Barbara M. Kehm and Ulrich Teichler

(eds.)

Higher Education Studies in a Global Environment

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Introduction: Learning in Order to Understand and to Shape Higher Education

Barbara M. Kehm and Ulrich Teichler

Higher education has been one of the major growth sectors in society, with impressive expansion all over the world. This has been combined with a qualitative leap towards professionalisation within the higher education system in four respects: First, the academics could not concentrate only on the generation and dissemination of knowledge, but they had to become experts of personality, learning, teaching, competences, research management, assessment, etc., as well. Second, those in leading functions could not develop management skills only through "learning by doing" anymore, but they had to become experts in management. Third, we have observed a substantial growth of professionals who are not in charge of teaching and research directly, but rather take over functions of services and management support: a group of experts who might be called higher education professionals. Initially, many of them built up their expertise through learning by doing, but the establishment of initial training and continuing professional education was to be expected in the process of professionalisation. Fourth, the expansion of higher education and these processes of professionalisation were likely to increase the demand for systematic knowledge of higher education. As a consequence, higher education research expanded, and professionalised as well; a growing proportion of higher education research was no longer undertaken by persons embedded in various disciplines who once in a while focused on higher education, but rather by scholars who view higher education research as the area of their academic identity and collect broad knowledge on the various theories and methods salient for the analysis of higher education as well as substantial "field knowledge" of a multitude of phenomena all over the world.

Most master programmes and doctoral programmes specialized in higher education reinforce the latter two processes of professionalization. They are aimed at laying the foundations of knowledge and competence of those serving as active higher education professionals – either as pre-service training, i.e. for those who later want to become higher education professionals, or as in-service training, i.e. as study along professional work in this domain. And they play a major role in the

formation process of young higher education researchers. As a rule, such programmes pursue these two purposes without any dividing line, thus allowing the participants to make respective career choices in one direction or the other at a later stage and taking care of intertwined competences: that on the one hand the higher education professionals are versatile in the basic features of research and knowledgeable in the achievements and findings of research, and on the other hand that the higher education researchers are acquainted with the rationales and the ways of thinking of the practitioners in their domains of knowledge.

Master programmes and doctoral programmes of this kind already have some tradition in the United States, China and a few other countries. In Europe, however, only a few programmes of this kind existed until the beginning of the 21st century. At that time, however, various initiatives started to establish master programmes almost simultaneously at a few universities in some European countries. They were not only reinforced by the above named processes of professionalization in higher education, but also by the fact that study programmes were restructured following the Bologna Declaration of 1999 by national ministers in charge of higher education in the majority of European countries to establish cycles of study programmes and degrees. As a consequence, bachelor and master programmes substituted most long study programmes in countries such as Germany and supported, among others, the view that new specializations might be established at the master level, which had not existed before, thus providing the opportunity to lay the foundation of competences for newly emerging or growing professions in a more targeted manner.

The University of Kassel was among the first universities in Europe that established such a master programme. Actually, the International Master Programme "Higher Education Research and Development (usually called "MAHE" by all persons involved) was established in 2004. Scholars and administrators of the International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER-Kassel) were the main drivers for the establishment and the implementation of the master programme. It was integrated into the programmes of the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Kassel –not least because research units such as INCHER-Kassel have no formal responsibilities for teaching.

The programme was intended to serve master students both from Germany and all over the world. Actually, most students came from outside of Germany. Young open-minded persons, some of them with professional experience, came from all over the world to join a master programme specialised in higher education at a university in an economically advanced country. The teachers were versatile in comparative higher education research and able to provide information on currently dominating discourses on higher education regarding the main issues and the possible reform options worldwide. The programme offered the students the challenge of bringing together prevailing concepts in higher education research and dominating discourses surrounding realities of higher education in their own coun-

tries or in other countries they developed an interest in. Thus, the master theses which were the results of such a learning process are a mirror of the tensions between the assumptions of worldwide pressures and worldwide valid concepts on the one hand and the experience of varied situations on the other.

The Master Programme – taught exclusively in English, but with the option of writing papers and the master thesis in English or German – addressed a broad spectrum of themes on higher education and society: the state of higher education research, empirical research methods, research on higher education systems, evaluation in higher education, higher education and the world of work, etc. The Programme differed from others in this thematic area by putting an emphasis not only on management but also on teaching and learning (some MAHE students had the opportunity of taking courses in the former area at the University of Oldenburg). The MAHE Programme aimed to prepare students for two different professional arenas: to be educated and trained as practitioners who might be named "higher education professionals", i.e., higher education experts in management, support, or service functions in the higher education and research system (for example, in the areas of quality management, international relations, career services, student services, research management and technology transfer, etc.); and to be trained as scholars for academic careers, notably in the area of higher education research. The MAHE Programme was not meant to train students routinely or sell recipes, but rather to encourage independent learning and critical thinking, to learn from contrasting cases, to become experts in comparative higher education studies, to confront theory and practice (also in the framework of internships), and to seek innovative solutions from all over the world. Intensive communication as part of the Programme, both inside and outside the classroom, was important in not only enhancing knowledge and understanding of theories, methods and relevant facts, but also in strengthening intercultural competences. The MAHE Programme elicited great interest all over the world. On average about eight times as many persons applied for it than actually took up their studies. Many could not be accepted, some had to give up their plans due to financial or personal reasons, and others faced visa problems. Those eventually enrolling had previously graduated from bachelor or master programmes in various disciplines and a considerable proportion of them had already been professionally active at higher education institutions, government offices, in journalism, etc. in their home countries. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) supported the MAHE Programme, most notably through scholarships for students who were professionally experienced.

The preparation of the MAHE programme started in 2002 upon recommendation of the president of the University of Kassel. He was convinced that the University should establish some master programmes in the English language in areas in which both the University has a strong research basis and that students from all over the world would be most interested in. Moreover, this course could be a way to link the teaching activities of the researchers of the Centre more closely to their

area of specialization. The MAHE programme started in 2004, and was accredited shortly afterwards in the framework of the German accreditation system newly built up around 2000. Altogether, 115 students from 39 countries enrolled within six cohorts. From 2010 onwards, however, no new students were admitted, and the MAHE programme was formally discontinued by the end of September 2013. Though the programme obviously was successful and highly appreciated by the students enrolled, the discontinuation was seen as necessary due to changes in the staff structure which did no longer allowed for a sufficient teaching capacity for this programme.

Altogether, 13 persons taught parts of the programme: Dr. Wolfgang Adamczak, Prof. Michael Fremerey, Prof. Marek Fuchs, Dr. Karola Hahn, Prof. Barbara M. Kehm, Dr. Regina Kirsch-Auwärter, Dr. Wilhelm Krull, Dr. Ute Lanzendorf, Prof. Aylâ Neusel, Harald Schomburg, Prof. Ulrich Teichler, Dr. Matthias Wesseler, and Dr. Helmut Winkler. In addition, Choni Flöther and Georg Krücken served as examiners in the final years of the Programme. Actually, Barbara M. Kehm was the coordinator of the programme; she and Ulrich Teichler were supervisors of the majority of master theses and examiners in the majority of the final oral examinations.

Moreover, Carmen Mureşan, a Romanian MAHE student and active tutor for several years, was awarded the DAAD prize for intercultural engagement for international students in 2010 for her engagement concerning the well-being of her fellow international students. Another student, Robert Owino Odera from Kenya, was accepted as a member of the DAAD-supported African Good Governance Network in 2010.

In 2012, a first volume was published presenting the highlights of eight master theses. Thus, the major findings of the first eight master theses were documented which had been rated unanimously as "very good" (actually at least 1.3 on a scale from 1.0 = very good to 4.0 = passing grade). The authors of these articles came from eight different countries: Austria, China, Colombia, Indonesia, Macedonia, Mexico, Poland, and Romania. They provided interesting information on single countries or on various countries in comparison and covered themes such as the issue of equity in higher education, non-university higher education, private higher education, mission statements, teaching and learning in higher education, and the role of graduate surveys (see Barbara M. Kehm and Ulrich Teichler, eds. *Higher Education Studies in a Global Environment*. Vol. 1. Kassel: International Centre for Higher Education Research – Werkstattberichte, No. 74).

This second and final volume presents the highlights of the remaining 13 master theses which had been rated unanimously as "very good". The authors of these articles come from 10 different countries. Some articles address specific issues of higher education in a single or in two countries – among them often their home country: *Claudia Müller* inspects efforts to motivate and support socially disadvantaged students in Germany, *Gulinuer Maimaiti* analyses the situation of ethnic

minority students in China, *Guanzi Shen* investigates the governmental policies of China in enhancing the quality of select universities to become 'world class universities', *Sarah A. Ooro* the overall setting governance – including the role of international actors – affecting higher education in Kenya, *Tamara Arutyunyants* studies the phenomenon of participation in internships after graduation in Germany, and *Ekaterina Piotrowski* compares technology transfer systems in Germany and Russia. Various master theses focus on internationalisation in higher education: *Vi Than Son* analyses internationalisation policies of the government and the higher education institutions in Vietnam, *Madonna Maroun* addresses the internationalisation strategies of the individual universities in Lebanon, *Queenie K. L. Lam* compares the website information and marketing policies of leading universities from different countries, *Carmen Nicoleta Mureşan* takes stock of the support services of a German university and their impact, *Andrea Cuenca* discusses the controversial discourse on 'brain drain' with emphasis on Colombia, and *Sandy Matthias-Mui* aims to establish the professional value of mobility in the case of students and young employees from Hong Kong having spent a period of study or an internship in Germany. Finally, one master thesis addresses higher education research: *Elena Schimmelpfenning* examines changing higher education research themes as visible in journal articles published by scholars from India and other regions of the world.

This volume begins with the contribution by *Claudia Müller*. She presents a case study of a German initiative "Arbeiterkind.de" that aims to support working-class children who wish to study at a higher education institution. This network, founded in 2008, is present in most cities where universities are located; it is a relatively informal network of persons ready to serve as mentors. The aim of the study is to examine the members and their motivations, the approaches, the impact of the concepts of "open methods" and "social networks", the critical factors of success and obstacles, and overall the political relevance of this network. As the author herself is active in this framework, she has access to a broad range of sources of information. She characterizes the network – based on a literature review of various modes of loose institutional interaction – as a "community" model with no formal membership, blurred boundaries of the concept of "mentoring", flat hierarchies in regional groups and "moderate governance". This characterisation is reinforced by a comparison with other initiatives in Germany aimed at supporting disadvantaged learners. The author concludes with a recommendation in favour of a more structured approach: cooperation with higher education institutions, clearer definition of the mentoring concept, creating closer ties among members and "knowledge management".

Gulinuer Maimaiti examines the situation of Uyghur students in higher education in China and how the situation is influenced by the Chinese higher education policies with regards to minority groups in China. She pays attention both to the situation of Uyghur students who aim to study or actually are studying in Xin-

jiang, i.e. the home of this second-largest Muslim group in China, as well as those who want to study and actually are studying at leading universities in the major metropolitan areas of China. She shows that parents of the Uyghur students are represented in small numbers in high status-occupations. Uyghur pupils can choose between Uyghur and Mandarin as the first language in primary and secondary education, while the latter is the only primary language at institutions of higher education in Xinjiang. A preferential admission policy for minorities is practiced in terms of a lower cut-off point at admission tests, which, however, is linked to a smaller choice of institutions and fields of study to which they can be admitted. Moreover, all Uyghur students who are enrolling in higher education outside their home region are required to enrol one year in a preparatory class. The results of research on the education of minorities are summarized, which shows, among others, a lower representation in higher education and more problems in the labour market. In the framework of the Master thesis, 149 former Uyghur students, who had either studied at two leading universities in China or at one university in Xinjiang, responded to a graduate survey questionnaire which was adapted for this study from one developed within a project undertaken by INCHER-Kassel. The survey shows that on the one hand the preparatory class is predominantly rated as not useful; on the other hand, the majority reported having difficulties learning in Mandarin, and considered preferential treatment of minorities as necessary. Altogether, most graduates having studied at the two leading universities opted for a return to their home region, even though their study at a prestigious university does not seem to be a clear advantage when they return. The author of the Master thesis suggests that the widespread option for employment in their home region indicates "a strong sense of ethnic identity".

Guanzi Shen examines the efforts of the Chinese government to build world-class universities. She discusses the increasing efforts to compete successfully in worldwide rankings as part of strategies of scrutinizing quality and undertaking measures of quality assurance. Among the various concepts of world-class universities analysed, an approach of defining strategies for enabling world-class universities is emphasized which names three factors: "a high concentration of talent, abundant resources, and favourable governance". The study suggests that China had a highly stratified system for a long time, whereby no clear distinction was made between research universities and other institutions of higher education. In the first decade of the 21st century, governmental policies moved away from supporting a "national elite" of universities towards the enhancement of the international reputation of the leading Chinese universities. This policy was pursued amidst an enormous expansion of student enrolment. "The decision to establish several world-class universities through 'cherry-picking' instead of improving the overall quality of higher education is obviously a cost-effective and time-saving shortcut to achieve a quick response to perspectives of the global knowledge market". In her conclusion, the author point outs, among other findings, that such a

funding strategy in favour of select universities leaves the issue of quality assurance unresolved.

Sarah S. Ooro undertakes an analysis of the overall system of governance affecting universities in Kenya. She takes theories of multi-level governance, developed and mostly used as a basis for case studies with respect to economically advanced countries, as a conceptual framework explaining the developments in Kenya from "pre-independence" until recently. This background raises her interest in the questions of increasing complexity of governance over time, of links between processes of democratisation and changing actor constellations as well as of efforts to create new coordination mechanisms, i.e. in the case of Kenya the establishment of the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). As regards the Kenyan case, however, the author argues that the development of governance in higher education was very closely tied to that of societal governance altogether. This can be anticipated anyway in a country, where higher education is expected to play a critical role in the development. Additionally, higher education governance in Kenya – as in many other African countries – is strongly shaped by international actors. The development of higher education is viewed as an integral part of societal development; in this framework, the poverty reduction strategy developed in Kenya in 2001 was "imposed by donors"; notably the World Bank and IMF mistrusted the Kenyan government's ability to counteract growing poverty and demanded agreements of that kind as a basis for continued external financial support. The author also examines the roles played by "Freelance International Organisations" (e.g. Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations) and by pan-African bodies of coordination (e.g. AAU and ADEA) for the overall governance of higher education, which altogether indicate a stronger role of the international level of governance than generally assumed in most concepts of governance in higher education.

Tamara Arutyunyants examines the role that internships after graduation play in Germany in the early career of graduates from higher education institutions. Her analysis starts off from the horror scenario often depicted in media that an 'internship generation' (Generation Praktikum) has emerged in Germany in recent years; that graduates facing employment problems are forced in large numbers to confine themselves to an internship after graduation as short-term cheap labour. A look at already available studies lead her to conclude that this scenario is a clear exaggeration: accordingly, the proportion of those embarking on an internship after graduation is lower and their subsequent early career is less deplorable than often depicted. The author decides to examine the situation more carefully by distinguishing two different groups: those carrying out an internship only after graduation and those doing an internship before and after graduation. Additionally, she selects two control groups: those who carried out internships only during the course of study and those who did not do any internship at all. She analyses data available from a survey undertaken in 2010 of persons having graduated

about one and a half years earlier; she herself had worked as auxiliary staff in that research project. She shows that 14 per cent carry out a post-degree internship, among them only one fifth who have not done an internship during the course of study. Altogether, her analysis shows that a post-degree internship is relatively seldom an early-career *disadvantage* for graduates in Germany. She draws the conclusion that research in this domain could be improved, if one knew more about the motives for embarking on an internship after graduation and if the impact of those internships could be examined for an extended period of the career.

Ekaterina Piotrowski undertakes a comparative analysis of technology transfer systems in Germany and Russia. Her expertise in this area has been reinforced by being employed as auxiliary staff while working on the Master thesis at the East-West Centre of the University of Kassel. After a discussion of relevant literature, she bases her analysis on indicators published by OECD and other international bodies, e.g. spending on research and development within higher education, business sector R&D and governmental R&D expenditures. In addition, she analyses the respective governmental policy, the research infrastructure and the university-industry relationships in the two countries. She concludes that both countries are similar in a very high share of R&D expenditures in industry, notably large and innovative companies. With regard to other institutions, Russia differs from Germany in investing more money in governmental research institutes outside higher education. She points out that university-industry relationships are "more developed" in Germany, but identifies various key areas in the context for which, currently, hardly any systematic information is available.

Vi Than Son addresses the concepts of internationalisation in Vietnamese higher education, the respective national policies and activities, and the actual strategies and operations within individual universities. She analyses respective literature for the whole country, but concentrates her detailed analysis on a single university in Vietnam. The literature review leads to the conclusion that internationalisation is driven, as one might expect, by a similar thrust all over the world, but enormous complex national policies emerge which change relatively quickly over time – a setting which is reflected in sentences such as the following: "The present higher education system promotes international cooperation for national development faced with globalization forces". With regards to Vietnam, the author observes that the promotion of internationalisation in Vietnam has a focus on teaching and learning rather than on research. Efforts are made to avoid a colonial style of internationalisation by paying attention to specific needs in Vietnam, for instance enhancing international activities in remote and disadvantaged areas. Internationalisation, obviously, turns out to be a challenge for policy approaches and political style, because it is often linked to a "westernization" of management, for example in the call for more autonomy of the individual higher education institutions, in the establishment of quality assurance mechanisms and in developing

joint international programmes with foreign partner institutions of higher education.

Madonna Maroun analyses the internationalisation strategies of universities in Lebanon. As the role of government in steering higher education has historically been limited and higher education has been open for diverse foreign influences, the individual universities also turn out to be the driving forces of current efforts to internationalise the universities. Based on the analysis of websites and catalogues, responses from 11 universities to a questionnaire sent out and interviews undertaken at five of the altogether 31 universities, the author examines the rationales to adopt internationalisation strategies, if the institutions opt for planned processes, or the ways internationalisation occurs unplanned. Based on a literature review, the double character of internationalisation is pointed out as a goal in its own right and as a means to achieve a desired state, e.g. quality enhancement in higher education in general. Actually, four approaches are identified at Lebanese universities, called capacity building approach, mutual understanding approach, revenue generation approach and, finally, skilled migration approach, i.e. attracting "world elite students and staff". The internationalisation strategies of the individual institutions are analysed as how marginal or how central they are in the overall policy and the extent to which they might be called ad-hoc or systematic. Attention is paid to issues such as staff, students, curricula, resources and funding, governance and management and finally partnerships and agreements. On the basis of her analysis which could be undertaken in the framework of an international project, she concludes that the rationales have a strong academic emphasis, are shaped as a rule by a capacity building approach and in various cases by a revenue generation approach as well. In most cases the strategies have an ad-hoc character, whereby strong efforts "are not always supported by proper regulatory frameworks and by strategic planning".

Queenie K. L. Lam analyses the websites of "flagship universities", actually 58 universities from 39 countries positioned highly in the ranking undertaken by Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2009. On the basis of a thorough analysis of dominant concepts in higher education research, she comes to the conclusion that the concept of "isomorphism" might have the highest explanatory power for the marketing and communication strategies of leading universities, but she argues that a "cocktail" conceptual framework, i.e. a "remix" of different concepts deriving from sociology, business and communication research might be more appropriate. By comparing the websites of the universities in 2010 and 2011 she shows that rapid changes take place in this domain and that some universities are eager to undertake a "face-lifting" in this area. Notably, moves from a "static text-base" to an "animated image-based" homepage as well as the adoption of "social media" could be observed. In the majority but not in all flagship universities of non-English speaking countries, the texts are presented both in the native language and in English, as well as occasionally in a third language. Information on the ranking

of the respective university is seldom presented on the first page of the website but often somewhere else, whereby the presentation style ranges from "pompous" to "factual" and "analytical". Altogether, the flagship universities show some signs of similarity of self-presentation on their websites, which can be interpreted as a sign of isomorphism, but "there is no fear of global homogeneity among the homepages of flagship universities yet, and as a result, no such thing as a 'global communication model' for flagship universities."

Carmen Nicoleta Mureşan examines the support services of facilities of a German university – actually those of the University of Kassel – for internationally mobile students, notably incoming students. With the help of a study of available research on living in another culture as well as support provisions for mobile students, four major areas of support are identified: information and orientation, academic support, practical support (visa, housing, etc.), and support for integration into the student and local communities. In the framework of her Master thesis she undertook a comprehensive "international student satisfaction survey" with 254 respondents, part of whom studied abroad for a short period, part of whom were regularly enrolled in study programmes taught in the English language and part of whom enrolled in programmes taught in German. The study – helped by the fact that the author herself was actively involved in the international student support services of the University of Kassel – revealed that many mobile students did not know the range of service provisions except the required ones such as registration; consequently, the utilisation of services turned out to be low in some areas, and the overall satisfaction with services was not high. A search for "easy-to-access" ways of finding occasional support on the part of staff and fellow students was more widespread than the search for organised support provisions. The author concludes that an enormous range of services have been built up in recent years. It would be more beneficial if it was made more transparent, if the information system was better structured and consistently also provided in the English language, if more adjustments were made according to the target group of students (levels of programmes and language proficiency), and if "academic support" was "complemented by integration activities".

Andrea Cuenca takes up the internationally controversial debate about the consequences of migration of highly qualified persons from developing countries to economically advanced countries. On the one hand, the traditionally prevailing term "brain drain" underscores unfavourable consequences for developing countries due to a loss of human capital. On the other hand, the term "brain circulation" is often employed to point out multiple processes of mobility of knowledge and persons as well as increasing cooperation across borders as long-term consequence of migration. This study analyses the magnitude of migration from the developing countries as well as the major causes, patterns and consequences. Thereby the question is raised whether typical conditions can be identified that favour brain drain versus gain or brain circulation and what such experiences imply for possi-

ble policies of national governments of developing countries. The study, though discussing the worldwide discourse and trends, takes Colombia as a case for an in-depth analysis. In the analysis of the basic controversial debate, the author shows that the argument of brain circulation gradually has shifted from an "internationalist approach", i.e. substituting the entity of nation with that of the individual, towards a "network approach" emphasizing the role of communication and collaboration across borders. The analysis of available data suggests that only less than one per cent of the total labour force in the world are highly skilled migrants from developing countries to economically advanced countries, but they comprise a substantial proportion for some countries of origin on the one hand, and on the other a substantial proportion of highly skilled labour in the U.S. as the major country of destination. Colombia experienced a substantial increase of emigration, notably to the U.S. Poor salaries, high unemployment, social disparity, lack of high quality in higher education and widespread contacts abroad are named as major factors reinforcing emigration. The author concludes that brain drain dominates with respect to most developing countries. In the case of Colombia, a return of a substantial proportion of mobile skilled persons can be observed after some time, but networking between emigrants and their home countries has not yet developed towards a strong element of circulation. The author concludes: "Follow-up studies are needed to assess the contribution of diaspora networks as a strategy for developing regions. Literature often refers to it as a simple and magical solution."

Sandy Matthias-Mui aims to analyse the professional value of academic exchange and work exchange programmes which support a stay in Germany on early career stages of graduates from Hong Kong. The analysis of available literature shows that the impact of academic mobility has been analysed frequently, that the impact of mobility for the purpose of an internship has been analysed less often, and an explicit comparison of these modes not at all. Actually, a questionnaire was employed which was adapted from a prior project undertaken at INCHER-Kassel. The analysis is based on 68 responses by graduates from Hong Kong who are less than 35 years old, whereby some had both studied and experienced a work period in Germany. As Hong Kong students are versatile in English, the choice of Germany was not the most obvious academically and professionally motivated choice, whereby motives of intercultural experience played an important role. While the responses of formerly mobile students are similar to what is often found in comparable studies, mobility to Germany for the purpose of work experience often turned out to be problematic for the students from Hong Kong: The "job-skill match was quite low … as many had manual jobs and entry level jobs", which also did not meet their expectations and were not viewed as eventually useful for their career.

Elena Schimmelpfennig analyses the changes of themes addressed in higher education research in India. For this purpose, she selects what she calls a "docu-

mentary research method" and scrutinised the topics named in headlines of articles in two respective journals in India within two three-year periods each around the years 2000 and 2010, and compares them with the topics named in the major international journal specialized on publishing abstracts of articles from internationally well-established academic journals in the domain of higher education (Research into Higher Abstracts). Thereby, she follows the classification undertaken in RiHEA. While working on her master thesis, the author communicated with leading higher education researchers in various countries and in succeeded in getting valuable advice for designing her analysis in this way. Her data thus gathered shows that the thematic priority of higher education research in India shifted over time from finance and physical resources, while the second and third most frequent themes, i.e. "contributory studies and research approaches as well as students", did not change. With regards to worldwide research priorities, stability of the thematic priorities – curriculum and students – can be observed. In summing up the results, it is made clear that they cannot answer the "big" initially raised question "whether the Tiger follows the world pattern in higher education research or whether the Tiger follows his own path".

This volume concludes with an account of the "MAHE experience". Barbara M. Kehm, the coordinator of the MAHE programme, describes the development of the programme, its design, enrolment and graduation figures, and the feedback given by the students. With regards to the latter, she can draw from a survey undertaken in 2011 by Matthias Klumpp (with support by Carmen Mureşan), which was analysed in the framework of his master thesis "Excellence and Efficiency in Higher Education" (see the publication Klumpp, Matthias: *University excellence and efficiency*. Berlin: Logos 2012).

This survey also provided information on the whereabouts of the graduates of this master programme at that time. Moreover, many former students stayed in touch with INCHER-Kassel afterwards and reported about their subsequent activities. Although the available information is premature for an assessment of the academic and professional impact of the MAHE programme, it shows that there is a substantial proportion of graduates went on academically to doctoral study (among them four doctoral dissertations at the University of Kassel and several at other universities) and academic work (among them already one professor). The majority moved towards other professional careers. Among them, indeed, many became higher education professionals – in Germany, in their home country, or in a third country (in one case already up to the position of a registrar within a short time). All the findings suggest that life after graduation from the MAHE programme often went into the direction the programme was designed for to lay the foundations, and that learning and experience in this master programme really lead to international perspectives and understanding.

Authors' biographical notes

Barbara Kehm is a professor of Leadership and International Strategic Development in Higher Education at the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change (Glasgow University, UK). She has worked as a lecturer at Sussex University (UK) from 1986 to 1989 and as a post-doc researcher at the University of Kassel (Germany) from 1990 until 1996. From 1996 onwards she was employed as a senior researcher at the Institute of Higher Education Research of the University of Halle-Wittenberg (Germany) and was its research coordinator from 2001 onwards. In 2003 she became professor at Kassel University and was managing director of its International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER) from 2004 until 2011. She also implemented and coordinated the international research oriented Master Programme "Higher Education Research and Development" which was running from 2004 until 2010 at INCHER.

Her research interests are internationalisation in higher education, new forms of governance in higher education, and changes in doctoral education. In recent times she has also produced several book chapters and journal articles on global university rankings.

Ulrich Teichler is professor emeritus and former director of the International Centre for Higher Education Research, University of Kassel (INCHER-Kassel), Germany. Born in 1942, he was a student of sociology at the Free University of Berlin and a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Educational Research, Berlin. His doctoral dissertation was on higher education in Japan. He spent extended research periods in Japan, the Netherlands and the USA. He was professor on a part-time/short-term basis at the Northwestern University (USA), College of Europe (Belgium), Hiroshima University (Japan) and Open University (UK) and fulfilled other teaching assignments in Argentina, Austria, Germany and Norway. His key research areas include higher education and the world of work, the comparison of higher education systems and international mobility in higher education. Ulrich has over 1,000 publications to his name. He is a member of the International Academy of Education and the Academia Europaea, former chairman of the Consortium of Higher Education Researchers, former president and a distinguished member of EAIR, honoured with the Comenius Prize of UNESCO, and Dr h.c. of the University of Turku (Finland).

2

The Role of Mentoring Networks for the "Widening Participation" Discussion in Higher Education

A Case Study of the Mentoring Network "Arbeiterkind.de"

Claudia Müller

1. Introduction

Since the last ten years, German higher education institutions have been subject to several reforms such as the Bologna Process and the German *Exzellenzinitiative.* Discussions on quality and new forms of professional management have also accompanied these reforms. However, one issue has been discussed only recently, and that is the comparably low ratio of participation of working-class students in higher education. This seems to be due, among others, to the three-tier school system and the lack of a systematic diversity management.

The so called 'widening participation approach', which originally comes from Great Britain and the US, has only recently become an issue in German higher education. So far, there have been mainly mentoring programmes for women or migrants and some 'traditional' diversity issues such as specific treatments of disabled persons, parent students or migrants. However, socioeconomic issues have hardly been addressed, and a comprehensive diversity management often is advocated that includes recruitment aspects is still missing.

To fill this vacuum, the initiative "Arbeiterkind.de" was founded in 2008. This network aims to support working-class children who wish to study at a higher education institution. Over the years, the network has grown fast and today it counts 5,000 members in 80 cities (Arbeiterkind.de 2012), which is a considerably large number compared to other networks.

"Arbeiterkind.de" is different from other mentoring programmes. The initiative is present all over Germany offering information in schools and higher education institutions and arranging mentoring partnerships. It is open for anybody to join. A social network platform is the main communication and organisation tool.

Mentoring partnerships are comparably informal. For example, there is no formal membership required and no mentoring programme is offered either. Also, the definition of mentoring is quite comprehensive: everybody who engages at "Arbeiterkind.de" is considered to be a mentor, regardless of the nature of his or her involvement.

This article is based on a first qualitative study to reveal the characteristics of the network. The main objectives of the study are to analyse the structure, the system and the mentoring concept. The goal is to develop a model that shows the initiative with its strengths and weaknesses, thus providing a basis for discussion for further development of mentoring initiatives for students.

2. Discussion of Literature and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Research Findings to Date

The network "Arbeiterkind.de" has hardly been a topic of research so far. There is empirical data neither on the structure nor on the influence on higher education participation or on higher education policy.

A first large survey that takes quantitative and qualitative aspects into account has been started at the institute of educational research at the University of Giessen. An impact study that examined "Arbeiterkind.de" offers at schools has been brought forward by Zeppelin University (Schabernack and Spokoinyi 2011). This study proved that all topics that had been important to the pupils such as the financing aspect, admission and information on certain disciplines, could be addressed. It was also proved that the probability to study at a higher education institution depended on the level of education of one's parents, especially that of the father's; if they had no academic education, their children are less likely to enrol.

The German higher education system is considered very impenetrable. It turned out that the transitions from primary to secondary and from secondary to tertiary education institutes are the biggest obstacles, and that the social level of a family is crucial at these stages. To quantify: the participation of children of parents without higher education degree is relatively constant at 24 per cent, whereas the participation of children of higher education graduates is about 71 per cent (Isserstedt et al. 2010). Thereby, often socially disadvantaged pupils with relatively good grades do not move up to higher education (Maaz et al. 2011). Several reasons can be attributed to this: According to Bourdieu (1983), people reveal their belonging to a certain class by their so-called habitus. Teachers unconsciously consider performance according to someone's descent. Also, working-class children have less self-confidence than those from educated families (Maaz et al. 2011).

This situation is of economic and socio-political relevance. We are living in an increasingly diverse society, characterised by migration, individualisation and

broken job histories. At the same time, the job market requires increasingly diverse skills. Thus, it must be guaranteed that the diverse population is represented in the higher education system. Moreover, there is evidence that heterogeneous groups in research, as well as in education, foster social intelligence and that they attain better outputs (de Ridder et al. 2008; Brandenburg et al. 2009).

A few remarks are at place regarding the concept of mentoring. Traditionally, mentoring initiatives at German higher education institutions were and are still established to promote women's participation. Such programmes are widely spread. In 2012, 120 such programmes could be counted (Forum Mentoring 2012). As a rule, they not only match mentees and mentors, but also offer structured programmes. Most programmes also operate as networks in which members can easily get in contact with each other. Other common characteristics of these programmes are that they are relatively formalised, and often a formal membership is required. So far, hardly anything is known on informal mentoring relationships. There are occasional hints that these can be of a higher quality than those in formalised projects and that a high degree of self-determination brings forward a fruitful partnership (Ragins and Cotton 1999; Ehlers and Kruse 2007).

2.2 Definitions

According to the available literature, there are three ways to define working class children: first, the differentiation by the categories of the German insurance system (working class, employee, self- employed), second, the distinction according to social parentage, and third, the educational background of a person's family (Isserstedt et al. 2010; Schabernack and Spokoinyi 2011). So far, there is no clear use of these definitions, especially when terms are translated from English literature.

The initiative itself addresses pupils from families in which nobody or hardly anybody has been to a college or a university. As target group are children of parents without a higher education degree, the initiative's name "Arbeiterkind.de" is somewhat misleading. The term 'children of parents without a higher education degree' would be more appropriate.

2.3 Research Questions

The research interest of this study was to elaborate the structural characteristics and to understand what elements have facilitated the success and what elements were constraining the "Arbeiterkind.de" initiative?. The following questions guided the analysis:

- Which critical factors of success and which obstacles can be named?
- Which impact do the open method and the social network have?
- What is the underlying mentoring concept?

– What kind of members does the network have and what are their motivations?
– Which political and public relevance has Arbeiterkind.de?

2.4 Method

In this qualitative research, the method of a case study is applied. First, data was collected through interviews and from further sources, such as (the) homepage and the social network (of Arbeiterkind.de). The method of participant observation, a method that is considered to be classical for single case studies, was applied as well (Kraimer 2002).

The interviews provided the basis to develop categories for 21 structural characteristics. The characteristics were merged to a general model.

3. Major Theme and Findings

3.1 History

To understand the phenomenon Arbeiterkind.de, it is important to look at its history. The initiative was founded by Katja Urbatsch, who was a child of working-class parents herself. When she started studying, she had typical experiences that working-class children undergo: her fellow students from well-educated households had extensive ideal and material assistance from their parents. They also seemed to have easier admission to stipends and they knew how to behave in the academic context. Katja Urbatsch had the feeling that she did not belong to this academic world. A few semesters later, when she understood the academic system, she wanted to help other students who were in the same situation as she once has been. In 2008, she founded the initiative Arbeiterkind.de, which was immediately supported by a number of German and international social institutions, such as Ashoka, Vodafone Foundation Germany, Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the JP Moran Chase Foundation, and which was decorated with numerous prizes in the following years.

First, the initiative was meant to be only a website which collected and provided information. But from the first day on, the idea found many supporters who came up with several ideas, making the initiative a success. One of the secrets was to welcome everybody who wanted to help, absorb their potential and integrate new ideas. In this way, "Arbeiterkind.de" became a mentoring network with dozens of regional groups and hundreds of activists and with a social network as an organisation and communication tool.

Katja Urbatsch is member of many expert boards, e.g., she is the German representative in the European Access Network, and she is member of the *Allianz für Bildung*, an initiative founded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

3.2 Mentoring Concept and Offers

The concept of Mentoring is not clearly defined in Arbeiterkind.de. Everybody who engages in the network is called a mentor. This has a historical reason, as the initiative used the slogan "become a mentor in your city" already in its very beginning, at a time when there was still no (formal) structure or the idea of a mentoring concept. When it was observed that the player was often in a double role, namely mentor and mentee, it was decided to retain this term even if it was somewhat blurry. In another respect, the mentoring concept is unusual: there is no targeted matching. Instead, there are lots of possibilities to get in contact with each other and to seek for the right contact person. The most common ways of finding a mentor is either to email the local group (all local groups have their own e-mail address and they can seek a contact person out of the local pool of members) or to get in contact at information events, e.g., at schools or at education fairs. This brings us to the provisions of Arbeiterkind.de.

The provisions can be classified into three categories: The first category is "information and support", and mainly targets mentees. The homepage and the social network belong to that category. In February 2012, nearly 30,000 visitors, coming from 20,000 different IP-addresses, had been registered on the Website. The social network is run by the OpenNetworX foundation, an institution that offers non-profit organisations a free use of social networks. This tool not only allows communication within the whole initiative but also the maintenance of group homepages. Every member can set up his or her own profile, and options for wikis and discussion forums as well as group organisation are given here. Further provisions are: information events, a hotline, and numerous activities of the regional groups, notably the regular meetings (*Stammtische*), consultation hours and the e-mail address of the local group. Most contact requests that come here are answered or forwarded by a responsible group member. Also, presentations at schools are given, and these two channels – the direct contact requests and school presentations – are generally used to arrange mentoring partnerships. And mentoring, of course, is one of the most important provisions of Arbeiterkind.de.

Second, there is the provision of "qualification". "Arbeiterkind.de" has developed a structured training programme for mentors and group leaders, in which communication and presentation skills are trained. Additional workshops on special topics, partially co-organised with sponsors are provided.

The third type of provision might be called "exchange", a cross -sectional task visible throughout the social network and in all kind of events, workshops and personal discussions.

As "Arbeiterkind.de" does not clearly distinguish between mentor and mentee, the offers are not always clearly defined for any one target group. For example, all members are invited to mentoring trainings. This, in fact, leads to irritation of

those members who regard themselves as a mentee. But, on the other hand, it fosters the character of a community.

It becomes apparent that a wide range of offers is carried out by the volunteers all over the country. This has two general implications for the type of provisions: first, the activities are usually arranged very closely according to people's needs and they can vary from place to place. And second, there has been hardly any emphasis so far on official cooperation with other institutions such as higher education institution.

3.3 Clientele and Motives for Social Involvement

Most of the members are students or young professionals. But as the network is open to all, there are also senior professionals. They organise themselves in a special group called "senior mentors".

The most common characteristic of the members is that the huge majority has a working class origin. The interviewed persons concordantly stated that their families did not have much understanding of their lives as students and their striving for a higher education degree. Some of them came from families in which their *parents* were the *first* participating in higher education. But even these members, being children of degree holders, had similar problems. Obviously, the parents had retained, at least in part, habits of the working class, its characteristics and ideas.

One reason for the involvement of those active at "Arbeiterkind.de" is to carry out a meaningful activity and to pass something on to the next generation. But, in addition to this, some want to belong to a community and reflect on their identity and biography. E.g. Katja Urbatsch mentions several working class children who as students had difficulties coping with academic habits and continue to have identity conflicts during their entire professional lives too (Urbatsch 2011).

3.4 Structure and Governance

"Arbeiterkind.de" works as an entrepreneurial company in Berlin with eight employees. It is financed by public funding and private donations. The members of the initiative work on a voluntary basis in a loosely organised network. There is no 'membership'. The interviewees spoke of it as a community, a network, or a movement.

The initiative's nature is mainly defined by the local groups. The voluntarily work such as mentoring, information and exchange takes place in this – local – context. The groups organise themselves and accordingly they have diverse provisions. The Berlin office gives directives, support and moderation. It is part of the network's culture that Katja Urbatsch and the staff are in personal contact with most of the groups in different regions, and regularly visit them. Two German states, Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia, have own local offices.

In this structure, it is hardly possible to control the quality of activities. There are means of quality assurance such as training and supporting materials, e.g., to guide mentors and make them aware of their responsibility and duties, but nothing compulsory in nature; much of the daily business works on the basis of trust and self-control within the groups instead.

3.5 The model: "Arbeiterkind.de" as a Community

As already pointed out, the analysis revealed 21 structural characteristics

Kind of the initiative

1. Open community with no formal membership; members share the same goals and values, they can be active or passive

Main target groups and concepts of mentoring

2. Pupils and students
3. Mentee- *and* mentor-centred
4. The term "mentor" is not clearly defined, blurred boundaries

Provisions

5. Overlapping in function (information/support, qualification, exchange) and target groups (mentees, mentors)
6. Punctual individual engagement und punctual support
7. Structured provisions for mentors (mentor-trainings, workshops) and
8. Structured (school visits, information events, consultation-hour, fairs) and unstructured (ad hoc consultation as required, e-mail inquiries, inquiries via the social network) provisions for mentees. No mentoring programme

Governance

9. Model of an online community
10. Many activities are initiated by mentors
11. Moderate governance, no contracts or control. Collaboration based on trust. Berlin office sets guidelines and is a motor for certain issues, regional offices act mainly supportive
12. Quality assurance is carried out centrally (by trainings, guidance through the Berlin office and regional offices) und de-centrally (in the regional groups, social network)
13. Organisation in regional groups, flat hierarchy
14. Regional and central collaboration with other institutions
15. Self-determined engagement leads to dynamism and diversity of offers
16. Web-2.0-based communication

Motivations and benefits

17. Motivation is based on the own educational biography, desire to do meaningful activities
18. Benefits for those who seek help: punctual, demand-oriented activities possible
19. Benefits for those who engage: sense of belonging, helps to be self-confident with regard to the family's educational background

Noticeable characteristics from the point of view of those getting in touch for the first time

20. Low entrance barrier
21. Vagueness about the mentoring concept, possibilities of engagement and communication via the social network.

These characteristics might be integrated into a model.The term ‘community’ describes the initiative most appropriately: A typical characteristic of a ‘movement’ is that its focus points to dominant forces of society, and it hardly considers the origin of the social evils (Fuchs-Heinritz 2011). A ‘social network’, on the other hand, is defined as a system of linkages which is used to gain personal benefit (Kopp and Schäfers 2010). The members of the initiative neither fight against any political system nor do they primarily use the network for their own career goals.

A community, according to Bacon (2009), is a “collection of people who interact together in the same environment”. This holds true as there is no formal admission and no discrimination of members (e. g., by age, education level, mentee or mentor). Bacon further points out that there is no willingness of political influence, but the members have similar values, and they campaign for the same content. By means of the new media, people can exchange their ideas and results. The interaction within the community leads to a sense of belonging. Every person counts and it is useful for the community that members are as diverse as possible. Figure 1 points out that the activities “information”, “qualification” or “exchange” shape the community but everybody can find his or her position in the initiative without being linked to these activities.

Figure 2 shows the motives and the benefits of being a member of the “Arbeiterkind.de” community. At first glance, mentees do not fit into this part of the model – they only “take” but not “give”. According to Bacon’s definition, however, they are very well part of the community because they interact, regardless of whether they “give” or “take” something.

Figure 1: Arbeiterkind.de: Community

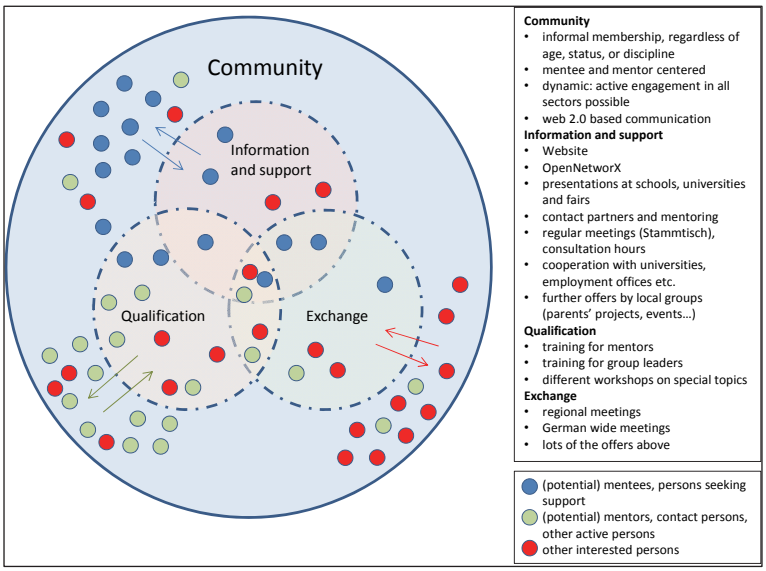

Figure 2: Arbeiterkind.de: Self Determined Involvement and Benefits

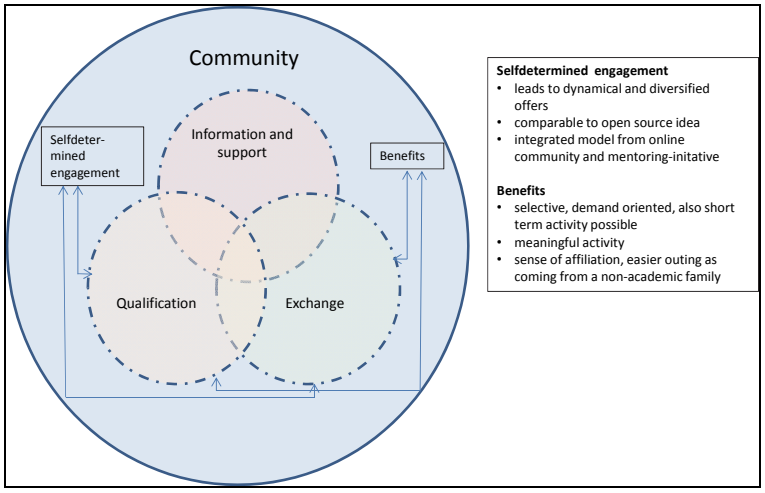

Figure 3 shows the organisational pattern: Support for the activities comes from the Berlin office and the regional offices. But the flow of ideas might be horizontal.

Figure 3: Arbeiterkind.de: Local Groups, Berlin Office and Regional Offices

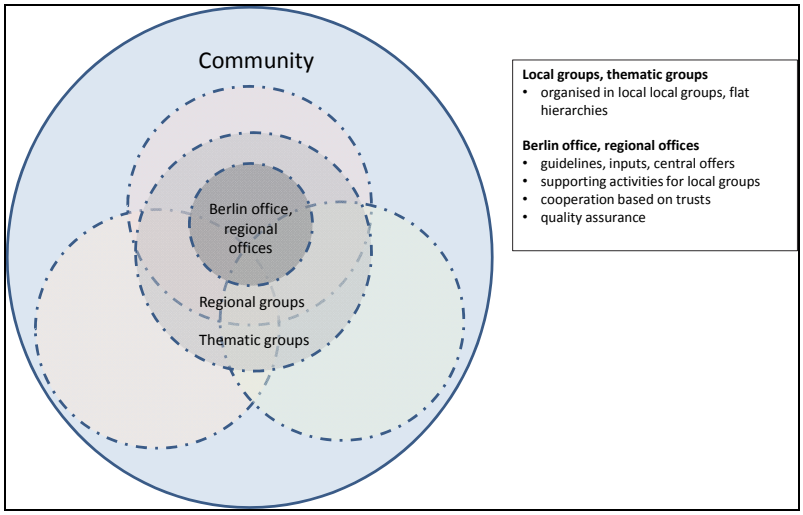

Figure 4: Arbeiterkind.de: Structured Provisions

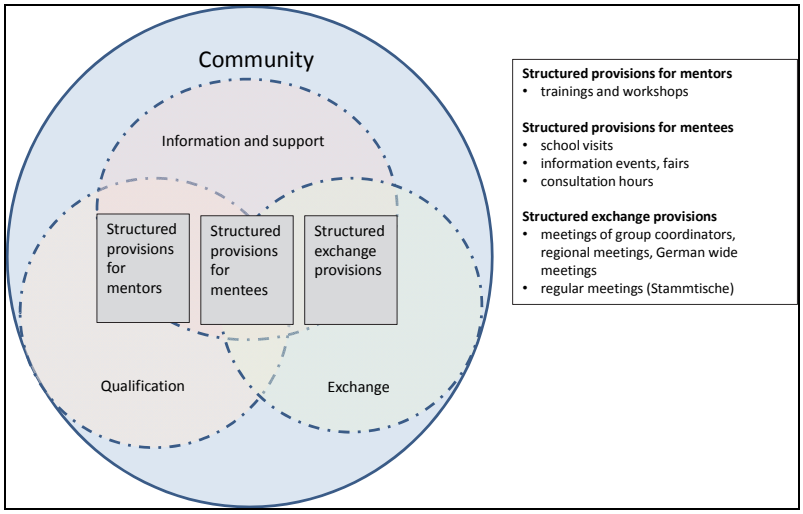

Figure 4 finally shows the structured provisions, i. e. training, workshops and information sessions. Many of them are accessible for anybody.

The model can be summarized as follows: "Arbeiterkind.de" is a community, which offers a structured programme for members on a voluntarily basis and which is extended by a central office taking over moderate controlling and steering functions.

3.6 A Comparison with Other Initiatives

The specific character of Arbeiterkind.de might become obvious through comparison with other initiatives aimed at facilitating access to higher education.

Studienkompass is an initiative that was founded in 2007 by three private foundations. Like Arbeiterkind.de, it also wants to help students who strive for an academic career. The initiative has offices in 23 cities and offers a three-year curriculum. Admission is restricted to mentors and mentees, and activities are tailored for mentees. A strong central regulation and a highly regulated three- year programme, which is offered during the final two years of school and the first year at university, and which does not allow punctual involvement, distinguish it clearly from the "Arbeiterkind.de" initiative. Communication is organised via a closed online community, which of course can be accessed only by members.

Rock your life was founded by students from Konstanz in 2008. It aims to support pupils from modern secondary schools (*Hauptschule*) to find an apprenticeship training position or another secondary school (*weiterführende Schule*), and therefore offers a structured two-year programme. The mission is to help pupils to develop their potentials, a goal that comes quite close to that of Arbeiterkind.de. They actively seek volunteers to take action as mentors, and their activities address mentees and mentors. Even though the roles are clearly distinguished, there are some characteristics of a community. The non-profit company is organised in a franchise system and so far there are 23 branches.

The Hessian network *MentorinnenNetzwerk für Frauen in Naturwissenschaft und Technik* is a joint initiative of the Hessian's higher education institutions and is open to female students of certain disciplines. It was founded in 2001 and is coordinated by a central office, which offers a structured programme, organises an application process and matches mentors and mentees. Online communication is possible only through the use of a mailing list; there is no platform where other members can be seen. A classical understanding of mentoring underlies this concept: mentors are experienced executives in research or business. Activities are mainly adjusted to the mentees' needs. In 2008, the network had 1,085 members, 274 of them working together in mentoring tandems.

Finally, we consider a classical model of a community: *Ubuntu*. Ubuntu is a linux-based software, developed and provided by a community of software engineers. It was founded by a single person, Mark Shuttleworth. The community – it

has 25 million users now – is spread all over the world. Due to this huge size, it is structured, and decisions on the further development of technique and content are taken by different boards. Also, there are different kinds of membership according to the degree of involvement. As Bacon states in his book "The Art of Community", in which he describes the model of Ubuntu, communities do not necessarily have to be unstructured (Bacon 2009). In the case of Ubuntu, the huge number of members and the complex contents lead to the establishment of a structure. This is similar to what happened in the "Arbeiterkind.de" initiative, where regional- and content- driven groups were established. The moderate steering by the founders of Ubuntu respectively "Arbeiterkind.de" is comparable, too, and both communities also have a second level of hierarchy, here the steering boards, there the regional offices. Furthermore, both initiatives share an open and low-threshold access and self-determined involvement, which leads to a diverse activities and the use of web 2.0 to complete the list of similarities.

These comparisons reveal that "Arbeiterkind.de" clearly differs from the first three mentoring initiatives, as they all have a strong central control and regulated access, and their main offer being structured programmes focused on the mentees needs. In contrast, the model that was developed for "Arbeiterkind.de" is similar to the Ubuntu model.

4. Conclusion and Policy Implications

4.1 Conclusions for the Initiative Arbeiterkind.de

"Arbeiterkind.de" reaches its target groups by a combination of authentic role models and area-wide presence and is very successful with those models. Nevertheless, some recommendations for improvement can still be made: most important is the need to improve the initiative's collaboration with higher education institutions. So far, the involvement of the latter has been minimal and no systematic joint activities have taken place. An exception is the recent "Arbeiterkind.de auf Tour", which addressed universities of applied sciences in the Tour's first road show. This provision could be extended.

Moreover, the definition of mentoring should be made clearer that there is no classical mentoring programme. Everybody can become mentor, and mentors are meant to be contact persons. Also, the term Arbeiterkind sometimes leads to confusion, as the initiative aims to help children of parents without higher education regardless if they have a working class background or not.

Finally, knowledge management should be one of the most important topics for the further development of the network. Two issues need to be addressed: first, the further development of the social network. Second, it is important to create closer ties among members.

4.2 Conclusions for Mentoring and Widening Participation Activities

"Arbeiterkind.de" fills a market niche that has not been filled by politics and society so far, and its activities are highly welcomed, as several prizes show. The initiative is a strong lobby for children of parents without higher education. In fact, there are other institutions too, but as this initiative has no restricted access, it is very large, and thus has a comparatively high visibility. In times of talent shortage, higher education institutions and politics make efforts to get groups into higher education that have been missing so far.

Obviously, this is a phenomenon which is not unique in socio-political innovation: often, non-profit organisations are the first to react to social problems. They initiate new ways and solutions, independently of political processes, which are then discussed on a wider public basis. According to this logic, it is now the task of politics and society to establish permanent solutions such as frameworks for schools and higher education institutions.

Now, mechanisms could be established to facilitate access to higher education for pupils whose parents had not been students. Mentoring programmes could be established by higher education institutions for various target groups. Efforts could be made to assess and improve the quality of mentoring. This could be undertaken by government and higher education institutions in collaboration with networks.

Mentoring is an effective instrument at the point of transition from school to higher education. So far, there is little research, but there are hints that informal mentoring with a highly self-determined relationship can be very fruitful (Ragins and Cotton 1999; Ehlers and Kruse 2007). This should be taken into account if new programmes are set up. After all, mentoring provisions have to be offered always with an online presence. To avoid pricy customized solutions, the use of an existing, non-profit organisation, like OpenNetworX, seems to be a reasonable alternative.

4.3 Outlook and Further Research

This survey was a first attempt to examine the initiative Arbeiterkind.de.

There are some issues that should be followed up by research concerning the initiative Arbeiterkind.de: Mentoring in an open context should be examined thoroughly. Moreover, hardly anything is known so far about the impact of "Arbeiterkind.de" as a public player and its relationships to politics, society, foundations, schools and higher education institutions. Finally, analyses of the persons involved in such a network could indicate further potentials of this initiative.

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Author's biographical note

Claudia Mueller graduated in Biology in Marburg 1999 and worked for several years in the field of higher education management. After she supported a network of technology transfer in Hesse (TechnologieTransferNetzwerk) she went to ETH and University Zurich, where she built up the Zurich Graduate School in Mathematics. This was followed by a period at Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, where she was responsible for international accreditations. Today Claudia Müller works at the Technische Universitaet Berlin in a joint project with Berlin University of the Arts, called Hybrid Plattform.

Claudia Mueller persued the international Master Program in Higher Education at the International Centre of Higher Education Research, University of Kassel, Germany, as an executive master student and graduated in 2012. She wrote her master thesis about the mentoring network Arbeiterkind.de, in which she is also a member.

3

Uyghur Students in Higher Education of China

Gulinuer Maimaiti

1. Introduction

Universities around the world are required to play an increasingly vital role in bridging the gap between the students coming from diverse socio-cultural, economic and regional backgrounds (Gupta 2006). In a multi-ethnic country as People's Republic of China (PRC), the role of higher education is more than bridging the gap; ensuring access and equity for minorities is viewed as a way to support economic growth and maintain social stability in border areas while contributing to building interethnic unity throughout the whole country.

It has been a challenge for China to develop a suitable education policy according to the historical, cultural and language backgrounds of minority groups. In this article, I will discuss the influence of higher education policy on one of the most populous minority ethnic groups in China, the Uyghur, living in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (hereafter called Xinjiang or XUAR interchangeably) of China, which is located in the border area and plays an important role in China's strategic layout.

The Uyghur are the main ethnic group in Xinjiang and the second largest Muslim group in China after the Hui. In 2010, there were 10,069,346 Uyghur making up about 45 % of the whole population in Xinjiang. The Han majority accounts for 40.1%, and the rest is made up of minority nationalities, such as, Kazakh, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tatar, Xibe, Mongul, Hui etc. (National Bureau of Statistics 2013). The Han population rose dramatically in the region after the foundation of PRC in 1949, from 6.9% in 1953 to 40.4%in 1982 and has remained at about 40% since then (Ma 2006, p.7).

The Uyghur are the descendants of Arian-Staqi-Sark-Turkic groups (Muhemmetimin, Zhang and Hu 1995, cited in Chen and Postiglione 2009, p. 289). Their language, Uyghur, belongs to the Altaic-Turkic family of languages; the writing system is similar to Arabic. The development of Uyghur education can be divided into three major historical periods: (1) Muslim religious education. Uyghur education prior to the 1900s was mainly Muslim religious education. The schools carry-

ing out religious education, called Madrassah, were attached to the local community mosques and were most prevalent in southern Xinjiang (Zhou 2001; Benson 2004). (2) The rise of modern secular education from the late 1800s until the Chinese republic era. In the late 1800s, Uyghur intellectuals who had been educated in Russia, central Asia and Turkey brought secular education with modern curricula to Xinjiang (Chen 2008). (3) Minority education under the Chinese communist party (CCP), beginning in 1949. After the foundation of PRC, the state implemented various policies to improve the overall education, not only for Xinjiang but also for all ethnic minority nationalities in China, but the region lags behind the national standard. Some researchers in China argue that "the main reasons for the underdevelopment of Uyghur's education are out dated educational perceptions, and poor teaching quality and administration. Moreover, researchers have shown that there is a conflict between the strong Uyghur ethnic culture and the national education system (Meng and Ba 2000; Chen 2008).

Even though the region lags behind compared to other regions, there are some successful Uyghur students who have been trained under these policies. For example, Urkesh Dolet (Wu er kai xi in Chinese) was the student leader in the Tiananmen Square Protests in 1989. His ethnicity is Uyghur, born and grown up in Beijing. He belongs to the Min kao han group in our classification of minority students in Xinjiang. Hoshur Islam, the first Uyghur academician in China, developed software in minority languages for Dos and Windows, Uyghur Automatic Speech Recognition system and Synthesis System, etc. Dr Erkin Sidiq, also a Uyghur scholar working in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); Tashpolat Rozi, Dean of Faculty and Mathematics, Professor at University of Antelope Valley; Dr Ablet Semet, Researcher at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, etc. It has been estimated that there are approximately more than 400 Uyghur scholars holding PhD degrees from HEIs in China and overseas.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify what happens with Uyghur students after the enrolment in higher education. Most of the past research concentrated on analysing the educational policy, especially the preferential admission policy, but did not address the situation after enrolment and after graduation.

With this aim, this is an empirical study carried out by using a quantitative research approach with participation of 149 Uyghur students from Beijing Normal University, Fudan University and Xinjiang University.

2. Background

2.1 Uyghur Students in the Higher Education System of Xinjiang

The Department of Education of Xinjiang is the representative of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China and is responsible for implementing policies which are

proposed by the central government. There is a board of education or office of education in different localities.

There are 38 HEIs in XUAR, including 11 undergraduate degree-granting colleges and universities, 5 independent colleges, 17 vocational colleges, 3 private vocational colleges and 2 adult higher education institutions (XUAR Department of Education 2013a). Among the 11 undergraduate degree-granting colleges and universities, 5 are master and doctoral degree-granting comprehensive universities, and 6 are master degree-granting colleges. (For detailed information about the HEIs in XUAR see the appendix II).

There is one major change in higher education in Xinjiang: from 2002, Mandarin has replaced the lingua franca Uyghur as the language of instruction in Xinjiang University. Other institutions are also following this trend in the recent years. This means that preparatory education is a necessary transitional step, and has influenced the emphasis on teaching in Chinese for primary and secondary education.

2.1.1 Access and Admission to Higher Education

As stated in the constitution of PRC, the ethnic minorities have the right to use and develop their own language. Based on the multi-ethnic, multi-language background of Xinjiang, schools are divided as minority schools and Han schools. In recent years, a third type of school has developed: joint Chinese-minority schools. The schools are either Han schools in which there are minority classes, minority ethnic schools with Han classes or schools with mixed nationality classes (Tsung and Cruickshank 2011, p. 100). The minority schools or minority classes use four minority languages as medium of instruction, Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Mongol. But the language of instruction has been changing step by step to the bilingual teaching model since the 1990s.

It started with establishing experimental classes for bilingual teaching in minority middle schools that taught mathematics, physics, chemistry in Chinese and politic science, history, geography and minority literature in minority language. Today, experimental classes can be found in every primary and middle school in Xinjiang and the non-experimental classes have adopted Chinese plus minority language in the medium of teaching (Ma 2009, p. 24).

It has to be noted that a large number of students choose to go Han schoolsand a few Han students also can be found in minority schools. Usually the minority students are categorized as “Min kao min” and “Min kao han”. The minority student who completed primary and secondary education in their own language is called “Min kao min”, and “Min kao han” refers to those minority students completed 12 years of schooling in Han schools.

The National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) examination papers are also translated into four languages. Every year, the Department of Education of

XUAR announces three different cut off score lines: a score line for Han students, a score line for Min kao min and a score line for Min kao han. And recently with the establishment of experimental bilingual classes, the students from bilingual classes have the same score line as Min kao han.

As mentioned earlier, the preferential admission policy practiced in higher education in China means that the cut-off scores for minorities are lower than for Han. In 2012, the difference in the cut off score line between Han and Min kao min was 107 for students who are applying to the key universities. Below are the cut-off score lines of NCEE in 2013.

Table 1: XUAR Cut-off Score Line for Bachelor Applicants of NCEE in 2013

	Liberal arts			Science		
Students' Classification	Top university	General university	University college	Top university	General university	University college
Min kao min	425	392		342	300	
Min kao han	376	314		418	370	
Han	460	394	340	443	378	330

Note: For the enrolment of specialized college, there were no cut-off score lines; the students selected from the high score to the lowest.
Source: own elaboration according to the XUAR Department of Education, 2013b.

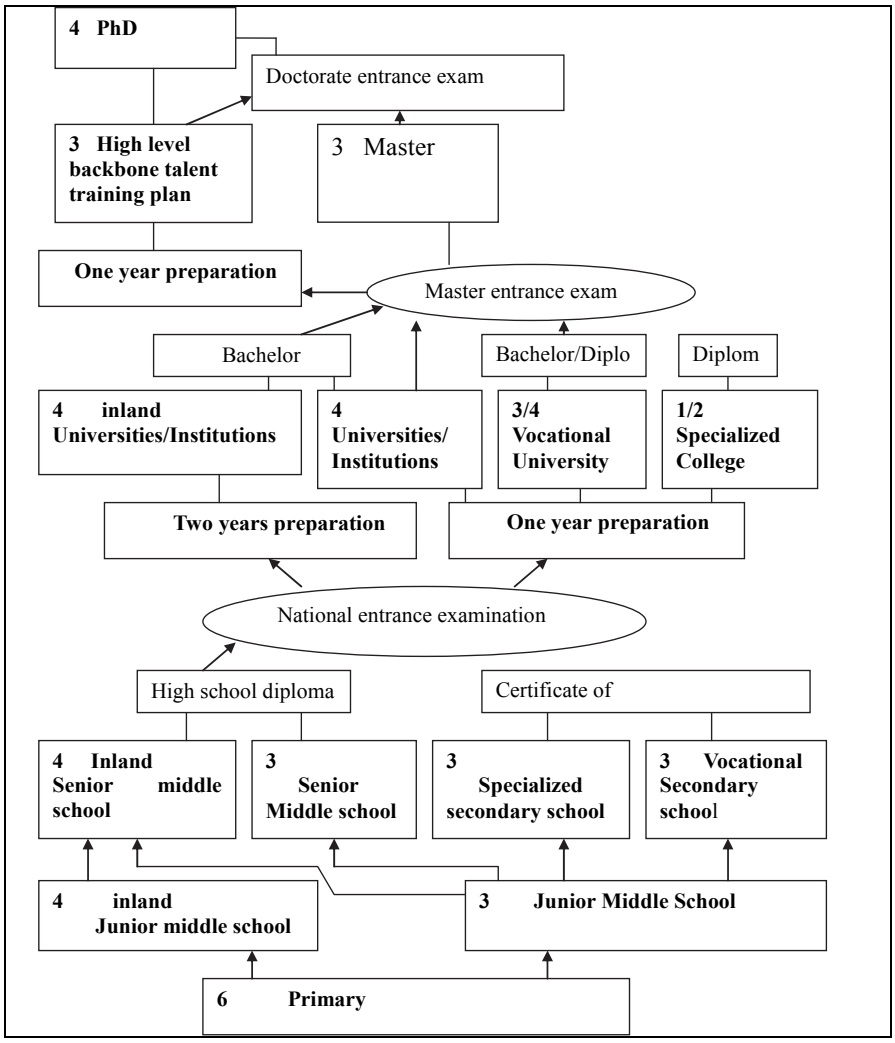
Min kao han receive extra bonus points; from 2006, 40 points are added. After taking the college entrance examination, Han students and minority students are given different lists of universities and majors to choose from. In general, Han students have the widest variety of universities and majors as options. Min Kao Min students have fewer choices compared to Han students, with very few advanced majors open to them. Min kao han students have the least choices. Especially, the Uyghur/minority students from Xinjiang who are admitted to inland universities have very limited majors opened to them.

Table 2: Majors Offered to Min kao min Students by two Universities in 2001

	Beijing Normal University	Fudan University
Liberal Art	Chinese Literature, Moral and Political Education, History, Education, Educational Management	Tourism Management, Public Administration
Science	Physics, Chemistry, Geography, Psychology	Environmental Science, Mathematics

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 1: Education System for Ethnic Minorities in XUAR



As shown in Figure 1, all universities have preparatory classes for Uyghur/minority students before they start university courses. Min kao han students and Min kao min students who will attend universities in Xinjiang and outside Xinjiang are required to take these preparatory classes. Only those Min kao han students who attend universities inside Xinjiang are not required to take these classes. Min kao

han students who want to study in universities outside of Xinjiang attend one year of preparatory classes. Min kao min students enrolled in universities outside of Xinjiang need to take two years of preparatory classes. The courses designed for improving Chinese competency, and some additional courses such as computer, advanced mathematics and classical Chinese literature are also offered. Students are required to study until they pass the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK, a Chinese language proficiency test, an equivalent of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

2.1.2 The Participation of Uyghur Students in Higher Education

The available statistical data on higher education participation rates does not specify every different ethnic group; the term "minority" is used to show the ethnic minority participation rate in Xinjiang. As we have stated, the Uyghur are the largest ethnic group, accounting for 45 % of the region while 40% is Han, thus it can be estimated that at least 90% of the termed "minority students" refers to the Uyghur.

There are two options for the Uyghur/minority students to access higher education: the HEIs in inland cities and the HEIs in XUAR. The inland HEIs admit ethnic minorities from Xinjiang in accordance with the Xinjiang Collaboration Project. The project started in 1989, designed to take advantage of the advanced educational resources in mainland Chinese universities in order to train high level personnel for the development of XUAR.

In the 5 year plan period completed in 2012 the total number of students enrolled in inland universities reached approximately 37,000. Every year, around 2,000 students enrol in inland HEIs: around 600Min kao han and around 600 Min kao min. They are distributed among 11 cities and provinces and provinces, including Beijing, Tianjin, Liaoning, Jilin, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shandong, Guangdong, and Shanxi. The Xinjiang provincial government provides financial support every year from 2001, about 2000 Yuan (200 Euro) per students to those students in inland HEIs (XUAR Department of Education 2012).

There is no recent data available for the proportion of minority or Uyghur students in HEIs in Xinjiang. The latest data available is from 1998 cited in Ma (2003). In Xinjiang, all the institutions of higher education combined had an enrolment of 47,464 students (20,941 of them were minority students), and all the professional schools combined had an enrolment of 82,242 students (41,617 of them were minority students). Of all enrolled students, minority students made up 44.1% and 50.6% respectively (The Statistics Bureau of XUAR 1999, cited in Ma 2003, p. 135).

2.2 Information on the Uyghur Students on the Labour Market

The recent available data about graduate employment does not separate the proportion of employment rate by ethnicity. And it is impossible to get the data from relevant organizations. But from earlier research citations, we still can obtain some information about the graduate employment rate and situation of minorities or Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

Qi and He (2007) stated in their research, according to statistics of college graduates employment rate in 2003 in Xinjiang, that among the graduates holding a bachelor's degree, the Han graduates' employment rate was 80.07%, the Uyghur/minority students' employment rate was 38.16 %. They also present the employment rate for graduates from specialized colleges: 58.83 % and 26.34 % for Han and Uyghur/minority respectively. This means more than 60% of Uyghur/minority graduates cannot find a job, and the unemployment situation is severe even for the diploma holders from special colleges.

The occupational status of Uyghurs might tell us the reason why the unemployment rate is much lower than that of the Han (see Table 3).

It can be seen from the table that in 1990 and 2000, 84.1 % and 80% of the Uyghur population are engaged in agricultural work, which is the second highest in percentage of agricultural workforce after Kyrgyz. The lowest proportion of professionals and leaders of government institutions & enterprise is Uyghurs, accounting for less than one percent.

The Uyghur graduates have to compete with Han graduates in the labour market. Since most of the employers are Han, it has to be admitted that there is bias against Uyghur graduates and a preference for the same ethnicity. The bias might also come from the preferential admission policy, in the sense that the difference in cut-off score lines could mislead the employers to doubt the Uyghur graduates' abilities or Chinese proficiency. Zang (2010) studied the variation of job attainment in the public sector in the Xinjiang capital city Urumqi, and listed ethnic penalty as one of the major factors that is causing the gap between Uyghur- Han employment. But there are more and more Uyghur students educated in inland HEIs and as the language of instruction has changed, the Chinese proficiency might not be a problem.

To solve the high unemployment rate of minorities, the government encourages graduates to develop their own business by applying for loans. In addition, in 2011, the government of XUAR announced that the jobless minority graduates can go to the developed inland cities for one or two years to participate in training and internships. After finishing the training, it is required to return to Xinjiang and take jobs in the government sector in townships. The plan is to train 22,000 graduates in two years in 19 inland province and cities (Chinadaily online, 2011).

Tabelle 3 quer

2.3 Results of Existing Research on Uyghur Students in Higher Education of China

In this section we will separately review the literature published by Chinese researchers and English literature written by international researchers. For literature searches in Chinese and English, key words in the title or content include "Uyghur", "Xinjiang" and "higher education". But the English literature results cover the minority educational policy, policy development, boarding school, and preferential policy; none of the literature discusses Uyghur students after enrolment, during studies or their labour market activity. There is limited literature describing the factors affecting minority students' employment, but it is not the focus of our research questions. Hence the international researcher's publications have been excluded. For the Chinese literature search, China's largest periodical and journal data base, the Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) was used.

2.3.1 Researchers from China

The Chinese literature does not address the research question, but it is somehow related to the objectives of this study. The past research on Uyghur students in higher education can be divided into four major themes: (1) English learning, (2) cultural adaptation and ethnic identity, (3) employment, (4) attitude for language selection.

(1) English Learning

For Uyghur students, English is the second foreign language; most of them (except Min Kao Han) start to learn English after enrolling in higher education. This situation attracts researchers to explore the relations of mother language (Uyghur) and second language (Han) influence on English learning.

Abliz and Quan (2006) analysed the impact of Uyghur, which is a non-tone language and Chinese, which is a tone language on English language learning from the pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar mistakes. They recommended that teachers should clarify if the grammatical mistakes are driven by the difficulty of the language or the interference of the Uyghur or Han language, and concluded, providing examples of the differences in the three languages, that this might be helpful for students' progress.

Zhang (2011) conducted a survey on the motivation of learning English for Uyghur students majoring in English, and compared it with Han students. The result shows that the level of English proficiency before entering higher education plays a crucial role in students' motivation for a large number of students.

Ablet and Yan (2012) conducted a survey and interviewed Uyghur students in Xinjiang Normal University to find the difficulties in learning English. They presented the external factors that make it difficult to learn: economic disparities and

poor teaching conditions in primary and secondary education. The internal reason is that the students have a passion for English but they have to understand the curriculum in Chinese and spend more time on it and end up neglecting English.

(2) Cultural adaptation and ethnic identity

The Han culture has become the mainstream culture in Xinjiang because of the mass migration of the Han population due to the economic development. For some students, it is easy to integrate into the mainstream culture; some students take part in both cultures, while some students refuse to integrate. This is one of the topics investigated by most researchers.

Sun and Yao (2009) conducted a survey and interviewed 190 Uyghur students from Xinjiang Normal University, Changji Normal Institute, Tarim University and Kashgar Teacher's College. The result shows that ethnic identity of Uyghur students includes three areas: ethnic awareness, ethnic sentiments and ethnic behaviour. Gender, time spent on Chinese learning, the location of school for primary and secondary education and the mother's level of education are the factors that have a profound impact on ethnic identity. They also pointed out that Islamic practice plays a major role in ethnic identity. In conclusion, they said that the lack of ethnic awareness might be misguided by ethnic separatists and it is recommended that HEIs and media should help the students to understand their history and current situation.

Long and Duan (2012) conducted a research survey on the language identity, national identity, religious identity and cultural identity of Min kao min Uyghur students. They found that the Min kao min students' recognition in the Chinese language is not high; hence there is a need to strengthen the sense of national identity and ethnic identity. In addition, the Islamic religion has great influence on Uyghur students. On one hand, the students are proud of their ethnic culture; on the other hand, there is a trend in acceptance of the mainstream culture.

(3) Attitude for language selection

We have mentioned that from 2002, the HEIs in Xinjiang implemented a bilingual teaching method. This also attracts further attention to conduct research.

Sun and Sun (2007) explored the bilingual language attitude of Uyghur students and tried to discover what the relevant background is that has a direct impact on their attitudes. They took the Chinese proficiency, internet and ethnic identity as independent variables and found that the internet is the most powerful factor influencing language selection and can serve as a predictor for future research.

Long, Auran and Zhang (2011) examined the choice of language (between Uyghur or Chinese) in the daily life of Uyghur students. The result shows that Uyghur students have an intense ethnic awareness and consciously strive to maintain their language and culture; they want to maintain their mother tongue, and have a clear sense of alienation towards Chinese; meanwhile they accept the growing importance of the role of Chinese in their personal and ethnic development. The

researchers also noticed that even though the students lived in Urumqi where the Han population is larger than the Uyghur, they are more cautious and conservative in using Chinese.

(4) Employment situation

The unemployment rate among the Uyghur is very high, as we have also showed in the literature review. In the past literature, this issue was mentioned as Xinjiang minority student employment, not Uyghur students. The findings of this minority employment research point out that the minority students' limited Chinese proficiency means that these students cannot compete with their counterparts of the majority, thus resulting in a gap between job expectancy and reality. Some researchers recommended adjusting disciplines to improve Chinese and English language ability.

There are a number of articles addressing these themes; it is not necessary to mention them one by one since the results are same. In the next chapter, the Methodology of the empirical study will be explained within the specific research question.

3. Findings

The specific research questions will explore:

A. The students' perception about preparatory classes. Have those classes helped to prepare them to four years college study? B. What are the difficulties students have faced in undergraduate study most? C. Uyghur students' perception of connecting their study to Xinjiang and the intention to return or stay in inland cities. D. What is the current employment situation of Uyghur students, the transition to and characteristics of the current job? E. The relation of higher education and the job. F. Are there any differences for all of the above questions in the three study universities examined in the survey?

By answering these questions, one can have a clear understanding of what is happening with Uyghur students according to the minority higher education policies of China.

A quantitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study. The CHEERS Questionnaire was imitated and used for the questionnaire. The data was collected using an online questionnaire. Once the questionnaire was ready, the institutions were contacted via E-mail, but there was no response. Next, the institutions were contacted by telephone; unfortunately, no support was received. Personal connection was used for one of the study institutions, but still there was not a positive result. Finally, Snowball technique was used. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) 21 used to analyse the data.

The study compares the results of Beijing Normal University (BNU), Fudan University (hereafter abbreviated as Fudan) and Xinjiang University (XJU). These

universities were chosen for several reasons. First, all three are public universities and included in the Project 211[1]. Second, BNU and Fudan are key universities listed in the 985 Project[2] and are both under the direct administration of the Ministry of Education while XJU is not. In addition, Fudan is more prestigious, as listed in the Times Higher Education rankings. Third, XJU is located in XUAR, BNU and Fudan are in inland cities in China. It was expected to find comparable results despite the differences.

The Uyghur graduates from BNU, Fudan and XJU were invited to participate in an online survey. A total of 149 students participated in the survey. The year of graduation was not restricted to specific years, but the results indicated:

(a) the graduates from BNU and Fudan took the NCEE in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004, and after completing preparatory classes and bachelor degree courses, graduated in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

(b) the graduates from XJU participated in NCEE in 2001 and 2002, and completed bachelor study in 2006 and 2007.

3.1 The Biographical Profile of Participants

The classification

There were 149 students who participated in this survey. 127 are Min kao min, 16 are Min kao han and only 6 students graduated from inland boarding schools. Table 4 shows the category of students in the three universities.

1 The 211 Project was announced in 1993 and initiated in 1995. The 211 Project aims to develop about 100 universities and a number of key disciplines by the early 21st century, so as to take a leading position in the country's socio-economic development and in international competition (Cheng and Wang, 2012). The universities in the project provided funding to the development of capacities in engineering and technological sciences, physical sciences and biological sciences (Yu at al., 2012, p. 22). To date, there are 116 universities listed in this project.

2 The 985 Project was launched in 1998. This project again reflects the government's goal and efforts to develop a tertiary education system of international stature. The Ministry of Education issued *The Action Plan for Education Revitalization for the 21st Century* and implemented the 985 Project to establish a number of world-class universities and to develop a number of key research centers of excellence. This project aims to explore new mechanisms for higher education governance, improve universities' global competitiveness, and develop a path for building world-class universities, but with Chinese characteristics. To date, there are 43 universities included in 985 Project (Ibid).

Table 4: The Classification of Participants (by total /percent)

Types of students	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total / %
Min kao min	38	21	68	127 / 85.2%
Min kao han	2	9	4	16 / 10.7%
Xinjiang classes	6	_	_	6 / 4%
Total	47	16	72	149 / 100%

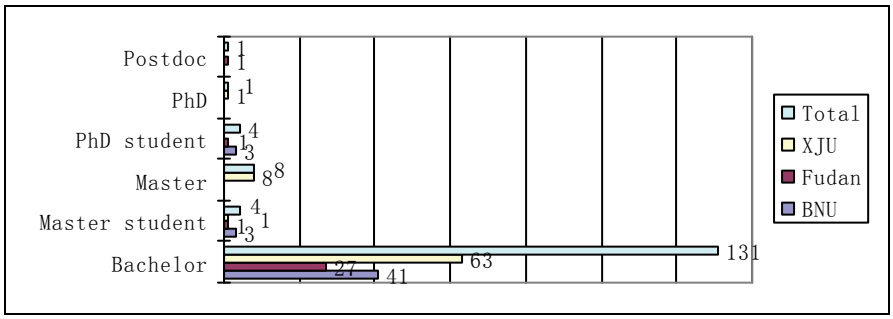
Question 1: You graduated from:

The 6 Xinjiang Classes graduates were all from BNU; more Min kao han participants were found in Fudan. Interestingly, there were 2 Min kao han students found in BNU, but the university only admits Min kao min and inland Xinjiang classes students. They have specified that they did not register as Min kao han for the NCEE, since they believed that they could succeed in the exam without getting bonus points.

Level of education

There are 131 graduates who have Bachelor Degrees, 4 are studying for a Master Degree, 4 are studying for a Doctoral degree, 8 have Master Degrees, 1 has a PhD and 1 is doing Postdoctoral research. Figure 2 shows the level of education of participants.

Figure 2: Level of Education (by total)



Question 3: Provide information about all higher education institutions, majors, degrees you have ever taken.

According to Question 3, which asked where you are studying/ have studied or where you got your degree, 8 students obtained a degree/ are studying/ have studied for a graduate level degree (from) abroad. The only graduate doing postdoctoral research had graduated from Fudan University, and the master and PhD degree were obtained in Sweden, and currently, the graduate is doing research in USA. The 4 PhD students who graduated from BNU and Fudan have all studied abroad (1 in Italy, 2 in USA and 1 in Sweden). Among the eight master degree holders from XJU, 2 received their degree from abroad (Belgium and USA).

Majors of the participants

The "major" refers to the bachelor degree course. The participants' majors are diverse, including Museology, Material Physics, Physics, Sociology, Geography, Geographical Information System, Earth Exploration and Information Technology, Russian Literature, English Literature, Moral and Political Education, Economics, International Politics, Environmental Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Sciences, Management, Education Technology, Education, Mathematics, Civil Engineering, Communication Engineering, Uyghur Literature, History, Psychology, Pharmacy, Ecology, Social Work, Electrical Automation.

The diversity of the majors makes the cross tabulation analysis for the research questions impossible. For example: only 3 graduates studied Museology, 3 studied Mathematics, 3 studies Pharmacy, 4 studied Economics, 3 studied Sociology, 6 studied Physics, and so on. The highest number can only found in majoring in Geography (11 students). The diversity affects the generalizability of the results; therefore the cross tabulation analysis was not applied further to "majors" with other variables.

Parental level of education

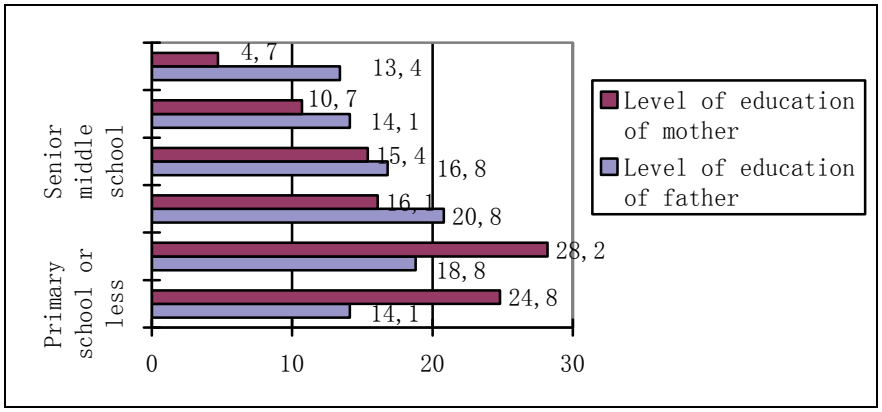
According to the parental level of education, we can see the following trends:

- most of the parents finished senior middle school or secondary vocational school.
- fathers hold more bachelor's degrees; 20 participants (13.4 %) have a father with a bachelor's degree compared to 7 participants (4.7%) with a mother with a bachelor's degree.
- most mothers have a junior middle school level of education. 42 (28.2%) have a primary school education and 37 (24.8%) did not finish primary education.

Even though we will not focus on the parental level of education, the figure can tell us the Uyghurs who were born between the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s (own estimation) participated in work after finishing secondary vocational schools and senior middle schools.

Figure 3 shows the educational level of parents of participants.

Figure 3: Parental Level of Education (%)



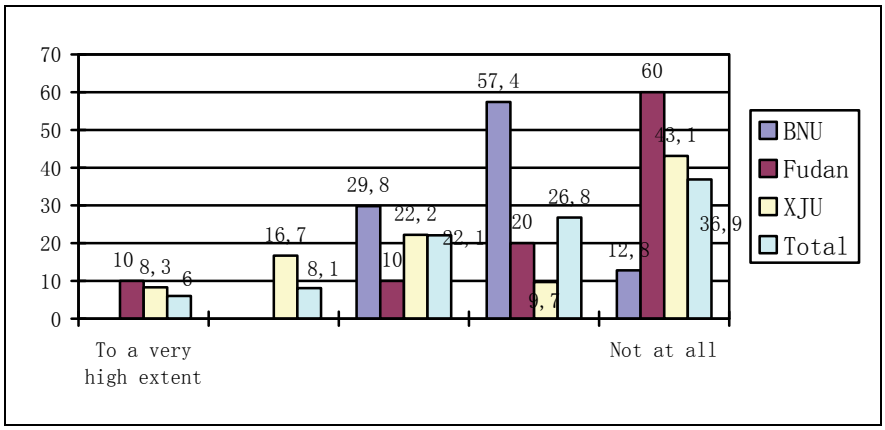
Question 33: Parental level of education: level of education of father, mother and husband/wife

3.2 Preparatory Classes

As we know from the previous chapter, the minority students have to take one or two additional years of preparatory classes to prepare before starting bachelor study courses. The students in XJU take one year of preparatory classes, the students enrolled in BNU and Fudan take two years of preparatory classes. The aim of the additional year is to better prepare the students for the 4 years of bachelor study, which is the medium of instruction in Chinese. Through the survey, we can measure if the preparatory classes reached their aim as stated.

The results show that the students think the preparatory classes did not help them. Only 9 students (6%) think that the preparatory classes helped them to a very high extent. 55 students (36.9%) think that the preparatory classes did not help them at all. In Fudan University, 18 (out of 30) students (60%) feel that the preparatory classes did not help them.

Figure 4: Extent to which Preparatory Classes Helped (%)

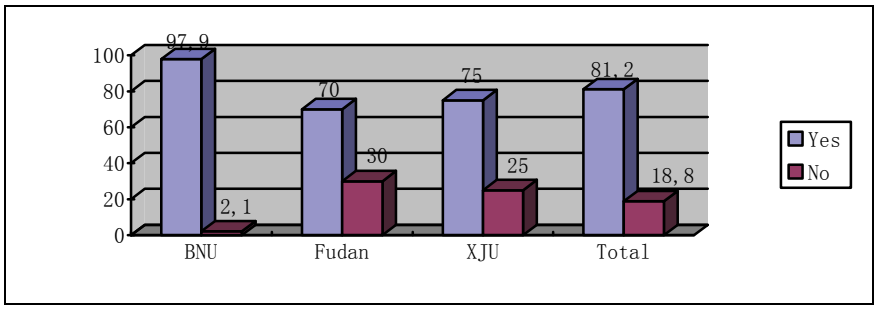


Question5: To what extent did the preparatory classes help you to prepare for four year college?

It is easy to observe from the figure that, no matter whether it is one year or two years of preparatory classes, most of the students think preparatory education did not help.

The preparatory education is compulsory; it has to be admitted that it is not easy for students who are taking primary and secondary education in Uyghur schools to transfer to taking classes in Chinese. The strange phenomenon is that even though most of the students think preparatory classes did not help, they think they need preparatory education. Figure 5 shows the proportion of students' perception about whether they needed preparatory education or not.

Figure 5: Students' Perception about Need of Preparatory Class (%)

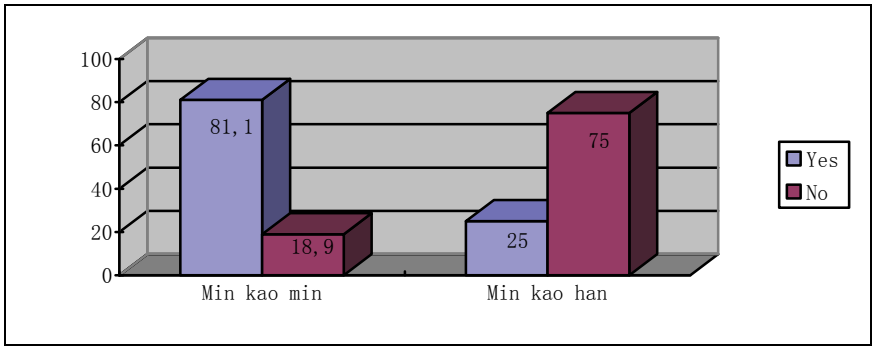


Question 6: Do you think you need to take preparatory classes?

The cross tabulation analysis was also applied to the Min kao min and Min kao han group's opinion about preparatory classes. As we have known, the Min kao

han attend Han schools from primary school and they do not need to improve their Chinese proficiency. The result is as we have expected. 75% of Min kao han students (12 out of 16) do not think they need preparatory classes. 81.1% of Min kao min students (103) think they need preparatory classes. Figure 6 shows the results for Min kao min and Min kao han students' perception of preparatory classes.

Figure 6: Need for Preparatory Classes or not by Min kao min and Min kao han Students (%)



Question 6: Do you think you need to take preparatory classes?

The Question also asked the students to specify the reason if the answer is "No". Only 15 students (9 Min kao min, 6 Min kao han) answered. Min kao han students said it is a waste of time and Min kao min students said the preparatory classes should be shortened according to students' level of Chinese proficiency.

When the students were asked what kind of classes should be offered during preparatory education (question7), 90% per cent of students said Advanced Mathematics, Traditional Chinese Literature and English are necessary.

3.3 During Undergraduate Study

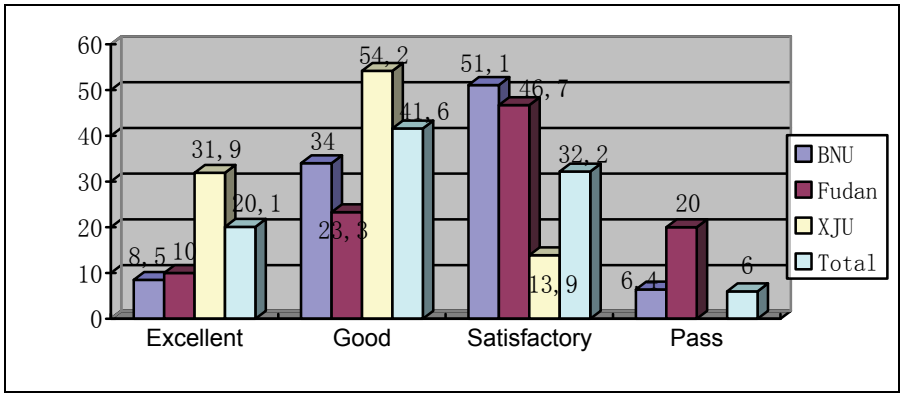
The preferential policy was implemented for number of reasons. But it has to be noted that even the students admitted to the universities through preferential policy, the ones who enrolled in the prestigious inland universities, are those excellent students from Xinjiang, because the prestigious universities always choose the students from the highest score to the lowest. (This does not mean the students attending HEIs in XUAR are not excellent; there are some students and parents who consider problems such as Halal food, long distance from Xinjiang and different living style of inland cities, and therefore they did not choose the inland universities). Only those students who got high scores in NCEE can apply to the prestigious universities such as Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Fudan

University, etc. After the preparatory classes the students will take the bachelor courses with the Han students and it is not an easy task to compete with the Han.

Performance in class

The students' perception about their performance in class was analysed. There was a high frequency of "average" found in BNU and Fudan students, 24 (51.1%) and 14 (46.7 %) respectively. There was a high frequency of "Excellent" and "Good" performance found in XJU. A total of 62 students (86.1%) from XJU rated their performance "Excellent" or "good". None of the students from XJU rated their performance as "Low"; comparatively, 9 students (6%), 3 from BNU and 6 from Fudan think they are the tail in the class.

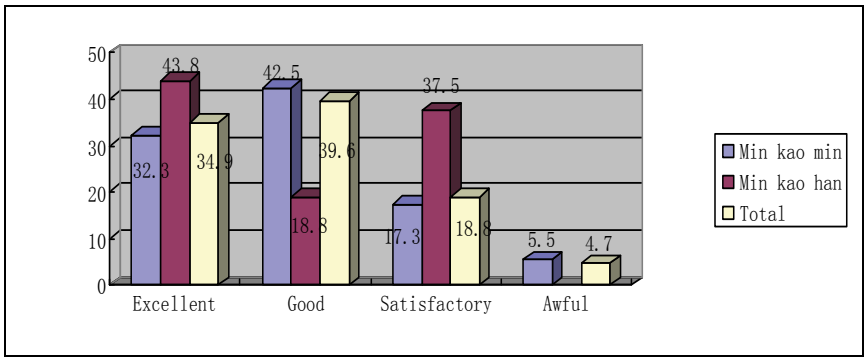
Figure 7: Degree of Performance in Class (%)



Question 8: How do you evaluate your performance at class?

When asked "how do you evaluate your Chinese proficiency, the majority of participants said "excellent" or "good". Interestingly, a number of the Min kao han students think their Chinese is "satisfactory" while Min kao min students rate themselves as "Excellent".

Figure 8: Degree of Chinese Proficiency by Min kao han and Min kao min Students (%)



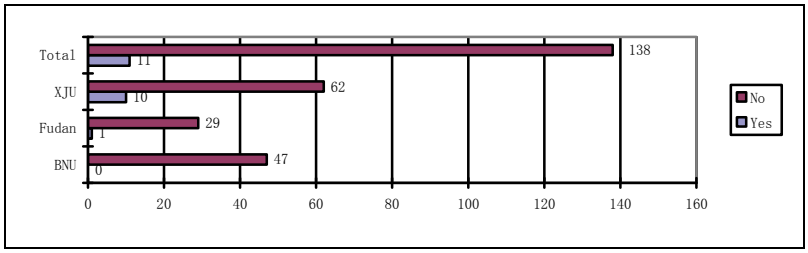
Question 9: How do you evaluate your Chinese proficiency?

It is obvious to see from figure 8 that more than half of the Min kao han rate their Chinese as "Good" or "Satisfactory". The differences between these two groups should be vice versa, since Min kao han are attending Han schools, they are the one who should rate themselves with "Excellent". Therefore the variable "Chinese proficiency" did not have further analysis with other variables.

Scholarship

It is also not easy to get a scholarship for Uyghur students, especially for those in inland universities. When asked, have you ever received a scholarship during your study, only 11 students said "Yes". Among them, 10 students are from XJU and one student is from Fudan University; the student from Fudan is the one who is doing Postdoctoral research in USA. Figure 9 shows the number of students who received a scholarship during bachelor study.

Figure 9: Number of Students who Received a Scholarship



Question10: Have you ever received a scholarship during your undergraduate study?

Failing in exams

For the Uyghur/minority students, especially for those who studied in inland universities, failing in exam is a conventional phenomenon. Every semester there are students failing exams ranging from one to four disciplines. According to the results in the survey, almost half of the students from BNU and Fudan have failed in exams. Fewer were found in XJU. Table 5 shows the proportion of the students failing exams.

Table 5: The Proportion in Test Results (by number/per cent)

Failing exam	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total
Yes	24 /48.9%	18/60%	20/27.8%	62/41.6%
No	23/ 51.1%	12/40%	52/72.2%	87/58.4%
Total	47	30	72	149

Question 11: have you ever failed in exams?

Special cut-off score line

It has been the recent trend that inland universities have a special cut-off score line for minority students whose ethnicity is Uyghur or Tibetan. Usually, according to the grading system of China, 100 is the highest, 60 is pass. Some universities make it 45 or 50 for those minority students. For example, BNU has announced *Supplementary Provision on Administration of School Roll of Students Enrolled as Special Type* in 2007. For the minority students enrolled from inland Xinjiang classes, inland Tibetan Classes and those who have taken preparatory classes, the standard of pass 60 adjusted to 45; the test scores that range from 45-59 will be recorded as 60. The provision is not only for minority students, but also for students enrolled as high-level athletes (Teaching Affairs Office of Beijing Normal University 2007).

According to the results, it was fully agreed by the students that BNU and Fudan have a special cut-off score line, and 45 equals a pass.

When asked did you receive this special treatment, there are 12 (15.6%) students who said “Yes”; see Table 6.

Table 6: Number/Percentage of Students Benefited from Special Cut-off Score Line during Study

Benefited from special treatment	BNU	Fudan	Total
Yes	8 (17%)	4 (13.3%)	12/15.6%
No	39 (83%)	26 (86.7%)	65/84.4%
Total	47	30	77

Question13: Have you ever used or benefited from special cut-off score line?

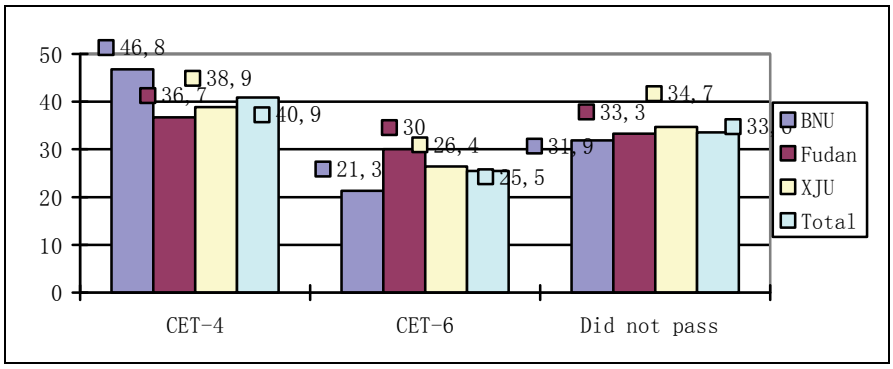
When asked, do you know any HEIs in China that have a special cut-off score line for Uyghur or minority students in China, the answer is astonishing. According to the answers that specified the universities name, there are 16 universities that have this kind of special treatment, including Shanghai Jiaotong University, Shanghai Financial and Economics University, Tongji University, East China Normal University, Nankai University, Beijing Science and Technology University, Nankai University, Beijing Jiaotong University, Jilin University, etc.

College English Test

In China, all students are required to pass the College English Test (CET). The test has two levels: CET band 4 and CET band 6. The students who do not pass CET band 4 or 6 (every HEIs has different standard) will not be able to get a bachelor degree certificate. For minority students, the majority of HEIs (including HEIs in Xinjiang) did not require students to pass CET. But there are students who try to get the CET certificate.

This survey indicates that most of the students from BNU, Fudan and XJU pass CET-4, and a high frequency of CET-6 found in Fudan, that of 9 students (30%) compared to 10 (21.3%) and 19 (26.3%) for BNU and XJU respectively.

Figure 10: Percentage of CET-4/CET-6

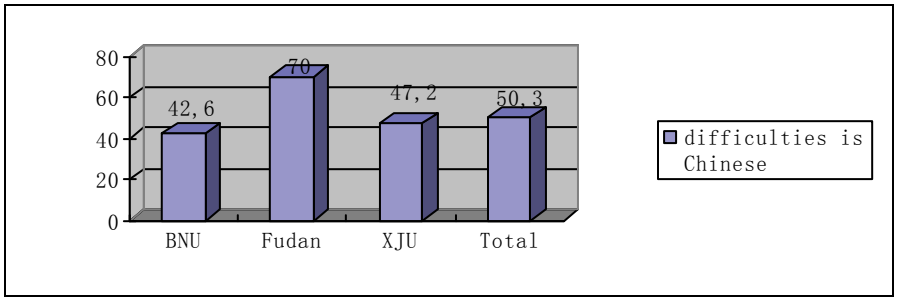


Question 15: Your/students' Level of English:

Difficulties during study

When asked: what are the biggest difficulties you have faced during your study, 75 students (50.3 %) answered with: Chinese language.

Figure 11: Percentage of Students' whose Biggest Difficulty is Chinese



Question 14: What is the most difficulty you have faced during your study?

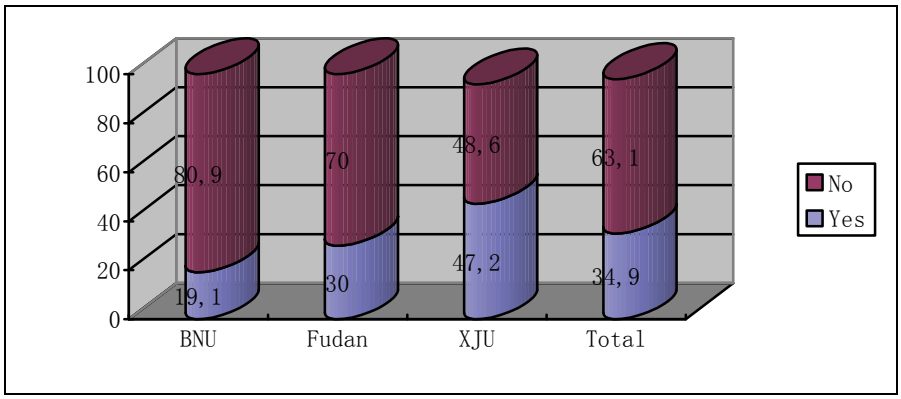
The other difficulties given by students are cultural differences, food, school facilities and lack of interaction with teacher, but none of these are significant.

Connecting study and Xinjiang

All of the students investigated are Uyghur from Xinjiang and might have thought to relate the knowledge they get from their studies to their home town or region. When asked, is your graduate thesis related to Xinjiang, 52 students (34.9%) an-

swered with "Yes". There are more theses related to Xinjiang found in XJU – 34 students (47.2%) – compared to 9 (19.1%) and 9 (30%) in BNU and Fudan.

Figure 12: Percentage of Thesis Related to Xinjiang



Question 16: Was your graduate thesis was related to XUAR?

There were only 5 students who have specified the title of a master thesis related Xinjiang. For the titles of the graduate theses, see table 7.

Table 7: Title of Graduate Thesis Related to Xinjiang

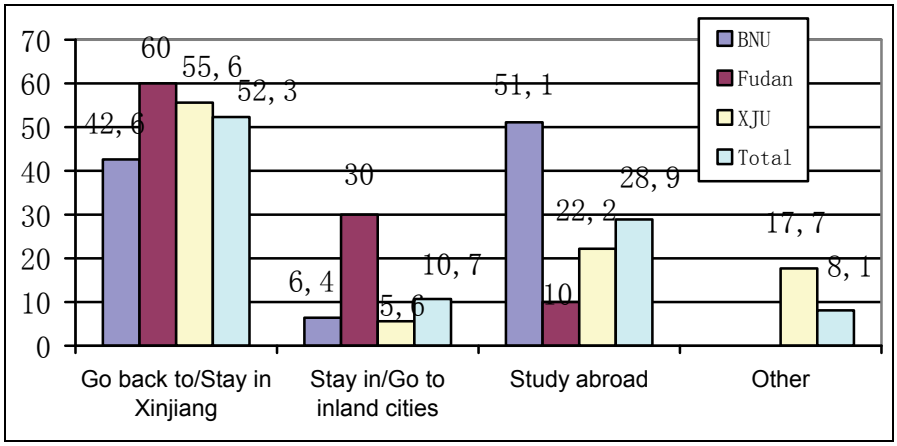
Institution	Title of graduate thesis
BNU	The Psychological Character of Bao Erhan[3]
Fudan	Uyghur's Wedding
XJU	China Xinjiang and Kazakhstan Trade Development Situation Analysis Bacterial diversity in the Kunlun (Kuenlun) Mountains

3 Bao Erhan (Burhan Shahidi in Uyghur, 1894-1989), male, Uygur ethnicity, born in Russia and returned to Xinjiang in 1912. He was the Chairman of Xinjiang in 1949, and renounced the Kuomintang Regime, joined the CPC in 1949. He was the Vice-Chairman of 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th CPPCC, National Committee and was the member of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, National People's Congress (China Vitae online, 2013).

Intention of return/stay/go to Xinjiang/Inland cities

The aim of the minority higher education is to support the development of the minority region. It is not compulsory to go back to or stay in Xinjiang after graduation except for those who signed the contract as part of the/a minority high level back bone programme. When asked, have you ever thought to go back to Xinjiang or stay in inland cities or study abroad when you graduated, 78 students (52.3%) answered they would like to go back to Xinjiang. A higher frequency of students who chose staying in inland cities was found in Fudan, 9 students (30%) would like to stay in inland cities. There are only 4 students (5.6 %) from XJU who thought to go to inland cities for future development. A high frequency of students who thought to study abroad was found in BNU: 24 students (51.1%) have thought to go abroad.

Figure 13: Percentage of Return/Stay/Go to Xinjiang/Inland Cities



Question17: When you graduated, did you think to:

3.4 After Graduation

3.4.1 Labour Market Activity

3.4.1.1 Current Employment Situation

Among the 149 participants, 132 of them are already employed, 3 are self-employed, 7 are studying for a master's degree, and 5 are studying for a doctoral degree.

Table 8: Current Employment Situation (by number)

Current situation	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total
Employed	37	26	69	132
Self-employed/started own business	1	0	2	3
Studying for Master degree	6	1	0	7
Studying for PhD degree	3	1	1	5
Other	0	2	0	2
Total	47	30	72	149

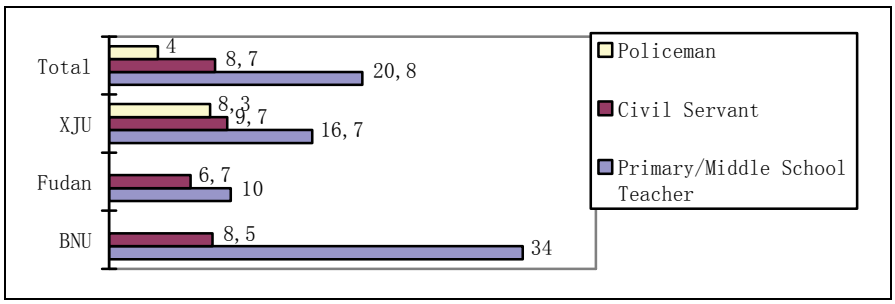
Question 24: Please inform us on your current major activity.

Two females from Fudan University are house wives. Among the students who are studying for master's and PhD degrees, 5 were employed before and are now studying again.

Characteristics of Current Work

Among the 135 employed and self-employed graduates, 55 (33.6 %) stated that they have a full-time, temporary contract; 82 graduates (55%) stated they are employed full time but did not say what kind of employment contract they have, permanent or temporary. Even though they did not specify the characteristics of their job contract, it is easy to distinguish from the job title. Policeman, Civil Servant and primary or middle school teacher is a permanent job in China. It can be certain that 50 graduates (33.5 %) have a full-time, permanent contract. Figure 14 shows the percentage of graduates who have the job title Policeman, Civil Servant or Primary/Middle school teacher in next page.

Figure 14: Percentage of Graduates with the Job Title Policeman, Civil Servant or Primary/Middle School Teacher



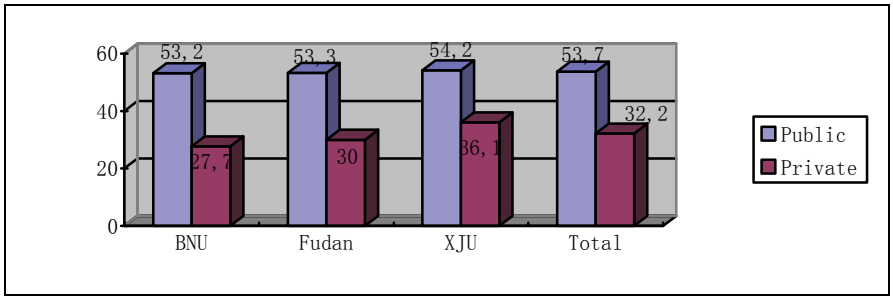
Question 24: Please inform us on your current major activity: Job title (teacher, engineer, etc), please specify.

It is obvious to see that 34 % of the BNU graduates are teachers, as the mission of the school is to train qualified teachers. Primary/middle school teachers were also found among the Fudan and XJU graduates.

Type of employer

When asked about the type of employer, 80graduates (53.7%) stated they are working in the public sector; 48 graduates (32.2%) said they are employed in the private sector. The balance between public and private sector is the same for all of the study institutions. Among the graduates who are employed in the private sector, 5 (3.4%) are looking for a job again and 9 (6%) are preparing for personnel testing for the government sector.

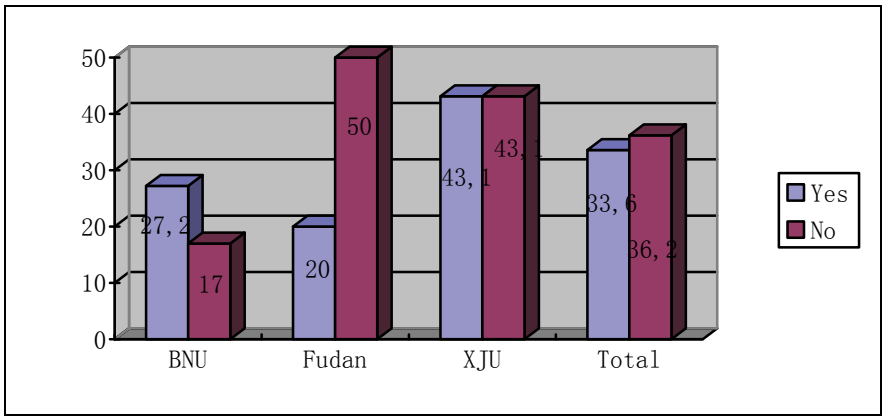
Figure 15: Graduate Employment in the Public and Private Sectors (percent of those in employment)



Question 25: Please state the type of your current employer/institution

When asked whether they have ever changed their job, 50 graduates (33.6%) who said" Yes". XJU had the highest percentage with 31 graduates (43.1%) who have changed work compared to 13 (27.2 %) and 6 (20%) graduates from BNU and Fudan respectively. Figure 16 shows the differences in job change within the three universities.

Figure 16: Graduates' Job Change (%)



Question 26: Have you ever changed your job?

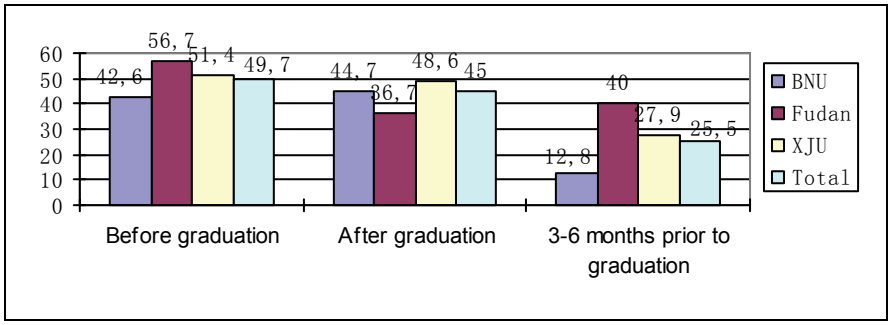
The cross tabulation compared the variance of job title and changed work. 12 graduates who stated their job title is primary/middle school teacher account for 24% of the changed work variable, the highest compared to those whose job title was stated as policeman or civil servant. It can be assumed hat the position of primary/middle school teacher is a way for to graduates to seek employment.

3.4.1.2 Job Search

Timing of initial job search

The result indicates that almost 50% of graduates started to look for a job prior to graduation. Fudan students have the high percentage for starting to look for a job before graduation, 17 (56.7%) stated that they looked for a job before graduation; among them 12 students (40%) started 3-6 months prior to graduation. Figure 17 shows the proportions of when graduates began the job search.

Figure 17: Beginning of Job Search (%)



Question19: When did you start looking for a job?

The most popular methods of job search used by graduates are launched advertisement by myself, personnel testing for the government sector, and personal connections. Launching advertisement for himself/herself is the basic method in the job search. 53.7% of graduates have jobs in the public sector, and the job title of primary/middle school teachers, policeman and civil servant requires personnel testing. Personal connections also plays an important role throughout China, especially in the civil servant testing of public sector; usually there were rumours saying that "even you got high score, if you do not have connection, you will still fail in the second round".

Table 9: Most Important Methods of Job Search (multiple responses)

Methods	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total
I launched advertisement by myself	15	18	24	57
Personnel testing of government sector	7	6	14	27
Placement office in HEIs	-	-	3	3
Self-employment/Own business	-	-	-	
Personal connections(e.g. parents, relatives, friends)	5	7	13	25
Job market	1	2	1	4
Advertised vacancy	1	-	7	8
Through internship	1	3	7	11
Established contacts while working during the course of study	4	-	7	11

Question 20: How did you try to find your first job after graduation? (multiple replies possible)

The most important method for actually getting a first job after graduation showed a similar pattern. Personnel testing for the government sector is most important overall in the three universities (see Table 10).

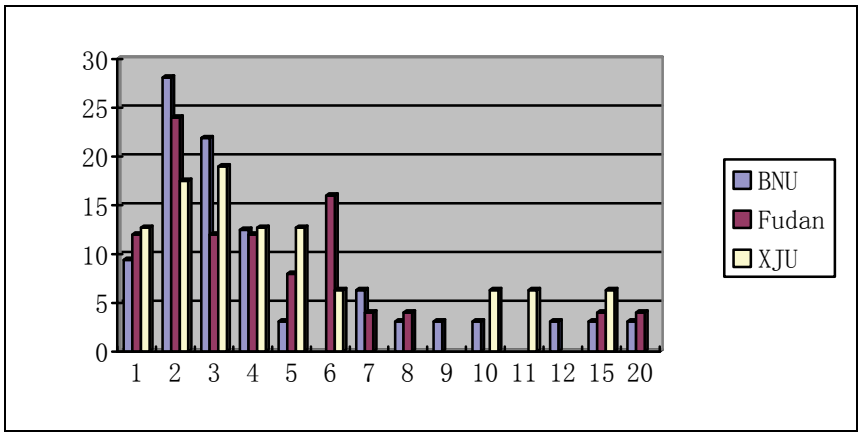
Table 10: Top 5 Most Important Methods in Obtaining First Job

Method	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total
1 personnel testing of government sector	16 / 34%	12 / 40%	20 /27.8%	48 / 32.2%
2 personal connection	6 / 12.8%	5 / 16.7%	21 / 29.2%	32 / 21.5%
3 advertise my self	10 / 21.3%	5 / 16.7%	8 / 11.1%	23 / 15.4%
4 advertised vacancy	4 / 8.5%	1 / 3.3%	6 / 8.3%	11 / 7.4%
5 job market	3 / 6.4%	1 / 3.3%	3 / 4.2%	7 / 4.7%

Number of employer contacted before getting first job

The number of graduates' who contacted employers is somehow the same. Most of them contacted 2-5 employers. Figure 18 shows the average numbers of contacted employer for the three universities (by per cent)

Figure 18: Number of Employers Connected before First Job



Question 22: How many employers did you contact before you took your first job after graduation?

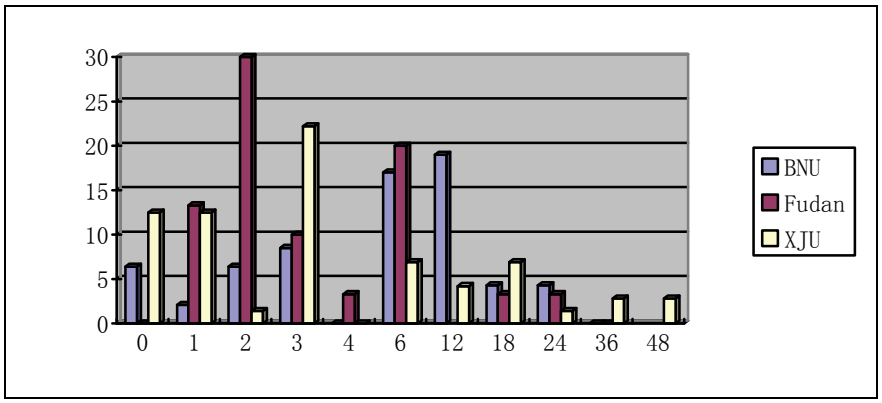
Duration of job search

There are 14 students (9.4%) who got a job in one month; 13 students (8.7%) who got a job in 2 months; and 19 students (12.8%) who got a job in 18 months.

The job search period was a little shorter for BNU and Fudan graduates. The job search period is longer for XJU. The cross tabulation analysed the duration of job search for Min kao min, Min kao han and Xinjiang Classes graduates; there are no differences.

Figure 19 shows the duration of job search for the three universities.

Figure 19: Duration of Search for First Job after Graduation (%)



Question 23: How many months all together did you look for your first job after graduation?

3.4.2 The Appropriateness of Work to the Level and Type of Qualifications

The relationship of degree course to job

When the graduates were asked to give an option on the relationship of their study and work, a total of 52 graduates (41.9%) think that another field would have been more possible; 15 graduates (53.6%) from BNU said that their field of study is the only possible for people wishing to do their job. After cross tabulation analysis was applied for the job title of BNU graduates, the primary/middle school teachers feel that their field of study is the only possible one. There were 16graduates (12.9%) who felt that the field of study does not matter; and 20 graduates (16.1%) who thought higher education studies are not at all related to their job, hence, it can be assumed that 1/3 of the graduates' jobs are not related to their field of study. Table 11 shows the relationship of degree course and job.

Table 11: Relationship of Degree Course to Job (number/per cent)

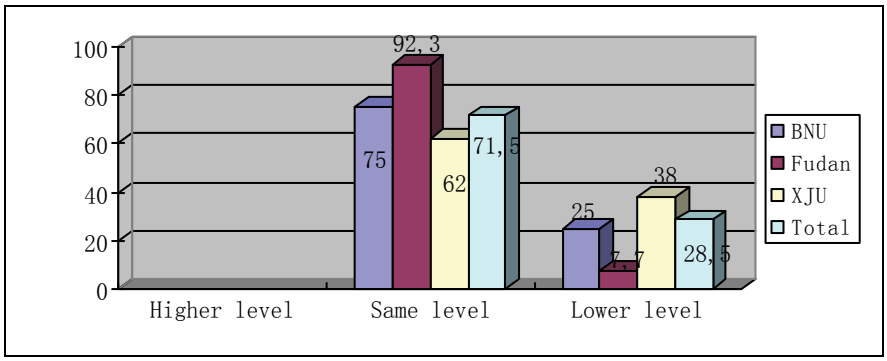
Characteristics of relationship	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total/%
My field of study is the only possible/by far the best field	15/41.9%	-	9/12.7%	25 /19.4%
Some other fields could prepare for the area of work as well	-	-	12/9.7%	12 /9.7%
Another field would have been more useful	3/10.7%	12/48%	37/52.1%	52/41.9%
The field of study does not matter very much	4/14.3%	8/32%	4/ 5.6%	16 /12.9%
Higher education studies are not at all related to my area of work	6/21.4%	5/20%	9/12.7%	20/16.1%

Question 27: How would you characterize the relationship between your field of study and your area of work?

The appropriateness of current work to level of education

When asked, what is the most appropriate degree for your employment, 98 graduates (71.5%) felt that the same level degree is most appropriate to their current employment. None of the students said a higher degree would be more appropriate to their job.

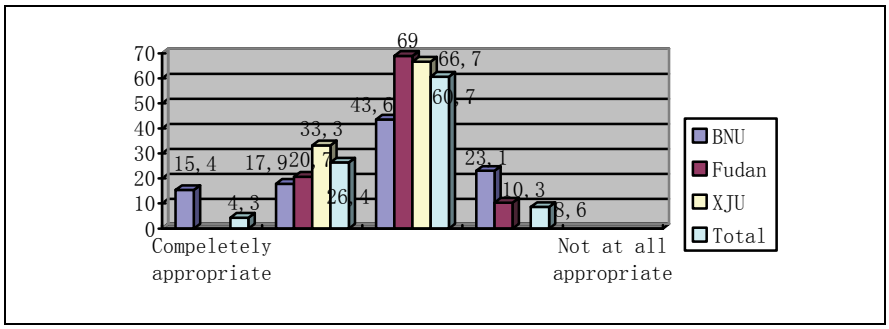
Figure 20: Percentage of Appropriate Course of Degree to Current Employment



Question 29: What is the most appropriate level of course of study/degree for your employment and work?

There were only 6 graduates (4.3%) who thought that their level of education is completely appropriate to their current work. None of the graduates thought their level of education completely is inappropriate to their work. 12 students (8.6%) thought their work is not appropriate to their level of education. Most of the students (60.7%) felt that their level of education is a little bit appropriate to their job.

Figure 21: Percentage of Graduates who felt their Level of Education to Current Employment



Question 28: To what extent is your employment and work appropriate to your level of education?

Reasons for taking up unrelated work

The Uyghur graduates took up jobs unrelated to their major for a number of reasons. They were often positive reasons concerning career prospects, interest, flexible schedule, possibility to work in the locality, and family needs. The reasons were very similar within the three universities. The negative reason, that the graduates could not find an appropriate job, also mentioned by the graduates, might be because they felt their major is not really related to their current job.

Table 12: Reasons for Taking up Unrelated Work (multiple responses; % of graduates in employment who viewed their jobs as inappropriate)

Reasons	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total/%
I have not (yet) been able to find a job more appropriate	10	2	27	39/26.4%
In doing this job I have better career prospects	14	2	15	31/ 20.8%
I prefer an occupation which is not closely connected to my studies	8	5	-	13/8.7%

to be continued

Table 12 continued

Reasons	BNU	Fudan	XJU	Total/%
I was promoted to a position less linked to my studies than my previous position(s)	-	-	-	-
I can get a higher income in my current job	3	0	6	9/6%
My current job offers me more security	4	3	3	10/6.7%
My current job is more interesting	4	0	6	10/6.7%
My current job provides the opportunity for part-time/flexible schedules etc.	3	5	11	19/12.8%
My current job enables me to work in a locality which I prefer	9	7	10	26/17.4%
My current job allows me to take into account family needs	6	5	5	16/10.7%
Other	7	0	13	20/13.4%

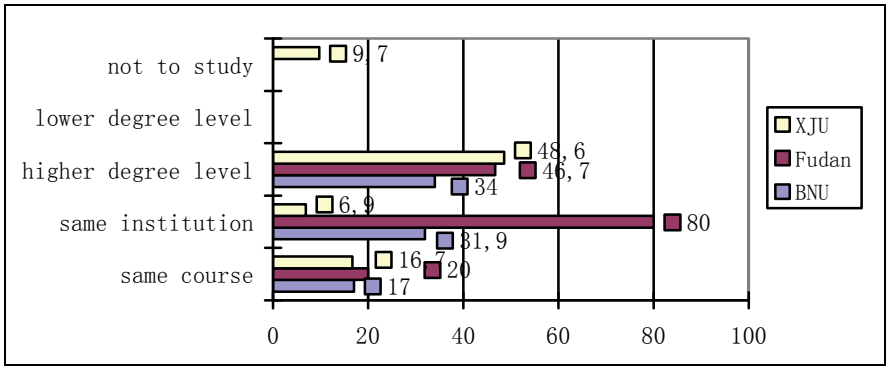
Question 30: If you consider your employment and work as hardly appropriate and not linked to your education: why did you take it up?

3.4.3 Higher Education in Retrospect

Choice of courses and institutions

There was a small proportion of students who would have chosen the same course. There was a high frequency of attending the same institutions founded with Fudan graduates, 24 (80%), compared to 15 (31.9%) and 5 (6.9%) with BNU and XJU respectively. The percentage for attending XJU was much lower. And more XJU graduates would have preferred to have taken a higher level of study. And again 7 XJU graduates (9.7%) would have chosen not to study at all.

Figure 22: Retrospective Study Decisions of Graduates (percentage of rating vary likely)



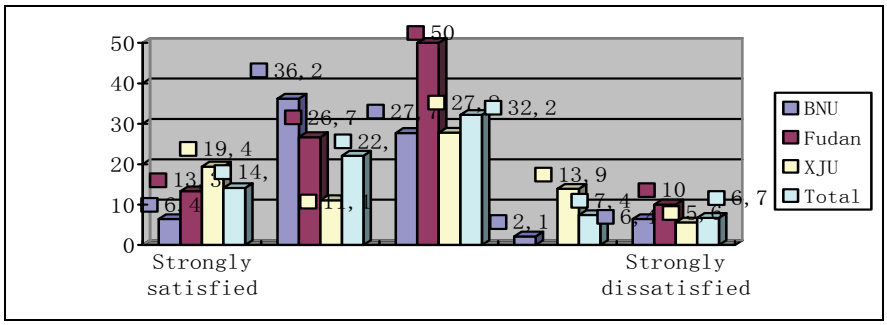
Question 35: Looking back, if you were free to choose again, how likely are you ...

Utility of higher education

Compared with XJU, Fudan and BNU are more advanced universities; especially Fudan was viewed as one of the top three universities in China. What are their graduates' views about the utility of their higher education study, when utility is measured by helping graduates "[find] a satisfying job after finishing your studies", "for long-term career prospects" and "for the development of your personality"?

When the graduates were asked to rate their satisfaction about higher education courses in helping to find a job, most of the graduates rated themselves as a little bit satisfied. BNU was rated the best in this respect with 17 students (36.2 %) who rated as "Satisfied".

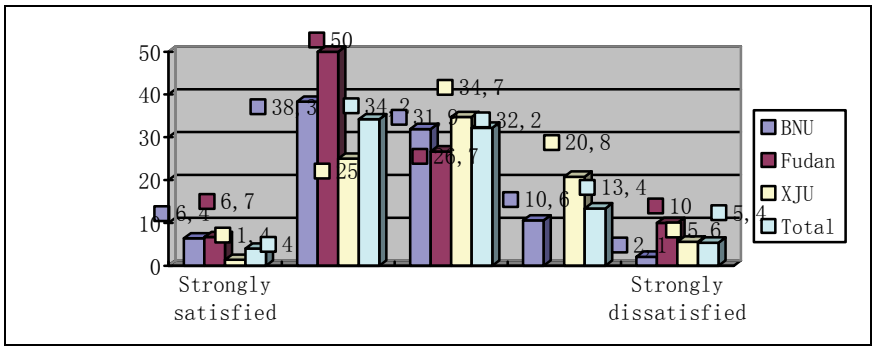
Figure 23: Graduates' Views of HE Studies Helping to Find a Job (%)



Question 34: To what extent did your studies help you finding a satisfying job after finishing your studies?

When utility is measured in terms of helping with long-term career prospects, Fudan did much better, with 15 graduates (50 %) rating "Satisfied" (see Figure 24).

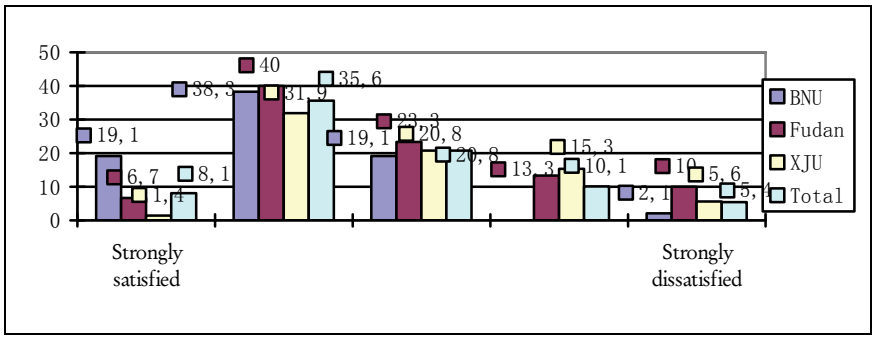
Figure 24: Graduates' Views of HE Studies Helping to Long Term Career Perspective (%)



Question 34: To what extent did your studies help you for your long-term career prospects?

Finally, BNU appear to be strong with 9 (19.1%) and 18 (38.3%) graduates rating "Strongly satisfied" and "Satisfied". The higher percentage goes with BNU's mission to training qualified teachers, as their motto "Learn, so as to instruct others; Act, to serve as example to all".

Figure 25: Graduates' Views of HE Studies Helping to Develop Personality (%)



Question 34: To what extent did your studies help you for the development of your personality?

4. Discussion

According to the findings of the study, the preparatory classes do help to prepare students for four years of bachelor study, but they should be adjusted according to the students' level of Chinese. The Min kao min students feel it is not helpful and there is no need for them to take additional years of preparation. Even though the majority of Min kao min students think preparatory classes did not help, they stated that they needed one year or two years regardless. Moreover, during studies, the biggest difficulty is still the language, therefore it can be concluded, for some students taking two years preparation is too long; the courses should be adjusted for one year preparation.

During undergraduate study, positive achievement was seen with the students from XJU; the majority of them rate their grades "Excellent" or "Good" compared to the majority of students from BNU (51.1 %) and Fudan (46.7 %) who rate their performance as "Satisfactory". 11 students received scholarships compared to 1 from Fudan and none from BNU. Fewer students from XJU failed in exams. If the reason behind it is the language, it is not applicable since the language of instruction is Chinese for all the three institutions. It might be the location or satisfaction with the same Uyghur ethnicity around? Or there are differences in quality of teaching and evaluation?

Regarding the research question, can the Uyghur students graduate with the same requirement as Han, the CET result can tell us that one-third of them need "preference" when it comes to graduation. Do they really need special treatment?

It is rational to have a different requirement for English, because when Han students started to learn English the Uyghur started to learn Chinese and when Han students had years of experience, the Uyghur started to learn English; there is

no logic to compare from this point. But the score line in exams in inland HEIs, such as "45=pass", cannot tell us the students need "special care". Take, for example, the BNU document about the *Supplementary Provision on Administration of School Roll of Students Enrolled as Special Type* issued in 2007 when there were a few months left for this author to graduate. The students who graduated before 2007 follow the same requirement as Han students: they have passed CET, have taken the "make-up exams" if they failed; there was no "45" score line, they still can graduate. Even though they cannot compete with Han and stated the major problem is language, the "preferential score line" only caused them to lag behind.

One of the research questions is about students' intention to return to and their perception of applying their knowledge to XUAR. The results indicate that one-third of the students wrote their graduate paper about Xinjiang and more than half of the students were thinking to go back to Xinjiang even though the development of inland cities is superior. The current job location (all in Xinjiang, except for those studying abroad) can also tell us that the majority of them intend to go back. These questions somehow also revealed that, even though the students spend many years studying in inland cities, they still have a strong sense of ethnic identity.

Last but not least, the job search and characteristics of current employment indicates that most of the students looked for a job for 6 to12 months. The job search period is slightly longer for XJU graduates, as the range of 36 and 48 months was only found among XJU graduates. Most of the students prefer to be employed in the government sector, therefore personnel testing of public sector is one of the most important method for obtaining a job. The students also stated that personal connections were important. The reason for taking jobs unrelated to degree course also can express the reason why governmental jobs are favoured, as flexible time schedule and job security has been selected by number of the participants.

From the labour market activity and characteristics of current employment, it is safe to say that there are no differences between the three universities. No matter what kind of prestigious university you attended, the job is the same; the transition period is the same.

Finally, opinions about higher education in retrospect were included in the survey and it was expected to find differences between inland HEIs and Xinjiang HEIs, but the results are not significant except that XJU graduates would not attend the same institution or the same degree course. When trying to measure the utility of higher education, similar outcomes were achieved. XJU came out the best in the rating for "strongly satisfied" in graduates' views on higher education studies helping to find a job, but not distinguishable compared to Fudan (19.4% versus 13.3 %). Within the other questions, helping in long-term career perspective and developing your personality, the three universities show similar results.

This raises the question of the inland universities admitting Uyghur/minority students from Xinjiang to support the development of this region, but there are no differences in employment. Naturally, the BNU and Fudan graduates should have better achievement in the job search and there might have been differences in taking up unrelated jobs. The primary reason is the study was limited to only 149 participants in three institutions, which affects coming to a general conclusion. In addition, the snow ball technique usually helps to find more participants but with similar characteristics. That is one fundamental reason why similar results were obtained. Because of the large diversity of the majors of the participants in addition to the small number of participants, further analysis about the relations of major and employment characteristics, job title, transition was not made.

The questions identifying students' perception on "ties" from their studies to Xinjiang is limited, with barely two questions. The same limitation applies to the only question to ask about students' perception of returning to Xinjiang.

After discussion of the results and clarifications of the limitations, suggestions for further research come more easily. As the fundamental problem with this research is the limited number of participants, the research will be more reliable if we conducted this study with more Uyghur students and more institutions. If possible, as we imitated the CHEERS questionnaire, applying the whole survey to the next research and comparing the variations with students' majors will give valuable results. When identifying the problems during study, the social life, such as the interaction with Han students, could help us to find unforeseen problems. In the end, it would be best with a mixed method of research: quantitative and qualitative approach applied to the study in the future.

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Appendices

I. Population Distribution in Xinjiang

Location	Total population (in ten thousands)	Uyghur	Han	Kazak	Hui	Kirgiz	Mongolian
Urumqi City	194.1	13.0	73.7	2.8	8.6	0.1	0.4
Karamay City	25.5	15.3	75.2	4.1	2.4	0.0	0.9
Shihezi City	64.2	1.0	94.8	0.5	2.5	0.0	0.1
Turpan Prefecture	58.4	70.2	23.1	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.0
Hami Prefecture	54.0	18.2	69.0	8.9	2.9	0.0	0.4
Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture	157.9	4.0	74.4	8.3	11.7	0.0	0.4
Ili Kazakh Subordinate County	259.6	23.7	40.2	20.4	10.0	0.6	1.2
Tacheng Prefecture	96.7	4.0	58.3	24.8	7.1	0.2	3.4
Altay Prefecture	63.0	1.6	42.8	50.3	3.4	0.0	0.9
Bortala Mongol Autonomous Prefecture	45.8	12.6	67.7	9.3	3.6	0.0	5.9
Bayin'gholin Mongol Autonomous Prefecture	117.1	32.2	57.9	0.1	5.0	0.0	4.1
Aksu Prefecture	226.5	72.9	25.7	0.0	0.6	0.4	0.0
Kizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture	47.6	64.0	7.0	0.0	0.1	27.7	0.0
Kashgar Prefecture	369.4	90.0	8.5	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0
Hotan Prefecture	182.5	96.7	3.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Entire Autonomous Region	2 010.4	45.9	39.6	7.0	4.4	0.9	0.9

Source: (Xinjiang Autonomous Region Bureau of Statistics, 2006, pp.82–83).

(Source: Ma, 2009, p. 192).

II. List of HEIs in XUAR

Name of the Institution	Characteristics	Years of Foundation	Location
Xinjiang University	Regular HEI	1924	Urumqi
Xinjiang Medical University	Regular HEI	1954	Urumqi
Xinjiang Normal University	Regular HEI	1978	Urumqi
Xinjiang University of Finance And economics	Regular HEI	1950	Urumqi
Xinjiang Agricultural University	Regular HEI	1952	Urumqi
Kashgar Teachers College	Regular HEI	1962	Kashgar
Tarim University	Regular HEI	1958	Aksu
Ili Teachers College	Regular HEI	1980	Ghulja
Xinjiang Art College	Regular HEI	1958	Urumqi
Shihezi University	Regular HEI	1996	Shihenze
Changji University	Regular HEI	1985	Sanja
Xinjiang University Science and Technology College	Independent college	2002	Urumqi
Xinjiang Agricultural University College of Science and Technology	Independent college	2002	Urumqi
Xinjiang Medical University Houbo College	Independent college	2003	Urumqi
Xinjiang University of Finance And economics Business College	Independent college	-	Urumqi
Shihezi University Science and Technology College	Independent College	2002	
Hoten Teachers College	Specialized college	1978	Hoten
Xinjiang Polytechnical College	Specialized College	1958	Urumqi

Xinjiang Police Officer College	Specialized College	2001	Urumqi
Urumqi Vocational University	Specialized College	1985	Urumqi
Xinjiang Construction corps Police Officers College	Specialized College	-	Urumqi
Xinjiang College of Uyghur Medicine	Specialized College	1989	Urumqi
Xinjiang Agricultural Vocational and Technical College	Specialized College	1959	Urumqi
Xinjiang Institute of Engineering	Specialized College	1957	Urumqi
Xinjiang Institute of Light Industry Technology	Specialized College	2008	Urumqi
Karamay Vocational and Technical College	Specialized College	1956	Karamay
Changji Vocational and technical College	Specialized College	-	Sanji
Ili Vocational and Technical College	Specialized College	2002	Ghulja
Bayingolon Vocational and Technical College	Specialized College	2002	Korla
Aksu Vocational and Technical College	Specialized Collge	2002	Aksu
Xinjiang Vocational and Technical College of Instruction	Specialized College	2002	Urumqi
Xinjiang Vocational and Technical College of Communications	Specialized College	2004	Urumqi
Xinjiang Shihezi Vocational and Technical College	Specialized College	2004	Shihenze
Xinjiang Modern Vocational and Technical College	Private specialized College	1995	Urumqi
Xinjiang Tianshan Vocational and Technical College	Private Specialized College	1993	Urumqi

Xinjiang Vocational and Technical College of Instruction	Specialized College	2002	Urumqi
Xinjiang Vocational and Technical College of Communications	Specialized College	2004	Urumqi
Xinjiang Shihezi Vocational and Technical College	Specialized College	2004	Shihenze
Xinjiang Modern Vocational and Technical College	Private specialized College	1995	Urumqi
Xinjiang Tianshan Vocational and Technical College	Private Specialized College	1993	Urumqi
Xinjiang Energy Vocational Technical College	Private Specialized College	2005	Urumqi
Xinjiang Education Institute	Adult HEIs	1978	Urumqi
Xinjiang Vocational University	Adult HEIs	1962	Urumqi

Source: Own elaboration according

4

Quest for World-Class Universities in China: From the View of National Strategies

Guanzi Shen

1. Introduction

Establishing world-class universities has long been the goal of the Chinese academic community, government and policy makers, especially under the rapid economic development in recent years. Production of talent and knowledge has become the foundation of the global economy instead of traditional means of productivity, and governments have endeavoured to reform higher education to meet social and economic objectives. After the massive expansion that began in 1999, a steep increase of enrolment and quick expansion of universities spurred on the higher education system to transform from "elite higher education" into "mass higher education". Along with the expansion, quality issues are gaining more attention. Consequent problems such as funding, adequate support facilities, qualified academic staff, and competences of graduates are all emerging gradually. Apart from attempts at policymaking and changing strategies, the Chinese government is also seeking an appropriate pathway to improve the quality of higher education from international empirical experience.

At the same time, the rising popularity of university rankings has accelerated competition among universities, both on the national and international scale, although it is always doubtful when using rankings as a tool for measuring the quality of universities (Shin and Toutkoushian 2011). The underperformance of Chinese universities in all the global rankings is considered as an unsuitable manifestation regarding the international standing of China. Therefore, initiatives for building elite universities, more specifically, world-class universities were started by the Ministry of Education of China, two of which are known as "Project 211" and "Project 985". Building world-class universities is seen as a more effective way to compete with other leading universities across the globe, and furthermore, to present the strength of the higher education system, as well as national power. While the most salient issue to support the initiatives is funding, the vertical differentiation inside the system has become steeper and brought consequent prob-

lems in the context of massification. This article will discuss the prospects of building world-class universities in China based on analyses of related issues at the national- and government strategy level.

2. Key Issues of World-Class University

2.1 Quality and Quality Assurance in Higher Education

To become world-class, universities have strived for excellence constantly, which has always had implications for the quality of higher education. Each stakeholder has different expectations of quality, based on the individual's subjective criteria. Quality takes different meanings depending on educational context as well as inputs, processes, outputs, missions, and objectives of higher education institutions. Quality is also closely related with standards that could measure as indicators for comparison studies in higher education, such as research outcomes, graduates employment status and students involvement.

Among the quality concepts of higher education is the broadly accepted typology defined by Harvey and Green (1993). This typology defines quality as: (a) the exceptional or excellence, which bears an element of elitism; (b) perfection or consistency, which is linked to the notion of reliability and to conformity through compliance with set standard; (c) fitness for purpose, often linked to the need to address fitness of purpose as the required reference point; (d) value for money, which is sometimes linked to the notion of value for time invested, both of which are related more closely than other definitions of quality to the quality concept of otherwise, partly rational and partly emotional, customer satisfaction; (e) transformation, considering the individual gain accrued in the course of a learning experience (Harvey 2006; Kohler 2009).

Quality in higher education may be too complex to define, but the significant increase of national and international competition, and diversification in the higher education sector which has created an incredibly rich variety of courses, programs and degrees has also resulted in the necessity for quality assessment and quality assurance becoming all the more evident (Müller-Böling and Federkeil 2007). Quality assurance is "an all-embracing term referring to an ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving) the quality of a higher education system, institutions, or programmes" (Vlãsceanu et al., 2004, p. 48), and a process of establishing stakeholder confidence through provisions (input, process and outcomes) that fulfil expectations, or measures up to threshold minimum requirements (Harvey 2006). Quality assurance is about accountability, and the pressure of achieving accountability in practice results in improvement. The improvement of quality is also inextricably related to standards in education, which are used to measure outcomes "that could be used for comparative purpose with indicators" (Harvey 2006, p. 3). Standards in

education may take both quantitative and qualitative form that can be presented in four areas of activity: academic standards, standards of competence, service standards and organisational standards (Harvey 1995; 2006; Harvey and Knight 1996). With five definition of quality and four dimensions of standards, there are twenty inter-relationships of quality and standards in higher education, all requiring a means of assurance. The standards approach to quality is related to the monitoring of standards that benchmark quality, and evaluating outputs of teaching, research and graduate competences.

The purposes of quality assurance include compliance, control, accountability and improvement. There are four broad approaches associated with quality assurance: auditing, assessment, and accreditation (Woodhouse 1999), as well as external examination (Harvey and Newton 2007). Federkeil (2008) also presented several other different instruments, including rankings, benchmarking, (comparative) peer review, "knowledge balance", and total quality management, that can be used for different purposes (enhancement and accountability), and various levels (at institutional level or system level). High quality of higher education always implies high grade or high status. The numeric output of the external evaluation of quality is often used by others to create rankings, especially those grading on a single dimension. Although ranking is a highly controversial issue, as a manifestation of global competition for talent, it is still considered to be a measure of quality or world-class excellence (Hazelkorn 2008, p. 10).

2.2 Quality and Rankings

The creation of rankings and league tables is a developed technique for displaying the comparative study of higher education organizations based on their performance (Vlãsceanu et al. 2004). There is no doubt that different choices of indicators and the weight given to each indicator create a dramatic diversity in the final result of each ranking. There are a number of different national, cross-national and global university rankings throughout the world with various methodologies or defined scopes that are profoundly influential; some of them draw constant attention, such as ARWU by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Time and QS Rankings, and Germany CHE University Ranking. Compared to other ranking systems, the Shanghai Jiao Tong Ranking has a distinct focus on research achievement by drawing data from bibliometric and citation databases. It also uses indicators for alumni achievement and number of academic awards winners as a representation of academic excellence. By contrast, the new methods of the Times Ranking places stronger weight on teaching. Furthermore, the Times QS rankings attempted to develop broader measurements in a market mechanism by combining academic peer review, students' assessment, and employers' surveys.

There is a strong belief, especially by the public media outside of the academic community, that the quality of higher education institutions could be measured

and rankings/league tables can be regarded as the most popular way to accomplish this. Consequently, winners with what they possessed as criteria in the top prestige hierarchies are in turn perceived as top quality. Unlike other approaches to quality assurance, rankings attempt to examine and compare higher education institutions as a whole, and intend to draw all higher education institutions into the global knowledge market. However, academic quality is a complex concept to measure and quantify by an overall profile. Different stakeholders have different expectations of quality, in addition to the huge variety of higher education institutions in different higher education systems, and it is not always easy to compare them internationally.

In practice, the measuring of institutional quality can, and should be applied to all three primary functions of higher education institutions: teaching, research, and service. Compared with other academic activities, research performance is easy to obtain from international data without taking subjective measures. Research publications and citation rates are the most prevalent methods for measuring research productivity. As a matter of fact, people interested in rankings would consider it as information about which university provides the best education, despite most existing rankings putting more emphasis on research performance rather than quality of teaching. At the same time, research output, citation rates, and publications or prize winners do not indicate the full range, or the depth and breadth, of research performance either. It is more likely that the research performance of a university is overestimated solely because it has an outstanding laboratory or a prize winner.

Performance indicators are used as instruments in rankings to present accountability and value for money, but only if those indicators are perfectly correlated with the quality concept which is intended to be measured. Rankings intend to measure and compare the complex diversity of higher education institutions with different missions and contexts by using suitable indicators as proxies for quality, which have always been questioned on the bias attached to the choice and weights of indicators (Hazelkorn 2008). Even if those indicators have been chosen appropriately, they could be interpreted in various ways due to different expectations. Moreover, from their nature and methodology, it could be that rankings represent reputations of higher education institutions rather than their quality. Whether using performance indicators, peer review, or employer surveys, the commonly applied rankings methodologies are largely identified by reputations and perceptions. Reputation indicators are commonly used in rankings based on scholarly criteria by using peer review or employers' review as classical forms.

Rankings use one set of common methodology to measure all higher education institutions regardless of their diversity of missions and social contexts, notable especially in cross-national rankings. Each higher education institution is a complicated combination of strength and weakness, but rankings reduce the complexity to a final “score” (Hazelkorn 2008) instead of adapting to high quality. Rank-

ings, though instruments to find out "who" is the best, should also provide answers to the considerations "best for whom" and "best how". It is important to relate rankings with the demands of diverse users, to take into account their characteristics, and embody them in the target group of opinion survey. Compared with other traditional approaches of rankings, the CHE university ranking actually has developed an alternative mode of ranking, which presents indicators independently and accounts for the heterogeneity of the audiences by their preferences, using a more democratic approach. It has introduced a reflection of the multidimensional approach of measuring higher education activities instead of fostering holistic judgments. However, some more abstract attributes, ranging from the international reputation of the university, to the university's contribution to society, are still very difficult to measure in an objective manner (Salmi 2009). This is also a vital defect of rankings and league tables for the intention of benchmarking the overall performance of universities.

2.3 National Strategies of Building World-Class Universities

The notion of "world-class" is not a new notion; however, it has been much invoked by governments and by universities themselves in recent years. The distinction of a university and its academic quality consists of maintaining higher achievement rather than exceeding high standards at any given time. Salmi (2009) has attempted to propose a manageable definition of the characteristics of a world-class university that three complementary sets of factors can essentially be attributed to world-class universities: a high concentration of talent, abundant resources, and favourable governance. In his alignment of key factors, quality of higher education institutions seems to be left out, or at least only partially mentioned, rather than closely relating world-class characteristics with quality. On the other hand, Harvey's (1997) theory of the changing perception of quality provides a reflection of the inter-relationships in quality of higher education between massification, funding, academic autonomy, and changing student needs. These four elements at the base are essential to prop the pinnacle of the pyramid: quality. From the theories developed by Salmi and Harvey, the key factors related with world-class characteristics and quality could be used in examining the possibility of building world-class universities in China.

Favourable policy, public support and financing conditions are always crucial to enabling widely-recognized world-class universities in the system. Based upon international experience, Salmi (2009) summarized three strategies, from the perspective of governments, which can be followed to establish world-class universities: First, governments could consider upgrading a small number of existing universities that have the potential of excelling (picking winners); second, governments could encourage a number of existing institutions to merge and transform into a new university that would achieve the type of synergies corresponding to a

world-class institution (hybrid formula); and third, governments could create new world-class universities from scratch (clean-slate approach). A combination of upgrading and merging strategies is applicable in the case of Chinese higher education authorities.

3. From National Elite to World-Class

3.1 Initiatives of Building World-Class Universities

With several universities existing in mainland China, voices demanding greater respect in the global community have become stronger and stronger in recent years. Some Chinese universities actually have worldwide reputation to some extent, but they rarely have decent positions in the rankings and league tables. Therefore, Project 211 and Project 985 were established for building world-class universities in China.

Project 211 aims at cultivating high-level elite universities in order to complement national economic and social development strategies. Until now, there were 112 universities and 3 university-affiliated medical schools on the list for the third phase of Project 211. According to the report of the Ministry of Education, the total funding for Project 211 is approximately 3.68 billion Euros over the course of ten years. *Project 985* was initiated under the call that "China must have a number of top-class universities at international level" by President Jiang Zemin in 1998, and which aims to support several elite universities becoming higher-level and world-class universities. The phrase "a number of top-class universities at international level" originally only referred to "two," namely Peking University and Tsinghua University. But soon, another seven universities were included in Project 985. Although the list expanded to 34 universities, these nine universities are considered outstanding and represent the leading universities in China. Compared to Project 211, Project 985 put more emphasis on the construction of elite universities themselves instead of the "elite system". Approximately 30 billion Yuan (about 3 billion Euros) in total were supposed to be invested in Project 985. Both these initiatives are funded by the Ministry of Education, competent departments and local governments. After the establishment of Project 211 and Project 985, a hierarchy in the classification of the higher education system has been finally formed.

In 2004, a revolutionary competition called the *Excellence Initiative* changed the German higher education landscape. After two rounds of selection, the Excellence Initiative Grants Committee awarded funding to 39 graduate schools, 38 clusters of excellence, and 9 institutional strategies. A total of 1.9 billion Euros will be available to universities in the first two selection rounds between 2006 and 2012, 75 percent of which will be provided by the Federal Government. In 2009, the second program phase of the Excellence Initiative to run until 2017 was agreed

by the Federal Government and the states. The funding volume will be increased by 30 percent to approximately 2.7 billion Euros until 2017 (BMBF 2009). The Excellence Initiative had broken the longstanding social democratic taboo that all higher education institutions of the same type are treated equally, and also introduced ranking into the German higher education system, albeit unofficially (Kehm 2006).

The Chinese Project 211, Project 985, and the German Excellence Initiative, are all political conducts rather than academic movements. Compared to German higher education, China has a much larger higher education scale with over 3000 different types of higher education institutions. The German higher education system has been known for homogeneity of equal quality among all the universities, while in China, the vertical differentiation is a longstanding situation. Moreover, the selection process of the German Excellence Initiative is a rigorous competition. Even though the initiative itself was more or less compromised due political involvement, the process of competition was an unalloyed academic decision and nota political one. As to China, the process shaping of Project 211 and Project 985 is more a selection rather than a competition. The selection process itself was not sufficiently transparent, and it has also been questioned as to whether or not the selection was purely reputational.

According to the international experience, once ranking or differentiation has formed, there are unlikely to be major changes of the landscape of the higher education system in the future. Once there is a top stratum, other universities which lost out in the competition will certainly feel that they have been relegated to a "second rate" position. The situation also inflicts the feelings of being "losers" on the large group of the system, and might demotivate the whole system by frustrating the majority. The initiative for building excellence in China signified for the State and other stakeholders, a decision to build "lighthouses" instead of improving the overall quality of higher education, and these universities are labelled "top universities" under the discretion of the government rather than achieving genuinely high quality by themselves.

3.2 Research Universities in China

Capacity of building research excellence is a critical strategy driven by national governments to create a remarkable dimension of activities, and research universities have become the centre of the quest for achieving world-class status. Research mission is also seen as a significant approach to represent and achieve value for money of high quality. Almost all of the top universities in recent world rankings show a strong research orientation, but only a few research universities are located in developing countries like China. Unlike the binary system of German higher education that all the universities could be classified as research universities except the Fachhochschulen, most of the Chinese universities can not be identified

as research universities because teaching has been a priority mission instead of research through the ages. China has established several independent research institutions outside of the university system that provide graduate education, and conduct more fundamental research crossover in all the major subjects, and also attract more social resources and qualified academic staff. Only a few universities have the research capacity to participate in the global knowledge market, while research institutions can not be taken into account in university rankings even though they have graduate schools. Therefore, in order to enhance the international status and visibility of research capacity, Chinese government has placed great efforts on intensifying research mission in universities, which includes enlarging the scale of graduate education, increasing funding and building foundations to promote research work in universities.

Along with the initiative of building world-class universities, a wave of university mergers arose with a view towards building comprehensive universities. Although the rationale of university mergers is still under debate, to create a cross-disciplinary research environment for knowledge development by merging is seen to be a great effort to help leading universities build up the capacity for world-class universities, as well as high quality in higher education (Ma 2007). At the same time, a numbers of colleges that provide short-cycle degrees were upgraded to the undergraduate level and are eligible to grant bachelors' degree. All these reforms of upgrading and merging have been undertaken by central and local governments in the name of higher education expansion, and are also considered as an effective way to deal with the problems associated with massification.

3.3 Higher Education Expansion

The expansion of Chinese higher education was initiated in 1999 in the form of increased enrolment in higher education, especially for degree education. According to the report of the Ministry of Education of China, between 1999 and 2009, the total number of higher education institutions has doubled from 1071 to 2305, and the total number of enrolments in undergraduate education and vocational-technical education increased from 1,548,554 to 6,394,932. For graduate education, the total number of new entrants increased from 86,315 to 510,953 (Ministry of Education 2010), and this significant growth also implied a necessity for strengthening research missions in higher education. The expansion of higher education institutions is not just in the public sector; the growth of private education is becoming a considerable force in undergraduate and vocational-technical education. A diversified higher education provision has been introduced into the higher education construction, including adult higher education, three-year specialized education, and examination-based self-study higher education. With expansion, degree-education became more desirable by students and their parents, and to satisfy this demand, many colleges upgraded themselves to universities in

order to get the eligibility to offer baccalaureate level programs. The expansion also brought criticism about the quality issue. Firstly, the possibility that the National Matriculation Test might fail to be the threshold standard for higher education in the access and admission process. Secondly, many universities have been doubted if they are qualified enough to enhance and empower students, and thirdly, against the backdrop of more and more graduates with different levels of education swarming into the labour market, their competencies and qualifications have been questioned by employers.

The shifting from an elite to a mass education system in China has not weakened the pursuit of elitism in higher education. The "mass higher education" did not necessarily substitute "elite higher education", but rather became a second sector to help the preservation of the elite sector alongside (Teichler 2010). The elite sector attracts more attention from politicians and represents the highest reputation and quality of higher education that matches the rapid economic development. In the massive expansion, the elite sector has still retained their privilege of receiving extra funding and recruiting the most talented students. Correspondingly, the rest of the higher education system is suffering from quality issues generated by massification, including admission selective criteria, facilities and personnel support, financial barriers, and transition to the labor market. Especially within Chinese higher education systems underwritten mainly by public funding, it is crucial to make a clear classification of higher education institutions in order to keep the elite status of research universities while also maintaining the overall quality of higher education.

3.4 Funding of Research Universities

Public funding from the government budget is an integral part of operating higher education institutions in China, which represents genuine political intentions. With massive expansion of higher education in China, larger numbers of students could aggravate problems of quality in the absence of appropriate funding allocation. For the academic system, research universities are inevitably more expensive to manage, and require more resources and funds to maintain than other types of higher education institutions. One important reason that quality drew increasing attention was because of the general social concern about public expenditure, which is actually limited. Therefore, questions have been raised about the priority to be accorded to higher education as compared to other social activities, and again, priority to which universities, or other kinds of higher education institutions.

The decision to establish several world-class universities through 'cherry-picking' instead of improving the overall quality of higher education is obviously a cost-effective and time-saving shortcut to achieve a quick response to perspectives of the global knowledge market , besides a hanging on to the reputation of those

national elite universities. In Germany, for instance, there is an attempt to select a few national elite universities to become world-class and provide advantageous funding to them. The situation in China is even more critical after the start of Project 211 and Project 985. The Ministry of Education and other central commissions, as the main funding bodies in China, are willing to distribute limited social resources to universities holding those programs that are directed towards researchers with great scientific capacity, and have higher probability to achieve the expected results. The flow of funding and social resources from universities in the lower cluster to the top cluster, and the increasing investment in those top universities reinforces the Matthew Effect in the academic system. This over-accumulation of funding, benefits and awards is a waste of research resources, which also leads to a large proportion of institutions becoming totally teaching-orientated because they do not have sufficient funding and resources to carry out research in their own universities.

On the other hand, funding is not the single antidote to balance the negative consequences of massification. According to the information of Chinese Project 985 and German Excellence Initiative, there is no large difference of the total funding allocation between these two countries. However, the limited amount of funding is unable to cover all universities selected by the government, and develop them all into research universities. Therefore, a well-organized classification of higher education institutions based on the differentiation of academic missions, and different funding plans according to their roles in the society are needed.

3.5 A Differentiated Higher Education System in China

3.5.1 Classifications of Higher Education Institutions

Research universities, as a nexus of science, scholarship and new knowledge economics, constitute part of a differentiated academic system, and are also important parts of varied roles of different types of higher education institutions and their different funding patterns (Altbach 2007). The Carnegie classification has provided several well recognised criteria for identifying different roles of universities in an academic system, such as number of degrees awarded at various levels, SCIE and SSCI ratio and annual financial support from the government. At the same time, a European classification of higher education institutions has also been developed , which refers to some new and more specific dimensions aiming at the European context, including European educational profile, innovation driven research, international orientation and involvement in life long learning.

Before the implementation of Project 985, there was no clear definition for research universities in Chinese higher education system. The classification and orientation of each higher education institution was based largely on the principle of government policy. In recent decades, several theories of higher education

institutional classification have been developed based on different dimensions and measurements such as administrative relationships, disciplines and subjects, number of academic staff, publications, SCI and rankings. The most commonly consulted one is the classification that results from the ideas and initiatives related to building elite universities. Nian-Cai Liu and Shao-Xue Liu have classified Chinese higher education institutions into five categories and elaborated them in nine categories in total, considering the criteria of the Carnegie Classification in the U.S. and Amano's classification in Japan, as Research Universities (type I and II), Doctoral Universities (type I and II), Master's Universities (type I and II), Baccalaureate colleges (type I and II), and Associate Colleges.

Classifications are supposed to be the rationales of policy making, and government should make their development strategies in accordance with different institutions' types and modes. Nevertheless, most of these highly research-orientated classifications of higher education institutions in China end up with rankings or principles of rankings, although the Ministry of Education has taken an attitude of strongly protesting against all university rankings. The government intends to emphasize regulations-rational authority, but the existing regulations are partial, and consequently form hierarchies. Horizontal differentiation has become the precursor of vertical differentiation. Both these classifications and rankings have intensified the concern over the roles and function of research universities in the academic system, along with the funds, talents, and reputations all converging on these universities.

3.5.2 Differentiation of Chinese Higher Education

The initiatives for building elite universities in China have intensified vertical differentiation and labelled the universities that are in the top of the hierarchy as "high quality". These universities are also classified as research universities with intensive research activities. Without exception, all the world-class universities in the world are research universities, rather than vice versa (Altbach 2007). Allocating investments to research universities has become a traditional funding pattern in China through initiatives like Project 985. However, research universities should constitute a small part of the academic system instead of a mirage that is chased by most of the institutions. The over-emphasis on, and desperate desire for research universities results in an unreasonable pursuit of an "engaged in research" status, and also implies ignorance from the standpoint of other universities and colleges at the national strategic level. Especially with a highly research-orientated classification, those universities not entitled to the status of a "research university" will strive for research missions in their own universities regardless of their capacities.

Horizontal diversity according to substantive profiles of higher education institutions has pressured for homogeneity to prevail (Teichler 2007), especially in

curricular, and study programs. Apart from the pressures from massive expansion of higher education, another purpose of the merging and upgrading movement inside the academic system is to build universities with a full range of baccalaureate and graduate programs; this has been widely considered as the principle and precondition for research universities, as far as developing world-class universities are concerned. National strategies have also been adapted to infuse research funds into these universities and privilege them with favourable policies. The aggressive and wide-spread pursuit of building world-class universities has therefore led to a rush to imitate these top universities. Plenty of universities began to set their sights on becoming "comprehensive" through the changing of the curriculum, and the recruiting of teachers and professors to build new study subjects, in spite of having their own characteristics or profiles in the higher education system. Because of the imitating of certain types of universities, horizontal differentiation has turned out to be "narrow" and the higher education system has become extremely stratified.

By introducing different classifications, Chinese higher education intends to move towards a relatively flat horizontal hierarchy and a system with profiles of individual institutions according to their institutional settings. At the same time, the vertical differentiation is seen as a hierarchy of quality differences in China, notwithstanding the fact that the same quality criteria can not fit all types of higher education institutions. A well developed and differentiated higher education system is not only based on a precise and elaborate classification, but also on favorable policymaking and strategic support for higher education institutions in each category of the classification. Apart from the few universities that have been supported and promoted to become research universities, other universities and colleges should also have the chance to compete for funding and policy support. Different types of higher education institutions should also be able to maintain their specialities and special features in the midst of meaningless merging and upgrading.

4. Conclusions

The underperformance of Chinese universities among commonly consulted rankings has catalyzed the government to quicken the steps of building world-class universities in order the increase international visibility and competition. However, using performance of rankings as a rationale for developing world-class universities could mislead the overall national strategy and have adverse effects on the higher education system. The "one size fits all" procedure of ranking basically reduces the complexity into a simple grade. Through these grades, governments and universities can barely find appropriate solutions to improving quality and building world-class universities. World-class university status can not be accomplished with quality as the sole concern, inter-relations of outside forces that could

underlie the development of quality, especially at the national strategic level, must also be taken into consideration.

Building research universities, dealing with massive expansion of higher education and funding research universities as well as the entire system properly are critical for preparing world-class universities in China. Under the impact of all these factors, several critical issues for higher education have emerged on the way to building world-class universities in China. First of all, a steep vertical hierarchy has been formed by the Project 211 and Project 985. Social resources and funding given to the few would downgrade the others, and even take much needed funding away from them. Secondly, research universities are expensive, and it is impossible to finance too many research universities, and support them to become world-class. Thirdly, because of the preferential policy to research universities, many universities and colleges have begun to lose their own strength and specialties, and are becoming identical by the rush of merging and upgrading. Last but not the least, having several elite or world-class universities does not signify an improvement in the overall quality in higher education. The imbalanced development of different types of higher education institutions will undermine the overall quality of higher education.

Only investing money in a few institutions is not sufficient to build world-class universities. The over emphasis on the development of the elite sector will undermine the quality of higher education as most universities and colleges can not receive adequate benefits and support from the government. The goal of establishing world-class universities can not be achieved without quality improvement in the higher education system as a whole. To improve the situation and be well prepared for the goals, a well-developed differentiated higher education system with rational funding schemes is demanded, in order to match the differentiation and ensure the balanced development of each sector in the system. Higher education institutions in different categories will not be proud of their specialties unless they are able to get appropriate support in funding and well-oriented development plans for them to accept and improve their current position in the academic system.

Building world-class universities is not simply selecting some national leading universities and investing in them to gain world-class statues. At national strategy level, many other factors are important including quality improvement, developing research universities, massive expansion of higher education, and funding the whole system. Apart from these issues discussed above, quality assurance of higher education and institutional autonomy in China is also critical, but these issues have not been addressed adequately. Chinese higher education is now in need of introducing third-party quality assurance bodies or networks to establish a quality assurance system that targets different types of institutions through multiple approaches. Meanwhile, governments should grant the elite sector, especially re-

search universities, more autonomy, and place emphasis on accountability to make spending policies and quality accreditation more clear and transparent.

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5

Multi-Level Governance in Kenya: A Systemic Analysis of the University Sub-Sector

Sarah A. Ooro

1. Introduction

This article based on the thesis of the author explores Kenya's higher education sector and universities in particular during the pre-independence, post-independence period (from independence to the early 1990s) and the current situation. The aim of the study is to assess the country's university sub-sector during this period through the lenses of the classical coordination models. The analysis of sampled characteristics of the sub-sector will not only assist in justifying the classification of the system during this era but will form a springboard for assessing the transformation the sub-sector has gone through.

Since the topic is multi-level governance, this historical assessment is deemed a necessary fundamental base on which to build on the discussion. This facilitates a holistic appreciation of the system and forms the bedrock for assessing whether indeed there has been change within this sub-sector. This change significantly invalidates the classical theories as appropriate descriptors of this sub-sector and perhaps necessitates the use of a different model. A discussion of the typologies of multi-level governance within the society will be undertaken and this will form the basis for discussing using relevant examples, the typologies that can be said to exist within the society. The premise being that universities are not self-enclosed islands, they operate within the society and are in constant interaction with it, and consequently the existence of multi-level governance within the latter would dictate its demonstration in the former or wouldn't it? At, the author hopes to illustrate through the use of relevant examples the existence of multi-level governance not only in the university sub-sector but also in the society. It is also the intention of the author to demonstrate the strides the country has made over time and in so doing justify the reason for not only being hopeful but also taking additional bold steps in improving our universities and society as a whole. This abstract provides an overview of some of the issues discussed in the thesis. The emphasis given in

this abstract is on the background and need of the study and most importantly the results of the study.

2. Background and Need

Change is never an easy process and Kenya has indeed gone through several dispensations of leadership with each promising to bring about some form of change. Whether this change can be considered positive and advantageous to the majority is debatable. A key component of a positive reform agenda can be said to be one in which there is interaction between all those involved. Aside from this is the fact that reform is a process and for this process to be productive it is paramount if there are structures put in place to ensure not just the institutionalization of processes but also continuity. The aspect of reform cannot be dealt with in isolation but inevitably includes that of democratization or what may be referred to by some as free space. Olungah (2007) alludes to the fact that the concept of democratization is controversial because of the fact that it is perceived differently by different people depending on the prevailing phase. This controversy is evidenced by the fact that it has been misused both theoretically and practically. It is for this reason that scholars and practitioners have formulated the minimum standards that constitute the practice of democratic governance. It is not only the development of principles and their institutionalization that is important but also the consideration of the fact that human beings are the core of these processes. It is important to note that democratization or democracy for that matter, is a loaded word that carries along with it associated concepts that are pertinent to governance (Olungah 2007, p.32). Katumanga and Omosa (2007) talk about the correlation between governance (and good governance at that) and leadership and the fact that the both are core to the methodology by which structures and regulations are applied in the management of State affairs (Katumanga and Omosa 2007, p.57). This illustrates the importance of not just simply stating that there needs to be an adoption of good governance but the understanding that there is an inter-linkage of concepts and the adoption of one presupposes the existence or adoption of a whole list of others. Aside from this is the fact that leadership and the people being governed play an equally important role in the equation. It is for this reason that an integrated approach of structural change, leadership and involvement of the people needs be seen to be in operation in order for reforms and Multi-Level Governance (MLG) to be effective and productive as opposed to only being evident on paper. Subsequent sections of this thesis give an in depth analysis of whether and how this has taken place both at the macro and meso levels.

There is the need in Kenya for what some have referred to as the levelling of the higher education playing field, a playing field that has been considered by some to be in favour of some universities and not others. This scenario is however only symptomatic of what occurs at the national level. This situation is echoed by

Marangu (2005) who states that due to the critical role university education was considered to play in the development of African countries from the colonial period a linkage was developed between them and the government. This linkage was witnessed through the fact that the government was responsible for the establishment and management of these institutions. Due to this linkage, it was inevitable that the success or failure of one had direct and similar effect on the other (Marangu 2005, p.18). In Kenya there exist both public and private universities with the former being created under their individual Acts of Parliament while the latter are created by the government through the Commission of Higher Education (CHE) Kenya through the 1985 University CAP 210B. The public universities Acts state that the persons appointed chancellors in these institutions shall serve only as long as the appointing power is in office (Marangu 2005, p.18). Task Force (2007) further clarifies that these Acts make it mandatory for the president to serve as chancellor and only optional for him to appoint chancellors (Task force 2007, p.38). The implications of this imbalance will be elaborated on further, suffice to say that this necessitates the need for a policy framework that is coherent.

The World Bank (1994) in their overall analysis of higher education systems within the recent past have documented a proliferated post-secondary education structure which in many occasions fall within multiple ministries resulting in difficulties in the rationalization of funds. Aside from this is the fact that the responsibility for different institutional types is assigned to various government units. Further aggravating this is the absence in linkage between the higher education system, primary and secondary schools, and the economic sectors. This emphasizes the need of creating a policy framework that is linked to national development since the different sectors of the society all have an important role to play in the shaping and achievements of the higher education sector. Additionally, they argue the importance of realising that the planning of the higher education sector should not be a mechanistic exercise that is typified by impositions of quantitative targets at the centre. It needs to be systematic, take account of the risks, the pros and cons of undertaking certain training initiatives over others and the impact those policy decisions will have on economic and technological advancements, and the demand of graduates in general among others. These type of processes need to be consultative in order to be successful. This will involve consensus building among all the representatives within the HE sector an exercise that can be challenging in countries where governments do not take kindly to active participation in the political process by universities. Reforms can therefore be eased into by creating umbrella national consultative committees where all the stakeholders are included (World Bank 1994, pp. 56-58).

An organisation that is fully and legally charged with the management, regulation and budgetary responsibilities of the higher education sector is essential. An organisation of this nature needs to command the respect of the stakeholders. The

World Bank (1994) states that these type of advisory organisations are not homogenous, those that are successful do share three general characteristics: they are by nature either independent of government or quasi-government; their membership is drawn from various sections within and outside of HE and finally that their tasks include priority setting with respect to university development particularly in respect to matters pertaining to expansion in enrolment and overall investment in the sub-sector (World Bank 1994, 59). In Kenya, the organisation that is charged with advising the government and facilitating the expansion of university education in Kenya among other related and equally important tasks is the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). Created as a body corporate through an Act of Parliament referred to as Universities Act Cap 210B, "it partners with the government in providing access to quality education" (CHE 2008, p.v). Due to its legal framework, it has managed to contribute to the development of private universities but has at the same time has had no role to play in admission of students or programme accreditation in public universities. This naturally exposes the constraints the organisation faces in undertaking its responsibilities. Magnifying this situation is the fact that up to fifteen (15) members of the governing body of the organisation are appointed by the President. The Minister appoints another four (4) resulting in a total of about nineteen (19) government appointees out of a possible total that ranges between twenty one and twenty eight (Public Universities Inspection Board 2006, pp. 366-368). The re-structuring of the oversight higher education policy implementation organisation has been revealed and subsequent sections of this thesis will divulge and discuss the current and proposed roles of this organisation. There will be an emphasis on its involvement in governance and multi-level governance within the university sub-sector and by extension higher education as a whole.

There is a great deal of literature on governance and the lack of its manifestation thereof within the Kenyan society it exhibit tendencies that exist within the government. As indicated earlier there is a culture of politicisation evidenced by the way in which the State has its tentacles in key institutions thus shaping the internal policies in its favour. The government has therefore projected the role of not only being the primary stakeholder but also the sum total of all stakeholders. It can be presumed that through this action that they consider themselves to be influencing or making decisions for the benefit of the people whom they present. Classical models that have been developed in an attempt to analyse the stakeholder relationships primarily between the government and higher education institutions there seems to be a gap in outlining the changes that have taken place. This is the gap the author will attempt to shed some light on, highlighting the developments that have taken place over the years. Additionally there have been enhanced developments in this arena to include other governance models which the author will attempt to discuss within the Kenyan context. The governance model that is of particular interest to the author is MLG and the existence of structures that

support its sustainability. The possibility of the existence of MLG in a developing country is an interesting idea. This thesis will weave through history using relevant literature with the aim of demonstrating the existence of this framework.

3. Multi-level Governance in Kenya

As has been explained above there is great deal of complexity and even fluidity that is evident in the setting up of structures that facilitate multi-level governance. Whether these structures are initiated with the intention of being durable or disintegrating is beside the point. What is of significance is that there is a high degree of transparency and accountability required. The actors, whether governments, international organisations, associations or local organisations commit not just political will but also resources to ensure that all the interests are taken into account or there are increased avenues that will ensure interests of the stakeholders are taken into account. It's a transformation of the power game, an increase in the magnitude and diversity of those who sit at the negotiating table. The developed countries are well acquainted with this concept and work at constantly improvising ways in which the interactions can effectively and efficiently serve all concerned but what about a developing country such as Kenya. Comparatively, it does appear to be a sea of calm in a region that has spots of incessant conflict but then again it has gone through a politically charged period where the sole actor is the government with the ruling party being not just omnipotent but also patronising. Is there supporting literature to show that there has been indeed a change and not just one that incorporates governance but a situation where there are hints of multi-level governance? For purposes of this abstract only one sphere at the national level and two spheres at the university sub-sector level where multi-level governance can be observed will be examined.

3.1 The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Process

When Kenya became a republic in 1964 the leaders then pledged to eliminate three evils: disease, illiteracy and poverty. Thirty eight years later, the number of Kenyans living below the poverty line of one US dollar or less had increased. In 1994 an estimated 40% lived below the poverty line, by 2000 this had increased to 56 %. The economy had steadily been declining, from a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 4.6 in 1996 to -0.3 in 2000. Attempts by the government to stimulate economic growth over the years through the launching of policies did not bear any fruit. These policies were formulated and implemented without involving all the stakeholders thereby resulting in a lack of ownership by both beneficiaries and implementers. In 2001 another policy paper was written, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and for the first time stakeholders were involved in its development, they included: civil society, the poor and marginal-

ised groups, private sector and of course, the government (Sisule 2001, pp. 2-4). The PRSP was not a government initiative but was imposed by the donors. In 1997, the donors discontented with the then regime led by President Moi particularly with respect to the levels of corruption and poor management called on the government to develop an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP), a document the government dutifully prepared. In March 2000, they presented this document to a national stakeholders' forum for discussion and adoption. It was however rejected by the forum and with support from donors a call was made for a process that was inclusive. Donors eventually adopted the IPRSP two months later but in August the same year, steps towards producing an inclusive country PRSP were initiated. The international standards for undertaking this process were set by the World Bank and IMF since it was expected to be the primary financing structure for donor funding. The government submitted the document in 2002 but by 2003 the Bretton Woods institutions had not approved it because of some irregularities the joint board of these institutions wanted corrected. Aside from this was the fact that there was a new government in power that did not follow its approval but embarked on formulating its own PRSP which it dubbed the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS) (Els et al. 2005, p.10).

The process of developing the PRSP revealed the obvious mistrust of the government by the donors, civil society organisations and the private sector, they demanded their inclusion in the agency that was responsible for coordinating and preparing the consultative process from the beginning. The government accepted this because they wanted to fulfil all the conditionality requirements and get donor funding. Aside from the two financial institutions already mentioned, funding was given by: International Finance Corporation (IFC), EU, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Department for International Development (DFID), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), various embassies, Action Aid (a non-governmental organisation) and the African Development Bank (ADB). In order to ensure transparency in the expenditure and the setting up of a proper budgetary framework a group called the Economic Governance Group (EGG) was set up. The EGG was composed of technocrats from the various donor organisations. While policy direction came from the Cabinet the process was coordinated by a technical PRSP-Secretariat composed of Kenyan professionals from civil society, private sector, the donor community with the government producing the most representatives. The Members of Parliament (MPs) did not actively participate in the process en masse as would be expected even though stakeholders' training workshops were organised by the Ministry of Finance and Planning. This was because they would not be able to divert the financial resources for personal needs. Since the aim of the process was to give a voice to the disenfranchised, the consultation process was held in the administrative units of the country from the national, provincial to divisional level. The first National Consultative Forum

(NCF) was composed of heads of the Private Sector Forum, the NGO Council, a Parliamentary Sub-Committee, permanent secretaries and an Economic sub-committee of Parliament. Training for facilitators was conducted in all eight provincial administrative units and although further consultation was intended to cover just 25 of the 70 district administrative units pressure from non-state actors caused this to include all 70. The National Steering Committee identified lead agencies to steer this process at the district level. These agencies were mainly civil society actors. Consultations were undertaken through focus group discussions or plenary sessions and the participants were selected local organisations that were well known but there were opportunities for interested persons to present themselves before meetings. Questionnaires were also used in collecting information prior to scheduled meetings. There were different levels of participation and different participants at every level. At the local level, mostly the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and individual religious leaders were involved. At the district level participants came from the business community through the Chambers of Commerce and religious organisations in a more formalised manner. At the provincial level there were a number of MPs while at the national level the religious organisations featured, private sector associations through the Private Sector Forum and the non-state actors through the NGO Council which represents registered NGOs. Unfortunately some actors such as the employers' organisation as well as trade unions were involved only to a limited degree despite receiving invitations (Els et al. 2005, pp.11-13).

The consultative process was undertaken countrywide but at the same time at the national level the NCF was negotiating with different groups which included 8 sector working groups to represent the main sectors of the country's economy, 8 thematic groups representing the country's primary socio-political interests. The latter were also expected to raise awareness in tandem with their duties in the PRSP process and the only one from the 8 thematic groups to outlive the PRSP consultation process was the National Gender Team (NGT) becoming a point of reference even after its suspension. Although there was heavy NGO and CBO involvement compared to the Private Sector Alliance, the latter was convinced that more than 90% of its concerns were dealt with in the document as opposed to 40% of the former two. The Private Sector Alliance also went through some transformation following this process; it incorporated 30 more national actors, became more integrated and homogenous and changed its name to Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA). The aim being to enable it speak with one voice on a wide range of issues of concern to its different members. The NGO Council also developed a more cordial relationship with the NGO Bureau at the office of the President. The CBOs also became more knowledgeable about the process through meetings organised by some NGOs and MPs and in one district in particular the CBOs formed an umbrella body. The level of satisfaction varied with non-state actors at the national level expressing satisfaction about the way in which the

government's attitude had changed towards other actors. Those at the local level did not share this view, some felt uninvolved in the processes (Els et al. 2005, pp. 13-14).

What is observed in this scenario is nothing as complex as the EU mostly Type I system of multi-level governance however we observe an emergence of a multiplicity of actors at different levels even though what triggered the process was imposed. Those considered to be imposing also had a stake in the process because they were contributing funds to the government and were dissatisfied with the corruption and governance situation so they were in effect stakeholders, they had an interest and since they were expected to bankroll the process they had the right to state their interests. We observe a diffusion of authority to other non-state actors albeit reluctantly, it was no longer about the government unveiling its impositions on its people but about a government consulting its people about how they want to be managed. The PRSP was a process aimed at coming up with possible solutions to a problem, poverty! Resources were amassed to ensure the process incorporated those most affected, the poor by not only limiting consultation at the international/national level but going down to the local people and incorporating their local organisations. The type of multi-level governance witnessed here is Type II, not only because it was target oriented and had a wide variety of actors (heterogeneous) but also because of the flexibility of the institutions created, such as the eight thematic groups and working groups among others that were created just to facilitate this process. A key feature of Type II being the fact that institutions created tend not to be long lasting because their scope is target based.

3.1.1 The Role of Freelance International Organisations

There is another category of international organisations that has been touched on in the previous section of this thesis; these organisations usually take the form of foundations. The most prominent organisations in terms of influence and extent of international education programmes assumed are: the Ford Foundation, Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller Foundation. In the 1950s the three foundations concurred that the shortage of qualified local leaders was a major hindrance to the advancement of developing countries. They promulgated that, "nation building in Africa, Asia and Latin America required indigenous institutions, strengthening post-secondary education in a limited number of domestic universities in a few Third World nations" (Teferra 2009, p. 161). After the rate of return catastrophe a number of international actors unified in their support of the importance of higher education in the development of a country's socio-economic framework. This unity led to the creation of partnership initiatives, the most important perhaps being the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA) established in the year 2000. The PHEA originally had four members who included the three foundations mentioned above plus the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundati-

on. The Andrew Mellon Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation later joined in 2005 and the final member, the Kresge Foundation joined in 2007 to make up a final count of seven. By the end of its first phase in 2005 PHEA had spent US $ 150 million. It increased its commitment to US $ 200 million for its second phase (end 2010) and included three more nations as beneficiaries. The criterion for including beneficiaries is far from basis of needs, PHEA basically, "pursues the respective policies of each partner foundation, simply stretching these to incorporate each partner's current "client countries" (Teferra 2009, p. 162). The PHEA is considered the most noteworthy initiative to support the African system although there are those who point out the incongruity of this partnership due to their choice of beneficiaries (Teferra 2009, p. 161-162).

Friedman et al. (2010) give an account of the accomplishments he PHEA has had in the continent during its 10 year existence. They state that, "The Partnership was a response to trends of democratization, public policy reform, and the increasing participation of civil society organizations in a growing number of African countries. Countering the conventional wisdom that prevailed among the funding organizations and governments, the foundations argued that Africa's future rests with the development of its intellectual capital through strong higher education systems, not just with the development of basic education" (Friedman et al. 2010, p.v). It had its operations in nine countries: Mozambique, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Madagascar, Egypt, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya which have a total population of 459 million. Through its direct and indirect schemes they invested in a total of 379 higher education institutions thereby transforming circumstances for 4.1 million students. While the foundations had pledged to give US $100 million and US$ 200 million during its first and second phases respectively these pledges were surpassed by US$ 140 million signifying total grants amounting to US$ 440 million. The different foundations have different levels of concentrations in different countries. They have specific country emphasis as well as multi-country emphasis where countries from a certain region benefit from grants and final Africa-wide initiatives where the foundations undertake a combined project. An analysis of the nine countries indicates that individually, South Africa benefits from the bulk of the investment at 28 percent. It is followed by Nigeria and Uganda at 14 percent and 10 percent respectively. Kenya has benefited from US$ 7 million worth of country specific investments during the 10 year period amounting to 2% of the total grants. PHEA's operating principles included: direct support to universities, emphasis on consultations, narrowing beneficiaries to a selective number of institutions in line with the principle of deepening rather than the broadening of support initiatives, individual support under the auspices of the New Generation of Academics programme (Friedman et al. 2010, pp. v-1).

Two of PHEA's foundations were instrumental in highlighting the importance of bandwidth expansion for Kenya's seventeen higher education institutions through their support of Kenya Education Network Trust (KENET) e-readiness

appraisal. The Rockefeller and Ford Foundation's backing of KENET raised its profile to the extent that the Kenyan government gave a grant of US$ 19 million which was meant for bandwidth extension for KENET members (Friedman et al. 2010, p. 6). Ford also supported scholars from South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Kenya by funding the Africa Higher Education Collaborative (AHEC) where they laid emphasis on the identification of approaches for expanding access and equity within their higher education institutions. Kenya was also one of the recipients of some of the funds set aside by Ford for its university community outreach programmes (Friedman et al. 2010, pp. 33-34). Kenya also benefitted from Rockefeller grants receiving 7 percent of individual country grants, second to Uganda which received 32 percent. A total of 51 percent of its funds was allocated to multi-country initiatives either covering countries within the Eastern and/or Southern region. Kenyatta University from Kenya received US$ 1.5 million for its programme aimed at providing literacy interventions quality primary education for girls in primary schools. Under the PHEA's Higher Education Research and Advocacy Programme (HERA) Rockefeller provided funds to the accreditation agencies from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya under a collaborative project aimed at developing a Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS) that would be common for universities within these countries. Launched in 2009, the project received the backing of their governments through ministerial representation Rwanda was also represented at the launch. Four initial fields of study were selected for standardisation namely: engineering, medicine, agriculture and pure sciences (Friedman et al. 2010, pp. 84-89).

The PHEA has undertaken numerous initiatives in the nine countries and as stated earlier they various foundations have their specific emphasis. The ones pointed out here relate to Kenya specifically or within a regional or Africa-wide framework. One must take cognisance of the boldness of the Partnership in going against the infamous World Bank policy at the time thus providing a lifeline for selected universities. The clout wielded by the Partnership led to a substantial contribution by the Kenya government in the investment in information communication and technology. We also observe transformative regional projects such as the CATS which also received approval from the East African Community ministers. One would rightly refer to this Partnership as typology II not just in analysing its activities as a Partnership but also in observing the type of initiatives they endeavoured to build, which constituted networks of experts and across the continent between universities and governments.

3.1.2 Continental Organisations: The AAU and ADEA

The two organisations have been discussed above in relation to UNESCO and can be referred to as continental organisations operating within the higher education field. It is therefore important to assess the roles they play within the African con-

tinent. The first of the organisations to be focused on is the AAU which as alluded to earlier was founded in November 1967 in Rabat, Morocco. It has its headquarters in Accra Ghana and its members come from Africa's five sub-regions. Its membership has increased from 34 at inception to a current total of 212 stemming from 45 countries. Its operating languages are English, French and Arabic. The AAU has linkages with organisations globally and has been granted observer status by The African Union (AU), UNESCO and the United Nations University (UNU). The AU has accorded the organisation the primary responsibility of spearheading the higher education section of its project on the Second Decade of Education. The AAU manages a wide array of programmes which include Academic Staff Exchange, Ford Foundation International Fellowships Programme, maintains a roster of African professionals living in Africa, mobilisation of regional research capacities and the strengthening of stakeholder relations among others. Important to note is the fact that the AAU has credibility not only among its international partners and the global higher education society but also among the African governments themselves. Kenya has a total of eleven universities and one research centre (ICIPE) included in the AAU's list of members with good standing, meaning they have zero to less than 2 years of subscription fees in arrears (AAU website 2010, p.1).

The AAU has also been credited with developing one of the most ambitious higher education revitalisation initiatives in recent years. Conceived in collaboration with the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and the Higher Education South Africa, the Renewing the African University Programme (2005-2015) was submitted to the Group of 8 (G8) for funding (approximately US $ 5 billion). The programme is not only expected to address the challenges faced within the higher education institutions in the continent but is also aimed at enhancing relevant partnerships both within the region and outside it. Another major initiative being undertaken by the AAU is the Regional Capacity Mobilisation Initiative (2006-2010) which is funded through a grant of US $ 7 million given by the DfID. It constitutes a challenge fund which is intended to support in the revitalisation and fortification of HEIs within the continent. The AU countries are also participating in funding the Action Plan for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015) as the main financiers. It has among its objectives the generation of original knowledge, increased advocacy and quality assurance (Mohamedbhai 2008, 193).

The ADEA has a somewhat different approach to the AAU it considers itself a medium for education reform, a round-table for policy dialogue on education matters within the continent, an alliance between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners and, "A partnership between ministries of education and development agencies" (ADEA website, 2010, p.1). Initially created in 1988 as a framework for streamlining the activities of developmental organisations within the continent it has evolved in more than twenty years to include the four goals men-

tioned above. It places a great deal of effort on its role of creating dialogue, "between African education and training ministries in Africa and their technical and external partners" (ADEA website, 2010, p.1).

This emphasis stems from the fact that they consider the African governments as bearing the primary responsibility thus requiring them to be responsive. As well as fostering networks between the different countries sub-regions and regions in Africa they are also committed to capacity enhancement of these institutions. The highest governing body of ADEA is the steering committee which has a total of ten Ministers in its membership aside from those emanating from the multi and bi lateral international agencies. The ten Ministers also referred to as the Bureau of Ministers represent the five African regions of Central, Southern, Northern, Eastern and Western Africa meet twice a year and draw up consultation and dialogue frameworks. The primary way in which dialogue is enhanced between all the stakeholders is through the Biennales which are organised every two years and discuss thematic issues in education as a whole. Recommendations arrived at during the conferences are implemented through the connecting countries with similar problems to strategic partners with knowhow in the specialised areas. These connections are organised under the Inter-Country Quality Nodes (ICQNs) where relevant ministry representatives and stakeholders are involved in tackling the problem identified as a national priority. ADEA has had a number of milestones but 2008 stands out as an important year because its Secretariat which was based in Paris since 1992 finally moved to Tunis, Tunisia. In this same year, it signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the AU uniting the two organisations within the structural execution of the Second Decade for Education in Africa. It also launched its first Medium- Term Plan for the period 2008-2012. Kenya's Ministries of Education and Higher Education, Science and Technology are both of ADEA (ADEA website, 2009, p.1).

The AAU and ADEA represent continental initiatives aimed at tackling higher education challenges with partnership from significant stakeholders. They also demonstrate not just the involvement of the academics and experts from international organisations but also active engagement by the African governments. These organisations where not created for a short or medium term purpose, on the contrary, they represent a long term and continuous in African education, higher education and societal matters. The involvement of the Ministers is critical in the sense that the respective governments are involved in identifying matters of national concern and dialoguing with partners on solutions and developmental strategies. The decision making structure is broadened and trust is forged. Structures have also been designed to facilitate both decision making and implementation strategies. The two organisations show Africans taking charge, assuming responsibility, committing funds and actively engaging as a bloc in generating ideas and implementing them together with international stakeholders. The fact that Kenya

is involved in both organisations clearly indicates its increment of decision making space.

4. Conclusion

The detailed inspection of the development of the higher education system in Kenya, from a period when the government exercised complete control over the entire system to a period where there is the proliferation of networks not only at the regional and continental level but also at the international level, shows a definite increase in autonomy within the universities, particularly the public ones. We, however, also observe what Kehm (2011) describes as the government setting the rules of the game and putting in place a regulatory structure within which the actors execute their activities. She further states that,

> "...the inclusion of a variety of actors in the coordination of higher education systems and in the strategic decision-making of higher education systems has been characterised as multi-level governance" (Kehm 2011, p.2).

The literature unquestionably indicates the existence of multi-level governance not only at the societal level but also within the university sub-sector. If one analyses MLG in Kenya from the point of view of typologies manifested it may be convincingly stated that there is an overwhelming visibility of type II over type I. This may be because type I requires a greater investment in resources, the restructuring of the administrative system and a large dose of political will. It is quite clear that there are still legal impediments that contribute to a situation whereby the public universities and the regulatory body are not fully autonomous. The fact that the situation is being discussed openly is indeed a hallmark of democratisation. Unfortunately, it will require much more than discussions to move the country to the next level. It will be necessary for the government to legal amendments that will serve in further de-politicising the higher education field and at the same time building a strong multi-level governance framework.

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6

Employment Success of Higher Education Graduates Entering the Workforce through Internships: The Case of Germany

Tamara Arutyunyants

1. Introduction

The issue of graduates from higher education institutions who enter the world of work via internships has been in the core of discourses and debates among the media, politicians and higher education institutions in Germany. Internships in Germany have increasingly extended beyond higher education studies and have become for higher education graduates a way of entry into the labour market. Indicative of this development is the concept of the so-called "internship generation". The discourses in the public have been about a generation of highly educated graduates who fail to find regular employment after their studies and find themselves in a situation of continuous internships with no career prospects and being exploited instead of developing a career path.

However, this assumption was promoted by the media based primarily on individual reports and was not supported by any empirical findings. Thus, this issue has triggered a number of surveys with the special focus on internships after graduation: the study of the Higher Education Information System (HIS) 2007; the studies of the German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB-Youth) in cooperation with the Free University of Berlin and the Hans-Böckler Foundation in 2006 and 2010, and the study done by the International Institute for Empirical Social Economics (INIFES) 2008. General graduate surveys started addressing the issue of internships after graduation as well.

According to the prior surveys, graduates who do internships after study obviously do not represent the majority. A large proportion of graduates succeed in finding an employment after graduation. However, a considerable number of graduates are not able to find a job and do internships first. Those higher education graduates who enter the labour market via internships are considered to be in a more disadvantageous situation in comparison with graduates who did not begin their career by means of an internship; thus the start is not successful (Sehrbrock

and Rudolf 2011). But does this unsuccessful beginning looks as failure in the future as well in comparison with those whose career entry did not start with post-graduate internships?

The primary focus of this research study is to research the employment situation and employment success of higher education graduates who attract huge attention in Germany due to the fact that they carry out internships after their studies.

In order to provide an in-depth analysis of the issue, this research study will examine four groups of graduates which are established according to the criteria of availability and/or absence of internships during and after study. The groups are defined in order to examine whether there are differences in the employment success of those who did internships only after study and those who did internships both during and after study, which are the main groups for this research; a further step of analysis is to compare them with control groups – those who did internships only during study and those who did not do an internship. By comparing all these groups, it is possible to explore thoroughly the employment success of the target groups.

The following assumptions are proposed in this study:

(1) *Graduates who carried out internships only after study* have lower employment success than graduates who carried out internships both during and after study and lower than graduates of control groups – those who did internships only during study and those who did not do internships;
(2) *Graduates who carried out internships both during and after study* have lower employment success than graduates of control groups – those who did internships only during study and those who did not do internships.

The research study intends to examine the employment success by focusing on four fields of study – humanities and social sciences, economics, mathematics and natural sciences and engineering – to identify whether there is the same picture in all fields of study or whether there are differences.

2. Internships after Graduation and Employment Success

2.1 Definition of the Term “Internship”

In the conventional use it is often unclear what the term "internship" really implies. The spectrum ranges among various types of practical training. A classical form of an internship aims at supplementing theoretical knowledge with professional knowledge and skills, gaining a variety of practical competences relevant for the world of work as well as valuable network contacts, what enhances graduates’ employment prospects and facilitates the transition from education to work (Sinick 1970; OECD 2000; Böhning et al. 2006; Witmer 2007; Stelzel 2009).

Internships after graduation correspond to the classical definition, but they also go beyond it and take the employment prospect into focus – can be a good alternative to finding a job by fulfilling the function of bridging waiting periods until more positions become available and can serve as a "jumping-off" place to regular employment (Böhning et al. 2006; Loretto 2009). Closely connected to internships is volunteer work. There are controversial views regarding the two types of activities. Part of the literature indicates a very sharp dividing line between volunteer work and an internship by considering the activity of a volunteer as a voluntary further training for an employment that in some cases has no relation to the prior curriculum. But this can also be applied to internships after study in general. Another part of the research literature as well legal literature see unclear boundaries between the two terms, do not distinguish between them, but, on the contrary, use them as synonyms. In German literature, the difference is also reviewed as meaningless (Stelzel 2009; Küttner 2007).

Internships, however, are to be differentiated from other types of practical training that are carried out by graduates from higher education institutions. The term apprenticeship is applied to these types of training, which in the German higher education system are called "Referendariat". It represents an integral part of further education in such courses of study as law and teacher training. Another type is trainee programs that are tailored to a specific group of people and integrated into an overall human resource development measures.

2.2 Implications of Internships after Graduation

Various studies with the focus on internships after graduation provide different figures with regard to the frequency of internships carried out by higher education graduates (24 % – INIFES 2008; 29 % – DGB 2010; 12 % from universities of applied sciences and 15 % from universities – HIS 2007). These discrepancies are partly explained by timing oft the respective graduate survey – internships right after graduation and/or internships sometime after graduation. There are also variations in the definition of the term "internship" used in the surveys. In some surveys, internships include training programmes that constitute part of further education, while others exclude these training phase, and some include volunteer work.

The surveys show, that even some graduates who have completed internships during their studies (four internships on average according to the *DGB-Youth* study of 2010), go on to internships after graduation. Internships between education and work are outlined as a classical form of transitional employment. They could be assigned to different transition profiles: transitional jobs – short-term bridging of waiting times through mainly low-qualified activities, or unemployment (Heine 2002).

The frequency of the internships varies by field of study. According to the *HIS* study, an internship after study is an exception in technical fields and fields of natural sciences. In contrast, many university graduates from such disciplines as linguistic and cultural sciences (26 %) and psychology (20 %) carry out one or more internships, i.e. graduates from fields facing difficulties in transition to the working life. Economics' graduates also undertake an internship comparatively often (21 % of university graduates and 17 % of graduates from the universities of applied sciences), i.e. a field which seems to guarantee a smooth transition to employment. Obviously, an easier transition to employment is hope for (Briedis and Minks 2007). In contrast, the *DGB-Youth* survey 2006 reports that 30 % of graduates from mathematics and natural sciences carry out internships after graduation (Grühn and Hecht 2007; Schmidt and Hecht 2011).

Authors of respective surveys tend to claim that such internships do represent to some extent a precarious form of employment in the sense of uncertain prospects; work as regular employees on a full-time basis with low status as an intern; financial insecurity; work not being rewarded properly; employers using graduates as cheap labour and benefiting greatly from motivated, cost-effective and full-time working employees (Sehrbrock and Rudolf 2011; Briedis and Minks 2007; Grühn and Hecht 2007; Fuchs and Ebert 2008). However, the surveys also show that around half of the internships are beneficial by the interns themselves for gaining practical experiences and for networking.

Finally, prior studies that chain internships after graduation are an exception. On average the duration is not more than four months.

2.3 Employment Success

Before going into details with regard to the available research on employment situation and success of higher education graduates who carried out internships after their study, it seems to be important to consider what employment success is and what its criteria, underlying theories and determinants are.

According to London and Stumpf (1982) as well as Judge and Bretz (1994), employment success or professional success represents by itself accumulated positive psychological and work-related outcomes or attainments which result from one's work. Jaskolka et al. (1985) consider employment success as an evaluative conception which depends on the subjects who rate the success and name the criteria of their ratings. Employment success can be judged by others or by individuals themselves. When being judged by others, employment success often is determined by focusing on relatively objective and visible criteria and represents an objective success due to the fact that it can be measured by observable exoteric metrics – observable employment accomplishments such as salary, occupational status. When being judged by an employed individual, employment success as a rule is determined by focusing on individual judgments of own employment

achievements and job satisfaction (Jaskolka et al. 1985; Judge and Bretz 1984; Gattiker and Larwood 1989; Judge et al. 1995).

Employment success might be rated or measured in terms of:

- a low unemployment ratio;
- *a low ratio of non-regular or precarious employment* (occasional employment, part-time employment, short-term employment, etc.);
- the "exchange value" between employers and employees, e.g. income, full-time employment, permanent employment, good career prospects, etc.;
- *Work*, implying professional activities and the link between knowledge and work, e.g. utilization on the job of the knowledge and competences acquired during the study, adequate level of employment, job satisfaction (Teichler 2007).

Research on employment success is characterized by various, e.g. economical, sociological and psychological approaches. The economical approach is based primarily on human capital theory, whereby analysis of income prevails (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos 2004; see also Teichler and Kehm 1995; Schomburg 2007). Sociological approaches tend to focus more on the linkages between higher education and work tasks (Teichler 2007). They assume that links between knowledge and work tasks indicate the appropriate relationships between higher education and work (Brennan et al. 1996).

Educational attainment has proven to be important for employment success; however, the more people obtain a higher education degree, the more other factors come into play (Teichler 2007). More detailed measures might play a significant role. For example, German employers consider graduates with better grades as better candidates (Teichler 1988; Falk et al. 2009).

Moreover, practical experience gained in internships is valuable for employment success, especially during the recruitment process (Franzen and Hangartner, 2005). As McGinnity and Mertens (2004) as well as Salas-Velasco (2007) assert, the hiring of graduates is a decision limited in time and made under uncertainty conditions due to the fact that the match between job applicants' capabilities and the skills required by the employers is not something that can be readily determined; this means that employers face a screening problem. Here, in addition to good educational performance, practical experience for graduates play a major role, as employers take a low risk in terms of capabilities of the candidate with people who have practical experience.

Finally, the psychological approach addresses primarily intrinsic issues of employment success, such as assessment of job satisfaction. "The analysis of job satisfaction helps to gain insight into the total effects of education investment on employees' well-being" (Mora et al. 2005, p. 36).

2.4 Internships after Graduation and Employment Success

Various prior studies examined what has happened to graduates after the internships that they had experienced soon after graduation.

The *HIS* study shows that 32 percent of university graduates and 44 percent from universities of applied sciences, who did internships after graduation, obtained employment with the help of an internship. One third of graduates assessed an internship as a door opener to the desired occupation (32 percent for both types of institutions) (Briedis and Minks 2007). For many graduates regular employment followed the first internship. Almost three-quarters of the graduates of universities of applied sciences were in regular employment half a year after finishing an internship. This figure was by half lower for university graduates. However, a large number of university graduates pursued further academic study (Briedis and Minks 2007; Briedis 2007). Unemployment right after the end of an internship was at a high level; it dropped, however, considerably in the following months (Briedis and Minks 2007).

According to the *INIFES* study, 35 percent could obtain employment subsequent to the internship. Unemployment following an internship was reported by 19 percent (Fuchs and Ebert 2008). And according to the *DGB-Youth* 2007, an internship served as a bridge to employment for about one third of the graduates (after the first internship this was about one quarter) (Grühn and Hecht 2007).

The DGB youth survey undertaken in 2011 addressed marginally the employment situation of graduates with internship experience after their studies in comparison with graduates without such experience. Three and a half years after graduation, the former were in a less favourable professional situation. While 30 percent were employed permanently at the time of the survey, the respective proportion among the latter was 39 percent. The former also stated lower job satisfaction, lower match between fields of study, level of education and employment, as well as lower income. However, the difference between the two groups had become smaller over time (Schmidt and Hecht, 2011).

3. Conceptual Framework

The research undertaken by the author aimed at getting more detailed information. Four groups of respondents were selected from all the respondents of the KOAB graduate survey 2010:

- *two main groups* – (1) graduates who did internships only after study and (2) graduates who did internships both during and after study;
- *two control groups* – (3) graduates who did not do any internship at all as well as (4) graduates who did internships only during study.

The measurement of internships during and after study was proceeded in the following way: Question C8 (variable V32) in the KOAB questionnaire: “Did you do

any internship during your course of studies?" was used to identify the availability of internships during study. Three answer options were provided for this question: 1 = "Yes, mandatory internship(s)" (V32_1), 2 = "Yes, voluntary internship(s)" (V32_2), 3 = "No internships" (V32_3). Responses 1 and 2 were recorded as "Internship(s) during study", as for this study the availability of internship during study was of primary importance. Response 3 was recorded as "No internship(s)" correspondingly.

The availability of internships after study was measured with the questions E1: "What applied to your situation directly after graduation?" and G4: "Which was your position in your first employment after graduation?" The response of "Internship/volunteer work" (V58A_6) to question E1 and responses of "Volunteer" (V62_15) and "Intern" (V62_18) to question G4 were used as indicators of internship after study. The combination of three above mentioned questions (C8, E1 and G4, variable INTERNSHIP) were used for identifying the availability of internships both during and after study. Referendariat, the medical training phase, an internship during the practical year, and a traineeship were excluded from this definition as they constituted either a special type of training for a specific group of people or an integral part of further education in such fields of study as law, teaching, medicine and social pedagogy.

The employment situation 1,5 years after graduation was taken as the basis of measuring employment success. This seems appropriate because most post-degree internships are done within the first year after graduation. Graduates employment success was measured with the objective and subjective indicators named in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicators of Employment Success

Objective indicators	**Subjective indicators**
Employment status	*Vertical link:* – Adequate level of employment
Employment conditions: – full-time or part-time employment – unlimited versus fixed-term employment	*Horizontal link:* – The extent to which the knowledge acquired during the course of study is used on the job – Link between field of study and work tasks
Income	*Job satisfaction*

The analysis is based on responses from 16.043 graduates of the cohort 2010, who were surveyed about one and a half years after graduation. It was conducted for

Bachelor and Master graduates as well as for graduates from the traditional "Magister" and "Diplom" programmes from universities and universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen).

4. The Findings of the Study

The available data of the 2010 graduate survey in Germany do not confirm the gloomy picture often portrayed by the media. As Table 2 shows, *only 2.6 percent of graduates carried out internships after study for the first time*.

The proportion of graduates who carried out internships only after graduation was observed in mathematics and natural sciences (3.9 percent) and humanities and social sciences (3.4 percent). Within economics, 2.4 percent of graduates carried out internships after study. Quite a few engineers also did internships after study (0.6 percent).

However, the rates of those who did internships both during and after study were about four times as high as of those who did internships only after study. These were mostly graduates from humanities and social sciences as well as from economics. The ratio was lower in mathematics and natural sciences and even lower in engineering.

Table 2: Internship Experience during and after Study by Groups of Field of Study (percent)

	Humanities and Social Sciences	Economics	Mathematics and natural sciences	Engineering	Total
No internship	14.9	16.0	39.9	14.4	20.4
Internship only during study	60.4	70.8	49.4	80.0	65.1
Internship during and after study	21.3	10.8	6.8	5.1	11.9
Internship only after study	3.4	2.4	3.9	.6	2.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Count	3,310	2,638	2,248	2,444	10,640

Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate survey 2010 (survey undertaken in 2010 of 2008/09 graduates)

With regard to gender differentiation, we note that the proportion of graduates who carried out internships both during and after study was higher for female

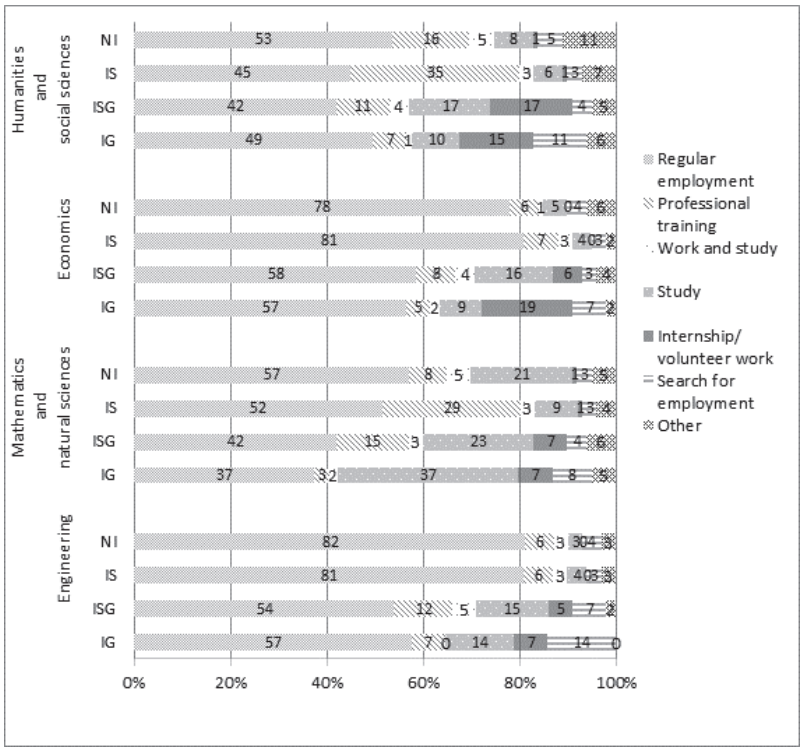
graduates than for male graduates. This held true for all groups of field of study except economics, where the proportions of females and males were quite the same.

Educational achievements in terms of the grades of those who did internships only after study as well as both during and after study were good and in line with the control groups. This held true for graduates in all four groups of field of study.

The survey results also do not confirm the gloomy picture often portrayed by the media as regards employment after internship. Unemployment or repeated internships for a considerablwe period are marginal phenomena.

As Figure 1 demonstrates, one and a half years after completion of studies, the situation stabilized for the vast majority of graduates who found themselves either in regular employment, further study, professional training, or some combination of work and study which are signs of success, not failure. Even though the regular employment ratio of the target groups was lower than in the control groups, it clearly prevailed over the unemployment rate, which was not high for graduates who did internships only after study, and very low for graduates who did internships both during and after study, which was the same as in control groups. However, the regular employment ratio of graduates who did internships only after study was similar to the control groups in humanities and social sciences. Internships and volunteer work were still present in the professional biography of graduates in the target groups, which were mostly pronounced in such fields of study as humanities and social sciences as well as economics by about one eighth of graduates; but the numbers were marginal and decreased remarkably in comparison with the situation of internships right after graduation and in first employment. In sum, internships after graduation represent a temporal phenomenon in the individual career of the majority of higher education graduates, while the majority of graduates achieve success in this respect upon completion of their internships already one and a half years after graduation.

Figure 1: Internship Experience and Employment Status one and a Half Years after Graduation, by Groups of Field of Study (percent)



Note: Labels: NI – no internship; IS – internship during study; ISG – internship during study and after graduation; IG – internship only after graduation.

Humanities and social sciences – NI (n=650), IS (n=3333), ISG (n=736), IG (n=108); Economics – NI (n=426), IS (n=1855), ISG (n=269), IG (n=58); Mathematics and natural sciences – NI (n=1001), IS (n=1782), ISG (n=223), IG (n=99); Engineering – NI (n=359), IS (n=1949), ISG (n=124), IG (n=14).

Source: INCHER-Kassel KOAB graduate survey 2010 (survey undertaken in 2010 of 2008/09 graduates)

Employment success according to objective and subjective indicators varies by groups of field of study. Yet, the two target groups of this research study were not always at the bottom as compared with the control groups as it was expected; rather, they were at the top according to some indicators and altogether the success of the target groups is not lower than that of the control groups.

In examining the results in details, we go back to our initial assumption. According to our first assumption, graduates who carried out internships only after study have lower employment success than graduates who carried out internships both during and after study as well as lower than graduates in the control groups (i.e. those who carried out internships only during study or did not do any internship at all).

Actually, graduates who carried out internships only after study showed lower success, in comparison with graduates who carried out internships both during and after study, concerning employment criteria only with regard to income. However, their income level was higher than for graduates who did internships both during and after study in mathematics and natural sciences. Graduates who did internships only after study were more often employed on unlimited-term contracts, and both groups had the same rates of full-time employment. The target groups achieved more or less the same success in terms of work criteria, but those who did internships only after study utilized their knowledge and skills acquired during study to a higher extent and were more satisfied with their jobs.

Graduates who carried out internships only after study had generally lower employment success in terms of employment criteria in comparison with the *control groups*. However, there are some exceptions: graduates who did internships only after study had higher rates of full-time employment in all fields of study, similar rates of unlimited-term contacts in humanities and social sciences as well as a similar level of income in mathematics and natural sciences in comparison with the control groups. Concerning subjective indicators, the same success in terms of work criteria was observed in this group compared to graduates who did not do any internship; however, higher job satisfaction was indicated. Graduates who did internships only after study had lower employment success compared to graduates who did internships only during study, which was the case in humanities and social sciences and economics. However, higher job satisfaction was noted. With regard to subjective indicators, graduates of this group in humanities and social sciences reported constantly lower success.

Findings are noteworthy in two groups of field of study. Graduates in mathematics and natural sciences who did internships only after study had an income that was quite similar to the income of the control groups and reported the same success in terms of adequate employment, which further indicates interesting and meaningful work with high job satisfaction as high as in the control groups. In contrast, graduates in humanities and social sciences achieved lower success with respect to all work criteria.

According to the second assumption, graduates who carried out internships both during and after study have lower employment success than graduates in the control groups (i.e. those who carried out internships only during study or did not do any internship at all).

Actually, employment success of the former was lower with respect to unlimited-term contract and income in comparison with the latter groups, but this was not the case with regard to full-time employment. Concerning work criteria, they had either the same or higher employment success in terms of horizontal and vertical links in comparison with those who did not do internships at all. Success in this respect was lower only in mathematics and natural sciences. Only graduates of this group in engineering reported being less satisfied with their jobs. Concerning their situation in comparison with those who did internships only during study, it can be stated that with respect to horizontal links it was lower in mathematics and natural sciences and economics. Their jobs were considered adequate to their level of education to the same extent as in the control group. Graduates in economics and engineering were less satisfied with their current work, whereas graduates in humanities and social sciences as well as mathematics and natural sciences expressed quite the same level of satisfaction.

The situation of former interns one and a half years after the completion of studies was less stable compared to their former fellow students who entered the labour market without an internship. They were less frequently found in a permanent position and reported a generally lower earning level. However, as was pointed above, there were exceptions from the general picture within some fields of study, especially in humanities and socials sciences (similar rates of unlimited-term contracts) and mathematics and natural sciences (similar income).

It can be assumed that lower income and lower rates of unlimited-term contracts in the target groups were due to the fact that these persons were only in the beginning of their professional path. They started working later than graduates without internships after study who could already pave their professional way and achieve better results.

One could have expected that lower job satisfaction was stated by graduates who did internships both during and after study, but this was the case only in engineering and economics. Graduates who did internships only after study expressed high satisfaction with their work; reported job satisfaction was lower only in humanities and social sciences, while in other fields of study it was either the same or significantly higher.

This research study altogether demonstrated that successful completion of studies and the availability of internship experience obtained only during study resulted in higher employment success with both monetary and non-monetary rewards - stable and secure employment, adequacy of employment as well as interesting and meaningful work as was expected on the basis of prior research. Internships have a competence enhancement effect, but those going for an internship after graduation

are likely to do so because they are the weaker candidates on the labour market without that internship and are not able to catch up fully with the help of the late competence enhancement.

The results of this research study showed that, taking into account all the measures of employment as well as perceived links between study and subsequent employment, it can be noted that the most of the regular employed graduates who entered the labour market via internships obtained employment in which work tasks could be viewed as matching their education. By and large, the study confirms that in spite of a problematic beginning in professional life, educational efforts and investments have been more or less rewarded mostly in non-monetary terms when employment situations one and a half years after graduation have been analysed. In the case of graduates who did internships only after study, substantial monetary reward for educational investment was visible only in mathematics and natural sciences. The research study cannot establish, whether monetary awards are lower for those in other groups of field of study in the long run, or whether this is a short-term phenomenon.

This study – in accordance with prior studies – proved that internships after graduation do not serve as an obstacle for further professional success of young individuals. In spite of a disadvantageous beginning, most graduates did succeed in finding an adequate job. Even though some graduates still continued as interns and volunteers one and a half years after graduation, the numbers were decreasing and postgraduate internships did not represent a break in an individual career path for the majority. On the contrary, many of the graduates, who wanted to gain practical experience in the wake of salient employment problems after graduation, found themselves after a relative short time in regular adequate employment or continued their academic studies.

5. Closing Remarks and Further Research

This research study examined employment success of higher education graduates in Germany who entered the workforce through internships. The study provided a more profound insight into the employment situation of these higher education graduates one and a half years after graduation.

Future research in this area could be improved in three respects. First, a higher number of respondents would allow more detailed analysis according to field of study. Second, it would be helpful to know the motives of the group of graduates who did internships both during and after study for carrying out an internship after graduation: To what extent was it caused by employment problems and to what extent by the desire to enhance competences? Change of professional orientation by the end of study or personality traits could also be influencing factors Third, it would be valuable to analyse the impact of internships on employment success in later career stages as well.

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7

Comparative Study of Technology Transfer Systems in Germany and Russia

Ekaterina Piotrowski

1. Introduction

With the growing importance of science and technology for the economic growth, it became more necessary to monitor and examine technology performance, to study national strategies, institutional structures, and to observe mechanisms of technology transfer. Despite of the progress in the technology transfer development, there are some real misunderstandings in functioning of the research systems when dealing with different national systems. A study on two countries makes it possible to make science and technology comparable and to understand their structures from different national perspectives of Germany and Russia. The current study observes the higher education as well as other sectors of science and technology national systems, discusses institutional structures, and makes general assessment of technology transfer between higher education institutions and industry in both countries. On example of comparative study between Germany and Russia, current study reflects a variety of attributes of the science and technology systems, includes relevant indicators assessing national technology transfer systems as well as central technology agents. Among technology transfer participants, higher education institutions are generators of knowledge. Historically, according to the Humboldtian model of university, the role of the universities in the societies involved the functions of higher education as well as basic and long-term research. This Humboldt's model shaped the philosophy of higher education institutions in last centuries in Germany as well as in Russia. Recently, the higher education institutions are in focus of innovation and economic growth discussion. They have complemented their task with another element often labelled as *technology transfer* or so-called *third mission* and started to act entrepreneurially. This phenomenon was described by Henry Etzkowitz as the *second academic revolution* where the university is not only a provider of human resources and research results but generator of innovations and economic activity (Etzkowitz 2001, pp. 13, 19).

2. Theoretical, Methodological, and Conceptual Frameworks

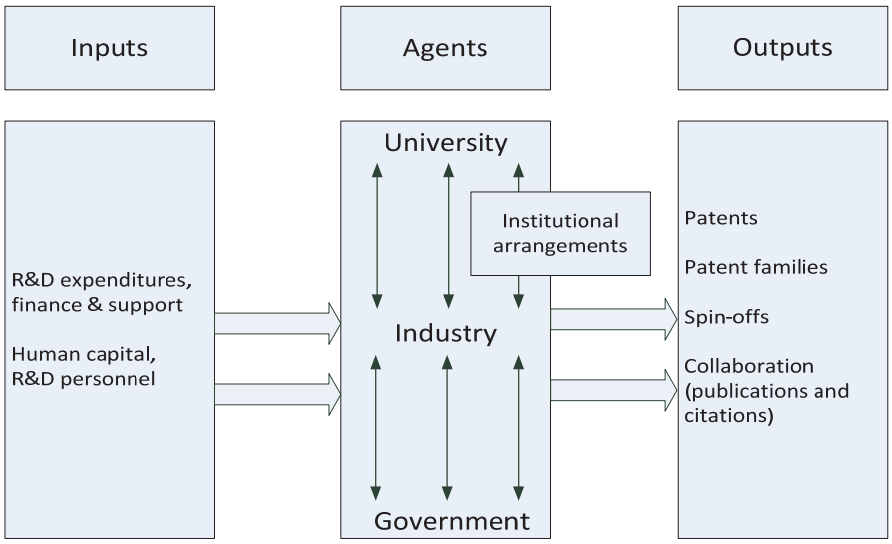
Research and innovation policies are critical to sustain a country's technological performance. The main rationale for innovation policy relies on the paradigm of market failure (Rammer 2006, p. 267). This paradigm is based on the idea that the market is the most efficient allocator of goods and services, but the government role is to interfere by removing barriers to the free market, through appropriate intellectual property policies, free trade agreements, neutral impact taxation, and limited regulation of enterprise. The main role of higher education institutions is not as a trader of technology but an educator and a provider of public research (Bozeman 2000, pp. 631-632). Among the new conceptual approaches that have influenced the innovation policy worldwide is *national innovation system* which stresses the role of interaction of various actors and institutions (Rammer 2006, p. 267) and the *concept of path dependency*. The concept of path dependency assumes that the interaction between research players is strongly characterised by path dependency which states that various (e.g. economic) factors interlock and strengthen each other mutually. The concept of national innovation systems perceives the system of networks, participants, and interactions. According to this approach, a national innovation system consists of participants involved into the research process such as enterprises, universities, research institutes, etc. The national research system includes the role of main players and their division of labour, available resources (e.g. human capital) and infrastructure (e.g. education, public research) (Meyer-Krahmer and Schmoch 1998, pp. 845-846, p. 849).

The idea behind the comparative study was to identify the main differences and similarities in German and Russian technology transfer systems, and how these can be explained. The comparative method using indicator approach aimed to (1) develop systematic knowledge that allows mere description and generalizations; (2) derive answers to questions on the basis of existing theoretical framework; and (3) extract information and comparable indicators that are reliable and open to replication (Pennings et al. 2006, p. 5). The science and technology indicators were extracted from the *Frascati Manual* of the OECD (OECD 2002a), the OECD indicators from the *Pilot Study on Benchmarking of Industry-Science Relationships in France and the UK* (OECD 2002b); the UNESCO *International Review of Science and Technology Statistics and Indicators* (UNESCO 2003); *Innovation and Research Indicators of the Centre for European Economic Research* (ZEW 2004); OECD *Main S&T Indicators* (OECD 2010); the *European Union Innovation Scoreboard* (European Union 2012), and the OECD *Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard* (OECD 2011b). The main statistical data were retrieved by the latest available years from the sources: OECD, Eurostat, UNESCO, World Economic Forum, and some other sources. The choice of the indicator approach is also based on the motivation to compare *real* figures: there is a lot of information about programmes of support and general description of scientific structures but

the technology systems and scientific inputs and outputs compared to other countries are hardly described.

In addition to theoretical framework, selected indicators, and extracted available data, (1) the main determinants of innovation capability by Robert J.W. Tijssen (2004), (2) the heuristic concept of national innovation system by Harald Legler, Christian Rammer and Ulrich Schmoch (2006), (3) the innovation system model of the United Nations Environmental Programme (2001) as well as (4) technology transfer and innovation system participants by Roman Gurbiel (2002) facilitated to shape the conceptual framework of the study (Gurbiel 2002, p. 5; Legler et al. 2006, pp. 5-6; Tijssen 2004, pp. 698-699; UNEP 2001, p. 15):

Figure 1: The Concept of the Comparative Study



Guided by the concept, technology transfer systems in Germany and Russia based on available indicators were compared reflecting a variety of attributes of the science and technology systems and including central technology agents (see Demarchuk 2012, pp. 195-240 for details). The study provided major differences and similarities in the technology transfer structures in compared countries as well as sector portfolios and university-industry relations in Germany and Russia.

3. Discussion and Portfolios

3.1 Major Differences in National Technology Transfer Systems

The research intensity in Germany is roughly two times higher than in Russia by volume of research and development spending as percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Research and development spending in relation to the population in Germany is over 10 times higher than in Russia. This difference, however, may be partly explained by different economies, partly by different national policies and institutional structures. The larger scale of research and development expenditures in Germany has certain advantages for research and development outputs e.g. patents granted.

3.1.1 Higher Education Portfolio

The difference in research and development expenditures in the higher education sector may not be explained by economic but by policy reasons. The domestic spending on research and development in higher education institutions in Germany is more than five and half times higher than in Russia. This indicates that research activities in Russian higher education institutions are hardly possible with poor financing policy. This is reflected on the stocks of the research and development personnel and researchers in the Russian higher education: they are almost six times lower than in Germany. Several programmes were developed by the Russian government in order to support research and development in the higher education sector. However, the statistical data for assessing the situation are not available yet and the reforms need some time to give fruitful results. The higher education sector in Germany is research-oriented and receives government and business support for these needs. The Russian higher education sector is less research-oriented and does not practice research as much as German one. Therewith, higher education as research performer is stronger in Germany than in Russia.

3.1.2 Business Sector Portfolio

Business sector expenditures as percentage of GDP in Russia is almost two and half times lower than in Germany. Over 57 percent of research and development in the business sector is financed directly by the government of the Russian Federation which makes Russia the OECD leader on government-financed research and development in business sector. German government finances directly about 4.5 percent of business research and development. This difference may be explained by the fact that German business sector body is more diversified and financially autonomous than the Russian one: the forms of ownerships of major business enterprises in Russia (enterprises are mostly state-owned corporations/companies) indicate less private decision-making and financial autonomy. State-owned enter-

prises create monopolies, roughly speaking: majority of the business sector, including research activities, belongs to the state. This phenomenon may be identified as nationalised business sector. Moreover, OECD (2011a), defines Russia as "poor business environment" and "anti-competitive" (OECD 2011a, p. 5). Compared to the Russian counterpart, the research performers in Germany have more opportunities for research competition. These differences may be the reasons for different research outputs including patent portfolios and publications.

3.1.3 Governmental Research Portfolio

The governmental research and development policies in Russia are difficult to define for the reason of missing data. Generally speaking, data on the Russian Federation are less available in the international databanks of OECD and Eurostat than those of German counterpart. The governmental sector in Russia has more than twice higher amount of research and development personnel and researchers comparing to Germany. The index of patent applications is lower than in Germany though. The reasons for poorer technological performance may reveal the differences in the institutional structures in two countries.

3.1.4 Institutional Portfolio

Despite many significant differences between the German and Russia research and development systems, many individual elements of the two national systems may be functionally compared.

Table 1: Functional Similarities between Research and Development Institutions in Germany and Russia

	Germany	Russia
Education, research	Universities universities of applied sciences (education, main focus on basic research)	Universities: 2 National Universities 9 Federal Universities 29 National Research Universities other Universities (education, main focus on basic research)
Basic research	Helmholtz Centres Max Planck Institutes Leibniz Association*	Russian Academy of Sciences Russian Academy of Education Russian Academy of Art Russian Academy of Agricultural sciences* Russian Academy of Medical Sciences* Russian Academy of Architecture and Construction Sciences*

Table 2 continued

Public mission, public interest	Helmholtz Centres German Academies of Science Departmental Research Institutes Federal States research organisations	Russian Academies of Sciences Institutes of the Ministries
Applied research, Technology transfer	Fraunhofer Society Leibniz Association* Federal States research organisations An-Institutes Technological and science parks	State Research Centres Federal Research and Production Centres Russian Academy of Agricultural sciences* Russian Academy of Medical Sciences* Russian Academy of Architecture and Construction Sciences* National Research Centres (Kurchatov Institute) Technological and science parks
Applied research, development	Research by German Federation of Industrial Research Associations Networks and Clusters Industrial Research	Industrial Research Networks and Clusters

* Both, basic and applied research

Composed from Abramson, H. Norman et al. (1997), p. 11; Ministry of Science of the Russian Federation (2012); OECD (2011a), pp. 154-158, 212. Research in Germany – Land of Ideas (2012).

The German research and development institutional infrastructure is more diverse than the Russian one. In Germany, the operational responsibility between the public research and development institutions and their technology transfer activity as well is wider than in Russia. The major and biggest player in the Russian research is the RAS focused on basic research. Other academies of sciences participate both in applied and basic research. Helmholtz Centres and Max Planck Institutes as well as the RAS and some other Russian academies are characterised by their public base funding and basic research orientation. German Fraunhofer Institutes conduct primarily applied research with the mission of technology transfer to industry. Russia does not have similar to Fraunhofer structure. German and Russian universities have as functions education and research with focus on basic research. Nevertheless, Russian higher education institutions are primarily focused on education. Russian higher education institutions perform less research outputs than German counterparts: traditionally in Russia the universities were not seen as research performers; poor financing is also the reason for low technological performance. Recent reforms on Federal and National Research Universities have not shown tangible results yet. It is difficult to assess them for the shortage of statisti-

cal data. Generally speaking, according to the OECD classification of national research systems, Germany may be characterised as country with an average share of government research and development funding and performance with broad-based system (OECD 2002b, p. 31) (both universities and institutes involved into research and development), whereas Russia is a country with a very high share of government research and development funding and performance with institute-based system.

3.1.5 University-Industry Relations Portfolio

The research and development expenditures in the higher education sector of Germany and Russia are very contrasting. The research and development in the Russian higher education sector is less enabled for poor financing, thus the creation of technology is hampered. The government sector in Russia receives a greater financial support than the higher education sector. In Germany, on contrary, the higher education sector receives more means than the governmental sector for research and development. The expenditures influence the research environment and therewith the research and development personnel. The stocks of research and development personnel in the Russian higher education sector are six times lower than in Germany. The government sector in Russia possesses twice more researchers than the German one. The financial university-industry relations on research and development are as follows: Russian industry supports research and development in the higher education sector more than the German one, the difference makes 8 percent. This indicator, according to Ulrich Schmoch may represent contract and collaborative research (Schmoch 1999, p. 53). There are no available data helping to assess higher education of the business sector, but, in both countries, large innovative firms tend to benefit more from the public sector than small and medium enterprises.

The research and development higher education outcomes in Germany are much higher than in Russia which shows more intense university-industry relations in Germany. Even though legal basis in intellectual property rights (IPR) is positive in both countries in the sense of creation of spin-offs out of universities and patent applications by the universities' inventors, the patent applications to the European Patent Office showed that in 2008 there were 3.903 patent applications per million inhabitants from the German higher education sector comparing to Russia with 0.008 applications per million inhabitants. According to Ulrich Schmoch (1999), patents originating from universities represent existing or intended contacts between universities and industrial partners (Schmoch 1999, p. 53) which means that the Russian higher education sector has fewer contracts with the industry than the German one. Statistical data show that after the legislation reforms on patents in 2008, the Russian higher education sector reduced the patent applications to the European Patent Office. Considering poor financing of the

higher education research sector, it is hard to believe that the situation on patenting will be positively improved by legislative reforms only. The higher education sector in Germany fulfilled more patent applications than the government sector whereas in Russia this situation is the opposite. The co-authored publications between industry and the higher education sector were more frequent in Germany than in Russia in 2000. In both countries government-industry relations in sense of publications were more intense.

The research interface in Germany is more favourable for university-industry relations than in Russia, it is more turbulent and the transfer connections are deeper, according to research outputs. In Russia, the government is the most engaged into research. In Russian industrial sector, the research activities are concentrated in state corporations and state-owned enterprises. The business environment for spin-offs is more favourable in Germany than in Russia: in Germany the amount of days to start a business is twice lower than in Russia; the culture of spin-offs in Germany is more developed, in Russia, spin-offs from universities are a rare and new phenomenon; administrative burdens on start-ups and barriers to competition are much higher in Russia than in Germany.

3.2 Major Similarities in National Technology Transfer Systems

Research and development expenditures as percent of the GDP in the government sector are similar in both countries. That indicates similar public research and development policies in both countries when it is the matter of allocation preferences. In business-funded research and development in the public sector, Germany and Russia stay literally next to each other in the OECD statistics. Generally speaking, the amount of research and development personnel in physical persons in Germany and Russia is alike. Both in Germany and Russia the biggest amount of inventions was made in the business enterprise sectors. In both countries, large innovative firms tend to benefit more from the public sector than small and medium enterprises and tend to do more regular training activities than small and medium enterprises. Both in Germany and Russia collaborating innovative firms are mostly large enterprises which make over 40 percent of innovative firms. In both countries, governmental impact on national technology transfer system is significant.

4. Conclusion

The technological performance of national science and technology systems as well as their transfer processes may be assessed due a set of comparative indicators split into inputs (research orientation) such as expenditures and human capital and outputs (technological performance) indicators such as patent applications or scientific collaboration indexes. The institutional structure is also important for the

reason that is works as *converter* of inputs into outputs. The comparison of national technology transfer systems allows seeing countries' research and development orientation and technological effectiveness in general perspective. The comparative study showed that the research and development orientation in Germany and Russia is different because the resources are allocated differently in sectors of performance: Germany sets more on research in higher education whereas Russia does it in the government sector. The research institutions in Germany and Russia have different sets of tasks, financial possibilities and decision-making abilities. Thus, the research activities are concentrated differently in the research systems of compared countries. The German higher education sector is much stronger than the Russian one as research performer. However, in both countries, business enterprise sector performs more technology transfer outputs, according to patent statistics. The comparison of technology transfer systems in both countries was successful. The mechanisms of technology transfer between higher education and industry were defined. However, the comparison based on available indicators did not allow deeper assessing of relationships between the sectors including business enterprise and higher education relationships. Existing indicators were not sufficient to look deeper into the technology transfer channels (e.g., to assess mobility of researchers between the sectors). However, it became possible to make general conclusions about the university-industry relations and define some differences and similarities between the two countries. In Germany, the university-industry relationships are more developed than in Russia. German higher education institutions are more involved into transfer activities because the research interface in more favourable for university-industry connections (e.g., barriers for doing business, etc.).

Although the relation of universities and industrial enterprises are an important topic, only a limited number of studies on the linking mechanisms have been undertaken. This point may be also supported by the fact that a few comparable international statistical data were found concerning the whole range of university-industry relations in the two compared counties. The statistical reflections on mechanisms of interaction between industry and universities (e.g., patenting, spin-offs, co-publications, etc.) are not likely to find in the international databanks. The research literature carries more descriptive than tangible character, data are not in comparable form, and figures are rarely consistent.

Future research challenges would be to find out the orientation of the research between the sectors including the higher education and business sectors (short-term or long term research); traditional areas of cooperation between the sectors; the effectiveness of technology transfer units within universities, or types of university-industry interactions according to disciplinary fields. From the statistical perspective of the current study, researchers belong to different sectors, which might not always be accurate. The mobility of scientists between the sectors would be challenging to discover. These relations are possible to discover due to

empirical investigations. Public employment legislation as well as regulations governing temporary mobility and secondary employment would be necessary to observe in order to define legislative barriers for university-industry relations.

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8

Supporting Internationalisation of Higher Education – the Way to Develop

A Case Study of Vietnam

Vi Thanh Son

1. Introduction and Rationale of the Study

Internationalisation of higher education is a popular term but there are not many publications or studies that discuss internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam. Those that do are primarily concerned with general issues of the higher education (HE) system. Despite some recent reforms, the higher education system in Vietnam is still facing many challenges due to its transition period, such as unclear regulations, top-down processes, lack of finance and manpower capacity, poor teaching and learning methods, etc. Additionally, the concepts of internationalisation, as well as the strategies, are not really developed and popularized. Many Vietnamese higher education institutions still over-estimate internationalized activities as anything foreign; hence, they try to follow some foreign trends that neglect to look at the real situation of their own institutions. This can lead policy-makers to imitate the other models lavishly so that they can end up on the wrong track of promoting internationalisation in the Vietnamese reality. Meanwhile, the international relations departments (IRDs) in most higher education institutions themselves are the main actors in operating the international activities of higher education institutions.

The thesis topic is investigated according to an urgent need to strengthen the innovative function of Vietnamese higher education through internationalisation processes. The chosen approach consists of thorough desk research and a case study focused on the implementation of internationalisation strategies and activities of most higher education institutions in Vietnam, which directly reflects the direction from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in the internationalisation process. In particular, I will look at the role of the International Relations Department of Cantho University (CTU). CTU is an important state higher education institution in the Mekong Delta – the biggest agricultural production area in

the entire country, and the cultural, scientific and technical center of the Mekong Delta and Vietnam. The analysis is qualitative and explorative and also discusses the limitations of the thesis in terms of accessibility of data and availability of research literature on internalisation of Vietnamese higher education. My target readers would include all stakeholders involved in higher education institutions and international relations departments in Vietnam, typically policy-makers, educational leaders, educationalists, the government and international partners of higher education.

The research aims to give descriptions of internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam through reviewing its past and look at its present while highlighting the reform and weaknesses of the higher education system and the important roles of international relations departments at Vietnamese higher education institutions. My aims, in other words, are to briefly show what internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam really means and how internationalisation affects higher education in Vietnam with the Government's policies and higher education institutions' international activities towards international cooperation. I will also offer suggestions for the policy options that could be drawn for further development of Vietnamese higher education for internationalisation, typically in the higher education reform process towards international integration. This is important to contribute to the improvement of higher education systems in the process of internationalisation, hence increasing interest in internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam.

Rationales

Vietnam, with its higher education system and internationalisation of higher education, is in the focus of investigation here as the country is rapidly developing in many aspects. Higher education institutions in Vietnam have recently been encouraged to undertake reforms to improve education quality in which internationalisation is being promoted, especially in terms of being "international at home" (IaH). Therefore, there are still some skeptical issues in the process of promoting this trend for higher education so that it is quite necessary to examine the development direction of this process to predict its future for any improvement options. I believe that there are challenges as well as opportunities for internationalisation of Vietnamese HE, so it is crucial to examine what actions the government and higher education institutions have taken to promote internationalisation for educational reform. The issue of internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam will be retrieved from the past to reflect the present and then we will make suggestions for future development.

To realize the above-mentioned objectives of the research, four main points are investigated in this paper

(1) the meaning of internationalisation in Vietnamese higher education in the context of general higher education reforms;
(2) reasons for the need to promote further internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education;
(3) national policies and activities in this context;
(4) Problems, challenges and suggestions for further development.

With these above-mentioned aims, the research is important in several aspects. Firstly, it could help to address the internationalisation of higher education issues for Vietnamese policy-makers and relevant stakeholders in this process. Hence, they can have a closer inward look at Vietnamese higher education for the strategic purpose of promoting internationalisation in line with Vietnamese reality in order to respond to the globalization process. Secondly, it could also provide the leaders of Vietnamese higher education institutions with suggestions for ameliorating the international relations departments in serving the internationalisation task for their universities. Thirdly, higher education researchers can use it as a reference to carry out more investigations in order to examine the comparative angles of internationalisation between Vietnam and other countries. Fourthly, this provides foreign investors wishing to develop cooperation ties with Vietnam with more updated information about the Vietnamese higher education system. Finally, this could also help to fill the void of understanding about concepts and processes of internationalisation of higher education, including its relevant terms in general, as well as the internationalisation process of Vietnamese higher education in particular.

2. Discussion of Literature and Conceptual Framework

Globalization has influenced higher education on a broad scale in every country; hence *internationalisation* is important in all aspects of higher education It is not a new phenomenon. Before analyzing the practical points of a specific country through a case study, I will review the conceptual and organizational framework of internationalisation of higher education from the relevant academic literatures on this field to provide general knowledge on internationalisation of higher education. I mainly discuss internationalisation in higher education as a multi-faceted and complex concept, so there is a thorough and critical discussion of all relevant authors who have analysed internationalisation of higher education in the countries of the developed world.

First, a little bit of history as well as a discussion of approaches to internationalisation is viewed so that one can see the diversity of internationalisation as well as the richness of this concept. Additionally, different interpretations of interna-

tionalisation create some confusion with other related-terms, typically the globalization term. However, the key elements in the definition of internationalisation are related to national and cultural identities as each nation has its unique culture, custom, policy, etc. In the meantime, globalization ignores this issue, and instead tends towards the standardization and convergence of borders. Thus, internationalisation is considered as a certain way an institution or nation responds to the impact of globalization. Moreover, the dynamic process of integrating international/intercultural dimensions into various aspects of HE, covering the sustainability of international dimensions, is identified for internationalisation.

Second, four main rationales for internationalisation have shifted over time, typically in Europe. After World War II, (1) political rationales for internationalisation were prominent with the aims of decolonialisation and nation building; economic and democratic reforms, such as enhancing security, stability and peace; and, later on, strengthening solidarity with developing countries. Continuously, when there is international competence and competiveness in the global market, (2) an economic rationale becomes increasingly important for internationalisation. These economic rationales refer to objectives for direct/short term effects (such as institutional income generation from international students) or indirect/long-term effects (qualified international graduates having a strong contribution to the international competitive power and position of a certain institution/nation). Additionally, (3) academic rationales arose later on to serve the aims and functions of higher education, such as student mobility, improving education quality and new technology in learning and teaching. Finally, (4) cultural rationales are present concerning the unique cultural position of a certain nation as well as promoting mutual understanding and knowledge of different languages and cultures (Van der Wende 1997a, p. 226; OECD 2004, p. 99). At this point, these academic and cultural rationales supplement economic rationales to achieve the goals of producing qualified graduates in the competitive market. Besides, some new rationales emerge within those four categories of rationale. Still, it is important to point out that rationales of internationalisation differ among institutions, nations and actors. Nevertheless, they are not exclusive categories but are linked together for internationalisation with the hierarchical priority. This priority could also be changed over time and between nations.

Thirdly, there are different actors with various types, levels and certain instruments affecting the internationalisation process of higher education. Those actors and factors can vary between different institutions and nations. However, in general, government, education and private sectors involving different stakeholder groups on a global scale have strong influence on the implementation of internationalisation policies; in particular, in the education sector with the group of academic leaders, students and teachers. Typically, specialized officers in international relations departments play dramatically important roles for integrating international and intercultural dimensions of higher education institutions; even the level

of their importance depends on centralized and decentralized systems. Therefore, policy makers need to be aware of all these actors in the process of implementing internationalisation policies.

Finally, the fourth section shows the samples of conditions, models and strategies which have a strong impact on international activities developed over time with different scholars in various contexts on a general scale. It depends on different situations and institutions to determine the most suitable ones, as Knight (1997, p. 16) informs that 'each organization has its own organizational culture and governance/operating systems which affect the choice and success of different strategies'. Each country can use them as references since even though national policies for internationalisation of higher education exist, they are also parts of wider higher education policies (Van der Wende 1997b, p. 20). Typically, there are two prominent strategies: (1) academic programs and activities involving staff, students and institutions in the internationalisation process and (2) organizational strategies that help to integrate international dimensions into the processes of higher education institutions' policy, administration and structure, and these task the IR offices with important roles for internationalisation. Indeed, both strategies are interrelated with mutual support for internationalisation.

In brief, the conceptual and organizational framework of internationalisation of higher education in the four sections helps to provide a theoretical knowledge background of the internationalisation concept and process, including the role of international relations departments for international activities. I later use these conceptualisations as benchmarks for the analysis of internationalisation in Vietnamese higher education, i.e. a less developed country.

3. Major Theme and Findings

3.1. Internationalisation of Higher Education in Vietnam

This chapter will examine internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam, including the promotion of international activities in higher education institutions in which four main aspects are concluded as follows.

First, an overview of higher education from the past to the present with some reforms as well as some problems served as the background to highlight the reasons for Vietnam wishing to promote internationalisation. Indeed, it is more comprehensive to see how internationalized activities of higher education in Vietnam work by looking back to the time of foreign influences on higher education and then examining its present form:

Vietnamese higher education was influenced by the Confucianism of China with the Chinese script and then by Western institutional models and Romanized script of France, the Soviet Union and the United States that mainly served human resource needs of feudal regimes as well as colonial officialdom. Additionally, the

initial movement of studying abroad at that time was rooted in the political rationales for Vietnamese patriots to obtain knowledge for national salvation and post war construction.

The present higher education system promotes international cooperation for national development faced with globalization forces.

This portrays the gradual development of higher education in approaching internationalisation. It also serves as the background to highlight the government's reform policies in strengthening the higher education system for training qualified manpower, hence developing the nation's economy.

Second, this chapter addresses how the government and Vietnamese universities have tried to internationalize higher education, especially in terms of international cooperation. There have been many changes and reforms in the Vietnamese higher education system since renovation reform. Those reforms have lead to an internationalisation of higher education that has been driven by academic, political, economic and cultural rationales. Economic and academic rationales for strengthening the human capability for national development in general and for the higher education system in particular become prominent as a reason for integrating international activities in higher education institutions. To some degree, this has helped to locate the national identity after the war and to join the global competitive economy.

Third, the impact of internationalisation on the current Vietnamese higher education system is strongly highlighted in different aspects, typically through expanding access to higher education through preferential policies and distance learning. Additionally, accreditation and quality assurance arrangements are also set up. Essentially, the meaning of internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education in this sense is wide. In preparation for opening doors to welcome more international students into the country, Vietnam has positioned itself in equity of access to higher education for everyone from any country and for every Vietnamese, especially supporting favourable policies for those with financial difficulty and minority groups. Therefore, in this way, Vietnam shows that the meaning of internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education is not only to integrate international activities into universities for the efficiency of the higher education system providing high-level graduates in a society undergoing industrialization and modernization, but also to promote human rights and equal opportunity to higher education access for all.

Fourth, the Government pushes the demand for highly skilled manpower for the country through preferential policies on student mobility and IaH. This chapter shows the national policies toward accelerated internationalisation through the Vietnamese government's commitment to international alliances, especially with strategies for educational development in 2001-2010 and the/a Vietnamese higher education renovation agenda (HERA) over the period of 2006-2020. These policies also help the process of student/staff mobility and the growing presence of

foreign programs and universities in Vietnam become more achievable and prominent.

Regarding student and staff mobility, it is developed for promoting knowledge exchange and intercultural understanding. This international activity also reflects the mobility phenomena. Vietnamese students abroad follow the flow of "vertical degree programme mobility" – mobility for the main goal of 'knowledge transfer' through studying in a programme of perceived higher quality than that available in Vietnam, typically in developed countries (e.g. the US, Australia, France Germany, the UK) and some fascinating Asian destinations as a new trend (e.g. Japan, Singapore, Thailand). Meanwhile, the flow of foreign students coming to study in Vietnam who mainly focus on Vietnamese language, culture and agriculture provide an illustration of "horizontal temporary mobility" – mobility for "experience-contrasting knowledge" through studying in another country of more or less the same quality at home (Teichler 2004, pp. 52-53).

Concerning IaH through the internationalized curriculum and joint international and foreign programs at local campuses, the Vietnamese higher education system can easily approach international standards for quality improvement. IaH has brought out many advantages for developing higher education in Vietnam, especially in the new century of globalisation, such as: (1) many international projects have been taking place in Vietnam and contributing to infrastructure upgrades, developing teaching and learning quality and improving education management. Additionally, the establishment of many foreign institutions in Vietnam also strengthens the international relationship. This also creates more chances for brain gain. (2) Vietnamese education is moving towards the participation of international accreditation and credit transfer. (3) Finally, curricula of many essential courses are undergoing innovation to ensure graduate employment that helps speed up the national economy as well as retain the manpower for the country through IaH programs.

Regarding internationalized curriculum in Vietnam, the process is slowly changing and encountering some problems. Thus, the MOET is still trying to adopt and develop similar curriculum and management as those in developed countries. However, the research points out that the process of internationalized curriculum in Vietnam is influenced strongly by the Anglo-Saxon tradition of higher education, especially the American higher education experience. Moreover, the above-mentioned international programmes taking place in Vietnamese higher education institutions show different types of internationalized curricula. They include curriculum leading to internationally recognized qualifications, curriculum leading to joint or double degrees and curricula for foreign students. These are reflected in joint degrees, diploma supplements and joint curriculum development in Vietnamese higher education institutions.

Overall, it seems that international activities in Vietnamese higher education institutions, as well as the Government policies, have more tendencies to promote

internationalisation of teaching and learning, but not as much forresearch. It is important that internationalisation of research be developed in order to enhance the qualified work force more effectively for Vietnamese development. Tran (2005, p. 30) confirms that Vietnamese higher education is facing many challenges rooted in national and international changes. However, I agree with Pham and Fry (2004) and Welch (2009) that there is the promising prospect of higher education with the increasing flow of more foreign ventures and partnerships, even if this also stresses the role of MOET in quality control. Last but not least in importance, with the inner wishes of a strong Vietnamese nation, not only in the war of the country's defence for reunification and independence but also in peace promotion, especially with the international support and cooperation the Vietnamese higher education system will quickly enter into the process of the regional and international integration for national development.

3.2. Organizational Strategy – The Support Service for Internationalisation in Vietnamese Higher Education Institutions: Case Study of the International Relations Department at CTU – Vietnam

This section mainly analyses the role of the international relations department in promoting internationalisation at CTU and it reveals five key issues. The focus in this chapter is on organisational strategies of internationalisation and the role of the International Relations Department. After introducing the structure and the tasks of the International Relations Department and carrying out a SWOT analysis, the set-up is compared to the ideal types of managing international relations at a university as developed by Toerenbeck (2005).

First, I have tried to address the proactive model of internationalisation (Rudzki1995, p. 438 – in Appendix 6) through five stages in this analysis. In the first stage, the deeper look inside the system of the institution is examined. This includes the introduction of CTU (to see how growth at the present time is a result of many efforts in different aspects, typically in promoting IR activities), and the description of structures, activities and missions, and the SWOT analysis of the international relations department in carrying out international activities for CTU. In the second stage, the definition and rationales of internationalisation are revealed for leading the international relations department to the process approach to internationalisation (third stage) in order to integrate international dimensions into CTU. This aims to enhance educational quality and human capacity as well as to maintain equity of higher education access, typically for ethnic minority students from remote towns in the Mekong Delta. In this way, the direction and implementation of the strategies for internationalisation at the international relations department (fourth stage) are indicated, in which student/staff exchange and IaH are strongly emphasized. Finally, in the fifth stage, I try to compare them to the ideal types in Toerenbeck (2005) for reviewing and giving further suggestions for stra-

tegic options on promoting internationalisation through the international relations department.

Second, there are some specific benefits from the international activities at CTU. They are: developing the competence of teaching staff and researchers at CTU; improving teaching methods with more student-centered learning; improving the infrastructure for CTU; and renewing the curriculum. In terms of an internalized curriculum, based on curricula regulated by the MOET, CTU has cooperated with different international partners to compile and renew the training programs to be suited to the international standard. Typically, the curriculum of the US model has been studied. This long and regular process was started in the early 1990s at CTU. The first beneficiary is the student as they can be a part of the new knowledge system with modern teaching methods and a modern learning environment with high technology. Additionally, the degree is internationally acknowledged so that it is easy for them to continue to higher study through the transferable credit system. Moreover, the intercultural skills and understanding could be enhanced with some typical international campus events organized by the international relations department.

Third, there are some difficulties and challenges towards the internationalisation process at the international relations department. They include lack of funding, lack of autonomy, lack of staff capacity, lack of infrastructure, lack of knowledge about international networks, lack of commitment of international partners, limitation of language capacity from staff and students, organizational culture with manual work, bureaucracy and CTU's late entry into internationalisation. The chapter also aims to call for more attention and preferable policies from MOET in supporting and structuring strong international relations departments for creating a stable step in promoting internationalisation at higher education institutions.

Fourth, the international relations task at CTU has some new changes and developments in which some former cooperation projects end and new ones commence. The international coordination form has become the cooperative direction for mutually beneficial objectives. Additionally, the international relations department tries to support equity in higher education through involving students from ethnic minorities in various international activities on campus to expand their academic horizons. In this way, I can see that internationalisation at CTU within the operation of the international relations department is on it's way to move from "Quadrant B" - a systematic-marginal strategy to "Quadrant D"- a systematic-high central strategy (Davies 1995, pp. 15-17). The fact is that over time, more international activities have been taking place at CTU. They are becoming well-organized and clearly directed under the control of the international relations department as autonomy is gradually being given to the international relations department. Still, CTU can move to Quadrant D more quickly if the international relations department obtains greater autonomy from CTU leaders and MOET.

Indeed, the international relations department at CTU in particular, and in most international relations departments of Vietnamese higher education institutions in general, hold important roles in promoting most international activities. This is confirmed strongly by MOET (2006). Moreover, according to the vice director of international relations department- CTU, the international relations department supports other departments in many ways besides the international activities at CTU which occur independently of the international relations department. However, to me, there are collaborative research activities between CTU academics and academics in other countries, joint publications and promoting internationalisation on research of which the international relations department may hardly be aware. In fact, it is not easy for the central university administration to know much about individual colleges or academics in a localized way.

Last but not least, compared to some other models, the international relations department at CTU still has to make many improvements. Nevertheless, I think these models can only become the ideal ones when they are applied in the right context and situation of a certain culture. Optimistically, the international relations department can develop in more different directions on the right track of internationalisation to be an ideal one at a certain time in the future if one can observe, compare and develop it based on the real situation and the need of CTU, as well as the culture of Vietnam.

4. Summary, Conclusion, and Policy Implications

Internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education has been transferred from:

(1) the colonial style import of higher education institutions and languages and a limited number of initial Vietnamese outbound mobility (on one side for war-compensation solutions and post war construction, on the other side for serving colonial bureaucracy) to

(2) both import and export aspects through in- and out-bound student/staff mobility and IaH (to improve Vietnamese higher education quality for manpower capacity and to promote brain-gain at home).

The main effects of Vietnamese higher education reform with regard to internationalisation processes on national policies and activities in promoting international cooperation among higher education institutions are seen in:

(1) a diversification of funding from differently involved stakeholders in supporting education and different higher education institutions (e.g. international universities, joint degree programs, distance learning, etc.). This allows the higher education system in Vietnam to expand with more choices and chances for students to enrol in different higher education institutions so that Vietnam can become a knowledge-based society by the year 2020;

(2) growth in equity in terms of access to higher education for all, through promoting student/staff mobility and approaching internationalized curricula for setting up joint international programs and foreign higher education institutions in Vietnam, as well as issuing more preferable policies for Vietnamese students in the areas of socio-economic difficulty and ethnic minority groups;
(3) westernization in terms of management, through giving more autonomy to higher education institutions to some extent, approaching accreditation, quality assurance and developing joint international programs. This reveals that Western standards strongly influence the development of international activities in the Vietnamese higher education system.
(4) internationalism in terms of the impact of French colonialism historically, and in today's internationalisation being ideologically dominated by other developed countries, typically the US, through an internationalized curriculum and use of the English language.

Besides supporting international cooperation for national development, within such a centralized system the research also reveals some challenges in this process of Vietnam entering the transitional stage, hence recommendations are developed. There are future challenges for the further development of internationalisation in Vietnamese higher education. The thesis has suggested some recommendations to deal with these challenges, specifically the issue of foreign rulers and colonialists as well as political influence from other countries, which has created a particular context for "life and death internationalisation".

(1) Brain drain does take place, especially in term of mobility. Still, there exists the situation that the people are just temporarily emigrating to widen their views and search for opportunities which their original country does not give them, and then they can come back. This complicated issue requires suitable national mechanisms. The government should issue more attractive policies as well as clear decisions and stricter regulations to encourage Vietnamese to come back home after their study abroad. It is also important to discuss with other countries internationally the need to retain manpower for Vietnam. Nevertheless, to me, self-consciousness and devotion to the national development by individuals is one of the most effective ways for addressing the issue of brain-drain. Additionally, IaH with a better education quality can help to retain the human resource studying at home.
(2) Neo-colonialism could be taking place since a foreign culture with its language may be implemented. Therefore, it is crucial for the government to have careful consideration in giving permission to proposals to open international campuses in Vietnam and to ask foreign programs to follow the quality accreditation process. This process should include the presence of a third country or an international quality accreditation organisation in order to protect the learners' rights (MOET 2005, pp. 38-39). In addition, it is very important for

the government to have a more intensive management mechanism in these non-public institutions. The government must be equal in managing and giving grants between public and non-public higher education institutions in order to maintain quality for both systems. There is pressure to have routine audits, more regulative frameworks and an accreditation system for non public universities (MOET 2005, pp. 68). Moreover, Vietnamese higher education institutions should not only encourage Vietnamese students learning foreign languages through international activities, but should also bring Vietnamese language and culture to local and international students and partners. Importantly, developing international activities must go hand in hand with orienting the perception of value, fostering capacity and ensuring equality in learning opportunities for all.

(3) Furthermore, in response to different challenges, Bernardo (2004, cited in Meek 2006, p.15) suggests that higher education systems in developing countries of the Asian Pacific Region should develop more policies on research initiatives through participation in collaborative international programs and projects with developed countries, hence strategic policies on international cooperation must be promoted for long-term impact. In this aspect, Vietnam, in the same flow with other nations of the Asia Pacific region, is gradually building research capacity and expanding its higher education system. In fact, the flow of opening doors to more international cooperation in this era is seen as an effective way to develop a better higher education system in Vietnam. Still, at the same time, when there is growing international higher education in Vietnam, there are questions of how to manage the desirable quality level in higher education institutions. Additionally, for the future plans of further developments in higher education, Vietnam plans to set up a new higher education system meeting the demands of the new economy in which MOET wants to maintain the existing university links and to improve educational quality and facilities for universities. This requires an effort from MOET to have better quality control mechanisms, new curricula, updated teaching and learning methods and a sufficient budget.

(4) However, facing the force of globalization, Vietnam is trying to follow some trends of internationalisation in order to reach international standards but has made some limping steps. This can be seen in new activities of internationalisation at home (internationalized curricula and international programs in Vietnam). Meanwhile, there are some challenging tasks that Vietnam needs to fulfill before moving forwards, typically matters of quality assurance, qualified manpower, finance, etc. Therefore, it is important for the government to locate Vietnam's position in national, regional and international contexts in order to see clearly what the problems and potentials of the higher education system are in the process of internationalisation. Then, the suitable plans and the strategic

crossroads for achievable outcomes can be proposed and directed. Moreover, a review in terms of the quantity and quality of the programs should be conducted to ensure what is on the right track and to make changes for the ones on the wrong tracks. This indeed creates the basic step for integrating Vietnamese education in the global community.

(5) All these matters require more attention in developing the right policies with enough autonomy as well as improving IR staff at institutions for pushing the internationalisation process. Indeed, the capacity of IR officers needs to be enhanced with more qualifications (typically in management, project management, administration, language and ICT skills and flexibility). international relations departments also have to obtain more autonomy for initiatives in driving internationalisation. It is true that IaH is an effort from higher education institutions. However, without the government's support and favourable framework conditions, the international activities of Vietnamese higher education institutions, and particularly the international relations departments, will exist in a vacuum. Besides, the efforts from other actors (educational managers, academic staff, families, students, companies, organizations and all of society, etc.) also play significant roles in promoting internationalisation. Therefore, it is important for the government and educational leaders to have flexibility in their management and encourage the development of a shared vision.

In sum, internationalisation itself is already a strategic means for improving Vietnamese higher education and certainly the phenomenon of internationalisation has brought out many advantages as well as many matters of concern. It is a big challenge for Vietnam in proceeding with international activities when there are severe resource constraints and also centralised government control. However, that a developing country like Vietnam joining the internationalisation of higher education is faced with some challenges is unavoidable, and we do need time and experience for adjustment. In fact, the international activities and greater numbers of foreign campuses in Vietnam create cooperation and competition among higher education institutions in Vietnam for quality improvement as well as raise the profile of Vietnamese higher education in the regional and international community. Therefore, this is not only a challenge but also a great opportunity for Vietnamese higher education to move towards modernization and industrialization. Although Vietnamese higher education is influenced by some external forces, it has been strongly built by its own steadfast system. Moreover, William Butler Yeats quoted that "Education is not filling a bucket, but lighting a fire". Therefore, it is hoped that when we look at the prospect of Vietnamese higher education in the process of internationalisation, there is an endlessly burning flame that keeps on lighting up more strongly in any corner of Vietnam.

Surely, with sound leadership from the Party, the government and educationalists in Vietnam, as well as the efforts from other educational managers, administrative and academic staff, students, families, companies, organizations and the entire society, etc., and especially through the cooperation and support from many international friends, higher education in Vietnam has been improved through many steps and through different activities. Soon, the future of the internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam will be developed in different directions, for joining international integration along a socialist orientation in order to cope well with the force of globalization.

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9

Internationalization in Lebanese Universities – Rationales, Strategies and Challenges

Madonna Maroun

1. Introduction

Higher education in Lebanon has acquired an international character since the 1830's with the establishment of the first universities by French and American missionaries and has continued to evolve in this perspective. Furthermore, since early years, the movements of the Lebanese diaspora have resulted in a multinational composition of Lebanese people both at home and abroad. At the same time, the diverse and open cultural backgrounds in Lebanon and the autonomy that universities in Lebanon enjoy have attracted many foreign students and allowed many foreign higher education institutions to spread in the Lebanese territory. Hence, internationalization of higher education in Lebanon has evolved naturally and has been a historical process highly controlled by foreign countries and by supranational organizations with the Lebanese state playing a minor passive role in this process. In a way, this rather undisciplined and unplanned process has all along promoted higher education in Lebanon and has allowed it to stand out as an advanced country in the region. But in recent years, with the increased planning and funding of higher education and internationalization in neighbouring countries, and with the relatively stagnant position of Lebanon in this field, concerns grow about the position Lebanon once enjoyed and the competition it is currently facing.

Given the loose relationship existing between the Lebanese government and the universities, the low level of interference of the state with university governance, and the absence of a national regulative framework for university procedures, individual institutional endeavours gain importance, as they form the main driving force behind all internationalization measures of higher education in Lebanon. Furthermore, the somewhat unique composition and history of Lebanese higher education, the lack of resources available for higher education, the large Lebanese diaspora, and the country's rich multicultural society, all bring a new set of rationales for institutions to adopt internationalization.

In the light of the above discussion, this thesis aims to identify the institutional rationales for internationalizing higher education and determine whether universities follow a specific strategy for this process, or whether internationalization is a haphazard, unplanned occurrence. This study has been conducted in the framework of an internship at the National Tempus Office in Beirut with the support of the higher education reform expert team.

2. Methodology and Data Analysis

The data collection methodology adopted in this study includes both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach is based on a questionnaire inspired by that of the International Association of Universities (IAU) and on a thorough analysis of university catalogues in the period 2010/2011 and their corresponding websites. The qualitative approach is based on interviews with specific persons who were willing to be interviewed in the universities, in addition to extensive literature review. Universities that have been covered in this study are those among the 31 universities mentioned in the website of the Lebanese Ministry of Higher Education. The questionnaire was distributed to 19. Out of these, 12 returned the questionnaire. The catalogues of 25 universities have been analyzed. The 6 remaining universities had either no catalogue available online, or the information provided was not sufficient to draw any conclusions. Websites of 27 universities have been analyzed. The remaining 4 either had their websites unavailable or under construction or offering insufficient information. 5 interviews were conducted with the following individuals: the Vice President for Planning and Educational Research at the University of Balamand, the President of the American University of Culture & Education) (AUCE), the Dean of the faculty of Business administration at Manar University, the International Office director at Notre Dame University) (NDU), and finally the Dean of the faculty of Sciences and Humanities at Université de Technologie et de Sciences Appliquées Libano-Française (ULF). Expert literature on internationaliziation of higher education was also reviewed to support the data collection procedure. Unfortunately, formal statistics and research papers on Lebanese higher education are very scarce and (therefore?) reliable sources for the required data were restricted to those from some international organizations, or some rare national institutions.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Definition

The various definitions of “internationalization of education” can be divided into three main categories: a state attained by higher education institutions, a random consequence that is not necessarily a planned result of a given process, or a well-planned procedure as part of a national or an institutional strategy. For the purpose

of this study, higher education internationalization is a strategic process where the integration of an international perspective in all university functions is a rationale, a means and an end at the same time. Higher education internationalization is a means to achieve a desired state in education. Internationalizing education is way to reach other goals. This explains why it is considered as a rationale for many university processes. Furthermore, an internationalized higher education is a desired outcome by itself. In today's global world, internationalization of education as a means to reflect the composition of the real world is regarded as a positive state that should be achieved per se because of the multiple advantages that accompany it.

2.1.2 Rationales and Strategies

"Rationales are the driving force for why a country, sector or institution wants to address and invest in internationalization" (Knight 2006, p.14). Identifying the rationales for internationalization allows a better understanding of the strategies followed and a better assessment of the institutional procedures. Knight and De Wit (1995) have classified the incentives behind internationalization of higher education institutions into four main categories: economic, political, social/cultural and academic.

Based on different rationales, it is possible to recognize four approaches to internationalization and shape a suitable strategy accordingly. The first approach is the capacity building approach based on rationales of meeting higher education demand, enhancing local human capacity and developing local higher education systems. The second is the mutual understanding approach with academic, economic, social and cultural rationales. The third concerns rationales that regard internationalization as additional income and higher education as an exporting industry; and these rationales are related to the revenue generation approach. The last is the skilled migration approach, whose rationales are to attract world elite students and staff and enhance competitiveness of own institutions (OECD 2004). As for the possible strategies, Davies (1995) divides universities into four different quadrants resulting in a two-dimensional matrix. On the one hand, universities can be at any point on a range where internationalization is ad hoc or systematic. On the other hand, internationalization can be marginal or central to all university activities. As for the second dimension, internationalization is considered by some to be a set of marginal activities occupying a low profile in missions and budgeting. In other universities, it is central to all other aspects and functions.

2.1.3 Elements of Higher Education Institutions

To identify what strategies are followed by universities to internationalize their education, it is important to consider different aspects of higher education institutions and determine how they best fit into the strategies and approaches reviewed

above. Hence, indicators have been collected about the university faculty, students, curricula, resources, partnerships and agreements, and governance.

a) "Faculty stimulates student interest in the field of internationalization and generally serves as a catalyst for the overall internationalization of the institution" (Carter 1992, p. 41). Knight (2005) states some basic strategies to form an internationalized faculty. These include recruitment procedures that value international expertise, reward systems that motivate staff contributions, professional development activities, and encouragement of staff participation in international activities

b) Students form the largest population of any higher education institution and as main consumers of the (institution's?) educational services; their geographical mobility holds benefits for the individual student as well as for the whole institution. Developing recruitment processes, facilitating student access and enhancing campus climate for international students are all means to ensure successful student mobility (Hahn and Teichler 2005; Kehm 2003; Lenn 2002).

c) The curriculum allows an international approach to teaching and learning that goes beyond mobility and strengthens international competences in students (Kehm, 2003). It gives an equitable opportunity for all students to get an international exposure and is not restricted only to those who can financially afford education abroad (Kehm and Teichler 2007). It can become international by delivering courses in several languages, notably English, by integrating new courses and subjects, by reforming the teaching process itself, or through university cooperation and agreements (Harari 1992).

d) Furthermore, adequate funding should be allocated for internalization to succeed. This also includes human resources, physical resources – mainly information and communication technology – and appropriate infrastructure for both local and foreign students. The international office is considered as a particular resource. " An international office or positions with experienced personnel to provide advisory, coordination and communication support is of key importance ... to serve in a catalytic ,supportive, service oriented way" (Knight and De Wit 1995, p.10).

e) Partnerships and cooperation agreements between institutions from different countries are among the main aspects of education internationalization. However, it is falsely believed that greater the number of agreements a university signs with foreign partners, the more internationalized it becomes. Effective partnerships depend on adequate resources, construction and implementation of well written contracts, and development of explicit quality assurance and teaching/learning strategies (Davis et al. 2000).

f) In many countries, higher education is under the responsibility of the national government that regulates it, funds it and monitors all aspects of higher education provision. Yet, institutions are granted more autonomy in some countries than in others. Whether it is the state or the institution that is the main governing body, effective governance at an institution wide level can ensure coherence and strate-

gic alignment for all international activities. Knight (2005) recognizes that the effective governance of higher education internationalization is related to the level of the commitment of seniors, the involvement of faculty and staff, the rationale for internationalization and the recognition of the international dimension in management, policy, and mission.

3. Discussion

3.1 Higher Education in Lebanon

Before discussing internationalization of universities in Lebanon, it is important to understand the migratory activity of the Lebanese who have known emigration since the time of the Phoenicians, who were famous for their exploratory expeditions. The successive wars on Lebanon have pushed hundreds of thousands of Lebanese to leave their country. Today, it is approximated that there are four times as many Lebanese abroad than those living in Lebanon. On the other hand, throughout history, Lebanon has hosted thousands of refugees and asylum seekers. This explains why Lebanon has always been an open country with a continuous migration flow; consequently, it is by nature multicultural in terms of spoken languages, nationality and religions of its people.

Lebanon is the only Middle Eastern country where the private sector has more student enrolment than the public sector. This is due to the fact that most education institutions were established by foreign religious missions, with the government being a latecomer in providing public education. Consequently, the Lebanese private schooling system is a product of Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Islamic, Russian, German, French, British, Italian, American, Armenian and Arab missions. According to Bashshur (1997), the historical evolution of the higher education in Lebanon can be divided into three phases: the first phase (1850-1950), characterized by the establishment of universities by foreign missions and foreign interference in the Lebanese higher education, the second phase (1950-1975), characterized by the establishment of the Lebanese University as an attempt to create a balance between national and foreign education institutions, and the last phase starting 1975, characterized by the fragmentation of universities and extreme chaos following assaults on university infrastructure, faculty, and students throughout the civil war that started in 1975 (Haidar 2001). Today, the Lebanese higher education system is the oldest in the region and includes 40 higher education institutions divided as follows: 28 full universities including the only public university, 8 university institutes or colleges, and 4 religious university institutes.

3.2 Rationales

According to universities, the main rationales behind internationalization are all academic rationales, and internationalization is considered as a means to improve

local education. As a developing country, Lebanese higher education institutions are not self-sufficient to meet domestic needs in terms of education programs, staff, and equipment. Lebanese universities cooperate with foreign universities in order to improve their programs and become more appealing to the students. Universities cannot benefit from knowledge produced locally, since Lebanon lacks strong economy, industry and research. There is a need to get support from more developed higher education systems abroad in order to improve the quality of the local education provision. A further incentive is the religious affiliation of some universities, which has equally encouraged international cooperation. Another related issue is the number of Lebanese emigrants pushing for tighter bonds with their home country. In this context, international cooperation between universities is regarded as reuniting Lebanese emigrants to their roots. These last two aspects can be classified as cultural/social rationales.

3.3 Staff and Faculty

Although many universities have considered faculty members to be the major actors in initiating international projects, it can be concluded that apart from some incentives to motivate the staff and occasionally having foreign faculty to deliver workshops and courses, there is very little deliberate effort invested in internationalizing the staff. Universities in Lebanon do not adequately train their faculty to deal with international affairs and have no inclination to do so in the future. Even in their recruitment process, they do not actively seek internationally skilled personnel. This may be caused by the lack of serious incentives to motivate international faculty members. However, the faculty is international in terms of mastered languages, skills, degrees obtained, and mobility. The different languages taught in most schools, starting already from primary levels,, have ensured that most faculty members master at least one language other than Arabic. As for international skills possessed by most faculty members, it can be explained by the general multicultural composition of the Lebanese society. Lebanese people thus naturally develop their knowledge and interest in global issues and other cultures. The scarceness of doctorate studies in Lebanon has pushed graduate students to pursue further education abroad, thereby accounting for a large number of faculty members obtaining their highest degree abroad. As for mobility, faculty members, in many cases, get funding from international organizations rather than from their institutions in order to participate in international events. All these points show how the internationalization of faculty in Lebanese universities has evolved naturally without any excessive effort and investment from universities.

3.4 Students and Mobility

Although Lebanon used to be a larger receiver of international students in the past, the numbers have decreased considerably since the civil war (Kritz 2006). Pales-

tinians, who are refugees or who come from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, make up a significant proportion of the total foreign student enrolment. Other than Palestine, Arab countries form a main origin of incoming students to Lebanon, given that it already had two reputable foreign universities in the 1980's and was clearly ahead of other neighbouring Arab countries in terms of foreign education. This flow of foreign students is caused by the demand for American styled education (Jordan's Competitiveness Report 2007). Another reason is the tension between the United States and the Muslims (certain Arab countries would be more politically correct), causing the United States to limit the acceptance of Arab students to its universities and to apply tighter visa regulations on students from many Arab countries (U.S.-Muslim Engagement Project 2008).

Lebanon has easy immigration policies for foreign students. Furthermore, because Lebanon is a heterogeneous country with a wide variety of cultural and religious backgrounds, it has many advantages over other countries in the region as a host country for Western students. The Lebanese society is well known for being tolerant, modern, and most importantly, liberal and open. The Lebanese social life and climate also play a positive role in attracting students.

However, there are some drawbacks in the Lebanese higher education system which pushes many Lebanese students to migrate for education in European and American countries. Most important is the political and economic instability of the country. Additionally, education in Lebanon is relatively expensive. Yet, universities are not as well equipped as in Europe and America and a student does not have access to the most recent technologies and studies (curricula/study programs?). Another important factor that discourages students from studying in Lebanon is the lack of appropriate job opportunities upon completion of a degree. Two main factors that facilitate Lebanese students during their studies abroad are their trilingual fluency and a Lebanese diasporic presence all over the world, whereby a student can always get support from relatives or friends residing abroad.

The role of Lebanese higher education institutions is discussed in the section below:

a) The recruitment process: Only some universities market their international activities internationally, but many of them market them regionally in the Gulf region, and very few offer scholarships for incoming foreign students. All universities, except those that have no website at all, have their websites available in at least one language other than Arabic. However, a small proportion of them have information specifically addressed to prospective foreign students. b) Student access: Lebanese universities are willing to recognize foreign students' previous studies since differences between education systems are not considered as major barriers in Lebanon, given the different education styles and systems available. More than half of the universities that answered the questionnaire reported that bureaucratic issues, visa regulations, recognition of previous study, and compara-

bility of degrees do not form major obstacles in student mobility. Concerning entrance requirements, the vast majority of universities have similar requirements for foreign and local students, and most of them offer the freshman program for foreign students. Around half of them recognized the scores of international tests such as TOEFL and SAT. As for tuition fees, all of the universities have equal fees for all students; but a few of them have lower application fees for foreign students and financially support international students unable to cover all tuition fees. c) Except one, all universities that answered the questionnaire have foreign students and offer support and counselling for mobile students. However, most of them have no systems to encourage their own students' mobility for a course or a semester abroad during the study years. The interviews conducted helped in shedding light on some problems universities encounter with respect to students and their mobility. Universities consider students' lack of preparation before going abroad to be a major obstacle. The nature of the social life in Lebanon, where a person lives with their own parents until marriage, makes it difficult sometimes for students to live on their own and assume responsibilities. Furthermore, students are not prepared for the type of interaction they encounter with their professors abroad as the relationship with professors and social interaction within the academic environment are different in Lebanese culture. This situation can be rectified by providing adequate counselling for those students going abroad.

It can be deduced that universities in Lebanon generally have developed procedures in recruiting and accepting foreign students. Although most of their success in this field is the result of efforts invested in the past, thereby having some of the most reputable institutions in the region, universities in Lebanon are also continuously working on improving their study structure to enhance comparability and recognition, and developing their recruitment process through different forms of marketing through websites, for example. Yet, no deliberate effort is invested to promote incoming and outgoing student mobility.

3.5 Curriculum

The literature reviewed in this paper has identified several ways to internationalize the curriculum: through the language of instruction, through the addition of courses with an international perspective, through study structures and resources, and through cooperation with institutions abroad to develop curricula and offer joint and double degrees. a) All the universities that answered the questionnaire, except for one, did not consider the language of instruction to be an obstacle at all for internationalizing education. This is because all of them have a foreign language other than Arabic as their main language of instruction. All of them declared having mandatory language courses other than Arabic. b) Some universities offer area studies and courses with international focus. However, all of them declared having courses on world peace and cultural studies. Very few organize seminars and

conferences on international topics. Although the vast majority of universities have possibilities for courses abroad, none are obligatory requirements for graduation. This shows that, in general, students are exposed to a variety of international settings and the availability of courses training for international sensitivity is wide and variant. However, in many cases, these courses are not mandatory and it is up to the students whether to take that course or not. c) Universities in Lebanon bear either French, American, or Arabic influences. Accordingly, the responses to the questionnaire indicated universities of French 'nature' had French as their main language of instruction, were initiated by the French government, had French rectors, and followed the French university structure. As for the American universities, they adopted the American system of instruction as well as the English language of instruction. The Arab universities were related to Arab countries and had mainly Arabic teaching and curriculum. This explains why universities, in general, do not consider the comparability of study structure to be a major obstacle in internationalization endeavours, since all of them have a form of internationally recognized study structure. d) Many universities stated that they get assistance from foreign universities to develop their curricula and that only a few have joint/double degrees in collaboration with institutions abroad.

The Lebanese state does not interfere with the curricula of the universities, which have the total freedom to design and set their own curricula. In general, the curriculum in Lebanese universities has two very strong aspects that complement internationalization: languages of instruction besides Arabic and study structures that accompany global developments and reforms.

3.6 Resources and Funding

Government spending in higher education is less than 0.5% of the GDP and is mostly invested in the public university– the Lebanese University. External grants and foreign governments form a major support through the provision of financial aids, professors, teaching material and joint programs. Student fees, however, remain the main source of income for private institutions (Tempus Lebanon 2010). In the questionnaire, the vast majority of universities did not rate revenue generation through foreign students' fees to be a driver or a benefit of internationalization. This is somewhat doubtful, since most universities identified the lack of resources to be a major obstacle and all of them except the Lebanese University recognized student fees as the main income source.

Regarding resources, all universities declare having libraries with international content and have internet available on campus. However, the internet connection in Lebanon is still very slow despite high costs. In addition to this, there are high restrictions on the free circulation of some books and media, especially with regards to certain information or when it comes from certain specific regions. All universities except only one have an international office/position that is responsi-

ble for international affairs, with most staff adequately qualified to hold such functions. Interestingly, international affairs are not exclusively under the responsibility of the international office. On the other hand, some aspects are divided among other departments in the institution and are integrated into all university functions.

3.7 Partnerships and Agreements

Western countries have been increasingly interested in establishing universities in Lebanon as a means to spread their culture, their language, and their education system in the Middle East, and compete to do so. Among all Arab countries, Lebanon attracts the most number of foreign students from the Middle East. Therefore, there are some distinct advantages for a Western country establishing a university in Lebanon: Not only would the elite minds of the Middle East be trained through that country's system, it would also ensure the propagation of that country's culture in the Middle East, thereby leading an increase of educated people who support that specific country.

Another reason that accounts for the interest of foreign countries in Lebanon can be seen in the context of recent endeavours to strengthen and ameliorate communication with the Arab world and decrease hostility between Muslims and Western countries. The strength that the Arab world and especially the Gulf countries have acquired on the economic level forms is also an important factor. Consequently, there is an increasing interest in Arabic language and culture (Jordan's Competitiveness Report 2007). In addition to this, Lebanon itself is an old country with a very interesting and unique historical background, as it has been inhabited by many civilizations throughout history. This makes it a natural site for studies in archaeology, history, speleology, geology and other studies. Further particularities have been identified from the interviews conducted. Lebanese universities, in general, enjoy a special position with respect to neighbouring Arab countries concerning internationalization. While the Arab world has long been hesitant to get involved in international activities because of fear of losing their cultural identity, the multicultural setting of Lebanese society since early times has been a major criterion in encouraging internationalization. Furthermore, historically, political and a dogmatic influence has limited the choice of foreign partners for many Arab countries. However, in Lebanon, due to its multiculturalism, universities have had a much wider choice of international partner countries. These are factors that encourage foreign institutions to sign agreements and partnerships with Lebanese institutions.

However, answers from the questionnaires have identified the interest of universities in Lebanon to expand regionally and locally rather than internationally. The fierce global competition and the lack of resources may have caused universities to become reluctant in engaging themselves in the global arena. Agreements were mostly initiated by institutions themselves or by supranational organizations.

A third of the universities have no preference as to the geographical distribution of their partners. The remaining universities have rated Western EU countries, Arab countries, the USA and Canada to be the most attractive regions to seek foreign partners.

In general, universities in Lebanon are very active in signing agreements with foreign partners. They proudly present the list of their international agreements and memberships. However, the concern is about the sustainability of such agreements and the required follow-up efforts, so that universities can benefit fully from such partnerships rather than them being mere signed documents.

3.8 Governance and Management

All of the universities that answered the questionnaire except one have an international strategy and rated their governing board and top management to be highly committed to it. Most of them have their strategies explicitly mentioned in policy papers, mission statements and websites. A detailed scrutiny of the university mission statements found on the websites showed that universities aim to become regional players, aim to form graduates able to operate in a globalized world, welcome students from all nationalities and cooperate with institutions abroad in order to improve their education. However, less interest is shown in becoming international agents and competing globally. This may be a somewhat realistic perspective adopted by Lebanese universities.

According to the answers of the questionnaires, universities considered foreign agencies, governments and embassies to play an important role in promoting internationalization. The national government was considered to play a minimal role in this regard.

On a state level, the Lebanese state was passive and absent in the higher education internationalization process, which occurred more as a natural, historical evolution rather than as a consequence of national policies and planning. On the other hand, this very lack of interference by the state, and the autonomy granted to the private universities have encouraged foreign countries to establish universities in Lebanon, and therefore make the country an important field for international higher education . There is an absence of policies concerning the internationalization of higher education in Lebanon. The only bodies responsible for some forms of internationalization at the national level are the supranational organizations that Lebanon is a member of and that which have included Lebanon in a series of international projects promoting higher education internationalization. Although Lebanon is highly involved in international projects, programs and cooperation, the problem resides in the fact that this involvement is more a consequence of supranational activities and institutional initiatives rather than of national policies.

In other words, the legal framework set by the Lebanese state, that aims to regulate the higher education sector, remains minimal in comparison to the huge

expansions and development witnessed by the sector, and is not able to develop at the same pace to ensure proper legislative coverage to all university activities. Individual institutional initiatives as well as international policies have had a much more significant impact.

4. Obstacles and Challenges

Higher education in Lebanon suffers from particular drawbacks such as lack of strategic planning in the face of sudden massification of students (higher education?), political interference at many levels, corruption, irrelevant curricula, and decline in quality (Altbach 2011). Nevertheless, there are some specific challenges that are most recurrent in the literature related to internationalization of higher education, and which particularly apply to the Lebanese case a) *National Policies and the political situation:* During the interviews, policies of foreign countries were perceived as an important obstacle. Universities in Lebanon suffer from continuous change of policies and regional preferences of foreign countries. According to them, the most stable relationships are those between researchers and those initiated by international and supranational organizations. These continuous changes in national policies form a main challenge to the setting of long term plans of internationalizing higher education. In addition to the changes in national policies, the local political situation is also an important consideration, because in most cases it is the one that affects the broader national policies. Historically, universities in Lebanon have also been a political battlefield and have been constantly exposed to different tensions. Decisions concerning professors, language of instruction, curriculum, faculties, and university campuses have all been affected as a result of these political tensions.

b) *Cultural Identity:* The lack of quality control on foreign providers threatens the cultural identity of the education provided because institutions are not willing to spend money and time to accommodate their educational settings to the country where they deliver (Knight 2005).

c) Data Collection: A main challenge lies in finding common meaning for similar terms and in the lack of universal definitions which affect the comparability of data, curricula and processes worldwide (Knight 2008). Knight identifies this issue as the "definition dilemma" (ibid, p.93). In addition to the differences in definitions, that hinder data collection, many countries, and Lebanon specifically, lack reliable and transparent data on education in general, that can reflect the realities of Lebanese higher education with its strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, on both institutional and national levels, there is a complete lack of information concerning strategies, numbers and statistics related to internationalization of higher education. This may be either due to lack of transparency because of institutions not willing to communicate their status, or due to the lack of research and statistics done in that area. In this respect, there is also the problem related to inaccuracies

that appear in the calculation of inward and outward student mobility; many Lebanese students enrolled at foreign universities may not be mobile for studying purposes, but may have moved already before for other purposes, or may have been descendants of earlier emigrants. Furthermore, many non-Lebanese students enrolled at Lebanese universities may be in Lebanon as refugees or for purposes other than to study. Another problem related to statistical data collection concerns students who have Lebanese origins, but who hold foreign passports. This creates a dilemma for universities in counting international students registered, since a large number of Lebanese students still have a foreign passport despite being in Lebanon all their lives.

d) Recognition and Quality Assurance: It becomes crucial for countries to have a regulatory framework to register and legitimize foreign providers and monitor them (Knight 2005). With the expansion of stakeholders interested in graduates' knowledge and competence, and with the increase of institutions offering education worldwide, it becomes crucial to have clear frameworks that allow the comparison of degrees, the content of study, the period of study as well as the qualifications obtained upon the completion of a given program from a given institution. This promotes fair and informed decisions concerning access to further education or to employment. Furthermore, it allows to differentiate between low and high quality providers. "Given the increased mobility of students taking degrees and looking for employment in foreign countries, there is increasing urgency to develop bilateral, regional and international systems where education institutions will be able to get reliable information on the recognition of qualifications awarded in other jurisdictions and countries" (Knight 2005, p.70).

5. Conclusion

Internationalization of higher education in Lebanon is either a result of personal initiatives or by foreign and supranational organizations with very limited involvement of the Lebanese state. In the earlier years of higher education in Lebanon, foreign countries were interested in opening universities in Lebanon. Since then, Lebanon has been clearly ahead of other countries in the region, but in recent years, increased competition with other countries that have clearer strategies, policies and funding to support internationalization and increased interest of foreign countries in other Middle Eastern countries have put Lebanon in a critical position.

It becomes clear from this study that the main university rationales and approaches to internationalization are based on a capacity building approach. Universities in Lebanon, considering the scarceness of financial and regulative support from the Lebanese state, are in urgent and continuous need of cooperation with universities and organizations worldwide in order to enhance local human capacity and develop their higher education systems. However, resources and

research are both insufficient to appropriately reform their systems to meet global standards.

In addition to capacity building, universities in Lebanon have a revenue generation approach. Although this may not be apparent in the stated rationales, tuition fees are the major income for Lebanese universities. The type of international staff recruited by a Lebanese university, the international curricula, and the international cooperation with foreign universities are all effectively used as a means to promote the university and make it more appealing to students (Stromquist 2007). Universities use their international agreements as a marketing campaign.

Based on the matrix model presented by Davies, on an institutional level, Lebanon could be considered as adopting an ad-hoc-central strategy; a high level of international activity may take place throughout its institutions but it "is not based on clear concepts and has an ad-hoc character''(Knight and De Wit 1995). It is noticed that the international perspective is found in many functions of the university .However, in most cases, they are not based on clear strategies, and are not supported by national or institutional policies or research that caters to specific societal needs in order to ensure sustainable development in an international setting. In many cases, agreements are not operational, strategies are not clear, and projects are not sustained by adequate work. The international activity in Lebanese universities can be attributed mainly to the societal nature of Lebanon, to historic events and to past achievements, rather than to continuous, sustainable development.

This study is based on data collected from a single academic year. However, internationalization is a process that takes place over several years, and it would be crucial to repeat the study in order to trace developments. Further research needs to be conducted about forms of e-learning as a strategy of internationalizing higher education in Lebanese universities, but this aspect has not been thoroughly discussed in this thesis. Quality assurance in the delivery of international education either at home via foreign institutions or local ones or abroad, is an additional topic specifically important in the Lebanese context that lacks vigorous policies to monitor the quality of higher education. However, this study is the first on this topic in the Lebanese case and has not been preceded by any similar studies. It was relatively hard to collect existing data and this explains why the most fundamental numbers have been collected specifically for the purpose of this thesis instead of relying on previous studies and building on them. Furthermore, universities were generally reluctant to provide information and the lack of transparency was obvious throughout the field work.

This study has tried to identify the main rationales and strategies behind international activities in Lebanese universities. It has been found that universities are eager to have internationalized education in order to improve own provision and ensure quality education that is able to meet global standards. Universities in Lebanon are very interested and enthusiastic about opening up to the global higher

education arena. This is apparent in the considerable amount of international agreements and the efforts at internationalization in all major university aspects and functions. However, these dispersed activities are not always supported by proper regulative frameworks and by strategic planning. They tend to exist sporadically with minimal alignment with a higher institutional goal, given especially that Lebanese universities are on their own and face fierce global competition with no support from the Lebanese state. For all the reasons above, it is clear that urgent measures have to be taken to provide a regulatory framework for internationalizing higher education in order to support the universities' initiatives, to control the quality of foreign universities operating in Lebanon, and to ensure a sustainable development of internationalized higher education.

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Madonna Maroun has a BS in Mathematics from Notre Dame University in Lebanon and obtained a Master in Higher Education Research at the University of Kassel, Germany. In the framework of her internship at the National Tempus Office in Beirut (Lebanon) she conducted the study "Internationalization in Lebanese Universities" with the support of the Higher Education Reform Expert's Team. She has held presentations about the students' perspective with respect to internationalization and quality assurance at several international conferences dealing with these topics.

10

In Search of Isomorphism: An Analysis of the Homepages of Flagship Universities

Queenie K. H. Lam

1. Introduction

Flagship universities are leading universities in different national higher education systems. With the emergence of global university rankings, they have become 'peers' in an imagined global higher education system and 'competitors' in the global knowledge economy. However, the concepts of a global higher education system and a global knowledge economy are equally vague. This suggests that such national flagship universities with a global role are facing a highly uncertain external environment in which they operate. The discourse of global competition further drives them into a state of insecurity, resulting in changes that are believed to have led to the homogenization of university models.

Based on a content analysis of the websites of 58 flagship universities in 39 different countries listed on Shanghai Jiao Tong's *Academic Ranking of World Universities* in 2009, this paper seeks to investigate whether there is a global communication model found among this supposedly homogeneous group of universities. Specifically, it will first highlight major changes observed in the homepages of the sampled flagship universities captured in April 2010 and November 2011. It will then continue with a critical analysis of the homogeneity and diversity of the homepages of the flagship universities using a mix of conceptual frameworks, mainly of isomorphism, but also strategic planning, diffusion of innovation and travel of ideas. Finally, it will conclude with a reflection on the perceived role of flagship universities in global higher education and the knowledge economy in relation to their external communication strategy (or the lack of it).

2. Rationales and Research Methods

The heterogeneity of higher education systems around the world suggests that comparing universities in different systems is a 'mission impossible'. However, there are several so-called global or world university rankings which have caught

considerable attention not only of students and parents, but also of policymakers and higher education practitioners in charge of internationalisation and research cooperation. Apart from misinformation, critics of these rankings warn against the phenomena of "isomorphism" and "academic drift" in the higher education sector resulting from the rankings' narrow emphases on indicators limited to hard sciences, past performances, or simply reputation. There is, therefore, the fear that national higher education systems and individual institutions may forgo their original mission and uniqueness in pursuit of a 'world-class' status or a 'global university model' propagated through such popularised global university rankings. The fear is not unfounded. A number of studies, notably one by Ellen Hazelkorn (2008), have found "unintended" negative impacts of such rankings on international collaboration, research funding allocation, as well as national and institutional policies. There is, however, little research with a focus on the relationship between global university rankings and the symbolic capital of the universities. This is a gap that should be filled, especially when it becomes increasingly clear that global university rankings are more about reputation-building than about the measurement of the actual quality of higher education and research.

Rankings may not reflect the actual quality of an institution in comparison to its peers. But the ranking information itself has no doubt a symbolic indicative value, be it positive or negative, for institutional communication. In the realms of public relations and marketing, the appeals of emotion, prestige and status often override factual information. Universities that are ranked well or ranked better than their peers rarely resist against the temptation to communicate their ranks for institutional branding. With the prevailing discourse of global competition, such temptation can only grow stronger.

In the global competitive environment, universities traditionally strong in their national systems are now assigned a new mission to increase their countries' appeal to students, talented researchers and resources which are critical to the development of the knowledge economy but are prone to be globally mobile. These universities, referred to as "flagship universities" (Altbach and Balán 2007, pp. 7-8), are not only expected to compete but also to communicate in a global environment. With their global role, they do not only have to bring their research and teaching quality to align with certain global standards, which are subject to interpretation, but also to communicate their achievements globally in order to attract the mobile talents and resources.

However, how and how well do these flagship universities communicate globally? Have they capitalised on their global ranks? If so, how do they present such information on their websites? More importantly, does this particular group of universities driven into the global ranking races display a tendency to adopt also a global communication model by resembling their peers in the selected group or emulating the top-ranked universities? In other words, are there traits of isomorphism seen in the self-representation of such flagship universities? If so, what are

the isomorphic features and what features remain different? Finally, do these differences or similarities fit the purpose of raising the global attractiveness of the universities in a competitive environment?

The above questions have led to the study of the homepages of 58 flagship universities ranked among the top 500 in the *Academic Ranking of World Universities* (ARWU, also commonly known as the "Shanghai Jiaotong" ranking) in 2009. The selected universities represent 39 different countries from both developed and developing countries. They were all ranked 1st in their respective countries. Due to tied ranks in the following countries: (see number of universities shown in parenthesis) Belgium (4), Chile (2), Hungary (2), Italy (3), New Zealand (2), Poland (2), and Portugal (2), and the fact that China was represented as three separate entities – with China (6), Hong Kong (3) and Taiwan (1) –, 58 instead of 39 universities were sampled for analysis. Their homepages, as well as webpages with ranking information that are a maximum of three clicks away from the homepages, were coded in April 2010 and November 2011 using the same coding scheme covering the following aspects: language option(s), visual style of the homepage, the use of social media that are global icons today, content of featured image, and, last but not the least, the use of ranking information.

Using the coded data, quantitative content analysis of the homepages and qualitative content analysis of the ranking information used on the homepages were conducted. Where quantitative analysis was conducted for national or regional comparisons, weighting was adjusted for countries where more than one university was represented. It must also be noted that much of the analysis in this study was based on the coded data of the English version of the universities' websites, given that English is the only language that is used by all the universities sampled for the study.

3. Development Towards a Transdisciplinary Conceptual Framework

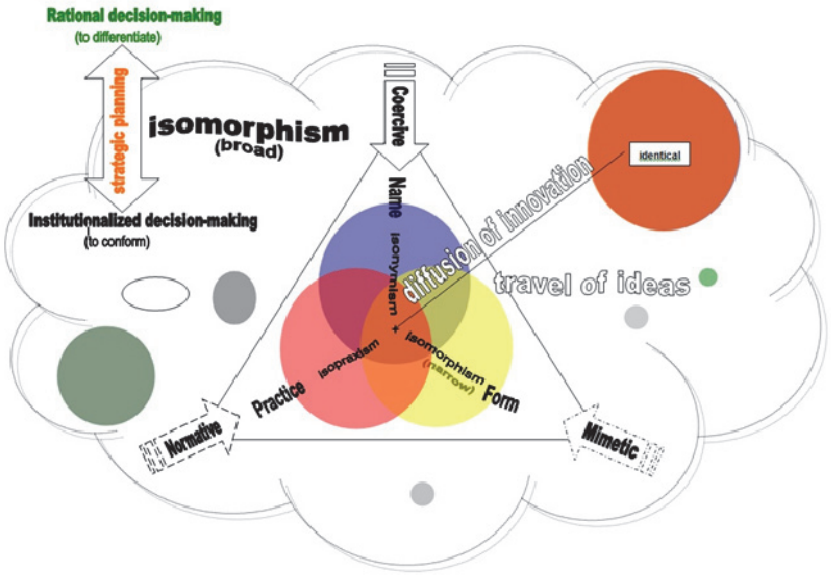
Although higher education research has developed into a transdisciplinary field of study in its own right, conceptual frameworks for explaining higher education developments have largely been borrowed from other disciplines such as sociology, political sciences and economics. There is not yet any established theory for higher education *per se* and none that can be readily applied in this study of an important yet currently peripheral aspect of higher education – university marketing and communication.

The author has, therefore, called on various concepts that have been developed in sociology, economics and communication to form a 'cocktail' conceptual framework for this study. Central to this framework is the concept of "isomorphism" which has been used frequently in studies concerning higher education institutions in a globalised environment (Stensaker and Norgard 2001; Marvin and Marc 2004; Gounko and Smale 2007; Loomis and Rodriguez 2009; Shirish,

Thompson and Annapoornima 2009), particularly, when assessing the impact of global university rankings.

During the literature review, it was, however, found that the concept of isomorphism itself is subject to clarification. To clarify the concept of isomorphism and its possible application in the context of higher education research, a conceptual framework (Figure 1) focusing on the concept of isomorphism and relevant concepts has been constructed for this study. Details of the framework are illustrated below.

Figure 1: A Cocktail Conceptual Framework Proposed by the Author for Analysing Higher Education Marketing and Communication



By applying the concept of isomorphism, the phenomenon that universities (and their websites in the case of this study) around the world begin to *look alike* should be explained in relation to the *uncertain* external environment (Appold 2005, p. 20; Birnbaum 2001, p. 181; DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Gounko and Smale 2007, p. 535; Jaeki and Fatemeh 2005, pp. 1222-1223; Shirish et al. 2009; Marvin and Marc 2004, p. 85; Simon 2005, p. 5) that gives rise to isomorphic changes. The external environments surrounding universities are constantly changing as a result of globalization and the ensuing neo-liberalist approach in public administration. Market forces have deregulated or liberalised the higher education sector, opening up the higher education 'market' for competition from

local private providers or overseas providers (Mok and Tan 2004). Even though one may argue that market forces have not penetrated all the higher education systems around the world and public universities remain in operation in some of the most marketised countries, the discourse of global competition has created an uncertain external environment that appears volatile, if not hostile, to universities. Such an uncertain context surrounding universities, which have few established success models to hold on to, is represented by the cloud, and the different university models are represented by the circles in Figure 1.

In order to survive in a globally uncertain environment in which few references can be found from within the academic sector, universities tend to look to the business world for solutions, because it is both the pioneer and advocate of globalisation (Birnbaum 2001; Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2006; Kantanen 2007; D'Andrea et al. 2007). For example, the concept of strategic planning has been borrowed from the business world to help enhance the competitiveness of universities. From an economic perspective, competitive advantage could be achieved by differentiating oneself from the mass or by lowering ones production costs through economies of scale. Between the two, differentiation is regarded as a more sustainable strategy than waging a price war with competitors selling similar products. Thus, the essence of strategic planning in business is to differentiate. However, this very concept does not seem to have penetrated the higher education sector. While many universities are engaging in some kind of strategic planning today and are applying relevant concepts from the business world (e.g. marketing, branding) in their operation, the results of their planning are more in the direction towards isomorphism than differentiation.

This brings us to the distinction between rational and irrational strategic planning (Shirish et al. 2009), which should also be taken into account in understanding the isomorphic changes of universities. In Figure 1, such contradictory approaches are visualized with a two-end arrow which has a rational end of *differentiating*, pointing out of the uncertain cloudy environment, and an institutionalised end of *conforming*, pointing back to the cloudy environment.

Isomorphism resulting from institutionalised strategic planning, though irrational, should not be ruled out as a topic for scientific investigation. Rather, it needs to be better described and explained as it is believed to be a prevailing phenomenon in the global higher education system and is frequently associated with studies of institutional changes and innovation without much clarification of the concept itself. The term has become familiar to higher education researchers through major studies concerning the impacts of global university rankings and globalisation of higher education (Marginson 2008; Marginson 2009; van Vught 2008). However, if one takes a closer look at current literature, only a few systematic applications of the concept of isomorphism in higher education research are found and they are mostly used for explaining the impacts of quality assurance

and regulations (Gounko and Smale 2007; Hodson et al. 2008; Stensaker et al. 2009).

The study of Gounko and Smale (2007) is one of the few to have clearly demonstrated how three types of isomorphism, namely "coercive", "mimetic" and "normative" isomorphism, can be differentiated and used to explain why higher education institutions change in response to different external forces. This study clarifies and demonstrates how isomorphism can be applied in the context of higher education research without departing from the original concept of isomorphism proposed by DiMaggio and Powell. In another study by Stensaker et al. (2009), the concepts isomorphism, isonymism and isopraxism are borrowed from Erlingsdottír and Lindberg (2005) and used to analyse the impacts of *European Standards and Guidelines* on higher education institutions' quality assurance reviews. At first sight, one may think that the study is another example elaborating on how the concept of DiMaggio and Powell could be applied in higher education research. At closer inspection, however, it is found that although both are termed "isomorphism", the definition and scope of isomorphism proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and Erlingsdottír and Lindberg (2005) are very different. The latter have reduced the definition of "isomorphism" to describe only the similarity of "form" and then supplemented "isomorphism" with the other two terms "isonymism" (describing the similarity of name), and "isopraxism" (describing the similarity of practice). The former, proposing a more commonly used definition, however, imply similarities in both organisational structure and procedures and their concept is often loosely applied to explain similarities among organisations that may cover all the three aspects (isomorphism, isonymism, isopraxism) distinguished by Erlingsdottír and Lindberg. In Figure 1, both sets of concepts concerning isomorphism in broad and narrow terms are incorporated after the following consideration.

Erlingsdottír and Lindberg (2005) believe that "idea" could be separated into "form", "practice", and "name". Moreover, an idea travels across time and space and is translated rather than diffused. Unlike DiMaggio and Powell, their set of concepts (isomorphism, isopraxism, and isonymism) seems to be describing the *pattern of similarities* among organisations instead of the *path of influence* causing the similarities among organisations. Both sets of concepts are applicable for explaining the similarities among organisations, but the latter focuses on describing *in what ways* the organisations are similar (isomorphism, isonymism, isopraxism) and the former focuses on describing *for what reasons* the organisations have become similar (coercive, mimetic or normative isomorphism). With such an interpretation, the two sets of concepts are complementary to each other and are not exclusive to or falsifying each other.

In Figure 1, the broad definition of isomorphism and the related three forces - coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism - are presented as arrows exerting conforming forces into a triangle delineating the immediate external environment

for an organisation undergoing isomorphic changes. The arrows are framed by solid and dotted lines to illustrate different levels of influence exerted by coercive, normative and mimetic isomorphism (the more solid the stronger the force). The narrow definition of isomorphism (concerning only form), as well as isonymism and isopraxism, are then presented as three overlapping circles which demonstrate how organisations undergoing isomorphic changes could be similar or remain different in terms of form, name and practice.

It is important to see isomorphism from the three aspects of form, name and pratice, although in reality, they likely to come as a package when universities emulate others. The reasons is that even when organisations undergo radical changes in order to look like another organisation, they are bound to be different in the *degree* of similarities either due to an inability to imitate or due to conscious adjustments necessary to fit local conditions. In other words, while the ultimate goal of organisations undergoing isomorphic changes may be to reach an identical status as the brighter, higher positioned model in terms of name, form and practice, i.e. reach the position represented by the cross at the very centre of the three overlapping circles in Figure 1, it will never occur in reality. If and when this happens, it may better be described as cloning rather than isomorphism. Organisations reaching this point will completely lose their self-identity and become shadows of the source of influence, the big circle at the top right corner of the cloud in Figure 1. This is also where radical isomorphism most clearly contradicts the goal of differentiation, branding and strategic planning for surviving in a competitive environment.

In addition to isomorphism and strategic planning, the concepts "diffusion of innovation", first introduced by Everett Rogers (1962), and "travel of ideas", as described by Erlingsdottír and Lindberg, may be drawn to explain the similarities and differences in the universities' use of communication tools. Again, the concepts "diffusion of innovation" and "travel of ideas" are rather different from each other despite the fact that they both seem to be tracing the sources of isomorphic changes. Commonly associated with the concept of isomorphism, the concept "diffusion of innovation" implies an unequal power relation between the source of influence and the organisation undergoing isomorphic changes. Compared with the concept "travel of ideas", the term "diffusion" implies the flow of ideas from a high pressure to a low pressure environment and "innovation" implies that the ideas flowing to the low pressure area is newer (or perceived to be newer) than the one that will be changed or discarded. With the concept "travel of ideas," there is however no such a sense of direction or comparative newness, which often implies also a sense of superiority. Rather, it suggests the possibility of influences on equal terms without bringing in the notion of pressure or a power relation. Nevertheless, I have included both in Figure 1 because they are complementary in explaining isomorphism between organisations in different sectors (e.g. business and higher education) or organisations in the same sector but of different ranks.

The 'cocktail' conceptual framework proposed above is a remix of concepts that have been used in sociology, business and communication research. Given that higher education is still a green field without an established theory of its own, such a contingent remix of concepts is, perhaps, a way towards the creation of a transdisciplinary theoretical ground for further research of higher education developments, and in particular, peripheral developments in marketing and communication.

4. How and how well do Flagship Universities Communicate Globally?

4.1 A General Switch from Text-Based to Image-Based Homepages

University websites are rarely studied by communication researchers or higher education researchers. They are perceived as a standard, if not simple, information sharing platform with little creativity or substance of interest to be researched. In the field of higher education, they are also of peripheral importance in the sense that they primarily interest the practitioners who are involved in student recruitment and marketing rather than higher education researchers who have more important issues (e.g. governance, funding, knowledge transfer) to deal with.

The lack of attention given to university websites by researchers of different fields does not imply that nothing interesting is happening in this area. On the contrary, fast and significant changes can be observed among the 58 institutions covered in this study. In the period April to August 2010, when the first round of coding and analysis took place, three universities, namely Oslo (Norway), Tehran (Iran), and Jagiellonian (Poland) launched completely new homepages, replacing their former text-based homepages with imaged-based homepages. Between August 2010 and November 2011, when the second round of coding and analysis was conducted, an additional two universities, namely Harvard (US) and Tsinghua (China), launched completely new homepages. A number of Chinese and Italian universities, together with Tokyo (Japan) and Istanbul (Turkey) also made face-lifting changes to their homepages, but only in one language version. The Chinese and Japanese universities had revamped their English homepages and kept the first language homepages intact, while the Italian universities and the University of Istanbul did just the opposite.

In short, notable changes, though at a different pace, have been spotted in the course of this study. However, it appears that not all the changes could be explained with the rationales of increasing global visibility or attracting (English-speaking) international students, as shown in the Italian and Turkish cases. This analysis does not rule out the possibility that they all intended to do so, but the changes may have misfired and missed their targets.

Without much surprise, it is also noted that when universities launch a new homepage, there is a tendency to change from a static text-based homepage to an

animated image-based homepage. The only one that runs against this tendency is Harvard. It changed from an image-based homepage with very little text to a text-based homepage with text boxes linked to its various social media websites. The general switch from static text-based to animated image-based homepages may be viewed as a sign of mimetic isomorphism, if the older Harvard homepage is taken as a benchmark. This is, however, an over simplified conclusion as the force of coercive isomorphism exerted by the adoption of new information technology (IT) in the higher education sector and the force of normative isomorphism with the growing acceptance of images in higher education marketing and communication are non-negligible. Further investigation into the institutional decision-making process is needed to verify which of the isomorphic forces play a decisive role in the changes. Besides, even if there is mimetic isomorphism, as some universities' homepages do resemble the older Harvard homepage in form, the impact of isomorphism are likely to be found among the followers themselves rather than the object of emulation. What is evident here is that Havard remains different in a snap.

4.2 A Trend in Adopting Social Media by Highly Ranked Flagship Universities

By comparing the data collected in April 2010 and November 2011, a clear trend in the adoption of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, is observed. The numbers of flagship universities that have integrated Facebook and Twitter into their homepage have grown by 157% and 76% respectively during the study period. In absolute terms, these two social network platforms have overtaken RSS, which used to be the most popular means for universities to disseminate news from their homepages. Another new medium, the video-sharing platform YouTube, has also gained a noticeable increase of 60%, from 7.5 to 12 institutional users. While YouTube has not replaced RSS due to the different nature of information they deal with (i.e. video vs. text), it appears to have grown at the expense (or snubbed the growth) of two other means of communication that were found on the universities' homepages earlier, namely university promotional videos (for institutional profiling) and Open-source Course Ware (OCW) and Podcasts (for sharing recorded visual or audio format of the universities' lectures). This trend in the adoption of new communication tools has contributed to an isomorphic change of the universities' homepages and is largely driven by European universities which had been resisting the adoption of social media, in comparison with universities in Saudi Arabia or Israel, until recently.

The sudden surge in the use of social media in Europe may be interpreted as normative isomorphism instead of mimetic isomorphism, since many European universities had been using social media unofficially (if not reluctantly) until they integrated the logos of such media into their homepages officially. Although we cannot rule out the possibility that some universities (such as the ones in Saudi

Arabia and Israel), which are early adopters of social media, had the intention to mimic top-ranked English-speaking universities by incorporating social media icons into their homepages, the later adopters of social media are likely driven by the need to acknowledge and accept the changing communication habits of the new generation of (international) students.

Another potential form of isomorphism in force is coercive isomorphism, not in the form of regulations but standardization of IT tools and software, as it is observed that the use of images and animation on university homepages on one hand, and the use of social media on the other, appears to grow in parallel or reinforce each other. This is true in most cases, because universities that have launched a new website clearly have a tendency to incorporate also social media links to their new homepages.

It must be noted, however, that the norm to adopt big social media brands, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, is far from global and that coercive isomorphism imposed by the IT world may be countered by state regulations. For example, it is widely known that Facebook, YouTube, Twitter are all banned in China, where the 'netizens' are active but using Chinese versions of social media. It is therefore not a surprise to see the unanimous absence of the banned social media on brand new websites of Chinese universities. This can clearly be understood as coercive isomorphism among Chinese universities as a result of regulatory constraints.

Another interesting observation is the comparatively slower pace (though there are also signs of increase) of Asian universities (e.g. Hong Kong, South Korea, New Zealand and Singapore) in adopting social media as official communication channels when compared to their quick adoption of imaged-based web design. There are likely many reasons behind these universities' hesitance in embracing social media, but one of the reasons is probably their heavy reliance on Chinese students as the source of foreign students. For this reason, there is clearly little need for developing a means of attraction that cannot get the message across to the target students.

Despite a slower than expected trend in the adoption of social media among Asian universities, flagship universities, in general, appear to have become more 'communicative' via their homepage by integrating different types of new media for either one-way information dissemination or interactive communication, or both, during the period of this study. The major difference observed among them is a general pattern that lowest ranked universities have a tendency to use one-way closed communication means (e.g. virtual tours, promotion video) more than highly ranked universities, which are, by contrast, more open to the use of interactive social media. Such a difference in the openness to communicate may be a result of the differences in the culture of communication, as well as the confidence to maintain a positive image in an open and interactive environment. The lack of expertise and resources for the maintenance of social media communication is another po-

tential explanation. Further studies are required, however, to explain the different means of communication adopted by universities as the data collected in this study focus only on their representation.

4.3 A General Increase in the Use of English, while Multilingualism is Promised

4.3.1 Multilingualism Prevails on the Homepages of Flagship Universities

While English is commonly regarded as the *lingua franca* in the global academic community, the role of English in the virtual representation of the flagship universities is not as strong as one may have assumed. After adjusting the weighting of the tie-ranked universities, only 8.3 of the flagship universities in the 39 countries use English as the first language of their websites. English is only one of the 26 languages used among this group of universities, meaning that language diversity still prevails in the academia, virtually. English is, however, the most widely represented language in the 39 countries since some former British colonies have kept using English as their first academic language while providing selected webpages in their first languages. Similarly, it is noted that Spanish and Portuguese have also been adopted as the first language of the websites of South American universities, but the global impact of these two languages is much smaller compared to English.

Little change in the choice of first language has been witnessed in the period April 2010 to November 2011. But some universities have been found to have strengthened their web-presentation in their second or third languages. All the flagship universities have also been found to have had a separate English (or what they labelled as the "international") version of their websites by November 2011. A visible increase in the offer of Chinese language as a language option on Italian and some Eastern European universities' websites has been observed.

It is not uncommon to find universities offering more than one additional language to include other widely spoken languages such as Chinese, Spanish, French and German, as well as languages of the natives (e.g. Afrikaans, Xhosa, Māori) and of their close neighbours (e.g. Korean in the case of the *University of Tokyo*, Swedish in the case of the *University of Helsinki*). The prevalence of multilingualism is far from global, however, as universities in English-speaking countries (i.e. the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Ireland) only offer one language option – English. Besides, a close examination of the bilingual and multilingual websites, typically found in European and South American universities, reveals that the bilingual or multilingual approach is sometimes symbolic and most of the time limited in scope. One clear example is *Pierre and Marie Curie University – Paris 6* which ambitiously displays four language options, but two of them (Chinese and Spanish) had been completely non-functional during the period of this study.

4.3.2 English Strengthens its Foothold as the Second Language of University Websites

Multilingual websites are clearly high maintenance. One may then assume that flagship universities offering only two languages, their local language and the most common second language (English) would perform better in delivering their promised options. Such an assumption may be supported by the dominant belief that English is an established *lingua academia*, particularly among flagship universities which have a global mission. This is however not supported by the findings in this study. The breadth, depth and overall quality of the English websites of the flagship universities vary to a great extent. The most limited use of English was found in *University Libre Bruxelles (ULB, Belgium)* back in April 2010, when it provided only one single English webpage hidden under a French menu bar on its front page. Seemingly better, some universities offer identical websites with their first language and English. With this approach, they may have used the same template of homepage, but the richness of the content is far from identical. In the worst case, from a communication perspective, the English homepages are translated from the original version, but only partially and unsystematically on the same page, thus projecting a 'messy-lingual' rather than multilingual impression. One such example is the *University of Lisbon*'s homepage at the time of this study.

Despite the chaos described above, the 58 universities sampled are found to have substantially increased the use of English both in breadth and depth. The most drastic changes in the English homepages are observed in mainland China (except Hong Kong and Taiwan), Chile, Argentina, Hungary, Poland, Italy, and Japan. One common characteristic found among them is a loose link between the English websites and first-language websites. This may be explained by a clear differentiation of target users, i.e. home students vs. foreign students (for admission into English-taught programmes), as shown in the case of the *University of Tokyo*, and thus clearly differentiated English websites free from the constraints of the original. The loose link may also be an indicator of work in progress as illustrated in the case of the *University of Tsinghua* (China), which had first introduced an English website, and only later, a Chinese one of the same design in 2011.

Slowly, a wider use of English is also found in Europe. The ULB had substantially enriched its English webpages and put an eye-catching "English" icon on the homepage by November 2011. Many more European universities have increased the amount of English information on their websites, while refraining from labelling English as English. They termed their English websites as "international". This seemingly politically neutral term has, however, ironically acknowledged English as the "international language", especially when the "international" label is coupled with the image of a Union Jack, as shown on the website of the *University of Milan*.

Using the conceptual framework of isomorphism, if the use of English on the international websites of universities today is interpreted as normative isopraxism at a global level, national regulations and deep-rooted traditions on the use of the first language as opposed to foreign languages can be interpreted as coercive isopraxism at the national or regional level countering the influence of English. As a result of the counterforces, the normative isopraxism in the use of English has in fact resulted in, to some extent, mimetic isonymism in the promise of more English (or multiple other languages) that remains, however, iconic with less than expected substance and effect in global communication.

In light of the above analysis, the language options made available by the flagship universities on their websites should be studied alongside both their global aspirations to recruit internationally and the political influence on their choices of languages. The reason is that flagship universities are largely publicly-funded. As a result of that, they are not only more likely to be regulated (linguistically) but are also more likely to be bound by traditions and localized expectations given their national standing. Such socio-cultural and political contexts unique to flagship universities' existence must not be overlooked when explaining the seemingly schizophrenic approaches in which these universities present and position themselves.

5. Have Flagship Universities all Capitalised on Their Global Ranks Symbolically?

5.1 An Overview of the Use of Ranking Information

All the universities sampled in this study were ranked among the world's top 500 universities and the topmost university of their respective countries by ARWU. In theory, they are the ones who can reap the benefit of the ranking results for brand-building, at least at a national level. But, in practice, how many of them are using the ranking results on their homepage? The answer is: very few, if we only look at the homepage (i.e. the front page) of the university websites. In each of the coding exercise conducted in 2010 and 2011, only two universities were found to have made explicit reference to their ARWU position on the homepage. Slightly more universities (3-4) used the THES results, but this number is also very low. The only university that has been using ranking results extensively and consistently throughout the period of this study is *King Saud University* in Saudi Arabia. It was joined later by the *University of Science and Technology of China* which, since launching a new website, also displays an eye-catching banner on the homepage about its ranking positions.

The absence of ranking information on the homepage of other universities does not imply that there is no impact, however. The difference lies in the level of subtlety. Several universities have displayed the term "ranking" or ranking-related

terms such as "leading" or "top university" on their homepages, hyperlinked to detailed descriptions of their ranking results or "achievements". This is a less eye-catching approach than displaying a banner. Yet, there is an obvious enough path directing the viewers of the homepage to the ranking results. Such an approach is commonly found among universities in New Zealand, the Nordic countries and increasingly in Eastern European countries. Moving up the level of subtlety, some universities do not display ranking information up front, but as part of the "facts and figures" or the general introduction about the university that are one to three layers below their homepages. In some cases, a ranking section or Nobel Prize winners section is displayed in parallel with the general information provided about the university without mentioning rankings on the homepage.

By taking into account more subtle expressions of the rankings such as the ones described above, over half of the universities (some 62%) in this group of 58, regardless of geographical regions and ranking positions, are using ranking information on their websites. This does not take into account sporadic ranking information given out as "news" when the annual ranking results are released, meaning that the use of ranking data by universities is bound to be more than what is presented in this study.

5.2 An Analysis of the Styles in which Ranking Information is Presented

As for *how* and *to what extent* flagship universities use ranking information on their websites, an analysis of the data collected from the 36 universities that have used ranking information shows a very diverse picture as described below.

5.2.1 Pompous Presentation Style

As mentioned earlier, only two universities carried a banner on their homepage boasting their ranking positions. Such a 'hard-sell' strategy is rarely found among the flagship universities analysed here. Instead, it is more common to see ranking-related messages (explicit or subtle) displayed upfront on the homepage to direct the users' attention to more detailed messages that the universities intend to convey as "facts" or "analysis". Compared to other more subtle expressions of rankings, we may call explicit presentation of rankings or links to rankings up front on a homepage 'pompous presentation', which resembles an advertisement. Eight universities were found to have used this strategy, and six among them have slogans claiming themselves as the best, the leading, the top or top-ranked university in their country or region, if not globally (depending on how the ranking positions are interpreted, creatively).

5.2.2 Analytical Presentation Style

Among the universities which do not display ranking related images or messages on the front page, eight of them dedicate a separate section or webpage to rankings, indicating that they do not take rankings lightly. Apart from the *University of Cambridge*, which is simply listing all its top ranking positions in the one-paragraph "League tables" section, the others with a dedicated section on rankings have gone to great lengths to describe their positions in different rankings and/or provided an "analysis" of their ranking positions, comparing their own ranking performance over the years or with other universities. It is interesting to note in this group that there is a tendency among European universities to first question the rankings before they bring in the analysis of their ranking positions. It is also noted that European universities, judging from where they locate the ranking information, tend to relate rankings to research, even though not all rankings they present in fact measure research outputs. By contrast, universities in the Asia-Pacific and Canada tend to link rankings to student recruitment or to their global positioning in general.

5.2.3 Factual Presentation Style

In stark contrast with the previous group, four universities mention rankings in passing in the introductory message about their university and seven simply incorporate rankings as statistics under "facts and figures" without discussion. These are less detailed presentations of rankings, but the brevity should not be taken as a sign of unimportance. On the contrary, the endorsement of the rankings and the unquestioned incorporation of the ranking figures as part of the institutional identity or statistics may indicate that rankings have been internalised in the university's operation. In the two specific cases – the *University of Dublin* and *Utrecht University*, ranking figures were placed in a prominent position, even before the founding year of the university itself.

5.2.4 Indicative Presentation Style

However critical a university may appear in the use of ranking information and regardless of the length of the message about rankings, universities using ranking information have inherently endorsed rankings as a means for them to shape their institutional profile. Therefore, the very act of incorporating ranking information on the university website and the critical analysis displayed are contradictory in nature. One may say that while this is not ideal, it is inevitable because "rankings are here to stay". How about Harvard, the top-most university on the ARWU ranking and many others? There is no direct reference to rankings on the website of Harvard, but the "fact" that "44 current and former faculty members" are/were Nobel Laureates is stated in the overview "Harvard at a Glance". Such an indica-

tive presentation, avoiding the controversy of rankings while using one of the most discussed indicators that has its own established reputation, is also found in a few other old universities such as *Karolinska Institute* (est. 1810), *Moscow State University* (est. 1755) and *University of Vienna* (est. 1365). It is, however, not clear whether these universities intentionally avoid the use of rankings or if there is a lack of communication strategy. The doubt here is raised due to the following observations: *Moscow State University*, despite its high ranking position, features one of the oldest websites among the sampled universities. The "online tour" it offers from its homepage is actually a slideshow of photos. The *University of Vienna* has provided a direct link to its online university shop on the English homepage, which is not found in the most commercialized higher education systems, not to mention Europe where commercialisation of higher education remains a taboo.

5.3 A Brief Comparison in the Use of Rankings by European and Asian Universities

The analysis above suggests that the most crucial element for determining the impact of rankings is not the presentation style. Universities that display a pompous banner boasting their ranking positions are not necessarily less critical than those listing ranking information before their year of foundation as "facts and figures". Universities that have gone into great length to explain the flaws of rankings but continue to use (or endorse) the information in order to validate their own (research) achievements may have been impacted more by rankings than those which used ranking information solely for packaging themselves and student recruitment. In the worst case, when universities use ranking data to consolidate their own position at the expense of other universities in the same system, as found in some Flemish, French and New Zealand universities, the impact of rankings on the internal balance between competition and cooperation among universities in the same national system is not negligible.

An ironic observation from this study is that European universities, which have criticised rankings the most, are using ranking information on their homepages more than Asian universities, which are believed to be obsessed with rankings. Two possible reasons may explain this discrepancy between common beliefs and the practices found in this study. First, many of the Asian universities are ranked below the top 100-200. They may not have considered the ranking positions worth mentioning. Second, rankings are more likely to affect universities that aim at attracting Asian students rather than institutions located in Asia. This is shown in the differentiated approach taken by the *Catholic University of Leuven* (Belgium) and the *University of Milan* (Italy) in adapting their Chinese and English international student recruitment brochures by including ranking information.

The above reasoning does not mean that Asian universities are not using ranking information. Rather, the decision to use ranking information or not depends also on the orientation of different Asian countries. Universities in New Zealand, as well as those in Singapore, South Korea and Hong Kong are increasingly interested in tapping into the massive outflow of students from within Asia. These universities have also begun to use ranking information to position themselves in the global higher education system by proving themselves of equal standing as, at least some of, their European or American counterparts. Such an orientation on student recruitment may also explain the use of ranking information for marketing rather than indicating research performance in Asia.

6. Discussion

As the results from this study show, the concept of isomorphism is more complex than is commonly understood. We can search for isomorphism by looking at *how* things look alike (such as similarities in forms as a result of isomorphism in a narrow sense, similarities in names as a result of isonymism, or similarities in practices as a result of isopraxism) and *why* they look alike (such as being the result of coercive, mimetic, or normative isomorphism). The kind of mimetic isomorphism that is often associated with the unintended impacts of rankings is only one out of the many sub-types of isomorphism just mentioned.

Based on the data collected in this study, universities can be similar to or different from each other as a result of various forces of isomorphism that can be reinforcing each other or restraining each other. Therefore, while there is a belief that flagship universities present in global rankings may be compelled to look like their peers on the rankings or emulate the top-ranked universities, it must be noted that the mimetic isomorphism in question can be restrained by coercive and/or normative isomorphism arising from state regulations, local norms, or the nature of universities (i.e. private vs. public).

As a result of such contending forces, it is highly unlikely to find a global model of university or a global communication model at any given time, however strong the impacts of rankings may be. It is found in this study that the flagship universities, although they are sharing increasingly similar missions to lead in the imagined global higher education system and compete in the knowledge economy, are far from homogeneous in outlook, not to mention other aspects of their operation.

This is not to say that they are all uniquely different and that there is no sign of isomorphism, however. First, there are indeed signs of mimetic isomorphism between the new image-dominant homepages adopted by some lowest ranked flagships and the older homepage of the top-ranked Harvard before it switched to a new style. However, the similarities are limited to the adoption of similar homepage templates and iconic labels rather than the content of the messages being

communicated. In other words, local adaptions are found even in cases of mimetic isomorphism.

Second, although mimetic isomorphism is found to be less prominent between universities in established national systems and the top-ranked universities, normative isomorphism is clearly reflected in the homogeneity among universities in the same world region. Such regional homogeneity, plus some noticeable signs of failed attempts to communicate through their homepages, implies that their differentiation from the top-ranked universities cannot be attributed to rational strategic planning. There is clearly conformity as a result of normative isomorphism, even though it is not at a global level nor driven by rankings.

In a positive sense, strong regional norms can help universities counter the fear of uncertainty in the changing global environment and maintain their regional diversity. In a negative sense, the counter-force of normative isomorphism may have only delayed a paradigm shift, as in the case of IT revolution and de-regularization of universities, that would ultimately have its impact at a later stage. Such diversity maintained as a result of resistance, rather than conscious differentiation, is therefore only temporary. It may disappear as time goes by.

Third, compared to normative isomorphism, coercive isomorphism appears to have a smaller role to play in the homogenization of university homepages. There are rarely hard and fast rules imposed by the states on how university websites should be designed. Though seemingly unlikely, overarching national regulations can still affect what should and should not appear on a university's homepage, even though these regulations are not applied solely to universities. At a global level, the changes in IT infrastructures and software may also result in coercive isomorphism if and when certain platforms or standards are no longer supported by existing technologies.

All in all, the findings in this study show that flagship universities in the global higher education system, if it does exist, remains virtually heterogeneous rather than homogeneous. There is a tendency to move towards homogeneity with the adoption of image-based animated homepages and the use of English and social media. But due to the different speed in the adoption of innovation and the local adaptions of imported ideas, homogeneity is highly unlikely to be found at a global scale at any given time. In other words, there is no fear of global homogeneity among the homepages of flagship universities yet, and as a result, no such thing as a 'global communication model' for flagship universities.

7. Policy Implications

In the discourse of global competition, few seem to have doubted the existence and the boundaries of a global higher education system and a global knowledge economy. While leading universities in different national systems are assigned a new mission to compete globally, there is little questioning of their suitability and

fitness for such global competition. It seems to be a natural assumption that being the top universities in their national systems, they are the best equipped to compete globally. This study challenges, to some extent, such an assumption from an institutional communication point of view. Many of these flagship universities, which are mostly publicly funded as well as heavily regulated, do not seem to be better prepared to communicate or compete globally than their private counterparts.

It is difficult to draw a line between top private universities such as Harvard and public universities by funding sources these days. But in terms of the flexibility to use the funding, the incentive to innovate, the need to take risk and to appear attractive to students, researchers and funders – in general, the adoption of a business approach in the operation –, the public-private divide is still clearly visible in most national systems. Some flagship universities have begun to privatize part of their functions in the name of university-industry partnerships, university-community engagement activities or internationalization of teaching, and to adopt a market-oriented approach in promotion. Nevertheless, they are far from being unchained from national regulations, localized socio-cultural norms, and public expectations to serve the local needs.

If the global higher education system in which they are competing is narrowly defined as racing up the global rankings, and if the global knowledge economy that they have to lead is narrowly defined as the export of higher education services, perhaps, these publicly-funded flagships are not in the best position to lead.

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11

Towards International Student Oriented Support Services

An Evaluation of Support Services and Facilities at the University of Kassel

Carmen Nicoleta Mureşan

1. Introduction

One of the strongest dimensions of internationalization which has developed significantly in the past 20 years in Europe is the mobility of students, teachers and researchers. A long time before the Bologna higher education reforms in Europe even started students and teachers all over Europe studied and taught in foreign countries. In 1987, the Erasmus Programme was launched, aiming to support around 10 percent of all students in Europe to travel and study in another country (Kelo, Teichler and Wächter 2006). Since then, the Erasmus programme has enabled over 1.5 million students to gain international experience in a European country, with a one percent increase every year. A new phenomenon, though, is the development of study programmes in foreign languages which are already part of the study offer in many European higher education institutions. The Sorbonne declaration in 1998 and the Bologna declaration one year later put a greater emphasis on mobility and promoted it as the "major policy objective in higher education" (Richters and Teichler 2006, p.78). In this process, incoming international students are given as much importance as outgoing international students, aiming to increase the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area around the world.

In Germany, in the past 30 years, the number of incoming international students has grown very much, from 5.7 percent to 12.5 percent of the total student population (BMBF 2010). Ongoing growth can be recognized until 2003. Since then, consistently around 250,000 students started their studies in a German higher education institution every year.

One can recognize a fundamental interest of universities in attracting international students and providing them appropriate support for their studies abroad. However, several higher education institutions in many European countries (e.g. Spain, Italy) still do not provide services to their domestic or international students. Only some basic support for registration or housing is available, but support staff and support services just have not become an issue yet (Kelo and Rogers 2010). Even though providing support services for students in general is quite a new concept, in other countries (e.g. Germany, France) institutions have already developed support programmes for incoming international students. These programmes aim to help international students adapt and integrate in the new culture, as well as support them in their professional development.

The University of Kassel has started addressing this subject in recent years. The first internationalization strategy, adopted by the university in 2001, puts special focus on the international dimension in teaching and research. In the meantime, the internationalization of the study offer continued with the development of more internationally oriented study programmes which were mainly taught in the English language (Armbruster 2007). This process had a great impact not only on the diversity of the student population, but also on the differentiation of the support services offered to the students. A special support programme, "Measures for Quality Assurance of the Study Experience of International Students" (*Maßnahmen zur Qualitätssicherung im Studium internationaler Studierender*), was launched in 2006. Thus, a structure was created for networking among different actors who supervise and support international students during their studies at the University of Kassel.

After four years of activity and the implementation of the support programme's guidelines, the current study aims to evaluate the existing support services for international students at the University of Kassel from the point of view of different actors, as well as to make recommendations for development of a new support programme.[1]

The current support programme will be considered as a basis for the analysis, which is built on the following activities:

- the meetings of the network of support staff for international students (NISIK) in the summer semester 2010
- an evaluation of support services for international students through a group discussion in the winter semester 2009/2010, included as a pilot study
- an international student satisfaction survey in the summer semester 2010
- an analysis of intercultural theories

1 The launch of new support programme was planned for 2011, the year of the study referred to in this article.

A comprehensive analysis of the above mentioned research activities contributes to the further improvement of the support services, and the expansion of the offer of these services. The results of the analysis will then be integrated into a more comprehensive programme of support and supervision of international students. A special focus for the new support programme will be the applicability of the guidelines.

2. International Student Support - an Institutional Perspective

Student support services have developed very much in the last years. These non-academic programmes and activities within a higher education institution take place before, during, and after the study abroad period of a student. Good support of students increases study success and improves study performance, facilitates students' adaptation in the new environment and enables them to benefit as much as possible from their study experience (Kelo 2006).

In Germany, support is currently offered in various areas, from practical to study related support, trying to reach and to fulfill the needs of as many student groups as possible. Due to the growing number of questions regarding organization of studies, social and psychological issues, student life, etc., before, during, and after completion of studies, a broad range of specialized support services for students were developed. These services aim to facilitate good learning and good conditions for professional development of students. At the University of Kassel, many services were developed recently offering support in the following areas: formalities and administrative issues – study counselling – crisis- and social counselling – financial issues – law counselling – gender equity – service for international students – professional perspectives after graduation (University of Kassel 2009). With generous support from national organizations (e.g. DAAD, HRK, DSW), German higher education institutions take initiatives to offer high quality support, and thereby contribute to sustainable study success of international students.

In this study, a special focus will be put on support services for all international students at the beginning and through the duration of their studies at the University of Kassel in the following areas:

- information and orientation programmes
- academic support
- practical support (visas, housing, etc.)
- integration into the student and local communities

Currently over 2000 students from 115 of the world's 192 nations (United Nations 2006) are studying and researching at the University of Kassel (University of Kassel 2010b). This puts the Hessian university above average in the state of *Hessen* with respect to the number of international students, even though the ratio of

national-international students has decreased constantly since 2005. In the winter semester 2009/2010, a slight increase was observed, so that today, almost 12 percent of the students at the University of Kassel are international.

According to its internationalization strategy, the University of Kassel (2006) set the following aims for strengthening its international dimension: to keep its position above average with regard to the number of international students, especially *Bildungsausländer*; to provide high quality student support in order to increase the success rate of international students (an aim that is partly an object of the current evaluation as well); to continuously evaluate and further develop the support programme for international students(an aim that constitutes a special focus of this thesis); to ensure that professional and target-group related service and counselling offers are a guarantee for efficient and successful studies; to put in place measurable actions for the evaluation of the realization of these aims.

Based on the internationalization strategy, a programme for support of international students was developed in 2006. Already in the winter semester of 2004/2005, the first orientation week for international students was organized, aiming to support foreign students with a successful start of their study period abroad as well as to familiarize them with student life in Kassel and Germany in their first semester at the University of Kassel (University of Kassel 2006). A special support programme, "Measures for Quality Assurance of the Study Experience of International Students" (*Maßnahmen zur Qualitätssicherung im Studium internationaler Studierender*), was launched in 2006. Thus, a structure was created for networking among different actors who supervise and support international students during their studies at the University of Kassel. The support programme targets the *Bildungsausländer* – those students who received their entry qualification in a country other than Germany –, and differentiates between exchange and degree students, taking into account their support needs. *Exchange students* might need support with choosing courses, achievement of study performance and ECTS points, accommodation possibilities, information regarding the German daily life, availability of social contacts, information in English language, learning German, and getting to know the host country. *Regular international students in German taught study programmes* might need support with the matriculation until their final exam, change of courses, socio-cultural issues, intercultural conflicts, and integration. *Students in internationally oriented study programmes,* also success oriented, might need support with German language, technical English language skills, getting in contact with other students, and the German oriented infrastructure of the university (University of Kassel 2006).

In summer 2009, different stakeholders in this area met for a first review and strategic planning of the support services: representatives of the university administration and of different departments of the university, tutors, *Studentenwerk*, the administration of the city of Kassel, Aliens office, etc. A network of support staff for international students was created, NISIK – *Netzwerk Internationale Stud-*

ierende in Kassel. Outcomes of the meetings were clear-cut answers on the current situation of international student support at the University of Kassel as well as clear steps and plans for improvement in the coming year.

3. Living in Another Culture – Intercultural Theories

Theories on cross-cultural adaptation allow us to understand what international students experience during their stay in the host country. The model of acculturation shows the phases foreigners go through in the process of cross-cultural adaptation. Culture shock, as a phase of the adaptation process, gives us some insight on the importance of support in this specific phase of adaptation, whereas the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic makes us aware of the complexity of the adaptation process. Kim's integrative communication theory on cross-cultural adaptation describes the structure of cross-cultural adaptation and the factors that influence this process, as well as factors that have to be taken into consideration when talking about support of foreigners – in this specific case, of international students. The theory explains this adaptation process as an exchange of characteristics between foreign individuals and the host environment, where individuals acquire some characteristics of the host culture and enrich the new culture with their own customs, language and their whole cultural identity. As an outcome of the adaptation process, Kim (2005) found some changes regarding the stranger individuals:

1. Increased functional fitness: synchrony between strangers' internal responses and the external demands in the host environment
2. Psychological health: ability to communicate and the accompanying functional fitness in the host society / psychological well-being
3. Intercultural identity: the original cultural identity begins to lose its distinctiveness and rigidity while an expanded and more flexible definition of self emerges.

The above mentioned intercultural theories and models create the contextual basis for understanding and analyzing the international experience from an intercultural point of view. Not all models can be directly measured in the international student satisfaction survey, but they create the context for discussing the factors that influence cross-cultural adaptation later on.

4. Evaluation of Support Services for International Students

In order to provide a comprehensive image of international student support services at the University of Kassel, this study combines several levels of analysis. Perspectives of support staff from the meetings of the NISIK networks were linked to the students' perspectives which were collected through different means. In chronological order, the group discussion with regular international students

from English taught programmes (ETPs) finds the strong and weak points of international student support at the University of Kassel through a qualitative approach. The data collected through the international student satisfaction survey constitutes the quantitative evaluation of support services from the perspective of international students.

4.1 Pilot Study – Group Discussion with International Students in ETPs

The group discussion sought to find out which support services international students know, how satisfied they are with the current support services, and how the current offer can be improved or changed from the perspective of international students.

In December 2009, three male and six female international students originally from South America (Chile), North America (USA), and Asia (China and Indonesia) took part in a 1 hour and 51 minute discussion.

Participants often claimed not to know which services were provided by which unit and noticed a poor cooperation and coherence between units and facilities within the university, as well as between the university and the city administration. At the same time, support offered by study programmes or by departments with their own administration branch (e.g. department of ecological agriculture) was evaluated as very helpful, whereas the more centralized services, as well as university wide facilities (e.g. *Studentenwerk,* International Office), were seen as inefficient, of low quality or professionalism, not transparent, or too bureaucratic, mainly due to lack of resources and low interest from the university administration as well as poor management in each of these services and facilities. Certain services were seen as very useful (e.g. psychological counseling), but promoted too little. Besides, the competence of support staff could also make a service unattractive. In this sense, the participants pointed again to the lack of resources; in this case, of competent human resources. Also, the quality of support is often related with the staff's interest in supporting students as well as staff's openness towards other cultures.

Participants agreed that better cooperation among providers and services could be made possible. Information needs to be collected from different sources (also from the national level: e.g. Handbuch für Deutschland) and shared more often and more efficiently (e.g. via an internet platform). More orientation tutors at department and study programme levels could save a lot of frustration and lost time during the first weeks of the semester. The orientation week for international students should gather all service providers and promote them among students, and at the same time, orientation tutors should be appointed for certain areas (one tutor for accommodation issues, another tutor for financial problems etc.). Contact people for international students should be appointed in each department, unit, and service. They should speak foreign languages, be more open towards other cul-

tures and show more interest towards problems of international students. The students' union should be more helpful and represent the rights of international students as well.

The group discussion brought much input into the development process of the international student satisfaction survey. The results of the discussion will bring a valuable contribution to the development of the new support programme at the University of Kassel.

4.2 The International Student Satisfaction Survey

The international student satisfaction survey is the key part of this research. It aimed to examine the satisfaction of international students regarding the support services for international students at the University of Kassel in specific areas: orientation and academic introduction (see appendix 2), academic support, practical support, and integration into the student and local communities (see appendix 1). The findings will be implemented for refining the current support programme for international students at the university, according to their expectations and needs.

Research questions:

1. To what extent are international students satisfied with the support services and facilities for international students at the University of Kassel?
2. What is the degree of satisfaction with the activities during the orientation and academic introduction meeting?
3. To what extent are international students satisfied with the support staff?
4. Is there a difference in the satisfaction of students from different status groups (exchange students, regular students)?
5. Is there a difference in satisfaction between bachelor students and master students?
6. To what extent do international students from different status groups (exchange students, regular students) need differentiated support services?
7. To what extent do international students get in contact with fellow students, staff and citizens?
8. To what extent are students with prior international experience in closer contact with fellow students, staff and citizens?

Through a census, the survey investigated regular international students in German taught programmes (GTP's), regular international students in English taught programmes (ETP's) and exchange students (e.g. Erasmus students).

254 out of 1,371 international students with foreign entry qualification participated in the survey, of which 13 percent are exchange students, 47 percent regular international students in German taught programmes, and 40 percent in English

taught programmes. 17 percent of the students could not be reached due to invalid e-mail accounts. Hence, 22 percent of the reachable students took part in the survey.

A computerized self-administered questionnaire (CSAQ) was administered, containing 308 variables in 48 questions, divided into 8 sections: A. Information about studies, B. Support services for (international) students, C. Orientation week for international students, D. Introduction meeting / -week in the department / study programme, E. Overall assessment, F. Experience abroad and foreign language proficiency, G. Personal information, H. Contact to the University of Kassel. The questionnaire was made available in 2 languages– German and English.

The field phase lasted r 5 weeks, between May 28th and June 30th 2010, containing an initial invitation letter followed by 3 reminders; all information was sent by e-mail.

The collected data was analyzed descriptively, by drawing conclusions according to descriptive values like means, frequencies and percentages, and inferentially, by calculating the significance of the results for the whole population through ANOVA for $p < 0.05$.

Support services and facilities

Respondents were in general more satisfied with facilities than with the services these facilities provide. The more satisfying services and facilities were those which are most used and known by students, and those which the students are required to consult in order to get started with their studies.

In general, the use of support services by international students at the University of Kassel was relatively low for most of the services, and the satisfaction was on average higher. Only few services, mainly those that students *are required* to use for registration and to proceed with their studies, were used more often, and students were therefore, also more satisfied with them.

Due to little or no use of the services, few respondents (n = 35) could express their satisfaction with these. At the same time, over 50 percent of all respondents stated that they did not know many of the services (15 out of 22 services). A high number of respondents (around 80%) did not know the services related to equity and diversity, psychological and law counseling, or counseling for religious welfare and for crisis situations. Well known and most used were the services with regard to formalities, academic advising, and advice regarding language courses, as well as counseling for general IT applications. These services were also those for which the respondents expressed a satisfaction above average. One can notice a parallelism among usage of services and satisfaction with them.

Table 1: Student population and respondents by degree and status

	Degree									
	Bachelor		Master		Other*		Exchange students**		Total	
Status	Students	Respon-dents	Students	Respon-dents	Students	Respon-dents	Students	Respon-dents	Students	Respon-dents
Exchange students*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	169	34	169	34
Regular int. stud in GTP's	242	36	111	36	480	48	n.a.	n.a.	843	116
Regular int. stud in ETP's	9	2	360	84	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	360	90
Total	251	38	471	120	480	48	169	34	1371	240

n.a. = no answer

* Diplom, Magister, Staatsexamen, other

** Exchange students didn't belong to any degree group in the university statistics; they were listed in a separate column.

Source: University of Kassel, 2010a

Regular international students in English taught programmes (ETP's) were on average more satisfied with all support services than exchange students and regular international students in German taught programmes (GTP's). Whereas regular international students were on average more satisfied with most of the services provided, this was not the case with the facilities. Exchange students used on average six of the facilities more often than regular students, but the satisfaction level was not significantly different between the three groups of students, mainly due to the small number of students who answered this question.

From another perspective, bachelor students used the support services in general less than master students, and were also more unsatisfied with these, whereas master students were more satisfied. This result is highly linked to the knowledge of the respondents about the support services. 13 services (out of 22) were unknown to over 80 percent of the bachelor students. In the case of master students, there were only three services that they did not know which also coincided with those unknown to bachelor students (counseling for students with children, for students with special needs, and psychological counseling). Similarly, in the case of support services, master students were in general rather satisfied with the support facilities in comparison to bachelor students.

Orientation Week for International Students and Academic Introduction Activities

Respondents were partially satisfied with the activities during the orientation and introduction weeks. Most satisfying in the orientation week were the social and cultural activities, and those related to getting to know each other, and integration into the international student group. Concerning the introduction week, students were more satisfied with the information about the study programme and the library, and the opportunity to meet the academic staff.

In spite of the offered orientation and academic introduction activities, students seem to have had some difficulties in getting started with their studies. When asked to rate the statement "It was easy getting started with my studies", partial agreement was received from the respondents. Exchange students and regular students in ETP's had a rather easy time at the beginning of their studies, whereas regular students in German taught programmes had a rather hard time, and disagreed with the statement. More disagremment came from bachelor students, whereas master students partly agreed.

Support Staff

Almost all international students seemed to choose the "easy-to-access" ways of finding support, teachers or fellow students. Students in English taught programmes also tended to ask their study programme coordinators and administrative staff for help. They, as well as exchange students and master students in general, evaluated the English language skills and the cultural openness of staff sig-

nificantly better than bachelor students and students in German taught programmes. The latter ones are those who stated that the quality of advice is dependent on the qualification of the advisor, whereas all master students rated the quality of advice significantly higher than bachelor students.

Needs: Information and Access to Information

All students, but especially exchange and bachelor students would like to have more information regarding their studies. Information about support staff and facilities should be disseminated better, as well as access requirements for services, and one should even consider lowering the initial requirements as well as increasing access possibilities, in order for students to take more advantage of the services provided. New means of information should be put in place, for example, an electronic newsletter, but also promotion through social networks would be a very effective medium for information according to the respondents.

Difficulties during the Stay in Kassel

Respondents seemed to have few problems during their stay in Kassel, at least that is what the overall average scores show. For all difficulties listed, the fewest problems were stated in the case of application procedure for the visa or residence and work permit, as well as in the recognition of previous scholastic or academic achievements. Over 70 percent of the respondents stated not to have had any difficulties in these areas. High and very high difficulties were declared in figuring out the academic system (35%), financial issues (40%), getting in contact with German students (41%) and with citizens (35%).

In the case of application procedures for visa or residence permit, and for work permit, there were no significant differences between the student groups, or in dealing with financial problems. Finding a place to stay was rated as partially easy for exchange and regular students, but bachelor students described it as significantly easier than master students. It was significantly more difficult for exchange students and students in ETPs to get in contact with German students and citizens. Bachelor and master students described this issue as equally difficult. Significantly fewer problems with the characteristics of the German culture were stated by regular students in German taught programmes and the bachelor students, in comparison to their exchange fellows, students in ETPs or master students in general. Getting in contact with citizens in Kassel was rated as significantly less difficult for students who have been abroad in a German speaking country before, because they also claimed to have significantly less problems in communicating in German, in comparison to those who have been abroad to another country before or haven't been abroad at all. Integration of students into the students and local communities was shown to be affected by the language of communication versus the ability of students in speaking German or English language.

5. Priorities for International Student Support

With a high number of international students, the University of Kassel puts a lot of emphasis on its international orientation. Funding schemes have been adopted and applied in different projects on internationalization of teaching and research, as well as in service provision for international students. Student tutors, integration activities, and even entire support programmes are financially complemented by national bodies. Recently, university wide projects have been developed and are currently in their first phase of implementation. Buddy schemes, intercultural trainings, specialized trainings, excursions and many more activities geared towards integration of international students are part of currently implemented projects.

Still, the University of Kassel seems to continue fighting with the disparity of its departments and therefore, of its support services and facilities, due to the historical development of the university campus. This often leads to lack of coordination between services in general, and specifically between support services, as was pointed out in the group discussion and confirmed by the survey data.

Results of the evaluation activities point out that better known information channels should be promoted, easy to read materials should be prepared, and an international customer-friendly, bilingual presentation of support services should be provided. To ensure better services in all areas related to studies, departments should be given more responsibility for designing their own support programmes for their international students. Decentralizing the support service coordination may help students to be better informed, use the services more often and be more satisfied with the support services and facilities at the university. In this sense, the necessary working areas discussed in the NISIK meetings can be pointed out as following:

- providing academic counseling through mentors and tutors
- providing information in English on the internet and in the main booklets for students
- organizing sharing meetings for support staff from the departments
- involving senior international students (as tutors, buddies etc.).

A well coordinated tutorship and mentorship programme may additionally ensure better academic support and study success of students. A mentorship programme based on the latest discussions in the NISIK network was developed by the network and was implemented in the departments in fall 2010, as agreed by the senate of the university. Involving senior international students in developing and improving support services was recommended by both the master students in the group discussion and by the NISIK network, and seems a suitable solution for creating student centered services in two ways: First, as tutors they are in contact with many international students, they learn about their problems and find solu-

tions to the problems together; second, they know as international students themselves what problems they came across and what might need to be changed.

The Staff needs to be prepared as well as empowered and given responsibility for the support they offer. A special focus on intercultural trainings for support staff would contribute to the international orientation of services and facilities.

Students should be encouraged to engage in projects in the local host community, or to work as volunteers in local organizations or companies. If possible, there should be ECTS credits given for this type of work, but voluntary work in the local community should be part of the experience. Intercultural theories show how important the exchange of experience, values and attitude among foreigners and nationals is.

The need of German language skills in the case of exchange and ETP students should be fulfilled by offering German language trainings for free to these students during the first two weeks of their stay in Kassel. They should learn the most necessary language skills to find their way inside and outside the campus. More advanced language trainings should be available also during the semester.

6. Conclusions

Due to the growing number of international–mainly overseas students–and therefore the growing heterogeneity of the international students group in German higher education institutions, international student support services gained much importance in the past years. Previous research shows the need for awareness at the institutional level regarding the importance of good services for international students, and the growing importance of students' decision making.

A case study at the University of Kassel analyzes through a mixed method research model international student support services from different perspectives; of staff and of students, with a special focus on the students' perspective. Overall, international students showed a moderate satisfaction with support services and facilities. Data shows that information provision and usage of services and facilities have a great impact on student satisfaction.

In recommendation for the new support programme for international students at the University of Kassel, the study revealed the following results:

1. International students need complete and better structured (English language) information.
2. Academic support is needed, and should be complemented by integration activities.
3. Differentiations in support offers or activities should be made between undergraduate and graduate students, and also between students in German taught programmes and students in English taught programmes.

4. Support staff (administrators, tutors, mentors etc.) as well as students should be continuously engaged in improving the support services and facilities at the university.
5. Services and facilities should become more transparent, should cooperate with each other and should be promoted.

In many of the above mentioned areas, changes have already been initiated; others are long term projects. Through cooperation and further evaluation studies, services can be improved, and can help students make the most of their international experience.

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In 2010 the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) awarded her the DAAD-prize for outstanding international students.

Appendix 1: Overview on the Support Services and Facilities at the University of Kassel

Support services	Support facilities	
Academic services and facilities		
Counseling for change of subjects, new decisions, etc.	General study counselling *(Mönchebergstr. 19)*	
Academic advising *(counseling for design of studies, examinations, etc.)*	Academic advising in the department /study programme	
Examination counseling	Examination office in the department / study programme	
Internship counseling	Internship counseling office in the department / study programme	
Counseling for planning studies and internships abroad	International Office	
Advice regarding language courses and services *(tandem, tutorials, etc.)*	International Language Center	
Practical services and facilities		
Counseling regarding formalities *(university registration, re-registration, etc.)*	Study service *(Mönchebergstr. 19)*	
Counseling for visa / residence permit		Aliens office
Counseling on the right of residence after completing your studies		
Counseling for career planning and job search	Alumni- and Career Service	
Counseling for general IT applications *(WLAN and VPN client, laptop rental, computer labs, internet access on campus, etc.)*	IT Service Center *(previously HRZ)*	

Counseling for religious welfare Counseling for crisis situations *(e.g. financial crisis during studies)*	Protestant Students Community / Catholic Students Community *(ESG / KHG)*	
General social counseling *(e.g. Counseling regarding insurance)* Support with accommodation search Counseling for financial issues *(e.g. Scholarships, BAföG)* Psychological Counseling Legal counseling *(Rechtsberatung)* Student voucher from the *Studentenwerk*	*Studentenwerk*	
Counseling for students with special needs Counseling for women *(e.g. questions about equity)*		Equity office
Counseling for students with children		

Appendix 2: Overview on the Orientation and Introduction Activities at the Beginning of the Studies

Orientation week (O-Woche)	Introduction week / meeting
Orientation and introduction into the study programme	
	General information regarding my studies
	Information about the study programme *(e.g. Modules, ECTS)*
	Information about the study plan *(e.g. creating the course plan)*
Orientation and introduction into the university structure	
Organizational aspects *(accommodation, bank account, health insurance, registration)*	
Information about the university structure *(departments, administration, etc.)*	Information about the university structure *(departments, administration, etc.)*
Information about service centres and facilities *(study service, Studentenwerk, library)*	Information about service centres and facilities *(study service, Studentenwerk, library)*
	Information about the offers of the *Studentenwerk*
	Information about the IT infrastructure *(students' e-mail, WLAN etc.)*
	Information about the library and lending books
Information about the facilities offered by students *(AStA, associations, etc.)*	Information about the facilities offered by students *(AStA, associations, etc.)*
Campus Rally *(buildings, facilities, etc.)*	
Information breakfast on the last day of the O-Woche	
Social and cultural activities *(excursions, Stammtisch, etc.)*	Knowing fellow students / joint activities
	Meeting professors / teaching staff

Orientation outside the university	
Information about German customs and lifestyle *(recycling, holidays etc.)*	
Knowing Kassel *(eating, drinking, shopping, etc.)*	Information about Kassel *(shopping, going out etc.)*
	Information about the study plan *(e.g. creating the course plan)*

12

International Skilled Migration from Developing Countries: Brain Drain or Brain Circulation?

The Colombian Case

Andrea Cuenca

1. Introduction

International migration is a worldwide phenomenon, present in different historical periods, with different magnitudes and patterns (Kaempf and Singh 1987). In particular, the international migration of highly skilled people, traditionally called *brain drain*, is currently an increasing trend in the global economic order. This topic has been extensively debated in different disciplines, and its unfavourable consequences for developing countries due to the loss of human capital have been widely stressed in literature on the subject. However, in the absence of reliable comparative data on international migration, the debate on brain drain has remained essentially theoretical (Docquier et al. 2007).

An alternative interpretation of the phenomenon argues that it does not necessarily mean negative consequences for the sending countries. According to it, skilled migration is part of a continuing process of mobility of knowledge, science and people in a globalized society. Thus, the phenomenon is seen as *brain circulation* (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997) and entails a positive impact on countries' economic growth, as well as on the scientific and social development.

This article gives an overview of the current discussion on the subject and makes an analysis on the skilled migration in developing countries. It argues that the pattern of mobility in developing countries is considerably different than the one present in developed regions, as it shows notably low and unequal figures in both sending and receiving sides. The questions orienting the paper are the following: What is the magnitude of the skilled migration from developing countries? What are its main causes, patterns and impact? Under what conditions are *brain drain* and *brain circulation* more likely to happen? What should national governments do to turn it into an opportunity? To give a clearer answer to these questions, the skilled migration in Colombia is analysed as a case study. This article is

not meant to be seen as an exhaustive investigation of the topic; rather, it provides a ground for subsequent studies.

The article is divided into five sections. The second and third sections introduce the conceptual and methodological frameworks respectively. The fourth and fifth parts present and discuss the main findings for developing countries and Colombia. In the final section, some concluding remarks are made.

2. Conceptual Framework: International Skilled Migration

2.1 A Historical Overview

A chronological look at the phenomenon leads us to trace the historical trends of science, a human activity that from its origins, "has built up through the circulation of men and ideas" (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997, p. 195). There are many examples of geographical migrations around knowledge and science in human history, such as the trips of scholars in Ancient Greece, the transfer of scientists in the Arab world, or the mobility of students and academics between medieval universities (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997). In contemporary history, the migration of 'brains' increased and became massive. After the Second World War, there was a growing migration of European intellectuals and scientists to the United States. In 1963, the concept of *brain drain* emerged when it was used by the British Royal Society to describe the migration of engineers and doctors from the United Kingdom to search better positions in North America (Brown 2000). Since 1990's, the topic gained importance due to changes in scientific migrations, marked by new flows of highly educated people produced by scientific and technological advances, and the progress of information and communication systems.

2.2 Definition

Even though the notion of *brain drain* has been criticized because the terminology itself is vague, diverse and simplistic, it is still widely used in both academic and non-academic circles. More recently, other expressions have emerged (e.g. migration of highly educated people, human capital flight, etc.), but the question of scientific migration remains central to the debate.

Overall, these expressions involve two main concepts (i.e. *international migration* and *highly skilled person*), which are also difficult to define. The United Nations defines a migrant as any person who changes his or her country of usual residence (Parsons et al. 2007); however, more specific definitions are given by national statistics which record international migrants according to diverse variables under specific purposes. Likewise, there is no single standard definition for *highly skilled person*. This category includes a broad range of educational and occupational backgrounds (Skeldon 2005), and traditionally refers to those who have tertiary or post-secondary education (Docquier et al. 2007). Nevertheless,

employment statistics often include in this category persons who do not have a tertiary education degree but whose occupations require it, and sometimes exclude those graduates who are employed in other kind of occupations (Teichler and Jahr 2001).

This article considers *skilled migration* as: "the proportion of working age individuals (aged 25 and over) with at least tertiary educational attainment, born in a given country but living in another country, taking into account neither their occupation, nor where education took place, nor when they arrived" (Docquier and Marfouk 2004, p. 6). Since there is no international consensus regarding definitions and levels of tertiary and higher education[1] in this article, tertiary education indicates more than 12 years of schooling and the population with this characteristic is referred as highly skilled.

2.3 The *Brain Drain* Controversy

Since its origins, the brain drain vs. brain gain controversy (Adams 1968, as cited in Kuznetsov 2006) has been a matter of debate between two opposite approaches: the nationalist and the internationalist. In this article, a third perspective is introduced: the network approach.

The *nationalist perspective* is based on the Human Capital Theory, which states that knowledge, skills and competences constitute the individual's human capital that increases through education and experience, and plays a key role in consumption, and that governments should invest in education and expect a return on their investment when the individual becomes economically active (Brown 2000). From this perspective, brain drain implies a double loss: sending countries not only lose their human capital which eventually could have had a positive impact on the economic and socio-political progress, but do not get any returns either. In turn, receiving countries become more prosperous and advanced (Hekmati and Glaser 1973). Since differences between developed and developing countries are closely related to the availability of qualified people (Wood 1995), brain drain makes the gap greater between poor and rich.

By contrast, the *internationalist approach* considers mobility as a necessary condition to scientific production and knowledge dissemination. According to this, skilled migration is a normal trend, not viewed as a loss, but a potential gain (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997). Another assumption refers to the right of people to choose their residence and occupation, and seek opportunities for personal advancement in an international context. The free movement of human capital is beneficial not only to the individual, but also to both receiving and sending countries (Kuznetsov 2006). In this sense, there are no 'winners' or 'losers' because it is assumed that

1 EU employment statistics include persons with vocational and technical training, which is considered *higher* by EU authorities and *tertiary* by OECD (Teichler and Jahr 2001).

citizens are not 'owned' by their countries of origin, and that the mere physical presence of skilled people is not a necessary condition for the country's development (Hekmati and Glaser 1973). Among the criticisms to this approach, the assumption that local value yields to global improvements is often discussed (Kuznetsov 2006).

A new perspective, the *network approach*, rather than talking about the phenomenon in terms of brain drain vs. brain gain, entails the notion of brain circulation or mobility (UNESCO 2006). It states that migration of highly trained personnel is unavoidable and not necessarily a negative dynamic. Based on the idea that science and technology are developed throughout social practices and collective learning (Meyer 2001), this perspective suggests that highly skilled migrants can play an important role by building knowledge, scientific, technological or cultural networks called *diasporas* (Meyer et al. 1997). These structures set up connections between highly skilled people and their homeland through the transmission of competences and expertise without the need of returning. In contrast with the former approaches, this one implies a shared benefit between the intervenient countries (UNESCO 2008).

3. Methodological Issues

Due to the diversity and vagueness of definitions, the lack of comprehensive sources, and the unavailability of information, the measure of brain drain has been a matter of debate. Since there is no specific data collection on the permanent and temporary flows of skilled migrants, different sources usually are required to approach the phenomenon. Most data are taken from immigration statistics of host countries, and complemented by fragmentary data from other sources, whose information originally is collected for different purposes. Population censuses and registers, administrative data, and surveys on labour force and graduates are often used, but none of them gives a complete picture of the phenomenon (OECD 2002). Furthermore, countries provide statistics according to national practice (Teichler and Jahr 2001), and most of them do not indicate relevant information, such as: socio-demographic data, duration of migration, educational attainment, field of study or occupation, etc. For these reasons, international comparative studies are often not possible.

In this article, two methods are implemented: descriptive statistical analysis and document review. The main source of information is the most comprehensive database of brain drain available.[2] For the purpose of the case study, national sta-

2 There have been two important initiatives to create a comprehensive database of brain drain. The first one was produced by the pioneering work of Carrington and Detragiache (1998) with data of the US census for 1990. In 2006, Docquier extended that database expanding the sample to all OECD for 1990 and 2000. Even though it represents an enormous contribution to the study on brain drain, comprehensive statistics of non-OECD countries are still unknown.

tistics from different institutions in Colombia are used. Additionally, recent academic reports and research articles on the topic are examined. Even though the figures presented are quite rough and could be improved, they are good enough to give a picture of the phenomenon.

4. Skilled Migration from Developing Countries

What are the magnitude and trends of *the* skilled migration from developing countries? Does it exhibit a pattern of *brain drain* or *brain circulation*? To answer this question, quantitative information is presented, along with a discussion and policy implications.

4.1 Main Findings

4.1.1 Where do Skilled Migrants come from?

In absolute values, the largest stocks of educated emigrants come from Europe (most of them from the UK, Germany and Italy), Southern and Eastern Asia (including the Philippines, India, China, Korea and Vietnam), and Central America to a lesser extent (particularly Mexico) (Özden and Schiff 2006). But in relative values, a very different picture emerges: looking at the stock of skilled people living abroad relative to the total skilled labour force of the home country (Özden 2005), skilled people from North America are less likely to go abroad (only 1%). South Asia, Eastern Europe and South America present similar figures (about 5%). This percentage is somewhat higher for Middle East/North Africa (8%) as well as for Western Europe (10%). But the flight of human capital has impressive numbers in other regions: Sub-Saharan Africa (15%) and Central America (20%). Particularly, the situation in the Caribbean (almost 50%) is dramatic with serious consequences in education, health and technology. In sum, these figures show that there is indeed an increasing flow of highly educated people from smaller, poorer and isolated nations. A recent study (Docquier et al. 2007) concludes that brain drain takes place in countries where the average level of schooling is low, and which are located near developed regions.

4.1.2 Where are Skilled Migrants Going?

Regarding the stock of migrants in million people by destination and the percentage of those who have a tertiary education degree, migrants tend to be concentrated in a few world regions. According to Özden (2005), the most common destination both for skilled and unskilled migrants is the United States. In 2000, more than 20 million people had the status of immigrants in the USA, out of which 41 percent had a tertiary education degree. The second most chosen destination is the European Union with almost 15 million immigrants, but the percentage of those

highly educated is lower (20%). Australia and Canada also play an important role; by the year 2000, they had received about 5 million people, out of which 57 percent were skilled migrants. The study of Özden and Schiff (2006) complements the previous information, showing that more than 85 percent of the total number of skilled migrants in 2000 was found in just 6 countries: USA (50%), Canada (13.5%), Australia (7.5%), UK (6.2%), Germany (4.9%) and France (3%). What is common to these countries is their strong skills-based migration programs (Cervantes and Guellec 2002).

4.1.3 Is the Phenomenon Increasing?

Different sources confirm an increase in skilled migration flows to developed countries. In fact, the stock of tertiary educated migrants has increased by about 800,000 a year in the OECD area during the 1990's, with a total number of 20.4 million skilled people in 2000 (Özden and Schiff 2006). Looking at the international migration to OECD countries by education attainment, the percentage of people with tertiary education among migrants increased (from 29.8% to 34.6%) between 1990 and 2000, as well as the share of migrants with a secondary school degree (from 25.3% to 29%), whereas low skilled migration has become less important (44.9% to 36.4%) (Özden and Schiff 2006).

A recent study (Docquier et al. 2007) confirms that even though general emigration rates slightly decreased from developing countries during this period of time, due to restrictive migration policies of industrialized nations, the number of skilled workers abroad from developing countries to the OECD area increased by 64 percent. This paradox can be explained by the progressive rise of education attainment and the expansion of higher education systems. Furthermore, between 1990 and 2000, the world potential labor force[3] grew from 2.6 billion to 3.2 billion, and the share of workers with tertiary education increased by 1.8 percentage points, meanwhile the share of low-skilled workers decreased by 2.5 points (Özden and Schiff 2006). Also, the rise of international skilled migration could be explained by a stronger demand of highly qualified personnel from industrialized countries (Cervantes and Guellec 2002).

4.1.4 Is it only an Issue of Developing Countries?

The data of Özden (2005) show that most skilled migrations come from developing to developed regions and their main hosts are the USA, Canada and Australia with 11.1 million people. In less measure, but still important, is the migration from developing countries to European countries with 2.7 million skilled persons. But surprisingly, there is also a constant skilled migration among industrialized re-

3 Defined here as the population 25 years old and over.

gions. Similar to the amount of people coming to Europe, there is also a significant movement (2.7 million skilled persons) from Europe to North America and Australia. Countries such as Canada, France, Germany, Sweden and the UK are important sources of temporary skilled migrants to the USA (e.g. postdoctoral scholars, researchers, company transferees) (OECD 2002). But the opposite direction, from North America to Europe, shows a lower magnitude of skilled migration with just 0.3 million people[4].

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Brain Drain vs. Brain Circulation

To what extent can the skilled migration from developing countries be described as brain drain or brain circulation? Although the data above are not the result of a detailed quantitative study, they show that there is indeed a flow pattern that could be considered as brain drain. In this article, four main reasons for this statement are identified: first, this flow represents an inside-out movement since there are more educated people going abroad than incoming foreign highly-skilled. Therefore, the net migration rate[5] is negative. Second, the return rate among mobile educated people is low in countries where structures of salaries, employment and research are less developed than, and therefore not competitive as, those of receiving countries (Özden 2005). Third, since most developing countries suffer from low levels of human capital, skilled migration represents a loss with a negative impact on economic growth and social development (Özden 2005). Fourth, circulation of knowledge and technology is low if connections of skilled emigrants and their home country are poor, or if their contribution to national development is marginal.

By contrast, skilled migration in developed countries has another pattern. Most European countries are hosts to highly skilled foreigners and their skilled emigration is often temporary and the return positive, suggesting more a pattern of brain circulation than one of drain (OECD 2002). In the case of North America and Australia, since skilled emigration is relatively low, the pattern of mobility is more brain gain than brain circulation.

Additionally, some authors state that skilled migration from a given country cannot be analyzed in exclusive terms of brain drain or brain circulation, but instead, both coexist (Móguerou 2006). Pellegrino (2000) reports various studies that show how both patterns play themselves out simultaneously in particular

4 Even though other possible directions were not explored, other studies have documented the existing migration flows outside the OECD area (Özden and Schiff 2006; Özden 2005).

5 Difference of skilled immigrants and emigrants of a given country in a period of time.

regions and specific fields of study. In these cases, brain circulation is supplementary rather than opposite to brain drain (Móguerou 2006).

Likewise, Knight (2004) claims that *brain chain* is a more appropriate term to describe the mobility of talents between developing and developed countries. As one country loses its human capital in a specific sector, it targets and recruits skilled personnel from other countries to fill the gap. Each country suffers from brain drain, but compensates it by backfilling from another country. Along the chain, those countries near the top, which are usually developed and larger countries, benefit more from brain gain; whereas those countries at the bottom, usually developing or smaller countries, experience more brain drain. In sum, the predominance or coexistence of the one or other model depends upon the characteristics of both receiving and sending countries, and the existing policies that regulate the mobility of the highly-skilled (Pellegrino 2000).

4.2.2 Policy Implications

The extent and mode of skilled migration are highly determined by the skill-based immigration programs from developed countries, but are also determined by the emigration regulations of the countries of origin.

Among the policies implemented by sending countries in response to skilled migration, at least six general policy types can be identified. Lowell and Findlay (2001) have classified them under the *Six R's*, which can also be categorized into two major groups according to Meyer et al. (1997) (see Table 1). Policies from the first group are not effective at all as they are only temporary but not permanent measures to dissuade people from migrating (Brown 2000). By contrast, the return and incentive policies constitute long-term alternatives. However, they only work if receiving countries are in a position to offer salaries and infrastructure comparable to that in industrialized countries. Consistent with the idea of brain circulation, the *diaspora option* is the strategy best adapted for developing countries; it requires abandoning the idea of keeping the highly-skilled at home, and promotes re-connection projects between skilled migrants and national communities.

Additionally, migration policies of developed countries are crucial factors in explaining particular international migration flows (Móguerou 2006). Many European policy strategies oriented to encourage mobility are based on the assumption that circulation of knowledge is always beneficial and leads to high levels of innovation. However, if these policies do not take into account the particular needs of developing countries, they could have a negative effect and accelerate brain drain (Kaempf and Singh 1987; Lowell and Findlay 2001). It is important to formulate coherent policies sensitive to the geographical areas suffering from brain drain–to their particular historical and socio-economic conditions–and to the need of certain occupations and specific skills within these countries. In order for developing countries to benefit from skilled migration, cooperation policies are needed to

facilitate mobility and the later return of graduates, by encouraging them to work on topics of relevance for their home countries, and promoting contact with government, academia and industry.

Table 1: Policy Responses to Skilled Migration of Sending Countries

To prevent brain drain	1. Restriction of international mobility 2. Reparation for loss of human capital (compensatory policy) 3. Recruitment of international migrants
To turn brain drain into an opportunity	4. Return of migrants to their source country 5. Resourcing expatriates (diaspora option) 6. Retention through educational policies and economic development (incentive policy)

Source: Adapted by the author from Lowell and Findlay (2001) and Meyer et al. (1997)

5. Case Study: Skilled Migration from Colombia

Migration of Colombians is not new, but what is new is its rapid growth during the last decades; more than 5 million people live abroad and it is the second receiving country of remittances in Latin America after Mexico (Guarnizo 2006). In spite of its importance, literature on the topic is scarce and not specialized. The available information is mostly published by newspaper articles which are not based on reliable empirical research, and the data presented are incipient and not rigorous. This article is an attempt to contribute to a general understanding of the migration phenomenon in Colombia.

5.1 Main Findings

5.1.1 Causes

Causes of human capital mobility are very complex and vary according to countries, periods of time, fields of study and economic sectors (Kaempf and Singh 1987). The *push-pull model* is extensively used in the literature on migration for identifying those causes. It distinguishes between push factors (i.e. negative encouragements that pushed people to emigrate) and pull factors (i.e. positive incentives, mostly offered by the host country that pulled people to go there). Based on both, this model and the work of Portes (1976, as cited in Alvarez 2008), who classifies the causes according to three levels – international, national and individual –, Table 2 lists a group of factors recognized as the main migratory causes for the highly skilled in Colombia:

Table 2: Main Causes of the Skilled Migration in Colombia

Level	Factor	Description
International (pull)	Macroeconomic environment	Economic and labour market conditions of other countries. Example: the oil boom in Venezuela (1970-1980).
	International dimension of labour market	Opening of the Colombian economy to the global market (1991). Recruiting of best talents by multinationals.
	Internationalization of higher education	HE programs abroad and scholarships offered for Colombians.
	Migration policies of receiving countries	Some countries attract Colombian talents with specific qualifications (e.g. Canada, UK, Australia).
National (push)	Salary and working conditions	High levels of unemployment (9,9% in 1997; 16,3% in 1999). Huge salary differences: the average income of Colombians in US is more than twice that of the residents in Colombia.
	Research capacities and innovation system	Lack of resources, funding, infrastructure and research positions.
	Higher education system	3 out of 4 people leave the country to pursue their studies. The supply of graduate programs is poor in terms of quantity, quality, costs, and competitiveness.
	Structural mismatch between national labour market and educational supply	Rapid expansion of HE. Labour market cannot absorb the increasing number of graduates.
	Socio-political environment	Internal violence and army conflict have triggered a massive displacement of people looking for life quality, security and financial stability.
	Geographical location	Colonial links and geographic proximity with industrialized countries (e.g. USA).

to be continued

Table 2 continued

Level	Factor	Description
Individual	Social mobility	Migration as an alternative way to achieve a higher social status for educated individuals.
	Migrant and social networks	Contacts abroad (e.g. relatives, colleagues, friends, etc.) provide information on migration and facilitate adaptation.
	Training and labour expectations	Particular career expectations and personal motivations.

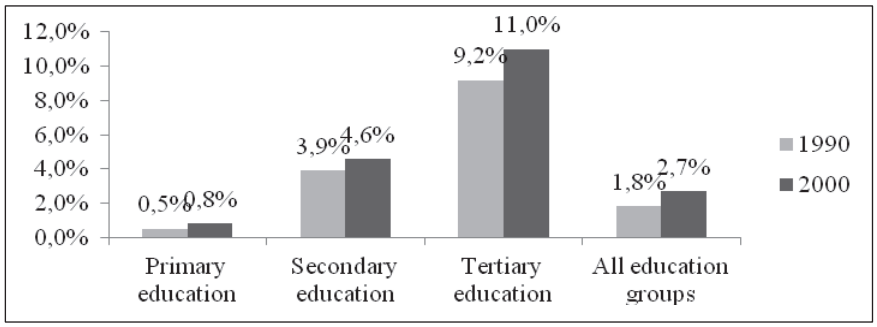
Sources: Adapted by the author from Alvarez (2008); Docquier et al. (2007); Kuznetsov (2006); Meyer (2001) and Rumbley et al. (2008).

Overall, salaries, employment conditions and infrastructure in Colombia are not attractive to highly qualified people to stay. In some areas, there is a lack of highly trained experts while many skilled personnel in other areas remain unemployed and underemployed. In both cases, the national labour market is unable to absorb this supply, and emigration becomes an option to access other labour systems. Moreover, many graduates who obtain their degree abroad cannot be integrated into the national labour market, and this is one of the reasons why many of them do not return (Kaempf and Singh 1987).

5.1.2 Size

Emigration in Colombia is a growing phenomenon: the number of emigrants more than doubled from 256,351 in 1990 to 559,654 in 2000. Regarding the education attainment, the migration wave has a higher education level compared to the non-emigrant population (Cardona and Medina, 2005, as cited in Alvarez 2008). In absolute values, people with primary education are less likely to migrate (92,384) and those with secondary and tertiary degrees are more likely to migrate (233,734 and 233,536 respectively) (Docquier and Marfouk 2004). Relative values presented in Figure 1 show that while 11 percent of the skilled labour force with a tertiary education degree is abroad, only 4.6 percent of the labour force with secondary education emigrate. Furthermore, the migration rate of the highly-skilled during the decade 1990-2000 is considerably high with an increase of 1.8 percentage points (from 9.2% to 11%). By contrast, the groups of migrants with primary and secondary education have increased by just 0.3 and 0.7 percentage points respectively.

Figure 1: Migration Rates in Colombia by Educational Attainment, 1990 and 2000[6]



Source: Calculations made by the author based on Docquier and Marfouk (2004).

From a comparative perspective, Colombia is located in the 25th position among the 30 most affected countries in the world by skilled migration in 2000, according to the number of educated emigrants (Docquier and Marfouk 2004). Among the South American countries, Colombia has the third highest rate of skilled migrants (11%) after Suriname and Guyana, which are considered the poorest and smallest nations of the region. This comparison shows how severe the skilled migration in the country is.

5.1.3 Destination Countries

Among the main OECD countries where Colombians with tertiary education emigrated in 2000 (Docquier and Marfouk 2004), the USA is the favourite destination country (186,035), followed by Mexico (7,535) and Canada (8,570) in America; a fact that could be explained partly by their geographical proximity. Spain (12,521) is the second most chosen destination due to language reasons; according to Alvarez (2008), this could be also explained by the flexibility of the Spanish migratory policies until visa requirements were imposed in 2001. Other host countries are: the UK (3,893), Germany (3,470), France (2,572) and Australia (2,042). A similar finding is shown by UIS, 2008, which collects data of higher education student mobility, including interestingly other nations, such as Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Cuba, whose higher education supply is very attractive for Colombians. This dataset also shows that even though the USA exhibits the highest presence of Colombian higher education students, these numbers have shown declining trends in recent years. On the contrary, figures of Colombian students in EU countries

6 Percentages indicate the stock of emigrants relative to the sum of people from the labour force (population aged 25 and over) living abroad and in the home country, with the same education level.

show a sustained increasing tendency (UIS, 2008). Presumably, the high cost of the American higher education supply is a strong constraint, which contrasts radically with the comparatively low cost of higher education tuition fees in public institutions of EU countries.

5.2 Discussion: Brain Drain or Brain Circulation in Colombia?

As discussed in point 4.2.1, four conditions have been identified to determine if the international skilled migration from a country is an example of brain drain or brain circulation. They are examined here for the Colombian case:

5.2.1 Level of Human Capital

Despite the efforts of the Colombian government, the enrolment rate of higher education is not as high as the one of primary and secondary, and there are crucial problems regarding quality issues of the higher education supply. In this context, the current emigration rate of the highly-skilled (11%) constitutes clearly a loss. Figures of schooling years of average Colombian residents in comparison to Colombian emigrants confirm this loss: Colombian migrants to the US have three more years of schooling than average Colombians, and their level of education has been increasing (11.8 years in 1995, 12.6 years in 1996 and 12.8 years in 1998) (Chaparro et al. 2006).

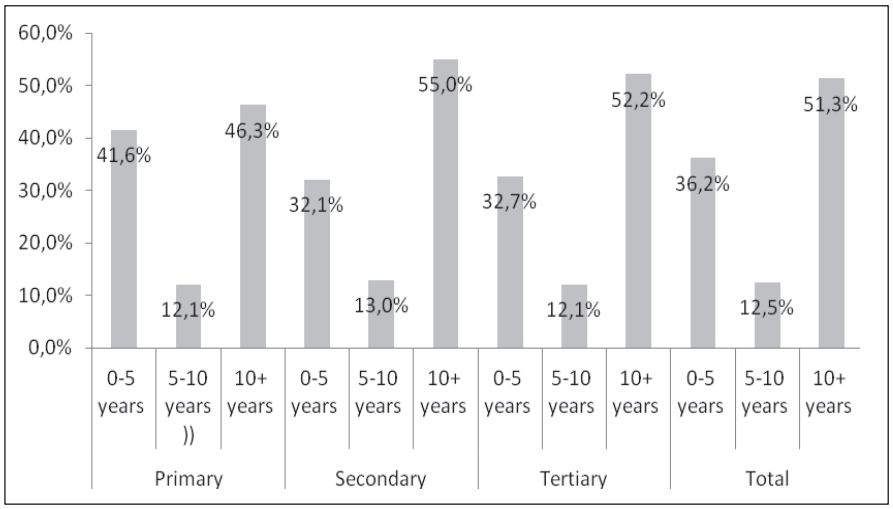
5.2.2 Net Migration

Even though there are no comprehensive and uniform data on emigration vs. immigration rates, official data provided by the DAS (Administrative Department of Security) and the national censuses confirm that Colombia is not a receptor country. According to UN Population Division estimates, foreign immigrants represented 0.27 percent (122,713) of the total population of Colombia by the year of 2005 (MPI 2009). This number is considerably lower than the total stock of emigrants from the country in 2000 (559,654) (Docquier and Marfouk 2004). Furthermore, a study of (Cárdenas and Mejía 2006) finds that the main countries of origin of immigrants are Venezuela, the USA and Ecuador, and that their educational attainment is higher (8.1 years of schooling in average) than the Colombian average (7.5 years of schooling).

5.2.3 Duration of Stay and Return

Figure 2 shows the duration of stay of Colombian emigrants in OECD countries by educational attainment.

Figure 2: Percentage of Stay Duration of Colombian Migrants in the OECD Area by Educational Attainment, 2000



Source: Calculations by the author from OECD (2008).

Regarding the years of stay in the foreign country, migrants of all education groups show similar patterns of immigration according to the amount of years in the host country: they stay either up to 5 years in the host country or more than 10 years. Accordingly, only a minority of immigrants (12.5%) decide to stay a period of time between 5-10 years. Considering the duration of stay of those with tertiary education, data show that more than half of this population (52.2%) stay abroad, at least for a period of time above 10 years. The rest of this population represented by 32.7 percent (up to 5 years) additional to the 12.1 percent (5-10 years), actually return home. Thus, around one-half of the total highly skilled population can be viewed under the conceptual framework of brain circulation; but at the same time, the other half of skilled emigrants who do not return to Colombia can be described as brain drain.

5.2.4 National Diaspora Networks

Only recently, the Colombian government has paid attention to the flow of emigrants abroad and started to develop specific programs and recognize constitutionally the rights of this particular group of people. The first programs were aimed at promoting the return of emigrants (e.g. Repatriation Program of Drained Brains). However, since the mid-1990's, public policies on emigration issues have been

oriented towards the integrtion of emigrants with the country, under the idea of diaspora option. As a result, some programs were created: *Colombia para Todos*, *Colombia Nos Une*, and *Conexión Colombia* (Guarnizo 2006).

The most interesting initiative was the diaspora called *Red Caldas*, established in 1991. Its main purpose was to strengthen the national research community with the participation of Colombian researchers abroad (Chaparro et al. 2006). It developed from a single to a highly specialized network with around 900 members distributed into 29 national nodes in 27 countries outside Colombia. It was one of the most highly developed networks in the world in the 20th century (Gaillard and Gaillard 1997), and became a promising model for turning the negative effects of brain drain into potential benefits (Meyer et al. 1997). After some years of expansion, however, the network disappeared in 2004, mainly because of budget constraints of COLCIENCIAS[7] and the centralized structure that constrained the involvement of local stakeholders (Chaparro et al. 2006). The Colombian diaspora's experience illustrates how the sole connection does not entail directly a circulation of brains. The success of these networks depends on different variables, such as: composition of members, type of support offered, size and structure, degree of sophistication and engagement, and funding (Brinkerhoff 2006; Chaparro et al. 2006).

6. Concluding Remarks

The network approach brings new conceptual and methodological tools for the study of highly skilled migration. A closer analysis of the topic showed that only some countries exhibit a pattern of brain circulation, and that that brain drain is still the model for developing countries. Indeed, the previous analysis of Colombia as a case study is a clear example of brain drain. A pattern of brain circulation could be possible in the country if some conditions are given:

- A higher growth rate of higher education graduates to compensate the migration rate of skilled people. This includes further efforts towards the expansion and diversification of the higher education supply in Colombia, with a progressive improvement in equity and quality.
- National policies and programs aiming at favouring mobility of students and workers for short periods of time and a later return-home possibility. This implies the strengthening of the internationalization process of higher education as well as the development of the national innovation system, including more research funding and positions.
- Financial support and governmental programs that promote the creation of networks with skilled emigrants abroad and particular regions in the country.

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– International cooperation and partnerships to develop policies and programs with the objective of protecting the interests of Colombia and encouraging its development, under the idea of brain circulation.

This article encountered several difficulties in reaching a more systematic and concrete set of conclusions on the high skilled migration from Colombia, mainly due to the availability and reliability of the information. Further research should address other issues, such as: labour market outcomes, occupations, fields of study, gender issues, return rates, etc.
Overall, it is urgent for the topic to:
– Develop standard definitions and agree objective methods of measure.
– Strength data collection and analysis, especially by the local statistical offices of sending countries.
– Conduct empirical studies more than increasing theoretical discussions.

Moreover, follow-up studies are needed to assess the contribution of diaspora networks as a strategy for developing regions. Literature often refers to it as a simple and magical solution.

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13

The Professional Value of Academic Exchange and Work Exchange Programmes in Germany: Experience of Hong Kong Graduates

Sandy Matthias-Mui

1. Introduction

The general goals of studying abroad are improving foreign language proficiency, increasing topical knowledge, developing cross cultural skills, and cognitive and personal development (Neppel 2005). As a result of the massification of higher education in Hong Kong in the 1990s, the keen competition among university graduates has encouraged Hong Kong students to actively seek exchange and internship opportunities with an ultimate goal in mind: increasing their employability.

Other than academic exchange programmes, overseas internship programmes are also popular among students because it is a combined experience of going abroad and work, although such internship programmes were not as big and established as the academic exchange programmes until recently. The reasons for students to seek exchange opportunities other than academic exchange programmes are multi-fold: smaller financial burden, less time constraint, less interruption of study plan, enhancement of resume, and a general shift in goals of going abroad. Other than programmes offered by the universities, students also actively seek external exchange opportunities, one of them being the Working Holiday Scheme.

Germany has not been a popular destination for Hong Kong students mainly due to the language barrier. Going to study abroad, especially in a country like Germany, which for many Hong Kong students is rather unfamiliar, is an important decision to make. Little is known about the experience of those who have been there, and this project seeks to understand more about these experiences and explore the differences in the outcome of the two kinds of programmes (academic and work).

This project attempts to investigate the effects of study abroad and work abroad programmes on the participants, particularly on the competencies they acquired and their subsequent employment. The result may help future participants of ex-

change programmes to have a clearer understanding of these programmes and their outcomes before making their decisions, and help them to maximise the positive impact of the experience.

There are many empirical studies on the relationship between study abroad and competencies and employment (e.g. Bracht et al. 2006, Jahr and Teichler 2002). There are some studies and literature on non-academic exchange programmes on topics like skills acquired, foreign language gain and impact on employment (e.g. Flander 2011, Inkson and Myers 2003). However, to date, there is no study comparing the outcomes of the two programme types. This study seeks to explore the possible differences in the experience, learning outcomes and impact on subsequent employment of the participants of these programmes.

This study tries to answer the following questions:

- What are the differences in the motivation of the participants to take part in these two types of programmes?
- What are the differences in the experience of these two types of programmes?
- What are the differences in the competencies acquired by the participants of these two types of programmes?
- What are the differences in the impact of these two types of programmes on the employment situation of the participants?

By answering these questions, one can have a clearer picture of these programmes and hopefully it will help potential participants to choose a suitable programme, prepare themselves more adequately for the sojourn and make good use of the opportunity.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Study Abroad

Most evaluation on study abroad programmes receives the criticism of evaluating themselves through simplistic research methods such as counting the number of participants or asking students to complete short surveys about their experiences relating to the basic elements of the programme (McLeod and Wainwright 2009). This is also the case for Hong Kong, except for a few studies like Yang et al. (2010).

There is vast literature on academic exchange and study abroad, covering various aspects such as motivation of students, students' experience, competencies acquired, personal growth and development, impact on career and subsequent employment (e.g. Jahr and Teichler 2002, Maiworm and Teichler 2002).

The motivation of going abroad and the magnitude of outcomes are closely related (Kitsantas 2004), and from an experiential learning point of view, goal setting is the beginning of the learning cycle and is an essential element that deter-

mines learning outcome (Schunk 2012). Therefore, by examining the motivation of participants to go abroad, one can see to what degree certain outcomes are achieved.

Apart from learning, students studying abroad are also engaged in cultural and social activities in the host countries, to name a few, discussions and conversations with locals, listening to and reading news about the host country, travelling, and visiting museums. The degree of involvement in these activities determines the gains in foreign language proficiency and cultural competencies (Brecht et al. 1995).

While abroad, students face various problems and they may affect the quality of the study abroad experience. Studies on ERASMUS students' experience show that accommodation, administrative matters, financial matters, too much contact with people from home country and not enough time for travel are the most common problems (Maiworm and Teichler 2002, Bracht et al. 2006).

Existing literature generally agrees that study abroad enhances a long list of skills, like: foreign language proficiency, personal skills, problem-solving skills, analytical competence, communication skills, intercultural proficiency, and global understanding (Wright and Clarke 2010).

Students who have studied abroad are more committed to learning foreign languages and use foreign languages more often, and language skills are further enhanced if the study abroad period is longer (Dwyer 2004). Length of stay, type of accommodation, pre-departure proficiency, attitudes and personality are some of the predictors of proficiency gain.

Studies also show that study abroad experience bears importance on later careers and shapes vocational identity (Rangel Chavez 2010). It is also strongly correlated to future international work (Mohajeri Norris and Gillespie 2009). Although it does not seem to provide advantages on income level, it has a positive impact on obtaining the first job, finding a satisfying job and long-term career prospects (Jahr and Teichler 2002). Moreover, soft skills and the ability to work and live in a transnational environment and global society are increasingly necessary for many professions, and it is believed that international education and experiences such as studying abroad and internships will instil such skills (Dickmann and Harris 2005).

2.2 Work Abroad

There is not much/very little literature on the work abroad experience. A study shows that former work exchange participants returned to same or similar jobs after their stay abroad, and that about half of them experienced career advancement (Inkson and Myers 2003). In the case of business education, there is evidence that overseas internships can truly offer a valuable learning experience in developing interdisciplinary competence (e.g. Johnson 2004).

The impact on career can be positive but only if the work abroad experience is presented properly to potential employers and the transferable skills acquired are

applied to the workplace. Some studies point out that international mobility is not fully appreciated with regard to employment decisions (e.g. Flander 2011).

There is some meagre literature on the Working Holiday Scheme, but it is concerned mostly with economic impacts, tourism, migration trends and migration policies (e.g. Harding and Webster 2002). Other literature focuses on cultural issues like the cultural identity of participants and cultural interaction between participants and locals (e.g. Wilson et al. 2010).

3. Methodology

3.1 Description of Sample

Since this study seeks to find out the competencies acquired and their relation to the employment of academic and work exchange participants, there are two target groups:

- Group 1: university graduates under 35 years of age who have been to Germany to study for at least one month, including full programme students and exchange programme students,
- Group 2: university graduates under 35 years of age who have been to Germany for work exchange programmes for at least one month, excluding those on work travel required by their employers in Hong Kong.

The rationale for limiting the target group to those under 35 years of age is to see the impact of studying/working in Germany on the early career of graduates, therefore studying younger graduates is appropriate. Considering that there was no DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) office in Hong Kong until 2001 and no German studies programmes until 1994, there are few Hong Kong graduates over 35 who have studied in Germany anyway.

3.2 Survey Instruments

There are two methods of data collection involved in this study: electronic questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

The questions in the electronic questionnaire are structured and termed according to the questionnaires of "The Professional Value of ERASMUS Mobility" (Bracht et al. 2006) and CHEERS (Careers after Higher Education: a European Research Study) Graduate Survey[1], and some questions were modified and added with reference to other studies.

A semi-structured group interview was conducted after data analysis of the questionnaire. The snowball sampling method was employed and eight returnees who

1 The CHEERS master questionnaire: http://www.uni-kassel.de/wz1/TSEREGS/PDF/cheers-que.pdf. Retrieved 21 Jan 2013.

have studied, been on working holiday or travelled in Germany were invited to the interview. The rationale for conducting the interview was to get insights that cannot be reflected in the questionnaire.

Accidental sampling and snowball sampling methods were applied to reach potential respondents. By the end of the data collection period, 77 individuals visited the online questionnaire and 68 completed questionnaires were returned, in which 16 respondents have both studied and worked in Germany, 32 went to Germany for academic exchange and 20 went to Germany for work exchange.

4. Presentation of Results

4.1 Motivation for Going to Germany

Respondents were asked to choose the reasons that influenced their decision to go to Germany from a list of 21 possible motives and to weigh them (see Table 1). The answers suggest that there were many important reasons: travelling, understanding Germany, personal development and adventure. Gaining academic knowledge, learning German and improving career prospects were also important reasons for the academic group. It is worth noting that many work exchange participants saw their exchange period as a self-searching journey, where finding new ways of thinking, making new friends and improving self-confidence were strong reasons for them to go to Germany.

Table 1: Important Reasons for Deciding to Participate in Academic/Work Exchange in Germany (percentage)

	Academic*	Work**
Gain academic learning experience in Germany	67	11
Gain working experience in Germany	33	44
Enhancement of academic knowledge	58	8
Enhancement of professional knowledge	42	22
Learn/Improve German	65	42
Travel	67	100
Have new perspectives of Hong Kong	50	56
Find new ways of thinking	69	97
Enhance my understanding of Germany	67	89
Enhance my resume	25	33
Improve my career prospects	40	14
Know myself better/personal development	60	86
Improve self-confidence	52	92
Adventure/excitement/fun	92	100

to be continued

Table 1 continued

	Academic*	Work**
Make new friends	48	78
Earn money	0	0
Wanted a break from my usual surroundings	83	97
Other friends were going	0	11
Family connections in Germany	8	0
Non-family connections in Germany	6	36
I did not think much about it (e.g. It was required for my study)	10	0
(n)	(48)	(36)

Questions B1-7 and B2-c-5: Please indicate the extent to which the following reasons influenced your decision to go to Germany.
Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very strong influence" to 5 = "No influence at all"
* Study abroad programmes ** Work abroad programmes

4.2 Duration of Stay and Activities

Academic exchange participants generally stayed longer in Germany than their work exchange counterparts. Eight percent of the academic exchange participants stayed in Germany for less than four months, 58 percent stayed for four to twelve months and 33 percent stayed for more than twelve months. As for work exchange participants, 20 percent stayed in Germany for less than three months and the rest (80%) stayed for six to twelve months.

Respondents were asked about their participation in the following: contacts with Germans at the university/at work, contacts with Germans outside the university/outside work, listening to or reading news about Germany, cultural activities such as visiting museums and going to concerts, joint leisure activities with Germans and travelling in Germany (see Table 2). Interestingly, work exchange respondents reported to be more active in all of these activities than academic exchange respondents. More than half of the work exchange respondents reported to have done these "very often" or "often", while only 33 percent academic exchange respondents reported to have frequently read or listened to news about Germany, and only 42 percent had joint leisure activities with Germans frequently.

Table 2: Experiences and Activities during Stay in Germany (percentage)

	Academic	Work
Contacts with Germans at the university/at work	58	78
Contacts with Germans outside the university/outside work	56	67
Listening to/reading news about Germany	33	56
Visiting museums, attending concerts, theatre, cinema, etc.	50	67
Joint leisure activities with Germans	42	75
Travelling in Germany	83	89
Travelling in countries other than Germany	60	81
(n)	(48)	(36)

Questions B1-11 and B2-c-10: Please state the frequency of the following experiences and activities during your study/work exchange period in Germany.
Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very often" to 5 = "Not at all"

4.3 German Proficiency Gain

The respondents are sorted into a matrix according to their intention to improve German (intention to improve versus no intention to improve) and their German level at the end of stay (with improvement versus no improvement). 42 percent academic respondents and 33 percent work respondents intended to improve German and did achieve improvement by the end of stay. 33 percent academic respondents and 11 percent work respondents did not intend to improve German but they did improve regardless. 25 percent academic respondents intended to improve German but did not improve in the end, while none of the work respondents belong to this category. 56 percent work respondents did not intend to improve German and did not improve by the end of stay, while none of the academic respondents belong to this category. This suggests that some academic exchange participants were disappointed because their intention to improve German was not achieved, while some work exchange participants had an unexpected gain – they improved their German without planning to (see Table 3).

Academic exchange respondents who did not improve their German took an average of 190 hours of German lessons and their work exchange counterparts took 40 hours, and among those who improved their German, the academic group took 263 hours of German lessons on average and the working group took 209 hours.

To conclude, the result suggests that although academic exchange participants may have had some advantages to improve German (e.g. longer stay, better access to German courses), other factors may have hindered their gain in proficiency, such as low motivation or lack of opportunity to have contacts with Germans at or

outside the university, too many contacts with fellow exchange students who spoke English rather than German, and living in private accommodation or dormitories (where German-speaking companions were either missing or willing to speak English instead). They may have received more classroom instruction than their work exchange counterparts, but they seemed to lack the opportunity to practice.

Table 3: Intention to Improve German and Outcome by End of Stay

	Intention to improve*		No intention to improve**	
With improvement by end of stay#	"INTENTION MET"		"SURPRISE GAIN"	
	Academic	42%	Academic	33%
	Work	33%	Work	11%
No improvement by end of stay#	"DISAPPOINTMENT"		"INTENTION MET"	
	Academic	25%	Academic	0%
	Work	0%	Work	56%

Questions B1-7 and B2-c-5: Please indicate the extent to which the following reasons influenced your decision to go to Germany. (Learn/improve German)
* Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very strong influence" to 5 = "No influence at all"
** scores 3 to 5 on a scale from 1 = "Very strong influence" to 5 = "No influence at all"
# By comparing the answers of questions B1-5 and B2-c-3: Please indicate your language competencies BEFORE your departure to Germany (German) and questions B1-13 and B2-c-11: Please indicate your language competencies AFTER your study period/work exchange period in Germany (German).

4.4 Problems Faced

Respondents were asked to state whether they had faced serious problems during their stay in Germany. They were provided with a list of 12 problematic areas. 23-33 percent of the academic exchange participants stated serious problems regarding administrative matters, accommodation, not enough contact with people from Hong Kong, and taking courses and communicating outside the classroom using a foreign language.

The work exchange participants generally encountered more problems and to a more serious degree than their academic exchange counterparts. 78 percent stated serious problems in working using a foreign language and 44 percent stated serious financial problems. 25-36 percent of them faced serious problems regarding differences in work cultures, accommodation, adapting to German lifestyle, interactions with Germans and not having enough time to travel (see Table 4). This suggests that a considerable number of work exchange participants had underestimated the difficulty in job search and the costs of living, and were not sufficiently prepared in German proficiency and basic knowledge of German culture and society.

Table 4: Problems Encountered during Stay in Germany (percentage)

	Academic	Work
Taking courses / working using a foreign language	25	78
Difference in teaching/learning methods / work cultures	8	33
Administrative matters	33	22
Financial matters	6	44
Accommodation	33	31
Climate, food, health	10	19
German lifestyle	8	36
Interactions with Germans	17	25
Not enough contact with people from Hong Kong	23	0
Too much contact with people from Hong Kong	17	11
Communicating in a foreign language outside classroom / work	27	22
Not enough time available for travel	6	33
(n)	(48)	(36)

Questions B1-8 and B2-c-6: Did you encounter significant problems in any of the following areas during your study/work exchange period in Germany?
Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Very serious" to 5 = "No problems at all"

4.5 Employment Situation Upon Return

The impact of the exchange experience is long-term for academic exchange participants. Respondents were asked to compare their employment situations before and after their stay in Germany. Almost half (42%) of the academic exchange respondents reported that no comparison can be drawn as they had no working experience before departure. Others continued career searching (19%), took up a new opportunity related to the experience in Germany (17%), changed field of work (8%) and returned to similar level of work with a new sense of direction (6%) (see Table 5). While 58 percent reported no impact on their income level, more than half (50-83%) reported positive impact on career choice, obtaining first job after return, long-term career prospects and establishing professional contacts (see Table 6).

For work exchange participants, the impact is short term. The sojourn influenced their immediate career advancement and sense of career direction. 41 percent reported to have got jobs with career advancement. 25 percent returned to similar level of work but with a new sense of direction. 14 percent continued career searching and 11 percent returned to similar jobs without career advancement (see Table 5). Meanwhile, they reported that the exchange experience had little impact on their employment in terms of career choice, career prospects and establishing professional contacts (see Table 6). This suggests that the experience in

Germany itself was not crucial (meaning the experience could have taken place elsewhere and would still achieve similar results), but the experience of being abroad as a whole had shaped work exchange participants into more mature and employable individuals.

Table 5: Employment Situations before and after Stay in Germany (percentage)

	Academic	Work
I had no working experience before departure, so no comparison can be drawn.	42	0
I returned to the same or similar job or organisation WITHOUT apparent career advancement.	0	11
I returned to the same or similar job or organisation WITH apparent career advancement.	0	33
I changed my field of work with apparent career advancement.	8	8
I took up a new opportunity directly related to my experience in Germany.	17	0
I returned to similar level of work but with a new sense of direction, and looked for new opportunities.	6	25
I continued career searching.	19	14
Other	8	8
(n)	(48)	(36)

Questions C1-a-1 and C2-a-1: Comparing your employment situation before and after your study/work exchange period in Germany, which of the following statements best describes your situation?

Table 6: Impact of Exchange Experience to Employment (percentage)

	Academic		Work	
	Positive*	No impact**	Positive*	No impact**
Career choice	67	33	33	67
Income level	33	58	44	44
Obtaining my first job after return	50	42	11	78
Long-term career prospects	83	17	33	64
Establishing professional contacts	50	42	33	67
(n)	(48)	(48)	(36)	(36)

Questions E1-1 and E2-1: What impact do you feel that your academic/work exchange experience in Germany has had with regard to your employment?
* Scores 1-2 and ** scores 3 on a scale from 1 = “Very positive”, 3 = “No impact” to 5 = “Very negative”

4.6 Competencies Acquired and Used at Work

Respondents were asked about their competencies by the end of their stay and usage of skills at work (see Table 7). Both groups rated themselves very high in working in multicultural situations and working independently. Apart from that, findings show that the two types of exchange programmes enhance different sets of skills in their participants. Academic exchange greatly enhances the intellectual competencies, such as field-specific knowledge, writing communication skills and learning abilities. Work exchange greatly enhances cross-disciplinary thinking and intercultural understanding. It also greatly enhances working competencies such as planning skills, problem-solving ability and working under pressure. Most importantly, work exchange enhances social skills such as oral communication skills, conflict and crisis management, negotiating, team work and leadership. It is exactly these working competencies and social skills that academic exchange participants found themselves lacking at work.

For the working group, lack of skills is not obvious but rather the "waste" of skills. They generally rated themselves very high in intercultural knowledge and working in multicultural situations but these skills were not required to a high extent at work.

This suggests that despite their intercultural skills, they were less likely to find jobs that involved many international aspects than their academic exchange counterparts. The reason can be related to their major subjects, which 75 percent of them reported to be an important factor for their initial recruitment upon return and 63 percent for their current recruitment.

The difference in the competence gain can be explained by the nature of the programmes. Academic exchange programmes are more academic-oriented where field-specific knowledge, writing communication skills and learning abilities are greatly enhanced. These programmes are well-planned and organised by home institutions and participants get a lot of institutional support during their stay. Therefore there would be fewer occasions where exchange students need to improvise and make use of (and enhance) skills such planning, negotiating and crisis management. However, for work exchange participants, there is little or no institutional support and there can be many uncertainties, which requires them to be more adventurous. Therefore they have to do a lot of preparation and research before and during the sojourn. While abroad, they have a lot of interaction with landlords, employers, local authorities and other strangers. They also have a higher chance of running into crises such as bodily injuries, conflicts with employers and financial hardship. These participants would gain more in planning, negotiating, oral communication and crisis management skills as a result.

Table 7: Competencies by the End of Stay and Competencies Required at Current Work (percentage)

	Academic		Work	
	Acquired	Required	Acquired	Required
Broad general knowledge	83	100	100	88
Cross-disciplinary thinking/knowledge	75	97	97	85
Field-specific knowledge and methods	58	50	44	64
Proficiency in German	42	25	56	12
Proficiency in foreign language(s) other than German	50	100	33	52
Knowledge of international differences in cultures, societies and lifestyles	81	88	100	39
Computer and IT skills	8	47	31	39
Technical skills (excluding computer and IT skills)	8	53	22	58
Manual skills	25	25	44	52
Planning, co-ordinating and organising	58	97	89	91
Applying rules and regulations	50	75	67	67
Problem-solving ability	73	100	97	88
Oral communication skills	85	97	100	85
Writing communication skills	77	72	53	76
Working in multicultural situations	100	100	97	64
Learning abilities	92	84	78	91
Accuracy, attention to detail	58	97	67	88
Conflict management, crisis management	67	91	89	75
Negotiating	33	78	58	63
Working under pressure	31	88	67	88
Working independently	83	100	89	85
Working in a team	67	84	89	91
Leadership	35	91	44	53
(n)	(48)	(36)*	(36)	(33)**

Questions D1-1 and D2-1: Please state the extent to which you had the following competencies by the end of your study/work exchange period in Germany.
Questions F-a-11 and F-b-11: Please state the extent to which the following competencies are required in your current work.
Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "To a very high extent" to 5 = "Not at all"
* Total number is not 48 because 12 respondents were still seeking employment or studying by the time of the survey and had skipped this question.
** Total number is not 36 because 3 respondents were still seeking employment or studying by the time of the survey and had skipped this question.

As concluded in section 4.1, the motivation of the academic exchange participants was more extrinsic (gaining academic knowledge, learning German and improving career prospects) while that of work exchange participants was more intrinsic

(self-searching, finding new ways of thinking, making new friends and improving self-confidence). From the result of this study, it seems motivation indeed determines the learning outcome and competencies acquired.

4.7 Value of the Exchange Experience

Comparing the results regarding the motivation for going to Germany and the value of the exchange experience, again, a close relationship between motives and outcomes can be seen. The academic group considered academic experience, learning German, understanding of Germany and enhancement of resume more important reasons for going than the working group did, and these were also what they achieved at the end (see Table 8). The working group considered self-development (self-confidence, self-understanding, new ways of thinking) more important reasons for going than the academic group, and this was also what they achieved at the end.

Table 8: Value of Exchange Experience (percentage)

	Academic	Work
Gain academic learning experience in Germany	100	33
Gain working experience in Germany	58	89
Enhancement of academic knowledge	75	31
Enhancement of professional knowledge	48	56
Learn/improve German	67	78
Learn/improve foreign language(s) other than German	50	53
Have new perspectives of Hong Kong	67	78
Find new ways of thinking	83	100
Enhance my understanding of Germany	92	97
Enhance my resume	58	36
Improve my career prospects	52	58
Know myself better/personal development	73	100
Improve self-confidence	77	97
(n)	(48)	(36)

Questions E1-2 and E2-2: From your point of view today, to what extent would you consider it was worthwhile for you to have been to Germany on academic/work exchange with regard to the following?
Scores 1 and 2 on a scale from 1 = "Extremely worthwhile" to 5 = "Not worthwhile at all"

Interestingly, not many work exchange participants considered learning German (42%) and gaining working experience (44%) as important reasons for going, but upon return, many of them (78-89%) considered the work exchange experience valuable in these two areas. This suggests that before their departure, some of these respondents had not given thorough thought as to what goals they wanted to

achieve during their stay, and only in retrospect they discovered they had made an unexpected gain.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Suggestions to Future Participants of Exchange Programmes in General

In this study, findings show that the two types of exchange programme have different impact on skills acquired and subsequent employment. Future participants should carefully consider the strengths of different programmes and decide which one is the most suitable for them. Working abroad may have some elements similar to studying abroad, such as gains in foreign language proficiency and intercultural skills, but it requires much more independence. Therefore, before making their decision, potential participants should evaluate not only their needs, but also their own skills and abilities.

Destination is also an important decision. In the case of exchange participants from Hong Kong, where English is one of the official languages, choosing an English-speaking destination is indeed a popular and sensible choice, for they may further enhance their proficiency in English, which is necessary for most jobs. On the other hand, choosing a non-English speaking destination like Germany may offer more opportunities for intercultural learning and other challenges that lead to personal growth and gains in skills.

Previous studies show that pre-departure goal setting and motivation can influence the magnitude of learning outcomes while abroad (e.g. Kitsantas 2004). The result of this study aligns with this finding. Amidst the excitement of pre-departure preparation, participants may neglect the importance of goal setting. Future participants should be reminded that goal setting is the very first step of the learning cycle and is a key element to a successful exchange experience.

Other studies suggested that good practices to enhance intercultural proficiency in an overseas experience include interaction with locals, integration with the community, allocation of sufficient travel time, educational activities (e.g. museum visits), cultural exploration (e.g. trying local dishes) and following local news (Rodriguez and Roberts 2011). This study shows that these practices are indeed necessary to enhance the learning outcomes.

5.2 Suggestions to Future Participants of Work Exchange Programmes

In this study, work exchange participants reported to have encountered more problems than academic exchange participants, where financial matters, language barrier, cultural differences and adapting to German lifestyle were the most pronounced. Future work exchange participants may benefit from more research on German culture, better financial preparation and more German language instruction before their departure.

Findings of this study also revealed that the job-skill match was quite low for the work-exchange participants while in Germany as many had manual jobs and entry level jobs. These jobs not only did not match their education and work experiences, most importantly, they may not have met their expectations. Future participants need to adjust their expectations and bear in mind that the type of job they get in Germany may not match their profession and skills, and they need to put more effort in relating such job experience to their resume when applying for jobs upon return.

None of the work exchange participants in this study considered German proficiency an important recruitment factor for their initial and current employment. Meanwhile, only one-third of them considered their experiences in Germany important for their initial and current employment. In this study, 11 percent work exchange respondents reported that their experience had a negative impact on their income level after return, and interviewees reported that some employers were not interested in their experience in Germany and might even think negatively of it. This means work exchange participants need to reflect more on their experiences and to convince their potential employers that the time they spent abroad is not time wasted or simply fun, but also a process that makes them more mature and competent.

5.3 Suggestions for Future Research

This study attempts to explore the differences between academic and work exchange programmes in terms of learning outcomes and impact on employment from a rather broad perspective. Future research could focus on the interesting issues this study has addressed, such as the optimal amount of pre-departure language preparation, comparison between programmes in English-speaking and non-English speaking destinations, longitudinal studies to explore the long-term effect of these exchange programmes, and the perception of employers on the value of exchange programmes.

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Author's biographical note

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14

Is the Tiger Catching up with the World? Thematic Analysis of Higher Education Research in India (1999-2001 and 2009-2011)

Elena Schimmelpfennig

"Research on higher education has been a rare species in academia not only in Germany, but also in most other countries of the world" [1]

1. Context of the Study

In the present overall picture of higher education research, more and more attention has shifted from the industrialised world to the developing regions of the world as well as to individual countries with emerging economies. Besides other factors, this growing attention can be explained by a steadily increasing local demand for higher education provision in developing countries, as well as by the efforts of these countries to develop potentially competitive higher education systems on the global scale (Altbach 2007).

Comparing the several major players of the developing world – the African continent, India and China – we can observe a discrepancy in the attention given to the issues of higher education in these regions. In China, concern with developments of higher education has obviously been seen over the last three decades in the establishment of the manifold centres and institutes of higher education in the

1 Teichler 2008, p. 6.

country[2] and in a rapid expansion of graduate programmes in higher education since 2000 (Wang 2010). Appearance of the university rankings exercise in 2003 (The Academic Ranking of World Universities, ARWU) produced by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University is another sign of the national academic interest in academic issues in China. In Africa, interest in the advancement of higher education can be traced predominantly in the establishment of international academic networks[3] for promoting cooperation in the field of higher education advancement and in the launching of the Africa Edition of the University World News with regular overviews of African higher education development.

In India, we discover mostly policy-driven initiatives that in their majority are either concentrated around the topic of attracting Indian students as incoming students to the national higher education systems, exchanging scholars in the means of outward scholar mobility, or establishing foreign universities in India (Altbach 2010). Concentration on areas of practical concern, such as technical and ecological advancements, is also characteristic for the German-Indian cooperation. In the field of systematic research on Indian higher education, we discover some sort of vacuum (Altbach 2012; Tilak 2011 – personal communication), especially in comparison with the scale of the national and international involvement in higher education in China and Africa. As of spring 2013, there was no centre for higher education research in India (Altbach 2013 – personal communication). Also Indian scholars themselves point to the lack of research on educational systems across the country:

> ...no efforts have been made to propose theories or methods. In fact, no methodological analysis by any Indian scholar has been made thus far. With the increasing complexities of India's educational endeavours, no one seems to be aware that a few reflective educational comparisons, both in thought and practice, are immediately called for (Singh 2011, pp. 254-255).

This vacuum is all the more puzzling considering the following facts: (1) India (along with China) has one of the fastest developing economies in the world; (2) the system of higher education in India is the third largest in the world in terms of student enrolments after the Chinese and the US higher education systems (Eastman 2011); (3) India is also among the three major sending countries regarding student outward mobility (OECD 2012, p. 24).

Our study aims at starting to fill the afore mentioned scholarly gap by exploring thematic patterns of higher education research in India in 1999-2001 and 2009-2011 against the background of global developments in the field of higher education research. The research question of the study is: *Were the topical devel-*

2 Even if the majority of these centres and institutes of higher education have a clearly local university focus (Altbach et al. 2007).

3 Examples here are the International Network for Higher Education in Africa (USA) and the African Good Governance Network (Germany).

opments in Indian higher education research similar to the trends in global higher education research in 1999-2001 and in 2009-2011?

2. Methodology

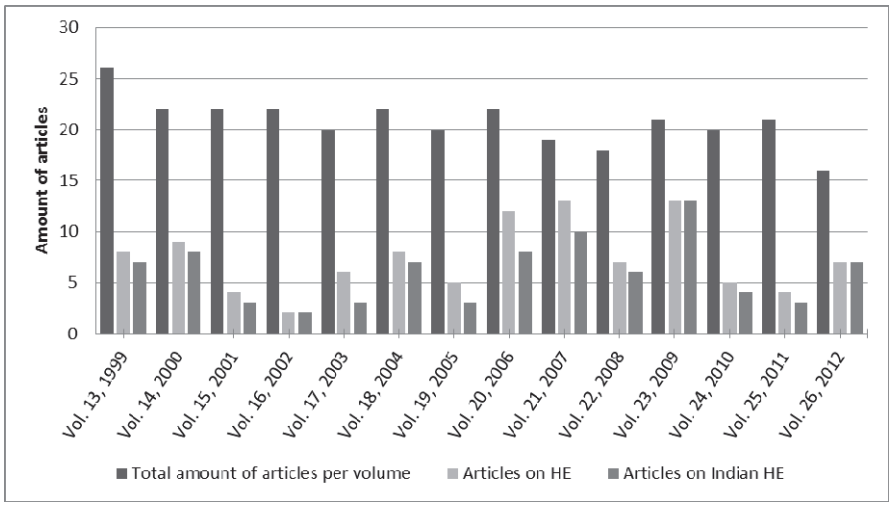
2.1 Data Source

The study presented here implements the documentary research method and scrutinises the topic of development of Indian higher education research in the context of global developments in research of higher education, on the basis of scholarly publications in academic journals in a time-series approach – in 1999-2001 and 2009-2011. More precisely, the study (1) focuses on scholarly articles published in selected Indian scholarly journals as well as on articles on higher education written by Indian scholars and published outside India (Indian dataset); and (2) discusses thematic patterns in the global higher education research that constitute articles on higher education written by authors worldwide (the global dataset). In the light of the general scarcity of resources on the topic of Indian higher education research[4] and a limited availability of sources in German libraries in particular we turned to the time-series approach of analysing thematic patterns of higher education research at two points at a time; this approach allows to perceive the higher education research as a process in order to gain more understanding of the field development in the given national context.

The Journal of Educational Planning and Administration (JEPA) is a scholarly journal, specialised in the field of educational planning, administration and development (Journal of Eduational Planning..., n.d.). Being nested in the National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, JEPA is considered to be the leading scholarly journal in India on educational issues, though the proportion of the output in regard to the issues of higher education and particularly to the issues of Indian higher education is remaining small (see Figure 1).

4 Within the total of 11,388 abstracted publications in the Research into Higher Education Abstracts in 1997-2012 there were only 37 articles on the topic of Indian higher education that equals to 0.3% in the total amount of abstracted publications. As of spring 2013, there was no numeric database of the *Research into Higher Education Abstracts* existing; all calculations in this research were performed by the author.

Figure 1: Articles on Higher Education in the Journal of Educational Planning and Administration (1999-2012)



Source: the author

The Economic and Political Weekly (EPW) is issued in India on a weekly basis with the aim of providing a platform for scholarly discussions on the range of social, economic and public issues (Economic and Political Weekly, n.d.). Scholarly articles in the field of social sciences constitute only part of a weekly issue, being published mainly in the section „Special articles" and sometimes in the „Perspectives" section with the aim of dissemination of research results.

Two other possible periodicals in India – the *University News* and *The Hindu* – were excluded based on the advice of the three named experts.

The global dataset consists of the articles on higher education that were published by scholars worldwide and abstracted in the Research into Higher Education Abstracts (RiHEA) of the Society for Research into Higher Education (UK). It is a quarterly journal, providing a database for Indian and global datasets. At the same time, we are aware that RiHEA's coverage of journals in higher education is in geographical terms not an overwhelming one. For the purpose of the all-embracing approach it would seem beneficial to include the American Higher Education Abstracts into the data source, however, due to a completely different approach in themes classification in HEA (that enlists 57 topics[5]) and for the purpose of not destroying comparability, we have not considered this publication in our current research.

5 URL: http://highereducationabstracts.org/topics.php.

Besides geographical restrictiveness, another peculiar feature of *RiHEA* is that a number of articles appear in *RiHEA* in the next calendar year after an original publication. This disparity in the years of the original year of publication and the year of abstracting in our study we resolved by including of one subsequent year into the two time-periods, assuming that the majority of the publications of the previous year would appear in *RiHEA* in the year afterwards. Consequently, our global dataset covers the years 1999-2002 and 2009-2012, whereby only the articles that were published in 1999-2001 and in 2009-2011 have been considered.

2.2 Classifications of Themes in Higher Education Research

Thematic classifications in higher education research have been elaborated by several scholars. Ulrich Teichler proposed "a 'map' of higher education research" with "four spheres of knowledge" (Teichler 1996, pp. 440-441) on the basis of "examining the bundles of thematic sub-specialisation chosen by the researchers involved in that field" (Teichler 2005, p. 450). Frackmann presented a five-cluster typology on the basis of research into higher education in Western Europe (Frackmann 1997 in Teichler 2005, p.451). In 2003, Tight introduced his "framework for thinking about contemporary higher education research … [suggesting] the themes or issues being researched, the methods or methodologies being used in conducting the research, and the level at which the research is focused" (Tight 2003, p.1) with eight categories of themes in higher education research.

Perhaps the earliest classification was implemented in Europe in The Research into Higher Education Abstracts (RiHEA) of the Society for Research into Higher Education, UK, which has been reviewing the publications in the field of higher education since 1967. The above mentioned classification which is comparable to RiHEA publication – Higher Education Abstracts (HEA) – has existed in the United States since 1984[6] and covers mainly publications in higher education from Canada and the USA, though it also includes "foreign publications in English".

In our research we employed the classification implemented in RiHEA in 1996-2012, which in its expanded form has the following structure:

(1) *National systems and comparative studies*: Higher education in context: relationships with economy, polity, community
(2) *Institutional management:* Missions, policy development, planning processes, organisation structures, leadership, cultures, evaluation and review
(3) *Curriculum:* Design and delivery of programmes, teaching methodologies, innovations, levels and modes of study, learning styles, study methods, assess-

6 In 1984 HEA received its current name and expanded its coverage to „all of the literature in higher education, from previously concentrating on issues relevant student personnel since 1965 under the title "College student personnel abstracts" (Ibid.).

ment and feedback, evaluation, subject specific studies, technology and teaching, learning support and libraries
(4) *Research:* Research policy: national and institutional, funding, intellectual property, technology transfer, doctoral study and students, research supervision and examination
(5) *Students:* Characteristics, recruitment: access and selection, experiences, performance, progression, support services, graduation, careers, alumni. Modes and levels of study: part-time, full-time, distance; undergraduate, taught postgraduate, post experience
(6) *Staff:* Characteristics, recruitment, development, roles, appraisal, conditions of service, equity issues, trade unionism
(7) *Finance and physical resource:* Funding methodologies, costings, income generation, resource allocation, financial management, buildings and plant management, design of learning environment
(8) *Contributory studies and research approaches:* History, philosophy, economics, sociology, policy studies, research design and methodologies (McNay 2012, n.pag.).

This classification was selected for several reasons. Firstly, implementation of the RiHEA's classification offers the possibility to enlarge our data source in journals' coverage to the scope of the journals covered by RiHEA: Tight's thematic analyses of 2003 and 2007 cover altogether 17 selected academic journals in English in higher education published outside North America and 3 selected North-American journals in 2000, whereas RiHEA provides a thematic distribution of articles on higher education since 1967 on a regular basis, currently with a coverage of 140 journals (Visser-Wijnveen 2012, pp. 308-314). Secondly, the focal point of RiHEA on Europe and the British Commonwealth within the years 1995-2012[7] gives, in our view, a higher probability for the representativeness of the articles with the topic on Indian higher education included in review. Additionally, the choice of RiHEA's classification allows us to analyse trends in Indian higher education research as compared with global developments in higher education research, where RiHEA abstracts serve as a ready-to-use database of the latter.

In contrast to the abstracted articles in RiHEA, articles in JEPA and EPW did not provide a ready database of the articles on Indian higher education; therefore in a preparatory process, articles on Indian higher education in JEPA and EPW were first singled out from the whole publication output in these journals in 1999-2001 and 2009-2011, read through and thematically classified.

7 This geographical focus is outlined on the coverpage of RiHEA during the RiHEA's editorship of McNay (1/1995-1/2012). The new editorial group is planning to include more coverage of the US-American based sources (McNay 2013, personal communication).

3. Indian and Global Trends in Higher Education Research: Empirical Part

3.1 Indian Higher Education Issues: 1999-2001

The first Indian subset of 1999-2001 is altogether comprised of 40 articles from JEPA (n=18), EPW (n=15), and RiHEA (n=7) (see Table 1).

From our dataset it is revealed that at the turn of the 21st century, articles on Indian higher education mostly explored financial aspects of higher education in India (n=8 or 20% of all articles in 1999-2001) and included reflective studies on the topic of Indian higher education (also n=8 or 20% of all articles in 1999-2001). The thematic field of students in Indian higher education was slightly less represented (n=6 or 15 %). Aspects of curriculum and research were of an equal interest in the articles of 1999-2001 (n=5 or about 13% in each group). Institutional management was of peripheral interest in India in 1999-2001 (n=1 or 2.5%), followed by slightly higher attention to the questions of the academic profession (n=3 or 7.5% of all articles in the first Indian dataset). In the next paragraph, we will try to give some explanations for the resulting numbers.

The biggest concern being the issues of financing the higher education system in India is a result of two mutually defining trends that developing higher education systems faced in the last decades around the globe: expansion of higher education for the purpose of meeting the growing demand for its provision, and the inability of governments to financially support the growing number of higher education institutions (see also Jayaram 2003). Additionally, diversified sources of funding in different Indian states – depending on the individual state's policy (Altbach 2009) – as well as the policy of the federal Indian government to support the best existing research universities in the country (Ibid.) alongside the decline of the public expenditures on higher education results in scarce financial funding for the majority of higher education institutions in the country. The severe financial constraints are reflected in the overall quality of the higher education provision, which we briefly described in the chapter on Indian higher education.

Students are key stakeholders in every system of higher education, particularly in countries with rising economies. As a consequence, with an increasing interest and financial abilities to receive higher education, issues of access and graduation, and topics relevant to student performance become a focus of analysis. In this regard, India, with its stratified social system of castes and religious minorities, provides a rich ground for research since social inequalities among different groups in India impact, one of them being access to and performance in higher education.

Table 1: Articles on Indian Higher Education Published in 1999-2001 (JEPA, EPW and RiHEA)

Year of publication	Journal (year of public-cation)	Topics								Total
		National systems and comp. studies	Institutional man-agement	Curriculum	Research	Students	Staff	Finance and physi-cal resources	Contributory studies and research ap-proach	
1999	JEPA		1		1		1	2	2	7
	EPW			2		1		1		4
	RiHEA	1				2	1			4
2000	JEPA			1		2		4	1	8
	EPW	2		2	2		1	1	1	9
	RiHEA								1	1
2001	JEPA				1				2	3
	EPW					1			1	2
	RiHEA	1			1					2
Total per topic 1999-2001:		4	1	5	5	6	3	8	8	40
Total per topic 1999-2001 (percent)		10,0	2,5	12,5	12,5	15,0	7,5	20,0	20,0	100

3.2 Global Higher Education Issues: 1999-2002

The global developments in higher education research at the turn of the century were analysed on the basis of articles written by scholars worldwide and abstracted in RiHEA in 1999-2002. The first global subset consists of altogether 2681 articles (without articles on Indian higher education): 1999: n=658, 2000: n=650, 2001: n=686, and 2002: n=687 (see Table 2).

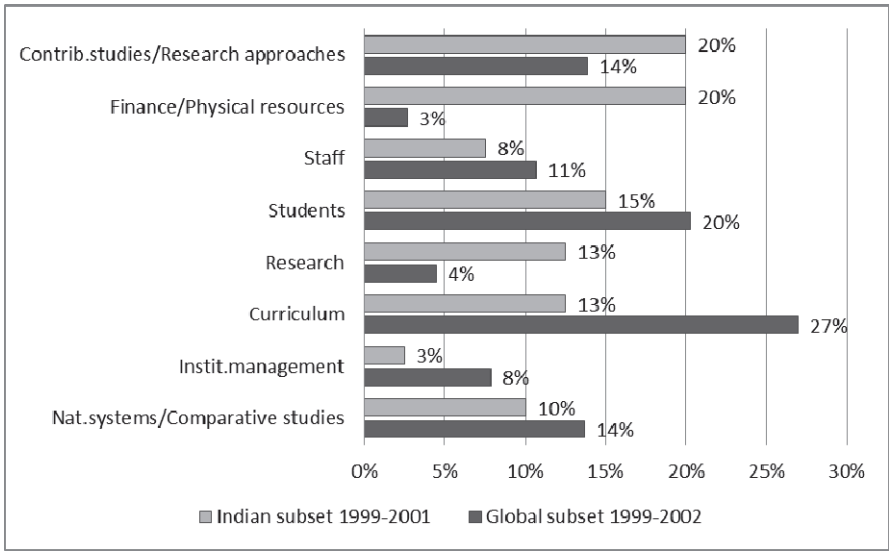
Table 2: Worldwide Articles Abstracted in RiHEA in 1999-2002

RiHEA Classification	Vol. 32 (1999)	Vol. 33 (2000)	Vol. 34 (2001)	Vol. 35 (2002)	Total per theme	Total (%)	Total
National systems and comparative studies	112	86	83	85	**366**	13,7	
Institutional management	48	48	67	47	**210**	7,8	
Curriculum	182	173	174	193	**722**	26,9	
Research	34	24	37	24	**119**	4,4	
Students	140	153	117	132	**542**	20,2	
Staff	76	62	85	63	**286**	10,7	
Financial and physical resources	18	19	15	20	**72**	2,7	
Contributory studies and research approaches	50	86	110	125	**371**	13,8	
Total per year	660	651	688	689			2688
Total per year without articles on Indian HE	658	650	686	687		100	2681

Source: RiHEA 1999-2002, calculated by the author

The major thematic concerns of the articles on higher education worldwide in 1999-2002 were questions of curriculum (27%) and students (20%). Contributory studies, studies on national systems and comparative studies were of equal interest and constitute 14 % each, followed by research regarding the staff (11%). Highly invisible on the global scale were issues of finance and physical resources (3%) as well as issues concerning research (4,4%). It is beneficial to our understanding of the global trends to compare them with Indian thematic patterns.

Figure 2: Indian vs. Global Patterns in Higher Education Research (first data set)



Source: the author

As it is obvious from the juxtaposition of the first Indian and the first global datasets (see Figure 2), there are no explicit similarities in the topical distribution of these datasets, besides the theme of students being the second highest explored in both datasets (20% for global and 15% for Indian subsets). Whereas in the Indian subset financial issues occupy a primary position alongside the contributory studies and research approaches (20% in each category), in the global subset studies of finance and physical resources are the least explored patterns in 1999-2002 (3%). This difference, in our understanding, can be explained easily, if we take into consideration that our global dataset constitutes articles that were written and (mostly) published in English speaking journals of countries standing mainly at the forefront of higher education development; in 1997 the country coverage by RiHEA, besides the UK, included the USA, Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Australia, Switzerland, Finland and France (McNay 1997, pp.77-84). Consequently, issues of financial and physical resources might have been not as urgent as in the developing system of higher education in India.

Another explanation might be a not-yet established multidimensional discourse of higher education homogenisation among the national European higher education systems, since the Bologna Declaration – as a catalyst of tremendous changes in the European systems for the coming decade – was adopted only in 1999. This

explanation is supported by the fact that a very small amount of articles is devoted to the research issues in higher education in the global dataset (4.5%).

The most widely studied theme on the global scale was the theme of curriculum (27%), followed by research on students (20%). The peculiar interest in the questions of curriculum (including modes of study, programme designs and delivery, subject-specific studies and other components) can be explained with the increasing interest in "the relationships between higher education and the world of work" in the higher education policy debates apart from the Bologna Process (Teichler 1998, p.49). In its turn, this policy discourse accentuated scholarly attention to the issues of study conditions in institutions of higher education.

A similarity of the high level of attention given to the topic of students in the Indian and global datasets can be explained only partially on the basis of the same assumptions; here we refer to the expansion of the global systems of higher education that had to meet the growing interest in higher education studies from the respective age group. Another explanation for the interest in exploring the theme of students in India might lie in the country's system of social stratification (castes) and, accordingly, in the specifics of access to and study in higher education institutions. Whereas, in developed countries the interest in the topic of students might be justified by the rising interest in 'employability' of graduates in line with the policy debates on higher education and the world of work (Teichler 2008, p.15).

Contributory studies and research approaches as well as research on national systems and comparative studies are equally represented in the global dataset, whereas in India contributory studies were undertaken twice as often (20%) as research on the national systems (10%). Institutional management was explored more in the global subset (8%) than in the Indian context (2.5%). We can ascribe a higher interest in institutional management (in the global context) to the increasing debates on the 'evaluation' and 'accountability' of higher education systems (Ibid.), where institutional performance becomes one of the important factors.

Research on staff also occupied a higher percentage in the global higher education research (11%) in comparison with the Indian subset (7.5%). The relatively low interest in the issues of the academic profession in India we can connect with the loss of the elitist status of being a guru since the 1970s (Jayaram 2003) that resulted in the decline of the interest in this topic under study.

3.3 Indian Higher Education Issues: 2009-2011

The second Indian subset of 2009-2011 constituted 45 scholarly articles from JEPA (*n=20*), EPW (*n=16*) and RiHEA (*n=9*) (see Table 3).

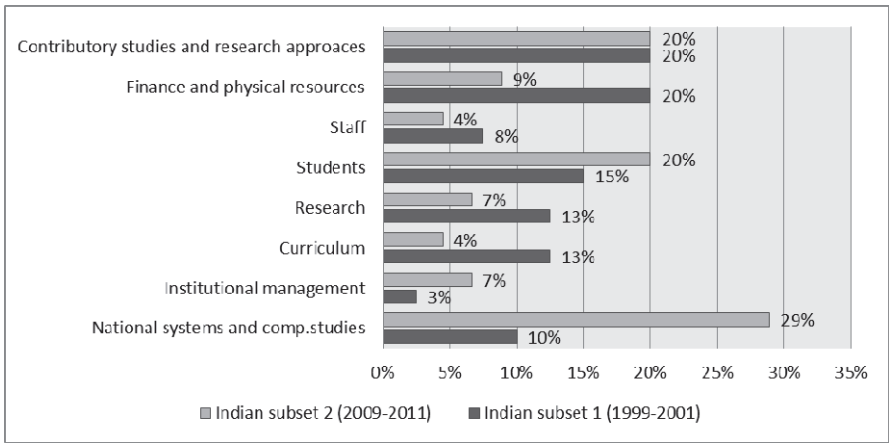
Table 3: Articles on Indian Higher Education Published in 2009-2011 (JEPA, EPW and RiHEA)

Year of publication	Journal (year of public-cation)	Topics								Total
		National systems and comp. studies	Institutional manage-ment	Curriculum	Research	Students	Staff	Finance and physical resources	Contributory studies and research approach	
2009	JEPA	2	2			4		2	3	13
	EPW	2				1			2	5
	RiHEA	1					1			2
2010	JEPA	1				1	1	1		4
	EPW	1		1	2					4
	RiHEA	2				1				3
2011	JEPA	1						1	1	3
	EPW	2	1	1					3	7
	RiHEA	1			1	2				4
Total per topic 2009-2011:		13	3	2	3	9	2	4	9	45
Total per topic 2009-2011 (percent)		28,9	6,7	4,4	6,7	20,0	4,4	8,9	20,0	100

In the years 2009-2011, in articles on Indian higher education, the most researched topic was national systems and comparative studies (29%). Research on students as well as contributory studies and research approaches were reflected in 20% of studies for each topic respectively. Finance and physical resources (9%), as well as issues of institutional management (7%) and research (7%) were relatively little explored, whereas curriculum (4.5%) and staff (4.5%) were hardly addressed in the research.

Looking at the quantitative development of research on Indian higher education in the comparative perspective in 1999-2001 and 2009-2011, we can observe that the quantitative output of research articles on India has not substantially increased over a decade, rising from 40 articles in 1999-2001 to 45 articles in 2009-2011 (see the data in the Table 3 and Table 4 respectively).
Regarding the thematic developments in Indian higher education research in 2009-2011, we can define the following aspects (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Indian Subsets on Higher Education in Comparison



Source: the author

The major thematic shift in the research articles according to the data appears to be from finance and physical resources in 1999-2001 to the theme of national systems and comparative studies in 2009-2011: The research on the former dropped from 20% in 1999-2001 to 9% in 2009-2011, whereas studies on the latter topic increased from 10% in 1999-2001 to 29% in 2009-2011.The increase of the topical research on the system of Indian higher education in the second subset might be explained by the acknowledgment of the fact "that higher education is the key to development" and the elevation of higher education as a policy priority in India (Altbach 2009, p. 39). Whereas contributory studies and research

approaches were researched on the same scale in both time periods, attention to the theme of students has risen in India from 15% in 1999-2001 to 20% in 2009-2011. One more topic – institutional management – was more explored in 2009-2011 (7%) as compared to the decade before (2.5%), and this may be explained by the same trend of putting the reform of higher education at the top of the policy agenda in India. Research on staff has decreased from 7.5% in 1999-2001 to 4.5% in 2009-2011, and both issues of research and curriculum were substantially less explored in the second time-period (7% and 4.5% respectively) in comparison to the decade before (12.5% for each theme).

To sum up, three areas in higher education research – national systems and comparative studies, students, and institutional management – were given a higher priority in India in 2009-2011 (though to a different degree in each area), whereas themes of finance and physical resources, curriculum, research, and staff were less in the scholarly focus than in 1999-2001.

3.4 Global Higher Education Issues: 2009-2012

The second global subset comprises 3000 articles by scholars worldwide and abstracted in RiHEA in 2009-2012 (articles on Indian higher education are excluded from the subset): 2009 – *n*=750, 2010 – *n*=761, 2011 – *n*=745, and 2012 – *n*=744 (see Table 4).

In quantitative terms, the overall international publication output that was abstracted in RiHEA within 2009-2012, increased from 2681 articles in 1999-2002 to 3011 articles in 2009-2012. This overall publications increase can be related, above other factors, to the Bologna Process initiated in Europe in 1999 that continued a discourse of reforming higher education systems on the European continent on the new – supranational – level. In the framework of the Bologna Process, discussions and policy debates on the themes of 'accountability', 'evaluation', 'employability' and other themes that were already the subjects of discussion at the end of the 1990s (Teichler 2008, p.15), became more sound and unavoidable in the developments of the higher education systems in the signatory countries of the Bologna Declaration. Consequently, the policy developments in higher education have since then been attracting a great deal of attention from scholars, resulting in the increase of the academic output on higher education issues in Europe.

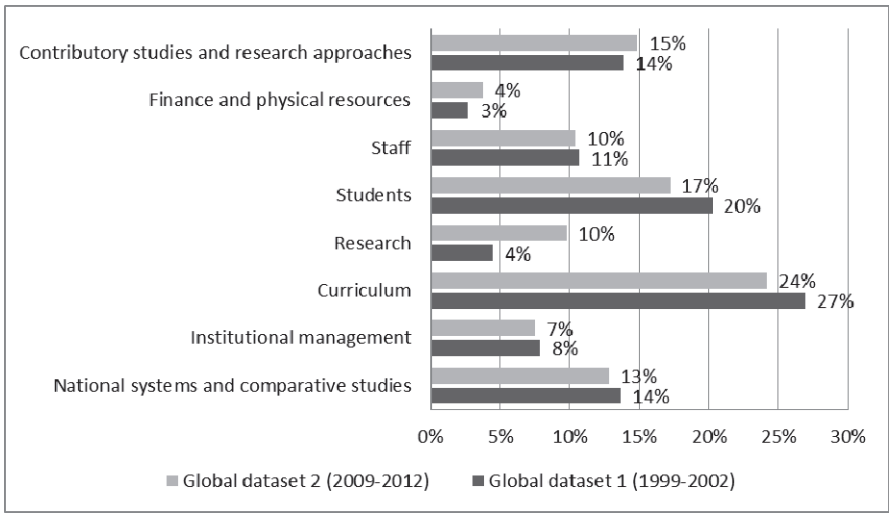
Table 4: Worldwide Articles Abstracted in RiHEA in 2009-2012

RiHEA Classification	Vol. 32 (2009)	Vol. 33 (2010)	Vol. 34 (2011)	Vol. 35 (2012)	Total per theme	Total (%)	Total
National systems and comparative studies	102	110	100	72	384	12,8	
Institutional management	50	51	44	79	224	7,5	
Curriculum	168	207	175	174	724	24,1	
Research	83	76	67	67	293	9,8	
Students	126	126	113	151	516	17,2	
Staff	78	69	74	91	312	10,4	
Financial and physical resources	29	17	26	40	112	3,7	
Contributory studies and research approaches	116	106	150	74	446	14,9	
Total per year	752	762	749	748			3011
Total per year without articles on Indian HE	750	761	745	744		100	3000

Source: the author

Comparing the global subset of articles abstracted in RiHEA in 1999-2002 with the global subset of articles abstracted in 2009-2012 (see Figure 4 below), we observe, in contrast to India, no radical shifts in the themes of research in higher education, besides the topic on research issues. Scholarly interest in the questions connected to research activities rose from 4.5% in 1999-2002 to 10% in 2009-2012. Such an essential increase in comparison with the other thematic areas of higher education research might be well influenced, in our view, by the recently established discourse on university rankings that measure mostly the research productivity of universities. The recent Excellence Initiative in the formerly horizontally stratified higher education system in Germany is a good example of an attempt to correspond structurally to the measurements set up by the rankings. Since the aspirations of many countries, as well as individual universities, lie in reaching a definite prestigious position in an international ranking, research on higher education on the national scale is strongly affected by the explorations of the research component of the higher education institutions.

Figure 4: Global Subsets on Higher Education in Comparison



Source: the author

Curriculum and research as topics in 2009-2012 were examined to a lesser degree than in 1999-2002; at the same time both themes remained the highest (24%) and the second highest (17%) researched themes in 2009-2012.

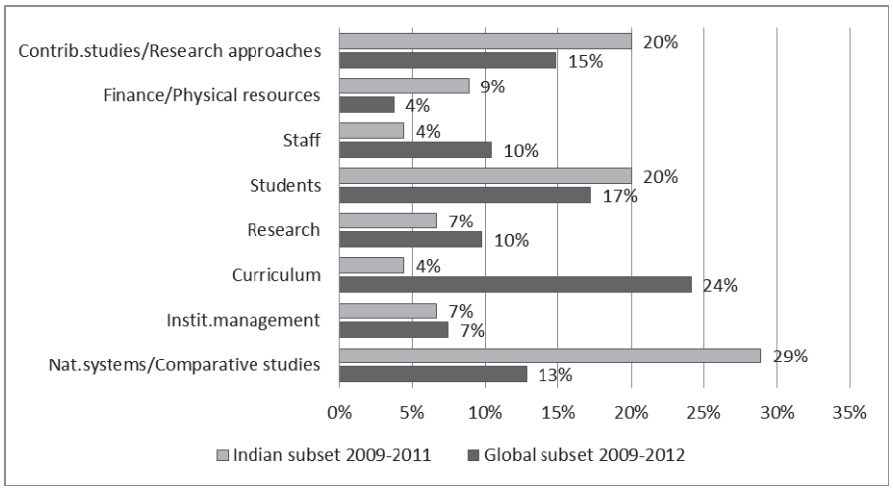
Research on institutional management and on staff remained at the same level of 7.5% and 10% respectively in 2009-2012, as in 1999-2002. The same is true for contributory studies and research approaches, and finance and physical resources: In the second time-period research in each of these thematic areas increased only by 1%. If the contributory studies and research approaches constituted 15% of the whole research on higher education in 2009-2012, issues of finance and physical resources remained highly invisible (less than 4%) in the global research in 2009-2012. Research into national systems and comparative studies has been undertaken at practically the same level in 2009-2012, having just a 1% decline in comparison to 1999-2002.

3.5 Indian (2009-2011) vs. Global (2009-2012) Developments in Higher Education Research

In subchapter 3.2, we analysed the global patterns in higher education research in 1999-2002 in a comparative perspective with the developments in Indian higher education research in 1999-2001. Our data analysis showed that there were no clearly similar patterns in the thematic affiliation of Indian and global subsets (see Figure 2). At the turn of the century the highest disparity between Indian and

global thematic interests were in the topics of curriculum and financial and physical resources: Whereas in India, financial and physical resources were one of the highest research themes in 1999-2001 (20%), in the worldwide articles on higher education in 1999-2002 it was the least researched topic (3%). For the issues regarding curriculum the situation proved to be in a way a reversed one (though not to the same extreme): having been the highest theme of scholarly interest in the global context (27%), curriculum questions in India were somewhat in the middle of the scholarly attention in 1999-2001(12.5%).

Figure 5: Indian vs. Global Patterns in Higher Education Research (second data set)



Source: the author

When considering the development over time, we see several similarities in the thematic patterns between the first (Figure 2.) and the second (Figure 5.) data sets. As already presented in subchapter 5.4, thematic trends in global higher education research in 2009-2012 remained relatively stable compared to 1999-2001, with one exception of the theme of research; the number of publications in 2009-2012 covering research issues doubled (10%) in comparison to a decade before. Research on contributory studies and research approaches remained at the same level of exploration in both Indian and global datasets at both points in a time. Global scholarly interest in finance and physical resources remained at nearly the same small level of 4%. One possible explanation for this global pattern may be a developed institutional basis of higher education in the countries where the articles

for the global subset come from – UK, Australia, USA and Western European countries.

Development patterns of Indian higher education research in the selected time periods, in contrast to the global developments in higher education research, were more diversified. While global studies on staff were conducted at the same level of intensity in both time periods, research on staff in the Indian context decreased from 8% in 1999-2001 to 4% in 2009-2011. One of the explanations of the declining interest in the academic profession in India might be the indicated earlier loss of prestige of the profession (Jayaram 2003) that might be also influenced by the financial shortcuts in the system of higher education. The field of research itself became more prominent in the global context in 2009-2012, increasing from 4% in 1999-2002 to 10% in 2009-2012, whereas in the Indian higher education studies it dropped from 13% in 1999-2001 to 7% in 2009-2011. A potential reason for the previously noted higher attention to the issues of research throughout the world might be the rapidly spreading fashion of international and national ranking exercises that highlight the research side of the higher education institutions as a determinant of a successful ranking position.

Institutional management as a topic of scholarly inquiries stayed unchanged in global research in 2009-2012 in comparison to a decade before (7-8%), and global research on students experienced a small decline of 3% in 2009-2012. In the Indian context, in contrast, there was a growth in research on the topic of institutional management (increase from 3% in 1999-2001 to 7% in 2009-2011) and the topic of students (20% in 2009-2011 compared to 15% in 1999-2001).

4. Conclusion

Our study aimed to explore thematic patterns of higher education research in India in 1999-2001 and 2009-2011 in the context of global developments in the field of higher education research. Accordingly, our main research question was, if the *topical developments in Indian higher education research were similar to the trends in global higher education research in 1999-2001 and in 2009-2011*.

The research employed the documentary research method and explored the topic of the development of Indian higher education research on the basis of scholarly publications in academic journals. The Indian dataset constituted articles on higher education from the *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration* and the *Economic and Political Weekly* – in 1999-2001 and in 2009-2011, and the articles by Indian scholars published in the same time-frame outside India and abstracted in the *Research into Higher Education Abstracts (RiHEA)*. The global dataset constituted articles on higher education written by authors worldwide and abstracted in RiHEA in 1999-2002 and 2009-2012. Analysis of the Indian and worldwide thematic patterns in higher education research was performed on the basis of the classification employed by the RiHEA in 1996-2012.

The most researched topics in Indian higher education in 1999-2001 were finance and physical resources, contributory studies and research approaches and students, whereas the major thematic concerns in articles on higher education worldwide in 1999-2002 were curriculum and students. Issues of institutional management were given the least attention in the Indian context in 1999-2001, whereas issues of research as well as finance and physical resources were the least researched categories on a global scale.

In 2009-2011, the most investigated topic in Indian research on higher education was national systems and comparative studies, followed by the topic of students and contributory studies. On a global scale, the most prominent topic in higher education research remained curriculum. The least researched topics in the second time frame in the Indian and global higher education research were curriculum and staff, and finance and physical resources, respectively.

In general, development patterns in Indian higher education research in the selected time periods, in contrast to the global developments in researching higher education, were more diversified.

Based on the above conducted analysis of the Indian and worldwide articles on higher education in the selected years, we come to the conclusions that:

- There are very few similar trends in topical developments of higher education research within the Indian and the global subsets in 2009-2011 compared to 1999-2001. Accordingly, we cannot speak of analogous thematic patterns of development of research in higher education in the Indian context in comparison to the global tendencies in higher education research. The topical changes are more pronounced in the Indian research of higher education, a clear indication, in our perception, of a still developing research area, which can be more influenced by new demands and trends than the research on the already longer established higher education systems.
- Unlike the highlighted topical dissimilarity within the Indian and worldwide research on higher education, the topical patterns between the Indian and global higher education research in 2009-2011 show an observable degree of stability to the trends in 1999-2001.

On the basis of our analysis we find it difficult to clearly state whether the Tiger follows the world patterns in higher education research or whether the Tiger follows his own path, and this difficulty is predetermined by the limitations of study in regard to the selected sources for the analysis, and a fragmentary character of research in regard to the time periods (it would be rather beneficial to explore the process of the thematic developments in the Indian higher education research as a continuum over a longer period of time). For a substantial answer, more rigorous research has to be undertaken.

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Author's biographical note

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15

The MAHE Experience: History and Assessment

Barbara M. Kehm

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to provide an account of a unique master programme serving students from all over the world in a thematic area for which no master programme had previously existed in Germany. It is hoped that a retrospective view is not only of interest for all the persons involved in the teaching, learning and administration of this master programme, but also a case which might be of interest for for those reflecting the potentials and risks of such an endeavour of a study programme in the area of higher education.

The International Master Programme "Higher Education and Development" (MAHE for short) was inaugurated in October 2004 at the University of Kassel. It was part of the study provisions of the Department of Social Science. Actually, the concept was developed and the course was coordinated by the International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER) of the University of Kassel.

This article presents the views of the author who was one of the key persons in terms of the inception the programme and who was its coordinator for six years. It could draw, of course, from the files of the programme, and it was supported by the fact that two surveys were provided useful information. First, those responsible for the programme send out a short questionnaire to all MAHE students enrolled in the academic year 2009/2010 asking them to state their views about the quality and the strengths and weaknesses of the programme (called MAHE student survey 2010 in the subsequent text). Second, all MAHE students – and former MAHE students at that time – of all six cohorts were surveyed in the framework of one of its master theses which eventually was published (Klumpp, Matthias: University excellence and efficiency. Berlin: Logos 2012). In this survey (called MAHE survey 2011), which was operately supported by former MAHE student Carmen Mureşan, 70 (61%) of the altogether 115 students provided information about their life-course, their motives to study, their experiences and views regarding the MAHE programme and eventually their whereabouts afterwards. This

contribution does not claim to be a comprehensive self-evaluation, but it aims to provide a more in-depth and a more valid account than just a personal view.

2. The Beginnings and the Programme

The aim to establish this study programme was first discussed at the University of Kassel in 2002. At the International Centre for Higher Education Research (at that time named Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work) – one of the best known institutions in charge of higher education research in Germany and internationally with almost 30 years of experience at that time – discussions had been already underway for some time whether the Centre should embark on formal training activities both of the next generation of higher education researches and of the growing number of higher educational professionals, i.e. persons in the higher education system providing service and management support on a high level of professional competence. It was the time when the traditionally long university programmes in various European countries started to be transformed – in the wake of the so-called "Bologna Process" – into separate bachelor and master programmes and thus to provide also room for relatively specialized, innovative master programmes such as the programme on higher education discussed in Kassel. And it was the time when universities in many countries aimed at strengthening the international character of their study programmes by, deciding, among others, to offer study programmes addressing predominantly internationally mobile students and to opt for English as the language of communication.

Actually, the president of the University of Kassel recommended the Centre to establish such a master programme. In addition to the rationales named above, he suggested that the members of the Centre could thereby concentrate their teaching activities on an area closely linked to their research rather than, as in the past, teaching single courses in a range of very diverse of study programmes or in study programmes concentrating on a single discipline.

It was envisaged from the outset that the MAHE programme was to be part of the teaching portfolio of the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Kassel. This reflected the facts that the Centre as an interdisciplinary research unit had no formal coordination functions of teaching and that the teaching activities of the full-time professors of the Centre were coordinated anyway at that time by two departments in charge of various social science fields and since 2005 by the Department of Social Sciences. This link with the social science did not mean that only students with a social science background should be admitted; rather, consensus was reached at the outset that students could be admitted with prior education in a broad range of disciplines, so long as the applicants seemed to be properly prepared for the study of higher education.

A concept of MAHE was developed that envisaged a two-year programme. This is Iin the majority of European countries this is the most widespread length of

master programmes and is considered in Germany as the customary length of a master programme, if prior completion of a three-year bachelor programme is the (minimum) entry qualification.

The courses and examinations were put into the framework of a credit system, whereby altogether 120 credits had to be collected – this is in line with the calculation of one-year full-time programmes as 60 credits in the so-called ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) scheme, which is the most widespread calculation of credits in most European countries. Actually,

- 78 credits were to be achieved in the MAHE programme in 13 modules of teaching and learning comprising 6 credits each,
- 12 credits through participation in an internship/work placement, required to last eight weeks, and a respective report,
- 25 credits for the master thesis, and finally
- 5 credits for the oral exam at the end of the programme which had the character of a defence of the master thesis.

Each module was taught as a one-week intensive course in order to provide the opportunity to study also for students who were professionally active concurrently and for students who did not live in Kassel during the whole period of the study programme. Students were send reading material some period in advance in order to prepare already prior to the teaching period. Subsequent to the teaching period, they were expected to write a paper on one of the areas addressed in the course, whereby the teachers provided a list of about five recommended themes. Altogether, each module comprised the official work load of 180 hours.

The teaching language was English. This was viewed as indispensible in order to open the programme to students from all over the world who would be inwards mobile for this master programme (actually, many mobile students took a recommended German language course in addition to the required modules in order to become acquainted with the life and culture of the host country of their study). However, students could write their papers and the master thesis in German, if they preferred to do so, and the language of the master thesis was as a rule also that of the oral examination at the end of study.

The members of the Centre preparing the programme had screened in advance existing master programmes on higher education in various parts of the world. They noted that a substantial proportion each had a prime emphasis either on "students, teaching and learning" or on "higher education management". They decided to opt for a programme not frequently offered anywhere else and to design a broad programme with some elements of these themes, but with a focus on "higher education and society", i.e. addressing also macro-structures of higher education systems as well as the social context of higher education. Among others, two modules reflected the relations between higher education and the world of work (a priority research area of the Centre). Moreover, emphasis was placed on making sure that

students get acquainted with empirical research methods (notably various kinds of surveys and quantitative data analysis). Actually, the themes of the modules are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: The Modules of the International Master Programme "Higher Education" at the University of Kassel (2004-2013)

Theme 1:	Introduction
Module 1:	Introduction to higher education research and development
Theme 2:	The Higher Education System
Module 2:	Structural development of higher education in an internationally comparative perspective.
Module 3:	Relationships between higher education, the state and society
Theme 3:	Knowledge and Society
Module 4:	Transition from higher education into employment and professional career
Module 5:	Higher education and work: Acquisition of competences
Theme 4:	Teaching, Learning, Research
Module 6:	Curriculum development, quality assurance, evaluation
Module 7:	Research planning, development, support and transfer
Theme 5:	Higher Education Management, Organisation and Decision Making
Module 8:	Change management in higher education
Module 9:	Higher education institutions as gendered organisations
Theme 6:	Evaluation and Internationalisation
Module 10:	Research management, indicators and evaluation
Module 11:	Internationalisation in higher education
Theme 7:	Empirical Research Methods
Module 12:	Data collection and analysis I
Module 13:	Data collection and analysis II

The proposal of establishing the MAHE Programme went through the various steps from informal preparation to formal approval over a period of less than two years. Among others, the programme was officially accredited by the Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, Hannover (ZEvA). It should be noted that a decentralized system of programme accreditation is established in Germany. A central agency accredits those agencies which are in charge of accrediting individual study programmes. Actually, ZEvA is the oldest evaluation agency in Germany and is often viewed as the most prestigious accreditation agencyone: It was already established in the 1990s with support of the Land (state) of Lower Saxony, when the Dutch model of programme evaluation developed in the 1980s gained

popularity. Actually, MAHE was accredited in February 2005 without any further conditions or requirements for change.

In the process of accreditation, it was necessary to opt officially for a certain type of master programme. Actually, MAHE was accredited officially as a "consecutive" programme, i.e. primarily addressing persons who just have graduated from Bachelor programmes, and as a "theoretically oriented" programme, i.e. predominantly providing the basis for possible future doctoral training. Actually, however, MAHE was presented by its initiators in all preparatory documents for the approval within the University and for the accreditation process as a programme with a broad scope, serving both new bachelor graduates and experienced persons who might have been professionally active after the bachelor degree, German and foreign students, and both students having future academic and research work in mind and those aiming to prepare for a professional career in the field of higher education (e.g. career services, international relations, accreditation, evaluation, transfer services, departmental development or decision-making at central level). Moreover, the programme should be open for students with prior education in the social sciences (sociology, political sciences, economics and business studies, law, etc.) as well as for students from other fields linked to higher education (education, psychology, history, etc.). The disciplinary heart of the programme was envisaged to be in the social sciences. Thus, graduates of MAHE could be accepted at the University of Kassel as doctoral candidates in the social sciences (eventually awarded the title "Dr. rer. pol.").

The International Master Programme "Higher Education" started in October 2004. It was envisaged to admit annually up to 25 students. Actually, as will be shown below, it admitted on average 19 students in six annual cohorts, i.e. altogether 115 students taking courses from 2004-2006 to 2009-2011. From 2010 onwards, no students were admitted anymore, and the programme was officially closed by the end of September 2013.

3. The Financial and Organisational Framework

Students of the Master Programme "Higher Education" at the University of Kassel had to pay only in the academic year 2004/2005 at – moderate – tuition fees. Thereafter, tuition fees were abolished at public university in the German state of Hessen. Rather, all MAHE students had to pay a general fee that takes care of the student union, various services and of public transportation in Kassel, and they have to care of having a health insurance. If they took a longer period for their study than the required period of two years, they had to extend the period of enrolment correspondingly and to pay these other fees (with the exception of periods when they were on leave). Students could also take other courses offered by the University of Kassel, e.g. German language courses or other courses of the Department of Social Sciences.

Actually, the International Centre for Higher Education Research received only limited financial support for managing the programme. The Department of Social Sciences accepted that the teaching load of the two professor positions in the area of higher education was predominantly allocated to this programme. The Centre allocated a half-time secretarial position, which initially was established for the support of research activities, for the organisation of MAHE. No substantial funds were there for the announcement of the programme or for other administrative activities. Some funds were made available by the Department of Social Sciences for having two modules each taught on part-time basis. Moreover, students could draw from the various services of the International Office of the University of Kassel and from some of the services of the local branch of Deutsches Studentenwerk (a national agency in Germany in charge of various services for students), e.g. eventual accommodation in a dormitory and help in the search for other accommodation.

German students of the programme were eligible to apply for the German need-based scholarship programme (BAFöG). However, foreign applicants had to be informed that they have to care themselves for the costs to be incurred, possibly by applying for scholarships in their own country.

There did not exist any general scholarship system for foreign Master students. INCHER, however, explored whether some ways could be found of getting support in the framework of the so-called programme "Development Related Postgraduate Courses" of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), i.e. the major German agency for the support of international student and academic mobility. MAHE was not officially designed as a programme for students from developing countries (rather, it strived for attracting a mix of students from Germany and all over the world), and, therefore, did not automatically fit. However, the DAAD agreed to provide up to six scholarships annually under very specific conditions:

- Only students from developing countries were eligible who already had been professionally active for at least three years as higher education professionals or administrators in higher education in developing countries.
- These students had to take three modules at another university in Germany which provided a programme with a stronger emphasis on higher education management than MAHE. Actually, the students took the modules "Project management", "Budgeting and funding" and "Human resource management in higher education" offered at the University of Oldenburg.

The DAAD provides provided some funds for curriculum development and tutors. In addition, the DAAD assisted MAHE by including the programme on its website and in its relevant brochures which were distributed worldwide.

4. The Teachers and the Role of INCHER

The MAHE programme had been initiated by scholars of the International Centre for Higher Education Research. Actually, INCHER was the conditio sine qua non of the programme, as the feedback of the students confirmed which is summarized below. Over the years, 40 to 50 scholars were active in the Centre as regular academic staff, associated members primarily based at another unit of the University or outside, staff funded by contract money, guest scholars, doctoral candidates, etc. MAHE students profited from the well-stocked library and its convenient working places as well as from technical and secretarial support of the programme. Some students took take their internship as work experience in research projects of the Centre, and some made their living as auxiliary staff in research projects of the Centre; altogether, almost half of the MAHE students, thus, were integrated into the Centre. The reputation of the INCHER was in many instances, as reported by the students, the single most important or a major factor for applying to become a student of INCHERMAHE. And last but not least some students hoped to become doctoral candidates – and eventually did so – at the Centre after the award of the master degree. Moreover, the friendly and communicative environment of the Centre helped students to become acquainted and getting advice also from members of Centre who were not directly involved in MAHE.

However, the academic staff of the Centre with official teaching assignments was very small. When MAHE was established, the University paid two professor positions – one permanently and one for a limited number of years – as well as seven research staff positions and four other administrative and technical staff positions of the Centre. The two professors (Barbara M. Kehm and Ulrich Teichler) were the only staff members of INCHER who could allocate their teaching load to MAHE. As a matter of course, they played a dominant role in curriculum development, administration, student guidance, supervision of master theses and as examiners in the oral examinations. In addition, some staff of the Centre volunteered to take over teaching assignments. Some professors of the Department of Social Sciences and some scholars of the Institute for Socio-Cultural Studies of the University of Kassel, who were active in the training of academics and administrators of development developing countries, contributed to MAHE. Finally, as already mentioned, some external experts could be invited to be guest teachers with the help of funds provided by the Department of Social Sciences.

Altogether, 13 scholars served as teaching of the MAHE programme: (Dr. W. Adamczak, Prof. M. Fremerey, Prof. M. Fuchs, Dr. K. Hahn, Prof. B. M. Kehm, Dr. R. Kirsch-Auwärter, Dr. W. Krull, Dr. U. Lanzendorf, Prof. A. Neusel, H. Schomburg, Prof. U. Teichler, Dr. M. Wesseler, and Dr. H. Winkler).

The key administrative tasks of the MAHE programme were taken over by Susanne Höckelmann, administrator at INCHER. She did not only care for all the

necessary procedures, but played an advisory role for the students in many respects. As a consequence, students liked to name her "the mother of the programme".

5. Application, Admission and Enrolment

The announcement for the first opportunity of enrolment in 2004 was undertaken at a relatively short notice. Even afterwards, there was not a budget for starting any major information campaign. A flyer was designed and printed, and a website was set up. In addition, staff at INCHER contacted colleagues around the world through their personal networks.

As a consequence, the number of applicants for the first cohort (starting in the academic year 2004/2005) was very limited (25), and figures for the second cohort (starting in 2005/2006) still had not reached the expected level (78). From the third cohort (starting in 2006/2007) onwards, MAHE had more than 100 applications annually. This suggests that an announcement of a programme primarily by the usual online information of the hosting university can be enormously effective, if a programme meets a demand on the parts of students and if the programmes is backed by a good academic reputation of the key scholars responsible. Altogether, exactly 600 applications were received over the six years.

Selection of applicants on the basis of documents and a letter explaining the rationales for application did not turn out to be an easy task. In 2009, the administration of the University of Kassel eventually built up a system of assisting all study programmes by examining the validity of documents submitted by foreign students and the quality of the institution of higher education certifying the entry qualification. As a rule, some applications for MEHE MAHE could be sorted out from the outset, because the applicants obviously did not know that higher education is a field of study and professional expertise of its own; they obviously wanted to study in another field. In some instances the documents were so incomplete that applicants could not seriously be considered. In other instances, prior education could not be viewed as an appropriate preparation. Last but not least prior educational achievements could be considered as too low. As the graduation rate in the three last cohorts was higher than in the first three cohorts (see Table 2), one might assume that the predictive validity of the selection for MAHE has improved somewhat over time, even though – as already discussed – many coincidences of varying motives and varying life courses might have played a role.

Actually, less than half of those applying were admitted, and more than twice as many students were officially admitted than eventually enrolled. Or calculated differently: Altogether – leaving aside the first atypical cohort – the available figures suggest that among all applicants clearly more than half of the applicants were rejected and that more than 20 per cent withdrew. Eventually 18 per cent enrolled.

An "overbooking" in the admission process was as matter of procedure, because not all students who had been offered a place in the programme could be expected to actually take up that place in the end. As one might expect, some students had sent out multiple applications, received more than a single positive response and opted for somewhere else. Written communication with the students showed, however, that the most common reasons for not taking up the offered place of study in MAHE were either personal or related to lack of financial means. A sizeable number of those admitted had applied for fellowships in their own country or had started to secure funding differently and eventually were not successful. Some applicants, who eventually did not enrol, reported major changes in their life-course, e.g. an interesting job offer, getting married or having to care for children. Finally some students did not succeed in getting a visa for studying in Germany.

A maximum of 25 students annually was envisaged, and the actual number of students turned out to be altogether 115, i.e. on average about 19 per cohort (see Table 2 below). 33 were men and 82 women. The organizers of the programme had expected a somewhat higher number of women than of men because more women than men seem to be employed as higher education professionals in many countries of the world, and the fields of study providing a basis for higher education research have a higher proportion of female than male students in many countries of the world as well. The actual share of women in MAHE, however, was higher than one could have expected on that basis. One might assume that men in this field less often opt for study in another country.

The 115 students eventually enrolling over the years came from 39 different countries: Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Macedonia, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Syria, Tadzhikistan, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the United States of America, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Vietnam. Among them, 22 students came from China and 17 from Germany, while other countries were represented with one to six students.

The first cohort of MAHE students, who started in October 2004, turned out – looked in retrospect – to be completely atypical. Eleven of the 13 students were German. All of the German students had already a degree from a German university that is viewed as being equivalent to a master, i.e. a Diplom, Magister, or a State Examination – a fact that did not come as a surprise, because bachelor programmes only had been recently started in Germany at that time. Most students of the first cohort were already employed and wanted to study part-time whereby some envisaged participating in selective modules only as a mean of continuing professional education rather than taking the complete programme and some stretching the study over a long period. These different objectives and approaches of study were in principle not regarded as a problem by the programme organizers since the programme had been conceived from the beginning to be as flexible as

possible, allowing part-time studies, allowing also for a fast track (i.e. graduating after 1.5 years) as well as allowing participation of professionals in selected modules only. Thus, a graduation rate of less than half (5 out of 13) does not have to be viewed as a failure given the characteristics of the students of this cohort.

It came as a surprise for the organizers that the number of German applicants turned out to be very low in the subsequent cohorts. Clearly, the aim of the programme was not fulfilled that MAHE should serves both German and foreign students. Actually, during these years some higher education programmes were established at other German institutions of higher education which were taught in German. MAHE obviously did not succeed to convince many of prospective German students that they should take up the additional burden of studying in a foreign language in order to enhance their international knowledge and competences.

In looking at the composition of MAHE students over all the years, we note that the students came from a broad spectrum of fields of study in the humanities and social sciences, ranging from classical Greek philology to industrial management and in a few instances even from mathematics, engineering and medicine. More than half of them had already been involved in study beyond a master. Moreover, more than half of them had been professionally active in a wide range of occupational areas and positions, however in the majority of these cases in teaching or administrative tasks in higher education and mostly only for a period of at most a one year.

6. Study and Graduation

Of the altogether 115 students newly enrolled in the MAHE programme over the period of six years, 80 eventually graduated in Kassel within this programme, i.e. 70 per cent. Most of the former students not graduating from MAHE provided information as regards the major reason for discontinuation. Accordingly, the majority of those not studying up to the master degree cannot be viewed as real drop-out: Some intended from the outset to participate in a few models modules for the purpose of continuing professional education, some changed the field of study, and some transferred to a doctoral programme without completing the master study in MAHE. Among those who can be viewed really as drop-out, some discontinued study for family reasons, some for health reasons, and some named academic problems. As studies in Germany have shown that the drop-out rates of foreign students are on average clearly higher than those of German students, a real drop-out of less than 15 per cent can be viewed as a success of MAHE that might have been due to the relatively intensive guidance, counselling, provision of services as well as intensive communication and cooperation among the students.
The average period from the start of study until graduation, as Table 2 shows, was 7.2 semesters, i.e. 80 per cent longer than the required study period. An average prolongation of study at German universities of about 40-50 per cent was custom-

ary in the past for various reasons. Many students opt de facto for part-time study, some because they earn money alongside study to fund their living costs and some for various reasons, among them care for family and children. Some interrupt their study for gainful employment and return to study after some period. Some take deliberately more time to intensify their study and work on papers and the thesis in order to get better grades, and some stretch the process of learning and examination because they cannot cope easily with the study requirements.

Table 2: The six Cohorts of Students in the International Master Programme "Higher Education" at the University of Kassel in Figures

Cohort	Applicants (m/f)	Students enrolling (m/f)	Graduates (m/f)	Average duration of study* (semesters)	Average final grade	No. of countries of students' origin
2004/05	25 (14/11)	13 (5/8)	5 (1/4)	9.8	1.9	2
2005/06	78 (34/44)	27 (9/18)	15 (7/8)	7.7	2.1	14
2006/07	139 (63/76)	20 (9/11)	12 (7/5)	6.6	1.7	15
2007/08	114 (57/58)	15 (3/12)	14 (3/11)	5.5	1.8	12
2008/09	133 (52/81)	23 (5/18)	19 (5/14)	7.7	1.9	16
2009/10	110 (38/72)	17 (2/15)	15 (2/13)	5.7	1.7	12
Total/ Average	600 (258/342)	115 (33/82)	80 (25/55)	7.2	1.9	39

* Including eventual periods of interruption and leave

In the MAHE programme, the high average duration can be explained in part by the fact that quite a number of students discontinued study after a while, started employment or took over family responsibilities for some period – often in their country of origin, and eventually decided later to embark on study again or to complete the master thesis which they already had started earlier. In addition, many students sought for means to have an income and pay their living costs. Obviously, there were some students as well who wanted to live a longer period in Germany than in their home country than they considered necessary for the purpose of study. Yet, there was an element in the MAHE programme which contributed to long study periods: Over the years, the teachers often discussed whether the requirement of writing an essay on an important thematic area in each of the

modules has been felt by many students as a burden and has contributed substantially to the prolongation of study.
On should bear in mind that Germany belongs to those countries, where no formal distinction is made between full-time and part-time students as far as the process of registration are is concerned. Moreover, students can prolong for a long time without any major administrative problems or penalization. Within the MAHE course, strong efforts were made to encourage students, who prolonged their study or seemed to discontinue study, to find their way back to the programme and eventually graduate – notably in the final two years of the programme when the formal end of the programme would also terminate the possibility of graduating even later.

Those graduating got a final grade of 1.9 on average on a scale from 1 = very good to 4 as a pass grade. Approximately one quarter ended with "very good" (up to 1.5), about half with "good" (between 1.6 and 2.5), and less than a quarter with an overall lower grade. This grading is similar to what one can observe on average in Germany in fields of study such as sociology or political science.

Of the 80 MAHE students eventually graduating, 13 did not have to have an internship as part their overall study, because their prior job experience was recognized within the MAHE programme as equivalent to the work experienced strived for in the internships. MAHE students were encouraged to find an opportunity for an internship themselves; thereby, they could opt for internships with an administrative emphasis or with a research emphasis. Actually, quite a number of students were inventive and successful in finding a interesting opportunity for acquiring practical experiences, for example at international organizations, in ministries, at institutions of higher education, in research units of higher education, etc. – partly in their home country, in Germany or in a third country. Actually, this held true for 26 students of those eventually graduating. However, more than half – actually 41 of those graduating – got an opportunity of internship with the help of INCHER – either in research projects or administrative tasks of INCHER or other units of the University of Kassel. The reports, which had to be written by the students, suggest that the internships in most cases that the internships were perceived as a valuable complementary experience.

7. Life and Study in MAHE: What the Students and the Teachers Reported

The most relevant aspects of the student experience can be divided into three categories: academic, social, and financial. In addition, the experiences can be reported here of those students who studied three modules at another German university in order to be eligible for a DAAD scholarship.

Typically, the first module in MAHE did not only serve as an introduction to higher education studies and research, but also as a course that tried to bring all

students to approximately the same starting level. The most important hurdle that the first module had to overcome was to focus students from different countries with different prior level of studies and degrees and from different degrees on the specificities of higher education as a field of study and scholarship. That could best be reached by making them aware, for example, what the different subjects and disciplines students had studied previously in their home countries could contribute – methodologically and theoretically – to the study of higher education as a genuinely interdisciplinary field of scholarship, policy and practice. But students also were made aware of the institutional basis and the relevant theoretical and methodological approaches to higher education as a field of study.

Another important hurdle that thechallenge of the first module was supposed to tackle was to integrate students from different countries and with different styles of learning socially and academically. In this respect teachers were expected to have a high level of intercultural awareness because the needs of Asian students or students from Arab countries were different from the needs of American students or students from a private Catholic university in a Latin American country. In addition, students had to understand to some extent the teaching and learning culture at German universities where typically there is an expectation of self-driven learning, high personal responsibility for getting the work done, lax handling of deadlines for homework papers, and initiation of teacher contact for advice through the students rather than through the teacher. For example, Asian students tended to be morbidly afraid when asked to come and see a teacher but at the same time would not ask for an appointment themselves. Taking this fear away from them or at least reducing it and making them understand that advice, feedback on their work and some counselling would help their learning and their progress was a task every teacher had to do.

Concerning academic and learning support there were a number of additional services, some typical for the German higher education system, others specifically devised to help international students. Naturally, teachers were always ready to make an appointment to discuss progress and performance, help students to tackle a topic for a homework paper or be available per email to clarify a smaller matter. The library and documentation unit of INCHER translated its search and signature system into English and offered introductions to its use for every new cohort. Additional search computers were set up and a copy machine installed. Furthermore, the biggest room in the library was furnished with a large table and chairs so that students could work in groups on their homework papers and help each other if need be. This meeting space also enabled academic exchange between students in the first year of the programme and those in the second year. From 2007 onwards, a small group of particularly active students established an online platform (e-MAHE) for student exchange, publication of particularly good homework papers, and opportunities for questions and answers.

Students were also encouraged to make use of INCHER's wide network of colleagues in the field of higher education and look for conferences to participate in and present papers or posters. Several students did just that and were accepted. Help was provided in many instances for them to find appropriate funding to enable their participation.

In general, as expectations differ from country to country with regard to what students have to do for studying properly and successfully, the MAHE teachers had to be very explicit about their own expectations as teachers. They had to explain to the students the learning goals, expected learning outcomes, academic writing skills and proper referencing, and the German grading system.

This was the academic side of it but there was a social one as well. The MAHE coordinator and the teachers put a lot of effort into helping each cohort of students to integrate socially. Each new cohort was greeted with a buffet style MAHE welcome dinner on the evening of their first day of classes when they were also greeted officially by the Dean of the Department of Social Sciences. Around mid-December, a Christmas party or a Christmas dinner was organised to which all students were invited. Additionally, the students were encouraged to become active and organise their own social events. Thus, one particularly active cohort (2007) introduced "MAHE cultural dinners" which took place every six to eight weeks. MAHE cultural dinners were organised by the students themselves and became a real highlight. A group of four to five students from different countries but the same world region (e.g. Asia, Africa, Central Europe, Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe) got together to organise such a dinner. The cultural dinners consisted of short power point presentations about the culture and beauty of each country and about the respective higher education system. Then the students organising the dinner had prepared traditional dishes from their country for everybody to taste. The teachers and the other students were responsible for bringing the drinks. The dinner was followed by a dance or music performance or a round of typical games (have you ever tried to transfer very smooth pebbles from one pot filled with water into another pot filled with water being only allowed to use chopsticks for fishing them out and transferring them while at the same time competing against another team doing the same?). It was a lot of fun!

All MAHE teachers encouraged the students to self-organise. Over the years MAHE students organised trips to Brussels to discuss higher education issues with members of the European Commission and other European higher education organisations (like ACA and EUA) located in Brussels and to Berlin or Dresden for some sightseeing. In addition, the programme administrator organised a trip for all students to the former East German border and a visit to a local museum because until 1989 Kassel was located rather close to the former border. Moreover, often small groups of students travelled together to various sites in Germany and neighbouring countries (for example weekend train rides to Prague, Vienna, Paris, Ams-

terdam, etc. can be arranged easily due to the central location of Kassel and the existing comfortable train connections).

For several years, but not for all the years, some funds were available to have some senior students of MAHE acting as tutors. Their activities covered an impressive range: Organising tutorials (for example: Introduction into scientific academic writing, Handling online resources, Presentation skills, Basic statistics, Time management, etc.), individual support on writing papers, information about internships and help in the search of internship places, support of social and intercultural activities (including study trips), and support of the MAHE students own e-learning and communication platform e-MaHE. Among others, the invitation to a weekly working group of students helped to clarify many day-to-day issues and to get to know problems which might require tutorial support.

Perhaps of the highest importance was the role of the programme administrator. She was the first contact for all organisational and administrative issues, starting with information for students how to get from their home countries to Kassel, greeting and meeting them, finding housing for them, helping them with opening a bank account, getting them properly enrolled, finding them the right doctor when they were sick, and so on. For many students she became a mother substitute and a friend and many students went to her and just had a good cry when they were overcome by homesickness. Such a person turned out to be of utmost importance when running an international programme.

Financial issues were a perennial problem one had to deal with. Many students from developing countries basically arrived without any proper funding and had to find a job as soon as possible. Efforts were made to prevent them from having to find work on the general labour market because many students did not have any knowledge of the German language and were only offered the most menial and underpaid job opportunities which then prevented them from studying properly and getting their degree. As already pointed out, many students were given contracts as tutors or as student research assistants in INCHER's projects. For students from Central and Eastern European countries another possibility was to work as research assistants in the East West Science Centre of University of Kassel. Some students worked in the language centre of the University, in the framework of the international summer or winter schools or in the International Office. Alternatively, students were helped to apply for scholarships from a range of organisations. In the end, certainly no student had "to sleep under a bridge".

Finally, a support system at the University of Kassel turned out to be helpful, which is called study completion scholarships. A few students annually could be supported for four to six month to concentrate at the end on their master thesis and the preparation of the oral exam without work alongside to cover their costs of living.

Support for students did not only require substantial administrative activities, but the students had to be supported to learn writing applications – for small jobs

and at the beginning and later for employment, for admission to doctoral programmes and for fellowships. And the key responsible persons of the MAHE had to write an enormous number of recommendations over time, as will be also addressed below.

For the small group of students, who had been awarded a DAAD scholarship, the study experience extended to another German university, namely Oldenburg, where they participated in three modules. As already pointed out, these modules were required in order to enhance the students' competences in areas of higher education management. Actually, the courses in Oldenburg did not primarily address students, but rather were 'development related postgraduate courses' addressing deans and prospective deans from developing countries. MAHE students enjoyed alternative training and learning environment in some respects. Sometimes, however, MAHE students had to note that some seniors let them feel that they were senior. Fortunately the Oldenburg teachers could prevent any serious conflicts and the MAHE students were mainly cheerful and resilient, but it was not always easy. On the practical side, MAHE students were pleased that a "blended learning approach" was pursued in Oldenburg, which allowed the students to reduce the physical presence and, thus, keep the costs of staying somewhere else in limits.

8. The Students' Views: Results of the 2010 Student Survey

In the – above named – 2010 survey of those MAHE students, who were enrolled at that time, comments on four issues were asked for:

- Evaluate the modules you have participated in so far.
- Assess MAHE with respect to teaching and study quality (including infrastructure).
- Identify the most important strengths and weaknesses of MAHE.
- Assess the future of MAHE, in particular with regard to its potential for further development.

The MAHE students found the modules interesting and exciting but would have wished for more choice. Furthermore and not surprisingly, many students would have appreciated a more intensive focus on developing countries. Those students who had previous professional experience found modules with systemic and theoretical perspectives particularly helpful. As a rule, students found that the modules were well organised and experienced the international composition of the student body as an added value for their learning experience. Learning outcomes were clearly formulated and reading and preparation material that was provided to students was state of the art. Topics given for homework papers were sufficiently numerous and broad to follow individual interests and foci. However, students would have liked a larger variety of assessment methods.

Concerning the quality of teaching and studying students found the teachers to be very engaged, passionate and inspiring. Teachers were regarded as well prepared and having a high level of expertise while being open and supportive at the same time. The majority of students described their learning experience as high quality within a positive learning environment. Although there was already a relatively high proportion of group learning and discussion, many students wanted an even higher proportion of this because they found learning from each other a valuable experience.

The infrastructure was evaluated somewhat more negatively. INCHER documentation and library as well as resources were judged as good as was well technical help when, for example, computer problems occurred. More support was wanted for online access to literature and interlibrary loans. Criticism was expressed most frequently with regard to classroom size (too small, too hot in the summer, no good ventilation). As modules consisted of one week of intensive classroom teaching and learning (Monday through Friday, morning until afternoon), this criticism was well justified. Some students also missed integration with and thus noted a lack of contact to other students and study programmes at Kassel University.

In response to the question regarding the strengths and weaknesses of MAHE, strengths were named with regard to the following issues:

- The international composition of the student body and the international, interdisciplinary and comparative nature of the study content;
- The composition of modules providing a good overview of the most important questions and issues of higher education research and development and the high relevance of the content;
- The possibility to have a job parallel to studying; in general, the flexibility and the possibilities of the programme as a whole;
- The good reputation of the teachers, their networks, their personal engagement and involvement, the good relationship between teachers and students;
- The high quality of support and advice (academic as well as personal) offered to the students;
- High quality of teaching;
- Encouragement to engage in independent and research oriented learning: Students appreciated the opportunity to develop research competences;
- Very good tutorials.

Some weaknesses were named of the programme:

- In general, students would have liked the opportunity to choose between several module options;
- Some modules had a weak correlation between preparatory reading material and homework topics;

- Students missed a module on ICT in teaching;
- Students wanted more group projects;
- Students easily could fall behind without having to fear any consequences;
- Students thought that there were too many homework essays to be written and wanted more variety in assessment methods.

Additionally, students noted some other weaknesses. Apart from the critique of the classrooms, they would have liked more German students participating as well as more linkages to the University of Kassel as a whole. They suggested that the programme should have a better marketing and advertising, and they would have liked to get hands-on information about future employment opportunities.

Finally, students commented on the future potential of the programme. There was an almost unanimous agreement that MAHE was a unique programme with high potential and high relevance. Many students regretted that the programme was going to be closed down, and some felt that this would take away some value from their degree. The students listed the following aspects to be taken into account in case the programme would be newly established in the future: Including new teachers; Establishing institutional partnerships and increasing network building to include guest teachers and alumni; stronger focus on the state of higher education in developing countries; broaden the range of themes addressed in the programme.

9. The Students' and Graduates' Views: Results of the 2011 Survey

As already pointed out, a survey was undertaken in 2011, i.e. seven years after the start of the programme, which addressed all participants of the six cohorts: Those having graduated already, those who studied at that time, those who were on leave, and also those who had dropped out. The 70 responses provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the student experience in MAHE.

The responses to an open question as regards their motivation to study suggest that more than 80 per cent had a deep interest in the subject "higher education". The interest in the subject matter often was combined with the intention to do research in this area and to eventually become an actor and contribute to the development of higher education. Many of them wrote in this context about their expectations regarding future work and career. Additional, a substantial number of respondents expressed their interest in learning in an international environment, acquiring international experiences and enhancing international understanding.
In the report on this survey, one quotation was singled out because it was seen as reflecting the students' motives in a nutshell:

"Higher Education research is a fascinating field of study. I decided to participate in the MAHE programme with the expectation to broaden my knowledge over higher education systems and to develop new perspectives and ideas in order

to offer my small contribution to the reform of higher education in my country. In addition, I would be given the opportunity to study in a foreign country, experience an intercultural environment and work with people who have different mentalities, customs and traditions. The reason I chose to study in MAHE was clearly to obtain the knowledge. What I actually got form from the programme and the whole study experience was much more."

Asked to estimate the time they spend for study, MAHE students reported that they spent 38 hours weekly on average on study (attending classes, tutorials, self-study, writing papers, etc.) during the weeks when classes were in session and 25 hours during the other weeks of the year. On average they spent four hours on extra-curricular activities, while about 11 hours were devoted to work for earning money. The time spent by MAHE students on work for earning money is slightly higher than the time spent on average by German students for that purpose.

In the questionnaire, a list was presented on didactical modes which already had been used in other student and graduate surveys undertaken by INCHER. Accordingly, MAHE was conceived as a programme with a strong weight put on lectures and courses, where emphasis is placed on theories and paradigms, students' own study and on scientific academic writing. Less emphasis seems to placed according to the students' perception on the teachers as the main sources of information, oon acquiring facts and on group work. Altogether, only a majority see MAHE as integrating directly into research activities or emphasizing the acquisition of practical knowledge.

In response to an additional question directly addressing elements of the programme, such as organisation, content, quality and opportunities of contact, the following elements were estimated as good:

- More than 80 per cent appreciated the access to lectures and courses as well as the contacts to students;
- More than 70 per cent underscored the content quality of teaching and the contact to teachers.
- More than 60 per cent expressed satisfaction with the schedule coordination, the overall content and structure, writing of academic texts, the quality of teaching method and the research orientation.
- While several elements were appreciated by slightly more than half of the respondents, least favourable were the responses as regards "Training of oral presentations".

As regards counselling and various services, about two-thirds appreciated the consultation activities of the teachers as regards study and also the feedback they received to their papers and other exam. The MAHE students underscored almost as often the support for own initiatives as well as the support provided by tutors. In contrast, less than half of the MAHE students rated the individual career advice as good.

Moreover, MAHE participants were asked to rate their own competences acquired up to the end of the programme:

- More than 80 per cent each considered themselves strong in acting in intercultural contexts, working in interdisciplinary settings, discussing their own and others' ideas, and in recognizing their own knowledge gaps and closing them.
- More than 70 per cent viewed themselves as strong in coping with different surroundings and requirements, analytical skills, ability of writing reports and other texts, work efficiently, work under pressure, organize themselves, cooperating with others.

The responses also were predominantly positive regarding other themes addressed in the questionnaire, such as team and leadership skills.

The MAHE participants were encouraged to state in general regarding MAHE what they liked, what they disliked and what improvements they would recommend. The author of the report summarized the responses as follows.

> "…the main points for positive feedback were about the quality of study content, research contact at INCHER and especially the international and intercultural atmosphere but also the very personal and supportive attitude within the programme. Negative feedback mainly included a certain loneliness due to the … programme structure (one week course modules per month), exam regulation and wishes for more freedom and group tasks the study programme … suggested improvements stressed more formal requirements (i.e. to improve own study discipline) in regards to submission deadlines and terms paper presentation well as more options of course choice …" (Klumpp 2012, p. 43).

Information about activities after the award of the degree had to be incomplete in this 2011 survey, because some had not yet graduated at that time and most of those you who graduated still were in an initial stage of their career. A few progressed quickly – one towards a professorial position and one became registrar of a university – while most had typical early career positions. The data, however, allow us to predict that most graduates take up professional assignments equivalent to their level of educational attainment in linked in their substance to their area of knowledge and expertise. Also, four former MAHE graduates had been awarded a doctoral degree by the University of Kassel and about the same number at other universities at the time this article has been written. We might estimate, though, that one about third of the MAHE graduates afterwards embark on advanced education, among them about half on doctoral education and training.

The overall satisfaction as regards MAHE is quite high. When asked to assess the overall MAHE study experience, 68 per cent expressed satisfaction, while 10 per cent clearly were dissatisfied. 67 per cent stated that they would choose MAHE again, and 68 per cent that they would choose the University of Kassel again, if they were back at the start again, and even 85 per cent said that they would take again higher education as a field of study.

10. Final Considerations

In the year 2010 the decision was taken not to admit anymore new students in MAHE. Thus, a process of overall assessment and of embarking on the process of re-accreditation became obsolete. Consequently, teaching in the framework of the programme ended in 2011, and students could graduate up to September 2013, when MAHE was officially terminated.

The MAHE Programme was discontinued because the existence of two professor position at the University Kassel in the area of higher education was viewed as indispensible for providing a master programme in this area, but two of such positions were not available anymore after 2009. The full-professor position held by Ulrich Teichler was expected to be kept after his retirement, and, actually, Professor Georg Krücken became a professor of higher education at the University of Kassel in 2011. The temporary professorship was not transformed into a permanent position, and the holder of that position, Barbara M. Kehm, eventually became professor at the University of Glasgow. The Institute for Socio-Cultural Studies at the University of Kassel, whose director – Michael Fremerey – and other staff had supported MAHE, was discontinued with his retirement. For reasons of ensuring the major disciplinary study programmes in the social sciences and for establishing new research positions on post-doctoral level for higher education research, neither the Department of Social Sciences nor the International Centre of Higher Education Research could provide for a second professorship in the domain of higher education.

The discontinuation of MAHE was viewed as disappointing by those who had been involved as teachers, administrators and students. B, because the programme was a success story in terms of the quality and relevance, the student experiences and the graduates' subsequent life, as far as this last could already be seen. It just happened that this international interdisciplinary programme was not sufficiently embedded into the strategic and personnel priorities of the units of teaching and research it drew from. As very few master programmes all over the world exist with such a strong international emphasis and as both research on higher education and the higher education professions experience a growth, a need for a programme such as MAHE is there obviously.

INCHER Kassel and the key persons of the MAHE programme continue to keep contacts with former MAHE students, support them with recommendations and other means in their career. Some of them meet again in Kassel, when another former MAHE student is there for a defence of master thesis or also, because some former MAHE students are employed at the University of Kassel or not far away from there, and many former MAHE students all over the world continue to reinforce their network of communication which derived from the programme; MAHE was for them as a rule a good start to be embedded into the international community of higher education researchers or other higher education experts.

Reference

Klumpp, Matthias: *University Excellence and Efficiency*. Berlin: Logos 2012