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Mutual learning and understanding in inter-cultural contexts have become a dominant part of the development discourse and of concrete development work. This is reflected in the way concepts, such as partnership, policy dialogue, ownership, empowerment and participation, pervade the debate and, increasingly, also action in the field. A critical dimension of all of these concepts is capacity building and development, understood as a continuous long-term interactive process at individual, organizational and institutional levels, and in national and international contexts (Marope, 1997a). Mutual knowledge and understanding among all parties involved in the development process may contribute to ensuring enhanced capacity development.

The emphasis on mutual learning reflects the fact that there is no one way to transfer knowledge and expertise. Improving knowledge and understanding as a basis for improved action requires proper management of learning experiences based on learning strategies that permit learners to learn in the way most appropriate for them. Teaching is no longer enough; instead knowledge and expertise available in all contexts and at all levels must become part of the learning process that is pre-
condition to improving development. This realization has been reached in the North partly because of a lack of fulfilment of common development objectives in earlier decades which, in their execution, depended strongly on foreign expertise and training activities. In the South, there is increased recognition by national governments and nationals that they have to recapture the initiative for their own development relying increasingly on local expertise and indigenous knowledge (see, for example, Buchert, 1997).

It is the purpose of this paper to describe and analyse how, within the umbrella of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Working Group on Education Sector Analysis, led by UNESCO, is developing new ways of operation in the undertaking and utilization of education sector analysis in Africa. This includes, among others, interactive dialogue, participation, and listening and learning among three critical education constituencies in Africa: (a) national governments; (b) international funding and technical assistance agencies; and (c) the educational research community. The Working Group is, in this sense, a learning laboratory for mutual learning processes and viable long-term capacity development.

**Linking research and development through policy-making**

There is a long-standing discussion concerning whether and how educational research can support education policy formulation in order to improve overall development in Africa and elsewhere. As has often been pointed out, the relationship between research and policy-making is far from linear, but is rather complex and must be understood in its specific social, cultural, economic and political context. Research can, for example, assist and lead to improved and informed decision-making, but research can also be used to justify particular decisions or become an excuse for not making others. The tradition of using research in decision-making varies from context to context, and often reflects whether particular societies are accustomed to involving all stakeholders in processes of decision-making. In some societies, the link between research and decision-making is understood to be rather strong, whereas in others its use in decision-making is less common and less institutionalized (Reimers, McGinn & Wild, 1995).

With respect to developing countries, several obstacles to the positive use of research in policy-making have been pointed out. These include, among others, weak linkages between researchers and policy-makers, weak diagnostic capability in many ministries of education and high dependency on international expertise (Namuddu, 1998). These obstacles are partly due to: (a) the deterioration of funding and other circumstances encountered at most universities and research institutions in Africa; (b) lack of training of researchers in policy-making; and (c) lack of use of existing capacities in policy analysis, whether by ministries of education or other institutions, in particular international funding and technical assistance agencies in specific countries.

The collapse of many universities in Africa has diminished their traditional role as a critical agent for the creation of new knowledge and has led to a depletion of
local research resources. Many academics have moved to other areas of activity—often in other countries. Many African academics now find themselves as employees of international funding and technical assistance agencies and, increasingly, of local consultancy companies and other non-university and non-research institutions (Buchert & King, 1996). Thus, as a consequence, there may not be a sufficient critical mass in Africa for research in education. Furthermore, the capacities that are available may not contribute much to the kinds of knowledge that are needed to sustain a locally determined policy and development process. One of the major differences between traditional university and consultancy-oriented research is that the former increases knowledge of fundamental issues in the long term, whereas the latter focuses on short-term problem-solving. While traditional university education research is more likely to be embedded in the national context and form part of the continuous long-term systemic development of education, consultancy work often responds to immediate needs and priorities that represent single elements of the wider system.

The priority to short-term problems and needs is particularly evident in the education sector situation analyses undertaken by international funding and technical assistance agencies, which have long served as a starting point to formulate specific educational development activities. Research and evaluation forms part of every stage of the standard project cycle of the international funding and technical assistance agencies. This research has come to play a—if not the—dominant role in the production of knowledge on education in Africa, partly because of the simultaneous deterioration of independent research at African academic and research institutions. This is the case particularly with research and evaluation undertaken by the World Bank, but also concerns that of bilateral agencies, such as, for example, the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (King, 1991).

Reviews by the Working Group on Education Sector Analysis of education sector studies undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s have pointed to a number of shortcomings resulting from the described practice (UNESCO, 1989; Samoff, 1994; Samoff & Assié-Lumumba, 1996). They include the lack of partnership of African ministries and other institutions in the formulation and undertaking of education sector analysis initiated by funding and technical assistance agencies and, consequently, a lack of national ownership of their agenda, the key issues of concern and the recommendations for future direction. They also concern the underutilization of national capacities in carrying out these situation analyses. The reviews have shown that nationals are seldom involved from the beginning to the end of a research and evaluation activity undertaken by the agencies, and seldom occupy a leading position, for example as team leaders. Local experts have rather primarily provided knowledge of the local context, the key issues having been predefined by the agencies. Nationals have, therefore, in many ways been used to legitimize an activity, rather than provide a critical perspective on particular issues. Since the education sector studies in a given country remain mostly unknown to the national government and are rarely utilized in interactive policy adjustment processes between the government and the agencies, they often bear little if any relationship to national policy development.
Towards the 'Africanization' of education sector analysis

In the present context of redefining the boundaries between the North and the South, there is appreciation among many agencies of the fact that national development in the South must be controlled and largely carried out by the South. Efforts are being made to shift the centre of gravity in development work towards the South, to include all key constituencies in specific development efforts and to increase capacities locally for policy formulation, implementation and evaluation of specific activities. This concerns education, as well as other sectors of society. These efforts are based on the notion of mutual learning, understanding and listening, often recognizing that agencies have to step back, leave the stage to the actors in the South and adapt their pace and procedures of operation to the particular reality. This is exemplified in the principles for partnership in development co-operation in Africa outlined by the Swedish development minister following an interactive process with, among others, African representatives of the academic community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. These principles are as follows: (a) changes of subject-to-subject attitudes; (b) sharing values; (c) transparency in interests; (d) clear contractual standards; and (e) equality of capacity (Sweden. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997). They are also reflected in inter-agency discussions concerning the need to develop a code of conduct and modalities for new partnerships between the North and the South, and codes of conduct for education sector funding agencies, such as that developed for the member States of the European Union (International Institute for Educational Planning, 1997; for further discussion on these issues, see King & Buchert, in press).

One of the important fora to reinforce an African perspective on education sector work in this continent is ADEA. Founded in 1988 by the World Bank as the Donors to African Education (DAE), it initially sought to foster collaboration and exchange of information among development agencies, of which some fifty were then members. In 1992, its Secretariat moved to UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning in Paris to foster a broad sense of ownership among all ADEA members and to ensure the full confidence of African ministers. The association is now focusing on reinforcing African ministries' leadership capacities as they work with agencies and on developing agencies' awareness that their practices should be adapted to the needs of nationally-driven education policies, programmes and projects. The association includes in its Steering Committee agency representatives and African ministers of education and training, the latter elected by the Caucus of African ministers of education and training which comprises all African ministers and which is supported in its work by ADEA (ADEA, undated).

One of the strategies applied by ADEA to reinforce African capacities, leadership and changes of agency practices has been the setting up of eleven working groups, each concentrating on different critical education themes, for example statistics, financing, female participation, and books and learning materials. While most
of the working groups are agency-led, they all work in different ways with African partners. They are autonomous in the definition of their work areas and the setting up of structures for this work. The work of the Working Group on Education Sector Analysis is undertaken in the light of stipulated objectives to develop the quality and use of education sector analysis, and to promote African capacities and leadership in this area. This is intended as a means to design relevant national education policies and development co-operation programmes. In its design and implementation of activities, the Working Group is attempting to further partnership, ownership and capacity-building—or to use a current catchword, promoting the ‘Africanization’—of education sector analysis employing several strategies and approaches.

**Development through mutual learning**

An implicit assumption of the Working Group is that partnership in and ownership of the national education development process can be enhanced partly through promoting dialogue and understanding among the key constituencies in education sector analysis: national governments; international funding and technical assistance agencies; and educational researchers. By using and enhancing the capacity of the educational research community, the link between research and development can be strengthened and, thus, education sector analysis will constitute a proper foundation for the policy-making processes.

As mentioned above, a current deficiency in many contexts is that the national policy-making process does not link research and development: national policy-makers are rarely scholars or rarely make use of existing local research capacity; on the other hand, scholars are rarely policy-makers or trained in policy formulation. Similarly, in conducting education situation studies international funding and technical assistance agencies have rarely used the national capacities that are available. As argued by Namuddu (1998, p. 298): ‘The most critical and immediate challenge for the [African] research community is to define itself as the most important and indispensable partner of policy-makers and to present itself as the most credible intellectual resource in the subsequent process of defining, designing and implementing such a policy’. According to Namuddu, African researchers need to improve in practice their individual and collective research competencies and participate visibly in policy development and the implementation of reforms.

One way in which African educational researchers have attempted to improve their collective research competencies is through the establishment of education research networks in Eastern and Southern Africa (ERNESA) and West and Central Africa (ERNWACA). The research networks have national chapters in a large number of African countries and seek collaboration with other research networks, for example in the North with the Northern Policy Research Review and Advisory Network (NORRAG). Their work seeks to improve the relationship between educational research and policy-making. ERNESA and ERNWACA are both partners of the Working Group on Education Sector Analysis which sets out to improve the quality, relevance and utilization of education sector analysis in Africa—a partner-
ship that is still evolving as both the networks and the Working Group are seeking to improve their organizational arrangements. An initial collaboration is expressed in the presence of the co-ordinators of networks in the Steering Committee of the Working Group. The Steering Committee, which plays a crucial role in defining the priorities and direction for the activities of the Working Group, includes furthermore representatives of the other two key constituencies of the Working Group: African ministries of education and international funding and technical assistance agencies.

**Capacity development in education sector analysis**

During the first phase of its work, in the period 1989-95, the Working Group concentrated on undertaking the inventory and analytic overviews of education sector studies referred to above. Three inventories have been produced: the first one comprised thirty-four sub-Saharan studies conducted during 1985-89 (UNESCO, 1989); the second included thirty-six sector and sub-sector studies in South Africa undertaken during 1993-95 (Samoff, 1994); and the third analysed approximately 230 sector and sub-sector studies, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, undertaken during 1990-94 (Samoff & Assié-Lumumba., 1996). The overviews included studies undertaken and provided mostly by international funding and technical assistance agencies and, to a smaller extent, by national governments. They covered different categories following the individual agency’s or government’s definition of what constituted a relevant education sector study. In the 1996 review, this led to an overall categorization of the material into studies, reports and papers which focused on one of the following areas: (a) the education sector as a whole; (b) specific sub-sectors of education, such as higher education; (c) special educational themes, such as girls’ education; (d) multi-sector studies, involving, for example, both the education and health sectors; or (e) general studies involving more than one country. The relative distribution was as follows: 75% of all included studies related specifically to education, the relative proportion being 19% on the education sector, 19% on education sub-sectors and 37% on specific educational themes. Seven per cent of the studies were multi-sector studies and 17% were general studies.

The purposes of the inventory and analytic overviews were two-fold: (a) to explore the magnitude of the studies and, subsequently, to make them known to the most important stakeholders, in particular African education ministries, funding and technical assistance agencies and the education research community; and (b) to draw lessons from the global analyses concerning similarities and differences in, for example, approaches, methods, process, content and themes, as well as concerning major gaps in the studies.

As mentioned above, one of the outcomes of this analysis was the realization that the predominant part of the examined education sector studies was initiated and undertaken by external agencies using external experts to set the framework. Africans, on the other hand, were mostly employed in responding to tasks defined by the external experts. This had major consequences concerning, among others, the
relevance and contextuality of individual studies (for a recent analysis of the implications of education sector studies in the period 1990-94, see Samoff, 1997). During the ongoing work of the Working Group (since 1995), priority has, therefore, been given to ‘Africanizing’ education sector analysis, partly through strengthening individual and institutional capacities in education sector analysis and partly through strengthening the dialogue among the key constituencies: ministries of education and other government institutions, international funding and technical assistance agencies and the education research community, as a means of improving practice. This re-orientation will involve joint application of analytic, advocacy and capacity-building strategies (for a recent analysis of all strategies applied by the Working Group, see Marope, 1997b).

The objective of the applied set of strategies is to create in the longer term a more conducive climate for policy dialogue concerning education sector analysis among education ministries, international funding and technical assistance agencies and the research community. This will be based on an identification of constraints to and opportunities for improved analysis in specific national contexts. In most cases, achieving this objective will necessitate changes of the national policy environment and of agency dispositions because of a present lack of co-ordination in the design, process and utilization of education sector analysis between the national governments and the international funding and technical assistance agencies, as well as inadequate use of national research capacities. It will probably also necessitate specific capacity development efforts, partly to cover gaps where they may exist and partly to continuously update capacities that do exist taking new developments into account. The work of the Working Group is therefore presently planned to cover three major areas: country-based initiatives; analytic work; and skills development.

COUNTRY-BASED INITIATIVES

The country-based initiatives fall into two main categories: (a) national reviews of education sector studies undertaken by national teams of researchers funded and facilitated by the Working Group; and (b) technical support by the Working Group of innovative initiatives, in particular new approaches and methodologies in education sector analysis undertaken or funded by international funding and technical assistance agencies. The overall purpose of the two sets of initiatives is to explore in specific country contexts the issues analysed in a global sense in the inventory and analytic overviews.

Of particular importance in the case of both the national reviews and the innovative initiatives is to ensure that they become stepping stones for changed practices in policy-making on a national level. The basis for this is partly to heighten the awareness of the key constituencies of the need to adopt new approaches to the process of education sector analysis and to change practices, and partly to strengthen dialogue, co-operation and co-ordination of such studies in the future. This may also be achieved through individual and institutional capacity-building in education sector analysis that is expected to follow from the reviews, assuming
that increased capacity development also leads to increased utilization of the established national capacities. Follow-up mechanisms to the national reviews are critically important to ensure that the review is not regarded at the national level as 'just another' study, but rather considered to be showing the way to continuous improvement of practices and wider capacity development.

The approach adopted by the Working Group when initiating the country-led and country-undertaken reviews of education sector analysis is one of open dialogue and participation of the key constituencies from start to end of the process. This ensures the sense of national ownership which has been largely absent from the agency-initiated and conducted education sector studies. Countries have been selected on the basis of a number of substance and geographical criteria, including: (a) the existence of an adequate number of recent education sector analyses; (b) the presence of a considerable number of international funding and technical assistance agencies; (c) the existence of individual and institutional capacity to undertake the review; (d) different country-specific situations which would allow for cross-country comparisons; and (e) the expressed need by countries for a national review.

An initial exploratory visit aims at confirming the feasibility of the national review and, in particular, at ensuring the commitment to a review on the part of the national governments and the international funding and technical assistance agencies active in that country. It is also useful to ascertain the interest in undertaking a review on the part of the educational research community. Self-constituted national teams develop their proposals in a competitive bidding environment. The proposals respond to a framework for a review which is developed by the Working Group and which stipulates general areas of concern rather than specific 'Terms of Reference' (for a concrete example, see Samoff & Buchert, 1998). The winning proposal is selected by a specially set up selection committee, which includes representatives of the key national constituencies (government, agencies and research community) and of the Working Group (Steering Committee and Secretariat). The key constituencies are encouraged to provide support during the undertaking of the review through a specially set up reference committee that provides advice and monitors the process in interaction with the Working Group.

ANALYTIC WORK AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Along with its activities at country and regional level, the Working Group regularly summarizes the lessons from its ongoing activities and feeds these lessons into the design of new activities. The successive versions of different kinds of analytical work is discussed in different international fora and is disseminated to the key constituencies of the Working Group for wider information. This process also generates ideas for new analytic work in order for the Working Group to continue to be in the front line of conceptualization and in introducing new practices in education sector analysis. In order to ensure maximum benefit from the analytical work undertaken by the group, it will also provide the basis for inputs to skills development for the key constituencies of the group.
At present, the Working Group is planning to develop a systematic picture of the approaches and practices of the international funding and technical assistance agencies concerning education sector analysis, including the recent sector-wide approaches of agencies, such as the World Bank, the European Union, Sida and Danish International Development Assistance (Danida). This is to assist in clarifying whether, since the finalization in 1994 of the analytic work contained in the last inventory and analytic overview, new approaches have in fact been adopted by the agencies and, if so, whether they have led to changed practices. The outcomes of this work, as well as those of the national reviews and of a broader analysis of other innovative and successful experiences, are expected to form the basis for the development of guidelines, and process and outcomes indicators for ‘good’ education sector studies.

The analytic work will also be the basis for the development of teaching materials in education sector analysis to complement existing ones. The Working Group is planning to contribute modules to relevant courses in evaluation and research methods and in educational planning in order to heighten capacities in education sector analysis among its key constituencies. Other ways of transferring the skills and knowledge of the Working Group in a more concrete sense will be regional seminars at which comparative lessons will be drawn from the national reviews. The regional seminars will also contribute to a much needed cross-fertilization and ‘internationalization’ of African expertise in and knowledge of education sector analysis.

**Conclusion and perspectives**

Mutual learning is central to the thinking and action of a number of international funding and technical assistance agencies, although concrete efforts are perhaps still piece meal and *ad hoc*, rather than continuous and systemic. Mutual learning demands critical contextual sensitivity and empathy, as well as transparency of underlying understandings and ideas and of overall objectives and strategies. Therefore, the national expertise available must be acknowledged and expanded. The commitment and capacity of national governments to take the initiative for their own development process, based on inclusion of all national constituencies, must be strengthened. An open understanding of the role of the international funding and technical assistance agencies in specific national contexts must also be created. While interactions between the North and the South may have to be explicitly focused and mutually agreed, the ultimate objective must be that international funding and technical assistance agencies complement and supplement national endeavours within a framework determined by the national governments.

One may question the likelihood of this happening in the present inter-dependent global context and in countries suffering from political and economic instability. Indeed, dependency on international funding may also mean dependency on external decision-making and procedures, or internal political rivalries may stifle mutual efforts in national development. Arbitrary decision-making and the laying down of important conditions on the part of international funding and technical
assistance agencies have been known to affect planning and implementation of national development efforts in many countries in the South. The same effect results from local abuse of public and international funding for private purposes. However, if the point of departure is—as outlined in the principles advocated for Swedish partnership with Africa—that, despite global inequalities, clear contractual standards and equal capacity in setting such contractual standards can and must guide development co-operation between the North and the South, then the reassurance of capacities for national policy formulation based on national interpretation of needs and priorities in the South is a core issue.

While international funding and technical assistance agencies have to look critically at the constraints of their own organizations in developing equal partnerships, for example abandoning the self-interest underlying demands for purchases of equipment and personnel from the North, national governments have to provide powerful leadership acting in the interest and enjoying the support of the wider civil society in the implementation of a nationally formulated vision for development. Linking national researchers with national policy-makers is one way forward. Linking national researchers with national policy-makers and representatives of international funding and technical assistance agencies who are honest brokers of equal partnerships is a potentially more powerful way forward. Capacity development of all three constituencies in undertaking policy formulation and in creating transparency of attitudes, values and interests is, however, most fundamental to working towards mutual objectives within a mutually acceptable framework and according to mutually applied strategies.

Note

1. This paper is a revised keynote address presented at the 1997 NASEDEC conference on ‘Learning in Intercultural Contexts’, Sida-Sandö, Sweden, 30 October–2 November. It has been written in a personal capacity and does not necessarily reflect the views of UNESCO.

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OPEN FILE

HIGHER EDUCATION
FOR THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
Introduction

All analysts are agreed that the second half of the twentieth century will go down in the history of education as a period when higher education expanded all over the world, when exceptional qualitative changes took place in higher education systems and when the reduction in resources entailed significant adjustments to the organization of institutions and systems and constant questioning of the way in which they functioned and performed their task.

The events of May 1968 in the countries of Europe and in a number of countries on other continents marked the end of a period when higher education, and universities in particular, could be reserved for elites and not regard contributing to finding answers to the major problems of society as being their chief priority. The changes were so many and varied that even to define higher education became a challenging task. Taking a pragmatic point of view, we understand by higher education all types of education (university-level, vocational, technical, artistic, 

Original language: French

Marco Antonio Rodrigues Dias (Brazil)
Director, Division of Higher Education, UNESCO, since October 1981. General Co-ordinator of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs programme. Represents the Director-General on the Council of the United Nations University in Tokyo. Executive Secretary of the Steering Committee for the World Conference on Higher Education (October 1998). He studied philosophy and law and has a postgraduate diploma in communication from the University of Paris (1968). A former journalist, he was successively lecturer, departmental head, Dean of extension studies and Vice-President at the University of Brasilia in the 1970s. He is the author of several books on communication, higher education and politics published in Portuguese, French, Spanish and English. His most recent book is O Fato e a versão do fato—Um jornalista nos anos sessenta [Facts and interpretation of the facts—a journalist in the 1960s] (1993).
teacher training, distance and so on) provided by universities, institutes of technology, teacher-training colleges and similar institutions that are normally reserved for students who have completed their secondary education and who wish to obtain a qualification, degree, diploma or higher education certificate.1

It can be seen from an analysis of trends in higher education establishments over the past thirty years that the basic tasks of higher education are, and will remain, linked to four main objectives:

- the generation of new knowledge (the research function);
- the training of highly qualified personnel (the education function);
- the supply of services to society; and
- the ethical function, implying social criticism.

In addition, as a result of their deep-seated links with society, higher education institutions are, by their nature, under an obligation to adapt continuously to social trends; in other words, they live in a state of permanent crisis.

This has recently been intensified by the increasing pace of change in social structures, of which globalization (as an external factor) is one of the important aspects, and the fact that higher education itself is having to contend with the need for radical internal change as a result of the explosive situation caused by the growth in numbers (students, teachers and administrators), the increase in costs and the cut-back in public funding.

By way of example, total average expenditure per student in 1995 was reported as being US$3,370 in constant dollars, compared with US$2,011 in 1985 and the number of teachers, which stood at 4 million in 1980, had risen to 6 million in 1995. The diversification of programmes, funding sources and organizational models is not only a trend but also a necessity if the system is to cater to varied and differentiated social needs.

All this might suggest that the decision taken by the Director-General of UNESCO in 1996 to announce officially the idea of organizing a worldwide conference on higher education was rather ambitious. The purpose of this conference would be to lay down the fundamental principles that would serve, on an international scale, as a basis for in-depth reforms of higher education systems throughout the world. These reforms would make a significant contribution to the construction of peace and development founded on equity, justice, solidarity and freedom. This would entail granting higher education institutions autonomy and freedom for which they would be held accountable.

A whole programme is encapsulated in this one paragraph. However, if the participants in the World Conference take different principles as their basis and do not adopt a social, cultural and humanistic approach, as the Director-General of UNESCO would like, they are liable—and this is not the only danger—to refer to a different agenda and revert to openly elitist proposals such as were made prior to 1968.

The risk is all the greater in that the Director-General decided that the conference would be prefaced by a widespread mobilization of ideas gathered in five regional conferences, themselves preceded by subregional conferences, national meetings, in-depth studies and joint analyses with non-governmental organizations.

The regional conferences were held in Havana in November 1996 (Latin America and the Caribbean), Dakar in April 1997 (Africa), Tokyo in July 1997 (Asia and the Pacific), Palermo in September 1997 (Europe) and Beirut in March 1998 (Arab States).

The results of these conferences, which confirm the validity of the Director-General's proposals, together with the studies carried out by some fifty organizations in preparation for a series of thematic debates for the World Conference, have served as a basis for the conference working document, the draft Declaration and Action Plan and this paper, which has been specially prepared for Prospects as a contribution to the debate on the subjects to be discussed at the World Conference.

Solution to global problems

In 1995, UNESCO published a *Policy paper for change and development in higher education*, the importance of which was recognized in the worldwide development of societies. The regional conferences leading up to the World Conference on Higher Education have confirmed that we are now facing global problems that call for solutions to be applied worldwide, even though in every region there are major divergences in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres—which have an effect on higher education.

As we come to the end of the twentieth century, there are still flagrant inequalities in higher education that are both the outcome and the cause of a growing gap between the rich industrialized countries and the so-called developing countries. These inequalities are noticeable when the enrolment ratios for the 18–23-year-old cohort are analysed in terms of the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants.

Whereas in 1991, according to UNESCO’s policy paper, this figure was over 5,000 in North America and over 2,500 in almost all the other developed countries, there were fewer than 100 students per 100,000 inhabitants in sub-Saharan Africa, which means that the young people of that region had seventeen times less chance of going on to higher education than those of the industrialized developed countries. Thus, one of the first lessons to be drawn from these preparatory conferences seems to be that an analysis of the situation in higher education must make reference to the various models of society.

Moreover, one of the aspects underscored by all the regional conferences concerns the need to deal with the education system as a whole. The universalization of primary and secondary education is imperative and is essential to the democratization of higher education. Secondary education should no longer be regarded as only preparation for higher education. It must also be capable of training young people for working life and must, moreover, be of a high standard if we are to ensure that those with secondary school leaving certificates will be successful in their chosen careers or capable of taking part in higher education courses.

Attention was also drawn to the need to ensure that young people’s access to higher education is not restricted on grounds of their financial situation, gender, language, origin or political or religious convictions. Students’ merit, ability and motivation should be the only grounds for determining whether or not they should have access to higher education.
A decline in quality was noted in a large number of institutions. Drop-out rates in higher education are still high, although the statistics are not always reliable. These comments point to a need for large-scale, concerted and resolute action focused on clearly defined goals.

**Globalization and new technologies**

It is also important to situate these actions in the context of a world undergoing change, in which globalization has both positive and negative aspects that have to be taken into account when the time comes to define higher education policies. In reality, major world trends are characterized by a series of convergent and sometimes contradictory processes: as defined in UNESCO’s policy paper, these are democratization, globalization, regionalization, polarization, marginalization and fragmentation, all of which have an impact on the development of higher education and call for appropriate responses.

Globalization—for better or worse—is consolidated by the extraordinary invasion of higher education by new technologies, especially the Internet. The development of communication and information technologies:

- makes it possible for distance teaching institutions to strengthen their position in the educational landscape; and
- paves the way for lifelong education for all and at the same time is spreading to traditional universities, more and more of which use distance teaching methods in their activities, thereby making the distinction between the two types of institution virtually meaningless.

There are an increasing number of university networks of this kind all over the world, and the use of computers in the learning process, access to the Internet by students as a vehicle for self-directed learning, educational broadcasting and video-conferencing are all being stepped up.

The impression gained from the discussions and statements at the regional conferences is that the trend is gaining pace and it looks as if institutions will, in the future, be competing to attract the most capable students. When students choose a particular institution, they will not be looking to see whether it is public or private or whether or not it has a long-standing tradition. They will look at the prospects offered by the courses provided for taking their place in society. Those familiar with computers will be on the lookout for teachers who are competent in a particular field but who are also familiar with information technology.

This trend can be observed all over the world in the growing number of projects for virtual universities that know how to benefit from a method that has the following advantages:

- learning without any restriction as to time or space;
- courses based on modules with flexible time schemes, which take individual learning needs into account; and
- greater responsibility taken by students in the learning process.

However, the debates leading up to the World Conference have shown that the
new technologies are not a remedy for all problems and, in fact, entail some risks. In the 1970s, many discussions focused on two different approaches in higher education establishments: those that were student-focused and those that were partially or exclusively content-oriented and which regarded knowledge of teaching methods and teacher-training as serving no useful purpose.

In practical terms, there is a risk of a return to this situation with the development of the Internet and its use by institutions bound by franchise agreements, whereby whole packages are sent out from a transmitter (an institution in a developed country) to receivers (institutions or students) that are passive recipients in developing countries.

The new technologies are therefore a key factor in the current development of higher education, but here again technology does not solve the basic problems, which are still bound up with the task of higher education in a world undergoing rapid change. Even so, some movement was seen in the analysis of this question as the regional conferences proceeded.

In the final analysis, it now seems to be generally acknowledged that these technologies have to be enlisted in the service of the educational process, as well as of progress in research. They must also contribute to more effective management of higher education systems. Higher education policies therefore have to ensure that higher education is made available to everybody throughout life and that its services benefit every individual, whatever their situation: part-time studies, distance education, short courses and indeed, if necessary, self-directed learning. The establishments concerned should work together on the definition and formulation of programmes.

Relevance and quality

Technology has to be at the service and disposal of human beings, as well as help higher education institutions to transpose their tasks into practical reality.

It is true that higher education has to aim at quality and that internal and external evaluation methods should be more generally applied, thereby enabling it to be accountable to society. However, it has to be borne in mind that what makes higher education attain a high quality is its relevance, in other words its efforts to find solutions to pressing social problems, in particular those connected with peace-building, peace-keeping and sustainable development. This goal requires the active participation of all the parties concerned (the media, parliamentarians, the production sector and so on) in actions to prevent social exclusion and in efforts to protect the environment. Institutional autonomy and academic freedom are essential to the fulfilment of this social goal.

In spite of the variety of situations encountered, the participants in the regional conferences called consistently (in the light of the considerations set out above) for higher education institutions to train citizens capable of thinking clearly, analysing problems, making choices and shouldering their responsibilities. These principles, on which there was consensus, have practical applications in the everyday life of such institutions. They have to form partnerships with the world of work but at the
same time set their long-term policies in the light of social needs, avoiding a short-term approach and disregarding certain undertakings' immediate needs.

Similarly, the ethical role of these institutions has never been as important as it is at the present time. The regional conferences were right to stress the fact that cultural values and the social and historical situation specific to each country have to be taken into consideration when education programmes are being designed.

These aims cannot be achieved unless the teaching staff has a status that is recognized by all concerned, and in particular by the authorities of each state—whence the importance attached to the implementation of the Recommendation concerning the status of higher-education teaching personnel approved by the General Conference in November 1997—and unless teachers have academic freedom and institutions likewise have autonomy.

The question of access and democratization remains fundamental and was discussed by all the regional conferences. The most recent statistics specially compiled for the World Conference on Higher Education show that:

Among the less developed regions, the gross enrolment ratio has risen steadily, from 5.1 in 1980 to 8.8 in 1995. Each of the less developed regions showed gains during this period. However, they also show considerable diversity.

Several of the developing areas have a ratio of under 10, including sub-Saharan Africa and the less developed countries in Eastern Asia and Oceania and Southern Asia. The Arab States, starting with a ratio of 9.2 in 1980, saw an increase to 12.5 by 1995. Latin America and the Caribbean states, which had a higher gross enrolment ratio in 1980 (13.8), had risen further, to 17.3, by 1995.

Among the more developed regions, the gross enrolment ratio rose from an average of 37.2 in 1980 to 59.6 in 1995.

It can be seen, therefore, that there has been a very real improvement in access to higher education, but that the imbalances between regions still exist and are sometimes growing worse, while references are made to inequalities of various kinds within the systems themselves.

Merit without discrimination

In the case of women, the figures given in the World statistical outlook on higher education: 1980-1995 (UNESCO, forthcoming) speak for themselves. From 1980 to 1985, the intake of female students in higher education increased at an annual rate of 4%, compared with a 3% annual increase for male students. Worldwide, the proportion of women in higher education grew from 44% in 1980 to 47% in 1995. It is remarkable that all the regions shared in the rise in this average. From 1995 onwards, enrolments in North America, Europe and the countries in transition were generally balanced between the genders. Latin America and the Caribbean countries came close to equilibrium in higher education. They recorded a female enrolment ratio of 49% in 1995. The countries in transition, in which a balance
between male and female students was as early as 1980, succeeded in maintaining this balance from 1980 to 1995. However, in sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Asia and the least developed countries generally, the proportion of women among all students continued to be low, at 35, 34 and 27% respectively. Even so, since 1980 the proportion of female students in each of these regions has risen. It is not surprising, therefore, that discussions on the gender issue should now be shifting towards increased participation of women in careers that were regarded until only recently as being reserved for men—such as engineering—and to increased representation of women in management posts.

These factors and lines of thinking led the participants in the regional conferences to agree that discrimination due to gender, race or a person’s financial situation is not acceptable, thereby reaffirming the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention against Discrimination in Education. On several occasions Federico Mayor, the Director-General of UNESCO, has focused on the need to move from elitism to the recognition of merit. Merit, ability and motivation are acknowledged as being the basic criteria for a policy ensuring equitable access to higher education. In addition, the access of young people to initial training naturally highlights the links that higher education has with the education system as a whole and with the system’s capacity to train young people and determine their future options according to their abilities and in the light of their aspirations. Lifelong access to higher education, coupled with the key question of the partnership between such education and all sectors of cultural and economic activity, will make it necessary to recognize knowledge acquired from experience. This will make it possible for all those who have not had an opportunity to attend proper tertiary-level training at a normal age eventually to have access to it.

In deciding to organize a World Conference, UNESCO wished to embark on a process for improving the quality of higher education, while at the same time making it more relevant. The conference will not be an end in itself. The regional conferences have adopted declarations and action plans or frameworks with a view to undertaking practical operational activities geared to training and research for the benefit of relevant and sustainable development. The conclusions of the regional conferences will be strengthened by a set of twelve thematic debates set up by governmental and non-governmental organizations that have contributed their know-how and the findings of their long experience to this exercise.

**Strengthening co-operation**

The logical outcome of this approach is the strengthening of inter-university co-operation based on solidarity, in which all partners are regarded as equals. The need for higher education to be open to the world is well known. Higher education cannot and should not be visualized any longer in purely national or regional terms. Future graduates have to be in a position to take up the complex challenges of globalization and rise to the opportunities of the international labour market. The equitable transfer of knowledge and the mobility of students, teachers and researchers are crucial to the future of peace in the world.
Inter-university co-operation concerns everybody. One of the lessons learnt from this development is that no institution can excel in every field. Moreover, solidarity with developing countries is more necessary than ever and is now contingent upon the promotion of genuine scientific partnership between institutions the world over. This will make it possible to offset the excesses of the brain drain and will contribute to the transfer of knowledge. We must therefore invest in university co-operation and develop international exchange networks and cultural and scientific partnerships.

None of this will be possible without the mobilization of all the social partners involved in the development of higher education. Student participation in this process is absolutely essential. It is no coincidence that this conference is being held in 1998, thirty years after the student movement of May 1968 that created an upheaval in university structures in many countries.

Before 1968, students were not consulted. History taught us a lesson that we should not need to repeat. As Georges Haddad, Chairperson of the Steering Committee responsible for supervising preparations for the World Conference, has suggested, one of its conclusions could concern the organization of World Higher Education Days convened once every four years. Their objective would be to draw up a status report on higher education in all parts of the world, promote innovative training and research projects, strengthen international co-operation and underscore the role of such education in fostering human development and peace. In addition, a forum, serviced jointly by UNESCO and the United Nations University and based on a network of Chairs in higher education, would be responsible for permanently monitoring developments in systems and institutions and for anticipating trends in structures, programmes and organizations.

In the final analysis, however, nothing can be achieved without resources. Partnership with the world of work is becoming imperative, there is widespread consensus on organizational and financial diversification, and there can be no doubt that institutions have to be well administered. However, the basic principle remains unchanged: the strong support of the authorities is essential to the development of higher education if it is to be capable of contributing to the building of a more just society.

In the Action Plan which the participants in the conference will be called upon to examine, it will be essential for the part dealing with co-operation to contain firm proposals aimed at strengthening inter-university co-operation based on solidarity, so as to help reduce the gap between rich countries and poor in the vital areas of the generation and application of knowledge. In order to attain these objectives, all the social partners involved in higher education have to be mobilized.

Note

1. As defined by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 27th session (November 1993) in the Recommendation on the recognition of studies and qualifications on higher education 'higher education' means all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level provided by universities or other educational establishments, which are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities.
References


THE PERTINENCE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION
IN A CHANGING WORLD

Hebe Vessuri

Introduction

In a rapidly changing social and natural environment, higher education (HE) is being called upon to play a varied and complex role in development. Pertinence, together with quality, management, financing and international co-operation, is assumed to be one of the key features in the twenty-first century. In general, in the regional conferences held in Havana, Dakar, Tokyo and Palermo in preparation for the World Conference on Higher Education, the term pertinence has been used to refer to the fit or match between what HE institutions do and what society expects of them. It is particularly about the role and place of HE in society, but it also covers access and participation, teaching and learning, the research function of the university, the responsibility of HE to other sectors of society, the world of work and the community service function of HE. No less important is the participation of HE in the search for solutions to pressing human problems such as population, environment, peace and international understanding, democracy and human rights. Another way to consider relevance is to focus on the particular services that HE delivers and to evaluate the type and extent of this service, how it is delivered and how it is valued by 'clients'.

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Hebe Vessuri (Venezuela)
Anthropologist. B.Litt. and D.Phil. Oxoniensis, researcher at the Instituto Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas, where she heads the Departamento Estudio de la Ciencia. Has taught and done research at universities in Argentina, Brazil, Canada and Venezuela and has consulting experience with several domestic, regional and international agencies. Her interests include sociology, the history of Latin American science in the twentieth century, science policy and anthropological theory. Belongs to eight editorial committees of international scholarly journals and is the author of more than 100 academic publications.
In the competitive context of an increasingly market-oriented world, actors with differing interests join the game, and thus the dimension of pertinence becomes a force-field with conflicting values, philosophies and instrumental interests tugging in different directions. Some of the problems identified by the consultations and expert meetings are due to the failure of HE and training to adapt to a changing world of new societal needs and demands, and to an insufficient commitment by governments, particularly in developing countries, to support the potential of endogenous R&D. It is essential to ensure that the dynamic of renewal already underway in many countries and institutions is generalized to those that have not yet started and is consolidated through the collaboration of all of the parties concerned. Access to HE and the broad range of services it may bring to society is an essential component of any sustainable development programme, for which higher-level human expertise and professional skills are required.

**Major intervening factors**

**THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN HE**

The tacit and self-referenced relevance of HE is being re-negotiated throughout the world. Within this common framework, contextual differences are strong, mitigating in the highly industrialized countries and reinforcing in the developing ones, the salient angles of the transformation underway.

**POPULATION GROWTH AND POPULATION EDUCATION**

Population projections suggest that the world's population will continue to increase from the present figure of around 5.5 billion to 11-14 billion by the end of the next century. UNESCO's projections for student enrolments show a worldwide increase in enrolment from 65 million in 1991 to 79 million in the year 2000, 97 million in 2015 and 100 million in 2025. HE institutions need to incorporate population education concepts and principles into curricula, for many graduates will become managers, planners and policy/decision makers who will need to understand the dynamic inter-relationships among population, the environment, natural resources and national socio-economic development.

**GLOBALIZATION, REGIONALIZATION AND SUBREGIONALIZATION**

The new trends can be seen in terms of universities as knowledge brokers, global markets for students, international student and faculty mobility, international diploma recognition, availability of programmes through the Internet and the development of strategic alliances between institutions as providers on a global basis. Not all of the internationally geared changes are positive, though, and HE institutions in weaker
countries risk losing further relevance unless adequate twinning and co-operation strategies are set in place. At the same time, HE institutions have a key contribution to make in realizing both sub-regional and regional goals in contexts where the role of HE institutions as actors of regional economic development/agents of urban development is growing rapidly.

RAPID SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

There is continued acceptance of research as an essential element in the mission of HE, for it is evident that no system of HE can fulfil its mission and be a viable ally to society in general unless part of its teaching personnel and its organizational units carry out research. Scientific knowledge is changing very quickly as modern communication technologies facilitate the sharing of information among scientists. The research market will become even more competitive. Large science-based corporations, which always had their own research laboratories, and also health and social welfare organizations, are becoming progressively more sophisticated in terms of basic research—they are often better resourced than many universities and capable of offering better salaries and working conditions to researchers. They are likely to represent increasingly potent competition for HE institutions. The latter may eventually have to decide whether or not to bow out of the competition with corporate laboratories at particular phases of the product life cycle (research, development, evaluation, production, etc.). They may decide to concentrate on particular niches of activity within the cycle for particular scientific areas or embryonic products; or they may even decide to enter into consortium arrangements with companies for a range of purposes, from basic research to production to venture capital. At the same time there is also recognition that R&D is very unequally distributed worldwide, being highly concentrated in the most industrialized countries.

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

Continuing high levels of systematic demand for HE provision due to surges in participation rates of school leavers in some countries, increased access of hitherto underprivileged groups elsewhere, widespread acceptance of lifelong learning for professional updating, career chances, etc. as well as frequent mismatches in the supply and demand of highly-trained personnel, means that the methods and contents of HE need to change and take into account current trends and influences if they are to meet the needs and realities of societies. Although in absolute terms expansion is also spectacular in developing countries, the young of those countries have seventeen times fewer chances of continuing into higher studies than the young of industrially developed countries. Privatization of HE is globalized across national boundaries with institutions in disparate geographical locations engaging in twin-
ning arrangements to compete for student markets. Public access to knowledge, even across international boundaries, is increasingly closed off behind the walls of private markets.

INCREASED CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND PRESSURE FOR DEMOCRACY AND PEACE

This domain is one of considerable ambiguity, elusiveness and rhetoric. Although most HE institutions, or at least universities, share a common set of universal values (pursuit of enquiry, truth, excellence and self-criticism; scope for argument and diversity within a common frame; individual autonomy and freedom; rational economic behaviour; peaceful co-existence and synergy; liberty and democracy; respect for human rights; the sovereignty of the law and ethical considerations; inter-denominational ecumenism), problems of national or ethnic identity remain significant. Certain forms of international collaboration are even perceived as threats to them, especially when 'internationalization' sometimes involves aggressive 'proselytization' of certain cultural images or dominance of some value systems at the expense of others.

NEED TO CATER TO MORE DIVERSE CLIENTELES AND CHANGING LABOUR MARKET NEEDS

At the same time that HE moves towards a mass enrolment system due to the pressure of economies becoming increasingly knowledge intensive, there emerges a problem of graduate employment/employability. This situation raises questions about the benefit of tertiary education, the value of the curriculum and learning experience, and the unequal level of attainment upon completion. The world of work is being radically redefined and a large part of the specific knowledge that students acquire during their initial training will rapidly become obsolete. Continuous and interactive partnerships with the productive sector are essential and must be integrated into the overall mission and activities of HE institutions. The world of HE policy formation (previously the preserve of education ministries) is being invaded by ministries centred on science, economic and industrial development, trade, etc., which are concerned primarily with information and communication in a knowledge-based society, while striving for sustainable economies and internationalization concomitant with regional growth.

NEW INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS RESULTING FROM NEW TECHNOLOGY

Accelerated change brought about by the digital revolution has permeated every strata of society. In the educational domain, we have begun to observe that: textbooks can no longer keep up with the growth of information. Richer forms of knowledge transfer are becoming necessary for making complex information easier to learn; there is a broad consensus that jobs in the information age require lifelong educa-
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The pertinence of higher education in a changing world; and the notion that a terminal degree is not as important as lifelong education and the capacity for lifelong learning. Greater access to electronic databases and sources of information, better institutional management, competency-based education and the practical application of improved pedagogical skills and technology may help students learn how to solve problems and find answers.

FUNDING CONSTRAINTS

Developing countries, in particular, face major dilemmas because of the inability of public resources to match expansion demands. The average expenditure per HE student is, in absolute terms, ten times below that of developed countries. But even developed countries have found great difficulty in devising strategies to cope with rapid increases in student enrolments. In many cases, declining levels have resulted in worsening staff-student ratios and staff workload, deteriorating staff working conditions and student services, and inability to maintain infrastructure at previous standards. The retreat of the State from a series of social services in many countries has resulted in greater inequality and poverty. It is likely that in response to the decreased ability of governments almost everywhere to pay for expanded HE, the roles of State and university will have to be redefined, involving a shift towards greater institutional autonomy and self-determination. Most countries appear to be seeking market-oriented economic policies and the political structures and institutions to promote and support them.

SYSTEMS REORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE DIVERSIFICATION

There is already a flurry of institutional change within HE to cope with these pressures. The pressure of both internal factors (such as changes in academic disciplines and new instructional methods resulting from the application of new technology) and external ones (such as the need to cater to more diverse clienteles and changing labour market needs, which induce the development of continuing education programmes) have led to diversification in structure, curriculum and teaching methods. Particularly important have been the development of new forms of non-university institutions, the establishment and rapid development of distance education, setting up of branches of foreign universities and twinning arrangements. The development of large-scale distance education programmes and open universities has been impressive. Regional and sub-regional associations are coming to play an increasing role in exchange and co-operation.

Challenges to improve pertinence

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

It is abundantly clear that governments have the power to facilitate universities' endeavours to cope with difficulties, or alternatively, to create severe 'infrastructural'
or procedural problems that frustrate creative leadership. Constructive partnership between government and university leadership is a critical element in the process of transformation of HE. Such partnerships must be founded on respect for academic freedom and institutional autonomy, which distinguish HE institutions from educational institutions at other levels.

THE IMPACT OF HE ON DEVELOPMENT

According to many political leaders, human resource development is the key to the future for HE, in particular to produce an increasingly large technical, scientific, industrial, managerial and entrepreneurial workforce which is versatile, hard-working, disciplined and conscientious. In most developing countries, the so-called 'innovation chain' is not as well developed as it might be. Perhaps domestic industry does not, or is unable to, support or work with universities, either due to it being dominated by multinationals that use American or European universities for their research needs or because it is made up of small and medium-sized enterprises whose research demands are modest and rarely encompass basic or strategic research. The challenge is for HE to give shape to some of the links in the innovation chain by inducing an entrepreneurial spirit in graduates so that they can themselves become entrepreneurs and efficacious creators of such links.

As for the consequences of the expected high level of systematic demand for HE provision, the negative past experience of many countries makes it necessary to ensure that expansion of access does not lead to a deterioration of quality standards. It is therefore imperative that quality assurance philosophies and instruments are incorporated from the beginning. A substantial paradigm shift in the philosophy of learning is required: funding the expansion by means of increased, not decreased, resources per capita, through the introduction of a fee structure or loans; and a funding of the expansion of part-time education through the extensive involvement of industrial stake-holders in co-operative/in-company education.

CORRECTING REGIONAL AND RURAL/URBAN IMBALANCES

The university is widely recognized to be a significant player in national regions, which in turn are perceived to be major future influences on universities. Synergy is clearly implied alongside potential mutual benefit. Universities have a significant role to play in regional economic development or regeneration, through technology transfer, SME development, continuing/co-operative education and applied contract research; as agents of urban development; as economic generators/local employment services, etc.; and as cultural providers and brokers. The nature of specific regions varies in terms of growth rate and wealth and, therefore, the most appropriate roles which HE can play in relation to the sophistication and need of the particular region will differ. It is desirable that national education programmes aim at diversifying with a greater emphasis on a regionalization of specific disciplines.

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INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSIFICATION

It is necessary to diversify HE institutions, not simply to satisfy market needs, but also to ensure the availability of the wider range of knowledge and capabilities needed by all countries to enter the twenty-first century. This diversification will depend to a large extent on the establishment and reinforcement of regional centres of excellence that will provide the necessary capabilities that will serve as the basis of a total reform of the HE sector and will contribute efficaciously to the priorities of national and regional development. Academic staff is the key to the transformation and effective diversification of HE. They determine what goes on in the lecture halls and in the seminar rooms; they design and implement curricular reforms; they help define and execute the research agendas.

CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND GLOBALIZATION

While internationalization is intended to overcome the barriers of isolation, prejudice and parochialism, the educational task is to tear down the dividing walls that preserve separate identities, thereby creating understanding and nurturing empathy, while preserving cultural differences at the same time. Although the university is at the apex of national efforts to foster an awareness of particular cultures and languages, an educational challenge for the new era is to integrate the base of a developed understanding of national interests with an international dimension. HE should provide higher learning that maintains separate identities and yet draws those identities into a larger, more encompassing whole, honouring both particular cultures and a multicultural environment. In the future, HE institutions will think of themselves as being at the ‘crossroads’ between local and wider identities and be able to elaborate on their peculiar ideological position. HE institutions should also make special efforts to promote integrated programmes aimed at the evolution of a culture of peace and the promotion of sustainable development.

NEW APPROACHES AND TOPICS IN HE

Genuinely interdisciplinary research spawns the new disciplines of tomorrow, and is more likely to be relevant to industrial opportunities and the resolution of industrial or societal problems. Many experts emphasize that HE institutions must be more responsive in meeting the needs of employers and adapting to the generation of new knowledge in various academic disciplines. It is important to carry out a series of case studies on regional priorities in which HE institutions should play an important role. Appropriate emphasis needs to be placed on curriculum renewal. New approaches to both classroom and distance education curricula, which traditionally focus on academic disciplines in arts and sciences and on training for elite professions, now should emphasize applied science and technology, business and management studies, and professional training in such fields as engineering, accounting and computer science.
ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE BY RESEARCH

A major policy dilemma for HE systems and research universities is how scarce research resources should be distributed and what mechanisms should be employed to do this. A common trend is the allocation of research funds to institutions and individuals on a competitive basis, depending on the research funds they have already attracted, their publication output, and the number of research higher degree completions that they have sponsored. There is a policy debate about whether research and infrastructure funds should be concentrated to a greater degree in order to develop a small group of stronger, internationally recognized research universities, or whether the current method of competition will ensure a sufficient degree of concentration. In the interest of economic efficiency, the World Bank advises developing and newly industrialized countries to strictly limit the establishment of new research universities and the number of students enrolled in them, and to provide cheaper and more cost-effective alternatives, such as junior colleges, technological institutes and short-cycle institutions, to cater to a large proportion of the student population. Another policy dilemma relates to the balance between basic and applied research. While effective applied research needs to be supported by basic research, the actual mix of basic and applied within a HE system varies greatly, depending on government and institutional priorities, and the respective roles in research by HE and industry within the country. There is a growing feeling that the distinction among basic, strategic and applied research is breaking down in HE institutions genuinely oriented towards economic regeneration and societal modernization. How this synthesis is accelerated and planned for is a genuine agenda item for the next century.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHER EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

It is widely recognized that HE has an important contribution to make to community service and to other education sectors in society. One area where there is consensus that universities can make a major contribution is direct involvement in the training of schoolteachers and in staff-development activities for teachers. However, there is a measure of disappointment with performance, especially with that of some traditional universities. This is unfortunate, since close links with the community and the other education sectors can be of benefit to universities in building wide community and political support, achieving renewal of the curriculum, and sometimes generating new forms of financial support. The last point is particularly important, since in the current environment of financial constraint there is often a strong tendency for universities to decrease or abandon much of their more traditional community service.

Recommendations

The specific aim of HE in connection with the topic of relevance involves mobilizing the responsible actors from the different domains, including politics, univer-
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...inity, science, technology, industry and business, building them into a strong coalition, and establishing a permanent dialogue with the ministries of finance and other sources of funding. Recommendations and proposals that should be elaborated are noted here.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Governments must promote education systems and institutions that are open, flexible and capable of efficiently adapting to changes in the social, economic or physical environment. There is a strong need for a clear definition of overall priorities and development policies as well as of the role that HE institutions and training must play within those policies. Countries should create 'observatories' to monitor changes in the labour market in order to facilitate the elaboration of national educational plans and to improve the capacity of HE institutions to align their policies with national priorities. Attention needs to be paid to career prospects and job conditions of students in high-skill courses, such as engineering and technology, for long-term development.

RESPONSIBILITY OF HE TOWARDS OTHER EDUCATION LEVELS

HE has a responsibility towards other levels of education. This is needed not only to ensure that students are better prepared for HE, but also to bring to bear the resources and expertise of the HE community to the tasks of teacher training, socio-economic research on such education variables as school retention and repetition, appropriate pedagogies, and educational policy alternatives, thereby improving education at all levels.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

HE institutions must promote processes aimed at regional integration. Cultural and educational integration should be the bases for political and economic integration. In a global environment, HE institutions must approach their studies on regional integration in the light of the specific economic, social, cultural, ecological and political aspects involved. Greater emphasis should be given to the regionalization of specific disciplines, through programmes targeting specific needs that will generate employment. In addition, more industry-based projects and a new paradigm of university-industry partnership must be instituted, especially in developing countries.

ACCESS

Governments must expand and diversify opportunities for every citizen to benefit from higher-level skills, training, knowledge and information—the qualifications for entry into the world of work. Serious efforts should be made to increase participation rates in HE. Appropriate strategies should be taken for increasing the partici-
pation of disadvantaged groups, including women and ethnic minorities, who must be encouraged to undertake higher degrees and enter academic and graduate employment.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN HE

Stakeholder involvement in teaching and learning must go beyond rhetoric. The situation varies with country and institution. Relatively few universities admit systematic stakeholder involvement in course design, or in giving strategic advice on programme developments. Current evidence, however, holds some clues to developments to be expected over the next few years, such as: stable alliances between universities, companies, regional and city governments in strategically conceived programmes of regional development; in-company education programmes (undergraduate and post-graduate); accreditation of prior experience/learning and competency-based education; university degrees with a range of in-company components; company involvement in course design, course review and student assessment; international networking between leading universities in co-operation with the multinational companies in the provision of international programmes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

There is need for improved staff recruitment methods and improved pre-service and in-service training at all levels. It is also necessary to have greater professional recognition and opportunities to improve career prospects. Local needs should be addressed to, and curricula adapted to, employment needs. Modularization appears as one of the most interesting innovations recently incorporated in the teaching-learning processes, as an alternative to traditional programmes. It includes: sub-contracting some subjects to the faculties of general education (basic sciences, law, etc.); offering the students a large range of courses; and opening some modules to continuing education. Other needs are to support inter-institutional arrangements for specializations and facilitate the sharing of information (scientific, technical or pedagogic issues) as well as exchange of teachers and students; to promote systems and structures allowing staff flexibility among HE, research and extension activities; to actively promote participatory teaching methods using case studies, problem-solving methods, group working and interdisciplinary approaches; to hold regular reviews of curricula and systematic feedback from employers and former graduates; and to increase emphasis on the development of distance learning approaches. In most developing countries special consideration needs to be paid to rural youth, particularly young women, to assist them in qualifying for admittance to HE.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NEW COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Recent developments in communication technology offer exciting possibilities for new approaches to packaging information and to course delivery, and for rethink-
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ing traditional approaches to teaching and learning. The time has come where technologies will co-evolve with teaching and learning. Not only will technologies be used as productivity tools, but also new needs are bound to be discovered as communication technology transforms education systems. The 'virtual university' technology is not yet mature, and R&D must continue. Technologies must attain an inviting quality to help universities in their transition to the next generation of education. At the same time, new technologies mean that powerful universities can more readily offer degree programmes within the countries of other regions, especially through use of the Internet. Multinational television and communications companies are showing interest in moving into the HE field and they might challenge the traditional monopoly enjoyed by universities and colleges in particular countries.

THE WORLD OF WORK

It is clear that the traditional domains of HE and productive public sectors are overlapping. HE institutions should promote continuous and interactive partnerships with the productive sector using both reactive and proactive approaches. Also, they must help shape the labour market by identifying, independently of the circumstantial interests of enterprises, new local and regional needs, and also by designing mechanisms for retention and career-switching. Greater attention should be given to the particular design and structure of programmes to give useful learning experience to students and employers. These include courses in entrepreneurial skills; company-building and fostering; creation of self-employment possibilities; enterprise in HE; work experience as part of the assessed degree programme; the incorporation of a diploma stage within a degree, with possibilities of employment on its completion or progression to a degree; action learning and project work in industry as the basis for assessed work and theses; and virtual professional environments. Also interesting are the examples of co-operative education and undergraduate or postgraduate degree programmes which are carried out in corporate classrooms and jointly staffed by university and company personnel, as well as co-operative doctoral training contracts. Although there are HE institutions exploring some of these possibilities, most are still at a relatively underdeveloped stage and the next few decades will be an important period. Half-hearted acceptance or rejection of changes is possible, enhancing the likelihood that industry and big employers will seek their own solutions either with other universities or through their own efforts.

To make the changes feasible and sustain the projects envisaged in the long term, dedicated organizational infrastructures and roles are needed, and are clearly being developed, although efforts must be more systematic and encompassing. They include organs within the university to manage particular relevant functions, such as continuous education offices, co-operative education bureaux, distance learning centres, consulting and employment offices, enterprise and industrial affairs offices, research liaison units, technological creation centres or incubators, and stake-holder/university policy or advisory boards. These multilateral bod-
ies are clearly no substitute for productive relationships with particular companies, but they are clearly invaluable in mobilizing whole regions to concerted action with HE institutions, especially if linked to city and regional councils and venture capitalists.

RESEARCH

There must be effective research personnel policies for dealing with problems such as: providing inspiring research leadership through active hiring policies and provision of good working conditions and competitive salaries in newer HE institutions; improving the age profile of many HE institutions whose research personnel are in the 40–55 year-old age bracket, with a dearth of opportunities for promotion of younger researchers; providing good staff-research training, especially at the post-doctoral level, together with a creative career structure for researchers and contract staff; reducing the current salary disparity between industry and universities for good researchers. A rationalization of research activities must stimulate countries and HE institutions to effectively co-ordinate their sometimes excessively fragmented research programmes. Thus, special attention needs to be paid to the identification of foci for interdisciplinary centres of excellence. The reason for this is: the recognition that few HE institutions are likely to be excellent across the board; the development of a critical mass in fields of major potential/actual importance to industry; and ‘clout’ in the international marketplace for funds and personnel. It is also fair to point out a dilemma as to whether groups of this kind are likely to assist humanities research, which has tended to be more individualistic in nature. Brainstorming and think-tank processes may facilitate these developments.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

External conditions are a constantly changing mosaic of pressures and possibilities which, whilst they may render detailed planning rather difficult, nonetheless call on institutions to develop alternative scenarios as a basis for mapping strategic directions. In terms of facilitating the adaptation of HE to new global conditions, agendas of institutional change will probably include the following: the development of a more entrepreneurial behaviour culture in universities, particularly in terms of speed of action, both individually and institutionally; a well-articulated policy on intellectual property and patenting; the university as a regional focus for Internet activity; and the imaginative use of doctorates for industrial research and the broadening of its conception (especially so-called ‘professional doctorates’). In many systems, it is clear that to enable HE institutions to be adaptive, governments need to revise substantially the regulatory framework governing personnel policy. Otherwise, the chances of dealing constructively with these concerns are vastly reduced. Among the main foci of attention for policy formation are: systematic staff appraisal and
development; development of new professional administrative centres; renewable contracts rather than permanent tenure; effective and attractive salary packages, including allowances for intellectual property considerations; equal opportunities; recruitment of a genuinely international faculty; and career shifts and competencies across teaching, research and administrative domains.

Many universities have taken the first steps towards changing the curriculum, with varying degrees of sophistication in terms of credit tariffs, a supporting or dominating regulatory framework and the recasting of the university power structure. Among the motivations are: opening up university courses for access to purposed and interrupted study; encouraging student choice—both in terms of combined studies/double majors, and more eclectic combinations across disciplines; facilitating credit for work-related activities or study—so-called ‘accreditation of prior experience/learning’; and assisting student exchange and mobility, especially across international boundaries and within regional networks. It will be a challenge for the next generation to realize these and other possibilities in a creative, flexible and low-cost manner.

AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Responsible institutional autonomy should be stimulated. This principle upholds the freedom to select staff and students, to determine the conditions under which they remain in the university; to select research topics, curriculum and degree standards; and to allocate funds across different categories of expenditures. In connection with this there is an advance of market philosophies towards HE. Governments and other social actors have proposed new work patterns to universities. For universities to avoid becoming mere arms of the State, they should keep a strategic distance by accepting greater social participation and division of tasks with other HE institutions that can better absorb part of the new social demands. To become more responsive to the needs of society, and in order to acquire greater financial autonomy, HE institutions should create structures for the development and management of consultancy activities, which could become an essential part of their missions. For this to happen, HE institutions need to develop an entrepreneurial spirit as a means of strengthening their service functions.

The topic of evaluation is crucial to accountability. Relevance cannot be achieved at the expense of quality, but quality itself has other social dimensions besides the internal, technical ones of traditional academic evaluation. These dimensions need to be taken into account since the mission of HE is basically a public one. The university curriculum will increasingly be cast in terms of not only the cognitive mastery of disciplines, assessed through conventional examination processes, but skills and competencies beyond the traditional focus on analysis and independent thinking, irrespective of the discipline. These include: seeking and processing information; discerning the essential from the inessential; operating successfully in different cultures; managing change in a variety of settings; promoting creativity and ethics; working in and managing multidisciplinary project teams; and problem-solving.
Governments, in their roles as clients and supervisors, should try to establish poli­
cies of continual search for improvement. Systems that have remained unchanged
for a long period of time tend to perceive demands for reform as a disruption,
rather than as part of the normal pattern keeping the system up-to-date. The expe­
rience of South Asia underlies this fact. Adaptation and acceptance of change will
be an increasingly critical factor in institutional efficiency in the twenty-first century.
Various strategies can be used to assist institutions more effectively with society
and client groups. These include mechanisms to identify and collect information from
client groups, mechanisms for consultation on curriculum design and renewal with
employers and professions, and studies of the experiences of graduates in the work­
place. Strategies must be different for the various segments of HE. Non-university
HE institutions should maintain or reach adequate levels of quality which respond
to new training demands. A major consequence of some of these themes is the enhanced
need of HE institutions to cultivate networks.

Note

1. This paper highlights some of the problems, issues and recommendations that were
discussed during the regional conferences and expert consultations held in prepara­
tion for the World Conference on Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century: Vision
and Action, to be held at UNESCO, Paris, 5-9 October 1998, and draws heavily on
the rich documentation produced. The references given below indicate the main sources
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The pertinence of higher education in a changing world


Towards a new evaluation culture in higher education

Eduardo Aponte

The context of evaluation systems

Evaluation systems are influenced and defined by the political and historical contexts in which they were created and developed. The creation and refinement of an evaluation culture in higher education is a relatively new activity and it is becoming an increasingly widespread enterprise. Although there is an international trend, national-level politics very much determine evaluation culture—what, why, when and how evaluation systems work.

The existing evaluation culture in many countries is a decision-making oriented process. The culture is essentially organized and structured for making judgements about the quality (desirable goodness) of the institution's performance, and the relevance (pertinence and effectiveness) of the institutional efficiency (capacity and competency) to accomplish its mission. The evaluation system comprises: assessment processes for the collection and interpretation of information for decision-making purposes in which there is also formal and systematic testing; and quantifying or selecting criteria to define quality and determine the relevance of the courses of action (Cowen, 1996), i.e. policy-making and strategy implementation.

Accountability evaluation of higher education systems has two interrelated components: The internal accountability of how institutions are carrying out their mission, how well they are performing, what they are doing to assess their own effectiveness and what they are doing to improve performance; and the external accountability evaluations in many different forms of audits, giving the grounds for confi-

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Eduardo Aponte (Puerto Rico)
A first-generation higher education graduate; professor of comparative education at the University of Puerto Rico. Has been a consultant to the Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education since 1987, and currently is the president of the Puerto Rican Association for Higher Education (1998–2000).

dence and continued public support. Both types of evaluation are desirable and necessary. Currently, these processes contradict rather than complement each other. Given the quality-relevance matrix, different approaches are needed to strengthen them and to reinforce each other in the new context of higher education.

As the next century approaches, higher education institutions face a variety of challenges. As institutions have grown, they have become more complex, have taken on different functions and use greater resources. In response to recurrent fiscal crises of States, societies are questioning the mission of higher education institutions, as well as their contributions to economic, social and cultural development goals. Moreover, their efficiency and effectiveness are being debated in terms of funding and budgetary allocations in both the public and the private sectors. The objective circumstances of higher education systems have changed and there is a sense that higher education institutions are of central importance to modern societies. These factors have increased the attention given to higher education evaluation in many countries.

In the North American region, public debate about the accountability of all institutions has been escalating for the last two decades. During recent years, discontent with higher education institutions and their bureaucracies has reached unexpected levels. For many people, tuition increases have hindered access to higher education, and therefore a brighter future has become a fading dream. Both citizens and the State are expressing increasing concern about efficiency, productivity and quality in higher education and the effectiveness and relevance (pertinence) of its curriculum. Different sectors are seeking evidence and assurance about the quality and relevance of higher education, particularly in this transition period as we move towards a ‘knowledge society’. This period can be defined as one in which there is a shift in the balance of employment from industrial manufacturing to the dynamic sectors of production-of-knowledge institutions and services; from factory work to professional work; a shift towards a society organized around knowledge and the information economy with a growing demand for higher education.

Accountability is being promoted by the different existing forms of evaluation in regional, State and governmental regulations, market forces, institutional self-regulation and accreditation (including peer-evaluations and the multiple forms undertaken by the institutions of higher education themselves). Institutional efforts include those carried out by trustees, administrators, academic units, presidents, chancellors, faculty, students, some ad-hoc joint committees and external funding sources.

Within this new evaluation context of ‘accountable for what and to whom’, institutions nowadays are trying to use evidence to assure themselves and the public that they are accomplishing their mission in an efficient and effective way. They are trying to make sure that they are meeting their own expectations and the public’s quality standards. Many of their internal efforts are evident in the self-appraisal studies and the public support of these institutions expressed by continuous enrolments, funding and the external accreditation evaluation process. The higher education evaluation system does not lack accountability, rather it lacks enough of the proper kind and is burdened with too much of an unproductive kind. Therefore, questions about quality and relevance remain at the forefront of the accountability movement in terms of allocating resources to an increasing demand for access to higher education.
Towards a new evaluation culture in higher education

The quality-relevance matrix

For a political decision-maker, it is embarrassing that higher education is constantly criticized, not only for educating new generations for the wrong fields, but also for providing education that is not relevant in terms of quality. What higher education institutions are responsible and accountable for, is the quality and relevance of their educational provision. In this respect, it is the responsibility of higher education authorities and institutions to find the necessary practical solutions to these problems.

In aspiring to a knowledge-intensive society, higher education institutions are rapidly losing their earlier status as the only providers of higher education, while at the same time the status of formal qualifications is changing. In this new context, competence and performance are increasingly based on knowledge and skill regardless of where and how they have been acquired. Continuous human resource qualification through training and non-formal education in a competitive global economy is changing the concept of higher education as an institution. Governments and policy-makers expect higher education to react rapidly to the challenges of permanent lifelong learning.

The emerging knowledge-intensive society requires a response to different educational needs and to diverse growing demands for quality standards and relevance, and also entails differentiation between institutions and diversification within institutions. By and large, the response to society's educational needs has been through the establishment of new institutions alongside the traditional higher education offerings and the creation of new degree programmes to supplement the existing ones. To the question of relevance, the response has generally been two-fold: a laissez faire policy in which institutions are allowed to grow according to market needs and the traditional policy, in which expansion does not equal diversification. Anticipating and responding rapidly to new educational needs is determining and defining both quality and relevance nowadays in higher education. Hence, higher education institutions must serve societal needs and development goals.

Under the recurrent situation of fiscal crisis of the State and an ever-increasing cost of higher education, access to a quality educational opportunity has become the greatest challenge to democratic countries. In the emerging knowledge-intensive world economy and ever-increasing credentialist society, equal opportunity to meritocratic institutions and access to higher education remains at the centre of the ongoing efforts to transform policy proposals (Aponte, 1996; Dias, 1997). Limited access to a meritocratic societal structure will exacerbate social conflict and weaken liberal representative democracies.

The access/quality antinomy

In the North American region, the United States has the highest student participation rate in higher education. Yet the accountability movement has pushed policymakers and funding sources to reconsider admission policies and the conditions
for financing or investing in higher education opportunities. The debate is between those who believe inclusive policies are promoting 'academic welfare' to the lower income groups with limited social and cultural capital, and those who emphasize being more selective in order to achieve quality. Current efforts to integrate quality and access rarely reach fruition because of the inherent contradictions in the meritocratic policy approach to achieve quality at the expense of access according to measurable individual capacity for higher education academic work. Furthermore, access to unequal educational opportunities and to low-quality institutional offerings should not be considered access.

The growth of sophisticated assessment techniques and of large testing institutions testifies to the new trend towards greater selectivity in the international higher education community. As a result, although many institutions have a high percentage of successful graduates, this is not necessarily attributed to the quality of the programmes, but rather to the talents and contacts the students bring to the institutions. They would be highly successful in any institution.

Besides the equity (political) issue, another question remains: are there economic, social or cultural reasons to continue and to broaden access to higher education? Although the positive social and cultural contributions of higher education to development are well known, the need for a new workforce for the knowledge society is being underestimated. The criticism notwithstanding, indicators of confidence in higher education remain impressive. Enrolments have grown, despite the shrinking pool of traditional meritorious higher education applicants and higher-than-inflation tuition increases as the income differential between general higher education continues to grow. This demonstrates the employment market's confidence in higher education. Opinion polls and focus groups continue to place higher education as a key goal. It is estimated that two-thirds of the newly created jobs in the dynamic sectors of the economies of developed countries will require higher education training in order to meet the demand for the next decade and beyond (OECD, 1997; Reich, 1991). Both the growth of higher education graduates to meet this need and access to higher learning by the different sectors of society (women, ethnic and low-income groups) to this new 'techno-meritocracy', will be crucial for the distribution of economic (income wealth) and political power (knowledge as social and cultural capital) in democratic societies. In developing countries, a quality-relevant diversified expansion of the higher education system is a priority; limiting access to reach higher quality levels will further increase social inequalities and the impact of the 'brain drain' at the national and regional levels. A meritocracy based on more rigorous selection and exclusion will weaken the social selection and legitimization functions of education in relation to the social structure—an uneven societal development in which different constituent groups are under-represented. Therefore, the antinomy of access/quality and the new pertinence must be brought together and reconciled.

The accountability/autonomy paradox

The accountability/autonomy conflict is so complex and redundant that an additive solution would produce even worse results. This evaluation system includes State
and voluntary accrediting entities, State agencies, legislative measures seeking sur-
veillance over institutions, government regulations recognizing the accreditors and
private groups attempting to ‘certify’ the accreditors, financial audits, institutional
rating systems, bond ratings and multiple market forces, plus ‘self-monitoring’ by
institutions themselves. The accreditation evaluations have both the potential to
intrude on institutional autonomy and to induce real improvements in academic pro-
grammes. Therefore, the pertinence of the evaluation system (programme assess-
ments, reviews, audits, etc.) is very important as a strategic policy instrument in
the higher education community. The loss of institutional autonomy is both cause
and consequence of the abdication of responsibility by institutions for managing
their own affairs, namely assuring high-quality, relevant and effective learning and
research (i.e. responsible autonomy).

Towards a new evaluation culture

In the emerging knowledge society, where knowledge has acquired more economic,
social and cultural value, increasing numbers of the population will need access to higher
learning, useful knowledge and new work-related skills. Higher education institutions
are at the centre of this process. Therefore, quality and relevance are being aggres-
sively pursued both inside the institutions and by the dual accountability movement.

This new context adds two new criteria in the evaluation of quality and relevance
of higher education institutions. Besides resources and outcomes (input-output crite-
ria) ‘value added’ and ‘process’ criteria are being incorporated into evaluation sys-
tems in order to determine improved institutional efficiency and effectiveness in accom-
plishing one’s mission. While input (nature and extent of available resources to the
institution, students, faculty and financial resources) and output criteria (nature and
extent of institutional outcomes, alumni employment and success after graduation)
once were the primary criteria for evaluating quality and relevance, the accountabil-
ity movement and the new context of higher education are bringing together internal
and external evaluations in a relationship where they can complement each other as
an integrated system. The value-added criteria (the transformation and difference
that the institution makes in the growth of all of the members of the learning com-
community—including intellectual, moral, social, vocational and spiritual development)
and the process-oriented criteria (the levels and forms of participation by all of the con-
stituencies in the educational and administrative governance of the institution) address
how they define and determine quality and relevance (Aponte, 1996; Berquist, 1995).

These new criteria and the demand for more access and higher graduation rates
in higher education suggest a possible alternative scenario for the future of higher edu-
cation. This scenario is being propelled by the shift from the teaching to the learning
paradigm (Barr & Tagg, 1995), where higher education institutions are becoming
learning organizations and are being evaluated by their performance in facilitating stu-
dent learning and for producing useful knowledge for the different sectors of society.
Therefore, the value-added criteria and the institutional participatory processes can be
considered as a need and a condition for the development of the knowledge society.
Hence, the new context sets the stage for the access/quality antinomy—under fiscal crisis and diminishing available resources to both students and institutions, how can an education system increase access, assure quality and be more relevant, efficient and effective? How can institutions transform quantity into quality with higher graduation rates? The answer to these questions can be found in a needed transformation of the higher education institutions where evaluation systems can play an important strategic role.

Two possible scenarios for the future of higher education in terms of evaluation policy outcomes can be presented.

- Evaluation systems oriented just to the ‘input-output’ criteria will promote a more selective higher education system pursuing the quality-relevance matrix being promoted by accountable policies oriented to accomplish more efficiency and effectiveness. But limited graduation rates will broaden the gap between institutional quality growth and the demand for more relevant education in the emerging knowledge society.

- Evaluation systems that incorporate value-added and process criteria can improve institutional performance by increasing access and graduation rates, while at the same time strengthening responsible autonomy and increasing institutional relevance. Quality in higher education can no longer be defined by measuring and evaluating institutional resources or outcomes. There is a need for a definition of quality based on the achievement of learning outcomes, regardless of how those outcomes are within the context, mission and purpose of higher education. For such a new context to emerge, an alternative concept of ‘relevant quality’ has been put forward. Relevant quality exists when adequate and appropriate resources are directed successfully towards the accomplishment of mission-related institutional outcomes, when the institutional programmes make a significant difference in the lives of the people affiliated to them, when programmes are created, conducted and modified in a participatory process according to the values and mission of the institution (Aponte, 1996; Berquist, 1995). The new evaluation culture of relevant quality and the four types of criteria can be expressed through the relationships shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** The new evaluation culture
Towards a new evaluation culture in higher education

Research and evaluation are needed to develop and refine the relevant quality approach and the new culture in higher education.

Concluding remarks and recommendations

The development of new evaluation systems is not an easy task. The successful implementation of the new conceptual approach will depend on many factors:
1. The transition of higher education institutions towards student-centred, intensive knowledge learning organizations;
2. A shift in accountability evaluation policy towards a dual system of institutional self-evaluation and external audit systems to reinforce and support internal evaluation and to strengthen institutional responsibility and relevance;
3. The promotion of evaluation research to create useful knowledge in order to develop and refine the new evaluation culture in higher education institutions; and
4. The enhancement of the conditions for international comparative research and co-operation by sharing expertise and knowledge on how to develop the new evaluation system as a strategy to transform higher education institutions.

The emerging knowledge society, the paradigm shift to learning organizations and the fiscal crisis of the State in a globalizing economy make up the new context of threats and opportunities for policy options to transform higher education institutions. Evaluation policy is perhaps one of the most important strategic options to promote the necessary changes.

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The State should always remember that it cannot and must not do the university's work for it, and that it hinders that work whenever it intervenes.

Wilhelm von Humboldt

Freedom, within the law, to question, to put knowledge to the test and to seek to advance new and controversial ideas or unpopular opinions without running the risk of losing one's job or even the privileges acquired within institutions.

Academic freedom, amendment to the law on British educational reform, proposed by Lord Jenkins of Hillhead on 19 May 1988

Introduction

The increasingly rapid pace of social, economic, political, cultural, scientific and technological change in our societies has in recent decades led to unprecedented upheavals in higher education. In all parts of the world, there has been an explosion in the number of students in higher education and in the number and type of institutions devoted to education itself on one hand and to research on the other. This dual explosion has resulted in a vertiginous rise not only in the financial but also in the social costs of this level of education for society and for the State.

One of the effects of these upheavals has been to highlight the concepts of academic freedom and university autonomy, which are more and more frequently referred to and defended in various legal and public documents throughout the world.

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Justin P. Thorens (Switzerland)
Honorary professor at the University of Geneva and a lawyer. Former dean of the law faculty and former rector of the University of Geneva. Honorary President of the International Association of Universities (IAU), Paris; former President of the Council of the United Nations University (UNU), Tokyo; former Chairperson of the Advisory Board for the UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES), Bucharest; honorary Vice-President of the Agence francophone pour l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche (AUPELF), Montreal. Member of the Swiss National Commission for UNESCO; member of the UNESCO Advisory Committee on Higher Education and of many other cultural and scientific associations. President of the International Latsis Foundation, Geneva.

invoked, sometimes even established by the constitution and legislation, without any agreement as to their definition or their scope. The numerous international declarations made on this subject in recent years have been set in specific regional or cultural contexts. In addition, they are often unclear, combining the concepts of academic freedom and university autonomy with others that are alien to them.

UNESCO has decided to study the possibility of a universal declaration that would help universities and members of the academic community when major impediments prevent them from playing their proper role. It has asked the International Association of Universities (IAU) to examine this matter, and at UNESCO’s request IAU is to organize, in the framework of the World Conference on Higher Education to be held in Paris in October, a round table that will study the desirability of such a declaration and its likely impact.

Posing the problem

I should like in this short article to leave aside the historical origins of these concepts—primarily in Europe during the early Middle Ages and in the nineteenth century—and to examine two aspects of academic freedom to which I feel insufficient attention is paid.

Firstly, I shall try to see whether there is a difference between freedom of expression and academic freedom, i.e. whether academic freedom should, as is frequently claimed, or should not be associated with human rights as such. I shall then try to show in what way academic freedom is specific to members of the academic community. Consideration of the French approach, which refers to academic freedoms in the plural, and the English, which refers to academic freedom in the singular, will give us a clearer understanding of the problem.

In fact, historically, academic freedoms in the plural (like university autonomy) relate to the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the members of guilds during the Middle Ages in Europe, whether university teachers, students or members of any other guild. Perhaps we should see whether, semantically, academic freedom or freedoms (and university autonomy) today are a modernized version of this type of privilege or whether they are based on some other concept.

I shall then look briefly at university autonomy, but more specifically in this context as one of the preconditions for academic freedom. I should like to point out that it is generally acknowledged that academic freedom applies to the individual members of the academic community and university autonomy to the university as an institution. However, these concepts can be addressed only on the basis of the university’s role in society, which is their sole justification. It should be noted once again that the university does not exist for itself, or even for science, but for the benefits that it bestows on human beings and society, hence by virtue and because of its social utility. Therefore, both academic freedom and university autonomy can only be justified if they are useful, indeed necessary, conditions enabling universities to continue to play the role that society assigns to them and which they perform through teaching, research and the other services rendered to society.
The role thus assigned to the university is basically to pursue truth, i.e. to add to knowledge and ensure its dissemination in the interests of the individual and society. Directly or indirectly, society and the State create this institution, or at least make its existence possible and guarantee its viability, for the contribution that it makes to the development of humankind. It should be recalled in this context that experience shows that research, particularly at a high level, and higher education are essential to the development and the wealth of a society and of its members. That is why authoritarian societies in the developed world support them and defend them just as much and sometimes more than free, democratic, pluralistic societies.

**Academic freedom**

In order to ensure the best possible development and dissemination of knowledge, society and the State must guarantee the members of the academic community the freedom needed for research and teaching. They must be able to pursue these goals without jeopardizing their careers, their independence of mind or their freedom, indeed their life. They will then discharge to the best of their ability the duties that they were appointed to perform and for which they are paid, which are precisely the development and the dissemination of knowledge. Academic freedom is therefore not the privilege of a caste but a way of enabling the members of the academic community to carry out their mission. We know that the pursuit of truth, i.e. the development of knowledge, calls for a critical approach to established truths, which is not always well regarded either by society and its social, cultural or political elites or, at times, by other members of the scientific and academic communities.

It is therefore vital that society and the State should protect the members of the academic community against influences and intrusions intended to prevent them from challenging certain concepts that are accepted as true, for the critical approach is essential to the advance of science and knowledge. It should not be forgotten that absolute scientific truth—I am not speaking here about the theological truths of the revealed religions—is never acquired by human beings definitively, inasmuch as all scientific truth at a given time is relative, varying according to the era in which one lives and the stage of scientific progress reached. Members of the academic community must therefore have the right and the duty to adopt a critical approach to established truths, to pursue their research without fear or favour, and to keep their students and society at large informed of their findings.

We may add that this often poses more acute problems in the so-called social and human sciences than in natural sciences, since new and different views in the former are more easily challenged than those in the latter if they contradict the generally accepted view. Admittedly, opinions in the social and human sciences that are in open contradiction with the view of the government or the population at large are more likely to pose a threat to the social and cultural balance of a society. It has to be acknowledged, however, that if they are forbidden, all major advances become impossible and society becomes ossified and inward-looking.

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The defence of academic freedom in these fields is of course particularly necessary in authoritarian societies, but it is also necessary in the so-called free and democratic societies, as witness the damage done by 'political correctness' in some of our countries. The difference between academic freedom relating to teaching and academic freedom relating to research is that in the first case it is not only a right but also a duty that society assigns to those who belong to the academic community so as to enable them to carry out their task fully.

This is not in any way to say that academic freedom is more important or more noble than freedom of expression for each member of society, whether it be a top scientist or the ordinary person in the street, but to point out that someone who is not a member of the academic community, in the sense defined above, pursues his/her research in a private capacity and without society compelling him/her to do so. It is essential to make specific provision for the protection of those expressly appointed by society to be responsible for the development and propagation of knowledge, i.e. the members of the academic community.

We can on this basis distinguish academic freedom for members of the academic community, whether teachers, researchers, teaching or research assistants or students, from the right of access to university. I would say, as does the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 26, paragraph 1 in fine, that the right of all to have access to higher education on the basis of merit—unlike academic freedom—is a human right.

If it is acknowledged that academic freedom is different from freedom of expression, which is a right of each individual, and is given by society and the State to the members of the academic community so that they can discharge their duty to the best of their ability, it becomes clear that academic freedom does not apply as such, in any case within the framework of this definition, to scientists—including those at the highest level—who work for private or public companies and whose primary goal is not that of the university.

For even the highest level of scientist who is employed by a public or private undertaking aims primarily and perfectly legitimately at enabling this undertaking to expand and make a profit, and not at promoting the advancement of science as such, for the benefit of all. This distinction also makes it possible to understand why academic freedom, still in the sense that I have defined, does not apply to teachers in primary or secondary education or even to teachers in tertiary and higher education who do not fit the definition of the university proposed above.

A question to which little space can be devoted in this short article, but which inevitably arises, is that of knowing where to draw the limits of academic freedom. Have researchers, inter alia, the right and the duty to pursue any kind of research, or should limits be placed on it? In my view, the only limits should be of an ethical nature. I am fully aware that this answer is not sufficient, inasmuch as one has to agree on the nature of ethics and know precisely who defines it. I will simply say here that as far as ideas are concerned, and as long as they are not put into action, better a blunder than a ban.
This question is, of course, very sensitive and difficult to resolve, but it must be raised in a society which can only be democratic if it is pluralistic and enables each individual to express his/her opinion even—and especially—if it is contrary to that of the majority or the elite. This is why some of the laws passed recently against racism in various countries, although they stem from a sentiment that is in itself totally justified, seem to me to conflict with academic freedom, and also with freedom of expression to the extent that they no longer make it possible for the individual to challenge accepted truths at the intellectual and scientific level without placing his/her career or property, and in some cases freedom or life, in jeopardy. My view on this question is akin to that expressed in the famous saying attributed to Voltaire: I detest what you write, but I am ready to lay down my life to enable you to continue to write.

I believe that to use legal, judicial and administrative instruments providing for penal sanctions in order to prevent certain scientific opinions from being expressed is a serious error. It is the duty of other scientists, and indeed of the social community at large, to refute these opinions, but in open discussion and not by means of penal sanctions. We must not forget that what was regarded as the truth for centuries has turned out to be false, just as what was regarded for centuries as flying in the face of reason has turned out to be perfectly true. In my view, the only unquestionable limits to academic freedom and to freedom of expression are incitement to hatred and destruction and offences against human dignity and nature, which endanger the planet and hence life itself.

**University autonomy**

There is no clear answer to the question of university autonomy because the concept of autonomy itself is relative. Firstly, like academic freedom, its only purpose is to promote the role of the university in expanding knowledge and passing it on and in rendering other services to society as well. In fact, the limits of university autonomy have varied considerably in different periods and places, and that applies to even the best universities.

In any case, the modern university cannot be totally independent of the State and society for financial reasons. Even the most famous private American universities could not continue to exist and carry out advanced research without subsidies and tax exemptions.

Before trying to define what university autonomy is, I should like to stress that society and the State must, in their own interest and to enable the university to perform the task that they entrust to it, provide it with the necessary financial means for this purpose. This obligation is also justified by considerations of social justice, since the lack of the financial resources needed to maintain a good university means that children from underprivileged classes who do not have the means to go to another university are denied access to the university as an institution. This impoverishes the nation and encourages 'brain drain', as can be seen every day in some countries.
It must be added in this context that the university, as I understand it, cannot—indeed must not—be an economically profitable undertaking. For its aim is not to create the conditions conducive to immediate or short-term economic gain, although its existence is a precondition for the economic development of the region and the country in which it is located, as experience has shown. In my view, university autonomy is the degree of autonomy required, given the economic, political, social and cultural state of the society concerned, to enable the university to best fulfill the role that society has assigned to it, experience demonstrating that the university cannot fully play this role if it does not have sufficient independence and freedom vis-à-vis society and particularly vis-à-vis the State.

It is therefore incumbent upon the State not to intervene, and to prevent any other institution or person from interfering in a sphere that does not concern them, and not to undermine the role that the university was established for and is maintained to perform, ensuring by this restraint the degree of autonomy needed for it to accomplish its mission. The university must, however, be accountable for its finances especially and also for its role and its usefulness to society and the State, concerning which verification is not only useful but necessary.

In conclusion

Beyond their historical origins, both academic freedom and university autonomy are essential to enable the university, among all higher education institutions, to play fully its specific role. It is not a question of privileges for the institutions concerned or for the members of the academic community but of preconditions for the fulfilment of their mission and their duty to the State respectively.

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The universities and higher education systems of the world are varied and diverse, displaying marked differences of style, resourcing, quality and capacity. Yet they share values and goals, draw on a common heritage and face similar challenges.

Huge enrolment increases and acute financial pressures are transforming institutions, challenging managers of the systems and institutions, and stimulating the search for new solutions. Unsatisfactory conditions for teaching and learning are all too common in a considerable number of countries, where the very meaning of higher education is under question—its value to individuals and society challenged by mismatches between study and career opportunities, between the knowledge and skills society needs and the ability of higher education to provide them. Variable quality, outcomes of questionable relevance and the loss of a near monopoly over higher learning, are among the concerns voiced in many countries. In the face of uncertainty about future roles, there is a widely accepted need for higher education to reconstitute itself and to recreate a living system of learning that engages closely with the conditions of contemporary life.

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Malcolm Skilbeck (Australia)
Emeritus professor. Formerly Deputy Director for Education at the OECD; prior to that his positions included Vice Chancellor of Deakin University, Australia; Professor of Education at London University Institute of Education; Director of Studies at the United Kingdom Schools Council; and Foundation Director of the Australian Curriculum Development Centre. His most recent publication is Redefining tertiary education (1998).

Helen Connell (Australia)
Ph.D. An independent educational researcher and writer. She trained as a geographer and has worked in planning, urban affairs, curriculum development and international education. Her most recent publication is University research in transition (1998).
These challenges and problems are widespread, nevertheless higher education has shown a remarkable capacity to adjust to changing circumstances. In a number of countries, it is indeed stronger than at any previous time in history. The worldwide picture is uneven: high quality performance in some countries and near collapse in others. In these circumstances a concerted, collaborative and worldwide effort by the higher education community, in close co-operation with other social, economic and political actors, is called for.

Far-sighted leadership, analytical skills and capable, efficient management have never been more needed. The success of institutions hinges upon their ability to plan, organize and manage their affairs, to attract sufficient human and financial resources, and to use them effectively and efficiently, as they recast their mission of teaching, research and service to the community.

The social and economic viability of communities, States, provinces and nations in a globalizing and competitive world will increasingly depend upon higher education institutions. The ability of any jurisdiction to meet the needs and aspirations of its members for advanced and continuing education is becoming a determinant not only of its legitimacy, but also of its very survival. Such an education needs to be accessible, equitable, just, efficient and cost-effective.

Those countries whose higher education systems fail these tests will be severely disadvantaged, causing irreparable damage to their citizens. The reasons are complex, but may be simply stated. In modern societies, economic and social development, living standards and lifestyles depend upon a broad basis of discovery, invention and the application of scientific and social knowledge. Also required are the systematic use of new information and communication technologies, a flourishing advanced employment sector and a stable political environment. Higher education of good quality, underpinning the growth and development of the economy and the society, is a prerequisite.

Education systems, especially at the higher levels, are necessarily very resource intensive. In an era marked by economic liberalism, fiscal restraint, moves to reduce public debt, structural adjustment, public accountability and increased transparency of all public operations, resource-intensive higher education must be ready to undertake major changes. Part of the challenge is to find ways to diversify funding sources and to make substantial efficiency gains through improved management and innovation at the institutional level.

Autonomy, especially in universities, and the need to safeguard the freedom of enquiry and an independent sphere of operations for institutions and for the academic community, is sometimes taken to mean separation and a well-guarded enclave for higher education. But this is no longer possible, even if it were desirable. Increasingly the institutions are an integral part of economic and social development. In addressing the management and resource issues confronting higher education, a constant reference is required to the interface between institutions and system authorities, between the functioning of individual universities and colleges and system-wide policies, legislation and regulatory frameworks.

In the course of the UNESCO regional consultations and in papers preparatory to the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education, these and other dimensions...
of the challenge to higher education were addressed. It is clear that the financing and management of higher education can no longer proceed on some kind of idealistic, outdated model of fully State-funded, self-governing communities of scholars and students. Higher education is an integral part of modern society and there is an increasing need to strengthen its socio-economic roles and relations.

**A changing socio-economic context**

There is a worldwide emphasis on the roles that higher education might play in addressing both national and regional economic and social agendas. It is expected that formal regional groupings such as the Asian Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will provide a means to foster cross-border co-operation. Looser or less politically focused associations are also seen to serve a similar purpose of co-operative endeavour in higher education and research. In whatever form, the international sharing of experience and collaboration was a pervasive feature of the consultations.

The issues of management and finance are therefore increasingly being projected from local to regional and supra-national stages. It is from these stages that the changing context for future policy and action are being viewed. Thus, the *European agenda for change in higher education in the XXIst century*, adopted at the Palermo Regional Forum in September 1997, speaks of the impact of European integration, the demand for quality services from higher education across Europe, increasing globalization of teaching, learning and research, and the mission of higher education in helping to construct a future Europe-wide society (UNESCO, Palermo Regional Forum, 1997).

But the formal groupings are only part of the story. Liberalization of trade and investment, labour mobility and globalization generally are leading States both individually and collectively towards ambitious expectations, not least of which concern graduates of higher education. Within higher education itself, regional and global networks are providing a kind of overlay to economic globalization and the political/economic/regional groupings of countries. The interests and concerns of the academic community, whether within national systems or cross-nationally, do not always match those of the political and economic groupings. Even so there is a common theme, namely the need for higher education to become more outward-looking, and to play a more dynamic role in these wider economic and social settings.

The pursuit of regional and transnational objectives must be balanced through higher education's active participation in fostering each country's identity, nationhood and cultural heritage. Higher education is thereby challenged to maintain traditional, deep national roots as the newer, lateral ones develop. Such balances can be difficult both at the political level and within institutions, placing a premium on sensitive and responsible leadership.

In many of the poorer countries, globalization as a transcendent economic force, based on distant sources of power, is seen more as a threat than an opportunity. Thus, in the Dakar consultation, there was concern about outsourcing (which bypasses

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countries perceived to be underdeveloped or unstable), the impact of structural adjustment on public expenditure, brain drain and the global concentration of ‘high tech’ industry. Notwithstanding such concerns, it was recognized that the power and pervasiveness of the globalization movement and of its technological underpinnings are such that higher education systems must respond. No institution, no system of higher education, is able to build protectionist walls.

From another perspective it was recognized that higher education has a responsibility to assist in solving deep-seated social problems within countries. For the African continent these were identified in a frightening array of what have become chronic disorders in many countries: poverty, hunger, disease, unemployment, illiteracy, the debt burden, unfavourable trading conditions, inflation, environmental degradation and all forms and types of conflicts. In the Latin American and Caribbean consultation, challenges included extremes of wealth and poverty that, like the rate of population growth, are greater than in any other part of the world. Higher education faces the reality of economic decline in many of these countries—where inequality is starkly portrayed as a tiny elite of the well-to-do living in urban enclaves linked to the world market economy: ‘virtual islets of modernity in an ocean of poverty’ (CRESALC/UNESCO, 1996, p. 85).

In the relatively advanced economies of the European region, and the rapidly developing but still uneven Asia and Pacific region, higher education is embedded in a context of ever-rising expectations and demands. Rapid technological and industrial change and new political realities are putting long-established educational and cultural values, communities and traditional cultures at risk of annihilation. The role of education in cultural evolution and community renewal is indeed a universal issue that can all too easily be overlooked in the inevitable preoccupation with economic growth.

In all regions there are exaggerated extremes of wealth and poverty. Equity and gender imbalances remain a major issue differing only in degree across countries. The globalization process and macro-economic policies offer many (if unequally distributed) opportunities for highly competent and mobile professionals; they spell unemployment and relative poverty for many other people, especially youth. The reform agenda for higher education and the tasks of leadership and management need to be broadly defined—even where individual institutions concentrate on distinctive roles. This agenda can be strengthened through contributions to debates about future directions of society, as recommended in the Delors Commission’s *Learning: the treasure within* (Delors, 1996).

**Student numbers: demand and growth**

The common quantitative element across all regions and in most, if not all, countries is increasing demand for access, whose cumulative effect is a huge increase in numbers. Although the rate of increase in some countries has slowed, the overall picture during the past three decades is one of rapid growth. Students enrolled worldwide in tertiary education increased by 61% between 1980–1995, to some 82 mil-
lion students. UNESCO statistics demonstrate two phenomena: gross overall growth and quite different rates of participation across countries. While growth has been particularly rapid in the less-developed regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Asia/Oceania, the Arab States and Southern Asia, it has been from a very low base; on average 824 higher education students per 100,000 inhabitants in the less-developed regions in 1995, compared with some 4,110 in the more developed regions (Mputu, 1997). Strong support for continued growth in participation was given by the regional consultations, which unequivocally argue for access to be fully open and democratic, based on such criteria as merit and capacity (UNESCO, 1997).

In one of the working papers prepared for the Tokyo consultation, Senator Edgardo J. Angara posed the issue in stark terms (Angara, 1997, p. 3):

The unabated growth in populations of Asia-Pacific countries constitutes one such challenge. About 3.6 billion people, more than 60% of the world, live in the rural areas of Asia-Pacific. About 1.5 billion of them are children and young persons below 15. It is necessary to provide them the basic needs, including productive jobs. How will higher education respond?

Thus far the major response has been to facilitate and encourage access and, more recently, to focus on quality and relevance. The dramatic increases in enrolment notwithstanding, numerous distortions and imbalances exist in all regions. The number of women in tertiary education increased in all regions between 1980–95, consistently at a higher rate than for men; indeed the more developed regions have shown a gap in favour of women (Mputu, 1997). Females, however, generally remain disproportionately enrolled in certain traditional ‘women’s subjects’. Students from lower socio-economic groups are underrepresented and attrition rates are very high.

The mass system has certainly increased access in volume terms, but has generated new problems—some of which will remain insoluble unless radical changes are made to the supply and organization of higher education. The heavy concentration of higher education in urban areas in many of the Asia and Pacific countries, for example, and inadequate provision for students in rural areas were cited in the Tokyo consultation (July 1997) as reasons for adopting new approaches.

The main task for policy-makers, administrators and institutional managers for several decades has been to provide resources, physical facilities, staff and equipment to address growing demand. Both individual aspirations and the socio-economic need for high levels of competency in the workforce and for an enlightened, responsible citizenry are at issue. Although in some countries participation rates in higher education are already in excess of 50% of the young adult age group (and there are increasing enrolments of mature age students), demand in these countries is likely to continue to increase. At the other extreme, in countries where participation rates may be 15% or less, the road is longer and harder, due to economic and political conditions—but the forces of growth are also present.

Growth has imposed enormous strains and created many distortions particularly in universities. Many institutions are overcrowded, adding to the resource prob-
lems and resulting all too often in education of questionable value and quality. Diversification of institutions and educational programmes is one possible remedy not only for the problem of overcrowded universities but also as a means of economizing. However, some previously diverse or multi-sectoral systems have moved towards a unitary structure, so diversity becomes a matter of differentiated missions, programmes and methods within institutions of the same type. Part of the problem of university overcrowding is the strong preference of students and families for university studies even where satisfactory alternatives exist. Where diversity means significantly lower status of some types of institutions and programmes of study, bottlenecks and inefficiencies in resource allocation are occurring. This is a topic that, while it did not receive much attention in the reports of the consultations, requires attention.

**Resources: human and financial efficiency issues**

Inadequate resources for teaching and research coupled with chronic underfunding bring into question not only the quality, relevance and efficiency of present provision but the capacity to meet demand to fund further growth and to sustain a satisfactory R&D base. Especially in those regions where demand is not being met and where there are very serious resourcing problems, more radical funding policies need to be pursued. Funding, however, is of itself an insufficient response. Fresh thinking is needed on managing increased and diverse demand in educationally satisfactory ways and on research budgeting. Specific weaknesses, gaps and mismatches need to be targeted, such as ‘mismatches in the demand for and supply of highly trained personnel, especially in countries undergoing rapid growth and industrialization’ (UNESCO, Asia and Pacific Regional Conference, 1997, p. 2), ‘excessively high student/teacher ratios which make individual attention to students difficult’ (UNESCO, African Regional Consultation, 1997, p. 3) and ‘gender inequity at all levels’ (ibid.). Such problems and defects require strong academic leadership and improved management as much as they do increased financial resources. There is also an issue of incentives and sanctions in public policy. This said, there is clearly a growing worldwide crisis of underfunding.

In most countries, the unit of resource has been progressively reduced and staff-student ratios, particularly for undergraduate programmes, have worsened. Institutions are enjoined to do more with less. There is an efficiency gain but it often does not translate into improved quality of teaching and learning, and high priority research is at risk.

Several countries, where charges falling directly on students have been relatively low, are exploring options to increase contributions by students and their families. Some have introduced fee regimes, others are considering them. Loan systems, heavily subsidized by the government, are common in support of student living costs. Such loans have to be repaid and there is concern over heavy levels of debt falling particularly on young people and a significant problem of default. Various options are under consideration to reduce support for student housing and subsis-
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Tence, and several countries have substantially increased charges falling on out-of-state or out-of-country students.

Thus fees and charges for students are not confined to private institutions but are increasingly seen as an option in the public sector, accompanied by fee subsidies, loans, grants, scholarships and means-tested allowances. One scheme is the Australian practice of deferred payments, whereby students may pay an up-front cost at a discounted rate or incur a charge whose repayment is deferred until they are in employment and earning a basic income. Approximately one-quarter of the cost of tuition is chargeable in this way to students. For a number of years the scheme has succeeded in eliciting additional resources for higher education and has helped to fund growth, but it is under increasing pressure due to administrative complexities and mounting costs in a period when government is seeking to contain public expenditure.

Although many governments are showing an interest in new ways to meet rising costs of study (Hidalgo, 1996; Salmi, 1997), the consultation meetings have given little support to what is perhaps the most tangible and obvious way of increasing teaching resources, namely tuition fees. There was, instead, general support for a continued or enlarged State role in financing higher education. Yet it was also widely recognized that public funds are (and are likely to remain) insufficient for the foreseeable future, for reasons such as continuing economic difficulties and other government priorities such as, in Eastern and Southern Africa, the provision of a good quality basic education for all (Blair, 1997).

Apart from policies to encourage private institutions and cheaper forms of higher education than on-campus university study, two main sources of additional resources have been identified. First is income generation through the sale of such services as consultancies, continuing education courses, fees for out-of-state or out-of-country students, hire of facilities and premises and the sale of products. Second is support by industry and commerce in the form of research funding, scholarships, access to staff and facilities, work placements for students and direct grants.

The extent to which such sources are contributing to the solution of the revenue problems of institutions is not well documented. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) studies indicate that in the industrially advanced countries, industry contributions may not currently exceed 5% of operating costs of institutions. It is clear, however, that some sectors of higher education (such as engineering) are better placed than others (the humanities and social sciences) to attract significant and consistent external income from industry (OECD/DSTI, 1998). While all income-generating activities have potential that should be more actively pursued, Blair’s assessment for higher education in Southern and Eastern Africa is that ‘really significant funding’ from all of these sources combined is highly improbable and is therefore ‘not a solution to the fundamental financial problems of higher education institutions in Africa’ (Blair, 1997, p. 19). Experience in a small number of countries suggests that income from all sources other than direct government funding of student loans can be well in excess of 50% of operating costs for some individual institutions. However, these sources generally include a heavy public sector component, for example research grants and consultancies. They also depend upon a highly developed private sector economy.

These alternative funding sources are unlikely to provide a sufficient answer to the general problem of underfunding. Still, it is important to pursue them as part of a strategy of intensive use of facilities and equipment, more innovative styles of management, and the orientation of staff towards increased efficiency and improved relations with the wider society.

Better use of the finances available to institutions is required. A key factor is what institutions are allowed, by regulation, to do with their funds; whether, for example, they may borrow and invest. In many countries, the trend has been away from input budgeting where institutions receive amounts for use only in defined categories (salaries, buildings) and towards a form of output budgeting increasing institutional flexibility in use of funds. Judicious handling of cash reserves is an important additional internal source of revenue for many institutions. Sanyal and Martin (1996) note the greater prominence of financial management within institutions and the growing prestige of financial managers in institutional hierarchies. Much can be achieved through greater concentration on institutional resource management in an environment of devolved responsibility.

Nevertheless, more resources are needed. It seems improbable that a careful reappraisal of the student fees option will be indefinitely postponed. There is a growing body of opinion that some form of cost-sharing with the immediate beneficiaries of higher education, namely students, will become necessary. There are strong ethical and political objections to fees in public institutions in some countries and their introduction where they do not already exist could raise serious difficulties. Great care would therefore be needed and this should include firm commitments by governments that any additional revenues would be applied to higher education. Students and families unable to pay fees or other expenses should not be deprived of opportunity. The consultations agreed that entry to institutions should be by merit and need, and not by means.

The arguments in the present debate on fees and other charges (accommodation, subsistence) are summarized here:

- a substantial volume of badly needed resources would be generated and there are no other obvious sources;
- participants in higher education as a whole enjoy greater lifetime employment opportunities and financial rewards than non-participants, yet are disproportionately State-subsidized—wherever private rates of return are disproportionately high, it can be inequitable not to charge fees in some form;
- payment of fees gives students a greater stake in higher education and more reason to study successfully—students who are not serious would be discouraged;
- institutions would become more sensitive to student needs and more responsive to market forces including graduate employment;
- cost-consciousness in institutions would increase and more attention would be given to increased efficiency; and
- differentiated fee structures would assist in the diversification of higher education, both within and among institutions.
Arguments against fees may be summarized as:

- since higher education is of such vital socio-economic importance, the State should adjust spending priorities;
- although individuals benefit, higher education is an investment in the future well-being of the entire society;
- fees can be regressive and inequitable and are likely to discourage participation, especially by disadvantaged groups;
- student motivation need not and should not depend on financial incentives; and
- institutions may become too much like commercial businesses and neglect rather than address students’ varied needs.

Governments need to decide at just what stage of education the right to ‘free education’ is to be circumscribed. This varies considerably by country. The heart of the present debate is the initial years of tertiary education, those that lead to a first qualification. Charges for subsequent levels of study have been introduced over a number of years in many countries with relatively little controversy.

A central aspect of resourcing is the staffing of higher education institutions. Due to a number of factors, notably funding, salaries and conditions of work for teaching, research, technical and administrative staff are unsatisfactory in many countries. In several countries, especially in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, they have deteriorated to a crisis point. Cadres of badly paid, poorly motivated teachers working perhaps in several part-time jobs and in environments where basic equipment and study materials are lacking, provide an unsatisfactory prognosis for the ambitious developmental functions expected of a university or college. Weak funding of research and poor working conditions do not augur well for the future of the ‘knowledge-based society’. The policy options are yet to be fully articulated, and while increased and more effective uses of financial resources to improve salaries and conditions of work are a crucial factor, so also are improvements in training, recruitment and further professional development of staff, strengthened personnel management systems and greater attention to career structures—including a review of the academic hierarchies prevailing in many countries and the uncertain, temporary nature of many research posts.

The staffing challenges identified in the consultations require a strong and capable management team in every institution. The issues of poor motivation, inadequate skills and unsatisfactory career progression arrangements apply to technical and administrative staff as well as to academics. Sophisticated, skilful management and administrative procedures are needed. Career guidance and placement, continuing professional education, research liaison and technology incubators, structures for stakeholder involvement and so on cannot be provided for unless these procedures are in place. The issues require just as much attention in relatively well-resourced as in poorly resourced systems.

The efficient use of resources also implies staff of a high calibre and integrity in ministries, buffer bodies, research agencies and academic institutions. Such staff may be in short supply and may become part of the brain drain. The combination of funding cuts, mounting costs and scarcity of highly competent personnel means
that innovations to improve the structure and organization of institutions, reform teaching, strengthen research and use resources more effectively are jeopardized. Some countries are far more favourably placed than others in this regard. There will be considerable benefit from taking the steps proposed in the consultations for more training opportunities, the sharing of international experience and improved international co-operation. Most important, however, systems and institutions must show readiness to evaluate existing arrangements and adopt more radical approaches to all aspects of resourcing teaching and research.

**Infrastructural change and institutional practice**

Institutions are operating in a financially difficult and volatile context: the pressures of growth of demand; the mood of economic constraint on public spending; devolution and decentralization; the growth of privatization in tertiary education and globalization across national boundaries; and the inexorable movement of research frontiers into multidisciplinary research beyond the bounds of individual institutions. Challenges to hitherto largely stable organizational and conceptual models of higher education have highlighted a number of contradictions or dilemmas to be resolved (Hill, 1997).

During the regional consultations it was suggested that a trade-off for devolution of various responsibilities to institutions is internal reform of governance and decision-making. Reform typically includes streamlining of the complex internal committee structure, a greater concentration of power in smaller but more widely representative governing bodies, and enlarged executive authority for institutional leaders. Leadership and management responsibility are not confined to vice-chiefs, rectors, their deputies or heads of university administration, but extend to deans, department heads and middle-range administrative officers. Emphasis on entrepreneurship in many systems has led to a greater complexity of internal structures, notably the emergence of specialized research, teaching and service centres or units, often interdisciplinary, alongside traditional departmental and faculty structures. These centres or units are frequently funded for a specific period of time by one or more external sources, and academic, technical and administrative staff may share their time and responsibilities between them and a base department. But their fortunes can also change rapidly; their quasi-independence within universities has resulted at times in inventive financial and general management methods.

In many countries, there is increasingly a mixture of dispersed management and decision-making on the one hand, and a concentration of authority for strategic planning purposes on the other. They imply an enlarged capacity on the part of people whose role in the past may often have been less demanding and less visible except on ceremonial occasions. The need for acquiring culture and training in these new modes has been expressed in the consultation proposals. The *Declaration and action plan on higher education in Africa* makes high-level staff training one of the main planks in its proposals for improving management.

It is not to be expected that each institution individually and separately will undertake management training. This calls for system-wide programmes for which
specialist centres, training staff and consultants are needed. Proposals have been made in the consultations for a variety of regional activities to enhance management and decision-making capabilities, collectively addressing the needs of a number of countries and drawing upon their resources. The need is not confined to institutions, since system management has become more complex and demanding with growth and diversification.

New approaches to institutional governance and management suggest a need for a new cadre of managers. That need clearly exists for full-time university administrators but there is no suggestion that academics would cease to play key roles in the governance and management of their institutions. The involvement of representatives of employers, unions, professionals, government and the community in governing and advisory bodies is complementary to academic management. This involvement is consistent with the emphasis in the consultations on closer and more practical associations between the institutions and these various outside interests.

Transparency and accountability

Attention to the efficient use of resources naturally relates to the recent upsurge of interest in quality appraisal and the policy emphasis on social and economic relevance. Due to financial stringency and contemporary climates of opinion affecting public administration systems, institutions are becoming more open to public scrutiny and are visibly accountable for their use of resources. Well established in research funding, scrutiny and accountability measures are increasingly evident in the teaching function of institutions.

Accountability is often expressed as demonstrated performance against clearly defined goals and criteria. One example is output or performance-based funding whereby funds are allocated to institutions for teaching purposes not on the basis of intake numbers alone, but also on completion and success rates. Close monitoring and accurate records are required, as well as a capacity by institutions—often difficult to achieve—to move resources flexibly. Armed with such data, funding bodies can thereby give better reports on what is an often poorly documented and little understood aspect of higher education, namely rates of failure and attrition and extended study periods.

Moves to increase transparency and accountability are part of an agenda of change in public administration; they are not confined to the education sector. But, due perhaps to a tradition of institutional autonomy and self-government, and the esoteric nature of academic life, in that sector the shock has been sometimes quite profound and compliance weak. It is noteworthy that in all of the regional consultations, many procedures that would have been unwelcome or unacceptable in many systems only a decade ago are now being embraced.

Giving confidence to stakeholders by demonstrating performance in publicly acceptable ways is increasingly accepted as a key function of senior institutional management. Commenting on changes in the past two to three decades in the Asia and
Pacific region in relations between government and higher education institutions, Harman (1997) stressed increased formality and the establishment of new structures, including buffer and advisory bodies, together with acceptance that increased autonomy is desirable within these frameworks. In this context accountability measures become one of the conditions of successful financial and other negotiations between government and institutions.

There is a general trend towards a more strategic policy and financing role for government, combined with greater discretion by higher education institutions in ways of meeting policy objectives and managing their own affairs. On the one hand, rational administration that incorporates a model of resource allocation for clearly defined purposes is subject to the test of performance through transparent and accountable procedures. It is also a counterbalance to political manipulation and something of a safeguard against corruption. On the other hand, a ready acceptance of accountability requirements demonstrates an interest in improved efficiency—a step welcomed by finance ministries.

Within institutions, procedures have become more open: staff appointments, promotions, reports on teaching and research outcomes, and decision-making by governing bodies and senior officers tend to be more rigorous and fair when open to scrutiny. The adoption of student evaluations of teaching staff is one measure of the accountability of the teacher to the student, something often overlooked in the debate.

The drive towards greater transparency in academic affairs raises a number of issues for further consideration. Long-established decision-making practices in institutions, based on the principle of collegiality, often entail complex procedures, lengthy debates and other practices that are at odds with a more entrepreneurial style of management, and do not always carry conviction with external audiences. The legislation, charters, statutes and ordinances under which universities and other institutions operate, as well as customary practice, have built up rights and privileges for particular academic groups. Although many changes have taken place that affect governance and decision-making, there is still a considerable difference between much academic practice and that of public administration, business and commerce. This is not to say that the latter should simply be transferred into higher education institutions, but academics are under increasing pressure to explain and justify their procedures. Where they believe change is not desirable, their reasoning should go beyond customary practice and existing regulatory frameworks. The improvements in study conditions and facilities, in research funding and in the overall quality in academic life that were so emphatically sought in the consultations are more likely to be achieved where there is a readiness to review existing practice.

Scepticism about the implications of some of the current trends in transparency and accountability is not, however, always just a matter of dogged resistance to change or the defence of special privilege. The academic institution can be held formally accountable for expenditure and, up to a point, for predefined performance in study and research. The accountability of the individual academic may be less clear cut.
As employees, academics are accountable to the institution or to the State where they are public servants. Accountability may also be expressed in contracts of employment specifying terms and conditions. However, academics are also accountable in a more closely defined way to a faculty, department or centre within the institution. More generally or abstractly, they are accountable to peers in the subject, discipline or profession. They are accountable to research funding bodies for the conduct of specific projects and, as teachers, to their students.

Although common principles govern these different types of accountability, procedures differ. Where staff are, of necessity, working part-time for two or more institutions, as reported in the Latin American and Caribbean consultation, to whom or what do they owe allegiance and how transparent are the staffing and resource structures of the institutions? As term-based staffing appointments increasingly make inroads into tenure, the issue of accountability becomes more acute. The term contract may formally specify obligations, but beyond that, nothing can be required, nor can the staff member assume all of the rights and privileges of membership in the institution. The increasing proportion of temporary, part-time, non-tenured staff is at odds with the collegial tradition that assumes a larger, often implicit, complex and non-transparent set of relations between the individual academic and the institution.

These and other changing realities of academic life, especially in the sphere of staffing and personnel, need consideration in the moves to increase accountability and transparency. The result, rather than the intricacies of the process, is crucial. For example, provided due procedures are followed, successfully concluding a complex negotiation, resolving a dispute or achieving consensus are of more importance than disclosure of the detail of methods.

Regulation, autonomy and student participation

A defining characteristic of universities is the right to award diplomas and degrees that are the culmination of a long period of study at the tertiary level and are recognized professionally and in the community. The authority exercised by the staff of the institution often (but not always) extends to determining diploma or degree requirements, the curriculum and standards of performance, instruction and examination. But this authority is seldom unqualified, since these internal academic matters may be subject to legislation, external regulations or requirements, and periodic reviews, usually those of education ministries and professional bodies. Moreover national research strategies and selection policies of grant-giving bodies increasingly determine the research programmes of universities. These conditioning factors notwithstanding, however, autonomy is widely recognized—at least in principle—as appropriate to a university. To a lesser degree, autonomy is also sought after and recognized in other tertiary institutions. Academic freedom, although separate from the question of institutional autonomy, can be at risk when constraints on the autonomy of the institution are heavy and detailed, for example in matters of curriculum.

The Declaration about higher education in Asia and the Pacific made at the Tokyo conference affirmed a need in the region for increased ‘responsible institu-
tional autonomy' in conjunction with accountability. Autonomy was extended to such principles as the freedom to select staff and students, to determine the conditions under which they remain in the university and to select research topics. Freedom to determine curriculum and degree standards was affirmed along with the capacity to allocate funds, within the amounts available, across different categories of expenditure.

The relevance of autonomy to management and resource issues is evident within the institution where the principle of autonomy is carried through to the authority exercised by individual faculties, departments and teachers. The management of universities as academic entities, including the extensive use of committees and boards, acknowledges the prerogatives of academics in relation to subject matter, teaching, study and research in which they are authoritative. Determination to uphold these protocols and structures, which reflect the distinctiveness and the richness of academic activity, lies behind some of the concerns expressed in the regional consultations.

The emphasis on principled autonomy and on the nature of academic authority relations might seem somewhat idealistic when compared with the actual practice in many countries. Yet its underlying values are deeply held within the international academic community and they explain some parts of the debate about the relevance and acceptability of new forms of executive management and financial control mechanisms. They also help to explain the frequently expressed concerns in the regional consultations about compromises and intrusions into academic life, to say nothing of impossible conditions in the financing and organization of the institutions.

The new balance sought between the values and the internal workings of institutions and State-wide policies and regulatory frameworks, does not signify a reduced State role, but a different and more strategic one of 'steering at a distance' and direction-setting. The key terms are goals, policy frameworks, guidelines and strategic oversight of the higher education system in place of direct bureaucratic control over each institution's affairs.

Coherent policies and structures, incorporating the principles of academic freedom, institutional autonomy and frameworks for regulating and monitoring performance, are needed and efforts are being made, albeit unevenly, to put them in place where they do not exist or are in disarray.

The self-managed institution is necessary, but its freedom is not unlimited. For example, there is a public as well as an academic interest in enrolments, in the severe imbalances that are occurring in many countries in the subjects students are studying, notably between science and technology and the humanities and social sciences. Standards concerning both the quality and the relevance of what students study are also of public interest, since large numbers of poorly prepared graduates would be a burden not only to themselves and their families, but also to the economy and society. On the matter of labour-market relations, the private sector, the professions and the government all have a major interest in institutional decisions.

Thus the concept of autonomy needs to be carefully rethought in relation to
the nature of public interest, academic values and interests and the changing context of institutional activities. Academic freedom is a necessary condition of study, scholarship and research, and teachers should be free to determine the focus and scope of enquiry. Such freedom is not, however, confined to academics. Indeed, it is being exercised by students in their increasing access to databases and other sources of information. Autonomy is inevitably subject to many constraining influences, and must be negotiated with a variety of partners and interests at the interface between the institution and its environment. The challenges and problems identified in the regional consultations indicate that institutional management will be giving increasing attention to the scope and limits of institutional autonomy.

Student roles and responsibilities are highly germane to the issues of autonomy and institutional decision-making. Student activism and unionism have, over several decades and in different parts of the world, featured prominently in relations between the government and institutions. Campus violence and the closure of institutions not only attract public disquiet, they severely disrupt academic life, testing to the limit the conflict management capabilities of institutional administrations and bringing into question the values of free enquiry and informal debate of contentious issues (Salmi, 1997).

A positive and enduring outcome of student unrest has been the development of more participatory styles of university governance. These have gone much farther in some systems than others; consequently in the consultations there were calls for a more prominent role for and by students. For example, included in proposals made by the students of the University of Benin is to ‘Set in motion an unprecedented movement within universities by organizing frequent conferences within universities on the initiative of the students themselves’ (Étudiants de l’Université du Benin, n.d.).

In the Declaration of the Asia and Pacific conference, the same theme surfaced (UNESCO, Asia and Pacific Regional Conference, 1997, p. 14):

At the regional level, an association or forum should be created to mobilize the contribution of student organizations to current efforts aimed at making higher education institutions more forceful, active and efficient partners in the promotion of sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Declaration and action plan on higher education in Africa adopted at the regional consultation in Dakar included perhaps the strongest of any of the undertakings on students in the regional consultations (UNESCO, African Regional Consultation, 1997, p. 10):

Student involvement in decision-making bodies should be given a considerable boost, with greater attention paid to their needs by taking into consideration students’ perspectives which are often relevant to the analysis of problems and to the search for viable solutions. Student involvement is also equally a means of inculcating the leadership skills needed in after-school life as workers and citizens.
UNESCO’s international consultative procedures have provided excellent opportunities for the voices of a number of students’ organizations to be heard. There is a message here for future consultations and conferences.

**Managing new teaching and learning systems**

The pressure of numbers and developments in information and communication technologies have stimulated much-needed innovations in teaching and learning. A diverse system of higher education—with well-planned alternatives to universities, distinctive institutional missions based on strengths, needs and opportunities and a private sector of good quality—is able to provide programmes well adapted to the different needs and aspirations of students. A diversity of institutions could assist also in resolving the overcrowding problem of public universities in particular and the imbalances in institutional profiles that result. One of the problems shared by many countries is a rather rigid adherence to an unduly conformist model of ‘the university’. Another is the failure of institutions other than universities to command the status and prestige sought by students and their families.

The design of new learning systems, while likely to be promoted by a diversity of institutions, does not depend upon large-scale structural changes at the system level. Innovations are taking place within existing institutions. Of particular interest is the development of specialized programmes and institutions of distance education. In several of the regional meetings, the worldwide growth of distance education was seen to be a major step in resolving many present difficulties whilst providing opportunities for new categories of students.

Distance education facilitates student access including first time, mature age students and those seeking professional upgrading. It is also a means to improve low-quality teaching and standards of student learning and performance. The reason for this is the attention that must be given to course material and the organization of new kinds of contacts between students and staff focused on the learning needs of students, whether programmes are largely based on the printed and taped materials of correspondence education or incorporating the new information and communication technologies. A system-wide approach to distance education, drawing progressively on the new technologies as their costs decline, their efficiencies improve and their educational value grows, is of incalculable importance to countries struggling with many of the educational problems identified in the consultations.

As demand continues to grow and enrolments increase, it is likely that only through the various types of distance education can cost-effective solutions be found. The nature of the educational experience differs from that of conventional face-to-face teaching, but the quality of course materials is often higher, students’ needs are usually addressed in a systematic way and standards of performance have been shown to be quite comparable to those in conventional institutions. Close attention to the management of learning is required and there are major staffing issues to address. The role of staff must include substantial planning and preparation time; use of correspondence and telecommunications instead of face-to-face contact implies a different type of relationship with students. Participation in coursework teams,
which may involve diverse specialists including those from other institutions and the private sector, calls for a practical understanding of group dynamics. Staff profiles change to include a wide variety of technical personnel, designers, editors and so on.

New staff profiles, training programmes, conditions of employment and academic structures are needed. Initial costs can be quite high but they must be treated as an investment and they need to be planned for in the expectation of substantial reductions in the unit of resource as systems are put in place and enrolments grow. The worldwide growth of distance education and the striking success of many institutions and programmes demonstrates both a need and an ability to satisfy it.

Plans for the development of virtual universities, mentioned in the Asia and Pacific Consultation and discussed in detail in some of the expert papers, are already well advanced in some countries. Various co-operative arrangements are already in place whereby students can regularly access courses in more than one institution. Private providers, using the new communication and information technologies, are exploring institution-free modes of delivery. The creation of national qualifications frameworks based on a hierarchy of competent performance levels is a structural innovation with considerable potential. The design and operation of these systems are calling forth new management skills and ways of financing study.

Further analysis of these highly significant developments in the provision and delivery of higher education is called for as part of the commitment by the regional conferences to enhance regional co-operation. National boundaries will be increasingly crossed as students access study programmes, databases and other sources of information wherever they may be located in the world. Okebukola remarked in a paper on managing higher education prepared for the African consultation in Dakar that ‘An agenda for higher education in Africa for the twenty-first century should give prominence to open and distance education’ (Okebukola, 1997, p. 9). This comment could equally be made in all regions of the world.

Conclusion

The strategies and methods directed towards support for and reform of higher education are numerous and varied. Through the regional consultations and the papers prepared for them, many different issues were addressed and solutions canvassed. They all find their focus in one essential task—to define, provide and sustain the conditions upon which good teaching, learning, study, research and scholarship depend. Directions for improving the quality and relevance of academic work fall within this essential task and set criteria for its performance.

Freedom of enquiry, scope for creativity and imagination, time and space for reflection, analysis and synthesis and a serious engagement with the critical social and cultural issues of the age cannot be cramped by excessive zeal for short-term results, although the academic community can be expected to respond to the need to solve the pressing problems facing humanity.

Reductions in the unit of resource and worsening staff-student ratios can be counted as an efficiency gain and an improvement in productivity. But if the qual-
ity of education that is provided is low, if research is impoverished, and if the conditions under which staff and students work are poor, the cost of the efficiency gain would be too high. Addressing problems of inefficiency is not merely a matter of reducing costs, desirable as this might be, but of introducing innovations that demonstrably advance educational purposes at a manageable cost. 'Manageable' means within existing or anticipated resources, which includes any additions that might be procured. The use of this criterion focuses attention on the quality and relevance of teaching and research rather than on cost-cutting. It is in the interest of governments to strengthen the links among quality, relevance, funding and management rather than to allow financial stringency to accelerate a downward spiral in the very qualities higher education exists to provide.

Cost containment without loss of quality and consistent with the purposes and values of higher education is, of course, an appropriate goal for the system as a whole, wherever it is feasible to adopt such an approach. Apart from its obvious necessity, the quest for greater efficiency demonstrates to funding bodies that any additional resources are likely to be well used.

Two major limiting factors in the consultations are, first, low and declining levels of financial resources and, second, the gap between the capabilities of existing personnel and the numerous challenges they are called upon to meet. A third limiting factor, more often implicit than explicitly stated, is the persistence of rigid structures and procedures that stand in the way of the flexible and creative approaches that are so clearly needed. These limiting factors need to be vigorously and comprehensively addressed in the continuing dialogues that were foreshadowed or agreed to in the regional meetings.

Policy and management decisions, resource allocations and accountability measures need to be directed by a close understanding of and a sensitivity towards the institutional field of action not only as it presently exists, but as it needs to evolve. Ultimately the justification for the orientation towards management and policy-making, the financial and other operational strategies and the efficiency considerations discussed throughout this paper lies in the possibilities for strengthening, improving and reforming higher education.

Together with the recognition of the urgent need to meet societal expectations and economic requirements, it is timely to remind ourselves in a discussion of management and finance of the values of a peaceful, democratic and just civil society and international order, which provide a beacon for the direction higher education should take. Knowledge, understanding and free enquiry are the basic commodities of higher education and the advancement of learning its raison d'etre.

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NEW STRATEGIES
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF
FINANCE IN UNIVERSITIES

Bikas C. Sanyal and Michaela Martin

Financial management in universities has undergone important structural and functional changes over the past ten years or so. The way governments finance their institutions has been widely modified in many countries: accountability and transparency are becoming universal requirements, and institutions are increasingly invited to attract supplementary external funding. This has had important implications on how institutions allocate and utilize their resources internally. Also, there is increasing pressure from governments to use funds more efficiently, due to financial constraints. As the overall functions of higher education institutions have become more complex, the functions of financial management have become more diverse. If, in the past, it had been widely concerned with the protection of finances and the execution of budget lines, today financial management also needs to be concerned with tasks such as setting up incentives for basic units to attract their own funding or placing funds in the capital market.

In many countries, both developed and developing, changes in financial management have been extremely rapid, whereas in some others its functions and

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Bikas C. Sanyal (India)
Senior Adviser at the International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO), Paris. At present responsible for the IIEP research programme on 'Improving the effectiveness of higher educational institutions: studies of the management of change'. He has previously directed the IIEP research programmes on Higher education and employment and technological development and educational planning. He is the author/co-author of a large number of books, monographs and papers on educational policy and planning.

Michaela Martin (Germany)
Programme specialist at the IIEP, working on the research programme on 'Institutional management in higher education'. Prior to working at the IIEP, she was working as research assistant at the European Centre for Strategic Management, University of Brussels, from 1988 to 1990.

structures have remained very traditional. In broad terms, radical change has often been the result of disruptive economic and political events that have obliged institutions to develop survival strategies. In other contexts, change has happened in a more co-ordinated fashion as part of major reform programmes initiated by governments and external agencies, especially international and bilateral donor agencies.

This article attempts to give a broad picture of strategies adopted by both governments and universities in the management of their finances. Since there is a broad trend of granting an increasing amount of financial autonomy to institutions, the focus will be on financial management at the university level.

The context of financial management in universities

The financial management of universities operates within constraints determined by three main factors: their mission statement, the distribution of authority over financial management, and the mechanisms through which institutions receive their finances.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND THE MISSION STATEMENT

For a large and complex system of higher education, a mission statement has the particular function of informing potential clients (students and the sponsors of consultancy and research services) and funding agencies of the government, of the special role and place of an institution within the national system of higher education. Thus, institutions—particularly those located in market-driven systems—have become increasingly obliged to determine their particular niche in the market and to clearly state which particular clients they intend to serve.

There should be a reciprocal relationship between mission and funding. A university’s mission may influence the public funds it receives; however, the funds it obtains, and the way they are allocated, should also help determine its mission.

Naturally, the financial management of a university ought to operate within its mission. For example, a university with a mission that emphasizes community service will not allocate resources in the same way as a major research institution.

DISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORITY OVER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE INSTITUTION

According to Gareth Williams (Williams, 1993), even the simplest organizational structure of a university allows for several models with regard to the distribution of authority over financial management within institutions. The following list presents the most centralized to the most decentralized model:

- **pure bureaucratic model**: all resources are received by the centre and are allocated, managed and administered from the centre;
- **decentralized bureaucratic model**: strategic decisions are taken at the centre but routine decisions and their implementation are made by departments;
New strategies for the management of finance

- political decision model: strategic decisions are taken at the centre based on consensus within the framework of collective bargaining;
- collegial model: the central administration takes a portion of the income and the remainder is allocated to departments to use in accordance with academic priorities;
- corporate entrepreneurial model: income is earned by departments but administered from the centre;
- managed entrepreneurial model: income is earned by departments, it is taxed to cover central administrative costs and the remainder is spent by departments according to the requirements of the external purchasing agency; and
- liberal entrepreneurial model: income is earned by departments and retained by them to buy central services as needed.

In reality, resource allocation procedures can be a mixture of more than one model. For example, externally funded activities often require somewhat different financial management procedures from centrally funded core activities.

Some universities are very near to the top end of this spectrum and others are at the bottom. Most developing countries still have very bureaucratic systems of financial management imposed by governments, but everywhere there is some shift towards devolution of financial management responsibilities.

MECHANISMS THROUGH WHICH INSTITUTIONS RECEIVE THEIR FUNDS

During the past ten years, many universities have experienced a shift from input-based to output-based public funding.

In input-based funding systems, public funds are provided to meet the costs of the input into the institution, for example staff salaries, equipment, consumable items and buildings. University managers are required to spend funds on the inputs for which they are provided, but within these constraints it is the institution that decides what outputs to produce.

Output-based funding pays the university for the services it provides. In effect, the government buys services from the organization. It is for the university to decide how to allocate resources between the various inputs to produce the contracted outputs.

The implications for financial managers of a shift from input specification to output specification are very large indeed. It represents a shift in the power relationship between the university and the external funding body, and also within the university between the managerial and the academic staff.

Broadly, the following methods in which government can fund universities are based on a combination of who provides the finances, the criteria used (input- or output-based) and the freedom to use the funds (Williams, 1993).

- The university submits an annual budget based on its cost estimate of its commitments to staff salaries and other essential inputs. It may bargain with the government over the percentage of this budget that is to be met. Grants are earmarked, which means that the university must spend its funds on the items specified by the government.
• The institution receives a single lump sum based on the grant received in the previous year plus or minus an increment, and is free to spend this money as it wishes within very broad legal limits.

• Funds are based on a formula reflecting past performance, but the university is able to spend its funds as it wishes once they are received. The basis of most formulae is student numbers (weighed by subject, level of study, etc.). But, increasingly, governments are trying to give ‘weight’ to the academic performance of students, the quality of training and the research undertaken.

• The government buys academic services from the institution. This is similar to the previous method, but funds are based on prospective future, rather than past, performance.

• The university sells its teaching, research and consultancy services to a wide variety of different customers, students, employers and public authorities. In practice, a combination of two or more of these models are used. For example, formulae may determine much of the funding while a proportion is determined by the sale of incremental student places to the government. However, it is usually possible to identify a dominant model corresponding to one of these ideal types.

In many countries the current trend in the allocation of funds is one of granting increasing financial autonomy to institutions through the allocation of block grants. Such block grants are, however, often calculated on the basis of output measures such as number of graduates. This movement goes along with the more general trend of making institutions accountable for their use of funding and creating incentives for desired results.

**Functions and practices of financial management**

The main functions of financial management include: the acquisition or mobilization of resources, the management of cash reserves, the allocation and utilization of resources, evaluation and auditing.

**ACQUISITION OR MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES**

The majority of resources are received from governmental authorities, or raised by tuition fees plus additions from a variety of other sources (such as the community, parents, charity, etc.). While public subsidies are likely to remain the major source of funding for higher education in most countries, they are becoming increasingly insufficient to ensure the financial viability of rapidly expanding higher education systems. Even when government funding is forthcoming, it is felt to be disadvantageous for a university to rely on a single financial source.

With less State support and limited opportunities to impose or increase fees, many universities have become involved in a wide spectrum of income-generating activities. In this context, it is important that university councils include representatives from business and industry in order to form partnerships and develop marketing methods (Sanyal, 1995; Williams, 1992).
Possible sources of funding include: private students; tuition, examination and residence fees; contracts for research, courses and consulting (usually a percentage of revenue goes to the department concerned); intellectual property rights (patents and books); commercial activities (printing, software); investments in productive areas; foreign aid; and endowments (this is a tradition in the United States and in prestigious universities in the United Kingdom and Japan).

Various routes have been followed to diversify funding sources. Traditionally, income is generated by undertaking research and service contracts on behalf of public and private companies. The returns on services, such as consultancies and developmental work, are expected to cover all costs and to provide the institution with a net income.

In many countries, public institutions are free to make use of these earnings, but in many others, it has been necessary to amend the regulations governing the finances of institutions, or to make other special provisions to enable them to retain their outside earnings. However, it is obvious that countries that are predominantly agrarian or that have a small, modern industrial sector, have limited scope for service contracts.

Another traditional way of raising financial support from industrial and commercial firms is in the form of grants or scholarships for specific academic or professional programmes. As far as developing countries are concerned, direct donations have been strongest in Asia, where the establishment of foundations offering financial support for students has been common. Private foundations, for instance, have developed in Indonesia, Thailand and the Republic of Korea. However, even in the most favourable scenario, these additional resources are not likely to represent a high proportion of an institution’s budget.

Any income-generating activity should be demand-oriented, locally specific and applicable to the modalities of a university. In addition, it should be tested by means of an experimental phase.

Encouraging departments to generate income is one of the newer functions of financial management. There are two ways in which individuals can be rewarded for undertaking activities that produce extra income:

- treat such activities as part of the normal work programme of the university and enable consultancy work to count as a criterion for promotion or senior posts; or
- more commonly, allow individuals to retain a part of the income that is generated, either for themselves, or for the department or centre in which the individual has a specific interest. Most often, income is shared among the institution to cover overhead expenses, the department and the individual or the team that did the work.

MANAGEMENT OF CASH RESERVES

The extent of this function depends largely on the overall legal framework within which the institution operates.
In countries where institutions have no financial autonomy and no cash reserves, this function is obviously non-existent. However, as more countries move in the direction of decentralization and devolved budgets, this function will become a very crucial one.

In countries with a well-developed banking system, properly managed cash reserves can generate significant income for the institution through interest and other benefits.

THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The allocation of resources reflects the priorities of the university. In the short run, these decisions are determined by the resources the institution has already acquired, but over time more options for changing allocations may become available. The current resource constraints and decisions are reflected in the budget plans drawn up for the coming financial year.

A basic budget plan shows the amount of funds to be raised and the proportion that is expected to be spent on each of the individual budget items. Some institutions are now keeping a proportion of 5–10% at the centre for strategic uses, such as incentives, innovations and information system development. Also, some institutions are separating teaching and research funds.

Other measures that have been adopted include:
- devolving financial responsibility and accountability closer to the operating units, as far as expertise and the information system permit—but not at the expense or abdication of all central control; and
- adopting formula funding, often based on enrolments, output of graduates and other performance indicators. Where governments use formulae for funding purposes, institutions often follow the same procedure for internal allocation and it may be necessary, when instituting formulae funding, to put aside some resources to assist certain faculties in the transition phase.

THE UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

Resource utilization is the phase where the budget plan is put into operation. Broadly interpreted, this task encompasses all of the management activities of staffing, running the premises, ordering supplies and so on, which incur expenditures. Other activities that bring in additional income, such as running a bookshop, hiring school premises or selling courses for a fee, may also be included.

The utilization of resources is also concerned with the protection of finances from fraud. Of all of its functions, this is the basic control function: it is the most traditional and by far the most widespread role of university financial managers. All of the other activities are, at least to some extent, dependent on this task being satisfactorily performed. As management information systems and auditing procedures improve, financial irregularities will be detected more easily and the regulations can be made less onerous.
Another crucial task for financial managers is monitoring the budget regularly throughout the year in order to compare actual income and expenditures under various budget items with planned expenditures. If there are differences between the real income and expenditure, as is likely, it is the job of management to correct them. This may involve adjusting certain expenditure plans or exerting better financial control over internal budget holders, such as the heads of departments, in order to either curtail or stimulate spending. An efficient management information system is important in keeping university leaders and administrators up-to-date on the academic and financial performance of the various segments of the institution.

Some special training in budgetary competence for all administrators and heads of units can prove extremely useful. Most higher education personnel have very little background in financial management, as may be indicated by:

- patterns of tardiness in meeting deadlines;
- mistakes in completing forms or in computation;
- failure to prioritize the uses of discretionary monies; and
- failure to communicate appropriate budgetary information to those concerned.

A series of short workshops or courses held internally can significantly increase cost consciousness and financial competence.

EVALUATION AND AUDITING

Evaluation and auditing are currently the least-developed aspects of financial management. With increased autonomy, higher education institutions have to be accountable for their academic and financial performances. While considerable educational evaluation is undertaken, very little of it relates the value of resources used to the resulting educational outcomes.

Despite the fact that educational outcomes are not easily measured, decisions have to be made, so there is certainly merit in quantifying where possible. There is no one absolute and correct way of costing. But when there are several ways to achieve an objective, if the same costing principles are adopted, relative costs can be measured. Cost analysis should aim at summarizing the net resource implications of an educational activity over a period of time, particularly if a change is involved. Cost per student per annum is a common measure, as is cost per student hour.

At present, educational evaluation is usually undertaken by government advisers and inspectors. Quite separately, auditing is normally restricted to checking the justness of transactions undertaken by educational administrators. Ideally, the auditors should assess the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilization by relating service outcomes to policy objectives (effectiveness) and resource utilization (efficiency). Since the major operating cost in education is teaching staff, cost-effectiveness is usually related to staff hours used and number of students benefiting.

In addition to the above, it is becoming more common for an institution to conduct its own self-evaluation, comparing performance both within the institution and with set strategic targets. It is advantageous to involve staff in setting targets and measuring actual performance.
Accountability exercises may be carried out by staff assessing work in other parts of the institution, so as to engender a sense of corporate responsibility. The objectives of each course have to be clearly defined, the percentage of students expected to succeed set, as well as optimum teaching hour investment in each course, and the education processes to be used (for example, audio-visual and practical aids increase cost-effectiveness). Once this task is completed, the information provides a stable database that may be reviewed each year.

The generation of useful performance indicators is becoming more important. Modern management systems depend upon comprehensive information, and a large proportion of the information needed concerns the direct or indirect use of financial resources. Any new financial management system must take on the routine production of financial effectiveness and efficiency indicators.

In the framework of accountability procedures, it is becoming common practice for institutions to publish an annual report that includes comparative data to show present and past results and budgets. Such reports are circulated not only to government departments but also to local authorities, industry and students.

Performance indicators can serve a useful role in the evaluation of the financial management of an institution, although it is clear that they do not tell the whole story.

**Strategies for financial management**

As mentioned in the introduction, national administrative systems have an important impact on the financial management strategies deployed by institutions.

On the one hand, even in systems with a high degree of administrative autonomy in its institutions, governments are concerned with particular institutional outcomes and performance. On the other hand, many governments in centrally planned systems have started to devolve administrative autonomy to the universities. In both cases, universities are expected to be accountable and to set up evaluation mechanisms that demonstrate that funds are used effectively and efficiently. One may therefore conclude that the trend in both self-regulated and formerly centrally planned and controlled systems is towards governmental steering at a distance (Sanyal & Martin, 1996; 1998).

**NATIONAL STRATEGIES**

Within this context, governments have applied different strategies to create a framework to facilitate creative financial management at the institutional level.

**Mechanisms for resource allocation**

With regard to resource allocation mechanisms, the following strategies have been attempted:

- line item budgets are replaced by lump sum budgets with a view to making
those who are close to the primary activities of higher education responsible for decisions;
• resources are allocated on the basis of funding formulae that include built-in output parameters (e.g., number of graduates) in order to give clear signs of expected outputs and outcomes, and to create an incentive for performance;
• a suggested set of performance indicators is developed by the government to indicate the criteria used to evaluate institutions, and to establish a monitoring instrument for the higher education system; and
• incentive budgeting and special-purpose funds are made available whereby government money is re-allocated to achieve certain impacts or to stimulate innovative projects in priority areas.

All of these governmental strategies try to combine the need for national co-ordination and the setting of guidelines with the aim of stimulating innovative behaviour within universities.

Allow for flexibility in the utilization of resources

Nowadays universities tend to find themselves in relatively unstable environments. They have to be able to react quickly to upcoming opportunities and threats. As a consequence, the rules pertaining to the utilization of public resources need to be flexible and to allow for creativity. Especially in systems using line items for input steering, governments have to create a legislative framework that will allow for flexibility in the disbursement of funds and budgeting, in carrying over funds at the end of the year, and in moving money from one budget line to another.

Create a framework conducive to diversification of resources

The legislative framework also needs to be conducive to the generation of supplementary income and the diversification of resources. More and more governments allow institutions, their departments or individuals to retain a part of the financial revenue that they have generated. Some institutions even supplement the income from their universities with the revenues from their services to new clientele. The autonomy to use the money thus gained on institutional projects, or to invest it in the market, constitutes an incentive for resource diversification.

Make new resources available through student loans

The introduction of student loans as a means of cost recovery for higher education is a measure that is increasingly being implemented to generate new resources at the systems level. Student loans are expected to make students more responsible for their programme of study. They are also expected to contribute to equity considerations since students of higher education benefit from a relatively high private rate of return on public investment in education. However, a student loan system requires an administrative framework to ensure that the loans are repaid with a reasonable default rate.
Develop a private higher education sector

Countries are encouraging the establishment or the development of universities in the private sector in order to reduce the financial burden on the State. This is expected to alleviate the pressure from secondary school leavers demanding places in public universities. This allows for expansion of higher education without lowering the quality of the education provided in the public sector.

Allow for financial planning at the institutional level

In the previous sections, it has been made clear that universities need to plan with a medium-term perspective. Strategic planning has been discussed as one of the approaches to systemize institutional development. In order to co-ordinate institutional and national planning, it is important to have a framework for joint negotiation and multi-year contracts that formalize the results of this negotiation.

Universities need to have funds released on a regular basis in order to allow financial managers to work properly.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES

Integrate financial management and institutional policies

Our research points out the importance of conceiving financial plans and budgets as a management tool for the co-ordination, control and evaluation of a university in the present context of financial crisis. It is also important that financial management aims and procedures be subordinate to overall institutional policies. Financial management should be a means for the implementation of strategic goals and objectives. Therefore, there needs to be close integration and joint planning of academic and administrative affairs. Programme-linked budgeting can be an instrument for the translation of institutional policy into a budget. Zero-based budgeting, which allows for the consideration of alternative patterns of expenditure, may create the flexibility for cutback and growth during the budgetary year.

Facilitate the generation of income and cost recovery at the basic unit level

If there has been a major shift in the functions of financial management, it is with respect to the new and increasingly important tasks of income generation and cost recovery. These tasks can be achieved through a variety of means:

- the commercialization and marketing of university programmes and activities;
- creating university-owned enterprises, commercializing patents and innovations;
- renting out of university facilities and space;
- increasing student fees for tuition and examinations, or fees for board and accommodation;
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- attracting employer sponsorship of students or trainees;
- attracting overseas students at differential fees or on a full-cost basis;
- managing the cash reserve in such a way that it generates as much interest as possible;
- investing in the stock market;
- attracting endowments for institutions, staff or residence halls by industry, commerce or philanthropists;
- bringing in gifts and endowments from alumni; and
- attracting research grants from national or international resources.

If a university intends to promote the generation of income and cost recovery, it is necessary to encourage the basic units and staff to do so, and to be willing to return an appropriate amount to the university. Consultancy work should be encouraged, and individuals or basic units should be allowed to retain a part of the income generated. Such work should be looked upon favourably in applications for promotion or senior posts.

A strategy geared towards income generation might also imply the need to create or strengthen those structures in the university concerned with marketing university services, such as the department of communication or extension services.

Reduce costs and increase efficiency

Given the financial crisis within many public sector budgets, universities are expected to increase the efficiency of resource utilization. They are expected to achieve the same level of effectiveness with fewer resources. This necessarily implies a reduction in their costs—but this should not be done at the expense of the quality of services provided.

The major expenditure in higher education is staff costs. These costs are relatively inflexible, since salary scales are normally decided by a public authority outside the university, or in negotiation with a trade union at the institutional level. For this reason, institutions usually try to cut back on non-academic costs such as capital investment, administrative costs, building and maintenance. However, it should be noted that some of these budgets, at least in the longer term, are essential for the quality of the academic services provided. Some strategies worth considering include:
- evaluating the cost of services provided by the university and considering if sub-contracting (e.g., for cleaning and maintenance) is more cost-effective;
- setting up mechanisms for cost analysis and trying to link costs and benefits, separating costs related to teaching and research; and
- developing costing norms and other standards, also with a view to fully establishing the cost of service activities offered by the institution to outside clientele.

Develop appropriate administrative structures

The above-mentioned strategies relating to the new functions of financial management imply that the supporting structures and mechanisms of financial management change. The following strategies adopted by universities have been identified:
devolving financial responsibility and accountability to those units who are in charge of major decisions at the academic level;
• developing the concept of an internal resource allocation authority, e.g., a resource planning committee to mobilize, allocate and monitor the utilization of resources;
• regrouping basic units to act as cost centres and restructuring the university's activities and financial accounting records around cost/profit centres;
• making cost centres sensitive to cost implications by charging all programme costs to them (e.g., cost of renting and maintaining space and equipment);
• upgrading the role of the financial manager within the university hierarchy;
• strengthening the internal audit department; and
• centralizing the purchasing function in one department in order to exert better control on all purchases.

A sensitive question for most institutions relates to the desired degree of financial autonomy to be given to the basic units. It is advisable for the central administrative level to retain a part of the budget for innovative and exploratory initiatives, in order to keep a margin for the implementation of initiatives in the common interest. Thus, seed money may be made available for projects deemed important to the institution as a whole.

**Develop an appropriate management information system**

Many of the strategies already mentioned imply the availability of timely and accurate data, be they related to a new type of relationship between the institution and its national authority or related to the need for institutional monitoring of policies. With the complexity of administrative procedures, a management information system (MIS) becomes a necessary tool to produce such timely information on a regular basis. However, a MIS must be adapted to the degree of devolution of administrative authority prevailing in the institution. It should inform everyone with the authority to commit funds about the main indicators relating to the financial health of the institution. Therefore, it should generate financial effectiveness and efficiency indicators and assist in the production of the annual report by providing university management statistics and performance indicators.

A MIS should also fulfil the following purposes:
• make available transparent information at all institutional levels on all incoming resources;
• contribute to the development of a clear picture of all costs and benefits derived from programme activities (evaluation); and
• provide information on who suffers and how bills are paid if government funds are insufficient.

**Provide adequate training**

The changes in structures and procedures in the area of financial management can only take place if the persons in charge are willing and able to implement, on a
New strategies for the management of finance

daily basis, the necessary changes. Institutions committed to devolving administrative responsibility to basic units will have to combine change in procedures and techniques as well as introduce new or different tools such as a MIS, as well as promote an integrated programme of training for academic decision-makers.

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THE RECOGNITION OF STUDIES AND QUALIFICATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A CHALLENGE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Dimitri Beridze

Less than two years separate us from the next century and a new millennium. The students of today, some 80 million young women and men, will be the main actors, designers and decision-makers of the society of tomorrow. How do they want to see this future world and their future society? The World Conference on Higher Education to be held by UNESCO from 5 to 9 October 1998 in Paris, France will provide an opportunity to address this major issue.

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, humanity is witnessing the development of a global society, one important consequence of which is the ever-increasing mobility of people. More than 1.5 million students are studying abroad today and their number will increase further in the coming years. In addition, virtual academic mobility is rendered possible by new information technologies.

Knowledge is universal, a part of the heritage of mankind. However, in reality, access to knowledge and learning has not always been easy. Because knowledge is constantly being developed and technologies being renewed, their acquisition and mastery are indispensable for students. Academic mobility aims to facilitate this important task and can be encouraged by the mutual recognition, by institutions

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Dimitri Beridze (Russian Federation)
Graduate of Tbilisi State Pedagogical Institute (1970); doctoral degree (Philology) from the same institution (1974); former senior researcher, head of the Post-Graduate Department, executive secretary of the Institute of Information on Social Sciences (INION), USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow (1974–83); programme specialist, head of the Unit for Academic Mobility at UNESCO Secretariat, Paris (1983 until present).

and authorities throughout the world, of studies, qualifications and skills obtained in other countries.

UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (1996-2001) fully endorses the promotion of activities pertaining to mobility and recognition of qualifications. Academic mobility becomes the essential tool to implement the four principles of education identified by the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. The achievement of academic mobility, also considered one of the basic pillars of academic freedom, is largely dependent on the recognition of the status of teachers in higher education and their basic, necessary working conditions. Therefore, the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-ninth session adopted the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel (11 November 1997).

UNESCO's action in the field of academic mobility is almost as old as the Organization itself. Over the last fifty years, UNESCO has been collecting information and carrying out studies on issues of mobility and the recognition of qualifications. Study abroad, published biennially since 1948, is one of the most comprehensive international guides to scholarships and courses available in all post-secondary academic and professional disciplines. Seven titles in the series Studies on international equivalencies of degrees appeared between 1969 and 1981 and led to the preparation of the World guide to higher education. This book is now in its third edition and is unique in its coverage of national higher education systems.

UNESCO's interest in academic mobility by all Member States goes back to 1964. At that time the Executive Board of UNESCO, at its sixty-sixth session, requested the Director-General to submit a preliminary evaluation of the technical and legal aspects of the matter, including the advisability of elaborating an international convention or a recommendation on the equivalence of secondary school-leaving certificates and of university diplomas and degrees. Since that date, the concept and nature of the action to be followed by UNESCO has been repeatedly reviewed by successive sessions of UNESCO's governing bodies. While maintaining the ultimate objective—namely the elaboration of an international standard-setting instrument—but keeping in mind the various difficulties involved, Member States reached the conclusion that the matter could be approached more successfully at the regional level. Consequently, six regional instruments of the convention type were adopted during the 1970s and the early 1980s, beginning with the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (June 1975), followed over the next ten years by five similar conventions covering all regions of the world.

Moreover, in a move towards a single universal convention, the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-seventh session held in 1993 took a major decision in the field of higher education by adopting an international Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education. This instrument aims to promote wider access to educational resources worldwide in order to improve the quality of higher education through enhanced mobility for students,
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teachers, researchers and professionals. It is also aimed at alleviating brain drain by reducing the difficulties encountered by those that have been trained or educated abroad. The recommendation supplements the set of regional conventions and suggests a number of new measures at the national and international levels in order to strengthen the application of the regional conventions.

UNESCO has made progress within the legal framework provided by the regional conventions and the international recommendation. These standards are adopted by the Member States (at the international and regional levels) and serve as guiding principles in the recognition of educational qualifications. In its turn, this legal framework facilitates the creation and development of a specific frame in the form of working mechanisms and bodies (at regional, national and institutional levels) which are in charge of recognition matters and, therefore, bring legal provisions closer to the needs of users. National information centres for academic mobility and recognition (already well known in Europe: European Community Network for National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC)) have been established in 145 States in all regions of the world.

For the five regional conventions and the single international one, governmental committees in charge of their application have been established and meet once every two years to consider, among other things, national reports provided by the States Parties on the results achieved and on the obstacles encountered in their application. In several cases, these committees have established working groups to study issues of particular interest. These reports and those of the working groups are published so as to advance common reflection and knowledge on recognition issues. In 1992, the committees met together within the framework of UNESCO’s Congress on the Recognition of Studies and Academic Mobility, to adopt a joint work plan.

As of March 1998, the regional conventions have obtained over 120 ratifications from Member States. The issue of ratification is a permanent concern of the UNESCO Secretariat and it receives a lot of attention on a daily basis. Those Member States who have not yet joined the conventions have at least two common concerns (as expressed orally by official representatives and government authorities, and sometimes in writing to the Secretariat of UNESCO). Some Member States suppose that membership in these conventions will weaken the position of national students vis-à-vis their international cohorts and will have negative implications on the national labour market by leading to unemployment among qualified national youth. This phenomenon could be identified as a fear of an international opening necessarily accompanied by greater competition and a fear of becoming a loser. Another common concern, more characteristic in the past to developing and the least-developed countries, but nowadays openly expressed by many industrialized States, is that by promoting academic mobility at the regional and international levels, the conventions encourage brain drain and thus contribute to the intellectual and economic impoverishment of States and of entire regions.

Thus, the seemingly purely academic and technical issues of student mobility and the recognition of educational qualifications turn into a dilemma of a world order confronting all societies. On the one hand, everybody agrees that knowledge
Academic mobility is one of the principal means in higher education for the advancement of knowledge. The Constitution of UNESCO, drawn up in November 1945, places emphasis on the "unrestricted pursuit of objective truth [...] the free exchange of ideas and knowledge", and on the "international exchange of persons active in the fields of education, science and culture". These principles underlie the activities of the Organization in the field of higher education.

On the other hand, since the early 1960s, UNESCO's Member States (particularly developing countries) have been confronted with the dangerous trend of massive brain drain and are searching for solutions to reverse the situation. In the cases of some countries it takes the form of a national tragedy. International recognition of studies and qualifications in higher education by all competent authorities and institutions was considered by UNESCO as a means of increasing the mobility of people in higher education and, at the same time, as one of the remedies to sustain and ultimately to reverse the brain drain phenomenon.

The joint work plan of the six intergovernmental committees

One of the aims pursued by the six intergovernmental committees when meeting in November 1992 was to give a fresh stimulus and a truly international dimension to activities in this field. Before that date, and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the regional conventions, intergovernmental committees in charge of the application of the regional conventions were set up in all UNESCO regions. They studied problems, through meetings, studies, recommendations and information exchange, mainly at the regional level.

However, it is common knowledge, corroborated by statistical data, that international mobility in higher education takes place predominantly at the inter-regional level. And recent experience related to the adoption of the international recommendation has indicated that there is considerable interest among Member States in broader-based international co-operation in this field.

One of the ways for UNESCO to approach the issue of recognition of educational qualifications at the international level is to develop co-operation among the regional committees in charge of the application of the six conventions. Such co-operation is specifically mentioned in the texts of the conventions and has been discussed at all sessions of the committees. Furthermore, the General Conference of UNESCO, at its twenty-sixth session held in 1991, invited the Director-General to 'support the development of closer co-operation between the Regional Committees of the existing conventions through exchanges of information, the undertaking of joint activities, the organization of joint meetings, etc.' Requests were made to UNESCO—which provides the Secretariat of the committees—to examine the possible ways and means for transforming this decision into reality.

The first joint meeting of all six regional committees was held on 5 November 1992 within the framework of the congress. It was called upon, on the one hand,
to take stock of progress made so far through inter-committee co-operation but more particularly, to discuss the needs, ways and means by which this co-operation could be further strengthened and rendered more practically oriented and more efficient. The meeting resulted in the adoption of a joint work plan consisting of five joint actions, each of them bringing together a series of activities. The joint actions are as follows:

1. Exchange of information and documentation between the regional committees and mutual participation in their meetings;
2. Inter-regional co-operation among the national information centres for the recognition of studies and for academic mobility;
3. Inter-regional training activities for personnel in charge of the application of the regional conventions;
4. Development of capacities for information gathering, processing and dissemination to facilitate the recognition of studies and qualifications in higher education; and
5. Undertaking of research aimed at facilitating the recognition of studies and qualifications of higher education.

Implementation of the joint work plan started in January 1993 in close collaboration among the national authorities representing Member States within the regional committees, the secretariats of the regional committees located in UNESCO's regional offices and UNESCO Headquarters.

The work plan gave a strong impulse to the work of the committees and is being successfully implemented by them. The dissemination of information, so crucial in any type of international co-operation, is becoming more regular and comprehensive. Furthermore, the documentation produced by the committees is becoming substantially more solid, and training activities are now better structured than in the past and increasingly relevant to the needs of national and institutional authorities.

The six intergovernmental committees in charge of the application of the regional conventions will meet in their second joint meeting from 29 September to 2 October 1998. They will review the results obtained over the last six years of their work and examine the prospects for future action.

The first phase of the implementation of the joint work plan has permitted concentration and streamlining of UNESCO's action in the field of academic mobility and recognition. It has also permitted the development, over the last six years, of the mechanisms and schemes aiming at a better knowledge of academic mobility and recognition problems. The second phase should permit the consolidation of the process launched in 1992 and should assure transfer of knowledge and practice (in the field of academic mobility and recognition) between all regions and in all geographical axes (with particular emphasis on North-South, South-South and East-West relationships). It should encompass all Member States of UNESCO and aim at their involvement, without exception, in the work of conventions related to the recognition of studies and qualifications. Therefore, the strategy to be followed for the second phase should be global, based on continuity and on constant renewal. The continuity could be assured through the maintenance of the
mechanisms proven to be useful (such as regional committees, networks of national information centres) and the renewal of work could be reached by developing an anticipatory action.

**Trends and prospects in academic mobility, the recognition of studies and qualifications**

The developments which occurred in the world in the last decade, and more particularly in the European Region of UNESCO (which historically has received the greatest number of international students), indicate several shifts in the area of academic mobility and highlight certain concerns common to both major recipient and sender countries.

**BRAIN DRAIN**

One concern relates to the ever-increasing trend of brain drain and its devastating consequences on developing countries. This concern could be expressed as a rejection of unidirectional academic mobility or, in other words, of a ‘one-way ticket’. In the 1990s, the relevant educational authorities and also a part of the public in industrialized countries have become more receptive to brain drain related issues and are searching for new and innovative solutions to remedy the phenomenon. The conditions are being created that should allow for a more concerted action in this domain by bringing together all of the interested parties: regional and national governmental and non-governmental educational and other authorities of both recipient and sender countries. Student representatives and economic sector representatives should also be included. The latter, in particular multinational companies, play an increasingly important role, not only in the globalization of the world’s economy and in the professional mobility process, but also in the field of academic mobility. They achieve this by providing more opportunities to their employees for training at the higher education level, including training abroad. Nowadays it is also better understood that the former categorization and opposition of industrialized countries as the only winners and developing countries as the only losers might no longer be entirely valid. All States, to varying extents, are losers when academic mobility turns into the loss of talent for national development.

While recognition issues should remain central for intergovernmental committees, they should not lose sight of more global objectives: international peace and national development. The attainment of these goals may call for different, much more pro-active strategies and policies in the field of academic mobility and recognition. These policies should lead to solutions that would encompass both the necessity to further encourage international academic mobility as a means for the advancement of knowledge and for building a global society of tomorrow, and also the necessity to reverse the brain drain as a means to assure sustainable national development. These objectives should be kept in mind as the committees consider proposals for their joint work plan for 1999-2005.
In order to reconcile the two interrelated but also opposite trends—that of desired academic mobility and brain drain—UNESCO is searching for solutions and has identified some promising venues. One of them is the inter-university co-operation scheme, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, established in 1991 and considered by UNESCO Member States to be a strong stimulus for academic mobility and the rapid transfer of knowledge through twinning, networking and other linking arrangements. It aims at improving the relevance and quality of higher education and its contribution to national development through the delivery of courses and programmes of study and of research at an international standard. Almost all of the 260 or so agreements that have been signed by UNESCO with institutions participating in the programme aim at building up a common teaching and research programme in order to facilitate, inter alia, the recognition of qualifications obtained from such international programmes of study.

Another example of the support scheme aiming to ensure the return of talents to their countries of origin and, thus, to reduce the brain drain is that of the TALVEN (Talento Venezolano en el Exterior) project. This project was developed in late 1994 by the Venezuelan authorities (co-ordinated by the Permanent Delegation of Venezuela to UNESCO) in collaboration and with the financial support of UNESCO. Activities of TALVEN have since ensured some ninety short-term study visits to Venezuela of high calibre experts (originally from Venezuela and now living abroad). These activities included, among others, the holding of a series of seminars on the creation of small software enterprises (held at Simon Bolivar University), a seminar on AIDS (held at the National Academy of Medicine), a seminar on the economy (co-organized with the Central Bank of Venezuela) and a seminar on molecular biology (co-organized with the Centre of Medical Teaching, Trinidad). UNESCO intends to pursue the development of TALVEN-type projects in other countries and regions. At the same time, it should be noted that projects of this type require strong financial support and they can only be efficiently developed and sustained when financial sources and partners (other than UNESCO) are involved.

ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION ISSUES

In the 1990s, international academic mobility is more spread out and diversified than ever before. The number of States and institutions of higher education providing access to international students is rapidly growing. New courses and programmes are being offered to international students. Academic mobility has taken new forms, including the creation of new diplomas and other national and international educational qualifications. The latter are increasingly offered by institutions that label themselves as international. A number of these higher education establishments are authorized to confer degrees on behalf of other establishments.

This situation may have multiple consequences, both positive and negative, and in particular with regard to the quality of higher education. Under these circumstances, it becomes important, if not imperative, to develop activities relative to accreditation and evaluation issues (covering both institutions and their programmes of study) within a common framework.
RECOGNITION OF SKILLS

The development and diversification of higher education finds its expression in the diversification of the student body and of the teaching personnel. Both the UNESCO policy paper on Change and development of higher education (1995) and the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (1996) clearly indicate not only the spectacular quantitative growth of the student body but also the diversity of student and teacher populations by age group, acquired experiences and competencies.

Therefore, being accompanied by the appearance of a new category of student and academic staff, higher education is confronted with the necessity to integrate them and to accommodate their knowledge, practical skills and competencies into its own academic requirements. As a consequence, the recognition of skills and of acquired experiences and competencies becomes most important—not only for individuals and the higher education establishments concerned, but also for entire systems. In the end, it is directly linked to the observance and accomplishment of Article 26.1 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights which stipulates that ‘higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.’

FINANCING OF INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC MOBILITY

Academic mobility, as any human development, requires permanent enhancement and capital investment. At the same time, it is the area for higher education institutions where the return from investment in financial terms is most visible and significant. The 28 November 1994 issue of Newsweek included an article concerning the trends in study of Asian students in American colleges as seen from the perspective of a trade issue. This article reports, among other things, that the United States Department of Commerce, which counts foreign students studying in America as an exported service, ranks college education as the nation’s fifth largest export, behind freight transport, but ahead of banks. The above trend is a reality. It occurs because the budgetary provisions for higher education around the world are being sharply cut and many institutions have to search for the funds to permit their future existence and development.

Over the past decade, there has been a significant shift in the financing of international academic mobility. A statistical analysis of the contents of the 1995 and 1997 editions of Study abroad indicates around a 18% decrease in the fellowships provided and supported by international organizations and a 41% decrease in those offered by national institutions. At the same time, it is not evident that this loss of investment in academic mobility is entirely recovered through other public or private sources.

A careful and thorough study of financing issues, preferably in collaboration with other international and regional organizations knowledgeable of the issue of financing and effects of internationalization in higher education, should permit the establishment of comprehensive statistical data and the development of new strategies aimed to enhance international academic mobility.

While the development of common markets and of cross-border trade remains a major driving force for international co-operation and regional integration, it is also clear that it results in the increased movement, not only of capital and of goods, but also of people. Therefore, an additional effort on behalf of the academic community is required in order to recognize their competencies and professional skills. Moreover, with the rapid development of science and technology and the ever-changing requirements of the employment market, the concept of 'lifelong education', advocated by UNESCO since the early 1960s, has become an imperative.

Nowadays, the trend of international co-operation in higher education, as well as in other domains, is best demonstrated in its regional, and even more in its sub-regional, dimension. The rapid development of certain older regional groupings like the Council of Europe, and the birth of new sub-regional groupings, like MERCOSUR (in Latin America) and NAFTA (in Northern America), are creating new opportunities with regard to academic mobility and the issue of recognition of educational qualifications.

The best example of this regional approach is the new Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (adopted in Lisbon on 11 April 1997), and currently developed through the joint efforts of UNESCO and the Council of Europe. It represents a major innovation not only from the viewpoint of its contents and orientation, but also as an important step forward in terms of regional co-operation in Europe. It should be highlighted that this joint convention might inspire other regions to co-operate more closely with regional and sub-regional governmental organizations in order to set up similar agreements. Such an approach could be very beneficial in as far as it reflects the well-known principle of international life: think globally and act locally.

It is also true that such an effort is only realistic when certain necessary preconditions exist (like the political willingness and readiness of several regional actors to embark upon an issue of common interest). For example, in Africa, regional leadership could be offered by the Organization of African Unity and in Latin America and the Caribbean it could be the Organization of American States or the Latin American Parliament. In Asia and the Pacific region, due to the fact that this UNESCO region has some forty-two Member States and the multilateral governmental organizations established in the region to promote international economic co-operation are mostly of sub-regional nature, like ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), PECC (Pacific Economic Co-operation Council) or even APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum), the most appropriate approach might be at the sub-regional level.

Regardless of the difficulties or complexities of different regional settings, they should not prevent governments and the academic community from pursuing co-operation in higher education, including the issues of academic mobility and recognition. Conventions adopted under the auspices of UNESCO are important in so far as they establish common principles and create a framework for other bilateral or
multilateral agreements at all levels (national, local and institutional). Therefore, legislators should concern themselves with this particular aspect of international law and make concerted efforts in this regard in concert with the academic community, including various regional and local NGOs active in higher education, including professional and student organizations.

The contribution of such organizations to academic mobility and to recognition matters should not be underestimated or limited to a passive role. First, the principles of academic freedom and of institutional autonomy enjoyed by higher education institutions push them to be the main actors. Second, the academic community is the first to profit (in terms of quality) from the internationalization of higher education and, therefore, should be much more involved in all matters concerning the recognition of educational qualifications. Some people believe that the existing dilemmas of State versus individual, or of central versus local authority, will be resolved when those responsible for education, and for higher education in particular, at all levels have the same right to speak their minds and to take decisions as the decision-makers responsible for other sectors of human activity.

One example of successful co-operation between UNESCO and the Council of Europe was already mentioned. It involves co-operation with other European partners (the Commission of European Communities and the Nordic Council of Ministers). Internationalization of higher education has a high priority in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which has led a series of workshops on professional services where the issue of advancing liberalization through regulatory reform is addressed.

Multilateral governmental and non-governmental agencies from regions other than Europe should extend this co-operation. This emerging dialogue between different stakeholders in both internationalization of higher education and international trade in professional services may require co-ordination by a global infrastructure at the level of the United Nations.

International and intergovernmental organizations, like UNESCO, have a continuing obligation to keep up with the changes that have been occurring around the world in the last few decades. The repercussions of these changes on higher education need to be dealt with by means of new, fresh and different approaches. Without denying all of the positive steps that have been taken to improve the process of international exchange in higher education, it is nevertheless necessary to ask all stakeholders in higher education whether the strategy used over the last four decades is still valid and, if so, what should be improved or changed so as to make our action more relevant and efficient.

What should be done, for example, to combat such phenomena as the proliferation of post-secondary institutions that offer low-quality courses and programmes and deliver educational qualifications of no value for employers, while maintaining and even increasing enrolments, including students from abroad? What means and mechanisms will be the most appropriate for creating a truly productive dialogue and co-operation among students, scholars and key administrators on issues of academic mobility? With regard to the UNESCO conventions, are their mecha-
nisms working efficiently and are their reporting systems useful tools in the monitoring process? What are the problems encountered by international students and how helpful are UNESCO conventions in resolving them? What are the other venues, apart from setting normative instruments, to be explored in order to promote proper academic mobility and to facilitate the recognition of qualifications earned in higher education? How will new information technologies (NIT) contribute to this endeavour and what will be the pitfalls to avoid in the ‘information society’ with regard to mobility and recognition in higher education? Is it not timely to fully explore the possibilities offered by NIT in order to furnish governments, universities, credential evaluators and students with modern tools facilitating both mobility and recognition of educational qualifications? For example, is it feasible to launch projects, at the regional and international levels, aimed at the preparation of software for recognition purposes (a kind of a computerized ‘diploma converter’) or projects aimed at better protection of educational documents (certificates, diplomas, degrees, etc)? What other types of support should be provided to facilitate international co-operation in the field of academic mobility and recognition?

The forthcoming World Conference on Higher Education will be the most important opportunity for the Organization to deepen its reflection and future-oriented analysis. It will be the first time in UNESCO’s fifty-year history that a major international conference will be entirely devoted to higher education. The decision to hold this conference, being preceded and based on the series of regional conferences,2 is indicative of the interest attached to this area by UNESCO Member States. It also reflects the maturity reached by the Organization itself, capable today of addressing such complex policy issues as those of the future agenda of higher education.

The internationalization of higher education will be one of the main interests and discussion topics. From the perspective of academic mobility and recognition, this conference could be a turning point in so far as it should permit the formulation of proposals for action, including the identification of new priorities and the building of new partnerships. Some of these new partnerships are already internationally recognized and fully deserve to be forged and further developed.

Higher education plays a decisive role in the modern world and receives particular attention from Member States. The World Conference on Higher Education will afford an opportunity to take stock and to determine the future lines of emphasis of higher education with a view to improved responses to the problems of the relevance of educational content, graduate unemployment and complementarity between the different levels of education. This conference will therefore serve as a ‘laboratory of ideas’ for the new university of the ‘global village’. The regional committees in charge of the application of the conventions are invited to contribute to this process. The joint work plan of the six intergovernmental committees for the years 1999-2005, once discussed and adopted, may serve the above purpose. It should be proposed to the World Conference on Higher Education for adoption as an integral part of the global action plan to be drawn up by the conference.

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The topic with which we are concerned is of monumental importance to our societies. One need only scan the main daily papers of any European country at the time when the secondary school-leaving or university entrance examinations are in progress to observe their social impact. In fact, entering university is one of the most problematic and significant transitions in an individual's personal, professional and working life, underscoring the need for the transition between those two stages to be viewed from a European perspective. To that end, this article will begin by offering a few general thoughts to place the topic in a theoretical framework, then go on to describe the most salient trends observed in Europe and, lastly, highlight a few experiences that may be useful for the reform of both those levels of education.

Thoughts on entrance systems

The following paragraphs contain some reflections on the path followed by students on their journey from secondary to university education and the content of the examinations they sit.

Reflections on the transition process

Experts and education policy-makers in developed countries are virtually agreed on the need for a selection procedure in the transition from one educational level to the next. The following are among the arguments most commonly cited:

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Ferran Ferrer (Spain)
Lecturer in comparative education at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Department of Systematic and Social Pedagogy. His general field of study is the countries of the European Union and particularly the evaluation, administration, financing and management of education systems. He is currently conducting research into social control of the school, the indicators of education systems and the processes of transition from secondary to higher education. E-mail: f.ferrer@cc.uab.es
growth in demand;
• scarce economic resources;
• glut of degrees on the labour market; and
• the need to guarantee that those entering these centres are adequately prepared
to continue higher education in the subjects selected.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the establishment of a selection procedure for the
transition does not in itself explain the disparities in higher education enrolment rates.

Ultimately, the number of students entering university is influenced in no small
measure by the characteristics of an education system, its selectivity, its relative diver­
sification, the availability of non-university post-secondary education, the public and
private systems' level of institutional development and the supply of university places,
to name but a few. Hence, we find that countries where the students who have passed
the secondary school-leaving examination enjoy fairly direct access to the univer­
sity (that is, countries with low selectivity) have a lower enrolment rate than one
would normally expect. This fact is best explained by, inter alia, more selective
secondary education that steers students towards non-university options during
the course of their studies.

It is also interesting to note that a university's autonomy is sometimes equated
with its capacity to select students on the basis of school-leaving examination marks.
Surely, this is a somewhat restrictive view of university autonomy, using only a handful of known results and disregarding everything that goes before and after. The uni­
versity could not therefore be involved in determining criteria, preparing and cor­
recting tests or setting pass marks.

Research that has been in progress for some time shows that access to higher
education institutions should combine students' secondary-school performance
(grades) with external examination marks. The problem posed by the comparative
assessment of the academic records of students wishing to enter university is offset
by the fact that it views the student's education as a continuum, as a cumulative
process, and not as a series of piecemeal actions.

The idea that particular aptitudes and motivations—transcending the knowl­
dge needed for pursuing higher education studies—are closely linked to subsequent
academic success or failure is supported by international studies. As UNESCO rightly
points out (1995, p. 41):

There is general agreement, however, that the quality of students in higher education depends
in the first place on the aptitudes and motivations of those leaving secondary education and
wishing to pursue studies at the higher level.

It must be realized in this connection that the level of knowledge acquired is quite
possibly a necessary but insufficient requirement for university entrance.

THOUGHTS ON GRADUATION AND TRANSITION EXAMINATIONS

The transition from secondary to higher education culminates in the secondary school­
leaving examinations or in the attempt to gain access to higher education. Given
The system of university entrance: a European view

their special importance, some of the aspects we consider essential will be developed in the following paragraphs.

First and foremost, the role of the secondary school-leaving examination—common to many countries—has been changing with time. Initially intended to attest to the acquisition of the basic knowledge required for the baccalaureate and as a prerequisite for university entrance, this intermediate test between the two stages has been turned into an entrance requirement due to soaring secondary education enrolment rates and increased demand for higher education places. More specifically, school-leaving examination results are used to determine which studies a student will pursue and in which institution. This expansion of the examination’s original purpose signified that evaluation for university entrance was made solely on the basis of the knowledge acquired for the baccalaureate. Hence, the more developed countries were constrained to amend their legislation to incorporate other systems and criteria more consistent with the university requirements of academic maturity, motivation, attitude towards study and so on.

As Keeves (1994, p. 15) points out with regard to this type of examination:

The two instrumental functions of national examinations, selection and certification, are not only different in kind but they also require different types of information from examinations. Selection requires the capacity to discriminate accurately near appropriate cut-off points. Certification requires measuring attainment of a clearly specified standard of competence.

European countries have endeavoured to separate the two functions through reform of their systems of access to higher education. Certain countries have chosen to distinguish between the two types of test, using the former to measure knowledge and cognitive skills and the latter to evaluate the individual’s capacity to learn in the particular conditions that prevail at a university.

Research conducted in countries with extensive experience in these matters shows that neither test on its own is a useful indicator of a prospective student’s likely academic performance, whereas this is reliably predicted by a combination of the two.

There are two distinct positions on the question of secondary school-leaving examinations. On the one hand, there are countries that prefer to accord priority to the objective evaluation criterion and devise standard tests that permit unanimous marking (that is, not leaving the result to one examiner’s personal discretion); on the other hand, there are those inclined towards the overall learning criterion and that therefore devise tests for measuring the more qualitative aspects of education.

It would be foolhardy to establish a clear dichotomy between the two options, hence the attempt by countries with a long tradition of certification examinations to combine both types in a single test.

Another significant aspect of these examinations lies in the uses that can be made of the students’ results. More particularly, in the social sphere these may be as follows:
• giving the national curriculum feedback by adapting the ultimate objectives of the baccalaureate and the contents and skills required in the certification examination to each other; and
• monitoring the quality of schools through comparison, in order to take steps to improve those that obtain poor results and to account to society for the investment made at this level of education.

At the same time, the test can have an important social value at the personal level as a passport to the labour market or other non-university studies and as a signpost to future academic and professional life.

Lastly, it would be a serious mistake to ignore the examination’s impact on certain aspects of the teaching-learning process in schools, mainly student motivation, pre-examination tension, attitudes to the various subjects of the secondary education curriculum, students’ gender-related skills and so on. This last aspect calls for extreme caution in an examination setting, systematically avoiding models that favour or penalize one gender, which would indubitably undermine the principle of equal opportunity.

International trends

The following paragraphs describe international trends, grouped into three broad categories: trends in the higher education model; trends in the transition from secondary to higher education; and trends in school-leaving and transition examinations.

TRENDS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION MODEL

In recent years, higher education in developed countries has been undergoing a thorough transformation that not only affects its structure and internal functioning, but takes a new look at the wisdom of abiding by the rules traditionally laid down for it by society. Whether for external reasons (demographic evolution, economic crisis, etc.) or internal factors specific to the institutions themselves (assumption of new functions, diversified supply, growing competitiveness), the fact remains that we are passing through a key historic period for the future of this level of education.

There is, however, some diversity in international situations. Judge (1994, p. 262–63) aptly describes the way in which these situations are interpreted depending on the country of origin:

Our French colleague sees higher education in the United States as a jungle: luxuriant, jumbled, noisy, undisciplined, diverse, ungovernable, unsystematic. To our American colleague, the English education world is not so much a jungle as a zoo: caged, segmented, ordered, domesticated, respected, inflexible, albeit generally docile. But English people admire France as one would a circus, where all is planned and perfectly orchestrated, elegant, geometrical, traditional, expert, always moving towards the place indicated by the tamer.
In any event, despite this diversity, some trends may be identified that are more or less common to all European countries. This article will focus on those most closely linked to the topic of access.

There have traditionally been two higher education sectors: the university and the non-university. In their policy on admissions, educational options available, equivalence of degrees and diplomas, and the duration and role of research, most countries tend to treat the two sectors as one, although the action of each is heavily influenced by its own tradition.

During the 1980s, many developed countries witnessed increased diversification of the supply of higher education, both from the institutional point of view and with regard to the courses organized in each centre, with the idea of providing citizens with better quality higher education. In any event, the specific factors that motivated that diversified expansion are essentially:

- greater social demand by the population for higher education;
- the need to cater to increasingly diverse student needs, such as combined work and part-time study;
- the emergence of new professional, technological and management fields; and
- the expansion of knowledge itself, which generates the emergence of new disciplines and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches.

There is also a marked tendency for higher-education institutions to be awarded greater autonomy in various fields. Recently, autonomy in the management of economic resources, financing and admissions policy has been added to the traditional curricular autonomy enjoyed by many of them.

Be that as it may, there is widespread concern about maintaining the traditional high quality of the European university, owing mainly to overcrowding caused by increased secondary education attendance rates and the arrival of the baby boomers.

In this last connection, the system of numerus clausus, which began as an ad hoc expedient for some specific types of study in which saturation of the labour market often made it necessary to regulate the entry of new professionals, was transformed into a broader policy intended to slow down the influx of new students at that level of education. All this notwithstanding, there has been a significant increase in the supply of university places.

One of the most disturbing problems in European countries is the high percentage of first-year repeaters and the high dropout rate. The time it takes to obtain a first university degree obviously far exceeds the period envisaged in theory.

In this last connection, given the current economic crisis, governments are increasingly reconsidering whether the expenditure on higher education is sufficiently cost-effective under the current financing facilities. For this reason, many countries, while maintaining traditional grants, are looking to increase university fees and develop other financing formulae for students, such as soft loans to be reimbursed once the students have completed their studies and secured their first job.

Lastly, State control of higher education appears to be increasingly indirect. Given the broad margin of autonomy, as indicated above, the administration’s action
focuses mainly on monitoring the results of the various higher education centres, using State funding of places to motivate the high performers and to penalize those that are unsatisfactory. In any case, there would seem to be some challenge to the 'enrolment numbers' criterion as the only valid one for the financing of higher education.

**TRENDS IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSITION FROM SECONDARY TO HIGHER EDUCATION**

The following are the most notable trends in the transition from secondary to higher education.

All countries establish selection procedures for both types of higher education (university and non-university). These selection procedures are of different types and often depend on each country's tradition and rules of evaluation, and the model of secondary and higher education that it has adopted. In some countries—France is a case in point—various transition and selection models exist side by side.

The general criterion for access to higher education in most European countries is the award of a secondary school-leaving certificate obtained on the basis of an external examination. It is also a means of certifying and ensuring that minimum curricular objectives have been met at the end of that phase of the education system.

However, it must be borne in mind that although this certificate served in the past as an authentic pre-university filter, now the high percentage of students obtaining it have made it no more than a minimum requirement for entrance to higher education establishments. Therefore, there is a growing need for further requirements: specific results in the certificate examination, additional tests, interviews, written reports containing a curriculum vitae, personal motivation, etc. Such practices, which used to be exclusive to specific types of study for which it was deemed necessary to have more rigorous selection procedures or to ensure that particular skills were acquired prior to entry, have been progressively extended to higher education as a whole.

The gradual application of the system of *numerus clausus* in higher education centres in most European countries, coupled with the introduction of these new selection procedures, means that the traditional principle of a right to access to higher education has been at least partially compromised. The application of this principle, recognized by law in many European countries, meant that any student who had obtained the secondary school-leaving certificate was entitled to enter those centres. Nowadays all it means is that this principle may be applied, but not necessarily for the candidate's preferred centre or type of study. It would appear to be this very situation—with some students obliged to pursue a course of study other than their first choice—that has led to the alarming repetition, drop-out and course-change rates observed in some European countries (Halsey, 1993, p. 134-36).

At the same time, the debate on whether the State should intervene more or less in the transition between secondary and higher education must be viewed on the basis of three minimum parameters of interpretation:
• the country’s overall degree of centralization;
• the tradition of greater or lesser autonomy of the university as a whole and of
  each university in particular; and
• the country’s political and administrative structures.
We find that each of the educational reforms carried out in Europe in recent years
to change the processes of transition from secondary to higher education must there­
fore be viewed in its proper political context.

It is interesting to observe the tendency in many European countries for the uni­
versity to enhance—or consolidate, as the case may be—its role in establishing its
own admissions criteria, which may or may not be additional to the mere acquisi­
tion of the secondary school-leaving certificate.

At the same time, access to higher education in most European countries is
explicitly or implicitly influenced by the student’s secondary education curriculum.
Pupils with a more academically oriented secondary education tend to gravitate
towards the universities, while those with more vocation-oriented studies endeav­
our to continue their studies in the non-university sector.

In some European countries, especially in Northern Europe, access is more a
function of the educational centre’s prestige than of the type of course the student
wishes to take.

European countries are unanimous in their growing concern regarding the lack
of motivation and aptitudes of a great many students entering higher education.
Students with a brilliant academic record appear to choose a particular type of higher
education mostly because of the social prestige it confers (Sutherland, 1995). This
has induced universities to try to introduce motivation and personal maturity as
criteria in the candidate-selection process.

There is also increasing disquiet in higher education establishments over stu­
dents’ lack of specific aptitudes considered to be a prerequisite for the successful pur­
suit of that level of education, including reading ability (speed, comprehension,
etc.) in the student’s own language and a foreign language, written expression, com­
puter literacy, time management and task planning, and data-organization ability.
Hence, certain Anglo-Saxon universities have included in their first-year syllabuses
subjects designed to remedy students’ deficiencies in those areas.

A measure of diversification has also been introduced in entrance systems so as to
cater more effectively to the aptitudes and needs of the increasingly heterogeneous higher-
education student profile (adult/young person, male/female, unemployed/gainfully
employed, full-time/part-time student, for purposes of work promotion/learning, etc.).

TRENDS IN SCHOOL-LEAVING AND TRANSITION EXAMINATIONS

The following are some of the most significant trends in the secondary school-leav­
ing examinations, a certification examination to show that the ultimate goals of
this level of education have been attained.

The examination continues to have some social value, although some of it
has been lost owing to two factors: the countries’ tendency to hold other external
examinations at earlier intermediate stages, thereby making the final secondary-education examination less exclusive; and the recent substantial increase in the percentage of young people obtaining this certificate.

The university is now tending to lose some of its former sway over this school-leaving examination, at least in those countries where it existed.

The State's role in the examination is, once again, influenced by the political and administrative structure of each country. Accordingly, while the Baccalauréate in France is national in scope, the German Abitur is controlled by each Land.

The examination is compulsory in the vast majority of countries. In others, such as the United States, where it is optional, it ends up being de facto compulsory for any student wishing to attend university.

Most countries establish the following guidelines for the examination's content: a less encyclopaedic and memory-oriented test; more questions designed to test the candidate's general maturity; and introduction of a modicum of specialization in accordance with the subjects studied at secondary school.

Differentiation between compulsory and optional subjects is fairly widespread. There is some consensus on making the national language, a foreign language and mathematics compulsory, while the basic subjects in the range of secondary-education specializations are usually optional.

In recent years, the structure of this type of examination has changed significantly in different countries. Indeed, structure is not a minor issue, nor is it confined to formal education; it clearly reflects the content to be evaluated. International trends show the countries' concern that the chosen examination format should address two issues: evaluation of new contents and skills; and harmonization of the measurement of more complex learning processes with the principle of maximum objectivity that must govern an examination of such social importance.

Trends have differed somewhat from country to country. However, the idea is clearly to use different traditions to combine more open-ended questions with more precise ones that evaluate aspects that lend themselves more easily to factual testing with this type of examination. For example, countries with a long tradition of standardized objective tests (such as the United States, the Netherlands and Sweden) have incorporated a few open-ended tests. By setting more comprehensive examinations—in an attempt to avoid the standard tests' excessive fragmentation of knowledge and skills—they endeavour to delve more deeply into students' problem-solving capacity and their ability to interpret data, work out conclusions and organize a series of arguments coherently.

At the same time, the oral examination that various countries hold for the certificate examination—i.e. interaction between a panel of examiners and a candidate—has proven extremely useful for measuring aspects that are difficult to evaluate in written examinations. Specialist research on the subject has shown it to be particularly effective because of its ability to predict the aspirant's academic success and because of its minimal discrimination between the sexes.

Accordingly, the countries that have traditionally had some kind of oral test tend to maintain it despite its high financial cost. Conversely, countries that did
not follow this practice in the past tend, for purely economic reasons, not to include it in the certificate-awarding examination.

The need for rigorous application of the principle of objectivity in a test of such social importance and with academic and professional implications induces the countries to adopt a variety of measures for abiding by this principle: tests with single-answer questions when the purpose of the evaluation so permits; double marking in more open-ended tests; and panels consisting of several teachers for the oral examinations.

There is no particular trend with regard to the number of times that students can sit the examination, since it varies from country to country. In any event, they always have more than one opportunity.

The overall mark obtained in the certificate examination weighs the examination result against the pupil’s school-performance record during the final years of secondary education. It is quite usual for the specific weight of the examination to be approximately 50% of the final score (Sutherland, 1995, p. 240).

Lessons for reform of university entrance systems

Some lessons should be heeded when it comes to reform of a country’s university entrance system.

In the first place, we must remember that to transplant an education system—or one of its parts—from one country to another is, to say the least, irrational. On the subject with which we are concerned here, educational tradition and the cultural environment are factors that assume enormous significance in the evaluation of any innovation. The international trends observed should serve more as ‘food for thought’ about possible changes than as specific policy strategies for bringing such changes about.

Secondly, let us not forget that innovations have never been successfully consolidated through abrupt, short-term changes. The trend should be, rather, for gradual reforms that attain the objectives envisaged within a reasonable timeframe and with the imprimatur of many of the institutions involved. As stated in the Report to UNESCO from the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, many tensions will need to be faced during the coming century.

the tension between long-term and short-term considerations: this has always existed but today it is sustained by the predominance of the ephemeral and the instantaneous, in a world where an over-abundance of transient information continually keeps the spotlight on immediate problems. Public opinion cries out for quick answers and ready solutions, whereas many problems call for a patient, concerted, negotiated strategy of reform. This is precisely the case where education policies are concerned (Delors et al., 1996).

Thirdly, the system of transition from secondary to higher education is intricately bound up with the secondary education model and the desired university model. What is more, it is by no means preposterous to think that change in a country’s system of transition from one level to the other is the cornerstone of reform—or confirmation, as the case may be—of the existing secondary and university education model.
Underlying the debate on the transition between the two educational levels is another debate on student-selection power. What needs to be settled is whether it is the education system that must establish some kind of student selection, or whether, on the contrary, it is society that will ultimately select them and place them socially and professionally. In the former hypothesis, one of the prime tasks in the process of transition from secondary to higher education will be to establish a proper, clear, transparent system of selection of a significant number of candidates. In the latter hypothesis, wherever there is a need to establish some sort of requirement for access to higher education, the process should be designed to accommodate as many students’ applications as possible.

The countries with the greatest propensity for student selection prefer more rigorous selection processes; by contrast, the transition systems of the countries more prone to societal selection are more flexible.

There are obviously arguments for and against and there are intermediate positions in any event; however, there is no doubt that any specific transition model involves some gravitation towards one or the other extreme.

Another equally important point is that university entrance requirements and academic success in those institutions must be two sides of the same coin. The latest UNESCO reports emphasize the fact that academic success is influenced in no small measure by the aptitudes and motivations that students bring to a particular course of study, in addition to their previously acquired knowledge. This underscores the importance of taking these two variables—aptitudes and motivations—into account when devising the university entrance system.

UNESCO (1995, p. 38) has also aptly pointed out that: ‘Higher education needs to assume a leading role in the renovation of the entire education system.’ It is precisely this leading role that is inextricably linked to full autonomy of the university, which is obviously accountable to society. These principles of leadership, autonomy and accountability must also prevail in the design, development and application of the system of university access. It is therefore unreasonable for the university to be held responsible for its students’ results unless it is given greater autonomy, which must include a role in student-profile definition and in student selection.

This increased autonomy, coupled with a greater willingness to be held accountable to society for the use it makes of this autonomy, is a challenge for the university. Taking up that challenge calls for substantial changes in its internal operations and its external image in the near future.

Nor must we forget that the university’s future depends on more adult enrolment. Thought should therefore be given to appropriate systems of access for this category of student seeking retraining, upgrading or simply personal education. This is all the more important in view of the increasing social acceptance of the principle of lifelong training, already part and parcel of the education system in certain Northern European countries, such as Sweden, where every other adult is enrolled in some type of training course.

Lastly, as the Delors Commission also pointed out in its report (Delors, 1996, p. 156), secondary education must be rethought from this perspective of lifelong edu-
cation. This means that the diverse training itineraries in secondary education, and
the selection processes produced at this level and in the transition to higher educa-
tion, must not close the door to students wishing to re-enter the education system
years later. Genuine acceptance of this possibility would help enormously to clar-
ify the debate on selectivity at these stages of the education system. The possibility
of a future return to the system and of access to higher education must hinge on
the principle of equal opportunity.

All of these concerns point to the need to devise flexible, diversified systems that
attach more importance to the skills acquired by candidates than to the diplomas they
hold (at least, that is how access to jobs and training programmes are increasingly
envisaged for the future), offer young people and adults new opportunities and, at
the very least, do not impose rigid rules on a constantly evolving situation.

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Primary school enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa increased rapidly after independence. However, between 1980 and 1990 the primary gross enrolment ratio fell from 81 to 71% under the impact of economic crisis and adjustment. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world to witness a declining gross primary enrolment ratio in recent history. While gross enrolment ratios on average declined on the continent, about half of the countries managed to increase their gross enrolment ratios after 1980. Eastern and Southern African countries seem to have done better than the countries in Western and Central Africa.

Achieving universal primary education (UPE) over the next ten years will be a major challenge for many sub-Saharan African countries. Given the high population growth rate, low enrolments and relatively high per pupil costs, the achievement of UPE in all developing countries over the next ten years will require about US$25 billion—an average of US$2.5 billion per annum in recurrent expenditure (UNICEF, 1995). This latter figure is equivalent to an additional recurrent allocation of approximately 0.7% of GNP to primary education.
The resources required in Africa are much more than those required in Asia and Latin America to achieve UPE. Part of the explanation lies in the large number of children still out of school, and part in the relatively high unit cost of primary schooling in Africa (see following section). Western and Central Africa will need to spend a total (the current level of expenditure plus the additional expenditure required to reach UPE) of about 2.5% of GNP each year between 1995 and 2005. Eastern and Southern Africa, on the other hand, will need to spend 2.1% of GNP. This would imply an increase in the real primary education budget of 5–6% every single year over the next decade—an unlikely scenario.

Given the substantial additional resources required, progress towards UPE will need major reforms which can be classified in two groups: more cost-effectiveness and additional financing.

Improved cost-effectiveness and greater diversification of financing are not the only reforms required to achieve UPE. Achieving UPE also requires pedagogical reforms: improving the preparation and motivation of teachers and strengthening institutional capabilities to manage the education systems; improving the curriculum; improved ways of learning; and sufficient time for learning. Since this paper is devoted to the cost and financing of education, pedagogical aspects will not be dwelt upon in any detail. However, they are critical in addressing the first question of how to use existing funds more efficiently. This is because lowering costs and raising funds for primary education are only means to the end of universal access with learning achievement. Pedagogical issues are closely related to many of the cost and financing reforms we discuss below, and an attempt is made to take those issues into account.

Options for improving cost-effectiveness

Although many sub-Saharan Africa countries will have to allocate more money to primary education, it will in most cases not be a sufficient condition to improve the situation. Efficient use of resources is a major issue. Unit costs are best expressed in relative terms because the principal input—teacher remuneration—is related to the level of development of the country. But even in relative terms, the unit cost of primary education is higher in sub-Saharan Africa than in Asia, for instance. The cost of primary education per pupil-year is equivalent about to 15% of per capita GNP, compared with 11% in South Asia and 8% in East Asia (UNESCO, 1995). Higher education is much more expensive in sub-Saharan Africa than in either South Asia or East Asia, with per student recurrent expenditure being 5.1% of per capita GNP in sub-Saharan Africa in 1992, as compared to 0.8% in South Asia and 0.9% in East Asia. Whilst economies of scale may account to some extent for the lower cost in Asia, there are other factors such as high boarding costs and student stipends which account for this discrepancy. In other words, different patterns of costs that have historically been practised, but not essential in pedagogical terms, account for a large part of the difference. In this section we explore six principal options for improving value for money.
Salaries represent the lion’s share of the education budget. UNESCO reports that seventeen out of twenty-six African countries for which information is available spend more than 95% of their primary education budget on salaries (UNESCO, 1995). Although teachers in many African countries are poorly paid, they are also often poorly utilized.

Teachers’ salaries are historically higher than per capita incomes in Africa. For example, in 1980 a primary teacher’s salary in French-speaking Africa was 7.8 times the per capita income, whereas in English-speaking Africa it was 4.6 times more (Donors to African Education, 1994). High inflation and fiscal austerity have reduced real salaries in most countries. Nevertheless, they remain relatively high compared to either per capita incomes in their own countries or to those in Asia. In Asia the primary teacher’s salary was only slightly higher than the per capita income (Tan & Mingat, 1992). At most it was double the per capita income. One reason for the high teachers’ salaries in Africa relative to per capita income was the historical shortage of human capital, particularly in French-speaking countries.

As countries grow wealthier, teachers’ salaries relative to per capita income fall because the education of an average income earner rises relative to teachers’ education, and the proportion of the population represented by the labour force age also increases as countries grow richer. As such, Carnoy and Welmond (1996) rightly suggest that deviations of the ratio of average teachers’ salaries relative to income per capita from an income per capita trend line is a more accurate measure than salaries relative to income per capita of the value countries give their teachers at different levels of development. Even by this measure, teachers’ salaries in many African (mostly French-speaking) countries are relatively high: the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Mali, Ethiopia, Niger, Mauritania, Zimbabwe, Côte d’Ivoire, Burundi, Benin and Togo. In the 1980s, teachers’ salaries fell in real terms and, although it is virtually impossible to compress them further, it may be possible to decrease the relative size of the wage bill in the total budget for primary education. We discuss two methods of achieving this result.

**Rationalizing the pupil-teacher ratio**

The first prerequisite for containing the relative share of the wage bill is to prevent the number of teachers from rising when enrolments are falling. One management tool is to control the pupil-teacher ratio very carefully with a view to improving teacher utilization. In sub-Saharan Africa there was a dramatic increase in the number of teachers, which grew by 24% between 1985 and 1990. Over the same period the number of students increased by only 11% (Donors to African Education, 1994). In most parts of Africa, a ratio of one teacher for between forty and forty-five pupils, though far from ideal, has been found to be reasonable. The majority of African countries have teacher-pupil ratios well below these levels (UNESCO, 1995). For example, increasing the pupil-teacher ratio from thirty-five to forty
may bring about a saving of more than US$6 per pupil per year (given that recurrent expenditure per primary pupil in sub-Saharan Africa is US$44), thus enabling the school to spend additional resources on learning materials.

Average pupil-teacher ratios hide substantial heterogeneity within countries. It is not uncommon to find situations where some schools, particularly in urban areas, are seriously overcrowded. This must necessarily mean that some schools have less than twenty pupils per teacher. Therefore, any attempt to modify the class size must pay attention to the spatial distribution of schools and teachers.

A careful monitoring of the pupil-teacher ratio in the country by district and by school is a useful means of controlling the salary component of current expenditure. How may this be achieved? Three ways of rationalizing the pupil-teacher ratio without jeopardizing the quality of education and demoralizing teachers could be as follows.

The most obvious method is to relocate teachers (and to build additional classes where needed so that every child will have access) in a way which decreases the overcrowding of some schools (e.g. in low-income urban areas) by increasing the class size in others (e.g. affluent urban areas). Even if this relocation increases the average pupil-teacher ratio, it could improve quality by reducing overcrowding.

An alternative option is to introduce multi-grade teaching where the pupil-teacher ratio is low, which requires special training for teachers, as well as special educational materials. The implementation of such measures requires adequate ‘school mapping’. However, deploying and utilizing teachers efficiently is no easy task. In many countries, the population is so dispersed that a primary school within a reasonable distance cannot have thirty to forty students in each class. Multi-grade teaching then is essential to make efficient use of teachers. Multi-grade schools should not be regarded negatively as a second-class solution. In France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, multi-grade schools have been established in small communities in response to falling pupil intakes and staff reductions, and in small towns and villages as an alternative to closing uneconomical single-grade schools (Thomas & Shaw, 1992). To succeed, multi-grade schools require modified pedagogical techniques—self-directed learning, peer tutoring, careful lesson planning and appropriate texts.

Another way of increasing pupil-teacher ratios is to increase the average teaching load. For this measure to succeed, the number of classroom hours must be increased only for teachers and not for pupils. This can be done by increasing the number of hours taught per day, days per week or weeks per year—or any combination thereof. This means some system of double shifting—i.e. splitting the school day, week or year—with each session catering to half of the pupils enrolled. Teachers’ salaries can be increased on account of the increased workload, but per pupil costs will fall if the increase in pupil-teacher ratios is greater than the increase in teachers’ salaries. Variations of this approach have been tried in many countries. For example, when primary education in Sweden was first made compulsory a century ago, teachers worked a six-day week, whereas pupils attended only three days of school per week. In many parts of the United States today, Grade 1 pupils are taught for only three
hours per day in classes of twenty pupils, but Grade 1 teachers normally take two such classes per day.

A variant is to reduce the average attendance of pupils—either by decreasing the number of hours per day, days per week or weeks per year—without reducing the workload of the teachers (i.e. introduce double-shifting). There may be a trade-off with learning achievement, although research indicates that—beyond a minimum threshold—the length of instruction in the initial years is not a strong determinant of academic performance in subsequent years. Countries in which all primary grades require the same number of hours per week could reduce the length of the school day for the lower grades to permit a second shift (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). Parents may welcome a shorter school day since it may reduce the opportunity cost of the child’s schooling. In Bangladesh, the primary education system is based on double-shifting: Grades 1–3 meet for two hours in the morning, and 4–5 for three hours in the afternoon. It is essential that limiting the number of hours a learner is at school is done judiciously. There is a trade-off between reaching large numbers with limited resources and offering high-quality education to a small number. A balance has to be struck to protect an essential degree of relevance and quality while reaching the largest possible number of children.

The choice of any of these options or a combination of them as the most appropriate one will depend on the national and sub-national conditions. Flexibility and a high degree of decentralization on the part of the local school and community are of big importance in policy design.

Using teacher assistants and community volunteers

The hiring of teacher assistants and community helpers, who are provided with adequate but low-cost training, could further lower the relative size of the salary component. The introduction of teacher assistants could play an important role in those situations where teachers are working longer hours in order to accommodate double-shifts or splitting of the school calendar. They could also play a significant role when the coverage of the system and enrolments are expanding rapidly. Teacher assistants are well integrated into the American system of primary education today, allowing teachers to concentrate their specialist skills on smaller groups of children at a time, whilst teacher assistants supervise the practice of knowledge and skills with other groups. In Guinea, the introduction of pairing between a government-employed teacher and a community-employed para-professional has been pivotal in persuading communities to participate in schooling. Incidentally, this strategy also lowered unit costs. State grants to parental and community groups to allow employment of community members within the school system can be more efficient than the State directly employing more teachers. Education, particularly at the primary level, requires a great deal of practice, and this practice can be done with teacher assistants, as well as with classmates, parents and community volunteers. Employing the most qualified youths from the village in rural schools will address another problem—that qualified teachers of urban origin often resist work-
ing in rural areas. In order to restore teacher morale and motivation and reduce teacher absenteeism (partly caused by second jobs), teachers' salaries will have to be increased over time (Adedeji, Green & Janha, 1995). Large increases in salaries may not be affordable in slow-growing economies, especially in economies where teachers' salaries are linked to other public service pay scales. Competing claims on expenditure (e.g. for educational materials, teacher training) may also constrain increases in teachers' salaries in the short run—but in the medium run teachers' salaries will have to increase to improve incentives.

If the objective of increasing teachers' salaries is to be realized, it is absolutely critical to monitor pupil-teacher ratios in the short run because fiscal constraints cannot permit the simultaneous increase of the total teacher force and an increase in salaries. Teachers have some political clout, and with the recent trend of democratic politics in the region, there is a tendency to protect teachers (ILO, 1996).

Adjustment programmes during the early 1990s emphasized protecting or increasing expenditures on non-salary inputs. The examination of incentive systems as a means of improving performance in education is more recent. The overwhelming emphasis on cutting civil servant salaries (to which teachers' salaries were tied) and public sector employment had the effect that the impact on teachers, and in turn on their performance and productivity, remained largely ignored. That will need to change if the recovery in primary education in Africa is the ultimate goal of the reform programmes.

REDDUCING REPETITION AND DROP OUT

Even where the per pupil unit cost is low, the cost per primary graduate can still be very high because many children repeat grades or drop out before completing the primary cycle. Repetition rates tended to go up during the 1980s. In French-speaking Africa the median repetition rate was 22% in 1980 and 25% in 1990; in English-speaking Africa it was 11% and 15% respectively (Donors to African Education, 1994). In at least seventeen countries—most of them French-speaking—repeaters occupy more than a quarter of the available school places—an inefficient way of utilizing scarce resources. Pupils in low-income countries generally take four additional years to complete the primary cycle as compared to almost two (1.8) years in low-middle income countries and just over one (1.2) year in upper-middle income countries (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). It is paradoxical that countries where the waste of education resources is the highest are the ones that can least afford it. Lowering the repetition rate necessarily entails improving learning achievement.

Less than half of all the children in the region complete five years of primary education. In addition to low enrolment, about one-third of those who start primary education drop out before completing fifth grade (UNICEF, 1995). This partial investment yields a very low return for society, because four to five years of primary education is considered a minimum to retain permanent literacy and numeracy.

Studies show that the drop-out rate is highest among the repeaters. Therefore, a policy of automatic promotion may be more cost-effective. Many of the coun-
tries which achieved UPE in the early years of their development (such as Sri Lanka, Kerala state in India, Zimbabwe, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Barbados) adopted automatic promotion in the early grades (Mehrotra, 1997). Automatic promotion may be a simple way of reducing repetition and saving on costs, because lowering the mean time required to complete primary education implies that more children can be catered for. However, appropriate measures are necessary to address students who have difficulties—otherwise the problem is merely deferred to the end of the primary cycle (IBE & UNICEF, 1996). A policy of automatic promotion does not mean the removal of standards or performance criteria. It merely recognizes that not all children learn at the same speed in all subjects. Automatic promotion helps children to learn to the best of their potential within the time-frame of the primary cycle without leading to unnecessary repetition. Instead of repetition, extra help and attention are given to those who fall behind in some areas.

Such remedial classes require special courses for teachers on how to handle slow learners and manage the heterogeneity of students, as well as adequate testing and diagnostic systems within the primary education cycle. Establishing such units within the primary education system may be much more cost-effective than permitting repetitions.

Repetition is highest in the early grades as well as at the end of the primary cycle as students try to improve their chances of passing the exam for entry to the secondary level. The majority of sub-Saharan African countries have to restrict entry to secondary education to a small percentage of primary school leavers because of the limited places available. A possible cost-effective strategy could be to separate the primary cycle leaving exam from the secondary cycle entrance exam. The opening up of secondary education opportunities, using the savings which would accrue from stopping primary school repetitions, is an option taken by countries such as Zimbabwe—which increased secondary school enrolments from about 4% at independence in 1980 to about 50% ten years later.

Increased opportunities for secondary education generally enhance the motivation to complete primary education. Secondary education is also likely to increase the pace of development, including economic development, as secondary graduates are more likely to develop independent entrepreneurial skills than those with only primary education (Crouch, 1993). Secondary school unit costs can be reduced sharply through the adoption of lower cost models, such as reducing the number of boarding schools. In Zimbabwe the capital costs of a boarding school are seven times that of a similar size day school, and recurrent unit costs of boarders are three to four times those of day students. Hence Zimbabwe preferred to expand day schools. Developing schools closer to the children's homes allowed more girls to attend and lowered costs for all (Chung, 1993).

INCREASING ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

If repetition and drop-out rates are to be reduced by improving the quality of education, increasing access to educational materials will be a key strategy. While the
latter is likely to increase the total costs of education, its cost-effectiveness is beyond doubt. If improved quality increases completion rates, the additional costs will be offset and unit costs per graduate will fall. Apart from improving teachers’ motivation and skills, teaching materials may be the most cost-effective input for learning. UNESCO data indicate that non-salary expenditure per primary pupil in sub-Saharan Africa amounts to only US$3 per year, against a recommended minimum of US$5 per pupil per annum (Colclough & Lewin, 1993).

One major reason for worsening quality is that education materials have unduly suffered from years of fiscal austerity. A 1995 UNICEF and UNESCO survey of primary schools in fourteen of the world’s poorest countries showed that even chalkboards were missing from 79% of the classrooms in Burkina Faso, 54% in Tanzania, 51% in Madagascar, 48% in Equatorial Guinea, 44% in Zambia, 36% in Ethiopia and 35% in Uganda (Schleicher, Siniscalo & Postlethwaite, 1995). In most African countries, notebooks, pens and chalkboards have to be provided by the household. Moreover, in many countries books are imported and expensive, partly because of agreements among governments, former colonial country publishers and donor agencies.

Given that few countries have the expertise to write good textbooks, they are often written by committees of international experts or are imported rather than stimulating and strengthening national capacities and institutions to develop and produce quality textbooks (Torres, 1995). Donors, in particular, need to guard against such practices. It may be particularly useful for donors to support a group of countries to publish textbooks—which can yield very substantial economies of scale and hugely lower the cost of textbooks.

Learning materials that require teachers to follow a step-by-step pedagogical routine and ensure that children are engaged in an active learning process have been found to be a great help in improving pupil achievement, as shown by the experience of escuela nueva in Colombia and BRAC in Bangladesh (Anderson, 1992).

The importance of teaching materials, however, should not overshadow the ultimate role of the teacher. For years, the World Bank has emphasized resource allocation to educational materials, almost at the expense of teachers’ living and working conditions. Given the weight of World Bank lending to education, this advice has influenced decision-making. However, the surest and most direct manner of improving the quality of education is by enhancing the motivation, preparation and working conditions of teachers. Textbooks are educational tools; teachers are the educational agents (Torres, 1995).

REDUCING TEACHER-TRAINING COSTS

In the previous sections, the importance of better trained teachers has been stressed. As training is costly, ways to reduce these costs should be looked into. In many countries, a large proportion of the intake in teacher-training colleges has not completed secondary education. Empirical evidence indicates that teachers’ behaviour in the classroom tends to be based more on what they experienced as students...
themselves than on what they learned in their formal preparation as teachers. Pre-service and in-service training are to a large extent compensatory and remedial strategies for a deficient education provided by a low-quality school system.

One way of reducing teacher-training costs is to shift the secondary education component of pre-service training to general secondary schools, and reduce the length of pre-service training. However, such a measure is contingent upon ensuring that an increasing proportion of all newly recruited teachers have completed secondary education. One example of this is in Zimbabwe, where secondary teachers’ colleges recruit students who have completed ‘A’ or Advanced levels. They undertake one year of pre-service training, followed by one year of in-service training, in contrast to the past when students were recruited with only ‘O’ or Ordinary level passes, and spent three years in pre-service training.

Another way of reducing costs is to increase school-based in-service training, which could yield savings in both boarding and tuition costs as well as in teacher salary costs, because part of the training would consist of on-site in-school teaching. The problem, however, is that while the proposal to increase in-service training as a substitute for lower quality pre-service qualifications of new teachers is reasonable, the practical difficulty is that it is not implemented on account of concurrent shortages in qualified teacher trainers and limited public funds. Meanwhile, because unemployment among the educated is often quite high, there is still an incentive to join the teaching profession, even though salaries may be declining in relative and absolute terms. But many countries in the region undergoing adjustment have not followed recommendations to recruit less-educated teachers even when teachers’ salaries have fallen sharply—thus putting pressure on the total salary bill (in addition to squeezing out non-salary expenditures).

The limited funds to provide in-service teacher training has resulted in innovative solutions. Efforts need to be made to recognize the innovations of teachers in teaching methodology, and allow for experiences to be shared. In Zambia each school could be called a teacher-training centre—a teacher can become a resource teacher who has the duty of improving the quality of teaching of colleagues (UNESCO & UNICEF, 1996). The emphasis is on the fostering and nurturing of replicable innovative techniques.

COST SAVINGS IN DONOR ASSISTANCE

Although donor assistance to primary education has been limited (an issue we discuss later), the modalities of donor assistance also need modification. Donors have normally adopted a project approach, and a multiplicity of donors in any given country can lead to a large number of projects that are not well integrated into a primary education sector strategy. In a project approach (as opposed to a sectoral approach), costs can be very high because of the duplication of management structures. Thus donors could contribute to cost savings in projects if they adopted a sectoral approach, and ensured better co-ordination among themselves and the ministry of education (MOE). However, this requires that the recipient government takes
the lead in formulating a sectoral strategy and actively takes on the task of coordination between the multiplicity of donor projects. The sectoral approach encouraged by the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa and the Sectoral Investment Programmes of the World Bank can facilitate the realization of such cost savings.

**COST SAVINGS ON SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND FURNITURE**

Some cost reduction is usually possible in respect of furniture. Desks and chairs can be made locally at comparatively lower cost. In a context of community management of schools, there should be an opportunity of getting parents and teachers to decide on priority and essential items for their school. This will encourage schools to provide simpler furniture, such as locally produced mats, thereby cutting furniture costs in general.

Expensive design standards and imported construction materials for primary schools are not uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa. There is scope to make more use of local materials, which will reduce costs and facilitate the transfer of responsibility for primary school construction and maintenance from the central government to local authorities and communities. Imported designs and materials often imply poor maintenance on account of high costs. Local materials can also improve the quality of construction, while decreasing costs. A survey in six sub-Saharan Africa countries indicates that brick and mortar buildings are, on average, more than twice as costly as the construction of schools with local materials. The cost range varies between 1.8 in Mali to 3.4 in Senegal (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). In Malawi it is reported that the construction cost of a primary school has been reduced by a factor of five by using local materials and community contributions. State grants to communities for construction and maintenance could be much more cost-effective than construction by the State.

Aid-financed school building projects can also result in high unit costs. In several countries, there is evidence that buildings financed from donor resources are more costly than locally financed schools.

Finally, a cautionary note: there are clear risks of introducing a series of cost-cutting measures simultaneously, without giving serious thought to their implications for the quality of teaching and learning. In Tanzania, the World Bank and other donors have been calling for a reduction in per pupil expenditures—in a country that experienced a decline in enrolment over the 1980s. This has resulted in the implementation of a number of cost-cutting measures: use of volunteer teachers, use of distance and in-service rather than pre-service training and cost-sharing with the population. While these measures have reduced costs, they have also adversely affected equity and teachers' conditions (ILO, 1996).

**Options for diversifying the sources of financing**

We noted in the first section that the additional costs of reaching UPE in sub-Saharan Africa are very substantial, amounting to 0.7% of GNP, much more than in any
other region. While efficiency of resource use is important, more important is that the total resources available for primary education must increase if UPE is to be achieved. Sub-Saharan Africa spends more on education as a proportion of GNP than Latin America, South and East Asia, the Middle East and North Africa (UNESCO, 1995). However, sub-Saharan Africa’s low per capita GNP level means that absolute expenditure is much lower than in the other regions. Moreover, the region also suffers from the most serious shortage of human capital. So while there is scope for better utilization of existing resources, there is an overwhelming case for increasing resources for primary education. This case is strengthened by the fact that education expenditure declined throughout the 1980s, along with the primary enrolment ratio.

Seven principal sources of funding for primary schooling are discussed here.

GOVERNMENTS

Given the widespread policy of fiscal conservatism on account of adjustment and stabilization programmes, public expenditure as a share of GNP cannot be expected to increase in most countries. Economic growth, which was below population growth in the 1980s, has remained sluggish in the 1990s. The growth scenarios for sub-Saharan Africa indicate that, at best, per capita income will grow by between 0.5% and 1% per year over the next decade. Growth is unlikely to lead to much increase in government revenue and education expenditures. Hence, the potential for raising additional taxes earmarked for primary education needs examination.

New taxes that are specifically earmarked for primary education have been levied in countries at different levels of income and can take the form of taxes on property, business, selected luxury commodities, payroll, imports and interest income. Such tax receipts could be used for quality-related inputs such as a national textbook fund or a community fund with matching grants from the government. It is important that such taxes supplement (not substitute for) existing budget allocations to education. However, the revenue potential of such taxes should not be overestimated.

Therefore, inter-sectoral budget restructuring must be considered as a way of releasing more resources for education. A larger share of the current package to the social sectors can be realized by redirecting spending away from the military, debt servicing and inefficient parastatals. Since a very substantial part of Africa’s debt is external, the capacity of many governments to restructure public expenditure is severely constrained. Within external debt, multilateral debt accounts for an increasing proportion of the total debt service, rising from 8% in 1980 to 20% in 1990 and 41% in 1994 (United Nations, 1996). The multilateral debt relief for Uganda in 1997 specifies that resources released will be allocated to basic education. ‘Debt for social services’ swaps as promoted by UNICEF have helped to redirect interest payments to be re-invested into human resource development in the debtor country.

Controlling defence expenditure is equally important in a number of countries as a way of increasing the total package of funds for education. The scope for
further reductions remains considerable, with 2.8% of the GNP being spent on defence and 2.3% on interest payments as compared to only 1.8% on primary education (UNDP, 1995).

Another area where there has been rather limited action is the privatization and commercialization of parastatals. But privatization has not taken place on any significant scale, and has been limited to a few countries, with six countries—Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Mozambique, Nigeria and Senegal—accounting for two-thirds of divestitures (World Bank, 1994).

Within the education sector, there is greater scope for intra-sectoral budget reallocation in favour of primary education. There is a strong argument for doing so on grounds of both efficiency and equity. Public expenditure per student at the post-primary level is considerably higher than spending per primary school pupil in all regions and countries of the world, but the discrepancy is the largest in sub-Saharan Africa. In Latin America and South Asia, expenditure per secondary pupil was about twice as high as spending per primary pupil and a little over two times in East Asia between 1980 and 1992, whereas in sub-Saharan Africa it is three and a half times as much. The discrepancy is much greater for higher education. In Africa, public expenditure per university student is equivalent to government spending on about thirty-five primary school students. The corresponding ratio for Asia and Latin America varies between eight and fifteen for 1980–92. This is not to underestimate the importance of higher education for national capacity building or to call for a further reduction in public expenditure on post-primary education. But the wide discrepancies highlight the potential for a more effective and efficient use of available resources.

Indeed, as the World Bank’s education policy review (1995a) shows, one domain within the education sector that could release resources includes student amenities such as food, accommodation, transport costs and so on. The budget share devoted to student welfare in secondary and particularly in higher education in sub-Saharan Africa is very high. In Asia, less than 10% of the budget is allocated to the welfare of university students, whereas the equivalent share is about one-quarter in English-speaking countries in Africa and one-half in French-speaking countries.

The state of African universities is such that they deserve attention and additional resources for essential areas—which makes inter-sectoral restructuring of public expenditure all the more necessary. A larger slice of the education pie for primary schools might be more acceptable to politically powerful groups if the size of the education pie was growing, thus allowing public resources to be allocated to these essential areas. Meanwhile, the view that the costs of student housing and meals should be recovered from students is increasingly accepted in Africa, mainly among English-speaking countries (Saint, 1992). But where students are crowded into dormitory rooms, lack sanitary facilities and live on poor food, the introduction of cost recovery would be unfair and may lead to student riots. Increased fees will have to be justified by improved quality of meals and accommodations. Meanwhile, the release of resources from inter-sectoral restructuring will enable essential expenditure to be undertaken on educational inputs, research and maintenance.

The World Bank has been calling for protecting health and education expenditures during adjustment, and public expenditure reviews normally recommend
Improving cost-effectiveness and mobilizing resources for primary education

intra-sectoral reallocation of resources within the education sector (Toye & Jackson, 1996). However, the fact is that in the 1990s, education expenditures have risen in relation to GNP in only a few countries. Even in countries where macro-economic improvements have occurred, there is no clear evidence that primary schooling has benefited (Jayarajah, Branson & Sen, 1996).

DONORS

Negotiations with donors to provide official development assistance to basic education and establishing a compact between donors and governments are other areas for resource mobilization for primary education. In 1990–1991, a study of fourteen Western and Central African countries revealed that less than 3% of all Overseas Development Agency (ODA) grants went to basic education. In twelve Eastern and Southern African countries, the share was less than 2% of ODA (Mehrotra, 1994). Most international aid to the education sector in the 1980s went to secondary and higher education. The 20/20 initiative calls on governments and donors to spend 20% of the national budgets and aid flows on basic social services, including primary education.

For donor funding to become more effective, two changes will be necessary. First, the capital-output ratio of aid, which is extremely high (Mosley, 1996), must be lowered. In the education sector, one reason for the low effectiveness of aid is that a substantial part of it has been focused on the hardware of education (buildings, furniture and equipment) and technical assistance and rather less on capacity development, books, instructional materials and budgetary assistance for teachers’ pay. Second, general recurrent support has been provided mainly to middle-income countries (Colclough & Lewin, 1993). Donors may consider concentrating future support more on recurrent costs and less on capital expenditure within a framework of a national commitment, plan and timetable for gradually phasing out reliance on external assistance for recurrent expenditure. There should be a special emphasis on the provision of books and instructional materials, especially the domestic production of books rather than those imported from donor countries.

At present a large proportion of donor aid is utilized for technical assistance from the North, generally from the donor country itself. If such aid were instead utilized to build up institutional capacities within recipient countries and to strengthen human resource capacities, this would have a more sustainable impact than outside technical assistance.

Most structural adjustment programmes have underestimated the impact of institutional capacity constraints in Africa on programme implementation. Planning capacity, personnel management and supervision capacity are weak or have been weakened, especially in the education sector (Makau & Coombe, 1994). Similarly, while adjustment measures have often called for decentralization of decision-making (in education and many other sectors), these requirements often do not take into account that personnel and financial management skills are deficient at the lower levels of government.
There is evidence that as a result of falling government support for primary education, households have been shouldering a growing burden of the costs, particularly at the primary level. There has been a proliferation of different kinds of fees. A 1992 household budget survey in Kenya showed that households’ direct contributions covered 34% of the total cost of primary education. A recent survey in Zambia found that households spend five times more on education than on health care. Ghana’s education sector reform has emphasized community-based primary education. Not surprisingly, statistical data from the latest two rounds of the Ghana Living Standards Survey show a substantial rise in household expenditure on education, but recent studies have found that both educational officials and parents reported a decline in the quality of education. These private contributions have seldom enhanced the quality of public schooling but merely substituted for government expenditure. An internal review at the World Bank on cost-sharing in education and health in sub-Saharan Africa concludes that user fees for primary education should be avoided (World Bank, 1995). UNICEF studies in two African (Burkina Faso and Uganda) and three Asian countries (Bhutan, Myanmar and Viet Nam) confirm the importance of private costs in discouraging school attendance. They found that private costs for uniforms, textbooks, building funds and parent-teacher association contributions ranged between 10 and 20% of per capita income. The figure is even more alarming if private tuition and in-kind contributions are added (Mehrotra & Delamonica, forthcoming).

Uniforms, which often constitute the single most important cost item for parents, have been subject to extensive policy debates in many countries. The main arguments in their favour, especially in the African context, are that they improve discipline, eliminate the difference between rich and poor children, and protect children in conditions of civil conflict. However, the recent experience of Malawi is relevant, where enrolment sharply increased in 1994 in the wake of the elimination of school uniforms and school fees. One possible policy is for the authorities to indicate that uniforms are not mandatory, and leave it to school administrations and parent-teacher associations to decide at the local level whether the uniform should be retained or dropped.

Primary education should be free and should not involve tuition costs. Regrettably, school fees at the primary level have emerged as a new source of financing, although educational fees as a share of unit costs of higher education are mostly low in sub-Saharan Africa. A survey of fifteen African universities found that only half of them charged fees—which generated on the average only about 10% of their recurrent budgets (World Bank, 1995a).

The historical experience from the early stages of development of both middle- and low-income countries such as Malaysia, Mauritius, Botswana, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Kerala state in India and Zimbabwe, is that they managed to eliminate or minimize tuition fees. Not all of the reduction in costs came at once, but were sequenced depending upon the fiscal capacity of the State. Thus Mauritius introduced free primary education in the 1950s, but free textbooks at primary level were introduced
only in 1988. Tuition fees were eliminated in Sri Lanka in 1945; a free textbook scheme and a free mid-day meal began operating in the 1950s; a free school uniform came in 1991. In Botswana, enrolment received a major boost from the decision to cut fees by half in 1973, and were totally eliminated in 1980 (Mehrotra, 1997).

COMMUNITIES

Communities have traditionally provided support for school construction in sub-Saharan Africa to a greater extent than in other regions. Harambee in Kenya is probably the best known example of this practice (Lillis & Ayot, 1988). However, communities cannot be expected to increase their support under conditions when government support for primary education is declining, and when the out-of-pocket costs of their members are already very high. Their response is already clear in the form of falling enrolment rates in many countries.

Community participation normally occurs through parent-teacher associations and parent-school community organizations. Enhanced community participation will only be forthcoming if communities gain a stronger say in the organization and management of primary schools, and if the perceived quality of education increases in the early stages of cost sharing. Decision-making by the communities can comprise: hiring of school teachers or assistants (preferably from within the community); providing inputs into the school curricula; governing the finances of the school; participating in setting time-tables and calendars; and monitoring achievement.

There is little possibility that with the decline in incomes, villages will be willing and able to build houses for teachers or additional classrooms, without the community having a greater say than before in the running of the school. For communities to participate effectively in decision-making, there may be need for some training in management and participation—of both school heads and of members of the parent-teacher association and/or other citizens who represent the community at large. In this context, special attention should be paid to the training of women, as they play an important role in child education in the family. In addition, an effective mechanism has to be established to ensure that direct central government contributions will compensate for the different levels of income and development among communities (Bray with Lillis, 1988). Community participation should not serve as a foil for reducing the responsibility of the State. Community participation cannot be accepted as a euphemism for additional extraction and taxation. ‘Decentralization’ is sometimes utilized as a way for the State to divest itself of responsibility for education. Instead, decentralization should be a community-school partnership.

SCHOOLS AND PUPILS

Pupils can also contribute to school finances through income-generating activities, mainly by growing crops or producing goods with wood, metal and other locally available materials. The proceeds can be reinvested in the school to purchase teaching materials and textbooks or to supplement the salary of the teacher. However,
such activities are often carried out at the expense of the time available for learning, thereby further undermining quality. In addition, the sums they generate are usually small, and they are not always reinvested in education materials. The management of the funds by headmasters and teachers has often been problematic. However, it is important that the lessons from past experience are learnt by evaluating school-based income-generating activities. The objective of these activities is not merely to support the school—its educational aspect is equally, if not more, important; the activity needs to be an integral part of the school curriculum.

The Self-Help Action Plan of Education (SHAPE) in Zambia has placed appropriate emphasis on self-help through production—and its efforts have reached almost all primary schools in the country, and hence deserve special attention. Education with production has three main frameworks—industrial arts, home economics and agriculture—but the scope of each activity changes from school to school because some skills (e.g. agricultural techniques) are easier to practice in some areas than others. Education with production has four main results: a) it facilitates learning based on practical knowledge, problem-solving, planning and initiative; b) it changes pupils' views of production and manual labour; c) it has financial benefits for the pupil and school through the sale of finished products; and d) its involvement of the surrounding population and the parents removes many of the barriers between the school and community (UNESCO & UNICEF, 1996).

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Private schools are of three major types: community schools, mission and mosque schools, and for-profit schools. This section is mainly about the last category. Public resources can be released by giving the right incentives to the private sector to increase the supply of school places, especially in urban areas. Currently, cases of multiple providers of primary education are limited in many African countries. The share of private schools in primary enrolment is very low—under 10% in most sub-Saharan Africa countries. In the mid-1980s, private education played a larger role in English-speaking Africa (22% of enrolment) than in French-speaking Africa (3%) (World Bank, 1988).

By allowing more private schools, the supply of primary school places will be increased without adding to the financial burden of government. Private schools, because they usually charge higher fees, are targeting the better-off families. That means that the leakage of public subsidies to the non-poor will be reduced. The oversight function of private schools should remain vested in the MOE, but this should be one of facilitator, and not that of principal financier. This oversight function becomes particularly important in a situation where the private school may be the only one available in a poor area, offering relatively expensive education of poor quality.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISES

Private enterprises could be given greater incentives to support public schools in the area where they operate and beyond. This would be a non-profit endeavour—
Improving cost-effectiveness and mobilizing resources for primary education

with returns in the form of public goodwill—although it could be argued that the productivity of employees will increase in return for the enhanced quality of education of their children. Such contributions to public schools could be made tax deductible.

The room for manoeuvre by local schools could be enlarged to undertake fundraising activities with the private sector. Unilever and Press Corporation in Malawi, for example, provide support to public primary schools.

But this is not the only role for the private sector in the public school system. Apart from being a service provider, the private sector can contribute in other ways: supplies, materials and transport. In other words, there is need for more innovative arrangements and partnerships. The State need not be the only producer/distributor of textbooks, supplies or transport services to the school system.

Conclusion

This paper has presented a menu of options in respect to reforms necessary to address the reasons for the decline in the enrolment ratio witnessed in Africa over the 1980s. Given slow economic growth and the need to keep fiscal deficits down, education budgets will remain constrained in most countries. Hence, more effective utilization of existing resources will be essential. Reducing cycle costs (through reduced repetition and drop outs), rationalizing teacher deployment and (where possible) increasing the pupil-teacher ratio offer the greatest scope for cost savings in many countries. Improving the quality of education through increased teacher effectiveness and greater investment in useful learning materials offer additional cost savings—essentially through reduced repetition and drop out. Investing in the teacher is the best guarantee of improved learning—by ensuring recruitment of only full secondary school graduates (assisted by lower paid assistants with lower qualifications), upgrading skills through in-service training (on-site in school), and providing the scope for teachers’ innovations, so that each school is also a teacher-training centre where emphasis is put on teachers’ initiative, resourcefulness and ability to train colleagues in new methodologies. Lowering school construction costs by using more appropriate standards and local materials could further reduce costs.

However, given that the total costs of achieving UPE were seen to be quite substantial in Africa, much more attention needs to be given to mobilizing additional resources for primary education. If teacher motivation is to be improved, making investments in teacher training alone will not suffice. Teachers’ salaries, which have been sharply eroded, must rise in the medium term—and greater cost-effectiveness alone cannot yield sufficient resources to allow that to occur.

In terms of diversifying the sources of funding of primary education, the greatest potential lies with inter-sectoral and intra-sectoral budget restructuring, targeted taxation, innovative fundraising initiatives by schools with private enterprises, and earmarking ODA and debt cancellations, particularly the redirection of interest repayments to primary education through direct budget support.

The capacity of parents, communities and pupils to further increase their contributions to primary education is limited—though school effectiveness would certainly be improved by the participation of the community in certain aspects of school governance, which in turn may bring forth greater community contribution. In some instances, out-of-pocket costs will have to be cut because they provide strong disincentives for parents to send their children to school. The financing of primary education is a core government responsibility, which is too important to the society as a whole to be left to the variability of parental or local community financing.

Notes

1. For important inputs and valuable discussions, thanks are due to Jan Vandemoortele. Fay Chung, Rosa Maria Torres, Mary Joy Pigozzi, Anna Obura, Manzoor Ahmed and Enrique Delamonica helped with comments on an earlier draft. The usual disclaimer applies. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Mid-Decade Review of Progress Towards Education for All in Africa in Yaounde (for Western and Central Africa) and Johannesburg (for Eastern and Southern Africa) in February 1996.

2. It is striking, however, that some African countries (e.g. Tanzania, Malawi, Madagascar, Kenya and Guinea) that pay teachers relatively well compared to the average income per capita pay much less when adjusted for the GNP trend line (Carnoy & Welmond, 1996).

3. In comparison, in the Republic of Korea the teacher-pupil ratio was 1:68 in 1950 and decreased to 1:52 as late as 1975. However, it is critical that in South Korea, primary education was well funded by both the government and parents, and the quality achieved was high despite large class sizes (Mason et al, 1980).

4. The following countries have pupil-teacher ratios in primary education below forty: Angola (32), Benin (35), Botswana (29), Cape Verde (33), Côte d'Ivoire (37), Madagascar (38), Nigeria (39), Sierra Leone (34), Sudan (34), Swaziland (33), Tanzania (36), Uganda (35), and Sao Tome and Principe (35). In thirteen countries the ratio is over 50, and an effort to reduce it is needed (UNESCO, 1995).

5. For an analysis of options on improving teacher motivation and incentives, especially in low-income countries, see Mehrotra, forthcoming.

6. The Minister of Education of Kenya made this proposal at the Johannesburg meeting in February 1996 of African education ministers to review progress towards the Jomtien goal of achieving UPE by the year 2000.

7. In a sample of twenty-seven countries, the ratio of recurrent cost to train one teacher in a teacher-training institute compared to putting the same candidate through general secondary education was 1:7.9 (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991).

8. For example, the Self-Help Action Plan of Education (SHAPE), conceived as a support system for basic education in Zambia and supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), has developed within the framework of an existing ministry and not as an independent entity. Launched in 1987, it has now reached every primary school in the country. Moreover, unlike many other donor-supported projects in many countries, no SHAPE member receives a salary from SIDA or from the SHAPE structure (UNESCO & UNICEF, 1996).
9. Thus in Bhutan, school buildings that were part of World Bank project cost US$826 per school place at 1992 prices; United Nations Capital Development Fund schools were also relatively high cost at US$293 per place. Government-built schools cost much less, and community-built schools even more so (Bray, 1995). Similarly, in low-income Guyana the per pupil cost of an Inter-American Development Bank-assisted school building project was initially US$3,750, and was later brought down to US$1,875 for a primary/secondary school (IDB, 1994).

10. In 1982, the Republic of Korea's education budget could not meet the total costs of its education system. It levied a national tax for five years on liquor, tobacco, interest on dividend income, and the banking and insurance industry. The tax provided 15% of MOE's budget. In Guinea, the sous-prefecture collects a US$4 poll tax from all persons age 15 or older—which finances education and other social expenditures. Indonesia recently introduced a 2% profit tax on big businesses to fund the nation's poverty alleviation programme, including an expanded programme of primary education. Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) discuss some of the pros and cons of earmarking.

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Teacher education in South Africa is undergoing a process of transformation at present. Universities and other institutions engaged in teacher education are rethinking their strategy with regard to the aims, identity, structure, programmes, management and control of teacher training.¹

This process involves fundamental changes and must be seen against the background of a broad transformation—political, economic and social—taking place throughout the country.

It must also be seen in the light of the restructuring of the education system as a whole. Where the education system is being transformed, it follows that both the role and the education of teachers are, of necessity, in the limelight. Transformation of the education system and facets thereof, such as education policy, the curriculum, management and control of schools, cannot take place without major consequences for teacher education.

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Fanie Pretorius (South Africa)
Professor of Comparative Education and Educational Management at the University of South Africa. Former superintendent of education at the Department of Education in Namibia. He has carried out research in various countries of the world which has been published in journals locally and abroad. Co-author of four books and editor of two others published in 1997. He has been invited to read papers at various local and international conferences.
E-mail: pretosg@alpha.unisa.ac.za
THE ESSENTIALS OF THE TRANSFORMATION

Since the democratic elections in 1994, a series of transformations has taken place in South African education. With regard to these developments, the education policy makers must consider the pattern of contrasts and paradoxes inherent in the country’s educational structure:

1. South Africa has managed, within the past few decades, to evolve the most developed and well-equipped education and training system on the continent. However, this system serves only a segment of the population. In many respects, it compares favourably with the best of industrialized countries (Republic of South Africa (hereafter RSA), 1995a, p. 18).

2. By contrast, there are millions of South Africans who are functionally illiterate. In addition, there are millions of learners who receive their education in circumstances that correspond to the most impoverished States in Africa. The results of this include high drop-out rates and a very small percentage of learners gaining access to higher education and to technological and professional vocations needing a strong foundation in mathematics and science (RSA, 1995a, p. 18).

Consequently, the transformation of education as a whole is essential in eradicating the imbalances of the past.

Apart from addressing the gross inequalities in the internal educational attainment, skills and employment opportunities, education policy makers must also, in this era of globalization, keep up with developments in the international economic and educational arenas.

From six recent research visits (to the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand), it has become clear that many countries have launched major educational restructuring programmes within the past ten years. In addition, Holdaway (1991, p. 13) and the National Institute for Educational Research of Japan (1991, p. 58-59) report reforms in the education systems of Canada, Hawaii and some other countries of Asia and the Pacific.

It is evident from this research that there are major similarities in reform trends. Guthrie & Pierce (1990, p. 202) are, for example, of the opinion that ‘a similar model of modern public education’ is developing worldwide. Although still indefinite, the characteristics of an international model are becoming noticeable. Holdaway (1991, p. 13) indicates that education systems are increasingly being influenced by developments in other countries.

Concerning the transformation of education in South Africa, the question arises as to what extent education should, in conjunction with internal requirements, take cognizance of global tendencies. The paramount task of transformation, as seen by the Ministry of Education, is ‘to build a just and equitable system which provides good quality education and training to learners young and old throughout the country’ (RSA, 1995a, p. 17). However, to ignore global economic and educational tendencies would have dire consequences for the country.
The focus of this article is teacher education. Of particular concern is the preparation of a future South African education corps which would be in harmony with both the requirements of an internally equitable system and with a global society and global trends in educational provision. For this purpose, attention is given to the following:

- *global forces* influencing educational provision in various countries of the world;
- *global trends* in educational provision as seen from the results of research in the countries mentioned;
- *values and principles* underpinning education of the democratic era in South Africa as well as *major developments* since 1994;
- *implications* of global trends, as well as internal developments, for South African teachers and their training.

**Global forces influencing educational provision**

From research findings in the countries previously mentioned, it is apparent that education reforms may be due in part to the following global forces:

**The emergence of a global economy**

Countries of the world strive towards economic co-operation as a means of forming greater power bases. At the same time, intense competition is the order of the day. For the United States, for example, maintaining its position as the world’s leading economy is of singular importance (see United States Department of Education, 1994, p. vii). Likewise, Guthrie & Pierce (1990, p. 191) state that educational restructuring in the United Kingdom is designed to make the country ‘economically more competitive’.

**Technological change**

In conjunction with the ascent of the global economy, there are far-reaching technological inventions which have a major impact on education. Contemporary technology, especially in the fields of computerization and telecommunications, is more pervasive and sophisticated than ever before. Researchers are of the opinion that countries that do not adapt swiftly to technological inventions fall behind, which rapidly threatens both the standard of living and the government’s political future. Productivity and quality are enhanced by the use of modern technology. However, modern technology sets rigorous standards and requires superior education and training of the labour corps.

**New forms of work organization**

The demands of higher productivity and quality, as well as the necessity of keeping up with technological advances, have various implications for the world of work,
including the manner in which organizations are managed. Devolution of authority, participatory forms of management, democratic leadership and decreasing bureaucratic rigidity are the order of the day. In the so-called high performance work organizations, greater use is made of the skills and abilities of workers. Vocations are more flexible and understanding of the aims of the organization, teamwork and rotation are often key elements of the new model. Essential requirements in such organizations are the presence of more insight and understanding than in the traditional workplace, good communication skills, creativity and co-operation between workers.

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

In the context of the aforementioned matters, the premium placed on education is gradually increasing. It is generally understood that countries which succeed in sustaining high standards in education also succeed in training a dynamic working corps. Such countries have a greater chance of upholding economic competition in the international economic arena. In certain countries, the endeavour to maintain high standards is the core of educational provision. Education must, however, be provided differently than in the past. For a considerable time, employers have been of the opinion that education is much too academically oriented. Education should put far greater emphasis on essential skills needed for the modern market place.

Against the background of these global forces, the restructuring of education systems is taking place in the countries that have been visited.

Global trends in educational provision

A personal interpretation of the findings of the international research mentioned brings to light the following similar trends in educational restructuring:

A NEW AWARENESS

There is similarity in the countries referred to above such that, in this era of intense economic competition, the labour force of a country should be better educated if the country is to be competitive and remain that way. More and better education is essential in the preparation of a dynamic work force.

In the educational history of various countries, there have been endeavours at certain stages to achieve equal opportunities and to attain a just society through quantitative development in education. At present the tendency is, as in the case of Japan for example, to strive towards qualitative fulfilment rather than to be focused on equal opportunities. The accent thus falls on quality education and more of it.

BROAD FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES

The provision of excellent and relevant education calls for fundamental changes in every facet of schooling: in educational policy, management and control, as well as
in content and involvement from the community. For example, it is emphasized that
the management principles of successful business organizations should also be applied
to the management of educational institutions. In addition, educational content
should undergo a change of emphasis, from more academically oriented education
to greater stress placed on technological training and preparation for the world of
work.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

There is an awareness of the fact that learners in school at present will enter the work
force by the turn of the century. The task of education is therefore to prepare them
for the year 2000 and beyond. Visions of the future foresee a world caught up in
the forces of a global economy, economic competition and technological advancement.
The emphasis in education should take these forces into account.

UTILITARIAN AIMS: EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The further development of post-industrial economies is inevitably based on sci-
ence and technology. These are the fields of expertise which are highlighted in
curricula.

DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS

It has become evident that there have been shifts in work-place organization. The
skills required of the contemporary worker are different from those that were
needed in the industrial era. Besides increased proficiency in the basic skills of read-
ing, writing and arithmetic (the 3Rs), increased outcomes such as adaptability, cre-
ativity, the ability to solve problems, interpersonal and communication skills, com-
petence in teamwork, the ability to learn independently and a healthy work ethic
are required of education. The development of such capabilities is clearly present in
the reconstructional aims of education systems.

A NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS

Contemporary education systems aspire to higher standards in educational provi-
sion. In Japan, for example, the goal is that of qualitative achievement. In the United
Kingdom, England ensures that all learners have a carefully developed, broad and
balanced curriculum with clear aims and measurable standards of progress. Students
in the United States are being educated towards the goal of world leadership in sci-
ence and mathematics by the turn of the century. Although the United States does
not enforce a national curriculum, exact national standards are required in all sub-
jects and at all levels of development. Although voluntary, the aim is that such
standards should serve as a frame of reference for what should be accomplished.
High standards are seen as the heart of reform.
The emphasis in national curricula is definitely towards more basic education, such as has long been the practice in Japan. Additional emphasis is placed upon technological competence through the means of technology as a school subject, in which technological dexterity is stressed. In addition to a national curriculum, there is the tendency towards a national system of evaluation on specific developmental levels, in which learner ability is compared to national standards.

LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

Although there is a trend towards greater central control over educational content and standards through the medium of a national curriculum and system of evaluation, the tendency is also towards a devolution of operational decision-making to the school level. In essence, this trend indicates that the responsibility and accountability for schools are transferred to parents and local communities. This includes, *inter alia*, increased responsibility concerning school finances, appointment of teachers, admission of pupils and the organization of the school curriculum within the guidelines of the national curriculum.

GREATER COMPETITION AND PARENTAL CHOICE OF SCHOOL

Together with the trend of moving the primary responsibility for schools to the local communities, there is the understanding that parents should have the choice of where they place their children, even if their chosen schools fall outside their designated area. The idea is that greater competition between schools would be brought about which would, in turn, bring about higher standards. In some instances the funding system for schools is linked to the number of pupils enrolled. Schools that do not meet the requirements run the risk of losing pupils, resulting in the loss of funds and a decline in staff and facilities.

LIFELONG EDUCATION

Because of factors such as an ageing population and the fact that the work force in the present era needs to be continuously retrained to keep in touch with technological innovation, the countries under discussion strive towards the establishment of a culture of lifelong education. The aim is the creation of a community in which anyone can choose to take part in study opportunities at any stage of life, the results of which can be evaluated and accredited. For this purpose, structures and mechanisms are created to promote lifelong learning, while also striving towards making universities and other types of institution more accessible to the whole community.

INTERNATIONALIZATION

In the light of increased international interdependence, countries are more aware of their role in, and responsibility towards, an international community. In the
Transforming teacher education in South Africa

Curricula of schools, provision is made for, and emphasis placed upon, history and geography as foundation subjects for international understanding, while multiculturalism and the teaching of a modern foreign language have become new priorities. To what extent does the process of transformation in South African education keep abreast of the aforementioned trends stemming from the international economy, developments in the technological field and the market place? For this purpose the ensuing discussion will pay attention to the latest developments in the system of education and training in South Africa.

Developments in the education system of South Africa since 1994

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Since 1994 the Minister of Education has appointed various commissions of inquiry into related matters; the results have been two White Papers concerning education, as well as a Green Paper on higher education. The documents mentioned were presented to all stakeholders in a transparent manner so as to contribute to the development of an acceptable educational policy and general aims in South Africa. It was followed by various educational acts that would control and guide educational provision in the future. Recently, on 24 March 1997, the Minister of Education announced that educational reform would culminate in the project called Curriculum 2005. Entirely new curricula for schools will be phased in, commencing in Grades 1 and 7 in 1998 and taking six years to be implemented in all other grades.

The ensuing discussion offers information concerning important values and principles at the foundation of the new curricula in schools, as well as the organization, governance and financing of the system.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

According to the White paper on education and training (RSA, 1995a, p. 15-16), an integrated approach to education and training would be one of the vital principles that would lead and direct educational provision in a new educational dispensation.

What this means is that academic education and vocational training should be seen as so closely related that they cannot be separated.

In the past, the so-called general or academic education was seen as the task of formal educational institutions. On the other hand, vocational and skills-oriented training was seen as the task of employers. An integrated approach encompasses the abolition of these restricting boundaries between the tasks of the educational institutions and the employment sectors. A flexible educational system is the aim, bringing education and the employment sectors nearer to each other and aimed at the development of human resources with 'a strong foundation of general education, the desire and ability to continue to learn, to adapt to and develop new knowledge, skills and technologies, to move flexibly between occupations, to take respon-
sibility for personal performance, to set and achieve high standards, and to work co-operatively’ (RSA, 1995a, p. 15).

**AN OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH**

As in many other countries, traditional education in South Africa was aligned with content. Evaluation and examination were aimed at determining to what extent the learning content had been mastered. This was done in terms of a scoring system of marks and percentages.

In the *White paper on education and training* (RSA, 1995a, p. 15), the Minister of Education has undertaken to introduce an integrated approach to education and training based on a system of credits for learning outcomes achieved.

In an outcomes-based approach, the desired outcomes are used as a basis for all curriculum processes. The curriculum developer works from these outcomes within a particular context or field of learning to design programmes of learning which will help learners to achieve the desired outcomes.

Two types of outcomes are distinguished, namely essential outcomes and specific outcomes. Essential outcomes focus on the capacity to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an integrated way in learning and work situations, as well as in life in general. Examples are problem-solving skills and the ability to communicate effectively. Specific outcomes are demonstrated knowledge, skills and attitudes in a particular field or at a given level.

In an outcomes-based approach, the learner’s progress is measured against agreed criteria based on specified credits awarded. All learners who meet the agreed criteria for specified outcomes receive suitable credits. Those who have not yet received credits are given the opportunity to try again to reach the required standard. An important feature of this system is that the learner competes against his/her own previous performance and not against those of other learners. In addition, learning undertaken outside the formal education system may also be recognized (see National Curriculum Development Committee, 1996, p. 9-12).

**THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

In a swiftly changing world, the continuous retraining of human resources is of the utmost importance to enable learners to keep up with new knowledge and technologies. The educational policy-makers recognize this important worldwide priority and foresee the development of a system which will enable anyone, at any age, to improve their qualifications and to be accredited for these improvements in a suitable way.

**INTERDEPARTMENTAL CO-OPERATION**

In order to be able to follow an integrated approach to education and training, the essential contributions to the development of skills by people outside the formal pro-
visioning system must be recognized as an integral part of educational provision. Co-operation with other sectors is thus important. For this purpose, the Ministries of Education and Labour have created an inter-ministerial work group on which there are, among others, representatives of the Departments of Education and Manpower, the National Training Board, as well as from organized business and labour. The perception is that all concerned will assist in establishing national standards in the various fields of expertise in education and training. This includes governmental departments, the organized teaching profession, delegates of representative bodies of universities, technikons and colleges as major stakeholders, other Ministries with responsibilities regarding skills training, such as those of Health, Agriculture, Water Affairs and Forestry, local governments, as well as public and private sector education and training (see RSA, 1995a, p. 16).

TRANSFORMING THE LEGACY OF THE PAST

The task that is of paramount importance in South Africa is the development of a just and equitable system that provides good quality education and training to learners—young and old—throughout the country. This means, among other things, that the gross inequalities in past educational attainment, skills, employment opportunity, productivity and income and the separate education and training systems will be redressed. A transformative, democratic mission and ethos will be the goal for the provision of education in the future. The principles of the new education and training policies—policies to redress the legacies of underdevelopment and inequitable development, and to grant learning opportunities to everyone—will be based on the Constitution of the country, in which equal educational opportunities for all and non-discrimination are guaranteed.

OTHER IMPORTANT ASPECTS

The Ministry of Education identifies, among other things, the following values and principles driving national policy for the reconstruction and development of education and training:

- education and training are basic human rights which must be protected and advanced by the State;
- parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the education of their children; they have the right to be consulted by the State with respect to the desired form of education and to take part in its governance;
- parents' right to choose includes choice of language, the cultural or religious basis of the child's education (with due regard for the rights of others) and the rights of choice of the growing child;
- all individuals, including street children, out-of-school-youth, the disabled, citizens with special educational needs, illiterate people, rural communities, squatter communities and communities damaged by violence must have access to, and succeed in, lifelong education and training of good quality;

the State's resources must be deployed according to the principle of equity;
- democratic governance should be reflected in every level of the system;
- the culture of teaching, learning and management should be restored by the creation of a culture of accountability;
- all forms of bias, especially racial, ethnic and gender, should be abolished;
- the curriculum, teaching methods and textbooks at all levels and in all programmes of education and training should encourage critical and independent thought;
- curriculum choice must be diversified in order to provide increasing numbers of young people and adults with the education and skills required by the economy;
- an appropriate mathematics, science and technology education initiative will be essential to stem the waste of talent and make up the chronic national deficit in these fields of learning;
- environmental education must be a vital element of all levels and programmes of education and training;
- sustainability and productivity are two operational principles which should be given strong emphasis (see RSA, 1995a, p. 21-23).

A NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

One of the most important developments in the new education dispensation of South Africa, with the specific aim of bringing about the aforementioned principles, is the provision and accreditation of qualifications in agreement with a National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The National Qualifications Framework is a framework for the provision of lifelong learning opportunities, in accordance with nationally agreed qualification levels. It therefore consists of a classification of qualifications which may be obtained in this country, either formally, non-formally or informally.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), which was established by Act 58 of 1995 to develop and maintain the framework (see RSA, 1995b), decided upon the following format for the NQF:

- **Level 1:** The General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) to be achieved by the acquisition of the required credits:
  - at the end of the compulsory schooling phase, i.e. Grade 9;
  - through adult basic education and training programmes, which include three sub-levels, with a fourth level which is the equivalent of level one on the framework;
- **Levels 2-4:** Further Education and Training Certificate(s) (FETC) to be achieved by the acquisition of the required credits, which may comprise core units and optional units in different combinations, undertaken in a variety of modes, including:
  - senior secondary school programmes, up to Grade 12;
  - general and career-specific programmes offered in the college sector, includ-
ing those offered in the current technical colleges, community colleges, intermediate tertiary colleges, and other private vocational or academic colleges and NGO providers;
— programmes offered in regional training centres, through workplace training, etc.

- **Levels 5-8: Higher education diplomas and degrees**, achieved by the acquisition of the required credits, undertaken in programmes offered by:
  — professional colleges, both public and private;
  — professional institutes;
  — technikons;
  — universities.

**SUMMARY: COMPARISON OF INTERNAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS**

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that, in the transformation of education, apart from restructuring the system according to the principles of equity, South Africa is taking global trends into account in determining policy directions and aims of education. Among others, the following emphases from the global community come to the fore in the latest developments:

- **quality education**, encouraged and of a higher standard, available to all members of the population, is regarded as an important element. This is achieved not only in the reconstruction and development of less-privileged communities, but specifically in the creation of a dynamic and competitive workforce;
- the developments discussed in the previous paragraph represent *fundamental changes in the manner in which education is provided*, of educational aims and the management and control thereof, of educational content and the involvement of other stakeholder groups such as business and industry, other government ministries and parents; emphasis is placed upon a move away from academic and content-based education towards more vocationally orientated outcomes-based education and training;
- **more prominence in basic skills** is emphasized, while the development of outcomes-based curricula is connected more strongly to skills-oriented education;
- **skills such as critical and independent thinking** are emphasized, as well as skills required by the economy;
- the importance of *science and technology* in the school curricula are strongly emphasized as a means of eliminating educational shortfalls in the country;
- **provision for national standards and curricula** are made by means of a National Qualifications Framework, as well as by a national system of evaluation at the end of pre-arranged school grades;
- **devolution of basic responsibilities and accountability** for education to parents and local communities is a high priority and has already been brought into being by the establishment of elected structures for school governance at local level;
• the principle of lifelong learning is recognized to a large extent by the development of the NQF which enables any person at any stage of life to make use of opportunities for study and to be accredited in a suitable manner.

Preparing South African teachers for the democratic era

The global forces, developments in the global educational context, as well as the internal demands emanating from the transformation of education have far-reaching implications for teacher education programmes in South Africa. From the research, it is evident that the following matters should be taken into consideration in preparing teachers for the future.

A DYNAMIC TEACHER CORPS

A new awareness of the importance of high-quality educational provision in the creation of a dynamic and competitive work force, as well as a competitive economy, necessitates specific requirements as far as teacher education programmes are concerned. More and better education also requires more and better teacher education and training. It also requires relevantly trained teachers. It demands working conditions and remuneration which will draw the really good and functionally qualified person to the teaching profession. Stated more succinctly, high standards which form the heart of educational reform at present and which would deliver a dynamic corps of workers, are dependent on a dynamic corps of teachers.

Teachers with high standards

High standards in educational provision are not only dependent on committed communities, committed parents and committed learners, but also on committed teachers. The development of a committed teaching corps requires, in addition to good training, a certain work ethic which is associated with aspects such as remuneration, conditions of service and the atmosphere and culture of teaching and learning existing in a community.

Teachers and the economy

The involvement of business and industry with education has become an important priority in education systems. In teacher education, it is essential that teachers are informed regarding the roles of business and industry in the provision of education, the advantages of mutual involvement, kinds of relationships and opportunities for secondment.

Skills needed by employers must be included in the training of the modern teacher. These skills would include competence in communication and interpersonal skills, the ability to work in a team, problem-solving skills, creativity, adaptability
and independent thinking. If teachers are to help learners to develop these skills, they need to acquire the skills themselves.

**Teachers' foundations in the basic skills**

The attainment of higher abilities in the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic by students requires that high-achievers in these domains be attracted to the teaching profession. Teachers are unable to lay solid foundations if they do not have a sound base in the context of the subject that they teach.

**Teachers' knowledge of national standards**

Teachers cannot inculcate standards of excellence if they have not been adequately trained and informed regarding the appropriate curriculum, national standards and the requirements for evaluation.

**Teachers with a strong science and technology orientation**

It is evident, from the reforms taking place in the education systems of various countries, that there is an increasing emphasis on science and technology. Traditionally, persons with good qualifications in these domains have been recruited by the private sectors as a result of better remuneration packages. If education systems wish to emphasize science and technology, there will have to be far greater consideration of conditions of service and suitable remuneration for persons with expertise in these fields.

As computers already play an integral part in daily education in many countries, teachers will have to be increasingly trained regarding technological education and technology in education, such as computer-aided instruction.

**Teachers' views and attitudes**

A move away from an academic and content-based education towards a more vocationally and skills-orientated education requires a fundamental change in the convictions of teachers. The shift in South African education towards an outcomes-based approach represents such a change. Therefore, teachers will intentionally have to be educated for a more skills-directed type of education.

**Teachers with a management orientation**

One of the requirements of the contemporary era is that schools and education systems should reflect the management changes occurring in the modern work place. Participatory forms of management are now becoming the norm. In combination with this, the devolution of the basic authority and responsibility for high standards to local levels add to the burden placed on the teacher, regarding school finances for example. This means that teachers should be equipped for their role in man-
agement. There should be no doubt that aspects of management, such as classroom and financial management, leadership, communication and interpersonal relationships, should receive appropriate attention.

Teachers as self managers

Higher demands regarding standards, increasing responsibilities following the devolution of authority and participatory forms of management require high inputs from the modern teacher. Teachers are increasingly faced with stress and burnout. Training in the principles of self management is essential in the education of teachers.

Teachers as public relations officers

Education is becoming more and more of a total community matter with a variety of stakeholders such as parents and employers involved. Teacher involvement outside the sphere of colleagues and learners is ever-increasing as contact with people outside the inner circle of the school domain expands. The handling of such contacts needs definite skills, and training in these skills should be included in teacher education.

Teachers as lifelong learners

In the present context of expanding fields of knowledge, technological inventions and a fast-changing world of work, teachers cannot rely on their initial academic and professional knowledge to sustain a comprehensive career. They must stay in touch with new and additional knowledge within their fields of expertise and with new technologies; more specifically, they should be in touch with developments which will make their teaching more effective, as well as with changes in the economic and labour sectors. This implies that teachers should master the skills of learning-to-learn. The principles of independent learning are therefore essential.

Teachers with a strong international orientation

Due to increasing international interdependence and the distinct responsibility of education towards these circumstances, education systems need teachers with a strong sense and understanding of the following:

- the global environment, trends and issues and appreciation of the way they impact on education;
- multiculturalism and appreciation of cultural diversity and differences, not only within their own country, but of cultures across the globe with whom there are economic ties;
- international history and geography; and
- the need for knowledge of a modern foreign language.
Conclusion

As indicated initially, educational institutions are presently busy with a change of mindset regarding all facets of teacher education in South Africa. Full implementation of the transformation of programmes, aims, control and management is, to a certain extent, still dependent on the Ministry of Education’s Green Paper on Higher Education, which has been presented to all interested parties for consideration. The Green Paper indicates preliminary policy directions regarding the broad terrain of higher education. Before policy guidelines are finalized and implemented, it is difficult to deduce how programmes for South African teacher education will be able to prepare the teacher corps for education within the global context.

Because of South Africa’s isolation over the past few decades, teacher education for the global context is a more complex task than it is in leading industrialized countries. South Africa has, as indicated, a two-fold responsibility for establishing a just and equitable system whilst, at the same time, keeping abreast of world trends.

In the foregoing discussion, the focus has been on the global context and the major forces influencing educational provision in a number of countries. A whole series of distinctive characteristics has been identified and compared with the latest developments in the South African education setting. Both the global and internal developments have incisive implications for the education of teachers in South Africa. The implications as set out in this paper are interpretations of the findings of research done in various countries. Although these findings are as yet rather obscure, they might provide a point of departure for further research, discussion and development of programmes for teacher education.

The role of the teacher, as seen from a global framework and set out in the discussion, necessitates re-thinking and evaluation. A challenge lies ahead for future teachers, but equally so for policy makers and teacher educators.

Note

1. Various interviews were conducted with representatives of Ministries of Education, education departments, universities and other teacher training institutions, research councils, business and industry and schools in Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

References


PROFILES OF FAMOUS EDUCATORS

AUGUST HERMANN NIEMEYER

(1754-1828)
Profile of a life

August Hermann Niemeyer was born on 1 September 1754. His father was deacon at the Marienkirche of Halle. His mother, A.S. Froylinghausen, was the daughter of the director of the town’s orphanage and granddaughter of A.H. Francke, the most active representative of Pietist educational theory in Germany and founder of the famous Halle school institutions. Moved by the poverty of the people, Francke, a protégé of Spener’s, began by founding a school for the poor and an orphanage. In order to be able to maintain them, he added fee-paying schools, followed by a dispensary and a printing works. On his death, the Halle schools made up a vast complex attended by some 3,000 pupils and employing over 200 teachers. The complex included the following establishments: a school for poor children, an orphanage, a primary school (Bürgerschule) for the children of artisans and the lower middle classes, a Pädagogium (a sort of academy reserved for the children of wealthy parents), a Gymnasium (secondary or grammar school) for children who were to

Original language: French

Gilbert de Landsheere (Belgium)
Professor at the University of Liège, where he ran the Experimental Education Laboratory for twenty-five years. Carried out missions in forty countries for the Council of Europe, OECD, IBE, UNESCO, NATO, WHO, the European Union and non-governmental organizations to launch kindergartens, elementary schools, curriculum reform, teacher training, training for research, and evaluation of schools’ performance and distance teaching. Visiting professor in sixteen universities in Europe, Africa, North and South America. Member of the editorial board of twenty educational journals. Author of seventeen books (translated into nine languages) and 260 articles. Honorary president of the International Academy of Education and founder member of the Academia Europaea. Doctor honoris causa of the Universities of Geneva and Iasi. Awarded the José Vasconcelos World Education Prize. Ennobled with the title of baron by King Baudoin for outstanding services to education.

Gilbert de Landsheere
go on to higher education, a teacher-training institution for primary-school teachers (Seminarium praecceptorum) and a higher teacher-training college (Seminarium selectum praecceptorum).

There were two features common to all of Francke's schools; while sharing the same genuine religious inspiration, they were diversified along social class lines, and each of them prepared pupils for a specific 'status'. Niemeyer would later restore the schools to the former glory they merited under Francke's direction.

Orphaned at the age of 13, Niemeyer was brought up by the counsellor Lysthenius von Wurmb, a lady of high aristocratic culture. He studied at the University of Halle and was taught by, among others, Nösselt, Griesbach and, particularly, Semler. In 1775 he published his Charakteristik der Bibel [Characteristics of the Bible], a work which earned him instant fame. He then struck up a personal acquaintance with Lessing, whom he met in Brunswick, and especially with Klopstock, with whom he stayed for several days in Hamburg in 1776. The following year, Niemeyer was appointed fellow in Greek and Latin literature at Halle. F.A. Wolf, the founder of modern archaeology, succeeded him to that chair.

Niemeyer the philologist and educational theorist—but also playwright, travel writer and oratorio composer—was the very embodiment of a Germany which filled the cultural void of the seventeenth century with works of genius accomplished in just a few decades.

There were some major landmarks in the life of the teacher from Halle. In 1778 he met Goethe, Herder and Wieland in Weimar. He did not get on at all well with the latter. We know little of his relations with Herder; but he did become Goethe's friend and remained so until Niemeyer's death.

In 1783, Duke Charles Eugene visited the Halle institutions and offered Niemeyer the post of professor at the Karlsschule. He declined the offer, but on that occasion became the correspondent and confidant of the Duke's favourite, Franziska von Hohenheim.

Protégé of the Kings of Prussia, Frederick William II and III, Niemeyer enjoyed a glittering career. He became prorector of the University of Hallein in 1793, director-general of the Francke Foundations in 1799, senior councillor of the consistory and schools (Oberkonsistorial- und Oberschulrat) with a seat and voting rights at the Ministry of Religion and Instruction in Berlin and, one year later, chancellor and rector in perpetuity of the university.

In 1783, Duke Charles Eugene visited the Halle institutions and offered Niemeyer the post of professor at the Karlsschule. He declined the offer, but on that occasion became the correspondent and confidant of the Duke's favourite, Franziska von Hohenheim.

In July 1802, Goethe visited the Halle Pädagogium. At the time, Niemeyer was translating Terence's Andria for him, under the title Die Fremde aus Andros [The stranger from Andros]. The play was staged the following year by the Weimar theatre.

Niemeyer met Schiller at Lauchstädt in 1806 and struck up a friendship with him as well. Thus it was that Niemeyer received the manuscripts of Wallenstein and Maria Stuart before their publication, with Schiller asking for his opinion and advice (see Menne, 1928, p. 48). The Pädagogium also received a visit from Schiller on 8 July 1803.

Then came the dark war years. On 17 October 1806, three days after the defeat at Jena and Auerstädt, Halle fell to the French. Napoleon immediately decreed the
closure of the university, and Niemeyer was deported to Paris. Halle was incorpo­rated into the kingdom of Westphalia.

In 1807 Niemeyer, back from exile, was invited by Nolte to take part in the found­ing of the University of Berlin, a veritable symbol of Prussian resistance which was arming itself morally and physically, and preparing for Napoleon's down­fall. At practically the same time, the minister vom Stein offered him the post of State councillor. Niemeyer refused both posts, preferring to stand by his schools in situ.

On 1 January 1808, King Jérôme authorized the reopening of the University of Halle and appointed Niemeyer chancellor. When the King of Prussia called his people to arms in 1813, Napoleon closed the university again. It was to reopen its doors after the Prussian victory at Leipzig, and Niemeyer—who still enjoyed the support of King Frederick William III—was restored to his post as chancellor and re­ctor, even though public opinion accused him of collaborating with the enemy.

After Napoleon’s defeat, the aristocracy raised its head once more and the period of anti-liberal reaction personified by Metternich began. The promised constitutions were refused and Schleiermacher, Arndt, Jahn and other patriots were subjected to harassment. Alarmed by the French Revolution, Niemeyer came down firmly on the side of the conservatives, disapproving especially of the students’ associations in general and the Wartburg events in particular. In 1816, the King appointed him Beständiger Beauftragter des hohen Departments in Universitätsangelegenheiten, that is to say permanent officer-in-charge of the Department of University Affairs.

Niemeyer was to live on for many years, covered in honours and held in high esteem, writing and above all continuing to watch over the expansion of Halle. When his academic jubilee was celebrated in 1827, he received gifts from Goethe and the King among many others, was made professor honoris causa of the University of Moscow, and received congratulations from a number of universities, including those of Breslau, Göttingen, Königsberg, Jena and Leipzig.

Development and mainstays of Niemeyer's educational thinking

During the first half of the nineteenth century, German education was very much dominated by Niemeyer's educational theory, whose influence was felt throughout Europe and beyond.

As we have seen, Goethe and Niemeyer had much in common. Apart from the fact that they lived near each other—a mere 100 or so kilometres separated Weimar from Halle—it was above all a friendly relationship spanning fifty years that brought the two men together, sharing as they did the same humanism, literary tastes and political opinions.¹

Despite its paramount importance, Niemeyer's educational work is little known today. It is an extensive collection of some 110 books, manuals and brochures. The author’s educational thinking is nevertheless summarized in his Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts [Principles of education and teaching]. Published in 1796 as an educational guide for parents and private tutors, this work gradually
expanded into a sort of encyclopedia covering ‘the result of all that has been tried and tested in pedagogy and didactics’.\(^2\)

And indeed, as German teachers were to say for almost a century, the three large volumes of the eighth edition (1825)—the last prepared by Niemeyer—contained everything: the philosophy of education, family education (including childhood nutrition), structure of the school system (which was to prevail in Western Europe for over a century), psychology, general methodology and special methodologies (which were to have a strong influence on Herbart), organization of teaching, and last, but not least, a history of education which is held by several specialists to be one of the first reliable essays on the subject.

With Prussia and the rest of Western Europe in the throes of a crisis of civilization at the end of the eighteenth century, as well as through much of the nineteenth, at a time when everything crystallized around the two revolutions that marked this period—the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution—and when ‘institutions, habits, symbols and beliefs were almost all affected by chronic instability, confusion, schism and uncertainty’,\(^4\) Niemeyer strove to establish education and teaching on firm ground once more.

**Social order and progressive thought:**
**a moderate approach**

His aim was twofold: he wanted happiness for the child and he aspired to social peace. True to Enlightenment ideals, he believed that both of them could be realized through education.

Niemeyer reacted to the upheavals of his time from an upper middle-class standpoint, and his eclecticism was akin to that of Goethe. Both men, who have been accused by some of conservatism, seem to have been somewhat alarmed by revolutionary violence, which was incompatible with their ideals. They did not reject political, social or scientific progress, but wanted it to be the outcome of peaceful change. H. Uyttersprot clearly illustrates Goethe’s attitude in this respect:

> We can safely say without risk of error that in politics Goethe was a conservative. But his conservatism was not narrow and blinkered like that of Metternich or Gentz. Here too he distrusted inflammatory slogans and expected good to come from the kind of change that does not destroy, poses no risk, and does not involve rash experiments. Here too he advocated the idea of gradual change, of slow and unforced maturing.\(^5\)

Niemeyer wrote: ‘Any ill-considered love of innovation leads to the worst evils a people can suffer, revolution and anarchy.’\(^6\) The whole cultural outlook of the educationist from Halle is to be understood from this perspective.

For instance, regarding religion and ethics, Niemeyer subscribed in principle to the modern rationalist trend, looking to Semler for theology and Kant for philosophy. However, aware of the inability of the morally and intellectually uncultivated classes of society to accede rapidly enough to a religion or moral code increas-
ingly stripped of its emotional content, Niemeyer adopted a moderate position. In religion, he left the door open to Pietism and maintained that pure reason and revelation, as well as practical reason, could legitimately lead to faith. He also compromised when it came to moral philosophy and, as well as the complete gratuitousness of moral behaviour held by the idealists to be the supreme criterion, accepted increasingly opportunistic motivations and did not even reject the simulacrum of morality dictated by sordid self-interest, in the hope that positive conditioning would assert itself as a result.

In fact, thanks to his profound experience of people, Niemeyer had already become aware of the phenomenon that Lévy-Bruhl would later analyse: a living society does not set itself a moral code *ad libitum*.

For Niemeyer, the moral hierarchy, in which the development of values is proportionate to the extent to which reason prevails over sentiment, corresponded to a social hierarchy. All his educational and theological work is informed by the idea that people can only attain full enjoyment of reason after having gone through a painstaking and methodical process of education and many years of teaching. But, as he saw it, the quality of family education declined in proportion to social status. Furthermore, the poorer a child was, the shorter the amount of time he or she would spend at school. Thus society was made up of the ordinary people, who could not attain the full exercise of reason, and, at the other end of the scale, a class privileged not only in economic terms but also in moral terms.

In his *Principles*, Niemeyer advanced a significant analysis of the cultural potential of the three social classes.

The case against the lower class was quickly made. Poverty made access to ‘humanity’ extremely difficult. Giving the poor ‘an upright, pious, satisfied mind’ and inculcating in them ‘the inclination to work’ was as ambitious a programme for them as could be expected. His attitude to the middle classes was quite different: ‘indisputably it is the bourgeoisie which lends itself best to intellectual and moral education’.

Situated between the peasantry and urban proletariat which had not yet had access to culture, and a decadent nobility, the middle class, whose prosaic nature had so often been the butt of ridicule, had remained in touch with reality. Free of the basic concerns of everyday subsistence, it had time to adopt the ‘reflexive attitude of intelligence’ that was true culture. Need we recall that since the Middle Ages there had been a realist culture (*Realbildung*) which, largely free of formalist prejudices, remained close to the realities of life, and that it was going from strength to strength? In the eighteenth century, the Dessau Philanthropists’ experiment and Christoph Semler’s *Realschule* were, so to speak, by-products of this movement.

As to the nobility, Niemeyer’s sober judgement was that wealth and a life of cushioned ease and dissipation were very sterile ground for culture and morality.

Consequently, in order to construct a theory of education conducive to maximum intellectual and moral progress, while ensuring social order, Niemeyer concentrated his endeavours on the bourgeoisie.

His position vis-à-vis the major conflicting educational movements at the end
of the eighteenth century was consistent with this analysis. He opposed the direct rivals of the Halle institutions, the Dessau Philanthropists (led by Basedow), unwilling as he was to accept their pragmatism and the revolutionary ferment they stirred up in the higher classes of society, and Pestalozzi, that generous and brilliant bohemian of educational theory, whom he looked down upon and at the same time feared for his efforts to bring the Enlightenment to the masses.

He did, however, approve of the Pietists and Neohumanists. He found in the Pietists the realism and profound religiosity which the people and the petty bourgeoisie needed in order to play their part in the nineteenth century effectively without conflict or rash demands. From the Neohumanists he drew upon the elements of altruistic aristocratic culture, the perfect antidote to the ideas of the Philanthropists and a bridge to eternal wisdom and beauty.

In short, in the political, religious, moral, social and educational spheres, Niemeyer's eclecticism was directed towards tradition to the extent that tradition averts revolution while leaving the way open for the free and progressive flourishing of the bourgeoisie.

Psychology and the child

In order to distinguish the main lines of Niemeyer's educational theory, it is important to understand how he justified the very existence of education and defined its overriding principles. We will then see how he saw psychology as the systematic study of a child's potential and how he intended to develop the aptitudes he identified.

Constructing his vast treatise on education on the basis of a rigorous method, Niemeyer set out to demonstrate, firstly, that education was not a violation of the natural rights of the child. His central argument was by nature genetic: children come into the world as fully-fledged people only in the virtual sense; they carry within them the seed of everything they might become, but the fruit will only grow out of the seed in a favourable environment. In addition, Niemeyer wrote: 'If he does not undergo the influence of other reasonable beings, that part of the human being which distinguishes him from the animal will never reach the degree of perfection it might have attained, through the original perfectibility of his potential.'

Niemeyer's system can be summarized as follows:

1. His entire educational theory had an ethical purpose, and indeed bore the imprint of Kant: 'May the harmony of liberty and reason be your supreme aim, for it is on that harmony that rests the moral worth of the individual, and thus his supreme, unconditional value.'

2. Education would operate, on the one hand, according to a formal principle, that of conformity to nature, involving the development of all potentialities to the extent that an authority endowed with reason so decided, and, on the other hand, according to a substantive principle, that is on the basis of a subject of study, also chosen according to the dictates of reason.

The formal principle is particularly significant, since, with its premise that knowledge of the child is the basis of the educational undertaking, it leads to psychology.
Without the assistance of that science, Niemeyer tells us, neither education nor teaching can function properly. Even this statement of principle is in itself highly important.

More generally, a study of Niemeyer's practical proposals shows how close the era of scientific psychology was to the age of Goethe. In fact, it had already begun. For while Niemeyer continued to take an interest in literary psychology—and who would venture to deny the psychological import of *Werther* or *Levana*?—he nevertheless placed more emphasis on observation and the empirical approach to invigorate the theoretical training of the educator.

**An inductive approach**

He expressed some remarkable views on the schoolteacher's need for and use of introspection; even more novel were his comments on outside or objective observation. For instance, Niemeyer—who admired Jean-Jacques Rousseau—sensed the danger of subjective pedagogy as expressed in *Emile*. The science of education would make no real progress unless it was based on a series of case studies of real children.

Niemeyer wrote:

If we were to portray a person who actually exists and if we described, with the greatest accuracy possible, how education intended to shape that individual, the means employed, the changes observed and the results which rewarded the efforts deployed, we would then have both the natural history and the history of the formation of a given being. In order to enrich our theory of education, the elaboration of many anthropo-pedagogical monographs would be desirable.\(^\text{16}\)

Thus, the ideas which were already to be found in Rousseau and Pestalozzi reach maturity with Niemeyer: from being deductive, educational theory was to become inductive.

In a special brief treatise entitled *New hypotheses on the evaluation of original aptitudes and capacities*, he set out to review current scientific knowledge and proposed a plan for systematic inquiry into the psychological development of the child.

Considering the psyche in relation to the body, Niemeyer gave his views on Lavater's theories on physiognomy and Gall's on phrenology, and did so with remarkable lucidity. He succeeded in separating the wheat from the chaff and showed, for example, that by studying their pupils from the physiognomic perspective teachers would at least learn not to be satisfied with a superficial impression of their pupils' characters, but to study them in a clear and precise way.\(^\text{17}\) That was indeed the great lesson of the era: did not Lavater, and even more so Gall, despite some naive assumptions and some extravagant claims, foreshadow the imminent transfer of psychology from the realm of philosophy to that of science?

We are struck by the modernism of the level of psychological observation recommended and systematized by Niemeyer. He takes as a starting point a well-
known passage from Francis Bacon: ‘One can discover and know a man in six different ways: by observing his physiognomy and his face, his words, his deeds, his character, the aims he pursues and, lastly, his relations with others and what they think of him.’

With this in mind he proposed an investigation framework which is still valid today. He wrote about interviews with parents:

Even parents' mistaken judgements can be highly instructive for the investigators, giving them an insight into the child's psychological development as a result of errors made in the child's upbringing or parents' attitudes of rejection; much of what the parents say about particular attitudes of the child in the past may help them to form a judgement and may even lead them to draw quite different conclusions from those that the parents would have wished for. They should be particularly attentive to points on which the father and mother agree and those on which they do not agree!

This quotation is an accurate evocation of the approach of the modern psychologist, who, while listening to the parents, sets out to reconstitute objectively the child's background, discern the main lines of the parent's attitude and discover any traumatic incidents, is interested at least as much in what is held back as in what is apparently said quite openly, and tries to formulate a diagnosis which, very often, turns the accusers into the accused.

To Niemeyer, the mind was not just a crude mechanism of which it sufficed to know the main workings in order to be able to explain everything. On the contrary, he stressed the complexity of the child's soul, laid emphasis on the far-reaching influence of the educational environment and, whenever appropriate, envisaged problems from the social standpoint.

It is not surprising then that, in his considerations on family education, he adopted a dynamic approach very close to our contemporary one. He identified the main aspects of the child's background, defined his or her various needs and studied the most evident errors in upbringing, including rejection and over-protection.

Here too, one passage, among many others, bears witness to Niemeyer's maturity:

How often do teachers know to what extent parents are responsible for the trouble their pupils so often give them? Do they know the stuff the pupils are made of? Do they know what combination of elements make up their bodies? Do they know anything of the indelible impressions the embryo received at conception, before birth, when it first came into the world, or of the children's contact with the women who were the first to feed and care for them? Do they know how they have developed physically in adolescence, what effect the transition from non-maturity to maturity has had on their minds and how extraordinarily complicated life has so often been for them during that critical period? Do they always know what agonies they have to endure, particularly in educational institutions, with companions they fear or have to accommodate, where they have to contend with the latent violence against which no teacher can offer protection? Lastly, do we not forget too easily that it is extremely difficult for most young characters to escape outside influences?
This whole psychology testifies to great broad-mindedness untrammelled by any social or economic considerations. Only the success of education, the greatest happiness of all, counted. In this it can be said that Niemeyer brought Rousseau's legacy to fruition by moving from child-centred theory to child-centred practice.

In the field of physical education we are also struck by the depth of the author's views, as he not only acknowledged the importance of physical health but showed, by his notes on gymnastics, nutrition and hygiene, how much emphasis he laid on those fundamental factors.

How the perspective changed, though, as soon as education entered the schoolroom, that is, when it was approached from the institutional standpoint!

The Enlightenment and social education

School, as a tool in the hands of the authoritative protagonists of a given culture, transmits their deep-rooted concerns, and Niemeyer proposed an approach to formal education which was altogether consistent with the aspirations of the decisive social forces of his period.

Even in family education he would have liked to have seen—alongside general, spontaneous parental action—the systematic cultivation of the three basic faculties: intelligence, sensitivity and will. Nevertheless, he knew that the influence and scope of such an enterprise was illusory because of the ignorance of many parents and the little time available to them.

In practice, therefore, school would provide almost all systematic education, which meant, on the one hand, the formal training of the faculties taken individually—culminating in the exercise of reason, love of higher intellectual culture and lofty morality—and, on the other, guidance towards truth, beauty and good, without which those faculties would be meaningless.

It is precisely here that we come up against the dividing line between ideals and reality, between the theoretical generosity of the Enlightenment and the lack of practical social sense.

The generosity is apparent in the following passage:

It is becoming ever more widely accepted that the concern to instruct the citizen must be extended to all classes of society. There is not a single citizen who, being capable of receiving instruction, should not be entitled to it, and happily the time is past when, even in civilized countries, only some people were considered to be free beings endowed with reason, and the others almost as animals and slaves, or else as beings simply destined to be used by the former and accordingly being barred from any training other than that which served the purposes determined by their masters. Anyone still harbouring such obscurantist ideas in our time and wishing to accomplish their designs must—in order to avoid exposure to public scorn—at least assume a mask of humanity, justifying their attitude by claiming that light can harm some people, that enlightenment can bring unhappiness. They would like to convince us that it is out of pure love that they are the custodians of the minds of the people, and withhold their rights all the better to safeguard them. But a healthy philosophy, sustained by a humane religion such as the Christian religion, sees in these manoeuvres only...
pride and the desire to dominate. It proclaims out loud that everyone has the obligation to help others to enjoy their natural and inalienable rights and that the first of these rights is the free use of one's own reason and the free knowledge of the truth. It further asserts that even the most worthy efforts of the State government can succeed only if they are not impeded by the baseness, unreason or ignorance of citizens or if these efforts are not rendered futile by their incapacity.\textsuperscript{21}

Two great principles of the Enlightenment are asserted here: the universal right to culture and the rejection of any form of constraining intellectual tutelage. Still, Niemeyer did add some theoretical and practical restrictions to his magnanimous assertions.

Just as Voltaire applauded La Chalotais for prohibiting study for labourers, so Niemeyer also used the specious humanitarian argument which he had himself denounced. He took it for granted that the actual living conditions of many people, 'essential for the accomplishment of the most menial work', put almost insurmountable obstacles in the way of the widespread provision of education, and he concluded:

Assuming, then, that it would be possible to raise all people to a certain degree of culture, it would not be advisable. People of the lower classes would all too soon feel wretched in their condition and would lose in peace and in happiness what they would have gained in ideas and knowledge.\textsuperscript{22}

Furthermore, Niemeyer subscribed to the principle of censorship, fearing as he did 'the ill-considered communication of truth' and 'excess of culture'.\textsuperscript{23} Lastly, he considered that birth still determined social class, an inexorable fate, and justified school segregation:

It is clear that the diversity of teaching institutions must emerge very early on. This is because of the irrevocable nature of the conditions in which individuals are born; no idealistic theory can do anything to change that.\textsuperscript{24}

The aristocratic position is patent, and is comparable to the words Goethe put in the mouth of Werther regarding the 'little people of the place': 'I know very well that we are not equal and that we cannot be so.\textsuperscript{25}

\textbf{Structural innovations}

On the practical level, Niemeyer proposed an organization of teaching and curricula which met those concerns. School organization was consequently to be modelled on the social order. At the base there would be elementary education. Theoretically, it was the same for all children, but private tutoring was still so common at the time and many private institutions were so restrictive in their recruitment that there was segregation from the outset. After primary school there was a clear break which corresponded to the distinction between the 'real world' and the 'world
of ideas’. Those who were considered good for manual labour and were among the happy few to complete their elementary schooling were sent out to work, while the children who were later expected to apply their intelligence to material objects went on either to the Realschule as such, or to specialized schools such as commercial schools, arts schools and military schools. Those who were to live in the ‘world of ideas’ went on to the Gymnasium or grammar school (also known, significantly, as the school for scholars (Gelehrtenschule)), and then possibly to university.

The proposed structures have, in essence, survived to this day.

As for the curricula, they show clearly that primary school was intended to be limited and limiting, that the Realschulen and their offshoots offered a scientific, realistic, modern education, while the Gymnasien (grammar schools) took pupils on to university via the route of the ancient classics, that of formal culture.

What is particularly striking here is the uniform stratification, with the social hierarchy corresponding exactly to what was assumed to be the intellectual and moral hierarchy.

The working-class child would have access to the three traditional skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, which were acquired not as tools for the autonomous exploration of the environment, but rather as instruments of formal discipline or the strictly guided acquisition of knowledge. Cut off from reality, history, geography and the sciences were paths to belief rather than to knowledge. Indeed, these three fields of study drew their basic subject matter from the Bible and often went no further, the aim being above all a formal one and one of edification: harnessing imagination and memory and reinforcing piety. The teaching of religion was based primarily on revelation, setting aside considered reason as being virtually unattainable.

The Realschule dispensed a realistic culture to the children of the petty bourgeoisie in keeping with their socio-economic needs. Modern languages were among the subjects studied. The methodology used to teach them was effective and consisted of the use of the direct method, with hearing trained before sight, words and phrases selected according to the frequency of their use in the spoken language, a global reading approach, and the theory of grammar taught on the basis of the preliminary acquisition of usage. More emphasis was laid on practising the spoken language than on written exercises.

For future ‘scholars’, culture would be learned for its own sake. Geometry would provide sureness of reasoning and the classical languages would train all the faculties; the sciences would be dominated by philosophy; poetry and rhetoric would enable thought, which was to have undergone gradual refinement, to flow in harmonious forms. Religion would be strongly marked with the imprint of reason.

Niemeyer referred to the intellectual agility conferred by the study of ancient languages:

The exercises, even when they concern what appears to be a trivial grammatical point, develop all at once memory, imagination, reason, quick-wittedness, wisdom, good taste and a sense of beauty. Nothing provides as much stimulus and focus for sustained attention and tireless zeal, and nothing provides as many opportunities to observe accurately and to overcome
difficulties through perseverance. Such an education is a preparation for all the undertakings of life, because it goes deep down. Furthermore, since the human mind deploys all its subtleties and diversity when it expresses itself in languages, they are the storehouses of all concepts, all forms of thought, all the means and tools for synthesis and analysis. That is why studying them stimulates greatly the flow of ideas, is so conducive to clear thinking, and structures natural logic, applying it instantly. The more advanced the study of languages, the more readily these goals will be attained.27

Education for girls tended to reflect the social order in just the same way as that of boys. For girls from the working classes, Niemeyer considered compositions and recitations to be superfluous and not even advisable. To them, love of work was far more important than love of writing or reading: ‘We must not go too far! By teaching them too much, we are doing girls the most serious disservice. In any case, most of what is learnt is lost in life.’28

Although the daughters of the middle classes could be better educated, he cautioned against ‘opening up the frontiers too widely, something which girls’ curiosity, malleability and quickness to understand might easily prompt many teachers to do’.29 So for them too, Niemeyer believed that restricting their knowledge did more good than harm.

By contrast, upper-class girls would have access to the broadest culture: ‘Who could fail to agree that the accomplishment of all feminine duties [Niemeyer’s emphasis] is eminently well served by a genuinely enlightened intelligence, a store of useful general knowledge, a cultivated taste.’30

The contradiction is so glaring that it requires no comment.

A similar gulf separated the training of teachers in mass education from that of teachers in secondary education, especially of the scholarly kind.

For the former (whom Niemeyer preferred to be from impoverished families so that they would be more likely to accept their mediocre status), access to culture, science and religion based on reason was virtually forbidden. For the latter, on the contrary, scientific university-level training was considered essential. A number of courses in educational theory and special exercises, provided in addition to the regular classes, foreshadowed the advanced teacher education system known as agrégation which still exists in French-speaking countries. Lastly, a detailed study of general and special methodologies showed that Niemeyer had in fact codified the whole of school life: the disciplinary system, curricula, observation and grammar exercises, monthly marks, the colour of the ink to be used to correct compositions, and so on.

Thus from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the most durable features of the daily functioning of school life, as we still know it to a certain extent, were mapped out.

The school system advocated by Niemeyer was extraordinarily successful. The Principles of education and teaching were translated into several languages: Danish, French, Hungarian, Dutch, Polish and Swedish. They were known from Geneva to Moscow.

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As Georgii clearly perceived, the plan for the organization of teaching and Niemeyer’s educational theory in general directly inspired many governments which, for the same reasons as Prussia, wanted to introduce a well-structured education system which respected the established order. At the same time, it was to be moderately progressive without appearing to be so.\textsuperscript{31}

In 1922, Mehlhose considered that Niemeyer’s influence was still making itself felt in Germany.\textsuperscript{32} That remains true today, not only in Germany, but also in many countries of Western Europe and elsewhere.

Notes

In the references to quotations from the \textit{Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts} [Principles of education and teaching], the Roman figure indicates the volume and the Arabic figure the page.

1. We felt it was important when examining the thought and work of Niemeyer to recall briefly how close his relations were with Goethe, Schiller and many other great minds of the time.


3. See Gockler, A. 1905. \textit{La pédagogie de Herbart} [Herbart’s pedagogy], Paris, Hachette.


6. Except where otherwise stated, all subsequent references are to the eighth edition of \textit{Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts}, as presented by Rein, W., 1882. Langensalza, Beyer & Söhne.

7. III/312.

8. Ibid.

9. Mehring described this period harshly: ‘Ganz Potsdam war wie ein Bordell’ (‘The whole of Potsdam was like a brothel’). See \textit{Zur preussischen Geschichte vom Mittelalter bis Jena} [On Prussian history from the Middle Ages to Jena], Ges. Werke. [Complete works], Berlin, 1930, III, p. 244.


11. A general study of the realist culture (\textit{Realbildung}) and its history has yet to be made.

12. Or ‘developmental’.

13. I/27.


15. ‘Awaken and develop any potential and any aptitude given to the child as a person and as an individual’ (I/38). Or again: ‘Guide the strength thus awakened towards whatever appears to reason to be worthy of the human person’ (\textit{ibid.}).

16. I/258.

17. I/334.

18. \textit{Notitia hominis sex modis elici et hauriri potest: per vultus et ors ipsorum, per verba, per facta, per ingenia sua, per fines suos, denique per relationes et judicia aliorum} (I/331).

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20. III/231.
21. III/7-8.
22. III/98.
24. III/11.
26. See II/177.
27. III/129. The historical importance of this passage is obvious. It sets forth, in well-ordered
terms, many of the arguments which justify the study of ancient languages to this day.
28. III/129.
29. III/130.
30. III/131.
31. See Schmid, K.A. 1892. Geschichte der Erziehung [History of Education], Stuttgart,
V, p. 227.
Grundsätze [The pedagogical principles of the eighteenth century in Niemeyer’s

Works by Niemeyer

Of the 125 publications of Niemeyer on record, we refer only to those which have a direct
bearing on education and teaching. The publications not mentioned concern for the most part
ancient Greek literature (particularly Homer, Philo Judaeus and Sophocles), the Bible, reli­
gious theatre, folk songs, the teaching of religion and theology, travel writing and many
topical publications.

—. 1782. Abhandlung über die Methode, die Moral in Sittensprüchen vorzutragen [Treatise
on the teaching of morality using edifying maxims]. Halle.
—. 1786. Über die Mitwirkung der Eltern zur Bildung und Erziehung ihrer Kinder auf
öffentlichen Schulen [On the collaboration of parents in the training and education of
their children attending public schools]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung.
—. 1787(a). Nachricht, die zu haltenden Vorlesungen zur Bildung künftiger Lehrer betr­
effend [Advice on the lectures to be given in the training of future teachers]. Halle,
Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung.
—. 1787(b). Über den Geist des Zeitalters in pädagogischer Rücksicht [On the spirit of
the times and education]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung.
—. 1790. Pädagogisches Handbuch für Schulmänner und Privaterzieher oder Sammlung
auserlesener Abhandlungen über Erziehung und Unterricht [Teaching manual for school­
teachers and private tutors or Collection of selected essays on education and teach­
ing]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung. (A second part of this work was announced but
never published.)
—. 1792(a). Über die Lesung griechischer Dichter zur Entdeckung der stufenweisen Ausbildung
moralischer Begriffe. Ein Beitrag zur Methodik des Unterrichtes [On the reading of
the Greek poets as a contribution to progressive education in moral concepts: contri­
bution to the methodology of teaching]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung.
—. 1792(b). A-B-C und Lesebuch für die deutschen Schulen im Waisenhaus [Primer and reading book for German orphanage schools]. Halle. (23rd edition in 1823.)


—. 1796. Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts für Eltern, Hauslehrer und Erzieher [Principles of education and teaching for parents, tutors and schoolteachers]. First edition. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung. (Ninth edition, finalized by Niemeyer’s son, in 1834. Several German-language editions followed until 1914. The work has also been translated into various languages: Dutch and Danish (1800), Polish (1808), Swedish (1810), Hungarian (1823) and, lastly, French (Lausanne, 1835.).)


—. 1801. Lehrbuch für die oberen Religionklassen in Gelehrtenschulen [Textbook for senior religious instruction classes in secondary (grammar) schools]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung. (Eighteenth edition in 1843.)


—. 1810. Über Pestalozzis Grundsätze und Methoden mit Rücksicht auf die verschiedenen Arten der Schulprüfungen [On Pestalozzi’s principles and methods concerning the various kinds of school examinations]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung. (This book was published in French under the title: Examen raisonné de la méthode de Pestalozzi, Paris, 1832.)

—. 1810. Beitrag zur Methodik des Examinierens mit Rücksicht auf die verschiedenen Arten der Schulprüfungen [Contribution to the methodology of various kinds of examinations]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung.

—. 1813. Originalstellen griechischer und römischer Klassiker über die Theorie der Erziehung und des Unterrichts [Extracts from the original works of Greek and Latin authors on the theory of education and teaching]. Halle, Waisenhaus-Buchhandlung.

On Niemeyer

There is a comprehensive bibliography contained in the work of K. Menne mentioned below. We would additionally like to thank Mr Goldman, director of the Stadtbibliothek of Nuremberg who, in 1958, spared no effort in helping us draw up a list of Niemeyer’s works and publications about him.

Besser, [?]. 1829. Dr A.H. Niemeyer als edler Menschenfreund [A.H. Niemeyer, a noble philanthropist]. Quedlinburg, Taubstumminstitut.


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