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Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs
2016
Special Edition
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Welcome to the *Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs*, the official journal of the Georgia College Personnel Association. The *Georgia Journal* is the leading journal for college and university student affairs administrators and counselors in the state of Georgia. The *Journal* serves as a primary communication link for research, critical issues, and best practices for the student affairs profession.

**History of the Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs**

The *Georgia Journal* was first published in 1985, under the editorship of Tom G. Walter, then a doctoral candidate in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia. Prior to that time, there was a graduate student publication called *Viewpoint*, which benefited from financial support from the Georgia College Personnel Association. However, the official “birth” of the *Georgia Journal of College Students Affairs* as the GCPA journal was Volume One which was published in 1985. Several graduate students edited the Journal over the succeeding years. Dr. Roger B. Winston, Jr., Professor in Counseling & Human Development Services at UGA became Editor in 1997. The first online version of the *Georgia Journal* was published in 2002 (Volume 18), under the editorship of Dr. Diane L. Cooper, a faculty member in the same department. From 2004 through 2007, Dr. Teresa Raetz, Director of Student Affairs for the University of Georgia Gwinnett Campus, was the Editor of the *Georgia Journal*. Dr. Tom G. Walter, Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment Management at Gainesville State College served as Editor of the *Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs* from Summer 2007-through 2010. Dr. Kijua McMurtry, Associate Dean of Students & Special Assistant to the President on Diversity of Agnes Scott College transitioned to the role of Editor during 2011. In 2012, Dr. Brenda Marina took on the role of co-Editor of the Journal. Together, McMurtry and Marina modified procedures and strategies for the Journal. Dr. Marina has served as the Editor of the Journal since January, 2013. During the 2013 year, Marina requested and received an ISSN number for the both the print and online version of the Journal.
From the Editor…

This issue of GJCSA is a critical assessment of empirical studies to determine how globalization has affected the higher education systems in various countries. The authors, doctoral candidates in an Educational Leadership program, reviewed policies and activities that were in place to internationalize the higher education system in their respective assigned country. The six countries used in these critiques are Greece, Senegal, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Ecuador and South Africa. The authors shed light on the importance for globalization efforts in higher education which include being competitive in global markets, maintaining external stakeholders’ satisfaction and increasing the overall quality of education. This increase in the quality of education then increases enrollment rates and adds to the country’s economy. These countries, over time, have implemented various policies and activities with the intention of transitioning to and sustaining a knowledge-based focus economy.

Greece and Senegal have become involved with the Bologna Process and its three-cycle degree system that is “aimed at harmonizing degree structures and quality assurance procedures across their diverse higher education systems” (World Education Services, 2007). United Arab Emirates have adopted four policies to guide their education sector. These policies are to build and operate their own universities, hire qualified faculty that meet international standards, use English as the dominant language for instruction and provide education free for all qualifying Emiratis including women. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education developed two objectives that were focused on education in Malaysia becoming more global. These objectives were executed in four phases; laying the foundation, strengthening and enhancement, excellence, and glory and sustainability. Next, we had Ecuador who went through a major reform and adopted a new constitution and a higher education law. These efforts served to improve the quality of education by disseminating more knowledge about international events to students. Lastly, in South Africa, education is perceived to be of a high quality because of the low cost and high rankings and international reputation compared to other higher education institutions. However, it is noted that South Africa needs to designate more funds to the growth of their education.

The authors brought forth a salient point; as a result of globalization, countries have become aware that to be competitive in the academic world, they need to pool more resources to support the evolution of their own education system. This journal’s content will also demonstrate how globalization hasn’t only affected the education system directly, but also indirectly. Mention is made of the 2008 financial crisis and also the fact that the world has been moving towards a technology/knowledge based focus and if countries stay in the agriculture focus, the phenomenon of “brain drain” will occur and the country’s education system will not be competitive enough to surrounding countries or the rest of the world. These articles will stimulate readers/educators to think about their own education system and ways in which they may be leading or deficient.

Sincerely,

Brenda L. H. Marina, PhD.
Globalization of Higher Education in Greece

John O. LeMay IV

Abstract

The current paper examines the system of higher education in Greece. This discussion incorporates details that describe a brief history of the system’s overall formation, an environmental snapshot of the country’s current demographics and economic situation as well as similar information for their overall higher education system. Also, details regarding how the Greek system of higher education is structured (for both the university and technological sectors) and situated within the country’s larger governmental system are considered. Next, the paper considers challenges that are currently being faced by the country and how they may impact their higher education structure and the policies and activities are in place that may have an impact (positive or negative) on their place within, not only their own borders, but within the broader international and global markets. Finally, potential implications that could be a product of the current choices and the environment in Greek’s system of higher education are offered and conclusions are drawn about the ramifications of the economical and educational choices of Greece and how these could influence their position (should they choose to have one) in the growing trend towards an increasingly international and globalized knowledge-economy.

Greece has a long history of advanced education that dates back to antiquity. Records indicate an organized system of higher learning in Greece that began as early as fifth-century B.C. where, in Athens, individuals known as Sophists marked the first full-time teachers paid for a systematic, defined course of instruction (Lucas, 2006). From this classical period to the present, higher education in Greece has developed into a sophisticated system of institutions that offers a range of opportunities. This expansion is necessary to meet the educational demands of not only a country with a population of approximately 10.8 million and a GDP (US$) of $242 billion, but it must be able to meet the costs that globalization and internationalization mandate (World Bank Group, 2015). Allocating resources towards globalization and internationalization initiatives is especially important as only 5% of those enrolled in Greek higher education were foreign students as of 2011 (OECD, 2013).

The contemporary system of Greek higher education consists of the university sector and the technological sector and these divisions are made up of 22 universities and 15 Technological Educational Institutes (TEIs) (and a School of Pedagogical and Technological Education), respectively (TEI Patras, n.d.). The technological system includes a number of institutes that provide vocational training in various fields (Euroguidance Center of Greece, 2015). In addition to the various types of traditional universities (research universities, technical universities, and the School of Fine Arts), the university sector also contains the Hellenic Open University that offers distance-learning curriculum to help meet the demand and needs of a growing student population (Euroguidance Center of Greece, 2015) (See Appendix A for a visual representation of the Greek higher education system structure and Appendix B for qualifications granted by institutions).

Enrollment in Greek higher education has been gradually rising in recent years. From 1998 to 2013, the number of students from both sectors in Greece has grown from 188,036 to...
Currently, Greece is a member of the Bologna Process, which strives to create a more “comparable, compatible, and coherent system of higher education in Europe” (EHEA, 2014). However, Greece has not yet signed the Lisbon Convention, meaning institutions have not even initiated application of the more traditional bachelor’s-master’s degree structure and, as a result, their current system does not easily lend itself to compatibility with other nation’s systems (EP Nuffic, 2015). This incongruity acts to isolate Greece from the globe and can remove incentives for local individuals to invest in a Greek postsecondary education since it may not improve their job search locally or internationally. In turn, if a lack of perceived value of Greek higher

International Policies and Activities

Currently, Greece is a member of the Bologna Process, which strives to create a more “comparable, compatible, and coherent system of higher education in Europe” (EHEA, 2014). However, Greece has not yet signed the Lisbon Convention, meaning institutions have not even initiated application of the more traditional bachelor’s-master’s degree structure and, as a result, their current system does not easily lend itself to compatibility with other nation’s systems (EP Nuffic, 2015). This incongruity acts to isolate Greece from the globe and can remove incentives for local individuals to invest in a Greek postsecondary education since it may not improve their job search locally or internationally. In turn, if a lack of perceived value of Greek higher
education decreases enrollment it decreases revenue, further adding to the system’s detriment. This perception of a lessened value of Greece’s higher education is twice as disadvantageous because it also influences potential foreign students. For example, if students from the U.S. consider studying abroad in Greece, they will likely be dissuaded by the fact that Greece’s system of qualifications and curriculum is not compatible with surrounding nations, let alone farther nations, such as the U.S. This is only one example of a policy or lack of action that can obstruct the diversity and globalization of Greece’s higher education system.

Any strategy that drives compatibility of systems is essential, but decision makers must also increase funding by finding ways to deal with the country’s austerity policy. This program, in the wake of the 2008 global recession, has also impacted Greece unfavorably and has led to a retrenchment plan that has cut budgets by up to 50% for some institutions (Robbins, 2015). If the Greek system wishes to attract adequate faculty, ensure a globally competitive level of quality, and decrease the country’s “brain drain,” it must find necessary resources to help stimulate their larger economy. This is especially true if the country hopes to improve its financial situation as it relates to their higher education structure and, ultimately, the ability to attract more international students (and faculty).

In summary, and in addition to the previously discussed policies and activities, a number of actions could be taken or adjusted to increase the presence of Greece in the global and international market and to help it shift towards a knowledge-based economy. First, in order to attract more international students, it may help to have more educational offerings in English as most are currently in Modern Greek and the courses that are accessible in English largely exist only in the private sector (EP Nuffic, 2015). Second, according to the International NGO Human rights watch, steps must be taken to decrease xenophobic violence, which has reached higher and higher levels (ICEF Monitor, 2015). In short, Greece must look beyond its borders and increasingly engage other countries for ways to impact and foster a more globally and internationally-rich system of education. These changes have the ability to eventually benefit Greece, other countries, and the larger international and global markets.

I initially assumed that education within Greece would be more stable than it appears to have been over the past few decades. This expectation was grounded in two main assumptions. First, I presumed that since the country has such a rich history of education that it would value or at least make higher education a governmental and budgetary priority above most other areas. However, due to a combination of factors, this seems to be not the case. These reasons could include a potentially unbalanced focus on agriculture and the debt crisis in the wake of the 2008 global recession. Even by itself, this financial predicament brought on numerous obstacles to Greece’s ability to globalize and internationalize its system. Complications such as: budget cuts leading to programmatic cuts, salary decreases, less public funding per student (similar to the current situation in the United States), “brain drain,” and an inappropriate fiscal policy of the larger government according to Stellern, Phipps, O’Connor (2015).

Secondly, and related closely to globalization, I was somewhat surprised at the lack of diversity in Greek higher education. This revelation stems from my initial impression that international (if not global) diversity would be at least somewhat facilitated by a country occupying such a geographically rich crossroad. Still, international and global initiatives require many resources and a country must meet the internal challenges of its educational system before being able to extend its goals beyond its borders. I did not realize that the global recession had such a negative impact on Greek’s economy. This larger, global adverse economic situation has been transferred down to the county’s higher education structure primarily because the Ministry
of National Education and Religious Affairs, which governs its system of higher education, is a branch of Greece’s larger governmental structure (TEI Patras, n.d.).

**Implications and Conclusions**

In conclusion, if Greece is to revitalize its system of higher education internally and externally, it will have to address these actions by starting with both the country’s government, given the public nature of its institutions, and its larger economy. Furthermore, Greece should make the best of its current limitations by “tightening its belt” as Stellern et al. (2015) states and strategically plan the allocation of its resources and this may mean mergers or getting rid of any redundant, inefficient, or outdated aspects of their higher education system to not allow the quality of its higher educational system suffer any further from its debt crisis. In addition, Greece will have to reach outward through policies and activities mentioned previously to improve not only its educational offerings and environment, but to significantly impact and improve the knowledge economies of both nations close and distant. For example, Greece is a member of the European Union and the Economic Monetary Union and the economic goals of these unions are analogous to the goals of the Bologna Process for higher education. These organizations seek to foster international relations and increase compatibility, especially in an area with such a war-torn history (Stellern et al., 2015).

These aspects are vital because, as with positive effects, since we are experiencing increases in internationalization, global connections, and knowledge-oriented markets, when one country suffers, the negative repercussions have a greater opportunity of adversely influencing other countries. After all, if this global environment was not a reality then the weight of the global recession of 2008 that is still impacting institutions such as those in Greece, education in general, industry, the United States and other societies (both western and eastern), and worldwide society at large would not have been a global phenomenon and would have remained isolated to one region. As a result of this evolving universal reality, and since Greece (like all countries) is not immune to either the positive or negative effects of internationalization and globalization, it is ultimately for them to decide if they wish to pursue a course of action that could foster an environment capable of facilitating growth towards becoming an international and globally-situated center of higher education.

**References**


Appendix A

Adapted from TEI Patras (2015) and EP Nuffic (2015)
Structure of Greek Higher Education System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Research Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Technical Universities (Polytechnia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. School of Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Open University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technological Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. TEIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School of Pedagogical and Technological Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Production - Labour Market
Post Graduate Studies
Appendix B

Adapted from TEI Patras (2015)
Greek Higher Education Award Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Award Type &amp; Granting Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>• Doctoral Degree: Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>• Post Graduate Specialisation Diploma (Master’s Degree): Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specialisation Diploma: TEIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>• Ptychio (6 years for medicine): Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Diploma (5 years): Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ptychio (4 years) Honours Bachelor Degree: Universities &amp; TEIs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
John O. Lemay
I came to Georgia Southern University in the fall of 2011 and graduated with a M.S. in Experimental Psychology in the spring of 2013. Wanting to explore higher education deeper, I applied to the College of Education’s Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership – Higher Education Concentration at Georgia Southern and started in the fall of 2013. My research interests have typically involved self-control and its relationship with a number of variables, including most recently, academic achievement. I have worked in the both the offices of Institutional Effectiveness and the Quality Enhancement Plan since coming to the University. In my spare time I enjoy serving both current and potential Georgia Southern students through my work in the Student Government Association, as a graduate ambassador for my program, and by volunteering my time with the Office of Student Conduct. When not on campus, working, or in class, I try to spend time listening, playing, and writing music.
Globalization of Higher Education in Senegal

Ashley Morris

Abstract

This paper marks the changes that have taken place in the Senegalese higher education system. As Senegalese citizens and leaders have worked diligently to improve their economy and society as a whole, they have experienced a great deal of obstacles in moving forward. Throughout this process, education has been an important aspect to improving the economic and social development of the country. Included in this economic, social, and educational overhaul, higher education was a component that required a great deal of work. In order to contend in the global society, the higher education system needed to be reformed. This paper, included a discussion of the reformation process of Senegal’s higher education from the French model at the heart of its inception to the adoption of the Bologna process. This process has allowed higher education in Senegal to become better with time and grow in its success.

Higher education reform is among the most pressing topics in many countries today. Across the globe, governmental agencies and those in higher education have worked diligently to improve higher education by instituting data informed policies, ensure sustainability, meet the overall demands of the 21st century, etc. Doing so requires a great deal of analyzing, planning, and implementing changes which are not easy tasks. Many countries have begun to take a serious look at their higher education systems and make the necessary changes to affect change. Senegal is one such country.

Senegal, a West African country, has fought tremendously and made great gains with respect to improving its society and its higher education system as a whole. Previously a French colonized country, Senegal has experienced a great deal of tumult throughout the years in seeking to rise to prominence and move toward a stable democracy. Senegal’s last two leaders, Abdoylaye Wade and Macky Sall, have brought about numerous changes to the country. Currently, “Since taking office, SALL has launched an economic reform program aimed at boosting economic growth...” (CIA, "Africa: Senegal", 2015) Economic reform has been an important part of improving Senegal’s society; however, a great part of the reform includes education.

Education is a key element in the economic and social development of any country, and Senegal is no different. Higher education has not always been at the forefront of reforms in the past. As a French colonized country, Senegal followed the French university system model, which emphasized a broad, general education instead of a focused, program-specific professional core (Ritter, 2011). Senegal universities were focused on the needs and objectives of the French: “the first African universities were built to meet the specific needs of colonial administrations and orientations were pursued even after African countries became independent” (Sall & Ndjaye, 2008). As the country progressed and moved toward reformation, the inadequacies of its higher education system were revealed. Senegal fell short in many aspects including socially and economically; however, these short falls stemmed partially from one major issue – a lack of quality education. Senegal faced issues like overcrowding, lack of faculty, lack of facilities, and
Senegal cannot keep training human resources that will ultimately be exported. Globalization means that universities have to meet internal and external demands of academic performance oriented toward Africa’s endogenous and sustainable development. Universities are expected to guarantee highly qualified teaching teams and high-quality instruction and research. (2009, p.49)

Therefore, the Senegalese economy, especially with respect to the labor market, is extremely important. It is not reasonable for Senegal to provide its citizens with a higher education only for them to be exported or not make gains in employment levels. Boccanfuso et al. (2015) studied the effects of improvements in the quality of higher education on the labor market outcomes of highly educated individuals. The Senegalese labor market is one that falls into similar perils of some African countries: it has a high unemployment rate for highly educated individuals. However, the higher educational reform instituted in Senegal led to increases in the employment rate and allowed young workers to more easily find jobs (Boccanfuso et al., 2015). All in all, the higher education reform has proven to be quite beneficial to Senegal.

Although it seems that Senegal may fall behind other countries in reforming higher education, overall, the country has made great strides in globalizing its higher educational system. Surprisingly, the issues that Senegal faced in its transition from a colonial to post-colonial country did not prevent it from rising to a place of prominence in higher education. Furthermore, the many changes in leadership and political struggles have created strife that the
country overcame and pressed pass. These victories serve as small steps toward positive reorganization and positive shift toward one important issue – education.

The improvement of higher education in Senegal has opened the country up to the international market. As Senegal continues the reformation process and furthers the goals and objectives outlined in the process in becomes better able to increase socio-economic development and strengthen its university system. Higher education will become the driving force behind pushing Senegal forward. Therefore, Senegal must continue to align its entire higher education system to international standards. Doing so helps to carry out the initial intent of the reform:

[to] put [African universities] in a position to satisfy local needs and push back the frontiers of knowledge as agents in the global knowledge economy on an equal footing with their counterparts, position them as partner and resource center for regional cooperation and African integration… (Sall & Ndjaye, 2008, p.53)

Since the reformation of Senegal includes the three-cycle studies of the Bologna process known as LMD, the overall programs within its system are welcomed by other countries including those in North America and Europe. The country should continue to build on the foundation that it has laid in changing the higher education system. The changes that Senegal has made in higher education will continue to propel it to a greater level of success within higher education.

References


Ashley N. Morris earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from Mercer University (2007) and a Master of Arts in English from Georgia Southern University (2009). She is currently enrolled at Georgia Southern University pursuing Doctorate of Education in Higher Educational Leadership. Currently, Ashley is a full-time English Instructor at Albany Technical College. Her research interests include Postcolonial Literature, African-American Literature, and Theory and Criticism. Ashley currently resides in Albany, GA with her husband David.
Globalization of Higher Education in United Arab Emirates

John S. Spranza III

Abstract

This article explores the educational history of the United Arab Emirates, a young and vastly wealthy nation located in the Middle East. A nation for just over 40 years, its leaders have struggled with educating and supporting its native population and managing the massive infusion of immigrants created by the progressive job markets established within its borders. With a mix of mandated free education for natives and a lucrative educational investment market from various other nations, the educational structure in the UAE has become a unique system that attracts students and faculty from around the world. The opulent landscapes of the primary cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi create a truly global educational environment poised to help lead the region into the future.

As a country, the UAE population is highly concentrated in its two major cities of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, with 70 percent of the total population living in these locations. The oil industry boom in the late 1970’s drew a large number of immigrant workers (initially primarily from India and Pakistan) and the trend of attracting droves of migrant workers has continued throughout the last 40 years. Today, approximately 88 percent of the total UAE population are expatriates drawn to the country for the labor market, leaving only 12 percent of the population as native Arabs (NQA, 2013). Currently, almost 65 percent of the national population is under the age of 24 so the country’s growth in its native peoples is on the upswing. This presents the opportunity to cultivate a strong educated national workforce that could help balance the UAE’s reliance on expatriates in the labor market.

Education has been a priority for the UAE government since the country’s inception in 1971 and the leaders have invested highly in the development and promotion of all levels of education, from nursery schools to doctoral level programs. However, the UAE government had a steep sand dune to climb since the national literacy rates in 1975 were 54 percent for men and only 31 percent for women. The UAE constitution and Federal Law No. 11 of 1972 established compulsory primary education and guaranteed free education at all levels for all UAE nationals. However, secondary education through grade 12 or age 18 was not made compulsory until 2012. The end result of the concentration on education for its citizens was shown in a 2010 report that indicated the national literacy rates were 89 percent for men and 91 percent for women (UNESCO, 2012).

The government-sponsored higher education system was started in 1975 when the young nation opened the UAE University in the city of Al Ain near the border with Oman. UAEU now has six campuses across the country. The largest national institution, the Higher Colleges of Technology, was founded in 1988 and now has 17 campuses across the country. The third and newest national institution, Zayed University, was founded in 1998 and has two campus locations. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR) governs and sets policy for all institutions of higher education across the country, but several Emirates also have governing bodies that regulate the education sector in their own territory. When the MHESR was created, it was established on four policy decisions that would guide its efforts. These decisions included: 1. The UAE would build and operate its own universities; 2. Qualified faculty that
meet international standards would be employed; 3. Instruction would be predominantly in English; and 4. Education was to be free for all qualified Emiratis, and would include women (MHESR, 2007). The Ministry also includes the Commission of Academic Accreditation (CAA) which certifies all institutions of higher education much like the SACS organization does here in the southern part of the United States. According to the CAA, there are currently 116 higher education institutions in the UAE with a cumulative enrollment of 116,912 across 644 accredited academic programs (NQA, 2013). Since there are only three federally-sponsored institutions out of the 116 qualified by the CAA, all of the other higher education institutions are international organizations or institutions that have formed partnerships or joint ventures with either the federal or local governments to establish campuses in the UAE. Due to the population concentration in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, most of the foreign institutions can be found in these two cities, with 19 institutions in Abu Dhabi and a mass of 62 institutions in Dubai (MHESR, 2015). Most of the private institutions can be found in one of the 15 economic “free zones” established by the UAE federal government or local governments of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The Free Zones are special areas in the city that offer tax exemptions and other incentives to foreign companies to encourage capital investments that benefit both parties, creating a true global market in these cities within the city. The Dubai Knowledge Village and the Dubai International Academic City are the primary locations of nearly all of the private institutions of higher education, and include institutions from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Australia, and India. The institutions found in the free zones are governed by the Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and further managed by the University Quality Assurance International Board (UQAIB) to ensure all institutions meet the benchmarks of quality and accreditation established by the UAE government.

Given the mandate that all levels of education would be free to its citizens, the government of UAE spends over a quarter of the federal budget on education. In 2009, the education budget was approximately $10 billion, or 28 percent of the federal budget for that year. In contrast, the participation rate for eligible citizens in the higher education system is still considerably lower than that of the U.S. or European countries, with only 25 percent of eligible Emiratis attending as compared to 71 percent of eligible students in North America and Western Europe (UNESCO, 2009). However, the pending “boom” of youth coming-of-age (65 percent of national population is under the age of 24) in the next decade has the government of UAE looking for ways to keep up the funding levels for education to maintain the quality and meet the demand from its citizens. Costs per student has already impacted the funding model given the inflation rate and increased demand for matriculation, and the government has had to freeze acceptance rates in order to limit the volume of new students in an effort to maintain the quality of instruction and services at the government-funded institutions. Projections by the MHESR indicate that over 50,000 students will be knocking at the universities’ door by the beginning of the next decade (MHESR, 2007). Additionally, if the native population of UAE follows the trend of other countries in regards to adult learners returning to college, the MHESR predict that could potentially add another 13,000 students to the 50,000 youths expected to flood the higher education system if only 10 percent of the 25-29 year olds decide to enroll (MHESR, 2007). Some of the demand for education has been met by the private institutions that have set up shop in the various free zones primarily in Dubai, but these are options typically only available to the more affluent upper-middle and upper class of the socioeconomic scale.

Faculty teaching in both the federal system and throughout the private institutions are heavily international. Within the UAE federal system, only approximately 10 percent of the
2,568 full-time faculty in 2013-2014 were UAE nationals. Similarly, less than 2 percent of the 3,949 faculty teaching in the private institutions within the free zones during 2013-2014 are UAE nationals (MHESR, 2015). The mandate set by the MHESR regarding the international qualifications of its faculty had assisted the recruitment of foreign scholars in the past, however, due to a static funding level the ability for federal institutions to attract and retain top faculty has declined considerably as the salary and benefits packages offered are no longer considered to be competitive (MHESR, 2007). Additionally, studies have shown that the most popular degree offerings and largest faculty expenses are no longer congruent with the needs of the employer market. Business, engineering, and health sciences dominate the course offerings and faculty appointments across all levels of higher education in the UAE, with 50 percent of students at federal institutions pursuing these degrees; 60 percent of students at private institutions enrolled in these majors; and 60 percent of UAE nationals studying abroad studying these same majors (NQA, 2013). Areas of study with huge industry demands that are not currently being met within the UAE educational system include information technology, education, architecture and construction, natural and physical sciences, and tourism and hospitality (Kazim, 2013).

Critical Analysis

Overall, I feel the UAE has had a very progressive and positive outlook on education as a young nation. I was surprised that women were not only given the right to public education but also heavily encouraged to attend, which is not how I envisioned females being treated in the Middle East given the stereotypical oppression of Arab women that we see in the media. I was also very surprised that high school education was not mandatory until just recently in 2012, which seemed a bit counter-productive to all of the other policies and goals of the UAE educational system. Several studies indicated that 94 percent of UAE nationals required at least a year of “foundation” studies when entering higher education to improve their performance levels in science, math, English, and ethics (KHDA, 2012). I wonder if these students would require that much remediation if they had been required to finish a high school education. However, I can also see that the exclusion of mandatory high school attendance might have been a financial decision since the federal government had established the free education policy for its citizens. But that exclusion then created a void in the preparedness of its native peoples that handicapped them in being able to compete in the global job market that permeates the country. I find it hard to understand why a country with such a vast population of non-nationals living and working within its borders would not want its native people to be more educated and better equipped to compete with the foreigners. I found it impressive that the government was working proactively to recognize these deficiencies and were proposing methods to combat the issues that have arose due to the looming disproportion of the population. It was also interesting to see the correlations between the UAE’s funding problems of doing more with less and the financial issues we have experienced here in Georgia (and nationally) over the past decade. But at the same time, I find it hard to believe that a country with so much wealth from its oil market has trouble allocating additional funds to its educational system.

UAE is undoubtedly a globalized country and has become a major player in global business, yet it still has a stark gap between the haves and have-nots in regards to its citizens. The United States has considerable stakes in the country, from business to education to military interests. Within the UAE educational system, faculty from the United States makes up the second-most international population of teachers at nearly a quarter of all instructors (MHESR,
2015). Additionally, U.S. institutions such as Michigan State University, New York University, and New York Institute of Technology all operate campus locations within the free zones of Dubai and Abu Dhabi; and hundreds of other U.S. institutions are sites of native Emiratis studying abroad. I also saw correlations between the U.S. educational system and the UAE institutions in the need to switch gears from what programs were once in demand to programs that are now in demand according to the job market and growing economic areas. Both systems struggle with breaking into new concentrations and convincing students to pursue a different path to their careers. Overall, I was impressed with what I learned about the UAE and its dedication to higher education, and I can see why it has been one of the fastest growing nations over the past several decades. It offers a modern outlook in an area of the planet that is often classified as being entrenched in ancient tradition and backwards social constructs.

References


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Globalization of Higher Education in Malaysia

Issac Taylor

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to highlight how globalization and the development of knowledge-based economy is effecting the higher education system of Malaysia. This reflective analysis examined the policies and practices, in the higher education of Malaysia that internationalizes its higher education systems; the impact of globalization and the development of knowledge based economy; the cultural landscape of higher education in Malaysia towards globalization; and any international organizations or resources to identify/critique the impact of globalization of Malaysia’s higher education systems. As a result, quality assurance has been the key factor in promoting globalization in Malaysia Higher Education because English is becoming more prevalent in higher learning which is promoting more opportunity for foreign students. With quality assurance, the cultural landscape has changed from the aspect of teaching and learning in its traditional formality.

Introduction

Globalization is impacting higher education in so many countries. Globalization is rendering challenges for higher education in each country, region, and its locale. Because of the global economy and its competitiveness, higher education in Malaysia has become a knowledge based economy. When Malaysia gained independence in 1957, the country had no university at all. The first wave of establishing higher education institutions began after the establishment of the University of Malaya in 1959. Currently, the Malaysian higher education system is composed of 20 government-funded universities, 37 private universities and colleges, and about 300 private colleges (Chan, 2013). The impact of globalization and the development of knowledge-based economy have caused much dramatic change to the character and functions of higher education in Malaysia (Anantha & Krishnaveni, 2012). This reflective analysis will discuss policies and practices in the higher education of Malaysia that internationalizes its higher education systems; the impact of globalization and the development of knowledge based economy; the cultural landscape of higher education in Malaysia towards globalization; and any international organizations or resources to identify/critique the impact of globalization of Malaysia’s higher education systems.

Policies and Practices of Malaysia’s Globalization in Higher Education

The Ministry of Education serves as the jurisdiction of both private and public institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. The bulk of the higher education is carried out by the country's public institutions but the private education sector also complements the efforts of the government by offering the opportunity to pursue higher education at a more affordable fee than is available elsewhere (Anantha & Krishnaveni, 2012). Public universities were for a long time the dominant institutions compared to private ones, which gained legal acceptance and recognition after the passing of the Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEI) Act in 1996.
Public institutions consist of public universities, polytechnics, community colleges and teacher training institutes while the private institutions include private universities, private university colleges, foreign branch campus universities and private colleges (.Nathan, et. al, 2013). The Ministry of Education in Malaysia developed strategies and plans for Higher Education Institutions to become more competitive globally. The objective of these plans is to ensure that Malaysian universities achieve world-class status and operate as a hub for higher education in the Southeast Asia region (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013).


The Impact of Globalization and Development of Knowledge Based Economy

Universities, now a day, are more actively involved to market their innovations which have opened the new doors for the higher education institutes to start entrepreneurial activities especially with reference to the economic growth. The role of university in the knowledge economy has been altered from knowledge producers to knowledge capitalizers for improved economic performance (Iqbal, et.al, 2011). The growth of the knowledge-based economy has led not only to competition among employers worldwide for the best brains but also among the institutions that train the best brains (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013). In order to compete in a globally competitive economy, the higher education system of Malaysia needs to be able to fulfill the demands of the economic sector, in terms of knowledge and skillful workers (.Othman et. al, 2011). For a country to be globally competitive, the development of human capital is essential. Education can be viewed as a capital good, which is used to develop human resource for economic and social transformation (2011). Globalization has demanded changes to be made in the Higher Education Institutions of Malaysia, to ensure that the education system can provide quality, creative, innovative and competitive workforce for the development of a knowledge driven economy (2011).

Many comments have been made about the lack of soft or generic skills among undergraduates produced by higher education institutions in Malaysia. By instilling soft or generic skills among undergraduates, it will increase their employability skills, as well as in producing productive and knowledge workers (Othman, et.al, 2011). One of the Ministry’s of Education objectives for Malaysia’s higher education system is to produce competent graduates to fulfil national and international manpower needs, with 75 per cent of the graduates employed in their relevant fields within six months of their graduation (Nathan, et. al, 2013).

The Cultural Landscape of Higher Education in Malaysia towards Globalization

In order to attract international students to Malaysia, the government realizes the importance of branding Malaysian education (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013). In response to
globalization, Malaysia must be marketable in the English language in order to attract foreign students (2013). The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education aims at intensifying globalization through increasing the number of international students (Othman, et. al, 2011). Cross-border institutional cooperation is solicited especially when it comes to other countries’ resources and its relationship with locality. The restructuring of its education policy have given foreign stakeholders the opportunity to conduct twinning programs with local colleges and universities, as well as to open international branch campuses in Malaysia (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013).

Although the academic community is orientated to a Western academic value system, it also operates within a complex and distinctive mix of heritage and Asian cultural values (Harland, et. al, 2014). The role of social support is important on international students’ adjustment is important because international students encounter many academic and cultural changes when they come to Malaysia (Othman, et. al, 2011). International students who decide to pursue studies in a foreign country have to overcome the challenges that are related to their adjustment experiences. They are required to deal with the differences between their own cultural values, norms, and customs and those of their hosts (Yusoff, 2011). Higher education in Malaysia has influence through bureaucracy which affect the academic scholarship and values of learning. The word “academia” can be translated as “the academic community”. The government has formulated three well-planned education blueprints: Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013–2025; the NHEAP 2007–2010; and the NHESP beyond 2020 (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013). These have transformed Malaysia into one the most sought-after countries by foreign investors and students in terms of its education sector. The Malaysian higher education institution have the responsibility for offering quality education. The excellence of any higher education institution can only be determined by competent and qualified academic staff (2013).

**International Organizations/Resources**

The higher education system of Malaysia has several organizations/resources which provide assistance in their endeavors in promoting academic excellence on a global level. Project Atlas is an organization that tracks migration trends of the millions of students who pursue education outside of their home countries each year. Data are collected on global student mobility patterns as well as leading countries involved in international higher education mobility (Project Atlas | Home, 2015). The Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia is entrusted with providing quality education for the people of Malaysia. Education in Malaysia begins from pre-school and continues to university. The vision of the MOE is to make Malaysia a center for education excellence (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013). Malaysia’s Higher Education System is a part of United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which is known as the "intellectual" agency of the United Nations (http://en.unesco.org/about-us/introducing-unesco). UNESCO exists to bring this creative intelligence to life; for it is in the minds of men and women that the defenses of peace and the conditions for sustainable development must be built. The higher education system of Malaysia is also a member of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services, International Association of Universities, and several others which support the upward mobility of higher education.
Conclusion

The current trend of higher education in Malaysia is based on four factors: globalization, knowledge based economy, cultural landscape, and its organizations/resources. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has formulated three education blueprints: The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013–2025, NHEAP 2007–2010 and NHESP beyond 2020 in order to pursue the idea of becoming an “education hub” in the region, especially in South East Asia (Grapragasem, et. al, 2013). These initiatives have provided growth and sustainability for the private and public universities in Malaysia. Quality assurance has been the key factor in promoting globalization in Malaysia Higher Education because English is becoming more prevalent in higher learning which is promoting more opportunity for foreign students. With quality assurance, the cultural landscape has changed from the aspect of teaching and learning in its traditional formality. In conclusion, human capital is the most pertinent attribute of the Malaysian Higher Education System. To be more competitive globally, the establishment of foreign universities and colleges in Malaysia has provided skilled workers and economic development as well. The Ministry of Education in Malaysia has a vision that reflects the upward mobility of its higher education system and throughout this analysis it continues to grow in order to be known globally.

References


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Higher education in Ecuador: A reflective analysis

Crystal Edenfield

Abstract

Over the last decade, many changes have taken place in Ecuador regarding education, specifically higher education. A new president was elected in 2006 and as a result a new constitution was approved in 2008. This new constitution offered educational opportunities to all Ecuadorians. The purpose of this paper is to analyze higher education in Ecuador. It will discuss and react to Ecuador’s demographics as well as the highlights of the country’s higher education system. It will conclude with considering the implications.

Introduction

Ecuador is a country located in western South America. Bordering the Pacific Ocean, Ecuador is situated between Columbia and Peru. In 2014, it was estimated that Ecuador had a population of 15,654,411 people. Quito is the capital of Ecuador. The official language of Ecuador is Spanish. Ecuador’s primary religion is Roman Catholic. It is estimated that 2 to 3 million Ecuadorians live abroad in the United States, Spain, and Italy. There is a high level of poverty in the rural areas of Ecuador. In addition, there is a high risk for infectious disease. The President of Ecuador is Rafael Correa. Elected in 2006 and sworn into office in 2007, the new president was an advocate for social change. Correa’s leadership has brought many changes to education in Ecuador (Central Intelligence Agency, 2015).

Education

In Ecuador, all children are required to receive a basic level of education. This typically means that a child will attend school for nine years. Primary, secondary, and post-secondary education is free for all Ecuadorians. According to Williams, if a student goes to and completes secondary school they will receive a diploma (2009, 40). Ecuador has over 4,000 academic programs (Hardt, 2014). Students chose a specialty before they begin college and do not change their specialty while there. Over 620,000 students attend college in Ecuador (Hardt, 2014).

Major Universities. Although there are over 70 higher education institutions, there are three major universities in Ecuador. The National Polytechnic School (NPS) is located in Quito. It is a public university and is known for research and education in applied science, astronomy, atmospheric physics, engineering, and physical sciences. Another major university is Central University of Ecuador (CUE). This national university is located in Quito. It was established in 1826, making CUE the oldest university in Ecuador. They maintain an annual enrollment of over 10,000 students. The other major university in Ecuador is Universidad San Francisco de Quito. The main campus is located outside of Quito in Cumbaya. It is the only university in the world that owns a campus in the Galapagos Islands and a campus in the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve.
Higher Education Reform

Over the last 7 years, higher education in Ecuador has gone through major reform. There have been two developments that have contributed to the reform: the approval of a new Constitution and the adoption of the Higher Education Law.

A New Constitution

The first development took place in 2008 when voters approved a new constitution. This new constitution granted every Ecuadorian citizen with free public education at all levels (Van Hoof, Estrella, Eljuri, & Leon, 2013). According to Van Hoof et al. the constitution “changed land-tenancy rights, natural resource management, and addressed various other economic, social, and environmental issues” and also “established people’s rights to education, food and water, and health and social security” (2013, 4). The new constitution allowed implementation of quick social change in order to alleviate poverty and increase other social programs in what President called 21st century socialism. Its goal was to provide academic and professional training, scientific research and technological innovation, the development and dissemination of knowledge, and the generation of solutions to the country’s social and economic problems (Van Hoof, et al., 2013). Ecuador implemented entrance exam for high school students. Exam sees if students were prepared for university and tells what discipline students will study. Some educators believe that the new reform has restricted public university students’ freedom to choose and that the government wants to force the students to study something according to what the government needs (Haney, 2014).

A New Law

The second development occurred in 2010 when Ecuador adopted the Higher Education Law. Historically, Ecuador’s higher education system focused on students receiving a degree not necessarily their ability to do so. In the past, every high school student was able to attend university if he or she wanted to, regardless of academic accomplishment (Riley, 2014). This law increased the regulation of the country’s universities aligning the research and education efforts with social and economic development needs (Van Hoof et al., 2013). The law focused on assessment, accreditation, and quality assurance as efforts to improve education (Hardt, 2014).

A New Accreditation Agency

In 2010 as a part of the Higher Education Law, the government founded a new accrediting agency called CEAASES (Consejo de Evaluacion Acreditacion y aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educacion Superior). This new accrediting process raised the bar for quality of academic programs at institutions like never before. It also eliminated those institutions that did not make the grade. Institutions were ranked on a scale from A to E rating infrastructural and classroom supplies, academic rigor, school budget, and research (Hardt, 2014; Haney, 2014; Riley, 2014). For the first time in 2012, CEAASES and government closed 14 universities because they did not meet the new academic standards. The goal is to have a more
knowledgeable public that is more aware of international events and wants to get to know more things (Haney, 2014).

**Critical Reaction**

It is my opinion that Ecuador has taken great steps in improving access to their higher education institutions. It is very clear that the government has invested in helping the public understand the importance of an educated society. Perhaps the government tried to change too many things at once and should have gradually introduced some of this reform to its citizens. There has been a push for vocational training. This push makes some faculty members skeptical. According to one educator, the only reason there have been changes at the institutions is because the government is a dictatorship and if you protest you go to jail. Therefore, teachers have improved the quality of teaching but only because they are afraid and being forced to (Haney, 2014).

I am surprised that although education is free for all, there is still a gap in those being educated. The intention is that accreditation will improve schools and the quality of education. Eliminating the costs was supposed to open access. There have been some complaints that all costs have not been eliminated. There are still institutional fees and transportation costs that students have to cover. So the wealthy succeed because they have been well prepared at the elementary and secondary levels. They have the resources to invest and the time to devote to studying. The average citizen only finishes the required years of schooling before pausing their education and returning home to help take care of younger siblings, other family members, or the family business (Haney, 2014).

I expected the people and educators to not completely buy into the process. Sometimes it takes years to really trust the efforts. And after having eight presidents in 10 years, I can only imagine the skepticism with such major changes. Even in the last few days protests against the Ecuadorian government have occurred. Protests have grown from being organized by social media to being led by political opponents, trade unions, indigenous people, and social activists (Alvaro, 2015). There is a desire to have an Ecuador where all freedoms are respected, especially freedom of expression and to be able to progress (Alvaro, 2015).

**Implications**

Higher education reform was supposed to bring access but there are still costs that students are having to pay. The recent protests communicate a desire for freedom. Some Ecuadorians feel as if the educational reform has taken away freedom to choose their academic program and career path. Others feel that it is broadening the gap between the poor and the wealthy. It makes sense that the government places a greater emphasis on vocational training instead of a liberal education so they can keep these individuals in their home country to work. Especially since millions of Ecuadorians leave each year to find work in other countries. It is my opinion that Ecuador tried to change too many things at once and is facing an uphill battle. I feel the major implication of the higher education reform in Ecuador is that the government tried to accomplish too many things at once. In the end, the reform could undo all that it was supposed to do.
References


Crystal Edenfield is a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program at Georgia Southern University.
Globalization of Higher Education in South Africa

Donald L. Ariail

Abstract

Despite being the smallest of the BRICS in population and having a relatively small number of public institutions of higher education (HE), South Africa (SA) has several world class universities and is the HE leader on the African continent. This paper presents an overview of various demographic aspect of HE in SA including types of institutions, popular fields of study, faculty demographics, government expenditures on HE, and the availability of financial aid. However, the focus of the paper is on globalization factors such as distance education, the presence of foreign university branch campuses, SA as a destination for international students (especially for students from southern Africa), and the regional and global rankings of SA universities. The research presented is informed by the author’s personal experiences as a doctoral student at the University of South Africa. The paper concludes with a brief critique.

Introduction

South Africa (SA) is one of the five emerging world economies; it is the “S” in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Since apartheid ended, the SA higher education system has undergone rapid growth and structural (including major consolidations) and cultural transformations (Karodia, Shalkh & Soni, 2015). Similar to the HE situation in India (Jayaram, 2013), there is a focus in SA on the color and ethnicity of students, faculty and staff. Despite ongoing racial tensions and structural problems (cf. Moloi, Mkwanazi & Bojabotshe, 2014), SA has a number of world-class universities and is the higher education leader on the African continent. This short paper, which is focused on the global aspects of higher education in SA, proceeds as follows: first, a brief review is made of some of the pertinent SA higher education demographics. Next, a few of the highlights of the international aspects of higher education in SA are presented. And, in conclusion, a brief summary and critique is offered.

Demographics

Institutions of Higher Education

Higher education in South Africa (SA) is delivered in both public and private higher education institutions (HEI). As of 2012, the latest year for which detailed statistics are available, there were 23 public HEI (two more public institutions were added in 2014) and 119 private HEI. Total student enrollment was 1,050,841: 953,373 (90.7%) in public institutions and 97,468 (9.3%) in private institutions. The public HEI system includes 11 traditional universities, six universities of technology, and six comprehensive universities (Department of Education and Training, 2012). The remainder of this paper is focused on the 23 public HEI.

Students and Faculty

The study of humanities is the most popular (n = 397,792; 41.7%) field of study, followed by business and management (n = 282,299; 29.6%), and science and engineering
In addition, 84% of these public HEI students are at the undergraduate level: 2.4% are occasional students, 29.5% are pursuing undergraduate certificates or diplomas, and 52.5% are pursuing an undergraduate degree (Department of Education and Training, 2012).

HEI faculty in 2012 totaled 51,573: 26,865 (52%) men and 24,704 (48%) women, and 17,451 (33.8%) permanent faculty and 34,122 (66.2%) temporary faculty. Permanent faculty qualifications included 34.1% with master’s degrees and 38.6% with doctoral degrees (Department of Education and Training, 2012).

Higher Education Expenditures

The 2012/2013 budget for HEI was 24.3 billion rand (subsequently indicated by “R” before the amount). The amount allocated by the SA government to HEI has steadily increased each year since 2007/2008 when the HEI budget was R13.1 billion—an increase of about 85%. However, in each year since 2007/2008, the percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) budgeted for HEI was less than 1%—0.76% of GDP was budgeted for 2012/2013 (Council on Higher Education, 2012). In comparison, in 2008 when SA allocated .63% of GDP to public universities (Council on Higher Education, 2012), the US spent 1.0% of GDP and the BRICS countries of Russia and Brazil spent .9% and .8% of GDP respectively (Altbach, 2013).

Tuition

Student paid tuition accounts for 30-35% of HEI funding. The average tuition paid by students in 2012 was about R21,689 (Council on Higher Education, 2012). A US context is provided by the present author who is pursuing a distance doctoral degree at the University of South Africa (Unisa). When in March 2015 he paid the annual program charge, including tuition, fees and a foreign levy, the total amount was R30,470 which equated to a payment of $2,616.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is primarily provided to qualifying students through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). In 2012, NSFAS provided 202,524 students with a total of R5.87 billion. For 2015 the NSFAS budget is R9.5 billion which appears to be insufficient to meet student demand for financial aid (Department of Education and Training, n.d.). For example, at the University of Johannesburg, their “…allocation [of the NSFAS budget] allowed it to assist 7,463 students, leaving 4,378 who met the requirements but could not be helped” (Hartley, 2015).

Highlights and Major Points

Distance Education

Distance education has significantly impacted the internationalization of higher education in South Africa. According to a report by the International Education Association of South Africa, 32,500 (44.6%) of the 72,875 international students studying in SA in 2012 were distance students (as cited in MacGregor, 2014). While the majority of students receive contact instruction, a relatively large percentage of students receive instruction at a distance. Since 2007,
the distance mode of instruction has increased from 38.8% to 40.6% while the contact mode of instruction has decreased from 61.2% to 59.4%.

Most distance students are now enrolled at Unisa, which is a distance dedicated, comprehensive university. In 2005, this institution “... became the sole provider of distance learning in ... [South Africa]” (University of South Africa, n.d. b). Gray (2013, p. 246) presents Unisa as “... an example of how the demand for online education is being met in a developing economy.” According to Professor Mandla Makhanya, Unisa’s Vice-Chancellor, Unisa, the largest provider of online education in Africa, “... is a seminal partner in the ... [African Virtual University] platform [which] address[es] the need for higher education on the African continent” (University of South Africa, n.d. b, para. 6). The African Virtual University (n.d.), which has “... the mandate of significantly increasing access to quality higher education and training through the innovative use of information technologies, ... work[s] across boarders and language barriers ...” (Virtual University, n.d., paras. 1 & 6).

Branch Campuses

As of June 8, 2015, the Cross-Border Education Research Team (2015, C-BERT) reports that SA has five branch campuses. Two are hosted by universities in the Netherlands, and one each by universities in Australia, India, and the United Kingdom. C-BERT defines a branch campus as “an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; engages in at least some face-to-face teaching; and provides access to an entire academic program that leads to a credential awarded by the foreign education provider” (Cross-Border Education Research, 2012, p. 1, para. 1). Of the BRICS, only China has more branch campuses than the five in South Africa (Cross-Border Education Research, 2012). The number of branch campus in the BRICS has grown since 2011 when China had 13 compared to zero for the other four countries, including SA (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012).

International Students

According to Higher Education South Africa (2012), in 2011 international students were 7.8% of total enrollment. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2013) listed SA as the only country on the African continent that was a destination for international students—Russia was the only other BRICS country that was an international destination.

In a study of 1,700 international students in SA, Lee and Schoole (2015a, 2015b) found that the majority (74.3%) of international students in SA were from the African continent. For these students, higher education in SA is perceived to be of higher quality, affordable, and to provide an entry point into the regional, continental and global work force. On the other hand, Lee and Schoole (2015b) indicated that most non-African students are often drawn to SA higher education for other reasons, such as interest in the African culture (Lee & Schoole, 2015b). However, the present author, who is located in the US, was drawn to pursuing a doctoral degree at Unisa based on his perception of the high quality and prestige of Unisa along with the programs relatively low cost in US dollars.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC), of which SA is a member, was established in 1992. It is voluntary organization of 15 countries (including SA) that promotes cross-border cooperation (Southern African Development Community, n.d.). Chien and Kot (2011) found that in 2009, 48% of the students from SADC countries who studied outside of their country chose SA as their destination. Interestingly, they noted that while SA was a
destination for international students, it had a small percentage of students studying abroad: “… fewer than 6,000 students studying abroad, representing about 0.1% of its tertiary-age population” (Chien & Kot, 2011, p. 10). The lack of students out-bound from SA is perhaps related to the perceived quality of its tertiary education system, which is evidenced by the regional and global rankings of a number of its higher education institutions.

**Regional and Global Rankings**

Several rankings of universities in Africa indicate the regional and world-class standing of SA universities. The Center for World University Rankings (CWUR) for 2014 has four SA universities included in its top 500 rankings with no other African country represented. CWUR also indicates that the top five of the ten best universities on the African continent are located in SA. The QS World University Rankings for 2014-2015 listed four SA universities and one Egyptian university in its top 500 rankings. The Shanghai Academic Rankings of World Universities (2014) includes five SA universities in its rankings of 500 universities. And, SA was the only country in Africa with universities (three rankings) in the top 400 rankings of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for 2014-2015. Given that there are only 23 established public universities in SA, having five (21.7%) of the universities so highly ranked, especially on the African continent, is indicative of the relatively high quality of HEIs in SA and at least one of the reasons for SA being able to attract so many international students.

**Summary and Critique**

The higher education system in South Africa is mainly composed of public institutions where two thirds of the faculty are temporary. Quality could perhaps be improved by the hiring of more permanent faculty. However, in order to do so, and also continue its role as a key provider of quality higher education on the African continent, the SA government will need to provide more funding. Compared to two other BRICS and to the US, SA is possibly not devoting an adequate percentage of its GDP to higher education. Budget constraints have resulted in the underfunding of student aid. Consequently, a large numbers of qualified but disadvantaged students are not being served.

From a global perspective, a number of factors have resulted in SA being a leader in providing quality education to international students: for example, perceived quality, low cost, and the high rankings and international reputations of its higher education institutions. It has been very successful in attracting students from continental Africa; especially students from southern Africa. Its distance education system, which is led by Unisa, serves the country, region, continent, and world. The continuing increase in its distance program enrollments accounts for a large percentage of the growth of international students. Further, compared to other BRICS, SA is seen by foreign institutions as an attractive location for establishing branch campuses. Moreover, despite being the BRICS country with the lowest population, having about a third the population of Russia, the next lowest BRICS in population (World Bank Data, 2015), it has a respectable number of world-class universities.

In summary, while the higher education system in SA is strong, it is in need of greater financial support from the government. With greater financial resources, higher education in SA should be able to continue attracting international students while strengthening its human capital in the form of more fulltime, dedicated faculty.
References


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- Manuscripts must adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) (6th edition) format.
- Spacing and Fonts: Double-spaced, including references, consistently applied throughout the manuscript. Times New Roman with 12 point throughout.
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- Has expertise in research, practice, or a combination of both in higher education/student affairs
- Must have computer literacy skills to access an online review system
- Is organized and adheres to strict deadlines.
- Has been published as an author in a professional/peer reviewed journal in the last two years.
- Has an interest in and a desire to make a two-year commitment to the Journal by reviewing approximately six manuscripts per year.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR PEER REVIEWERS

- Is thoroughly familiar with APA style in academic writing.
- Has background experience in higher education/student affairs
- Is organized and adheres to strict deadlines.
- Has been published as an author in a professional journal in the last three years.
- Has an interest in and a desire to make a two-year commitment to the Journal by reviewing approximately six manuscripts per year.