

# id21 insights

research findings for development policymakers and practitioners

## Building sustainable higher education

**With the growing knowledge economy, higher education is no longer seen as a luxury that developing countries cannot afford, but a critical element of national development. Countries must become globally competitive through skills training, given that good quality products and services are crucial in the fight for global profits.**

Higher education is therefore expected to promote economically-productive knowledge: advanced skills will attract investment leading to economic growth which will benefit all sectors of society.

However, the obstacles in many developing countries are alarming. Historical conditions such as colonial and post-colonial origins of the university system, structural adjustment policies and 'brain drain' have all had negative impacts. There is also a growing demand for university places, a lack of basic resources such as classrooms, scientific equipment and libraries and too few skilled and committed academic staff. According to the World Bank's 2000 report on higher education, many universities, particularly in Africa, have reached crisis point.

The development of higher education in low income countries must also be viewed in the context of changing global funding and governance trends and changing ideas of the roles of higher education. The idea of higher education as a social and public good, that contributes to the wellbeing of society in general, is being overtaken by the idea of it as a private good, and a way of helping national economies to become more competitive.

In addition, university autonomy is being weakened by the introduction of market competition for resources and students, and stronger accountability measures to ensure that higher education meets societal demands. There is also greater

cross border higher education and an influx of foreign and private providers. These trends are likely to grow with the World Trade Organization's trade liberalisation agreement – the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) – which aims to break down barriers to international trade in higher education.

This issue of *id21 insights education* focuses on the opportunities and dangers posed in relation to building sustainable systems of higher education and presents some of the responses developed.

The re-evaluation of higher education by international agencies and governments and the greater interaction between universities in low and high income countries is timely and welcome. However, there are also dangers. The focus on higher education as the primary influence on development diverts attention away from other equally important areas of social policy. It fails to acknowledge the interaction and impact of global political and economic factors and focuses mainly on high-skilled jobs and the economic

dimensions of development.

In reality, low-skilled and high-skilled jobs co-exist and this is seen as an advantage in high income countries.

**Simon McGrath's** article develops this analysis by reflecting on the opportunities and perils associated with the change in the World Bank's position on higher education in developing countries.

While greater international interaction may lead to the sharing of expertise, there is also a fear that the meanings of quality and relevance are shaped by elite western universities. This can drive universities away from practices more relevant to their own national contexts.

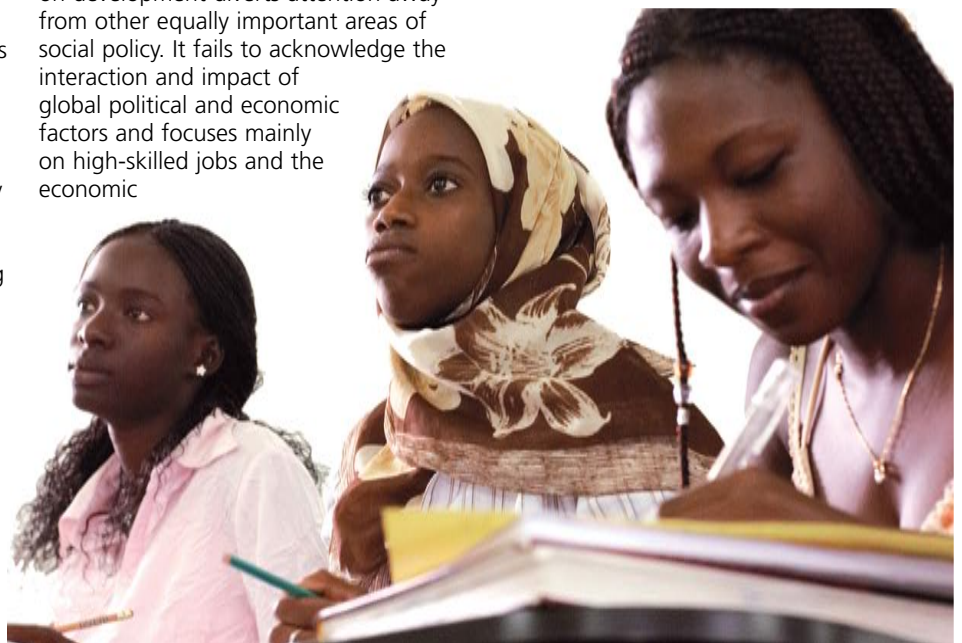
**Rodrigo Arocena** and **Judith Sutz** show how some universities in Latin America are successfully responding to the social and cultural dimensions of

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Students during an economics lecture delivered in English at Suffolk University's satellite campus in Dakar, Senegal. This is a private American college, which opened in 1999, aiming to attract middle and upper class students from across Africa. Degrees cost around half as much as they would in the USA.

©Jacob Silberberg/Panos Pictures 2004



development, in addition to the economic ones. This requires expanding their relationships with government and industry to include civil society organisations. The case of the University of the Republic, in Uruguay, illustrates strategies that can be developed at institutional level.

A further challenge facing low income countries is 'brain drain', through which qualified people emigrate, leaving university posts vacant. **Damtew Teferra** indicates that there is also an internal drain within Africa as Africans move to more attractive countries such as South Africa or work outside academia. As attempts have failed to attract these workers back, he reports that the trend is now moving towards using intellectual migrants in host countries to strengthen teaching and research back home.

How can developing countries respond to the growing demand for higher education, while maintaining equity and quality? **Louise Morley** reports that gender inequity still prevails despite national and institutional support for equality. Her research indicates that formal and informal mechanisms continue to create an environment which hinders women's professional development and students' learning.

Regulatory systems also have an impact on the relationship between equity and quality. **Mala Singh** presents the quality assurance system in South Africa, which links accountability requirements to social transformation rather than to narrow notions of efficiency, productivity and competitiveness.

One of the solutions for the growing demand for higher education places has been to encourage foreign and private providers. However, evidence indicates that this has led to a decrease in educational quality. Reputable publicly-funded universities in high income countries may take opportunities to deliver lower-cost learning, primarily by focussing on quantity rather than quality. **Tristan McCowan** presents the rapid expansion of private higher education in Brazil, which makes up ninety percent of institutions. While this has increased the number of places available, it has not contributed to equitable access for students nor has competition between providers brought expected gains in quality.

The dilemma for developing countries is how to open up to foreign providers in a way that supports sustainable development. Rapidly-growing economies such as India and China are well placed to negotiate the market on their own terms. **Sudhanshu Bhushan** shows how India's plans to implement GATS aim to open up to foreign higher education in a regulatory manner.

China also maintains close government steering. The Education Act of 1995, for example, legislates conditions for joint ventures including the requirement to invest any private surplus income. In addition, as **Ka-Ho Mok** indicates, the government has implemented several projects to strengthen the competitiveness of Chinese universities.

Policy, governance and funding

mechanisms need to be developed to overcome some of the traditional tensions of higher education such as: the relationships between equity and quality (particularly in relation to ethnicity, gender and class), the developmental role of the university and its wider role in knowledge creation, internationalisation versus indigenisation, and academic achievement versus relevance.

A development strategy built by interlocking low, intermediate and high skills may be more viable than one based on high skills alone. This requires joining up different levels of education. In addition, the social and political benefits of higher education need to be valued equally to the economic benefits.

Better policy and regulation are needed to shape the relationship between foreign investment and public and private sectors in order to build skills. There is little evidence to support the assumption that a weakly-

regulated market will lead to better quality higher education. This prevents us from thinking about strategies for different forms of regulation and public investment that have worked in the past or could work in the future. For example the 'developmental state' and the 'managed market strategies', which have worked well for some states, may be more relevant to developing nations. These strategies have encouraged the entry of foreign and private higher education within a framework of planning and regulation.

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**See also**

*Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise*, The Task Force on Higher Education and Society, World Bank: Washington DC, 2000

[www.tfhe.net/report/downloads/download\\_report.htm](http://www.tfhe.net/report/downloads/download_report.htm)

## The growth of private providers in Brazil

### Implications for equity and quality

**There is a cruel irony in Brazilian higher education. The high fees for private universities put them beyond the reach of most people. At the same time, intense competition for places at the free public universities means that on the whole, only those who have attended expensive preparatory courses are admitted. People living in poverty are thereby excluded on both counts.**

Demand for higher education in Brazil has grown rapidly: enrolment rose from 11 to 25 percent between 1991 and 2005. While there has been some expansion in public universities, the vast majority has been in private universities. Nearly nine out of ten are now private, with 81 percent of students starting university in 2006 in private institutions.

Only 11 percent of 18 to 24 year-olds are enrolled in higher education. Consequently, the growth in the private sector has been welcomed by the Brazilian Government and organisations such as the World Bank. But has this expansion contributed to equity in the higher education system? What has been the effect on the quality of provision?

Most of the growth has not been in the traditional Catholic universities, but in new profit-making institutions. While this expansion has increased available places, it has not contributed to equitable access for students:

- Fees vary considerably depending on the prestige of the institution and course. This prestige in turn influences the value of qualifications in the job market, leading to a reproduction of initial inequalities.
- Half of Brazilian families earn less than R\$900 (around US\$500) a month, making most courses inaccessible as they range from R\$200 to over R\$4,000 per month.
- Private institutions have more students from the richest backgrounds, and fewer from the poorest backgrounds, than their public counterparts.
- Student loans are only available for approximately one in eight students in private institutions.

Competition between providers has not brought the expected gains in quality:

- The performance of students at private institutions is lower than at federal and state ones.
- Private institutions have only 12 percent of staff with doctoral degrees, as opposed to 42 percent in the public sector.
- Only 16 percent of teaching staff in private institutions have full-time contracts, compared to 75 percent in the public sector.
- Private institutions have higher drop-out rates.

In 2005, the Brazilian government launched the University for All (*Prouni*) initiative. Through this, private universities allocate free places to low-income students in return for tax breaks. At first, this appears an ideal scheme for rapidly expanding the system at little cost. However, new places are mostly concentrated in the less prestigious courses and institutions, and the difficulties new students experience receive little attention.

While there is a place for private providers within the system, their current growth is not a solution to the problems of equity and quality. Government efforts should focus on increasing public university places, and ensuring access to high quality education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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**See also**

*Equidade e Heterogeneidade no Ensino Superior Brasileiro*, INEP: Brasília, edited by Carolina M Bori and Eunice R Durham, 2000 (PDF)

<http://apep.unisantos.br/ead/educacao/conceitos/05.pdf>

'The Growth of Private Higher Education in Brazil: Implications for Equity and Quality', *Journal of Education Policy*, 19 (4), pages 453 to 472, by Tristan McCowan, 2004

'Equity, Quality and Relevance in Higher Education in Brazil', *Anais da Academia Brasileira de Ciências*, 76 (1), by Simon Schwartzman, 2004

[www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0001-3765200400100015&script=sci\\_arttext&tling](http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0001-3765200400100015&script=sci_arttext&tling)

# Chinese universities seek global competitiveness

**Modernisation, reform and opening up to the outside world have transformed China's economy from highly-centralised and planned into dynamic and market-oriented. The higher education sector has to adopt resulting challenges and new approaches, including privatisation and decentralisation. How are Chinese universities addressing global changes to become more competitive and successful?**

The government has decentralised and privatised higher education by allowing private and overseas universities to run programmes in mainland China. These must be joint ventures and overseas partners have to reinvest any surpluses.

Structural reforms include curriculum redesign, financing, privatisation, and strategies to achieve 'world-class' universities. Chinese students now pay for their university tuition. Domestic universities are working hard to develop their research capacity and earn more income to develop and internationalise their research and teaching programmes.

In order to strengthen international competitiveness of Chinese universities, the government has implemented several major projects, for example:

- The 211 Project aims to develop 100 key universities and disciplines with additional funding to improve teaching and research facilities.
- The 985 Programme aims to transform Beijing and Tsinghua Universities into world-class universities by 2015 and 2011 respectively – both having to compete internationally for research performance.

Given the increasing competition between leading universities worldwide, the Chinese government has identified national research centres for humanities and social sciences and national laboratories to promote scientific research. The government is also implementing policies to ensure more people benefit from higher education. Although still mainly concentrated in coastal areas or major cities, in the last decade, the number of undergraduate and postgraduate students has increased to 20 million.

Other successes include:

- Zhejiang University now ranks in the



**Science library – the government aims to transform Tsinghua University, Beijing, into a world-class university by 2011.**

©Trygve Bolstad/Panos Pictures

top three of China's University League after merging four local universities in Hangzhou area to combine talents and resources.

- In May 2008, the College of Government and Public Affairs at Sun Yat-Sen University launched the new Social Welfare and Social Policy Research Institute, which is strengthening links with top Chinese research institutes and international centres.
- The government is encouraging Chinese and overseas universities to work together. By June 2004, there were 745 joint programmes, with 169 allowed to award overseas or Hong Kong degrees.
- The Ministry of Education is currently supporting PhD students to study overseas for a year during their research programme.

## The World Bank and the knowledge revolution

**Since 2000, the World Bank has seen higher education as vital to development. This is a change of focus from its advocacy throughout the 1990s, primarily based around basic education linked to the Education for All goals. In that time, research documented higher benefits to developing economies from primary education. Within the Bank, there is now acceptance that the neglect of higher education was misplaced.**

This shift comes from the growing belief in a globalised knowledge economy. If economic success comes from participating in this knowledge economy, then developing countries need to improve their ability to participate. The UNESCO/World Bank Task Force on Higher Education states:

*'As knowledge becomes more important to the global economy, so does higher education... The quality of knowledge generated within higher education institutions, and its accessibility to the wider economy, is becoming increasingly critical to national competitiveness.'*

A renewed commitment by the World Bank to higher education is welcome. However, the knowledge economy is not a simple reality even in developed countries. Linking the future of higher education with that of the

knowledge economy is problematic anywhere, even more so in poorer countries.

India is seen as a country with a strong relationship between successful participation in the knowledge economy and a strong higher education system. Yet, the relationship between educational expansion and economic development has not been so straightforward: the expansion of higher education in India preceded major economic take-off but its effects were constrained by the structure of the economy and industrial policy. Many graduate jobs in India are not the types of knowledge work envisaged for the knowledge economy.

Higher education can contribute to economic progress when coupled with other policies and contextual factors. Branding higher education only as a path to higher incomes is both an impoverishment of higher education's broader meaning and potential and a promise that is likely to remain unfulfilled for many.

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**See also**

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[www.tfhe.net/report/downloads/download\\_report.htm](http://www.tfhe.net/report/downloads/download_report.htm)

## Future challenges

With investment concentrated on a selected few, the university sector in China is becoming highly stratified and unequal in terms of state funding. Also, the rapid increase of higher education providers and student numbers has caused concerns for quality assurance. In order to raise academic standards, the Chinese government is therefore emphasising rigorous quality assurance reviews and further research. Chinese academics are being sent on international exchanges to learn good practices, while foreign academic experts are invited to advise the government or universities on how to conduct high quality research and teaching. International collaboration is being encouraged and the quest for 'world-class universities' has definitely shaped the future development of higher education in China.

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## Achieving equity and quality in South Africa

**Building a post-apartheid higher education system in South Africa has to overcome old and new forms of inequity. Since 1994, enrolment rates for black students have risen to 60.8 percent of total enrolments in non-distance mode courses. Women students comprise 54.5 percent of all students in the higher education system. Yet their academic success and more representative distribution across subject areas remain a challenge.**

The sector needs to:

- increase enrolment and graduation rates for black students. Current figures show that while 16 percent of all 20 to 24 year-olds are enrolled in higher education, there are marked racial inequalities. In 2005, only 12 percent of black 20 to 24 year-olds were enrolled in higher education, with 60 percent of white students in the same age group enrolled.
- encourage women into post-graduate level studies and science and technology subjects
- reduce the high drop-out rates among students unable to afford fees
- ensure that staffing profiles reflect the country's race and gender demography, with particular attention to black people
- provide equivalent resources for all academic and research institutions

- increase funding for academic and infrastructure improvements. Yet better success rates without credible quality would be a hollow gain. The government has identified planning, funding and quality as the main elements necessary for positive change, for example:

- 36 universities have been reconfigured into 22 with new identities and missions.
- A national target has been set to increase the overall participation rate from 15 to 20 percent of adults in 15 years. Government monitors negotiated institutional equity targets for programmes where black and female students are under-represented. Universities have also set employment targets for equity in race and gender in senior academic and professional positions.
- Since 2004, extra funds of 8,420 billion Rand above annual expenditure have been allocated to improving infrastructure (including information and communication technologies) and increasing student financial aid.

The Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education, an independent statutory organisation, includes social transformation in its definition of quality and encourages universities to focus on the connection between equity and quality.

Evaluation systems include race and gender equity within a broader notion of social transformation that focuses on curriculum reform, changes in institutional culture, and innovative scholarship.

Not all universities have the resources to achieve new approaches to equity with quality. This could set up new forms of inequity as only some institutions can respond effectively to new social and educational priorities. Therefore, the agency runs a continuing programme of training workshops which includes staff from all institutions in the country.

It is too early to know whether the policy commitment and actions to connect equity with quality are having the intended effect. The equity and quality link is focused on institutional agendas but higher quality teaching and research have yet to be achieved across all institutions. However, a start has been made.

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### See also

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[www.che.ac.za](http://www.che.ac.za)

*National Plan for Higher Education*, Ministry of Education, South Africa, February 2001 (PDF)

[www.education.gov.za/Documents/policies/NationalPlanHE2001.pdf](http://www.education.gov.za/Documents/policies/NationalPlanHE2001.pdf)

*Higher Education Monitor: A Case for Improving Teaching and Learning in South African Higher Education*, HE Monitor 6, Council on Higher Education: Pretoria, by Ian Scott, Nan Yeld and Jane Hendry, 2007

[www.che.ac.za/documents/d000155/](http://www.che.ac.za/documents/d000155/)

## Reversing the brain drain from African universities

**A critical challenge for higher education in Africa is 'brain drain' – losing highly trained or qualified people through emigration. In some countries, for example Cape Verde, the Gambia and Somalia, tertiary-educated migrants comprise over a half of all those leaving the country (see figure 1). Universities are left with vacant positions and the science subjects in particular are suffering.**

Brain drain is driven by several factors including economic hardship, political repression, the academic burden of teaching and supervising, lack of physical, technical and virtual facilities and the financial attraction of working abroad.

The global demand for highly-skilled and intellectual workers is making the situation worse. Whereas much research focuses on the flow of workers to developed countries, little is written about the 'internal' mobility within Africa.

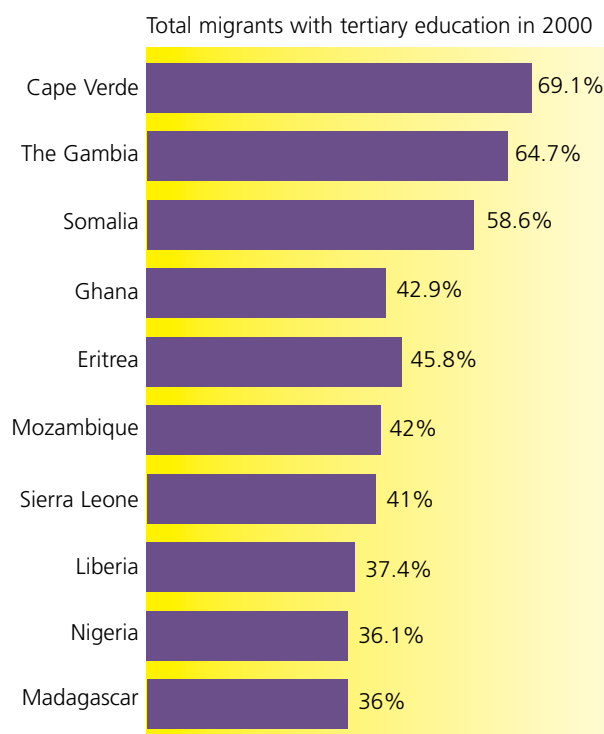
Many Africans now move to find work in more attractive destinations such as Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. Countries are losing their qualified people: for example, nearly 70 percent of migrants leaving Cape Verde in 2000 were tertiary educated. As the African economy is slowly

expanding, many find more prestigious work outside academia with better salaries and conditions. Moreover, private colleges – mainly teaching institutions – have attracted a lot of the university staff, further undermining one of the core missions of higher education: research.

As attempts to attract these workers back have failed, the trend is now moving towards using intellectual migrants in host countries to strengthen teaching and research back home: through graduate advising, joint research schemes, and creating networking skills and opportunities. For example, the South African Network of Skills Abroad aims to link highly-skilled South Africans living abroad and working in academic, cultural and commercial sectors.

Universities, governments, international organisations and non-governmental organisations need to form a close working relationship with intellectual migrants to reinvigorate higher education in Africa and strengthen learning and research across national institutes. Often, scholarly and professional networking efforts between home- and host-country personnel and institutions are often scattered and informal. Revitalising,

**Figure 1 : Emigration from sub-Saharan Africa**



Source: *Measuring the International Mobility of Skilled Workers (1990-2000)*, Policy Research Paper 3381, World Bank: Washington, Frédéric Docquier and Abdeslam Marfouk, 2004

supporting and strategically organising these efforts are the first important steps in the right direction.

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# Universities in Latin America support development

**One of the main goals of the Latin American University Reform movement of 1918 was to transform the university's relations with society and work together for social and democratic fairness. Even today, universities have to support development by creating new knowledge for promoting social change. Access to higher education needs to increase significantly, to create new knowledge and train people to use it.**

The University Reform was initiated by the students of the University of Córdoba, in Argentina, and spread rapidly across the region. The proposal to include a third mission – 'extension' – with the two usual missions of teaching and research, was particularly popular. The goal of the third mission was to use scientific knowledge from universities to help those living in poverty to overcome different forms of deprivation or access and exercise their rights as citizens. The various areas of extension work, undertaken by teachers

and students together, included free legal advice, health support at community level, advice on vegetable cultivation in urban areas, and help for school children to improve their comprehension of science.

Ninety years on, the main aims of the University Reform movement are still relevant. Strong relationships with civil society organisations, trade unions, co-operatives and social movements are crucial for improving the impact of universities' extension mission.

Innovation and problem sharing are complex social processes. To understand them, it is important to realise that creating and using new knowledge often takes place in interactive learning spaces. These are relatively stable sets of social relations that provide opportunities to cooperate in problem-solving, build common languages and trust, share learning, and follow up with new undertakings. Universities can help in organising interactive learning spaces devoted to solving social problems.

For universities to undertake this knowledge-related developmental role, they need to renew and broaden the concept of extension. They need to promote an internal and national transformation – a 'Second University Reform'; its scope and ambitions no less than those of the First University Reform.

The University of the Republic, in Uruguay, with the active involvement of students, teachers and graduates, is discussing how a 'Second University



**The University of the Republic, in Uruguay, developed 'Bililed' – a lamp for treating severe jaundice in newborn babies. Jaundice is treated using a very precise source of blue light which helps to avoid the toxic effect of the 'bilirubin' molecules that cause it. Commercially-available lamps, based on digital technology – light emitting diodes (LEDs) – are costly, because each LED has very little power and thousands of them are used for the required intensity. Bililed uses fewer LEDs and is therefore cheaper. By substituting LEDs with a system of light concentration, they got the same effect. Bililed has been installed in several public hospitals in Uruguay, bringing state-of-the-art technology within the reach of public health.**  
©Hospital Pereira Rossell, Uruguay, 2007

Reform, can happen, and ways in which its aims can be achieved. Everyone agrees that access to knowledge has to be democratised radically and lifelong higher education has to be made relevant to work-related skills. Other goals include:

- strengthening internal democracy and participation in decision-making processes
- encouraging research, in particular regarding social inclusion
- strengthening 'university extension' – external collaboration to use knowledge in socially-valuable ways
- linking extension with research and teaching so that it can be part of the problem-based learning for all students, to reinforce their social commitment.

One strategy of the university reform is to participate in several interactive learning spaces alongside government, public and private enterprises, non-governmental organisations, trade unions and other social movements. This is part of the social developmental role of universities which could lead them to collaborations to strengthen national scientific innovation systems as well as help to find solutions for ordinary people. Latin America now has its best chance in its history to promote and use this developmental role.

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#### See also

'Knowledge, Innovation and Learning: Systems and Policies in the North and in the South', by Rodrigo Arocena and Judith Sutz, pages 291 to 310, in *Systems of Innovation and Development: Evidence from Brazil*, Edward Elgar Publishing, edited by José Cassiolato, Helena Lastres and Maria Lucia Maciel, 2003

## Gender equity remains a dream

**Are women choosing non-traditional subjects at university level? Do they have the same career development opportunities as men? Focusing on access, curriculum transformation and staff development in higher education, new research finds that gender inequity still prevails despite national and institutional support for equality.**

The study explored how far gender equity is promoted or inhibited in five higher education institutes in South Africa, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. These countries were selected for their national policies on gender equity and commitment to international policies to end discrimination against women.

The five institutions were selected because they have organisational policies and practices in place concerning gender mainstreaming, curriculum innovation and affirmative action. They also encourage women into non-traditional subjects.

The research finds that a highly-gendered environment exists which impedes women's development as students and staff. This has a negative effect on students' learning and on women staff's academic identities.

Discriminatory practices include:

- exclusion of women from career development opportunities
- gender-insensitive teaching practices
- sexual harassment and gender violence left unchecked
- prejudice concerning women's academic abilities and intellectual authority

- poor implementation of gender equality policies
- male domination of knowledge production, decision-making processes, and research opportunities.

A range of approaches are suggested to encourage increased gender equity, including to:

- adopt national implementation strategies for gender equity such as with targets, evaluation procedures and regular monitoring
- develop and support affirmative action programmes such as women-only management development programmes
- fund women to participate in international networks, seminars and conferences
- conduct organisational gender audits
- ensure effective institutional responses to discrimination, such as codes of practice and disciplinary measures
- encourage women to attend staff development programmes and women's studies courses

Feminist activities and groups inside and outside universities play a major part in promoting change. This is particularly effective when there are partnerships between gender organisations in civil society and feminist groups within universities – for example, when female science and technology academics visit local communities and schools to discuss study opportunities with young women.

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# India's response to GATS

**The National Knowledge Commission, the advisory body to the Prime Minister of India, aims to transform India into a knowledge society. Advisors recommend expanding access to higher education and improving the quality of learning through the Five-Year Plan for 2007 to 2012. This will use funds increased by ten times (to US\$300 billion) from the previous plan to reach a target enrolment of 21 million by 2012. One important strategy to transforming higher education is through promoting privatisation.**

This transformation, however, requires structural change for programmes, institutions and students to move across nations. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is a treaty of the World Trade Organization designed to extend international trade in services, among them higher education. Trade in higher education would include aspects such as distance learning, recruiting international students, establishing university campuses abroad and movement of professionals.

Delivering international collaborative programmes in higher education began in the 1990s. At present around 150 Indian institutes are collaborating with foreign universities and awarding foreign degrees. Most however, are private institutes and not recognised by the University Grants Commission, therefore are not able to award valid degrees. There are very few partnerships with public universities and colleges, despite the high demand for foreign higher education in India. Recognition and accreditation are two important regulatory issues in sustainable collaborative delivery of programmes.

Trade within the GATS framework has so far not begun, as it has to be followed by further negotiations and agreement of the terms on which the trade will take place. The pace of negotiations has slowed due to failure in talks on other issues such as subsidy in agriculture. India has offered the following commitments:

### Cross border supply (mode 1)

Any foreign institute can provide education through distance learning, in print or online. However, they will have to follow the regulations of the Distance Education Council.

### Consumption abroad (mode 2)

Indian students can go abroad freely for higher education and the government will place no restrictions on them.

### Commercial presence of foreign service providers (mode 3)

As education is a non-profit activity in India, fees charged by the foreign service providers will be regulated.

### Presence of natural persons (mode 4)

There will be conditions relating to the type of professionals, purpose of visits abroad and visa relaxation.

There were contentious issues in negotiations over developed countries' demand to include training and testing services under education, mutual recognition of degrees, barriers in terms of economic needs test and so on.

In response to GATS negotiations, the government is planning to bring in legislation that will allow foreign universities to grant degrees under regulatory control, as applicable to the Indian universities. Academic groups in India are divided over

## Useful web links

Association of African Universities  
[www.aau.org](http://www.aau.org)

Centre for Higher Education Transformation  
[www.chet.org.za](http://www.chet.org.za)

Centre for the Study of Higher Education  
[www.cshe.uwc.ac.za](http://www.cshe.uwc.ac.za)

Higher Education Research and Advocacy Network in Africa  
[www.herana-gateway.org](http://www.herana-gateway.org)

International Network for Higher Education in Africa  
[www.bc.edu/inhea](http://www.bc.edu/inhea)

The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa  
[www.foundation-partnership.org](http://www.foundation-partnership.org)

UNESCO Higher Education  
[http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=44351&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=44351&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

the consequences of trade in higher education. They fear that it will promote commodification and will become unaffordable for most students. Public universities in India may also change because of commercialisation. Some experts see an advantage in terms of improving the quality of learning and transforming higher education in India for a competitive marketplace. Twenty-five private universities were established in the last four years. As private higher education is expanding, the trade in higher education services is increasing and the regulatory system will have to monitor that commercialisation is avoided as much as possible.

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### See also

The National Knowledge Commission on Higher Education  
<http://knowledgecommission.gov.in/focus/higher.asp>

## What do you think?

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