

# COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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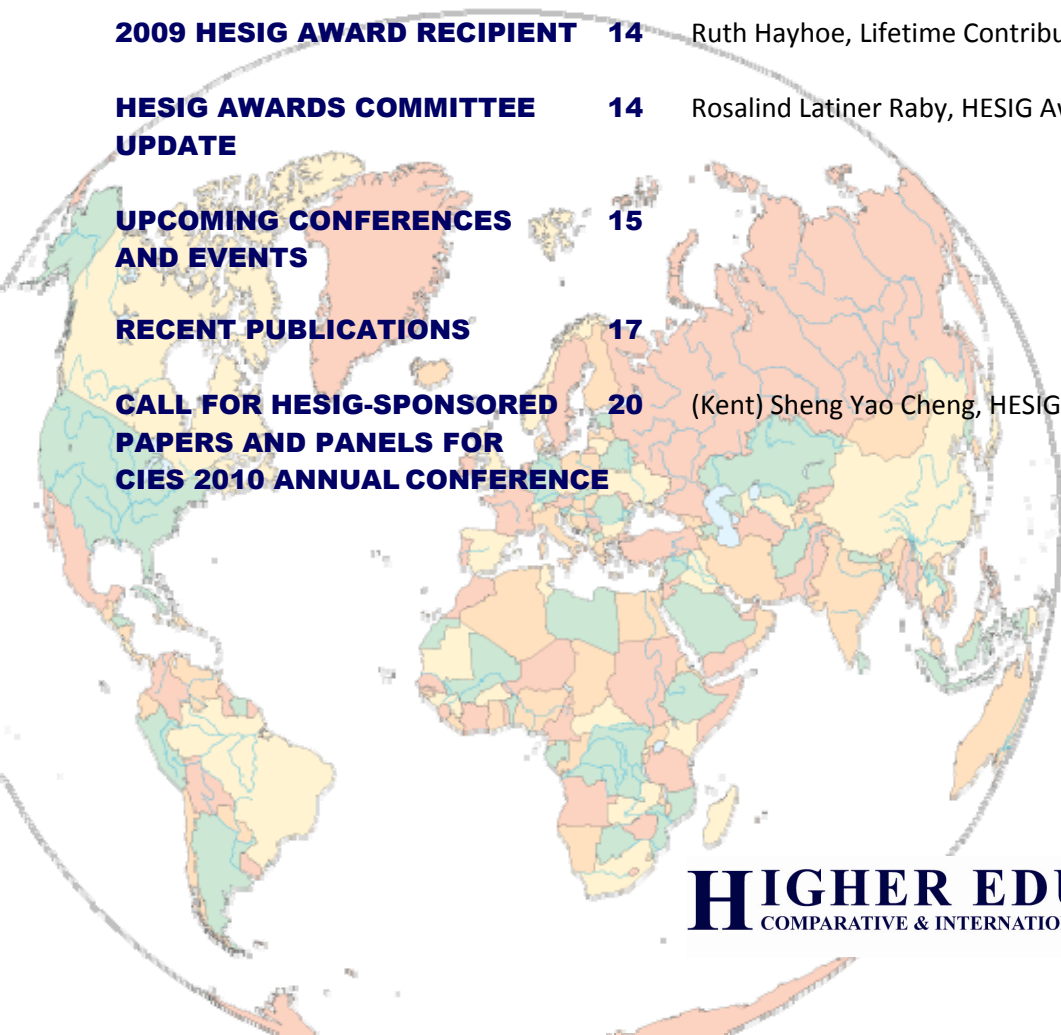
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# COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

## Philosophy for *Comparative and Int'l Higher Education*

This is the official newsletter of the Comparative and International Education Society's (CIES) Higher Education Special Interest Group (HESIG), which was created in 2008. HESIG serves as a networking hub for promoting scholarship opportunities, critical dialogue, and linking professionals and academics to the international aspects of higher education. Accordingly, HESIG will serve as a professional forum supporting development, analysis, and dissemination of theory-, policy-, and practice-related issues that influence higher education.

## Submission and Review

The Editorial Board invites contributions, normally of around 1,500 words or less, dealing with the complementary fields of comparative, international, and development education and that relate to one of the focus areas listed in the Newsletter Philosophy section above. Electronic submissions are preferred and should be sent to [submissions@higheredsig.org](mailto:submissions@higheredsig.org). Hard-copy manuscripts, books for review, and inquiries should be addressed to: The Editors or Regional Editors, Comparative & International Higher Education, University of Pittsburgh, School of Education, 5714 Wesley W. Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA. Manuscripts are evaluated by the editorial board—with full confidentiality on both sides—and then accepted, returned for further revisions, or rejected. For more information, please see the website at:

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### Editors

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University of Pittsburgh

Val D. Rust  
UCLA

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### Managing Editor

Dai Bao  
University of Pittsburgh

### Contact Information

*Comparative & International Higher Education*  
Higher Education SIG  
5714 Wesley W. Posvar Hall  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260 USA  
Direct +1 (412) 567 2517  
Fax +1 (800) 327 8203

Website: <http://www.higheredsig.org/newsletter.html>

Email: [submissions@higheredsig.org](mailto:submissions@higheredsig.org)

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# Higher Education in Comparative and International Contexts

W. James Jacob<sup>a,\*</sup> and Val D. Rust<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Institute for International Studies in Education, University of Pittsburgh*

<sup>b</sup>*Center for International & Development Education, University of California, Los Angeles*

Comparative and international higher education issues continue to flood headlines, publications, and lead research and development initiatives worldwide. In an effort to capture the significance of higher education issues in comparative and international contexts, we are eager to provide a networking hub for scholars, policy makers, students, and practitioners to better network with one another locally and abroad. The Higher Education SIG (HESIG) provides this networking opportunity to all of its members. In this article we want begin this networking process by revisiting some of the key issues discussed at this year's HESIG Business Meeting at the CIES Annual Conference in Charleston, South Carolina.



FIGURE 1. Photo of Regsuren Bat-Erdene, Director of Higher and Vocational Education, Mongolia Ministry of Education, Culture and Science speaking at the HESIG Business Meeting on 21 March 2009.

We had the pleasure of honoring Ruth Hayhoe a long-time contributor to the field and distinguished leader in CIES. Ruth is also an inaugural member of

\*Corresponding author: Email: [wjacob@pitt.edu](mailto:wjacob@pitt.edu); Address: Institute for International Studies in Education, University of Pittsburgh, 5714 Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA.

HESIG. In addition to welcoming new members to HESIG, we discussed several areas where members can get involved. These include participating in the HESIG Awards, Publications, HESIG-sponsored projects, and organizing a HESIG-Panel or Paper at the upcoming CIES Conference in Chicago, 1-5 March 2010. The deadline for individual paper and HESIG-panel proposals is 1 October 2009.

## HESIG Publications

This is the first issue of *Comparative and International Higher Education*, the official HESIG Newsletter which includes contributions from each regional editor. Information on upcoming conferences, news, and other events are also included along with a section on recent publications on international higher education organized by geographic region.

Two issues of *CIHE* will be published each year and we encourage HESIG members to be active contributors to this important networking publication. Feature articles on a variety of higher education topics are welcomed and should be submitted to either the editors or a regional editor of your choice. The Newsletter is also a good way to inform members of timely publications in the field along with upcoming conferences in respective geographic regions.

## Awards Committee Organized

Each year HESIG offers four awards that will be presented at the Annual CIES Conference: (1) Best Dissertation, (2) Best Journal Article/Scholarly Paper, (3) Best Book in Higher Education, and (4) Lifetime Contribution Award. A committee of six members was nominated and received unanimous support by HESIG members. Rosalind Latiner Raby will serve as the

Awards Committee Chair, and will be accompanied by the following committee members: Scarlett Benjamin, Gustavo Gregorutti, Diane Oliver, Laura Portnoi, and Janet Thomas. This committee will serve for a period of three years (until March 2012). The first task of the Awards Committee was to develop the criteria for selection of candidates for the awards, which was approved by the HESIG Officers in May 2009. The criteria were then sent to HESIG members via the Secretariat with a deadline of July for nominations for each of these four awards.

### **HESIG-Sponsored Project with Palgrave Macmillan**

During the initial HESIG Business Meeting at the 2008 CIES Annual Meeting in New York, we launched a Higher Education SIG-sponsored book series on current topics in international higher education. These volumes will be edited and contributed to by SIG members and published as part of Palgrave Macmillan's *International and Development Education Book Series*.

Of the many book proposals submitted three manuscripts have been accepted for publication to date. The first volume is scheduled to be published in 2009 and two additional volumes in 2010. *Higher Education, Policy, and the Global Education Phenomenon*, edited by Laura M. Portnoi, Sylvia S. Bagley, and Val D. Rust, will be published in February 2010 and two panels will be organized by for next year's conference as HESIG-sponsored panels. The forthcoming book inquires about the processes through which different higher education

systems have determined national higher education policies related to competitiveness, as well as the strategies they have adopted to enhance their global competitiveness.

Rajika Bhandari and Peggy Blumenthal of the Institute for International Education (IIE) are the editors of another HESIG-sponsored volume forthcoming in 2010 entitled *Global Student Mobility: National Strategies and International Trends*. This book will lead to an improved understanding of international higher education student flows through research and improved data collection; will encourage and make possible better governance of international student flows at the global, regional, and national levels; and will stimulate new thinking among a broad range of communities on the impact and importance of international educational exchange.

*Increasing Effectiveness of the Community College Financial Model: A Global Perspective for the Global Economy* is the third volume approved through the peer-review process at Palgrave Macmillan. The book is edited by Stewart Sutin, Dan Derrico, Rosalind Latiner Raby, and Ed Valeau.

HESIG members are encouraged to submit book proposals for review. More information on this HESIG-Sponsored Project can be found on our website:

<http://www.higheredsig.org/projects.html>

## Current Trends in Higher Education: Internationalization in Asia and Oceania

Rebecca Clothey<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Higher Education Program, School of Education, Drexel University*

As the demand for tertiary education continues to increase, new means for expanding educational access must also continue. A 203 percent increase in postsecondary enrollments in Asia and a 116 percent increase in Oceania over the past 20 years have coincided with internationalization trends (*Almanac of Higher Education* 2009). Internationalization trends in higher education are certainly not new, but modes of exchange, as well as common countries of origin and destination for exchange, are changing. Asian countries are becoming a more popular destination for study abroad and international exchanges, and more students from Asia are also studying abroad.

According to the Institute of International Education, there was an overall 10.4 percent increase in the number of students studying in the United States from Asia in the 2007-2008 academic year, and a 16.4 percent increase from Oceania. The top four places of origin of international students in the United States are all from Asia: India, which experienced a 13 percent increase of students from the previous year, China, which experienced a 20 percent increase, South Korea, which experienced an 11 percent increase, and Japan [Institute of International Education (IIE) 2008]. Such exchanges are not unidirectional. Asia has also become a more popular destination for US students studying abroad: increasing 20 percent over the previous year (IIE 2008). Australia, China, and Japan are all among the top ten destinations for worldwide academic exchange.

A related trend is the increasing establishment of international branch campuses, defined as “institutions that have the name of and are run by a foreign institution, and that award full degrees from that institution”

(Jaschik 2009). A study by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education indicates that there has been a 43 percent increase in international branch campuses in just three years. Only 35 of the campuses in the study existed prior to 1999 (Jaschik 2009).

While institutions from the United States still dominate the international branch campus landscape, other participating countries include Australia, which now is second in terms of the number of institutions with established international branch campuses, and India ties with France for fourth. The United Arab Emirates is the top host country for branch campuses with 40, but China, Singapore, and Qatar are also among the leads.

The most prevalent model for such branches is “North to South,” where colleges and universities in developed nations create campuses in the developing world. However, thirty percent of branch campuses are now considered “North to North,” with exporting and host nations both considered “developed” nations. Much of this growth has taken place with branches in Singapore and Australia. There are also now 26 “South-to-South” branch campuses, in source countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, among others (Jaschik 2009).

Another growing approach to satisfy the increasing demand for tertiary education is distance learning. The governments of many countries, including India, Turkey, and New Zealand, among others, have supported distance education as a means of promoting greater educational access. In fact, online learning is the fastest growing market segment of adult education and has grown faster over the last six years than any other sector of higher education (Clothey 2008; Kolowich 2009). Education had become the eighth largest export industry in Australia by 2004, in part due to the proliferation of web-based tertiary courses (Walsh 2007).

\*Corresponding author: Email: [rebecca.a.clothey@drexel.edu](mailto:rebecca.a.clothey@drexel.edu);  
Address: Higher Education Program, School of Education,  
Drexel University, Korman Center, Room 208, 3141 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA.



China has long been a leader in distance education, utilizing television to improve access to education since the early 1960s. Now more than 10 percent of China's 19 million university students are engaged in online learning. China's oldest and most-established distance learning project, Shanghai Television University (STUV), was named as a laureate for the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication and Technologies in Education in 2008.

The potential for fostering international interactions, accessing global resources, and communicating with a wider range of people is now easier than ever, and these trends are likely to continue as ever-new modes of interaction are found and the demand for tertiary education around the world ceases to decline.

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## The State of Higher Education in Africa

Christopher B. Mugimu<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Makerere University*

Higher education in Africa has generally been neglected for several decades. Previously it was only accessible by a chosen few, in most cases individuals who were economically privileged and could therefore afford to attend good primary and secondary schools offering quality education hence were able to perform well in university or college entry examinations. On the contrary, the economically disadvantaged individuals could not access higher education given their poor educational background.

However, having recognized the role of higher education towards meeting national, social and economic development goals, recent years have seen renewed commitment to higher education by most African governments. This is because higher education institutions could act as knowledge creating entities as well as think tanks for enhancing future innovations in science and technology. Making higher education more accessible and equitable especially by expanding opportunities for marginalized groups remains a challenge in many African countries. Nevertheless some governments have attempted to put into place some affirmative measures to fulfill this need. For example in Uganda, in order to enable more female students gain admission into public universities and get more popular and highly competitive courses, female applicants are given an additional 1.5 points leverage and sometimes some of the admission requirements may be waived.

The future of higher education in Africa seems to be brighter given that students' enrollment is steadily rising and more individuals are opting to undertake higher education. Currently there are more than 4 million students attending higher education in Africa (World Bank 2008). Although, this figure appears to be

high, students attending higher education in Africa are relatively very few compared to other developing regions such as Asia and Latin America. Students' completion rates are also low due to the fact that many students drop out of college following their failure to pay all the required institutional costs and tuition fees.

Currently, many higher education institutions are moving towards offering the market driven/demand curricula and courses such as computer science and information technology (ICT), environmental studies, peace and conflict resolution, and entrepreneurship (Jacob, Nsubuga and Mugimu 2009). This is to attract more students and thus more revenue needed to meet their day-to-day operation costs.

Traditionally, African governments have wholly financed higher education, however due to over stretched budgets; this approach has become financially unviable. Following the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommendations, African governments were advised to reduce their national budgets on higher education and to constitute cost-sharing policies. This meant that governments would partly sponsor a few students and the rest become self-sponsored. Those who can particularly afford to pay the required costs are given the opportunity to access higher education.

In recent years, we have also seen rapid expansion of the private sector in higher education. There are more than 450 private universities and colleges in Africa today (World Bank 2008). Despite this progress in the sector, the majority of potential students who would wish to access higher education cannot do so; at least for many years to come, mainly because most of them find institutional costs and tuitions fees very high and prohibitive.

Despite the advancement in higher education in Africa, it still faces many challenges such as poor infra-

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\*Corresponding author: Email: [byalusagomugimu@gmail.com](mailto:byalusagomugimu@gmail.com);  
Address: School of Education, Makerere University, P.O. Box 4753, Kampala, Uganda.

structure, lack of funding, shortage of human resources which is compounded by brain drain and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, outdated curricula, poor ICT infrastructure, and poor library facilities among others.

Political instability in the region has undermined economic and social growth in most of the African countries. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of African nationals who are experts in highly specialized fields live outside Africa in more developed countries. Unfortunately, the current political environments and economic policies in most African countries do not favor or encourage African nationals and intellectuals/experts to return home from the diaspora.

The future of higher education in Africa will depend on, first, the ability of African governments, their partners and development agencies, establishing economic policies that could encourage distinguished African nationals and intellectuals living in the diaspora to return and make their contribution to Africa. The expertise and knowledge of those individuals returning home will boost the development of African higher education by opening networking opportunities, not only in research and publication but also consolidating Africa's ability to use ICT and advancing technology. Second, a renewed focus on ensuring the relevance of curricula to meet the current realities and needs of Africa is critical, otherwise we will continue to see many more graduates without employment. It is evident that many developing economies such as India, Malaysia, and China earn billions of US dollars because their nationals share expertise, knowledge, and skills through job outsourcing schemes with industrialized nations.

Without a strong foundation in higher education, Africa will lag behind the rest of world in all important aspects of life such as the economy, technology, quality of life, etcetera. Therefore, the reality is that Africa as a region cannot afford to neglect higher education any more (Bloom, Canning and Chan 2005). Damtew Teferra (2009) indicated that

A new era has dawned for higher education in Africa. The pledges made, the good will shared, and the commitment expected coming out of the WCHE are indicative of the new bright period for the subsec-

tor. . . . As the players and the issues on the African higher education landscape continue to diversify, it is vital that the regionally and internationally relevant bodies—such as the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the African Union, UNESCO, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank, among others—play an active and visible role in shaping the new era of higher education in the region. It is an opportune time for these institutions to come together to collectively define the future and share the roadmap for achieving key objectives with all the stakeholders—the old and the new.

The recent World Conference on Higher Education held in August 2009 brings new hope for higher education in Africa. Indeed, all these stakeholders are challenged to meet their commitment toward supporting and promoting higher education in Africa, especially in ensuring that it becomes responsive to the African social, economic, and political realities and problems.

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## Gendering the Ethiopian Knowledge Diasporas: Addressing Gender Inequality and Inequity in Public Higher Education

Rose Amazan<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*University of Sydney*

The image of Ethiopian women is characterized by carrying heavy barrels of water; bending under heavy bundles of firewood, crouching over fires in kitchens cooking injera or sitting in the markets/streets with their youngest child clinging on them or at their breast while selling goods. The variety of roles that women play in Ethiopia, including their economic contributions, is as yet little recognized or valued. Like many African women, Ethiopian women have suffered economic, socio-cultural hardship and discrimination over many years. Although they are pillars of Ethiopia, their contributions are measured by their roles as mothers and wives, but not necessarily as a core part of the economic development of the country. Full economic growth of Ethiopia is not possible without the active involvement of women in Ethiopia as well as in the diaspora; although this is yet to be realized. This article will attempt to highlight the multidimensional aspects of gender inequality and inequity that exist in higher education in Ethiopia, despite efforts to mitigate the situation, and will bring to light the potential contribution that mobilizing the Ethiopian female knowledge diaspora can make.

While the murderous Derg regime did much to raise women's profile and reduce gender disparities, the current government established several gender-sensitive policies to narrow the gap between women and men in Ethiopia. The current participation of female students in public universities has increased to 25 percent; however, their graduation rates remain low (Yizengaw 2007). A study by Tesfaye (2007) in 2006 on Debu University shows that 35 percent of enrolling female students were dismissed, which means that of every ten female

students in a regular undergraduate program in 2003/2004, four were lost by the end of the first academic year. This a clear indication of the failure of the government policies in narrowing the gender gap.

In discussing these issues, one must first analyze and evaluate the state of the underrepresentation of women in higher education in Ethiopia. One of the issues<sup>1</sup> which continues to limit female success in higher education was identified by Tesfaye (2007) as the lack of academic support while attending university. The fact that implementation of the gender-sensitive policies only begins at the university admission stage and does not continue on throughout the students' academic career, sets female students up for failure (Tefaye 2007; Yizengaw 2007). In other words, gender-sensitive policies are not implemented at all levels of education and, in addition, there is inadequate support for those students after enrolment.

The lack of female role models at the university level to set precedents that could reconfigure the worth of Ethiopian women beyond the role of mother and wife, does not make things any easier. In the 2002/2003 academic year the proportion of female faculty in Ethiopian universities stood at 7 percent (Habtamu 2003; MoE-EMIS 2003; Tesfaye 2007). The few women academic who hold positions are largely concentrated in fields considered as typically feminine and in the lower ranks of their faculty (Tefaye 2007; Yizengaw 2007). My research also shows that female academic staff have difficulty balancing their career with societal expectations. As one divorced female academic said "I've been working and earning and raising kids and teaching . . . I don't have much time for research . . . those men, in a sense they do have time because they do have wives, wives to represent them into the society anywhere, wives to look after their kids, wives to do

\*Corresponding author: Email: [rama9803@usyd.edu.au](mailto:rama9803@usyd.edu.au); Address: University of Sydney, Building A35.550, Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia.

everything . . . they do have so many assisting systems . . . this is man's country in every sense." Ethiopian women academics are not only expected to work extra hard to prove their worth in their chosen field, but must uphold the societal expectations of women, which explains the low percentage of academic women.

Ethiopia spends over US\$5.3 million every year in hiring expatriates staff to compensate for the shortage of qualified staff in the country (Ministry of Education 2003). The government's rhetoric regarding the mobilization of the highly skilled diasporas to participate in the development of Ethiopia was not matched by its efforts, although the diaspora community is ready to assist. The Recording and Travel Document Production Department claim 6,539 Ethiopians returned between 2003 and 2008,<sup>2</sup> of which 2,505 were women (38.4 percent). These numbers do not truly represent either the real flow of Ethiopian returnees or the contributions of the diaspora, because the government still lacks a database to track diasporas activities. The government continues to invest more each year on employing expatriate staff instead of investing more into recruiting its own knowledge diasporas. The government's failure to elevate the status of women in Ethiopia and failure to recognize the power of diasporic women as agents of change, continue to impede the country's progress towards development.

African women in the diaspora have the power to help in gender mainstreaming by providing a precedent for young Ethiopian women to model themselves after; by demonstrating that success does not contravene the female experience. They can serve as something of a circuit-breaker to narrow the gender gap between men and women. In addition, higher education in Ethiopia and Ethiopia as whole need to be better prepared to adjust to the global trends in higher education. One way to prepare for this is by making more effective use of their secret weapon, Ethiopian women in the diaspora. An Ethiopian female academic returnee characterized her experience as follows: "whenever something happened they run to me for consultation. . . . I tend to be, I don't know why, but I tend to be more like a mother . . . they come to cry, talk . . . . students can exploit my skills and even if that's the skill I developed from being

a mother." Such empirical evidence reinforces the importance of Ethiopian academic women diasporas.

Gender equality and equity in Ethiopia is not the sole responsibility of women, however; it is also that of men. As much as they are part of the problem, they can be part of the solution. Ethiopian men can contribute in this process by helping women to embrace this change and helping them in this new journey of gender role redefinition, which would also impact how Ethiopian men define their own role in the society. Thus, in order to reduce poverty and bring about sustainable development, both women and men must play a crucial role. Remittances, and hiring expatriates to fill skill gaps are only temporary solutions to the deeply rooted problem of gender inequality in Ethiopia. Gendering higher education, including increased use of highly-skilled diasporic women, is crucial, for the country's development, and can play an important role in achieving gender equality.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Tesfaye (2007) identified many issues, but lack of academic female staff is the focus here.

<sup>2</sup> This data was aggregated from only Ethiopian returnees with a different citizenship who applied for the residence and work permit known as the “Yellow

Card.” Thus, there are many Ethiopian returnees who are unaccounted for, unfortunately, this is the only system the government has at this time to track returnees.

## Trends in Accrediting Private Higher Education in Latin America

Gustavo Gregorutti<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Universidad de Montemorelos*

Since Latin American governments have been unable to accommodate and absorb all the demand for higher education in this globalized world, an exponential number of new private universities have flourished during the last two decades. As a reaction to that, governments throughout the region are gradually increasing controls over private universities and their academic offer. Several federal accrediting organizations in different countries are setting up higher standards not only to open new institutions, but also to keep them officially accredited. Without an official accreditation it is almost impossible to run a university. This must be understood within the legal system that points governments as the ultimate accrediting agency for private higher education. Actions like these are a rather radical way of authorizing universities when compared with US procedures. Most, if not all, of Latin American countries follow a pattern of strong state control over tertiary education. This is probably due to European laws and legal traditions imported during the colony and subsequent stages of modeling Latin American higher education institutions after the European university.

A secondary and major issue for private universities is accreditation of new programs, especially graduate degree programs. Tertiary institutions are seeking to expand themselves toward the hottest markets of master's and doctoral programs. Graduate degrees are a key

element for people to obtain better jobs and income. However, there is an increasing concern among government policy makers that quality is at stake. Many private universities are graduating people without rigorous mechanisms to assess quality. This situation brings in the very controversial issue of defining quality for universities. According to several national research organizations throughout the region (CONACYT, CONICET, CONCYTEC, CONICIT, CONICYT, among others), quality is highly related to research productivity. Although many of these research organizations accept some practitioner-oriented graduate programs, the bottom line is that they should produce knowledge and use it to modify reality.

The above situation prompts to a third issue, namely the need of rethinking the parameters and assumptions used to define what is *quality*. Some academic administrators, at private universities, are complaining they are being measured up against standards that work better for universities with abundant public funding. Producing research is highly expensive. It demands cutting edge facilities, time to do research, and a full time type of student who is not present in many professional-oriented private universities. One of the main criticisms is that governmental accrediting agencies are not taking into account the professional orientation of many graduate degree programs. Although these organizations claim to recognize these differences, their definition of quality resembles the knowledge production

\*Corresponding author: Email: [grego@um.edu.mx](mailto:grego@um.edu.mx); Address: Facultad de Educación, Universidad de Montemorelos, Nuevo León, México.

benchmarks used for academic and research-oriented programs.

Governments' continued concerns about quality remains a genuine issue that has not yet been sufficiently addressed in many Latin American countries. A possible solution to these tensions can be found through opening accreditation to a broader set of agencies. This is already being applied in some Latin American countries with good results. Like in the United States, some accrediting bodies are very selective giving prestige to the universities that are accepted. Another possible alternative is to broaden standards of what is quality. Faculty research productivity is important to include in this definition. But, what about the real contributions these professionals programs are making on a

workplace? Shouldn't a program be judged also by its impact on students' practice? How well adjusted is a program to what is going on in the real world? These questions are essential for a successful professional degree that would generate alternatives to existing problems.

Finally, it is imperative to recognize the need of innovation. Quality is a crucial issue that affects universities and society as a whole. Measuring hard data and the amount of indexed journals may be easier to many statisticians. Yet, having a unilateral way of measuring and defining what quality is may produce outcomes that are against the very purpose of these interplaying institutions.

## Funding Policy and Higher Education in Arab Countries

Manar Sabry<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*State University of New York at Buffalo*

The Twenty-Fourth Report of the Investment Climate in Arab Countries (2008) has, for the first time, devoted a section on the development of higher education, acknowledging the emerging importance of education for the Arab World. The report reveals the increase in the number of universities in Arab countries from 233 in 2003 to 385 in 2008, including 115 private universities (about 4.4 times the figure for 1993). Although the number of private universities has grown to equal that of the public universities, this does not reflect their capacity; most of the private universities have smaller capacities. However, the report infers that if we add the enrollment in the successful private higher education institutions, it is likely that the percentage of students enrolled in private higher education has approached its counterpart in public universities. This inference is based on a policy adopted by most Arab countries to limit the growth in the number of students admitted to public universities, and establish or expand the private sector to limit public spending on higher education. Overall, the number of universities has risen significantly in all Arab countries except in Iraq, Algeria, Djibouti, and Mauritania, which, however, are making serious attempts to establish private universities.

According to the report, Tunisia has experienced the highest increase in the number of universities (doubled from 22 to 44 universities, including 31 private universities). Kuwait is reported to have the highest percentage of expenditure on higher education of the total public expenditure on education (32.6 percent), followed by the UAE (27.6 percent) and Tunisia (24 percent). Kuwait also has the highest per student expenditure as a percentage of the per capita gross domestic product (80 percent of income per capita).

\*Corresponding author: Email: [msabry@buffalo.edu](mailto:msabry@buffalo.edu); Address: University at Buffalo, 428C Baldy Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260, USA.

### High Spending, Lack of Funding and Limited Output

Arab countries spend a comparatively high percentage of their gross domestic product on education. Over the past forty years, countries in the region have allocated an average of 5 percent of GDP and 20 percent of government expenditures to education—more than other developing countries with similar per capita incomes, yet less than most developed nations. As a result, the region was able to improve equal access to education, and to reduce the illiteracy rates (even though it is still high in many countries). This is seen as a remarkable achievement, given that the region had some of the lowest educational indicators in the world in the 1960.

Regardless of the relatively high percentage of expenditures, most universities and higher education institutions are still facing a funding crisis. In many Arab countries, the limited capacity of institutions of higher education is associated with significantly limited government spending. This situation is exacerbated by the fast-paced ongoing technological revolution and the growing youth population, which is estimated to be one of the largest in the world. This youth population which is currently at a peak, and is expected to continue to grow, creates a greater demand on higher education.

The report points out that despite the significant increase in the number of universities, the effectiveness of the Arab higher education system is still limited for several reasons. Among these reasons are the low participation rate in higher education, high tuition fees in private universities, brain drain, outdated university libraries, inappropriate admission systems and students assessment methods, low level of expenditure on scientific research and the dissemination of research reflected in the limited number of published research in international journals, the decline in teachers' preparedness



and in educational materials, the lack of academic freedom for professors, and the decline in quality of programs in the absence of accountability.

As evidence of the severe decline in universities and research centers in the region, none of the Arab Universities appeared in the top 500 in the Academic Ranking of World Universities compiled by Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2008. Cairo University was the only university previously listed.

### **Reflection and Recommendations**

Looking at the current situation of the higher education financial policy in the Arab world, I believe that there is potential for improving the effectiveness of the sector in the region. In order to increase the competitiveness of the graduates, it is critical to have a strategic plan that embraces the needs for development and those of the job market in the region as well as targeted labor markets.

It is a fact that students from middle- and high-income families are overrepresented in higher education in almost all countries (Johnstone 2003). The dual track policy—admitting the more qualified for free or low cost places in public universities—means that the intellectual and social elite who are more qualified easily access the free or low-cost public seats. At the same time, the low-income students, who are less qualified due to social barriers, have to pay. Based on the current financial policies in the Arab World, where tuition-supported private higher education is growing and policies of cost sharing (higher tuition fees, dual track, cost recovery of food and lodging in public universities) have been implemented in most countries, there is an urgent need for policy makers to realize the importance of providing means-tested grants and loans that are generally available for those qualified needy students.

High tuition is a real barrier to equal access because of the limited financial aid and student loans available. Thus, there is an urgent need for implementing effective grants and loan schemes to ensure that no qualified student is denied access to higher education due to financial constraints. In addition, private universities should be encouraged, even forced, to diversify their resources so that tuition is not the main source of income, in order to charge lower tuition and/or offer more financial aid to those who cannot pay.

It is worth noting that the long-term philanthropy culture, which existed in Arab countries to support education, has significantly diminished and thus is in need to be revived and encouraged. In conclusion, if the current development continues in the Arab World—higher tuition, dual track, privatization in public higher education and an increasing private sector without adequate grants and student loans—the result will be a regression to elite higher education, and the region will face the risk of missing the prospect of economic and social development permanently.

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## Reflections on Comparative Education Conferences: A European Perspective

Ligia Toutant<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>California State University, Long Beach

Are the conferences worldwide mimicking society's economic market trends? A quick look at the first page of various conferences shows that after the title and the dates of the conference, a description of the place occupies quite a large space. I encourage you to watch this short video from the 2008 European Association for International Education (EAIE) conference in Belgium that had 3,000 participants from 70 countries and offered 90 sections and 34 workshops:

<http://www.eaie.org/conference/video>

The conference received wide local media coverage and the sponsors were pleased with the exposure. Being global and the need for money is a recurring theme at many conferences. The travel attractiveness of the surroundings and the many possible excursions make one wonder if the conference organizers have partnered with the travel industry. Indeed, the conferences participatory fees are on the rise and the cancellation rules have become stricter making conference attendance unaffordable for many. However, if you have figured out your finances and have planned your trip, I can assure you that an international conference is a rewarding experience.

Last year, I attended the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on *Comparative Education and Teacher Training* organized by the Bulgarian Comparative Education Society and held in Tryavna, Bulgaria, from 29 June to 3 July 2009. Indeed, as I mentioned above the next sentence on the website was that "Tryavna is a beautiful, ethnographic and picturesque town located 250 km (ca.155 miles) from Sofia." As a longtime member of

the American CIES, I was curious to experience something different; I wanted to have an European experience. The language of the conference was English. The conference gathered 67 participants that included the following countries: Canada, Cyprus, Hong Kong, England, France, Germany, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Serbia, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, and the United States. The presentations were been arranged around four themes: Comparative Education as a University Discipline; Pre-service and In-service Teacher Training; Education Policy and Reforms; Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Social Inclusion. While I attended only the comparative education section, I had enough time to mingle and make connections during the coffee breaks and breakfasts. The mindset of participants was open and ready for exchanges. I found the Bulgarian CIES conference well organized and not unlike other conferences I have attended; the discussions were thought provoking, and all in all the conference was a valuable experience. I would certainly consider returning to this conference in the future. As a participant, I received a free copy of the conference proceedings and I bought for 10 Euros *The Comparative Education at Universities World Wide* (second edition). Both books can be used in teaching comparative education as hands-on examples of comparative and international studies.

\*Corresponding author: Email: [ltoutant@ucla.edu](mailto:ltoutant@ucla.edu); Address: California State University, Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Tower, Long Beach, CA, 90840, USA.

## 2009 Higher Education SIG Award Recipient

### Lifetime Contribution Award: Ruth Hayhoe



Ruth Hayhoe holds a BA Honors in Classics from University of Toronto (1967), and an MA (1979) and PhD (1984) from the University of London. She is a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto and president *emerita* of the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

She has been a trustee of the New York based United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia since 2000, and Secretary of the Board since 2003. She has written extensively on higher education in China and educational relations between East Asia and the West. Her recent books include *Education, Culture and Identi-*

*tity in Twentieth Century China*, co-edited with Glen Peterson and Yongling Lu (University of Michigan Press, 2001), *Knowledge Across Cultures: A Contribution to Dialogue among Civilizations*, co-edited with Julia Pan, (Comparative Education Research Centre, University of HK, 2001), *Portraits of Influential Chinese Educators* (Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong and Springer, 2006) and *Comparative and International Education: Issues for Teachers*, co-edited with Karen Mundy et al (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press and New York: Teachers College Press, 2008). She has received a number of honors and awards, including Honorary Fellow of the University of London Institute of Education (1998); the Silver Bauhinia Star of the Hong Kong SAR Government (2002); Honorary Doctorate in Education, the Hong Kong Institute of Education (2002); and Commandeur dans l'ordre des Palmes Académiques by the Government of France (2002).

## Higher Education SIG Awards Committee Update

Rosalind Latiner Raby<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*California Colleges for International Education*

The CIES Higher Education SIG established an Awards Committee at the 2009 annual HESIG Business Meeting. The committee placed a Call for Nominations in Spring 2009 and early Summer 2009 to honor publications and individuals whose academic work focuses on international and comparative issues in higher education. Nominations were received in all four categories: (1) Best Article, (2) Best Book, (3) Best Dissertation, and (4) Lifetime Contribution.

The committee is in the process of reading all the nominees and ranking choices will be conducted during Fall 2009. The award recipients will be announced at the annual meeting in Chicago.

Please consider nominations for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual HESIG Awards that will have a due date of **1 July 2010**.

Please send inquires to Rosalind Raby, Chair HESIG Awards Committee at [rabyrl@aol.com](mailto:rabyrl@aol.com).

Thank you  
CIES Higher Education SIG Awards Committee

**Chair:** Rosalind Raby

**Members:** Scarlett Benjamin, University of North Carolina; Gustavo Gregorutti, Universidad de Montemorelos, Nuevo Leon, Mexico; Diane Oliver, California State University, Fresno; Laura Portnoi, California State University, Long Beach; and Janet Thomas, Zayed University, Dubai

## Upcoming Conferences and Events

### Global

54<sup>th</sup> CIES Annual Conference, 1-5 March 2010, Chicago, Illinois. Theme: Reimagining Education. Website: <http://cies2010.msu.edu>

14<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, 14-19 June 2010, Istanbul, Turkey. Theme: Bordering, Re-Bordering and New Possibilities for Change in Education and Society. Website: <http://www.wcces2010.org>

### Africa

INORMS 2010, 11-15 April 2010, Cape Town, South Africa. Theme: Managing for Impact: New Approaches to Research and Innovation Management. Website: <http://technoscene.co.za/inorms2010>

5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training, 26-28 May 2010, Lusaka, Zambia. Theme: An annual event of developing e-learning Capacities in Africa. Website: <http://www.elearning-africa.com>

### Asia/Pacific

Southeast Asian Association for Institutional Research (SEAAIR): The Future of Higher Education, 13-15 October 2009, Penang, Malaysia. Conference theme(s): It is hoped that participants and presenters will discuss aspects related to Visions, Innovation and Practices, Quality, Alternative Learning Environment and, Institutional Research and the growth of higher education will be discussed. Website: <http://www.ptpm.usm.my/seaair2009/>

5<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Teaching English at Tertiary Level, 16-17 October 2009, Hong Kong. Website: <http://www.engl.polyu.edu.hk/events/5thSTETL.htm>

World Innovation Summit for Education, 16-18 November 2009. Conference theme(s): Pluralism, sustainability and innovation. The forum will draw leader and decision-makers from governments, businesses, civil society, schools and universities, international institutions, NGOs, grassroots movements, top-tier media, multimedia, art and other creative communities around the globe. Participants will share and create new ideas, best practices and

experimental programs for the challenging issues in 21<sup>st</sup> Century education. Website:

<http://www.wise-qatar.org/en/this-edition>

3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of UNESCO Chair Higher Education for Sustainable Development, 20-22 November 2009, Penang, Malaysia. Conference theme(s): All researchers and higher education institutions committed to integrating sustainability into their curricula are invited. Website: <http://www.hesd09.org/>

International Conference on Dialogue between Educational Research and Educational Policies, 21-22 November 2009, Taiwan; and The Development of Higher Education Quality Assurance and International Comparison: Proseminar, 22-23 November 2009, Taiwan. Joint Website: <http://www.ced.ncnu.edu.tw/ccest/chinese/chinese.html#> (in traditional Chinese)

The Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, 24-27 November 2009, Armidale, NSW, Australia. Conference theme: Entering the Age of an Educational Renaissance: Ideas for unity of purpose or further discord? Website: [http://anzcies.org/call\\_for\\_papers.php](http://anzcies.org/call_for_papers.php)

National Conference on ICTs for the Differently-abled/Under privileged Communities in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship (NCIDEEE), 1-3 December 2009, Chennai, India. Conference theme(s): To devise a successful formula through which the less privileged people of our society can be provided the opportunity to use the Information and Communication Technology to grow on par with the modernized world. Website: <http://www.loyolacollege.edu/docs/NCIDEEE2009.pdf>

International Conference on Innovation in Teaching and Management of Higher Education, 21-23 December 2009, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia. Conference theme(s): innovative teaching, trends and techniques in higher education, higher education man-

agement on research and innovation. Website:  
<http://www2.tganu.uitm.edu.my/icitm2009/>

Best Practices in University Development through International Cooperation, 3-4 February 2010, Baguio City, Philippines. Theme: a showcase of best practices in university development through international cooperation. Website:

[http://www.uidc\\_conference.slu.edu.ph/](http://www.uidc_conference.slu.edu.ph/)

### Europe

European Educational Research Association (EERA) Annual Conference, Vienna, Austria, 25-30 September 2009. Theme: Theory and Evidence in European Educational Research. Website:

<http://www.eera-ecer.eu/ecer/ecer-2009-vienna/>

8th International Conference on Comparative Education and Teacher Training, Bulgarian Comparative Education Society, 9-12 June 2010, Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Website: <http://bces.conference.tripod.com>

International Sociological Association (ISA) Annual Meeting, 11-17 July 2010, Gothenburg, Sweden. Theme: Sociology on the Move. Website:

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010>

22<sup>nd</sup> European Conference for International Education (EAIE) Annual Conference, 15-18 September 2010, Nantes, France. Website:

<http://www.eaie.org/conference/futureconferences/2010.asp>

### Latin America

3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of Educational Innovation with Technology, Valparaiso, Chile, 29-30 October 2009. Theme: Developing skills that can be of help to bridge present reality with the future of Latin America education. Website:

[http://www.costadigital.cl/prontus\\_costadigital/site/artic/20090120/pags/20090120161538.html#T0](http://www.costadigital.cl/prontus_costadigital/site/artic/20090120/pags/20090120161538.html#T0)

6<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on Higher Education Reforms. Mexico City, 9-11 November 2009. Theme: Recent changes and reform policies concerning the role of the State and the growing importance of the market in higher education. Website:

<http://www.comie.org.mx/viiwher/index.php?idm=en&s=02>

9<sup>th</sup> Latin American Congress on History of Latin American Education, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 16-19 November 2009. Theme: Education, Autonomy, and Identity in Latin America. Website:

[http://www.sbhe.org.br/ixcihela/info\\_gerais\\_castel.htm](http://www.sbhe.org.br/ixcihela/info_gerais_castel.htm)

6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Adult Education, Belém, Brazil, 1-4 December 2009. Theme: Policy dialogue and advocacy on adult learning and non-formal education at global level. Website:

<http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/>

7<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Higher Education, Havana, Cuba, 8-12 February 2010. Theme: The university for a better world. Website:

<http://www.universidad2010.cu/Eng/presentation.php>

### Middle East and North Africa

Arab Women in Science and Technology: Empowerment for the Development of the Arab World, 28-29 September 2009, Arab Science and Technology Foundation, Dubai, UAE. Theme: The conference will be the platform for leading women scientists; eminent researchers specialized in gender-specific topics, and representatives of Arab and international organizations that are concerned with women's research, development, and innovation. Website:

<http://www.astf.net/womenrdi/>

MEA/LBS: Middle East Education & Skills Conference, 1 October 2009, London Business School, London. Theme: The conference will address the challenges faced both by the Middle East and the UK in equipping young people with the necessary skills for private sector employment. Website:

<http://www.the-mea.co.uk/>

World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE), 16-18 November 2009, Qatar Foundation, Doha, Qatar. Theme: *Global Education: Working Together for Sustainable Achievements*. Website:

<http://www.wise-qatar.org/>

### United States and Canada

Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), 4-7 November 2009, Vancouver, BC. Theme: Advancing the Next Generation of Higher Education Scholarship and Scholars. Website:

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# HIGHER EDUCATION SIG

COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY

15 September 2009

Dear Higher Education SIG (HESIG) Members,

Greetings from Taiwan! I want to thank you for your continued commitment to one of the largest special interest groups (SIGs) in the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). As you may or may not be aware, CIES determines the number of SIG-allotted panels or SIG-sponsored papers in its annual conferences based on the following two criteria: Annual SIG Fee submissions of \$10 and indicating you want your paper/panel to be part of a specific SIG. I want to encourage you to support the Higher Education SIG by (i) submitting your annual SIG fee, (ii) submitting papers and panels that can be sponsored by HESIG, and (iii) participating in the HESIG Business Meeting at next year's CIES Annual Conference in Chicago. For information on how to submit your annual SIG fee, please visit our website at: <http://www.higheredsig.org/membership.html>.

Along this vein, I encourage HESIG members to consider organizing HESIG-sponsored panels on a range of higher education topics. Some topics related to current higher education issues you may consider include Current Trends in Various Global Regions; Comparison Between Regions (e.g., Higher Education Research Comparisons between European and Pacific Rim Regions); Issues of Quality vs. Equity under a specific higher education context; International Higher Education Rankings vs. Traditional Higher Education Values and Academic Freedom; or another topic of your choice.

Higher education continues to be one of the most growing areas in comparative and international education, and I hope we can provide increasing evidence-based higher education research and discussion along with an in-depth ideas sharing and opinion exchanging during the forthcoming CIES Annual Meeting in Chicago. Please note the paper and panel submission deadline of 1 October 2009. For more information on submitting a paper or panel, please go to the following URL:

<http://cies2010.msu.edu/call-for-proposals.html>

I look forward to seeing each of you next year in Chicago.

All the best,



(Kent) Sheng Yao Cheng

Program Chair, HESIG

Associate Professor, CCU, Taiwan