privileged international students. Those students who study abroad, whether in the Erasmus program in Europe, or more generally, are considerably more likely to come from economically and educationally advantaged backgrounds than are other students.

Who benefits then, classwise, from internationalization? Too often, institutions that recruit international students who are mostly privileged are at the same time largely overlooking local students, often in their neighborhoods, who are mostly not privileged. Most elite universities would be diversified culturally at least as much by expanding access to low-income students of various ethnic and national backgrounds in their city, as by recruiting yet more rela-

tively privileged international, or, in the case of the United States, out-of-state students.

Recently, Cambridge University released a report sounding the alarm about the adverse effects of Brexit on Cambridge, and on British higher education generally. I doubt that the average working-class family in the industrial midlands—slammed by decades of economic upheaval and decline in the brave "new economy"—would sing a sad song for Cambridge or university dons more generally. Neither would those 15–20 percent of people living in poverty in Cambridge. That is understandable. For the new economy appears to be very much like the old economy, in terms of who reaps the prime benefits and who does the principal tough labor.

> Partly, the backlash has also intersected and animated the political deconstruction of the social democratic compact and the welfare state.

Class inequities between labor and capital are increasing internationally, straining our social democratic compacts and institutions. University academics and executives must certainly redouble their efforts and discover new ways to work more effectively against the xenophobia—and racism, misogyny, and homophobia—that defines so much of right-wing populism. But we would also do well to learn a lesson from the rise of populism, by committing ourselves to bridge the social class divide that plagues the academy and society, dividing us into nations of a relatively few haves and too many have-nots. We need to find ways to realize more fully our social responsibility to democratize the societies in which we are situated. That should mean rebalancing and enhancing the global and the local, to enhance the opportunities and lives of the social class "others," domestically and internationally, who continue to be relatively invisible and relegated to educational oblivion by our policies, practices, and belief systems in academe.

Trump and the Coming Revolution in Higher Education Internationalization

PHILIP G. ALTBACH AND HANS DE WIT

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In recent months, we have seen the beginning of a sea-change in the patterns of higher education internationalization that have been entrenched and rapidly expanding during the past half-century. The most recent minitsunami is the implementation of several restrictions on citizens of seven predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States, and the havoc that has created. Brexit, inward-looking nationalist governments in Poland and Hungary, and the rise of the populist right in Europe are all parts of what might be called the "new world order" of higher education internationalization. While some observers feel that current patterns will continue, we disagree. We are not arguing that mobility will end or that the academic community itself is abandoning internationalization as a goal, and certainly not that the commercial interests that have recently entered the internationalization "marketplace" will stop. But we do think that we are at the beginning of a fundamental period of change.

One must keep in mind that higher education internationalization is a set of concepts and a series of operational programs. The concepts include a recognition of the positive elements of globalization and an understanding that it is a permanent element of the world economy; a commitment to global understanding; respect for diverse cultures; and an open society welcoming cooperation between different political, cultural, and economic partners. Internationalization is also often seen as part of a nation's "soft power" influence. The operational side of internationalization has in recent years become big business—many billions of dollars, euros, and other currencies are spent on internationalization programs and earned by universities, private companies, and a vast array of providers, insurance companies, recruiters, and others. International students contributed more than \$32.8 billion to the US economy. And UK universities currently earn around one-eighth of their income from tuition fees paid by international students. These students also contribute around £7 billion a year to the economy.

Although the more idealistic aspects of international-

ization have been modified in recent years by commercialization and profit-seeking, basic goals are, and will remain, fairly stable. Overall, the academic community will remain committed to these positive goals. The operational end is likely to be seriously upended, with considerable implications for internationally mobile students, academics seeking overseas mobility or collaboration, and for universities and governments that have come to rely on income from mobility in all of its aspects. The future of more than 200 international branch campuses, mainly sponsored by European and US universities, and located worldwide—many in Muslim-majority countries—might be in jeopardy.

> At the same time, we will see many universities and their faculty and students in the United States and in Europe resist these trends and take initiatives to promote international solidarity, cooperation, and exchanges.

External Realities

Global political realities are changing by the hour, as shown by the immigration restrictions of the Trump administration. Further implementation of "extreme vetting" can be expected. Changing policies by the British government relating to defining international students as immigrants also create instability. Changes in policies and in opinions about the role of student and academic mobility can be expected in the coming period in some European countries. In the year of the 35th anniversary of the European flagship program ERASMUS, the future of this program and of others in research cooperation and higher education capacity building may be threatened or will see severe budget cuts, as a result of growing anti-European feelings among right-wing parties and their supporters. In the West, the trend toward "border closing," or at least tightening restrictions, may well get worse. It is unclear whether countries affected by Western discriminatory policies will retaliate, creating a kind of "trade war" for higher education internationalization.

There are also counterexamples. Canada has made it clear that it will keep its doors open and expand programs for international mobility, keeping available a path to citizenship for graduates from other countries. Others, including China and India, may strengthen their policies aimed at attracting international students and staff. The existing

trend toward increasing mobility within the Asian, Latin American, and African regions, and between these regions, will speed up.

The rhetoric and policies of Trump, May, and others do not even need to be fully implemented. Occurrences of hostility and discriminatory practices, incidences of harassment at border crossings, difficulties in obtaining visas, and numerous other problems, real or perceived, will affect how people think about mobility and internationalization. The genie is out of the bottle, and cannot easily be put back.

Internationalization has been perceived as a Western concept, benefiting mainly the developed world. With the West shutting itself out, the next revolution of higher education internationalization might well take place among developing and emerging economies.

Likely Consequences

While it is impossible to predict the exact consequences of the trends outlined above, several results seem likely:

- There will be significant changes in patterns of student mobility, affecting mostly the market share of the United Kingdom and the United States, which is already declining.
- Global perceptions of the United States and the United Kingdom, and of other European countries that follow their lead toward intolerance and xenophobia, will suffer, weakening the dominance of these countries in global academic rankings, research collaboration, and other aspects of higher education prestige.
- Public higher education institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom will likely suffer the biggest impact, with a further decrease of public funding, combined with lower numbers of fee-paying international students.
- Smaller universities and colleges, already facing demographic challenges, and often dependent on international student enrollments, will risk closure.
- Branch campuses and other forms of cross-border education from the United States and the United Kingdom will stall—while universities from other regions, including India and China, will fill their places. Current host countries of Western branch campuses, in the Middle East and elsewhere, may become less eager to support them.
- Scholarship schemes like Fulbright in the United States and ERASMUS in Europe will face severe budget cuts, which will contribute to reductions in mobility of students and faculty.
- Internationalization, already perceived to be elitist, will likely only be afforded by prestigious universities.

At the same time, we will see many universities and their faculty and students in the United States and in Europe resist these trends and take initiatives to promote international solidarity, cooperation, and exchanges. Global citizenship, a concept denied by Trump and May, will become a key factor in the fight of universities for autonomy and academic freedom. The reactions of academic leaders, faculty, and students in US universities and colleges to the restrictions imposed by the Trump administration, are a clear manifestation of their opposition. These reactions are not driven by a fear of losing revenue, but by their attachment to the core values of higher education.

Academic Staff Mobility in the Age of Trump and Brexit?

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Academic mobility and the attractiveness of higher education systems are increasingly associated with excellence, the creation of dynamic, international networks, enhanced scientific performance, improved knowledge and technology transfer, and ultimately improved economic and social welfare. The success of higher education institutions, measured in terms of high-quality teaching and research output and the attraction of large research grants, is strongly influenced by the academic staff they employ. In times of growing international competition, the ability to attract talented academic staff is the key ingredient of success for universities and economies worldwide. Yet, current political developments, characterized by increasing populism, nationalist tendencies, and strong anti-immigration discourses might lead to significant shifts in traditional patterns of international academic staff mobility.

Traditional Mobility Patterns

Austria and the United Kingdom (where 25 percent of aca-demic staff are foreign nationals), Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Norway (30 percent), Luxembourg and Switzerland (more than 50 percent) are the European countries that have attracted most foreign academic talent in Europe up to now. The 2016 Science and Engineering Indicators show that in the United States, more than half of the postdoctoral workforce is foreign born. Existing patterns of academic mobility do, however, tend to reinforce inequalities between academic centers such as those mentioned above and academic peripheries (to speak in Altbach's terms), which are usually located in smaller, geographically remote, and economically weaker countries, and constitute less attractive destinations for international academic staff. Traditional losers of the brain-gain and brain-drain dynamics of international academic staff mobility include Central and Eastern European (CEE), South European, Latin American, and some Asian countries, as well as many developing countries across the world.

Our recent study of patterns of academic staff mobility in CEE countries—Estonia, the Czech Republic, and Lithuania (traditionally closed systems characterized by transition economies, distinctive cultures and histories, and protectionism of their national languages) has revealed that these countries struggle both to retain and to attract academic talent, resulting in predominantly outbound mobil-

> **Estonia stands out as a best-practice example in implementing concrete policies and imposing clear targets at both national and institutional levels for opening recruitment and attracting foreign academic talent.**

ity flows. Key barriers to attracting talented academic staff from abroad include comparatively low salary levels, a lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion procedures, high degrees of nepotism and academic inbreeding, as well as a lack of foreign language competencies among older generations of local academic staff. In the Baltic States, especially in Latvia, further barriers are created by local language requirements for foreign academic staff. We observed that academics moving to CEE countries seem to be motivated by factors that differ from those moving to other countries in the world. Instead of career progression, access to knowledge and equipment, autonomy and academic freedom, and lower teaching loads and more time for research,

interview partners noted personal ties and family-related factors, or a specific interest in the history, language, and culture of the host country, as their primary motivations.

Although recent policy rhetoric points to the imperative of attracting academic talent from abroad, concrete measures are lacking and problems with legal salary schemes and legal frameworks for immigration remain largely unsolved. At the same time, we observe that CEE countries have significantly improved their research infrastructure with investments from EU structural funds. Moreover, higher education institutions in CEE countries are increasingly offering courses and programs in foreign languages, usually English, which facilitates the participation of foreign academic staff in educational activities. Additionally, a growing number of individual institutions in CEE countries that struggle to attract international academic staff on a regular employment basis engage in alternative strategies, such as public–private partnerships, which are more attractive to international academic staff due to better remuneration and more time for research activities.

Brexit and Trump: Changing the Rules of the Game?

Increasing populism, nationalist tendencies, and strong public anti-immigration discourses can currently be witnessed in many countries worldwide, and the question of attracting and retaining academic talent to ensure the competitiveness of science and higher education systems in Europe and the United States remains paramount. Especially in light of events such as the 2016 referendum in favor of what is commonly referred to as "Brexit" (the United Kingdom leaving the European Union), and the immigration policy proposed by President Trump in the United States, we assume that the number of academics moving to both countries will decrease. Furthermore, recent reports from the United Kingdom reveal that academics from EU countries have been told by the Home Office to make arrangements to leave the country. As motivations and possibilities for foreign academics to move to and stay in these countries decrease, will this lead to new opportunities for other countries to increase their talent base?

Due to demographic downturn, increased emigration rates, especially of young people, and an aging academic workforce, attracting foreign students and academic staff will become an ever more important aspect to ensure the competitiveness and ultimately the survival of higher education systems in CEE countries. We expect increasing awareness of the importance of changing national and institutional practices and legal frameworks in order to attract international academic staff. Among CEE countries, Estonia stands out as a best-practice example in implementing concrete policies and imposing clear targets at both na-

tional and institutional levels for opening recruitment and attracting foreign academic talent. From EU accession in 2004 to 2014, the share of foreign academic staff in Estonia has increased almost eight-fold, to more than 8 percent. Recently, increased efforts to advertise in *Science* and openly recruit top scientists with significant investments can also be observed in Poland, and we expect other CEE countries to follow this example in the future.

As conditions for recruiting and retaining foreign academic talent are changing in countries like the United Kingdom and the United States, new windows of opportunity may open up for Central and Eastern Europe and other countries previously located at the peripheries of higher education. Provided that these countries do not follow the trend towards increasing national isolation, and anticipating that they will follow positive examples in their regions of decreasing barriers for incoming mobility, they might be able to increase significantly the attractiveness of their systems for talented academics from abroad. In such instances, we may witness a significant change of direction in international academic mobility trends. ■

Do Rankings Drive Better Performance?

Simon Marginson

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Global ranking is still only 13 years old, but has already installed itself as a permanent part of international higher education; it has deeply transformed the sector. Global ranking is inevitable. People inside and outside the sector want to understand higher education, and ranking is the simplest way to do so. It maps the pecking order and underpins partnership strategies. It guides investors in research capacity. It shapes the life decisions of many thousands of cross-border students and faculty—despite the patchy quality of much of the data, and the perverse effects of all rankings, good or bad.

Global ranking has remade global higher education as a relational environment, magnifying some potentials

in that environment, and blocking others. It has done so in three ways. First, competition: ranking has burned into the global consciousness the idea of higher education as a competitive market of universities and countries. This competition is about research performance, the main driver of ranking outcomes, and about reputation. Second, hierarchy: ranking is a core element of the system of valuation, whereby unequal weights are assigned to knowledge and to the credentials that graduates take into national and global labor markets. Through ranking, universities become more tightly connected to the political economy, the labor markets, and the unequal societies in which they sit. Third, performance: ranking has installed a performance economy that controls behavior, driving an often frenetic culture of continuous improvement in each institution.

Unequal Competition

There are naturally competitive elements in research and in graduate labor markers. But ranking gives competition a more powerful and pristine form, embedding it in indicators and incentives. It makes competition the principal strategy for many university rectors, presidents, and vice-chancellors. Solidarity and cooperation within systems is weakened.

We continue to cooperate, regardless of ranking. The metrics include intellectual collaboration in publishing, though this is often explained as self-interest (joint publication expands citation rates). But the point is that a large and increasing share of the remarkable collective resources in global higher education is allocated to mutual conflict.

Cooperation is further hampered by the hierarchy of value formed in ranking. Though research and learning flow freely across borders, they are not equally valued. There is a clear status hierarchy. What defines this hierarchy is not a global system for valuing credentials or learning. There is no global system for credentials. We do not measure learning on a comparative basis. What systematizes the global hierarchy is the process of codifying, rating, and ranking knowledge, summarized and spread everywhere by global ranking.

Knowledge is ordered by journal metrics and hierarchies, publication metrics, citation metrics and hierarchies, and crowned by rankings, which are largely based on research. Research performance is the whole content of the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), the Leiden ranking, and Scimago, and more than two thirds of the *Times Higher Education* ranking. Rankings translate the status economy in research into an institutional hierarchy, determining the value of each knowledge producer and, so, determining the value of what they produce. Knowledge metrics and rankings recycle the dominance of the strongest universities.

Better Performance?

What about performance improvement? This is the ultimate rationale for competition. If ranking is grounded in real university performance, and measures the important things about universities, then a better ranking means improved performance. If every university strives for a higher rank, all must be lifting performance. Is this what happens? Yes and no.

The potential is there for a virtuous circle between ranking, strategy, efforts to improve, better performance, then back to better ranking, and so on. But there are problems. Only some university activities are included in ranking. There is no virtuous circle for teaching and learning, a big gap in the performance driver. Many research metrics are inside the virtuous circle, but not in the humanities, the humanistic social sciences, and most professional disciplines, and all scholarly work outside English is excluded. What about science? There, some rankings drive performance, others do not. Rankings that rest on coherent metrics for publication and citation drive more and better research outputs, all else being equal (e.g. ARWU, Leiden, Scimago). Since 2003, research-based rankings have contributed to increased investment in university scientific capacity and elevated research outputs within institutional strategy.

> Global ranking has remade global higher education as a relational environment, magnifying some potentials in that environment, and blocking others.

The picture is more mixed with the *Times Higher Education* and QS rankings. To the extent they draw on strong research metrics, there is the potential for a virtuous circle. Taken alone, the QS indicator for citations per faculty, and the *Times Higher Education* indicators for citations and for research volume, potentially have this effect. "Potentially," because the incentives are blunted: the research-based indicators are buried within combined multi-indicators.

The internationalization indicators generate incentives to increase numbers of students and faculty from abroad, and joint publications, but are minor within the total ranking—and again, the performance incentive is buried within the other elements in the multi-indicators used.

Therefore, a university may improve its citation per faculty performance, or improve its internationalization numbers, but watch its ranking go down because of what happened in the reputational surveys, which constitute a large

slab of both the *Times Higher Education* and the QS rankings, but are decoupled from real performance. Surveys contain data about opinions about performance, not data about performance. The link between effort, improvement, and ranking, essential to the virtuous circle, is broken. The same happens when the ranking position changes because of small shifts in methodology. Again, there is no coherent link between effort, performance, and ranking.

Wait, you might say, reputation matters to students. The value of degrees is affected by the pecking order. That is right. And a reputational hierarchy based on surveys, by itself, uncontaminated by other factors, does tell us something important. But a reputational ranking alone, while interesting, cannot drive continually improving performance in real terms. It can only drive a position-and-marketing game. In the end, reputation must be grounded in real performance to consistently benefit stakeholders and the public good.

The point can be made by analogy. The winner of the World Cup in football is determined by who scores the most goals within the allotted time on the field. Now what if FIFA changes the rules? Instead of rewarding the final performance alone, who scores the most goals, it decides to give 50 percent to the most goals, and 50 percent to the team believed to be the best, measured by survey. We would all have less trust in the result, wouldn't we?

Multi-indicator rankings provide a large data set, but because the link between effort in each area and the rankings outcome is not transparent, they cannot coherently drive performance. The incentives pull in different directions and the effects are invisible. In ARWU, the different indicators correlate fairly well; they pull in the same direction and share common performance drivers. But QS and *Times Higher Education* use heterogeneous indicators.

On the other hand, if the multi-indicator rankings were disaggregated, the individual indicators could effectively drive performance improvement. Then, at least, ranking competition would be directed towards better outcomes, not reputation for its own sake.

Pursuing Rankings in the Age of Massification: For Most—Forget About It

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We have one simple argument: universities around the world, many more than will ever publicly admit it, are currently obsessed with gaining status in one or more national or global rankings of universities. They should quit now.

Although some may succeed in becoming ranked or may improve their numerical scores marginally, it is almost never worth either the resources required, or the substantial changes in mission or academic programs necessary. Indeed, most "gains" are due to methodological changes, introduced by the various rankings to remain in the media and public headlines, and thus commercially lucrative.

Our advice is particularly pertinent for midrange national, regional, and specialist universities and colleges, and their stakeholders and governments. Today, these institutions constitute the overwhelming majority of higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide, due to a combination of demographic demand for participation in higher education, and societal and economic requirements for a more highly educated citizenship. Indeed, projections suggest the number of students enrolled in higher education is forecast to rise from 99.4 million in 2000 to 414.2 million in 2030, an increase of 316 percent. Accommodating these additional students will require more than four major universities (30,000 students) to open every week for the next fifteen years.

These HEIs are the real backbone of society and their locales. They serve as the anchor institution, the mainstay for social and economic growth and development. They will develop some research focus, but are unlikely to become globally prominent.

However, our advice extends even to those universities that adopt the mantle of "flagship"—those at the top of the hierarchy in their country or state. This is because rank-

ings pervert one of the main purposes of higher education, which is to ensure that students and graduates acquire the knowledge and skills needed for a successful, satisfying, and active life throughout one's increasingly longer life span.

What Global Rankings Measure—and Don't Measure

It is by now well-known that the three main global rankings: Academic Rankings of World Universities (ARWU, the Shanghai Rankings), *Times Higher Education (THE)* rankings, and QS, mainly assess two things: research productivity and (except for ARWU) reputation among peers, employers, and students. *THE* devotes 90 percent and QS 70 percent to measuring research, while, respectively, they assign 33 percent and 50 percent to reputation. *THE* uses a subjective reputational survey to measure teaching quality, but it is unclear how anyone can rate teaching ability without being in the classroom. Internationalization incentivizes quantity over quality, and often reflects a country's geographic position. Switzerland is one good example.

U-Multirank, developed by the European Union, uses a broader set of indicators but has struggled to gain wide acceptance, while others, such as the Leiden Rankings, are more narrowly focused in scope and coverage.

There are a growing number of national and specialist versions, ranging from those done by such publications as *US News and World Report* in the United States, *Macleans* in Canada, *Der Spiegel* in Germany, the *Asahi Shimbun* in Japan, to Global MBA Rankings from the *Financial Times* and the Green Metric World University Ranking from Indonesia. The former have access to a broader dataset, but they all suffer from methodological problems.

Why Universities Should Forget About Rankings

There are 18,000 HEIs worldwide, according to the *World Higher Education Database* (http://www.whed.net/home.php). However, only a small minority will ever appear in the rankings, no matter how much they try and how many resources are devoted to the task. Indeed, the top 100 universities represent only 0.5 percent of HEIs or 0.4 percent of students worldwide. No doubt being ranked is itself an accomplishment, but maintaining position and even climbing in the rankings is not easy. There are rising expectations, and slippage is a constant problem—bringing inevitable negative publicity.

This is because competition is fierce, and those in the upper reaches of the rankings have considerable resources, financial and human, to devote to the effort. Furthermore, rankings favor universities with strength in the sciences, engineering, and medicine. Newer and smaller universities, especially in developing economies, and institutions without these specializations, have limited opportunities.

At the same time, universities already at the top of the rankings continue to improve. Thus, without massive financial and other resources, it is almost impossible for academic institutions to improve their ranking status.

Lessons from Rankings

Rankings have had an outsized impact on higher education and policy. International evidence from the last decade and more show how they influence decision-making, academic behavior, and resource allocation; research priorities and disciplinary practices, including publication in English-language and internationally ranked journals; recruitment and promotional criteria; and organizational structures and institutional mergers. Today, many universities have a rankings strategy and institutional research units that benchmark rankings performance.

However, our advice extends even to those universities that adopt the mantle of "flagship"—those at the top of the hierarchy in their country or state.

Because of the overemphasis on research, international experience highlights emergent tensions between a university's mission and values, and efforts to enter and/or climb in the rankings. Teaching and undergraduate students, as well as the arts, humanities and social sciences, often take a backseat when decisions are made or resources are allocated. Some universities report preferential attention and benefit being given to research "stars" over longer-employed or domestic faculty. Other examples show how universities have attempted to refocus student entry criteria and become more selective and exclusive to better meet outcome indicators such as completion rates, graduate employment or salary levels, alumni donations, etc. However, in making such changes, universities can significantly alter their mission and purpose. Other examples highlight the huge financial costs associated with attempting to make statistically insignificant changes in their ranked order—leading to huge debt.

Focus on Mission, Not Rankings

Our combined recent experiences highlight the fact that rankings have become a major factor influencing all higher education. Even Yale University recently announced it can no longer ignore them. Although in the midst of a war zone, a university recently approached one of the authors,

because it was concerned about its position in the rankings. This experience is not unique. At a time when universities seek to promote and protect academic autonomy from all kinds of interference, it is remarkable that some universities willingly allow their decisions to become vulnerable to an agenda set by others.

Prestige and reputation have become dominant drivers rather than pursuance of quality and student achievement, intensifying social stratification and reputational differentiation. There is a big assumption that the choice of indicators and associated weightings are meaningful measures, but there is no international research evidence that this is true.

The problem is particularly acute—and concerning—for the overwhelming majority of middle- and lower-ranked universities and colleges that have got caught up in the rankings maelstrom. To these universities, and their governments, we say: concentrate on what matters—helping the majority of students earn credentials for sustainable living and employment, rather than ensuring that your institution matches criteria established by different rankings. Even if much attention and resources are so expended, the results will not be favorable.   ∎

The American Academic Profession at Risk

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Over the past half century, the United States emerged arguably as the world's premier national system of higher education in terms of both size and quality. China, of course, now surpasses the United States in total student enrollments and produces more PhDs annually. It counts as well a larger number of instructional staff than the United States. India is on the verge of surpassing the United States in size, at least in terms of total student enrollments. American claims to quality remain—claims, however, that are increasingly at risk.

A New Appraisal
That is the argument of a new, elaborately detailed analysis of the status and prospects of the American academic profession: *The Faculty Factor*, by Martin Finkelstein, Valerie

Conley, and Jack Schuster (Johns Hopkins University Press, October 2016). Building on already disturbing indicators of deterioration reported in our earlier book in the first years of the twenty-first century (Schuster and Finkelstein, *The American Faculty*, 2006), our new book creatively mines fresh—and heretofore unavailable—data sources to follow the fortunes of the American faculty through the lingering Great Global Recession of 2008.

For those who are not experiencing the American system on a daily basis, it provides a sharp, albeit nuanced, corrective to perceptions of the ideal, typical American model of academic work and careers that emerged from Christopher Jencks and David Reisman's *The Academic Revolution* (1968), Bowen and Schuster's *American Professors* (1986), and even Burton Clark's *Academic Life* (1987). That model was built on the concept of *shared governance*, stewardship of the institutions' academic mission, including supreme faculty authority in academic matters, especially personnel issues of hiring and promotion; on the concept of *tenure*, which protected academic freedom, served as a magnet for scholars around the world, and regularized the structure of an academic career (including a six-to-seven year probationary period, followed by a high stakes "up or out" evaluation, leading to a continuous appointment and a relatively stable career); and the concept of an *integrated academic role*, that included teaching, research (often broadly defined), and service in a mutually reinforcing, synergistic dynamic, with each functional role seen as strengthening the others.

By the Numbers: A New Model
The "new" model of academic work and careers in the United States is built on an increasingly contingent, stratified academic workforce; the unbundling of the traditionally integrated role into specialist teaching, research, and administrative roles; and the progressive yielding of faculty authority on campus, even in academic matters, to a growing core of full-time professional administrators. About 35 percent of the headcount of instructional staff are full-time, tenured faculty, or faculty on tenure tracks; about 50 percent now work part-time (predominantly teaching one to two courses on an *ad hoc* basis); and the remaining 15 percent are in full-time fixed contract positions, which are focused on teaching only, research only, or program administration only (with no expectation of service, including participation in governance). With explosive growth in the general, but also academic, administrative ranks, decisions about academic programs and policies are increasingly made by administrators rather than faculty, and faculty's sphere of influence has progressively shrunk down to the department and even program levels.

Our major findings reveal that for the past generation, nearly three-fifths of new hires into faculty positions have

been off the tenure track. Half of all graduating PhDs in the natural and social sciences begin their careers in temporary, postdoctoral positions, and only the fortunate few move into appointments with faculty status. Perhaps one-quarter of newly entering faculty change jobs and employment status in the first three years following their first employment. And two-fifths of full-time faculty who begin off the tenure track leave the higher education sector in the first career decade. The type of contract upon which you enter academe—be it full or part-time, tenure-track or fixed—circumscribes your likely career trajectory. There is minimal permeability across career tracks. And there is relatively little in-migration to the academic profession from industry and government.

> The "new" model of academic work and careers in the United States is built on an increasingly contingent, stratified academic workforce; the unbundling of the traditionally integrated role into specialist teaching, research, and administrative roles.

Across the system, American academics—like those in other nations—have experienced increasing workload demands for teaching more courses, more students, and concurrently for producing more research publications (preferably with competitively secured external research funds), while being increasingly subject to new demands for accountability. All in all, a much less attractive working situation and much less promising career prospects—a situation reflected in declining, albeit still high by most standards, job and career satisfaction. Following a brief period of real growth beginning in the mid-1990s, academic salaries have stabilized and are only just now beginning to recover from the Great Global Recession. Salaries for the very best entry–level jobs (tenure track assistant professorships) do not bring incumbents to the level of median family income. New faculty, even those employed full-time, find themselves increasingly economically marginalized.

International Benchmarks

As a bonus for IHE readers, this volume includes two chapters that explicitly place the US faculty in an international perspective, based largely on the results of the 2007–2008 Changing Academic Profession survey. The first examines trends in the internalization of the teaching and research/ publication activity of American faculty. The second explicitly compares the profile of teaching, research, and governance of academic staff in the United States with those in other English-speaking countries, in Western Europe, and East Asia. What did we learn? To begin with, the American faculty emerged largely as insular and inward looking as they did in the original Carnegie Foundation Advancement of Teaching 1991–1992 International Survey. Only about one-quarter integrated international perspectives into their teaching and research; and only about one-third collaborated with international colleagues. What distinguished the American faculty "internationalists," was their overall research productivity and their extended, professional border-crossing experience. Compared to faculty in other English-speaking countries, in Europe, and East Asia, American academic staff tended to be less oriented to research, to spend more time in teaching, to publish less, to be less influential in institutional governance outside of their own home academic unit and in education public policy, and to be relatively well compensated and relatively satisfied—in the middle of the pack, rather than firmly at the top.

What emerges is a picture of an increasingly fragmented and weakened profession that threatens the future preeminence of US higher education. In a cruel irony—at least for Americans, as many nations across the globe explicitly seek to emulate the American model as part of their strategy to increase their global competitiveness in the knowledge economy, the United States is watching the foundation of its preeminence erode. ∎

Tajikistan: University Challenges and the Professoriate

Zumrad Kataeva

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Tajikistan's higher education is going through a difficult and challenging period. Tajikistan is a small, landlocked, and isolated country with a population of 8.5 million. The country borders with Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and China. Ninety-three percent of its territory is covered by mountains. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, secondary and higher education were deeply af-

fected as a result of the civil war and the discontinuation of financial subsidies from Moscow. A long period of educational reforms began after political stability was restored by the end of 1990s and the early 2000s. The collapse of the former Soviet Union negatively impacted the status of the academic profession in post-Soviet states, with salaries and professional development opportunities spiraling down. At the same time, the liberalization of the economy and the promise of higher education access led to a rise in the demand for higher education and public clamor for greater university access. Colleges and universities in Tajikistan rushed to hire lesser-prepared faculty members, as those more seasoned or talented among the professoriate left for the private sector or migrated abroad. Those who stayed started selling goods in markets or working in a few available businesses, or moved to international organizations. Nevertheless, the higher education system in Tajikistan today consists of 38 higher education institutions with almost 9,000 full-time faculty members and 167,000 students.

Salary and Remuneration
The Republic of Tajikistan is one of the smallest countries of former Soviet Union with a per capita GDP of only US$926. The higher education budget comes from the state, non-state sources, and, increasingly, from tuition fees. The average monthly compensation is approximately US$550 for rectors of universities and only US$69 for assistants of departments, the lowest academic rank; the wage of full–time professors is around US$270 per month. Although salaries have been gradually increasing, they are still not sufficient to cover living expenses for the faculty and their families.

Survival Strategies
As the salaries of teachers and faculty members do not correspond to the cost of living, academics do not have any other choice but to look for other means to earn an income. Younger faculty members do not want to join academia because they know that salaries in universities are very low. Compensation and working conditions faced by faculty members compel them to use a variety of strategies just to survive, let alone flourish. At best, they are involved in projects supported by international organizations, working as translators, private tutors, or in related small businesses. At worst, they become salespeople on markets, or have fled the country looking for better wages. Those that do not have additional jobs are supported by their parents and spouses. Under such conditions, faculty members are not interested in improving their knowledge and skills, and thus are less prepared to be effective instructors. Moreover, faculty members believe that their most important task, apart from teaching, is research, and to engage in research they need adequate income and time; most of them rather spend time looking for additional income in order to survive.

Challenges to Research
Faculty members usually teach 15–20 academic hours per week, which does not allow them to pursue their research and publication needs. As a result, the number of faculty members with academic degrees such as *kandidat nauk* and *doctor nauk* is decreasing. During the economic collapse and the civil war, most libraries throughout the country were damaged. Often, during winter, there is no electricity; some archives with books and journals, which need to be kept at a certain temperature, have not been maintained. Electronic resources are not easily accessible—and the few professional resources available are primarily published in Russian; almost none are published in Tajik. There are few Russian websites that faculty members have access to, but even those sites require fees to download information. Unlike in most developed countries, there are very few external grants to fund research. There are no national dissertation committees that can confer degrees. Until very recently (2015), all dissertations needing approval had to be sent to the Russian Higher Attestation Commission for completion, a lengthy and costly process borne by faculty themselves.

> **Compensation and working conditions faced by faculty members compel them to use a variety of strategies just to survive, let alone flourish.**

Universities in Tajikistan have also experienced a lack of adequate facilities for teaching and learning. Many faculty members work in classrooms lacking modern equipment, such as computers and electronic boards; laboratories are also lacking modern technologies to provide sufficient training to students and young researchers. Given all the professional and personal barriers faced by Tajik faculty members, it is no wonder that only a few of the younger ones pursue further training and advanced academic degrees. Instead of believing in the process of further education and returns to such investments, most, typically, decide to leave academia. The statistics of the ministry of education show that less than 30 percent of faculty members working in Tajik universities have suitable terminal degrees to teach—while governmental policy papers call for enhanced research capacity.

FUTURE STEPS

Despite the harsh conditions and realities faculty members experience, those who remain often do enjoy teaching and working with students. This appears to be their main reason for staying. However, such personal feelings of satisfaction seem insufficient to motivate the next generation of university instructors to prepare to enter the profession. What they need is to be provided with basic working conditions and salaries that they can live on, so they can fully dedicate themselves to teaching, research, producing knowledge, and preparing well-qualified specialists for the future development of the country. Tajik universities and the government need to work on establishing adequate policies and opportunities to enable prospective candidates to regain the status of valued professionals within academe, a condition for allowing their institutions to participate in the growing global educational competition to create a knowledge society. ∎

Making the Gap Year a Reality: Six Issues for Consideration

Doria Abdullah

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A "gap year" refers to an experimental period of travel, work, or other personal and professional development opportunities. It is typically taken before students commence their postsecondary education. Students can undertake a gap year domestically or abroad, the latter having greater appeal among participants. The concept is more familiar for students in the United States and the United Kingdom, with a lucrative industry built in support of the students' pursuits.

Malaysia will incorporate a gap year as part of its undergraduate curriculum. Idris Jusoh, the minister of higher education, made that announcement during his New Year address on January 12, 2017. Starting in 2017, undergraduates from eight public universities are given the option to take a year off during their studies. They can take part in industrial training, pursue their interests in the arts, or work on volunteering projects. The intention is for the students to gain exposure, discover their potential, and develop intellectually. Their gap year experience would also enable them to be more adept in a highly competitive job market.

This article lists six pertinent issues, before the gap year option enters its inaugural implementation phase in the coming 2017/2018 academic term.

ISSUE #1: AWARENESS

The gap year is a new concept and has never been implemented before. If the minister's policy statement is taken literally, Malaysia's version of a gap year will be different than the norm. It must be clearly defined and communicated to the undergraduates. Students should also be convinced of the merits in undertaking a gap year, and the different ways in achieving memorable and impactful gap year experiences.

Parents play a significant role in the undergraduates' decision-making processes. They are accustomed to the conventional pathway of studying and getting employed upon graduation. It will take a while before they can accept the alternative notion of their children taking time off from education to "see the world." Universities should reach out to parents, particularly during orientation, to introduce and obtain parental buy-in.

ISSUE #2: TIMING

As students are expected to take a gap year during their study period, some clarification on timing is required. Should it be done in the second year of study, when students have completed their fundamental courses? Can it be done in the students' third year of study, when they have identified their desired specialization and are more mature in their demeanor? Alternatively, can a student break the gap year duration into two, and sandwich the gap periods in their second and third years of study?

ISSUE #3: DESIGN

Based on the minister's statement, students can work, volunteer, or deepen their knowledge in particular fields during their gap year. Should the students pick only one of the three, or are they allowed to toggle between the options? Student A might choose to work in a company for the full duration of his/her gap year, while student B may prefer to volunteer in a community project for the first six months, before proceeding with a six-month internship in a company. Faculty members and academic advisors should be given clear guidelines before they advise their charges on the best gap-year design to take on.

ISSUE #4: INCENTIVIZING PARTICIPATION

Taking time out for a gap year can be a costly affair. Sub-

ject to terms and conditions set by funding bodies, students may have to temporarily suspend their scholarships or study loans during their time off. Can universities provide scholarships or stipends that would partially support the students' financial needs during their sabbatical?

If the gap year is an elective option, there might only be a brave few who step up to the challenge. How might universities reward the students for their effort? Can the students' gap year experience, for instance, be translated into course credits, which would help them fulfill graduation requirements? The universities should consider setting up incentives to encourage a greater number of students to take up a gap year during their studies.

Issue #5: Alignment with Existing Programs
Volunteering programs abroad with a university's international partners can complement existing plans for a gap year. It would be a good way to increase the number of domestic students participating in outbound student mobility. As such, the gap year should be integrated with the university's existing internationalization strategy. The faculties, academic management office, and international office have to coordinate their efforts and work together so that the gap year becomes an institutionwide internationalization activity.

In recent years, students have been exposed to basic know-how on entrepreneurship, and are required to carry out minientrepreneurial projects as part of their learning. The Malaysian government has even gone one step further, by providing fee waivers to students who wish to set up companies during their studies. Are the students allowed to set up companies and work on their business ventures during their gap year?

> **Malaysia will incorporate a gap year as part of its undergraduate curriculum.**

Issue #6: Stakeholder Engagement and Monitoring
Universities have to have clear strategy on engaging their internal and external stakeholders. It is clear that implementation necessitates the participation of several key stakeholders. Community leaders provide input on the appropriate projects to be carried out, becoming enablers for the students' community-based pursuits. The university career office has to revisit existing skills development modules in order to help students prepare for their gap year.

Industry players should understand the concept of gap year, and be committed to providing enriching work experience for students. Additionally, clear mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation have to be established in order to ascertain effectiveness of implementation.

These issues aside, the ministry's effort in introducing a gap year policy should be lauded. The idea is exciting, and one that could work—provided there is adequate information, clear communication, and good guidelines for those involved. In the long run, it might be a good way to address graduate employability of students from public universities, who are purported to be behind their peers from the private universities in terms of "soft skills" required for employment. ∎

Is There a Benefit to Importing a Branch Campus? Research Capacity in Abu Dhabi

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Many local and national governments, driven by desires to become more economically competitive, seek to develop their local research capacity. There are a variety of approaches undertaken to advance this interest. Some seek to build the capacity of existing institutions, while others are pursuing new strategies, such as building new domestic institutions or importing international branch campuses (IBCs) of research-productive institutions.

Few governments have expansive enough resources to undertake multiple approaches to building research capacity. The few that do, provide opportunity to compare the results of multiple approaches. One such location is Abu Dhabi, the largest, most populous, and wealthiest emirate in United Arab Emirates (UAE). It is the location of more than 20, mostly private, higher education institutions,

some of them IBCs, and most created in the last 15 years. Therefore, it serves as a case to better understanding the resultant research contributions of investments in public, private, and foreign institutions.

We focus particularly on New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD), an IBC established in 2008, which had an early research expectation. Before the first students were admitted, the NYUAD Institute was created to support the research of NYU faculty in the UAE. Today, the Institute promotes cutting-edge and innovative research through the support of its 12 centers and laboratories. Because of its early research focus and support, NYUAD is an unusual example of IBC; but, as an outlier, it is a good test case for looking at potential research contributions.

In order to begin to understand this issue, we used bibliometric data available from Elsevier to track the quantity and quality of research outputs from each of the higher education institutions in Abu Dhabi. This data provides information about the total number of publications produced by faculty at each institution, as well as the relative quality of those publications, as determined by a Field Weighted Citation Index (FWCI), which can be a way to compare the quality of an institution's citation performance, controlling for differences in disciplinary profile, publication age, and publication type.

Research Productivity in Abu Dhabi

When we look solely at the number of publications produced by institutions in the UAE between 2011 and 2015, Abu Dhabi is clearly the leading emirate in terms of research productivity. Of the top ten most productive academic institutions in the country, six of them are located in Abu Dhabi, including the top three.

In Abu Dhabi, UAE University (UAEU) comes out on top with more than 3,000 publications. UAEU is the oldest and largest institution in the country, founded in 1976 just after the country was created, and has long been viewed as the nation's public research university. The next three most productive institutions (Khalifa University, Masdar Institute, and Petroleum Institute), each privately governed and partially publicly funded, have more than double (or nearly double) the number of publications of the fifth institution, NYUAD, the only IBC in the top five, which began its research efforts at about the same time as Khalifa and Masdar.

Of note, the branches of the French business school INSEAD and the Sorbonne, both in Abu Dhabi, register much lower levels of productivity, with fewer than 20 publications each.

Assessing Research Quality

When we look at publication quality (FWCI) for the ten largest institutions, the outcomes shift and we begin to see the potential influence of the IBC connections. The institution with the highest quality indicator in the UAE is Masdar, followed by NYUAD. UAEU drops to 4th place. While the IBCs have not been as productive in terms of the quantity of publications produced, NYUAD does seem to deliver high quality. What is it about an IBC that might lead it to have higher indicators of quality than other domestic institutions?

Capitalizing on Academic Capital

Part of the benefit of importing an IBC is that it can benefit from the academic capital of the parent campus, possibly allowing it to develop a quality research culture more quickly than newly created domestic institutions. NYUAD does not produce as many research publications as the home campus and it probably never will. However, NYUAD's quality indicator has fluctuated around the same level as that of

> **The institution with the highest quality indicator in the UAE is Masdar, followed by NYUAD.**

the home campus and actually was higher than that of the home campus for three of the last six years. It is not possible to draw a firm conclusion on this one case, but it may be that there is an expectation of quality in terms of the type of publications and where publications are published, that spills over from the home campus to the IBC. In addition, the established name of the home campus, whose coattails the IBC clearly rides, may also help to lift the attention that its publications receive, relative to colleagues of newly established, and less well known, domestic institutions.

Collaborations

For NYUAD, international collaboration on publications was around 80 percent in 2015, significantly higher than the home campus. The leading international collaborator, by far, is the home campus—providing more evidence of the IBC benefiting from the home campus affiliation. In addition, it appears that faculty at NYUAD most frequently collaborate with international institutions often considered in the top tier of international rankings, such as Harvard University, the University of Oxford, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University. This suggests that the networks to which the faculty of NYUAD have access may contribute to their relatively higher quality indicators, compared to their local peers.

Conclusion

The number of publications produced by an academic institution does not fully represent the research profile of an organization; but it can provide a quick snapshot of the relative level of productivity and quality among institutions, and a sense of institutional commitment to academic publishing, a typical component of the research enterprise.

This singular case indicates that research-focused IBCs may not have an inherent advantage over domestic institutions in terms of research productivity when measured by the quantity of the output. However, that does not appear to be as true when looking at an indicator of research quality. In this case, NYUAD jumped to the second place of the ranking. This may be due to the academic expectations that are carried over from the home campus, the ability to leverage the established name of the home campus, and the access to networks that local institutions may not have.

Interestingly, however, the only local publication collaborator of NYUAD is Masdar University, which has both more publications and a higher quality indicator. If a benefit of importing IBCs is to build local research capacity, the absence of local collaborations is a question for further exploration. While more information is needed to unpack the research contributions of IBCs, the bibliometric data suggest that they are not necessarily a quick way to build local research capacity.   ∎

Higher Education in South Sudan: Living with Challenges

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South Sudan, which attained its independence from Sudan in July 2011, has one of the smallest, but most problematic higher education systems in sub-Saharan Africa. The world's newest country has five public universities—the University of Juba, the University of Bahr el Ghazal, Upper Nile University, Dr. John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology, and Rumbek University—with nearly 20,000 students, including 1,040 graduate students. There are also four "project" or "proposed" public univer-sities: the University of Western Equatoria (Yambio), the University of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Torit University of Science and Technology, and the University of Bantiu.

Exacerbated by conflicts and a lethargic economy, the system is confronted with several challenges, characterized prominently by poor physical infrastructure, underfunding, and severe staff shortage. These weaknesses have heavy implications for the capacity of the universities to function. The failure of public universities to meet the enormous demand for tertiary education has encouraged the emergence of an unregulated private university sector in the country. South Sudan has 13 private universities, but only four of them are recognized.

The focus here is on the experience of the five functioning public tertiary institutions. Faced with extant problems, the institutions have limited options but to live with the challenges. Four main approaches underline the sector's resilience: dedicated staff, institutional partnerships, a supportive tertiary governance structure, and international assistance.

Dedicated Staff

In 2012, there were only 721 faculty employed at the universities, which suggests a comparatively moderate student: lecturer ratio of 28:1. But the universities experience a considerable shortage in qualified academics. With 66 percent of the students, Juba University, the largest tertiary institution in the country, lost 561 of its staff, northern Sudanese, at independence. Similarly, significant numbers of faculty of Upper Nile University and Bahr el Ghazal University, the post-1991 institutions, remained in Khartoum when the universities were returned to the South in December 2010.

Moreover, the system is dominated by unqualified faculty. For example, in terms of academic qualifications, only 86 of all academics held a PhD in 2012. Furthermore, staff profiles, compiled the same year, revealed that only 36 faculty were full professors, while 62 were associate professors, 76 assistant professors, 242 lecturers, and 262 teaching assistants. To run the academic programs, universities recruit part-time tutors. Thus, 31 percent and 60 percent of Juba and Bahr el Ghazal lecturers, respectively, were part-timers in late 2016. The staff situation at the other three universities is equally alarming.

Nonetheless, the universities employ some of the most educated, experienced, and talented workforce in the country. Rigorous university recruitment procedures insulate the institutions from the corrupt practices inherent in the civil service. More importantly, the commitment of the academics to the institutions underscores their ability to impart knowledge and provide other vital services. The dedication of the academic staff mitigates the threats posed by the lack of qualified faculty. For example, a Bahr el Ghazal's

professor supervises 12 doctoral students.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS
In general, scanty infrastructural facilities represent the most pressing challenge for the universities. The facilities and laboratory equipment of the three older universities were either left in Khartoum when the institutions were re-patriated to the South, or plundered in the aftermath of the December 2013 conflict, as in the case of Upper Nile and John Garang.

Exacerbated by conflicts and a lethargic economy, the system is confronted with several challenges, characterized prominently by poor physical infrastructure, underfunding, and severe staff shortage.

To tackle this problem, the vice-chancellors instituted partnerships, which had a positive impact on the capacity of the institutions. For instance, although John Garang has re-opened in Bor, due to the current insecurity in Malakal, Upper Nile has been relocated to Juba. The displaced university utilizes some of Juba's facilities, and Juba's professors instruct students and work part-time at John Garang. Furthermore, Rumbek University's science students conduct laboratory experiments at the University of Bahr el Ghazal in Wau, and John Garang's science students visit Juba for their practical work.

In addition, professors in other universities supervise Juba's graduate students. To ensure staff development, universities enrol their staff for graduate studies offered by the Universities of Juba and Bahr el Ghazal.

SUPPORTIVE GOVERNANCE
Tertiary education in South Sudan is governed through the ministry of higher education, science, and technology. The ministry has policy, technical, and administrative oversight. Although the minister is a political appointee, the presence of academics, such as the undersecretary, at the helm of the ministry ensures that the views of the tertiary institutions on the problems confronting them are taken into consideration.

The ministry supports the universities, primarily by providing government funding. The ministry increased the remuneration of lecturers in 2014, a measure that attracted some academics back to the universities. The number of

Juba's permanent staff rose from 251 in 2011 to 574 in 2016. Although this indicates a 56 percent increase from 2011, it is still well below the university's preindependence staff level of 700. In addition, through the ministry's efforts, some European and African countries support university staff development programs. Currently, through this initiative, many academics pursue graduate studies at Makerere University, Uganda, the University of Zambia, and the University of Zimbabwe.

Moreover, the representation of the universities on the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) strengthens the bonds between them and provides the institutions with a national platform. In addition, the university leaders have introduced a collegial management style in the universities. Faculty, students, and supporting staff are consulted on major institutional affairs, which enhances internal university communication. In this respect, the universities determine, and reflect on, the wider issues within and outside their campuses.

The vice-chancellors draw on their connections and political insight to access resources for the universities. They appeal to members of university councils, who are often influential ministers or parliamentarians, in order to be heard by government ministries. In a country where informality is more dynamic than bureaucratic procedures, this *modus operandi* often yields results.

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE
Higher education is one of the least funded government sectors in the country. The universities consistently receive less than 1 percent of annual fiscal allocations. This meagre funding restricts university operations. University administrators use funds prudently on staff remuneration, procurement of essential services, and learning equipment such as books. As a result of the government's inability to fund physical infrastructure and staff development programs, the universities need to rely on foreign support.

International assistance is the most practical mechanism to address the two critical challenges confronting the tertiary sector: infrastructural inadequacy and staff shortage. With international support, universities can handle the issue of infrastructure. Prior to independence, Juba secured $6.5 million from international development partners—Norway and USAID—to build premises for its college of law in 2010. The new buildings provide accommodation for other colleges and a graduate research center.

At that time, 87.6 percent of the faculty did not have doctorates. Staff development is therefore a top priority on the international assistance agenda. In early 2011, Juba agreed to a three-year venture with the Virginia Polytechnic and Virginia State University to train Juba's staff. Juba also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with

the Open University of Tanzania in August 2015, to promote distance learning programs between the two institutions. The University of Bahr el Ghazal entered a similar arrangement with Makerere University in Uganda and the University of Oslo in Norway. Also, Texas's A&M University and the University of New York signed an MoU with John Garang Memorial University in June 2010. Following the outbreak of war, however, the international community suspended its assistance to the universities, as it shifted its attention to the humanitarian crisis.

Conclusion

South Sudan's tertiary sector is confronted with many challenges. Although universities are unable to entirely overcome the problems, they employ strategies to live with them. This experience offers invaluable lessons for comparable higher education systems in (post-)conflict contexts.

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Gender Inequity in African University Engineering Programs

Eric Fredua-Kwarteng and Catherine Effah

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The African philosopher and educationalist James Aggrey (1875–1927) stated that if you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family, indeed a nation. This statement suggests that the education of women is significant to the development of Africa. Though African men contribute to development, African women carry a heavier portion of the continent's underdevelopment burden in the fields of health and childcare; agriculture; and food production, processing, and preservation. For instance, invariably, African rural communities have no access to pipe-borne water systems and nonfossil fuel. It is the lot of African women to travel long distances to fetch water and firewood for household consumption.

Enrollment statistics indicate that African women are underrepresented in university engineering programs across the African continent. For example, at Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, while marginal progress has been made in female enrollment in the engineering program, the percentage of male enrollment is about 90 percent.

Similarly, at one of the oldest African universities, Makerere University, Uganda, 2160 students enrolled in the engineering programs in the 2009-2010 academic year. Among them, only 22 percent were women. At the University of Rwanda, the percentage of women enrolled in engineering programs in the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years was 20 percent and 19 percent respectively. The University of Mines and Technology, Ghana, matriculated 503 undergraduate students in the 2014-2015 academic year. The proportion of women was only 16 percent. In the previous year, it was almost 20 percent. In average, the percentage of matriculated female students of that university hovers around 15–20 percent.

The underrepresentation of women in university engineering programs in Africa cannot be attributed solely to a lack of interest, ability, or intellectual capacity. Instead, a traditional presentation of science and mathematics as a male domain; societal cultural practices that prioritize the education of men over that of women; and an unsupportive science and mathematics teaching environment in secondary school contribute to the paucity of African women studying engineering in African universities. Thus, it is palpably an issue of social injustice, involving an unfair distribution of engineering education opportunities.

> **Enrollment statistics indicate that African women are underrepresented in university engineering programs across the African continent.**

Gender Parity or Equity?

Most African universities publish enrollment statistics showing the percentage of women and men. The University of Cape Coast, Ghana, is an obvious case. It publishes its enrollment statistics displaying the year and the corresponding gender distribution. In the 1962-1963 academic year, for example, a total of 155 students were recorded, with only 8 percent women. In 2011-2012, by contrast, the proportion of female enrollment was 33 percent. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya, has also improved its female enrollment from 14 percent in 2012-2013 to 29 percent in 2013-2014. So did the University of

Yaoundé, Cameroon, which increased its female enroll-ment in 2015-2016 to about 38 percent compared to 27 per-cent the previous year.

Other African universities have posted similar im-provements in their enrollment of women. Though these statistics are a useful tool to monitor the access of women to university, they do not show the programs in which women enrol, in particular engineering. This is equally relevant for South African universities, which have achieved an average of 53 percent female enrollment. It appears that most Afri-can universities have focused more on gender parity, to the neglect of gender equity, which looks at gender access and distribution per academic programs, particularly engineer-ing.

Social Justice Strategies: What Can Be Done?

Some African universities have implemented four strate-gies of affirmative action to boost women's enrollments in their engineering programs:

- *Admission quotas*: a percentage of study places in engi-neering programs are specifically allocated to women. A common variation of this strategy is to offer admis-sion to prospective female students almost meeting entrance requirements. While empirical evidence from the University of Ghana and the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, supports the viability of this strategy, it has been criticized for lowering academic standards and giving preferential treatment to female candidates. Regrettably, in most cases, female students admitted under this policy strategy are not provided the academ-ic support they need to succeed in their chosen engi-neering programs.
- *Priority consideration*: qualified female candidates are given priority over their male counterparts. It is a sim-ple strategy to implement, since it does not require any elaborate planning. Many African universities, notably the University of Mines and Technology, Ghana, and others, have implemented this policy strategy with tre-mendous success. But the problem is that it does not concern itself with how female candidates originally at-tained the necessary qualifications for admission.
- *Academic upgrading*: a variant of this policy is that female candidates with credits close to the required admission standards are offered admission based on their willing-ness to participate in, and pass, an academic upgrading program. Despite its merits, it focuses exclusively on knowledge acquisition and skills development, not on confidence building.
- *Conditional admission*: female candidates who have achieved what are considered reasonable marks are of-fered admission contingent upon their ability to attain specified marks in their first year courses. For example, female candidates who have achieved 75 percent in their mathematics grade may be offered admission into engineering programs on the requirement that they ob-tain 70 percent or better in their first year mathematics courses. This strategy tends to exert too much pressure on female candidates to satisfy the condition.

A Way Forward

Affirmative action strategies of quota admission, priority consideration, academic upgrading, and conditional ad-mission are all important for addressing the underrepre-sentation of women in engineering programs in African universities. However, they do not make any dent in the fundamental causes of gender disparity in engineering en-rollment. Two major factors, namely girls' enrollment in upper secondary school, and the difficulties of girls study-ing science and mathematics at that level, must be ad-dressed. African universities should not stand aloof while gender disparity worsens. They should engage in strong advocacy for girls' education and let their voices be heard as development partners.

Upper secondary school is the major source of stu-dents to undergraduate engineering programs. Only a few girls do well in courses that enable them to apply to these programs, owing to unsupportive classroom environment; teachers' use of referents outside of girls' daily experiences; a strong preference for boy students; and a patriarchal im-age of science and mathematics in society.

African universities could influence the number of sec-ondary school girls opting for engineering programs by de-signing and teaching science, mathematics, and technology programs specifically for girls as part of their community outreach programs. Such interventions aim at helping girls to develop interests, skills, and confidence in those areas. ∎

Mongolia: Higher Education and Mobility

Bryce Loo

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The number of Mongolian students abroad has in-creased tremendously since the country's transition from a Soviet-aligned communist state to a market econo-

my. Persistent challenges in the domestic higher education system have partially fueled outbound student mobility. While higher education enrollment levels in Mongolia have been impressive in recent years, the quality of higher education still lacks, despite near continual reform attempts. Issues of equitable access, particularly for poor and rural students, still persist. Most of these problems stem from chronic government underfunding. Consequently, Mongolia has relied heavily on international donor organizations to address these continued challenges through funding and technical assistance.

Student mobility can benefit Mongolia if effectively managed. Returned students and scholars can bring their skills and experience acquired abroad and help to internationalize the institutions to which they return. In many ways, Mongolia provides insights into the challenges and opportunities of less populated nations managing student mobility to their benefit.

Higher Education in Mongolia

Mongolia's education indicators are on par with its developed neighbors, and since the transition, higher education in particular has expanded dramatically. In 2015, there were 162,626 students enrolled in Mongolian institutions, with a gross enrollment rate (GER) of 68 percent. In the early 1990s, the GER was only about 14 percent. The majority were female, reflecting an established reverse gender gap in the country.

There has been similar robust growth in institutions. Public institutions remain preeminent and have recently consolidated from 42 institutions to 16. Private institutions have grown exponentially in number, numbering 78 in 2015, but most have low enrollments.

Trends in Outbound Student Mobility

During the Cold War period, the vast majority of Mongolians who studied abroad did so in the Soviet Union or Soviet-aligned countries. The top countries of study in 2014 were more diverse: China, South Korea, the United States, Russia, and Japan. Over 15,000 Mongolians are now abroad for study. While small compared with major sending countries, this number is quite high for a nation of only about 3 million people.

Only some upper-class families, primarily in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, likely can fully fund such an education, particularly in high-income countries. The Mongolian government sends a small number of students annually on full scholarships, and a larger number with loans. Additionally, a fair number of students go to specific countries, notably China and Russia, largely or fully funded through bilateral scholarship schemes. A relatively small number of Mongolians are able to earn scholarships provided by Mongolian NGOs and corporations and by foreign governments and hosting institutions.

Brain Drain and Circulation

One major challenge is the strong possibility of brain drain. To begin with, little is known about the number of Mongolian students and scholars remaining abroad. The last known government estimate, from 2010, stated that over 107,000 Mongolians lived abroad. Student migration, in particular, has opened up wider migration to others, with families often joining. Around 2011, Mongolia's economy boomed, with one of the fastest growth rates in the world, centered on the rapidly emerging mining sector. This fantastic growth was believed to have lured back many expatriates. Recently, however, Mongolia's economy has stagnated. This has likely prevented some Mongolians abroad from returning home, and incentivized many to emigrate.

> The Mongolian government sends a small number of students annually on full scholarships, and a larger number with loans.

Beyond understanding the scope of the problem, Mongolia should explore options for countering brain drain. Some options involve incentivizing students to return once graduated. Government funding for the sector is crucial for preventing loss of talented students and academics. Larger research and development budgets can incentivize doctoral students and scholars to return. Incentives beyond higher salaries, such as providing returned students with employment services, may help, as has been done with some success in countries like China. Where students and scholars do not return, Mongolian higher education can still find ways to benefit from these expatriates through "brain circulation," or research collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

Access for Rural Students

Access to international opportunities for rural, disadvantaged students is also a concern. The vast majority of higher education institutions are located in Ulaanbaatar, and most of the nation's financial and social resources are concentrated there as well. Mongolia has also long experienced high rural to urban migration, as many individuals and families migrate from the rural countryside to Ulaanbaatar and a few other urban centers. Nearly half of Mongolia's population now resides in the capital.

It is unclear how many rural students are able to access international study opportunities, but the barriers for such students are fairly clear. Most rural students who study in rural secondary schools or colleges and universities often lack the same access to information as students in Ulaanbaatar, where most advising centers are located. These students usually lack family and friends who have gone abroad, particularly for educational purposes. English language penetration, as well as that of other foreign languages, is significantly lower in the countryside than in the capital and other major cities, even though English is now a required subject in the curriculum at all levels. The ability to pay for an international education is an issue as well.

Scholarships

One area in which the government and subsector can address many of these challenges is through scholarships. Currently, the government awards a small number of scholarships for foreign study at the undergraduate and graduate levels to students admitted to a top 100 institution listed in the *Times Higher Education* rankings. Relatively few students benefit from such a program, and most are likely from Ulaanbaatar or a few other major cities.

The Mongolian government may be able to send more students abroad by opening up more short-term opportunities. Similar to Brazil's Science Without Borders program, the government could fund students for one year of academic study, plus any necessary intensive language training and an internship. Graduate and postgraduate level programs could utilize existing partnerships that Mongolian institutions have with foreign universities.

Such a program can open up more access to study abroad opportunities, including to qualified students at rural institutions. By partnering with organizations in host countries that can help place students, students can go to a wider variety of institutions other than the most selective. Perhaps most importantly, by tying the study abroad opportunity to a domestic degree program, Mongolia can retain more internationally educated students.

Moving Forward

There is clearly a need for more data collection and research on student mobility and the wider social and educational contexts in which such mobility takes place in Mongolia. Such information will help Mongolia better manage student mobility for the benefit of the higher education system and the country more broadly. Informed policy-making in this arena is important for Mongolia, to gain the most from its internationally educated citizens. ∎

What Does Data Tell Us about Cross-border Online Learning?

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Distance learning, MOOCs, and blended and online delivery modes offer new ways to access education across borders without being physically present in the classroom, and have been heralded as potential game changers in transnational education (TNE). Given the attention it receives, what does data indicate about the size and scale of the market, particularly in countries that are host to, and source of, many international students? What evidence exists that students are increasingly turning to cross-border online education?

Data from Top Host Countries

In the United States, host of the largest number of international students, the majority of universities offer at least some learning online: data from the WCET Distance Education Enrollment Report utilizing IPEDS data from fall 2014 shows that one in seven higher education students (14 percent) took all of their courses exclusively at a distance. More than one in four students (28 percent) enrolled in at least one of their courses at a distance.

Moreover, between fall 2012 and fall 2014—since federal data has been gathered—enrollments in exclusively distance education programs by students based outside the United States grew by 8.6 percent, drawing an increase of over 35,000 students in this time period. This outpaced domestic student online enrollments, which increased 7 percent by approximately 185,000 students during that time. Concurrently, total enrollments in higher education decreased 2 percent.

The growth in online enrollments, contrasted with the decrease in higher education enrollments, demonstrates that online education is becoming a more popular choice for students, though international students compose a very small portion of the total distance enrollments. Of 2,858,792 exclusively distance enrollments in 2014, only 1.3 percent (37,788 students) were based outside the United States. The rest were either domestic students (2,730,769) or enrolled from an unspecified location (90,235).

Cross-border online education is further understood in the context of the international student market in the United States. International student enrollments in the United

States grew 16 percent in the two-year period from 2012/13 to 2014/15, topping 854,639 students in 2014/15—a faster pace than the cross-border online learning market. While growth is evident, it does not appear that cross-border online learning is gaining outsized momentum when viewed as part of the greater international student higher education market in the United States.

Turning to the United Kingdom, the nation with the second highest number of international students, reveals a varied picture of the distance learning market. UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data shows that the number of UK-based distance learning students decreased from 210,005 in 2013/14 to 189,865 in 2014/15—a drop of 10 percent. As The Observatory reported in 2016, this decrease may be linked to the decline in part-time study, stemming from changes to student funding: in England, part-time enrollment in higher education has decreased 41 percent over the past five years, representing over 200,000 students no longer enrolled. The Open University, the largest provider of distance education, enrolls primarily part-time students, and has lost one third of its student body since 2009/10.

The Chinese government is actively promoting widening access to online education across the nation.

According to the HESA definition, the number of distance learning students based wholly overseas, enrolled in UK programs, increased slightly from 119,700 in 2013/14 to 120,475 in 2014/15. This excludes the large number of students, sometimes dubbed "distance," enrolled on the bachelor's degree in accounting offered by Oxford Brookes University. This degree is offered in partnership with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), which automatically registers most of its members onto the degree program. This is seen to artificially inflate UK TNE figures.

The recent HE Global report on TNE found that 70 percent of UK TNE distance/online learning programs were first delivered before 2000, and only 4 percent of distance enrollments are in programs developed after 2010. This suggests that distance learning has not expanded much in recent years.

Top Source Countries
Is there evidence that online and distance learning is becoming an increasingly attractive study option in coun-

tries that have high outbound student mobility? The top two source countries for international students, India and China, are active markets for online and distance learning, though they do not publish data specifically on cross-border online learning. Both nations have seen large growth in distance learning, offering alternatives to face-to-face learning, including study abroad.

In India, there were more than 26.5 million enrollments in higher education in 2014/15, according to the University Grants Commission (UGC). Though UGC does not publish data on distance learning, other estimates and forecasts are bullish. Research firm TechNavio estimates there are 5.42 million distance-learning enrollments at all levels of education in India, with enrollments predicted to grow 10 percent by 2019. The online education market in India was valued at US$20 billion in 2014, with revenue to grow 25 percent by 2019, and 100 of 140 e-learning companies in the country were founded in the past three years, indicating growth in the industry.

Growth in provision comes from all sectors, including national public universities such as Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), a distance learning university founded in 1985 that reports over 700,000 students. Foreign universities such as MIT and Harvard offer courses via platforms such as EdX—in fact, after the United States, India is second in the number of enrollments in EdX courses. While this indicates growth in online learning, it does not necessarily indicate that students are choosing distance learning instead of face-to-face options, whether from domestic or foreign providers.

China now has the largest higher education system in the world, with enrollments increasing sixfold in the last decade to over 33 million students. According to research firm Ambient Insight Group, by the end of 2014, 5.28 million students, or 16 percent of the total number of higher education students, were enrolled online.

Another estimate suggests that revenue from e-learning reached US$5.8 billion in 2015 in China, accounting for 22 percent of all education spending in the nation. This data refers to e-learning at all levels of education; data specifically on online higher education is not gathered. In January 2014, the Chinese ministry of education suspended the rule that it must approve all online degree programs. While it remains illegal for foreign universities to offer online degrees in China, there were 68 domestic universities in the country with online learning institutes in 2014.

The Chinese government is actively promoting widening access to online education across the nation. In May 2015, President Xi Jinping called for "reform and innovation in education in line with development of information and communication technology to allow all people to access to education anytime, anywhere." Despite these calls for

growth, China's April 2016 report on the quality of higher education—the first of its kind from the ministry of education—makes no mention of distance or online students.

The Need for More Comprehensive Data

In the United States and the United Kingdom, there is evidence of growth in cross-border higher education (CBHE) enrollments, though more comprehensive data would deepen understanding of where this growth is coming from. In India and China, the market for online education is booming, and though there is a lack of data pertaining specifically to CBHE enrollments, growth in the domestic sector suggests real demand.

However, it is premature to conclude that online is a drag on traditional international student mobility. Nonrecognition of foreign online degrees in China and India no doubt limits appeal. It may be through forms of blended education that online begins to play a stronger role in cross-border higher education. ∎

Brazil's For-Profit Higher Education Dilemma

Marcelo Knobel and Robert Verhine

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Brazil has the world's ninth largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with a population of around 195 million inhabitants, distributed in more than five thousand cities in 26 states and one federal district. The country has an unusual higher education system, with a relatively small number of public research universities and a large number of private institutions. Although the system has been growing rapidly in the last 15 years, the number of young people attending university still represents less than 20 percent of the 18–24-age cohort. Around 7.5 million students attend a higher education institution in Brazil. Seventy-five percent of these students are enrolled in private institutions and, perhaps even more significantly, approximately half of all private sector enrollees study at a for-profit institution.

Fifty years ago, higher education in Brazil, like in most regions of the world, was primarily public. Brazil's public universities are research oriented and remain tuition-free, but the expansion of the public sector has been severely limited by a combination of high costs and limited governmental resources. Since the 1970s, Brazilian policy makers have relied on the private sector to meet the burgeoning demand for higher education, facilitating institutional authorization and offering attractive fiscal incentives. The federal government further strengthened this policy in the late 1990s, when laws were changed to permit the creation of for-profit institutions. Educational entrepreneurs and investors rapidly created new for-profit establishments and changed the status of many older institutions from non-profit to for-profit. The University of Phoenix entered the Brazilian market in 2001, and although it withdrew from Brazil in 2006, its presence paved the way for the entry of other large, multinational entities. The shift to more for-profit institutions after 2005 was fueled by several other factors, including the expansion of the country´s federal student loan program, the use of the Brazilian stock market to raise investment funds, and the introduction of a federal program whereby tax exemptions are given to private institutions that provide scholarships to poor students. The recent tightening of the for-profit sector regulation in the United States by the Obama administration also appears to have contributed to for-profit growth in Brazil, as some North American educational entities have moved their activities to foreign countries that offer a favorable legal environment.

Current Private Sector Trends

Many countries do not permit for-profit higher education institutions. The expansion of for-profits in the United States has been extensively (and critically) documented, but the sector only accounts for about 10 percent of the total higher education enrollment in that country. For-profit higher education is also prevalent in China, but it focuses primarily on non-degree vocational education. Worldwide, where they exist, for-profit higher education establishments tend to be low status institutions that typically enroll "non-traditional" students who have been excluded from most public and non-profit establishments. Educational census data from Brazil reveals that compared with the higher education student body as a whole, for-profit enrollees tend to be older, are more likely to be employed, and come disproportionately from low-income families, with no prior educational studies at the tertiary level.

Today, Brazil is undergoing a period of deep economic crisis. One of the consequences has been a substantial reduction in the availability of federally subsidized student loans since 2015. As a result, many for-profit institutions

have suffered a significant financial blow, leading to a willingness, on the part of their managements, to merge with one or more of their competitors. These mergers are reshaping the private higher education sector in Brazil, contributing to the formation of huge organizations that have proven to be very lucrative. In 2015, the Brazilian higher education for-profit sector registered a net income of around US$14 billion. About 36 percent of this income came from 12 megaeducational groups that make up nearly 30 percent of the total market, with yearly profit rates that are above 21 percent. The country´s private education sector is now the tenth largest component of the Brazilian economy. A recently announced merger between Kroton and Estácio de Sá will lead to the formation of the world´s largest higher education institution, potentially enrolling more than two million students.

> **Seventy-five percent of these students are enrolled in private institutions and, perhaps even more significantly, approximately half of all private sector enrollees study at a for-profit institution.**

The New Higher Education Giants

The new education giants will destabilize the sector, creating companies significantly larger than many of their competitors and concentrating a great majority of the government's student loans in just a few institutions. Despite the claims that financial goals will never be given priority over social commitments, lessons from other sectors and from other parts of the world have shown that, in most cases, the appetite for short-term financial gain subsumes long-term educational objectives. This means that the notion of education as a public good is likely to be undermined in the name of rapid economic return.

To date, the quality of for-profit higher education in Brazil is highly dubious. For-profits tend to be ranked below other higher education institutions on official student learning indicators and also suffer from problems related to infrastructure, faculty qualifications, and financial sustainability. It is worth emphasizing that most of the students in for-profit institutions are enrolled in low-cost programs in the fields of law, pedagogy, administration, and humanities. These degree programs favor larger classrooms, low faculty salaries, reduced academic expectations, and the absence of

policies designed to minimize dropout rates. The quality of these programs is further jeopardized by excessively rapid growth that outpaces governmental efforts to maintain minimal standards through a complex national system for the evaluation of programs and institutions. The national assessment system does not address the for-profit phenomena in a specific fashion, being uniformly applied to all higher education offerings. Also, the government's evaluation process focuses on the performance of concluding students, rather than on the student body as a whole. Since many of the students in for-profit institutions never graduate, their omission from the evaluation process makes it more difficult to detect deficiencies. Although for-profit advocates argue that the sector has introduced better management, provided funds for greater physical infrastructure, and expanded higher education opportunities, these claims must be subjected to rigorous examination.

The trend toward for-profit growth in the higher education sector is clearly a cause for concern. The overall impact of the recently created higher education giants is still uncertain. Will small, private, non-profit colleges and universities be able to compete and survive? How will local needs be accommodated within this scenario? Are for-profit establishments planning to expand to the rest of Latin America or beyond? How will the government deal with the evaluation and regulation of such big players in the higher education landscape? What will be the effect of lobbying and political activities undertaken by such powerful educational groups? These are some of the many issues now confronting Brazil. The world should keep an eye on what is happening, because the rise of the for-profit higher education sector in Brazil is certainly a harbinger of a worldwide trend. ∎

Colombia: Challenges of Fast-Paced Change

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❝ Here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

These words from the Queen of Hearts to Alice in *Through the Looking Glass* illustrate what many countries around the world are facing in terms of higher education policies. Changes are coming fast and governments and universities are usually ill suited to adapt quickly. This challenge is particularly difficult for developing countries and Colombia is no exception. Recent proposals from the government are ambitious. Experiences from other countries demonstrate that reforms can take decades; but the tenure of most presidents is brief.

The Most Educated Country

Colombia has been a leader in innovative and progressive educational policy. ICETEX, the government's student loans agency, was the first one of its class in the world, and Colombia was among the first in Latin America to establish an accreditation agency. However, Colombia is now struggling to introduce policy to keep pace with the changes in higher education.

President Juan Manuel Santos' National Development Plan (NDP) for 2014–2018 dedicates more attention to education than any previous NDP. In chapter six, titled "Colombia, the Most Educated," the government sets forth its strategy for education. Higher education and research play an important role in the NDP, prioritizing a more fluid interplay between education, research, and the productive sector. This is not a new idea: a fruitful relationship between academia and the productive sector has been elusive for decades.

A Coherent and Integrated System

Santos' NDP is proposing new initiatives toward developing a more coherent tertiary education system, many of which have been implemented successfully in other countries. These include the creation of a national qualification framework; the creation of a system for the accumulation and transferability of [academic] credits; and the creation of a national system for quality.

While the reform of the quality assurance system, which points toward the reorganization of many preexisting structures and processes, may not require much time to be implemented, some of the other components will take many years, or perhaps more than a decade, to materialize.

National qualifications frameworks provide a structure to organize educational levels in terms of their corresponding qualifications, including learning outcomes. These frameworks have proven successful in the regulation of qualifications in education and training in countries such as Australia and Ireland. In Latin America, Chile and Ecuador have embarked in similar projects with mixed results. Experience indicates that this is a long-term enterprise. In other countries, the whole process has taken a couple decades to reach successful implementation.

The qualifications framework proposed for Colombia includes all levels and types of education (similar to the Australian model). Currently, the distinctions between the different levels of the higher education system are unclear. For example, the difference between the academic program leading to the degree of "técnico profesional" and the one leading to the degree of "tecnológo" is not clear to the public, and sometimes not even among experts. Something similar happens with some specializations (graduate-level programs) and master's degree programs. If the qualifications framework helps to define clear distinctions between each type of program while contributing to mobility across them, it will be an important contribution.

Santos' NDP is proposing new initiatives toward developing a more coherent tertiary education system.

The system for the accumulation and transferability of academic credits is another strategy that poses challenges for its prompt implementation. Mexico and Chile recently developed tools for the transferability of academic credits. In Mexico, an initiative by ANUIES (the national association of universities) provided a framework for academic mobility among its university members. Similarly, in Chile, the CRUCH (Council of Rectors of Chilean Universities) created the Transferable Credits System. Not only did both initiatives take years to develop, but they only included those institutions that participated voluntarily, and neither included nonuniversity institutions. Colombia's approach is more ambitious and adds complexity: the system aims to facilitate mobility across different sectors, including nonformal, vocational education and training, as well as universities. Participation is also intended to be compulsory, although this is not yet settled.

The announcement in the NDP of the "creation" of a tertiary education system has caused confusion, particularly because of a broad consensus in Colombia that a higher education system already exists. The differences between the current "higher education system" and the proposed "tertiary education system" are not clear. The ministry of education claims that the purpose of this change is to strengthen the status of technical education in the country by creating two interrelated paths (called pillars) of instruction: the university education pillar and the technical education pillar. The differences and similarities between the two

pillars might be simple to express in theory, but the practical implications of integration have proven more complex.

The Politics of Change

The relevance of most of the strategies and systems that the Colombian NDP proposes is undeniable. Yet, implementation is another matter. Some of the ideas and initiatives will take time—both to mature and develop, and to gain the acceptance of diverse stakeholders. This level of reform is not compatible with a government with only limited time remaining in office, and certainly not with the pace at which academia accepts change. The Santos government is under pressure to set in motion this ambitious reform before 2018 (Santos cannot be reelected again). Yet, the government faces an additional challenge: the minister of education and the vice-minister of higher education who crafted the proposal recently resigned. The new minister has vowed to continue these efforts, but the learning curve is steep and time is running out. Interestingly, the leadership of the project seems to be shifting from the ministry of education to the ministry of labor and the National Learning Service (SENA), a government institution that provides vocational education and training and higher education.

The government will not be able to execute many of the components of the reform without engaging many other stakeholders, including, of course, universities. However, the Santos government has not been successful at communicating the intended reforms, even though some institutions support certain elements of the plan; the full scope and potential impact are just not yet fully understood.

The Santos government has less than two years left. The ministry of education has launched an effort to achieve the goals of the development plan, but this is extremely ambitious for the time remaining. It is time to evaluate what can be achieved in this short period and focus on that. A more ambitious approach may cause the reforms to fail. "Haste is a poor counselor," said Dumas, or, in the words of the White Rabbit, "the hurrier I go, the behinder I get."

*Disclaimer: The opinions appearing in this article are the author's sole responsibility and do not necessary reflect those from the World Bank or the ministry of education.

New Publications from CIHE

Philip Altbach, Liz Reisberg, and Hans de Wit (Eds.). *Responding to Massification, Differentiation in Postsecondary Education Worldwide,* published by the Körber Foundation in Germany in cooperation with the German's Rectors Conference (HRK) http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cihe/pdf/Korber%20bk%20PDF.pdf.

Hans de Wit, Jocelyne Gacel-Ávila, Elspeth Jones, and Nico Jooste (Eds.). *The Globalization of Internationalization, Emerging Voices and Perspectives*, published in January 2017 by Routledge. The book includes two coauthored chapters by CIHE Director Hans de Wit, who was also the lead editor for the book. https://www.routledge.com/The-Globalization-of-Internationalization-Emerging-Voices-and-Perspectives/de-Wit-Gacel-Avila-Jones-Jooste/p/book/9781138100664.

Maria Yudkevich, Philip G. Altbach, and Laura E. Rumbley (Eds.). *International Faculty in Higher Education: Comparative Perspectives on Recruitment, Integration, and Impact,* December 2016. The book is the latest in a series of scholarly collaborations between CIHE and the National Research University Higher School of Economics, in Moscow. https://www.routledge.com/International-Faculty-in-Higher-Education-Comparative-Perspectives-on/Yudkevich-Altbach-Rumbley/p/book/9781138685178.

Georgiana Mihut, Lisa Unangst, Liz Reisberg, and Hans de Wit (Eds.). *The World View: Selected Blogs Published by Inside Higher Education, 2010-2016*. CIHE Perspective 4 brings together a collection of 30 blogs, selected from over 300 such pieces published since 2010 when *The World View* became a regular column in *Inside Higher Education*, edited by Liz Reisberg, Research Fellow at CIHE.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

(Editor's note: *IHE* is no longer publishing short book summaries, but rather is providing a more comprehensive listing of new books that will be of interest to a higher education audience. We welcome suggestions from readers for books on higher education published especially outside of the United States and United Kingdom. This list was compiled by Edward Choi, graduate assistant at the Center.)

Atherton, Graeme, ed. Access to Higher Education: Understanding Global Inequalities. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. 272 pp. £29.99 (pb). ISBN 9781137411891. Website: http://www.palgrave.com.

Aune, Kristin, and Jacqueline Stevenson, eds. Religion and Higher Education in Europe and North America. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. 226 pp. £28.99 (pb). ISBN 9781138652958. Website: www.routledge.com.

Burke, Penny Jane, Gill Crozier, and Lauren Ila Misiaszek. Changing Pedagogical Spaces in Higher Education. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. 180 pp. £26.99 (pb). ISBN 9781138917224. Website: www.routledge.com.

Cross, Michael, and Amasa Ndofirepi, eds. Knowledge and Change in African Universities: Volume 1 - Current Debates. Singapore: Springer, 2016. 220 pp. $39.99 (ebook). ISBN 978-94-6300-842-6. Website: www.springer.com.

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