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ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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IMPACTS OF QUALITY ASSESSMENT: THE CASE OF JYVÄSKYLÄ UNIVERSITY*

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to analyse the impacts of quality assessment, called "total evaluation" that was carried out at Jyväskylä University in 1992-93. Analytically, the starting point is to analyse both direct and indirect impacts of quality assessment that have led to expected and unexpected outcomes. The authors focus on the topics of teaching, research and institutional decision-making using the data gathered by interviews, through a questionnaire, and by analysing the planning documents of the University. The study is structured by comparing the international peers' report with the actions taken at Jyväskylä University. The authors suggest as their main research outcome that the most important outcomes of the total evaluation have been indirect impacts caused by secondary measures through the definitions of research priorities at the basic units.

* The text of this article was written as a case study for the IMHE Project on Quality Assurance, Quality Assessment and the Decision-Making Process. It appears with the other case studies under the title *Institutional Experiences of Quality Assessment in Higher Education* on the IMHE Web Site.

INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTS OF QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Institutional background of Jyväskylä University

Jyväskylä University has a long and strong tradition as a pilot university in initiating Finnish higher education reforms. During the 1970s a major degree reform (*tutkinnonuudistus*) was first tested at Jyväskylä University after which it was extended to other Finnish universities. The reform of university administration at the beginning of the 1980s was the second major reform that has been initiated at Jyväskylä University as well as in another Finnish university, Åbo Academy. In the late 1980s, Jyväskylä University together with the Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration initiated a reform that aimed at increasing flexibility in the allocation of teaching resources (experimentation on the free allocation of teaching resources).

Thus, it was quite natural that Jyväskylä University, together with the University of Oulu, were the pilot universities in the implementation of institutional quality assessments. A common feature in both the cases was the focus on institutional evaluation: the main aim of the quality assessment process was to evaluate both the academic procedures (teaching) and the decision-making and administration structures at Jyväskylä University. This aim also provided the name to the quality assessment: it was called "total evaluation" (in Finnish: *kokonaisarviointi*). However, the nature of these assessment processes differed from each other as Sallinen, Konttinen and Panhelainen (1994) have noted. At Jyväskylä University the emphasis was on the development processes at the basic unit level, whereas at Oulu University the processes served to a greater extent the needs of institutional decision-making.

The nature of total evaluation at Jyväskylä University

At Jyväskylä University, the quality assessment was organised by the university central administration: it nominated the evaluation secretariat responsible for gathering information and writing the institutional self-study report. The quality assessment process, however, consisted of two parts. First, the departments made their self-study reports for the university evaluation secretariat. These self-study reports were then analysed and redefined by working groups organised by the faculties. Simultaneously with this process the university evaluation secretariat collected numerical data on the output of Jyväskylä University and compared it to national statistics. As an outcome of this process that lasted about a Year (1992), the university evaluation secretariat revised the self-study report of Jyväskylä University. Secondly, just as at Oulu University, the self-evaluation report was analysed by an international peer-group that visited Jyväskylä University during spring term 1993 (Sallinen, Konttinen and Panhelainen, 1994). During the

visit the international peers interviewed representatives of the administrative staff, university teachers and students. After the visit they wrote an assessment report that consisted of the analysis of Jyväskylä University and recommendations for future actions to be taken (Kogan, Allardt, Kirkwood, Praestgaard and Teichler, 1993).

The approach taken by Jyväskylä University was a mixture of institutional evaluation and the self-study method introduced by the Dutch rectors' conference (Vroeijenstijn and Acherman, 1990). In addition, "The Jyväskylä model" was influenced by the previous discipline-based evaluations (humanities and natural sciences) with their strong emphasis on departmental self-assessment. Essentially, the Jyväskylä approach aimed at involving academics in the assessment and development processes at their departments. In this sense, the nature of the evaluation process was interaction more than institutional evaluation (Sallinen, Konttinen and Panhelainen, 1994).

The aims and methods of the study

According to empirical research, the implementations of higher education reforms have caused intended outcomes, but they have also given "rise to the achievement of unexpected and unintended results" as Cerych and Sabatier (1986, 243) put it. Moreover, the utilisation of quality assessments – how much a higher education institution uses the results of an internal or external evaluation – has been divided into active and passive use (Westerheijden, 1996). Therefore, in line with earlier research outcomes, we begin our analysis with the assumption that total evaluation has had both direct and indirect impacts that have led to expected and to unexpected outcomes. We do not believe, however, in a simple, linear, and causal decision-making model where the recommendations given during the total evaluation can automatically be connected with the changes implemented after it. We are, however, interested in the historically linear relationship between the total evaluation process and the changes related to it. Therefore, we assume that the social contexts at Jyväskylä University should be taken into account in the analysis, because many external and internal factors may have influenced the changes implemented after the total evaluation. We will focus on the topics of teaching, research, and institutional decision-making.

First, we will examine what kind of direct impacts (expected or unexpected) the total evaluation has had at Jyväskylä University. We will analyse which impacts (measures and changes) are directly linked to the total evaluation process: what measures are caused by the total evaluation? and what kind of changes have these measures caused?

Our second main aim is to analyse the indirect impacts of total evaluation. The category of indirect impacts consists of expected and unexpected changes

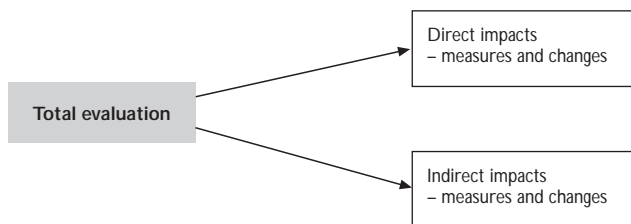
that have been promoted by total evaluation without visible connection to the process: what changes are related to the total evaluation process? and how are they related to it?

Our third aim is to reflect on the relationship between direct and indirect impacts. This task aims at the analysis of cultural changes the total evaluation may have promoted at Jyväskylä University. We assume that culture is born in social formations which “construct the meaning of their actions – in other words, their cultures – within the social relations that are formed in communicating and producing together. Change the social relations and cultures change” as Hill and Turpin (1995, p. 138) put it. We will ask: has total evaluation changed social relations inside the university? has total evaluation promoted new social formations?

We will examine these direct and indirect impacts and cultural changes both at the levels of the university institution and basic units. Our theoretical outline is presented in Figure 1.

Our examination is based on various sources: interviews, written documents and a questionnaire to the heads of departments. Methodologically, our aim is to use triangulation allowing various sources to change the emphasis given to each in order to analyse the same phenomenon from different perspectives. We interviewed 26 persons in all. They were faculty secretaries and faculty student advisors (10 persons), two representatives of the student union, both the university vice-rectors, the head of the development office, and eleven university teachers (from professors to assistants) working in different academic fields from soft-pure to hard-pure disciplines (Becher, 1989). The written documents are the university

◆ Figure 1. *Impacts of quality assessment at the institutional level: theoretical outline*



self-study report and that of the international peers, and the five-year development plans (*Jyväskylän yliopiston toiminta- ja taloussuunnitelma*, TTS-plan) produced by five faculties and by the Jyväskylä University central administration. In addition, a questionnaire was sent to the heads of departments (29 persons) asking how they see the impacts of total evaluation in relation to improvements in decision-making, teaching and research. The rate of return was 66 per cent.

Our position as researchers requires also some clarification. On the one hand, we have been involved in the total evaluation process as objects of evaluation. On the other hand, we are subjects of assessment because in addition to this research we have done research on Jyväskylä University for many years (Aittola, 1983; Välimaa, 1992). This dual position gives us “local knowledge” as Geertz (1983) has put it, but it may cause problems for objective research if we are not conscious of our commitments. However, as a result of this local knowledge we have noticed that the culture and administrative practices have changed after the total evaluation. Therefore, we will utilise this benefit of our “dual position” in the analysis of cultural and structural changes at our university. We will begin with the institutional level and proceed to the basic unit level.

IMPACTS OF TOTAL EVALUATION AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

The main problem with the analysis of direct and indirect impacts of quality assessment derives from the nature of the higher education institutions themselves. Higher education institutions are open social systems that exist in close interaction with society (Becher and Kogan, 1992; Clark, 1983). Academically, the problem of how to examine impacts of quality assessment can be formulated as follows: how to separate from each other the external processes (changes caused by the external social forces) from the internal processes (changes caused by institutional actions) at the institutional level? In order to make the distinction clear between these two interconnected processes we will compare the international peers’ recommendations to the administrative actions implemented at Jyväskylä University. In our examination, the peer review report (Kogan *et al.*, 1993) provides us with a useful document that serves our purposes, because it is analytical and contains clear recommendations for Jyväskylä University.

The international peer group consisted of esteemed academics from different academic disciplines. They were professors Allardt, Kirkwood, Kogan, Praestgaard, and Teichler. The international peers paid attention to various problems that are related to the institutional decision-making structures and practices. In what follows, we will emphasize these themes in our dialogue to highlight the role quality assessment has played in the development of the University.

Decision-making practices and structures

The peers paid attention to decision-making bodies and their functions in several notes. In one of them they wrote:

“The three year period of office of the Rector is too short for continuity of knowledge and action. A longer period should be considered” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 20, recommendation 8).

What has been done after the total evaluation? The main stream in the Finnish higher education-policy making has been the strengthening of the managerial superstructure through national legislation. Academic leaders (rectors and deans) have been given more power at the cost of democratically elected bodies. This process has been supported by the economically harsh times and by the introduction of new “management by result”-steering policy (Higher Education Policy in Finland, 1996). The new “management by result”-steering ideology is based on clear managerial structures, where university rectors are expected to act as university managers responsible for their organisations.

“Senate should be able to act decisively whilst retaining its electoral legitimacy. It could make more use of *ad hoc* sub-committees to examine and make proposals on key issues. The University has fruitful relations with external groups which should find a place in its policy-making” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 20, recommendation 9).

“The deans should be associated more strongly with the corporate development of the university” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 20, recommendation 10).

These recommendations have not been followed at the local level. However, the representation of external groups has been discussed both locally and at the national level. According to the interviews of faculty staff, deans have been excluded from the “corporate development of the university”. Some of the interviewed remembered, however, this recommendation. They emphasized that the recommendation (10) should be taken seriously and deans should be incorporated into the institutional policy-making in order to make their academic communities understand and accept the decisions. This provides an example of the way the total evaluation has influenced the argumentation in the academic community.

“The Library and Education Studies, however, are particularly good examples of areas where self-report might be followed by closer university attention to them by the use of *ad hoc* senate sub-committees, by the allocation and planning systems, and by continued self-report” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 21, recommendation 22).

The recommendation concerning *ad hoc*-committees is a good example of the direct impact the total evaluation has had on the policy-making at Jyväskylä University. After the total evaluation, the rector nominated 13 committees and working groups (between 1992 and 1995) to analyse problems and to recommend improvements. In all 83 members of the University community (teachers, other staff, students) were involved in these committees. Only 20 of them belonged to more than one committee. From a cultural perspective it is significant that they met each other in a situation where the aim was to think about the University as a social entity. As to the University computer centre and library services, the committees suggested improvements that have led to structural reorganisations and caused visible changes in their functioning.

“Some departments are too small to be viable and could with advantage be combined” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 20, recommendation 12).

After the total evaluation, the number of departments has been reduced in social sciences, but not in the other faculties. The merger operations have been influenced by the total evaluation, because it paid (once again) attention to small departments that do not function well. However, the motives for the merger operations have been supported by the economic constraints in Finland and political calculations inside the university: larger units are more powerful than smaller ones in the internal debates.

Mission and priorities

The peers paid attention to problems in defining the mission of the University and to the ambiguity in determining priorities. In fact, the peers focused attention on the lack of strategic thinking at Jyväskylä University.

The peers wrote the following on the mission statements:

“The statement of mission in the self-report does not arrive at explicit priorities based on judgements of feasibility” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 19, recommendation 4).

“Our criticism concern: the need to create an effective mission statement; the lack of corporate critique of the basic units’ plans; the need for authority at the centre of the university to lead such critique” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 21, recommendation 24).

After the total evaluation, the head of development office has compressed the mission of Jyväskylä University into a slogan “Culture, Quality, Accountability”. It seems that these catch-words describe well the institutional goals of Jyväskylä University. Symbolically, and practically as well, the University’s mission has been produced where the University exists: in the University central administration, because central administration is the only place where the University is visible as a social entity and as an organisation (Becher and Kogan, 1992).

Furthermore, the international peers wrote:

“So far, the priority approach has been modestly applied. A closer analysis of present and potential strengths and weaknesses is necessary. This should be followed by examining the potential for reallocation, particularly through creating a ‘shadow’ staffing structure, related to future mission, priority areas for research and scrutiny of resource needs of education programmes. Then negotiation with the Ministry on the mission can begin and a virtuous planning cycle set in motion” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 20, recommendation 7).

In fact, the most visible impact of the total evaluation can be seen at the University TTS-plan document and in the corresponding faculty TTS-plans, because these documents contain several references to the peer report. The references indicate that the peer report has been used in defining functional problems of Jyväskylä University. It has also been used in institutional argumentation to help legitimise development policies. The peer report has also been a useful point of reference to show which issues have already been improved. Rhetorically, therefore, the peer report has been a useful instrument for the university’s planning structures and practices, because it has structured development argumentation.

The determining of priorities has also influenced strongly the basic units’ activities through definitions of priorities within research. These definitions are, in turn, related to the new institutional planning and monitoring system (TTS-planning process). We shall analyse this relationship in more detail in the next section.

The reform of the university planning system (TTS-plan)

As to planning the evaluation group wrote:

“Our report states some of the considerations that both the University and the Ministry might take into account in determining what kind of university it should strive to become. They include selection of priorities; supporting potential as well as actual areas of strength; ensuring that the total profile includes subjects necessary to a university identity and that lend necessary support to other subjects; and attention to both academic and regional needs ” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 20, recommendation 6).

The most important direct impact of the total evaluation was the reform of the university’s yearly planning procedure. According to the head of the planning office, the evaluation showed a need to reform the information gathering and processing system. The reform of the five-year action and economic plan (*toiminta ja taloussuunnitelma TTS-plan*) was implemented during the total evaluation process. Consequently, a new TTS-plan procedure replaced the former yearly reports made by the departments and faculties. The major problems in the former

reports were their routine formula, descriptive touch and defensive attitude. Following the procedure developed during the total evaluation, departments prepare their reports and deliver them to the faculties. Faculties, in turn, discuss and prepare their TTS-plans and deliver them to the University central administration. All these reports are expected to include a critical analysis of actions taken, reflections on their strengths and weaknesses combined with future plans of action. It is also expected by the administration that faculty TTS-plans contain definitions of research priorities, "strong areas of research" (e.g. gerontology, mathematical analysis, evaluation research) that will guide the functioning of the faculties and departments, as well as concrete development proposals (e.g. a new study programme) which will be put forward by Jyväskylä University in the negotiations with the Ministry of Education.

The TTS-process is planned to provide the university central administration with the information needed in the consultations with the Ministry of Education. The causal relationship between total evaluation and changes in the TTS-process is not only caused by internal actions. Economic difficulties in Finland, mainly budget cuts, have made departments more willing to adopt the new evaluative procedure, because it has been politically sensible both locally and nationally. As one of the vice-rectors told us: "Various evaluations (of teaching, learning, and curricula) have even created a kind of 'evaluation hubris' because evaluation has become 'a magic tool' to solve various problems occurring in the higher education field" (Neittaanmäki, 1996). It is, however, significant that assessment of activities has become part of the departments' normal procedure. This has, in turn, had many indirect impacts on the nature of academic work at the departments. We will return to these changes in the following sections.

IMPACTS ON TEACHING, LEARNING AND RESEARCH AT THE BASIC UNITS

Soon after the total evaluation process, departments shared positive attitudes concerning the total evaluation. According to a national follow-up study, 54 per cent of the departments at Jyväskylä University answered that it had been positive experience. Only 13 per cent regarded it as a negative experience, whereas in Oulu University 25 per cent of the departments considered it a positive experience and 50 per cent negative (Saarinen, 1995, p. 131). The opinions on total evaluation varied, however, when we asked the heads of departments how they see the impacts of total evaluation in institutional decision-making. According to the questionnaire sent to the heads of departments, the most drastic changes have taken place at the institutional level, because the role of rector and central administration has strengthened after total evaluation. However, half of

the departmental heads said that total evaluation has had impact on the contents of academic work (development of undergraduate teaching and doctoral training) at their departments. Furthermore, as many as 77 per cent saw that the definition of research priorities has had a clear impact at their departments. Therefore, in order to see how total evaluation has influenced academic work we will focus our attention on the changes that have taken place in teaching and learning, doctoral training, and research.

Changes in teaching and learning

Traditionally, teaching and learning have been one of the most crucial problems in the Finnish universities. Total evaluation showed that these problems were to be found at Jyväskylä University as well. Therefore, we will begin with problems and proposals mentioned by the external visiting group. They wrote:

“The University is popular and attracts a large number of applicants. We received, however, disturbing corroboration of the criticism of teaching made in the Self-Evaluation Report. There was said to be a lack of out-of-class communication between teachers and students and of individual academic advice. It may be that there are cultural reasons for this somewhat distanced approach, and a desire to avoid spoon feeding” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 12, recommendation 35).

“In general we feel that closer concern about teaching would be desirable as would some ice breaking of relationships between students and staff. These are reported as good in some areas but poor in others” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 13, recommendation 40).

The evaluation group focused attention to unsatisfactory teaching and supervision in graduate education, lack of teacher student interaction, long duration of studies and too heavy course requirements. The issue of poor teaching was also raised before the self-evaluation during the Experiment of Free Allocation of Teaching Resources which probably helped in raising poor teaching as a problem that should be taken seriously (Välilmaa, 1992, 1994). On the basis of the TTS-plans of different faculties and the interviews of the faculty members, it seems that Jyväskylä University has supported many kinds of improvements in teaching and learning after the total evaluation, because these were defined as problems by the external evaluation group. At the institutional level the notion has supported the division of duties between two vice-rectors. One of them has concentrated on teaching and the other on research and doctoral training. This redivision of responsibilities was also the starting point for the development project “Quality improvement in teaching” which is led by the vice-rector responsible for educational issues. During the project, financial support varying from Mk 5 000 to

20 000 has been given to different small-scale evaluations and experiments in various departments. In 1995 Mk 500 000 were shared by 30 projects, and in 1996 Mk 300 000 are shared by 29 projects. These small-scale development experimentations have initiated many kinds of innovations in teaching methods.

The year 1996 was named as the Year of Quality Improvement in Teaching. In order to lend support to the issue the University has started to elect a department or a teaching group as the top teaching unit of the year. Furthermore, the University has organised a "marketplace" for higher education pedagogy improvement (*Korkeakoulutuksen tietotori*) at the university's main library, containing a computer connection to global networks, research reports on learning and teaching in higher education, and a collection of journals. It has also offered a place for open afternoon seminars where academic teachers have given short presentations on their teaching experiments or on their higher education research.

The active role of the local student union needs also to be mentioned, because it has initiated different kinds of student evaluations on teaching and decision making. The student union has annually chosen the teacher of the year from the nominees named by subject matter student associations from the beginning of the 1990s. The student union also has organised student evaluations of teaching and learning in 1992, 1994 and 1995 (Vähäkangas, 1996).

Combining the issue of poor teaching with the issue of curriculum structures the peer group noted:

"Academic staff were said to lack teaching skills and should receive training. Secondly, course requirements had been increased, and it was possible that this led to a competitive spiral in which different universities were reluctant to not join the tendency to increase them in case their standards were thought to be low. There was a lack of co-ordination between, and guidance on, the curricula choices that students should make. These all helped to produce the prolongation of study" (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 13, recommendation 39).

According to the questionnaire addressed to heads of departments all the faculties and almost all the departments have created different kinds of evaluation systems. The most typical way of conducting an evaluation has been a structured course evaluation questionnaire. These kinds of evaluations have been used in the faculties of social sciences and natural sciences, where all the courses are evaluated by the faculty and results of the evaluations are presented to all teachers and departments concerned. The faculty of sport and health sciences has favoured semi-structured open questionnaires, whereas the faculties of education and humanities have used more varied kinds of evaluations on a voluntary basis. In short, the beginning of systematic evaluation of teaching and learning

has given a remarkable both direct and indirect impact on curriculum development.

The external visiting group paid attention to the unacceptably long study times and to problems related to the one-level degree structure.

“Finland’s average duration of study for the first degree is especially long, too long in the view of some, although the self-study report points out that the average duration at the University is shorter in most fields than the average in Finland. (...) There is discussion of the possibility of creating a bachelors degree which might reduce drop out and unacceptable prolongation of duration of study. The introduction of a new system in natural sciences, mathematics and the humanities should introduce desirable flexibility in the range of student choice” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 13, recommendations 37, 38).

The evaluation group stated that there is a need for creating Bachelors degree which might help in reducing drop-out and long study time. The need for a two-level degree structure has also been argued in different discipline-based evaluation reports (Mathematics, Natural sciences, Humanities). This recommendation has had a strong impact on the statement of a new two-level degree structure in 1994-95 in Finland. In Jyväskylä the new degree structure has inspired faculties and departments to create more possibilities for students to make individual choices in their curricula. The creation of a new two-level degree structure is a remarkable improvement compared to the previous rather inflexible “curricularized” degree structure which left very few possibilities for students’ individual choices, which had in turn, caused many problems to the students with external-orientated study motivation and surface level knowledge processing (Aittola, 1995).

Post-graduate education and doctoral training

Total evaluation has had an important strategic role in the reorganisation of doctoral training, because it paid attention to this problem. The international peers noted:

“The University plays an important role in graduate training in Finland but the need for improvement was expressed in the self-report and by a substantial number of persons we interviewed. Considerable variation was reported. Good advice was most likely to be available in persons paid by research grants. Many of those employed as assistants could focus only for a limited time on work for the dissertation. Many of those not employed by the university seemed to lack proper guidance; many faced problems in spending enough time on graduate study” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 14, recommendation 41).

After the evaluation there have been considerable investments on doctoral training and post-graduate posts. In the faculties of Humanities and Educational Sciences, defining doctoral training as one of the central problems has led to a policy where deans allocate resources to support the finishing of dissertations. In both the faculties deans have given grants (Mk 5 000 to 30 000) to potential dissertation authors. This is an example of the direct impact of total evaluation. The adoption of a new faculty policy is strongly supported both by the national higher education policy-making, which rewards doctoral degrees and also by the institutional policy where doctoral degrees are regarded as a basis for departmental bonus money.

In addition to these activities, doctoral training has been supported by national and local measures. At the national level, doctoral training has been supported by the foundation of doctoral programmes that is called the graduate school system since 1995. The graduate school system consists of 96 new graduate schools and it offers about 900 new full-time doctoral training posts for graduated students, in the Finnish universities. Jyväskylä takes part in 27 national graduate schools, being the main co-ordinator in five of them. At the local level, the system known as "rector-stipends" preceded the graduate schools. Organised at the turn of the 1990s it has offered a possibility for 70 doctoral students to concentrate on their dissertation for 1-3 years in a full-time research position. This investment in connection with better structuring and supervision of doctoral studies has clearly increased the number of doctoral degrees in the last two years. Before 1992 there used to be 25-30 doctoral degrees a year, but in 1994 the number increased to 44 and in 1995 to 59 doctoral degrees. Within five years the number of dissertations has almost doubled, and the proportional number of dissertations has raised over the average level in Finnish universities.

The evaluation group also considered the difficulties of making an academic career:

"(...) Two other measures would require action on the part of the University but also of the Government: provision of doctoral fellowships, and the establishment of an academic career position between the assistant and researcher position on the one hand and on the other the associate professor position. This would help stabilise the academic career and thus also ensure more regular supervision" (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 14, recommendation 43).

"The national structure does not provide anything like a systematic research fellowship scheme and researchers make slow progress, if ever, to tenure through a long period of assistantship. The progress to associate professorship from assistantships is too long and difficult to traverse" (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 14-15, recommendation 47).

Although Jyväskylä University has tried to improve the infrastructure of the post-graduate education, there still exist the same problems defined by the

evaluation group. These are problems with: inadequate supervision, lack of time resource to be used in doctoral research, loose structure of doctoral studies, and lack of available research posts both for post-graduate doctoral students and for post-doctoral positions. Many of these problems have, however, been polarised between different faculties and disciplines. In mathematics and natural sciences doctoral studies are generally carried out in various research groups where students work in full-time research positions and where supervision is well organised by the head of the research project. In these disciplines research projects have received extra funding from private industry as well, whereas in humanities, social and educational sciences, doctoral students used to be part-time students, who earned their wages outside the university. Furthermore, the last-mentioned students used to work alone with their research topics without special funding or extra resources. Contacts with supervisors used to be occasional and loose. These problems were rooted deeply in the institutional traditions and practices and in the disciplinary cultures of these subjects (Aittola and Aittola, 1995).

In short, according to our interviews with faculty members and TTS-documents the following measures have been initiated by rectors and faculties in order to improve the quality of doctoral training. First, faculties have created new financing models for post-graduate students (stipends, graduate schools). Second, all professors, docents, and doctoral teachers have been made responsible for the supervision of doctoral students. Third, post-graduate education has been organised into structured curricula which are tied to research priorities at the departments. Fourth, the number of courses for post-graduate students has been increased. Fifth, doctoral students have been encouraged and supported to participate in international networking.

The impact of total evaluation to the improvement of post-graduate education has been both direct and indirect. The main direct outcome was the creation of a new financing system for doctoral students in the faculties of humanities and education. Indirect and partially unexpected outcomes were, however, the consequences of defining the research priorities. This definition process combined with departmental profile sharing has directed the election of new doctoral students, supervision, and allocation of resources. This process has integrated doctoral training, teaching and research more closely to each other and it has given a possibility to make these efforts more efficient. Post-graduate education has become a common issue in faculties and departments, because its connection to funding is a generally known fact.

Changes in research

The international peers paid attention to three issues: the variation between departments, the management of research, and the position of research institutes. They wrote:

“There is considerable variation between departments. Some reach high international standards, and others, including some with less good research reputations, might be engaged in ‘useful’ and regionally applicable work. We note the self-report’s concern that undergraduate and graduate theses are not linked to departments’ research programmes. There is concern that the research institutes are too separate from the departments” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 14, recommendation 46).

“Good management of research includes encouragement to plan work well, for researchers to receive supportive but rigorous critique and to apply to the ultimate audience so that publication is well targeted. The outcome rewards system can succeed only if creative normative modelling of the research progresses suitable for individual subject areas is undertaken by research leaders” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 15, recommendation 48).

Internationalisation of research has been one of the main areas of development at Jyväskylä University before and after the total evaluation. The main importance of the total evaluation was that it emphasized the issue of internationalisation of research results and co-operation. After the total evaluation departments and faculties have made efforts to increase the number of international referee-publications. The number of articles published through the referee-system has increased by 277 per cent in the last five years. Before the 1990s it was not considered important to publish in foreign languages, but today this opinion has changed also in the more “national disciplines” such as humanities, social and educational sciences. The academic community is not, however, necessarily excited about this new trend. A doctor interviewed was rather cynical when she said that “I got high points (in the faculty of social sciences) when I published an article in English in a highly esteemed referee journal. I felt I was fooled to publish in that journal, because it has only about 350 subscribers! I never write in Finnish for so few readers”.

Jyväskylä University also participates in the competition of “top-units” in research, where the rules are set by the Ministry of Education. The rector and central administration have also started to allocate resources from undergraduate teaching and basic services to support new temporarily changeable development projects. These reforms are worth noticing, because academic research in Finnish universities has traditionally been free from any kind of external steering and mostly directed by academic curiosity. The definition of research priorities and the creation of research profiles in all the departments have influenced this purely academic element.

The external evaluation group has also stated that the existing research institutes (The Institute for Educational Research, Language Centre for Finnish Universities, Research Centre for Environmental Sciences) are too separate from the disciplinary departments.

“There is concern that the research institutes are too separate from the departments. Each of these has its own identity and networks, but there would surely be mutual benefit if full time researchers undertook some teaching and had more contact with the more central academic community in the departments” (Kogan *et al.*, 1993, 14, recommendation 46).

After the total evaluation various efforts have been made to increase the integration between research institutes and departments. For example, the former Language Centre for the Finnish Universities has been modified into the Centre for Applied Linguistics and it has become more closely tied with the faculty of humanities.

Changes in the financing and allocating research resources have been exceptional, because after the total evaluation the central administration has adopted a more active role. The central administration and the rector have started to function as instruments for innovative research policy which is guided by the new research priorities and new temporarily changeable development projects. The faculty secretaries and the planning director told us in the interviews that the rector and the central administration have started to take (5-10 per cent) off from the ordinary financing of all faculties and departments and to allocate these resources to new development projects which are seen as institutionally important. This enables the rector to increase more flexible steering of resources to new multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research areas. However, it has also caused some reductions in the departmental expenditure (part-time lecturers, travel, material infrastructure) causing cutbacks in undergraduate education and teaching.

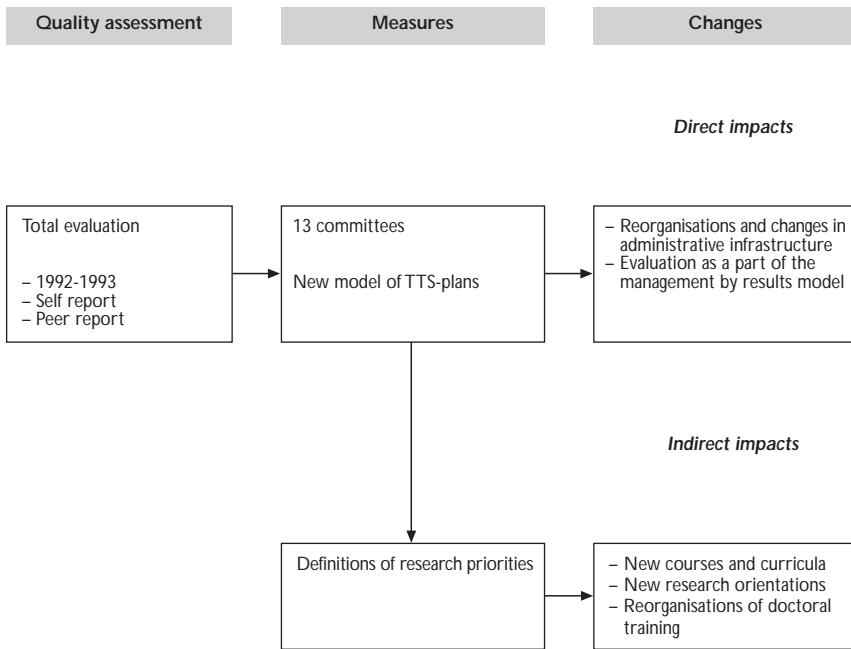
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The impact of the total evaluation on the structures and cultural changes in Jyväskylä University are interwoven in many ways. As to decision-making and academic activities (teaching and research), most of these outcomes have been indirect, because changes normally are influenced or even caused by external social factors (like higher education budget cuts). Therefore, our theoretical as well as practical aim has been to find the impact mechanism of total evaluation.

Direct and indirect impacts

Our main aim has been to examine the impact total evaluation has had in Jyväskylä University. We have examined the impacts through the distinction of direct and indirect impacts. With the help of this distinction we wish to address the question: What is the relation between total evaluation and the changes that

◆ Figure 2. *Impacts of quality assessment at a university*



Source: Authors.

have taken place, when we know that there are many external factors that have influenced the changes in the University? As the majority of the departmental heads told us, there hardly exists a direct relationship between the total evaluation and changes in the basic units. In the course of the study we needed to revise our basic model by taking into account the empirical evidence. In order to make the linear relationships more visible we divided the category of impacts into measures taken and changes occurred, even though in the real world they are interconnected with each other (Figure 2).

In our model direct changes can be described as primary measures caused by the total evaluation. Indirect impacts, in turn, can be described as secondary measures caused by primary measures. The main differences between direct and indirect impacts can be defined as follows:

Measures

- Direct measures were initiated by the university central administration. They consisted of nominations of committees and reform of the university planning system (TTS-plan).
- Direct impacts took place at the institutional level.
- Indirect measures consisted of actions implemented by basic units. These consisted mainly of the definitions of research priority areas.
- Indirect impacts took place at the basic unit level (departments and faculties).

Changes

- Direct changes caused by the total evaluation have consisted of reorganisations of departments (library and university computer centre) suggested by committees. They have also consisted of implementation of a new evaluative planning cycle (TTS-plan) that has been connected to the management by results-system taken into use after the total evaluation.
- Indirect changes have taken place at the academic basic units. The changes were mainly related to the contents of academic work: structural changes of curricula have changed the contents of teaching. Definitions of research priorities have influenced the contents of academic research. There have been also changes in doctoral training.

The most important differences between the categories of direct and indirect changes are the different actors. Normally the leaders and initiators of the reforms are interested in causing direct – visible and fast – changes that can be counted and mentioned in the administrative reports. The indirect changes, however, are less visible and they take place at the basic units. In the case of Jyväskylä University these indirect – invisible and slow – changes were the changes that have taken place in the contents of academic work in the basic units.

In the practices of departments the secondary measure (definitions of research priorities) has been the most important exclusive measure that has caused the majority of the changes in the basic units. The definitions of research priorities were the most important unintended outcome of the total evaluation, even though it was well in line with the main aims and goals of the total evaluation. The changes caused by the definitions of research priorities have been, in turn, the most important unexpected outcome of the total evaluation.

In short, the impacts of the total evaluation at the basic units have, first, gone through the definitions of the new research priorities. These have, in turn, caused improvements in education and research. Secondly, the impacts have gone through the re-allocation of financial resources to new development projects, and

thirdly, they have gone through the increased participation in international research programmes and publishing in foreign languages.

The analysis of the relationship between direct and indirect impact addresses the question of cultural change. Namely, it is a question of how to describe and analyse the conceptual change (Westerheijden, 1996) that has changed the understanding of what a university is. In order to reflect on this abstract difference we will return to the question presented at the beginning of this article: What are the new social formations that have been promoted by the total evaluation?

It seems that new social groupings of academics promoted by the total evaluation are related to new curricula structures, new forms of supervising and financing doctoral students, changes in the departmental research priorities, and to departmental merger operations. All these new social forms of academics were promoted by the total evaluation that helped to define and justify the need for reforms. The dynamics of reform has not, however, been guided only by objective evaluations of high quality, but also by political calculations to secure resources in the difficult economic situation. Therefore, the emerging new culture is rooted in competition, political calculations, and in a strategic rhetorical game. Robert Birnbaum (1988) has described this kind of model as the political model of a university. Therefore, it seems that the total evaluation has not only promoted a reflective and evaluative culture but also supported a political culture rooted in the academic power games.

The butterfly effect?

Total evaluation was started at Jyväskylä University as a pilot project before the time of budget cuts in the Finnish higher education. The national context was favourable for this kind of innovation and evidently Jyväskylä University profited from being a pilot university. The benefits were materialised as bonus money in the consultations with the Ministry of Education. Jyväskylä University also received positive feedback from the media, because the total evaluation was noted both locally and nationally. At the institutional level the total evaluation was an obvious success.

After the total evaluation, the restructuring of TTS-plans at the different hierarchical levels of the University has had important consequences. All planning documents are now written in an evaluative and even innovative style. New plans contain very detailed descriptions of development activities, statistics on various academic outputs and information on research priority areas. However, as one of the faculty secretaries told us in an interview: "The new TTS-formula has mixed facts and fiction and created new kind of planning rhetoric. In fact, it is very difficult to find out what is actually done and what is just a plan."

The planning system of the University (and especially the central administration) have greatly profited from the total evaluation, because it showed in detail what was going on in the University and helped to create new databases which promote administrative planning and institutional decision making. From the perspective of central administration it is easy to see the causal relationship between the total evaluation and actions taken. The total evaluation has been a useful instrument for the central administration.

The total evaluation has also promoted new expectations for an efficient university administration. It even seems that the ideal type of “good administration” has changed during and after the total evaluation. Before the 1990s the aim of “good administration” was to maintain the *status quo*: everything should follow the old routines, whereas the “new” mode of administration stresses the ability to change. The old administrative ideal stressed steering based on the obedience of laws and statutes, whereas the new administration is more interested in steering departments through money allocations. The old administration mode was strongly hierarchical, whereas the new ideal stresses flexible, reactive and dynamic elements. It also is willing to start new projects and carry out faster development projects.

Naturally, the description of these ideal types does not necessarily indicate that radical changes have taken place in the daily routines. However, being faithful to the Weberian idea of ideal types (Sadri, 1994) it means that the aims of good administration have changed towards a more reflective and flexible ideal. The new mode also has meant the increase of uncertainty and unpredictability in the daily work. It is difficult to see how these elements of risk society will be solved by the administrators that are trained for a routine-like and slowly changing world. It seems that there are evident contradictions inside the central administration between the “old” and “new” modes of administration.

The total evaluation process was useful for the faculties as well. According to the interviews of the faculty personnel, the total evaluation helped to discuss and define functional problems in an open situation that promoted developmental orientation in the faculties. Therefore, the emergence of focused discussion on functional problems is in itself a positive impact of the total evaluation. Furthermore, the realisation of problems also has promoted improvement activities at the faculty level. Perhaps the most obvious impact of the total evaluation process has been the realisation of the importance of quality improvement in teaching and learning. The fact that these problems were mentioned in the evaluation report and authorised by the external examiners emphasized the need for development.

The total evaluation strongly supported the process of defining the research priorities and creating new research profiles for the departments. In this way the total evaluation has to some extent changed the understanding of research in the

basic units. Strongly supported by economic difficulties there also has emerged a need to create new funding sources for research. For these reasons the aims of research and teaching seem to be more practical and promotional than before the 1990s (Wernick, 1991). Furthermore, research priorities have created criteria for the election of new doctoral students to certain research fields. Important also is the change in the attitudes towards doctoral training. The establishment of graduate schools has increased the number of supervisors at the departments. Professors no longer have the monopoly of supervising post-graduate students, because doctors (normally senior assistants and lecturers) have been given more responsibility.

The process of curricula reforms has, on the one hand, created new opportunities for integrating research and teaching, but on the other hand, it has narrowed down the supply of choices in curricula and courses. It is, however, important that the development of one's teaching is a more socially accepted activity than it was ten years ago (Välimaa, 1994).

The total evaluation focused attention on functional problems at Jyväskylä University. Rhetorically, the problems of the University were defined as functional problems and not as academic or scientific problems. This kind of managerialistic definition of the university has served the administrative planning system in two ways. First, it has helped to make the academic community committed to solving functional problems. Secondly, it has provided a document that has been used after the total evaluation in the development of the University. Thus the total evaluation has supported the understanding of Jyväskylä University as a local production unit of academic degrees, whereas the scholarly dimension that combines academic communities into global academic communities of scholars is weakening (Gibbons *et al.*, 1994).

It seems that the total evaluation has had the "flight of the butterfly" effect at Jyväskylä University. Part of the significance of the total evaluation was brought about by good timing: it took place in an unstable social situation where small changes may have grave consequences. The method of self-evaluation introduced during the total evaluation initiated processes that promoted new evaluative practices at Jyväskylä University. In this sense total evaluation can be compared to the classic example taken from chaos mathematics according to which the flight of the butterfly in a rain forest causes a storm in Japan a week later. Unstable social conditions were created by the economic depression in Finland and the budget cuts in the Finnish higher education (Välimaa, 1994*b*). In the survival of the fittest game, the academic basic units were also eager to adopt new procedures which would not have been possible in a very stable social situation.

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NEGOTIATION OVER UNIVERSITY TEACHING AWARDS: THE EVALUATION OF UNDERGRADUATE-GRADUATE AND QUANTITY-QUALITY INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

In 1993, the State University System (SUS) of Florida, at the behest of the State legislature, embarked on an ambitious state-mandated teaching evaluation program targeted on teaching performance. The purpose of the Teaching Incentive Program (TIP) was to reward every year a large number of faculty in the SUS for undergraduate teaching and raise their salaries. The evaluation was based on the quantity of instruction. That is, the number of students and instruction hours generated by the faculty. Professional schools in the SUS entered negotiation with their universities in an effort to modify the TIP to accommodate graduate teaching and quality of instruction. The universities, in turn, tried to negotiate these items with the Board of Regents (BOR) of the SUS and the Florida legislature.

After years of negotiations, the TIP has remained an undergraduate- and quantity-based program and has changed only incrementally to accommodate the graduate- and quality-oriented interests. The paper highlights the issues of undergraduate versus graduate teaching and quantity versus quality criteria in teaching evaluation. It illustrates that the numbers of students and instruction hours continue to dictate the policies of American state universities in the 1990s.

Teaching, research, and service evaluations are the three components of all major personnel decisions at the university – that is, tenure, promotion, renewal, and merit decisions. Because all three are factored into each personnel decision, the decision does not necessarily indicate whether the evaluation of any one component has been positive or negative. The only exception are special awards that cover one component only, such as Distinguished Teacher/Researcher of the Year Award.

In 1993, the State University System (SUS) of Florida, at the behest of the State legislature, embarked on an ambitious state – mandated teaching evaluation program targeted on teaching performance only. The purpose of the Teaching Incentive Program (TIP) was to reward every year a large number of faculty in the SUS for *undergraduate teaching* and raise their salaries. The individual reward was an additional \$5 000 into the winning faculty member's salary base for the rest of the employment period in the SUS. This was a clear departure from typical teaching awards which routinely provide a one time lump sum for a faculty member. The program was competitive because awards were granted to a limited number of faculty in every college and department at each of the nine universities in the system.

Underlying the Florida TIP was the trend of growing importance of *undergraduate teaching* in American higher education. In the 1990s, American state and private universities offered more undergraduate courses, enlarged the number of students in their undergraduate classes, and began to graduate them in shorter time periods. State universities, in particular, were instructed by their legislatures to fill out such quota targets. As a result, faculty were teaching more undergraduate courses and larger classes. The legislatures also requested a tighter monitoring of faculty teaching which forced the universities to employ more tangible indicators of teaching evaluation in personnel decisions.

The Florida TIP lent support to this new undergraduate trend through the provision of both a monetary reward to teaching and a symbolic visibility to the growing importance of this activity. At the same time, in Florida and other states, the new emphasis on teaching was propelled by the economy. The cost of higher education was rising while state universities resources were shrinking. State universities suffered severe budget cuts, significant portions of their funds were reallocated to other areas such as prison construction in Florida and crime prevention in California. The universities were forced to transact budgets from research to teaching activities. They had to increase their tuition fees and private funding.

In Florida, the legislature demanded more accountability of faculty teaching in order to satisfy the tax and tuition-payers and to respond to the private sector which occasionally criticised the university as inefficient. The TIP was designed to meet these concerns and to promote teaching as a rewarding activity to faculty

and students. The original legislative intent for the program was to reward faculty for substantial amount of *undergraduate teaching*. Moreover, the growing demand for accountability and tangible indicators of evaluation dictated the nature of the TIP. The program was based on the *quantity of instruction* of faculty. That is, the main evaluation criteria employed were the number of: Student Credit Hours (SCHs), Instruction Contact Hours (ICHs), and different courses generated by the faculty member. These criteria determined the eligibility of faculty members for the award.

Evaluation criteria that determine the *quality of instruction* were applied to eligible faculty only and were thus relegated to a secondary level of importance. This was a departure from the traditional practice in universities which is based primarily on quality criteria. Criteria employed to evaluate the *quality of instruction* have included: student evaluation, student advisement, peer evaluation, peer assistance (to other faculty to improve their teaching), course syllabus, type of course assignment (exam, paper, etc.), innovative teaching technique, and participation in a teaching conference or workshop.¹

The legislative mandate of the TIP to reward both *undergraduate teaching* and *quantity of instruction* posed major difficulties to *professional schools* in the SUS which were virtually excluded from the program. *Professional schools* are colleges with significant proportions of graduate students in disciplines such as business, education, engineering, public administration, public policy, and urban planning. These schools emphasize *graduate teaching* along with faculty supervised research-oriented courses (e.g. independent study, internship, thesis, and dissertation) that generate a relatively small *quantity of instruction*.

Professional schools in the SUS entered negotiation with their universities in an effort to modify the TIP to accommodate *graduate teaching* and *quality of instruction*. The universities, in turn, tried to negotiate these items with the Board of Regents (BOR) of the SUS and the Florida legislature. The dynamics of the negotiation, particularly that within the universities, is the subject of this paper. The paper also draws on the dynamics within one university in the SUS-Florida Atlantic University (FAU). The FAU experience might be generalised, albeit with caution, to other universities in the system.

The paper highlights the issues of undergraduate versus graduate teaching and quantity versus quality criteria in teaching evaluation. It shows that after years of intra- and inter-negotiations – that is, within the universities, and among the universities, the BOR, and the Florida legislature – the thrust of the program has not changed. The TIP has remained an undergraduate- and quantity-based program and has changed only incrementally to accommodate the graduate and quality interests.

The negotiation process over the TIP began in 1993, the first year of the program. The focus on *undergraduate teaching* and *quantity of instruction* remained intact that year with the exception of one minor change. This is described in the first section of the paper. The negotiation process continued well into 1994, the second year of the program. The program was re-authorized by the legislature with a significant incremental change in favour of *graduate teaching* and *quality of instruction*. This change is described in the second section of the paper. Only a minor change was made in the TIP during 1995 and 1996. This change is discussed in the conclusion section.

THE TIP 1993 FOCUS: UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING AND QUANTITY OF INSTRUCTION

Guided by the Florida legislature's statute, the BOR allocated to each university in the SUS a specific number of awards in the first year of the TIP. The number was based on the undergraduate enrolment of the university. Subsequent to the legislation, the BOR also handed down to the universities a set of guidelines for the actual implementation. Faculty were to be evaluated on the basis of their substantial contribution to undergraduate teaching over the previous three years. Only undergraduate courses taught during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) were considered for calculation of the SCHs. Eligible faculty were required to have taught a minimum of five courses during each of the three previous academic years.²

Moreover, universities were strongly discouraged by the BOR from considering any faculty who taught graduate courses as part of that minimum five course load. This requirement was derived out of the statute emphasizing undergraduate teaching and explicitly excluding graduate teaching.

Professional schools in the SUS entered negotiation with their universities just before the actual implementation began in the universities in fall 1993. The negotiation was difficult because the universities themselves were constrained by the state-mandated quantity of instruction criteria handed down by the legislature. The professional schools tried to reduce the importance of the number of SCHs and ICHs as the main basis to reward faculty. They argued for more emphasis on quality of instruction criteria and on the additional effort invested in graduate teaching in order to meet these criteria.

Professional schools gained modest results in their negotiation with the universities. They were permitted to consider for the TIP faculty who taught one graduate course per year for each of the three years under consideration (direct

independent study, internship, thesis, and dissertation supervision were excluded). The enrolment in graduate courses, however, did not count in calculating the faculty member's SCHs. Faculty who taught more than one graduate course per year but still generated large numbers of undergraduate SCHs, were automatically disqualified.³

The BOR and the universities closely scrutinised that TIP awards were given only to eligible faculty, and particularly to those who generated significant numbers of undergraduate SCHs and ICHs. Each university was required to develop a plan of distribution of its allotted awards across colleges, and a plan for assessing individual applicants. The university then required each college to develop a plan for application and selection. The college plans were incorporated into the university plan, which had to be sent to the BOR for approval. University plans were also reviewed by members of the legislative staff on behalf of the legislature.

At FAU, the university developed a plan which apportioned its allocation of awards among its colleges on the basis of undergraduate SCHs. Colleges were also provided with a list of eligible faculty along with the SCHs generated for each of the three previous years. Colleges were instructed to develop an internal process for application and selection of nominees from the eligible list.

The university also required that the review of application portfolios starts in each college with a faculty committee making recommendations to the dean. The dean then made recommendations to the campus vice-president (FAU is a multi-campus university) who transmitted all campus applications to the university provost (chief academic officer). The provost proposed a tentative list of awardees to the president. The final university list of awardees and their application portfolios were forwarded by the president to the BOR approval and were made available to legislative staff for review. Once that list was approved, awardees were notified by the president and the necessary accounting measures were taken to incorporate the additional \$5 000 into each salary base.⁴

Large numbers of FAU faculty were ineligible for consideration in 1993, especially those teaching in graduate programs housed in professional schools. Even faculty who taught only two graduate courses in at least one of the three previous years, and had the bulk of their teaching in undergraduate programs, were automatically disqualified from consideration. The prime examples of ineligibility were the entire faculty of the College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA), and faculty of graduate programs in the Colleges of Education and Engineering. These faculty did not participate in the development of the university TIP plan and waited on the margins hoping that the legislature would discontinue or drastically change the program in the next year.

THE TIP 1994 INCREMENTAL CHANGE: GRADUATE TEACHING AND QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION

Professional schools in the SUS continued to negotiate with their universities to modify the TIP in the second year of the program. The state legislature then removed the prohibition on graduate teaching. Faculty who had taught more than one graduate course were not automatically disqualified. Faculty with large graduate teaching loads, however, were still not competitive because their courses tended to generate small numbers of SCHs. Another change in the law was that up to five per cent of each university's awards could be given to faculty who taught solely at the graduate level.

The three academic years time frame for evaluation was maintained. But SCHs generated in any four semesters (fall/spring) in the previous three years could be considered. This rule opened the door for faculty who had been on sabbatical or leave as well as faculty who were released from teaching to serve in administrative capacities. The rule was qualified, however, indicating that the faculty member had to generate more than the college/department median of SCHs for any four of the previous six semesters. Graduate SCHs were included in this calculation with the exception of credits for direct independent study, internship, thesis, and dissertation supervision.⁵

These changes in the 1994 legislation stimulated interest in the TIP among faculty in professional schools because their applications were no longer deemed futile. They awaited their universities' internal plans to allocate the TIP awards across the colleges. The plans were to be forwarded to the BOR for final approval.

At FAU, the university developed once again a plan which apportioned the allocation of awards among its colleges on the basis of undergraduate SCHs. Professional schools argued against this blunt allocation. They asked for consideration by discipline so that faculty in relatively small professional disciplines would be treated fairly. They demanded an emphasis on graduate programs, especially those with doctoral degrees. Professional schools also requested consideration by the local campus. FAU has a number of campuses, only the main one offers lower division courses, and faculty assigned to that campus thus generated the bulk of undergraduate SCHs.⁶

Underlying all these arguments was the fundamental claim that despite the changes in favour of professional schools, graduate faculty were still unfairly disadvantaged in the competition over the quantity of instruction due to circumstances beyond their control. FAU, therefore, should ameliorate at least some of the unfairness involved in the SUS-wide TIP. Not less important, faculty should not be penalised for their emphasis on quality of instruction which always super-

seded its “quantity” counterpart in the graduate classroom. These arguments and claims had little impact over the university’s action.

The demand to set aside five per cent of the awards for a separate FAU-wide graduate competition was also rejected. Had it been accepted, faculty engaged primarily in graduate teaching had at least some equal opportunity to compete in their schools and then in the FAU-wide graduate TIP. The university, however, considered its allocation to graduate teaching to be covered by allowing faculty from professional schools (who were automatically ineligible in 1993) to compete in 1994.

A minor change in 1994 was that FAU faculty in graduate programs in the Colleges of Engineering and Education were eligible for competition. But the allocation of awards to these two colleges was not increased in 1994. A more important change was that the CUPA was allocated awards and entered the TIP for the first time. Despite the small size of this professional school, the principle inclusion of a virtually graduate programs unit was a departure from past practice.

CONCLUSION

After a minor change in 1993, there was a significant incremental change in the 1994 TIP in favour of graduate teaching and quality of instruction. Only minor incremental changes were made in legislation in 1995 and 1996.⁷ Similarly, a number of minor incremental changes, within their administrative discretion, were made by the universities in 1995 and 1996.⁸ For example, in 1996 faculty had to generate more than the college/department median of SCHs for the last six semesters (total sum), instead of any four of the previous six semesters. In addition, faculty with somewhat lower numbers of SCHs became more competitive as their counterparts with higher quantities had been already awarded.

Nonetheless, since its inception in 1993 the focus of the TIP has been on undergraduate teaching and quantity of instruction. Professional schools with emphasis on graduate teaching had a limited influence on the negotiation within their universities. The universities, in turn, have produced only an incremental change of policy in the BOR and the Florida legislature.

Professional schools have learned that their universities were caught once again in the “undergraduate teaching policy mode” of the state legislature. They learned that this policy mode will continue to dictate higher faculty teaching loads and dwindling state support for research in the universities.⁹ They learned that political power and budget in American universities in the 1990s will continue to be determined by numbers of students and credits.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of quantitative and qualitative evaluation criteria, see Chen (1990) and Rossi and Freeman (1985). For an earlier version on the distinction between quantity and quality of instruction in the TIP, see Ben-Zadok and Carter (1995).
2. See Florida Statute (1993).
3. See, for example, Florida Atlantic University (1993).
4. See Florida Atlantic University (1993).
5. See Florida Statute (1994).
6. See Florida Atlantic University (1994). See also United Faculty of Florida (1994).
7. See Florida Statute (1995) and Florida Statute (1996).
8. See, for example, Florida Atlantic University (1995)(1996).
9. For more on these trends, see for example, US News and World Report (1996).

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PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: EXPERIENCES FROM NEW ZEALAND TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses performance measurement in tertiary educational institutions. The literature relating to performance measurement is briefly reviewed. The study used an activity based management approach, in which staff in registries, libraries and an academic department identified appropriate measures of performance for mechanistic activities. However, even measures identified by staff themselves were still subject to some criticism.

For some activities, particularly at senior staffing levels, mechanistic measure are inappropriate and not practicable. Performance of these activities can best be evaluated by informal feedback from a variety of sources, including peers, students, other departments and other institutions. Interviewees noted that any performance measures used in institutions should be linked to a formal performance appraisal system.

INTRODUCTION

Publicly funded educational institutions have been the subject of scrutiny internationally for the last several years. Governments have sought to reduce financial input and to gain an assessment of how well that input has been utilised. This has led to a focus on the use of performance indicators in higher education. In Australia, for example, a national government policy lead to "the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee establish[ing] a working party to identify a range of performance indicators" (Linke, 1992, p. 195). Similarly, in the United Kingdom,

“the introduction of performance indicators into higher education (...) involv[ed] the government, the committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (...) and the then University Grants Committee” (Cave *et al.*, 1991, p. 9; see also Johnes and Taylor, 1990, chapter 3).

The literature concerning performance indicators in higher education is extensive, but most focuses on academic departments. Measures have been suggested to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of departments’ teaching, research and administration (see, for example, Cave *et al.*, 1991; Johnes and Taylor, 1990). However there is scant literature available regarding suitable measures for assessing the performance of staff in other functions within the university. Typically, non-academic staff comprise more than half of total staff employed.¹

To fill this void, and to add further to the literature on academic performance measurement, an activity based management study was carried out in five New Zealand institutions (three universities, one college of education and one poly-technic). The main activities or work done in an academic department, the registry and library in these institutions were identified.² For some of these activities, staff offered mechanistic performance measures. However, a significant number of interviewees felt that important activities could not be measured mechanistically or formally.

This paper begins with a theoretical discussion concerning the use of performance indicators in tertiary institutions. After detailing the research method, the experiences of the interviewees are described. Tables are provided of performance indicators for use by academic departments, registries and libraries in tertiary institutions. These performance indicators were suggested by staff themselves, and thus should provide acceptable and valid indicators of the work that is performed.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – GENERAL DESCRIPTION

“Performance indicators currently attract considerable interest. Over the last decade few subjects relating to higher education have received more attention in the debate internationally” (Spee and Bormans, 1992, p. 139).

Performance indicators attempt to measure numerically efficiency and effectiveness (Spee and Bormans, 1992). “Their underlying purpose (...) is to serve as a guide in making decisions on ways in which organisational performance might be improved” (Linke, 1992, p. 195). Such measurements attempt to assess both quantitative and qualitative aspects of performance, and may be derived in different ways (Cuenin, 1987).

The use of performance indicators in tertiary institutions has been criticised (Pollitt, 1990). These criticisms arise from the inherent complexity of the institutions, necessitating the use of surrogate measures (Kells, 1990). Also, Linke (1992, p. 196) argues that performance indicators should reflect the “true purpose of higher education”.

A further criticism focuses on the confusion over definition of measures. An institution’s performance can be measured from many perspectives: internal, external or responding to government goals or policies (Kells, 1990, 1992; Cuenin, 1987; McDaniel, 1996). Sizer (1992, p. 160) notes the importance of making this distinction:

“In order to lessen tensions that may arise (...) it is a prerequisite to make a distinction between the information requirements of different levels of management (faculty, institution, and national), and accept that not all management statistics in the national database should be available to institutions and within institutions”.

Ball and Halwachi (1987, p. 395) make a similar point strongly:

“It will be important to distinguish between performance indicators which relate to Outcome Goals and hence measure how effectively the institution meets the needs of society and those relating to Process Goals which indicate how well the institution is functioning internally.”

It is widely recognised that internal performance measures should ideally be developed from within the institutions concerned, by those performing the activities (Kells, 1990; Rutherford, 1987; Hughes and Sohler, 1992). Stolte-Heiskanen (1992, p. 183) states, “the views of the ‘insiders’ whose performance (...) is being evaluated” should be used. Sizer (1992, p. 161) believes “quality assurance systems informed by agreed performance indicators are best developed by the institutions if their ownership is to be secured”. If performance measurement is to be effective, formal appraisal systems are necessary (Rutherford, 1987).

For these reasons, this research has taken an activity based approach for performance measurement determination, focusing on internal performance indicators.

“Activity Management examines an organisation’s activities, who does them, why they are done, and whether they are essential to the strategic objectives of the organisation (...) [Then] Performance measures are designed to identify the flow of value through the system” (Johnson *et al.*, 1989, p. 63).

In using this approach we have sought to gain a better understanding of what people do and to establish which measures employees believe best reflect what they do. We also sought to establish whether there were any activities which have no readily identifiable output and hence should not be measured.

METHOD

The researchers used on-site interviewing as the research technique. Interviewing is a common form of activity analysis and has been used by other researchers (see, for example, Moravec and Yoemans, 1992).

“Activity analysis is accomplished by means of interviews, questionnaires, observation, and review of physical records of work” (Raffish and Turney, 1991, p. 57).

A total of 119 interviews were conducted at the five institutions. Two interviewers were present in all cases: one asked the questions while the other took notes. The transcripts were reviewed by all members of the team, and, where requested, a copy was provided to the interviewee. Job descriptions, where they existed, were examined. In writing the reports, all three team members were present, safeguarding against the views of any single interviewee or interviewer dominating the analysis. Quotes given are representative of the significant views expressed by the interviewees.

The interviewees were selected on the basis of their position, to ensure a representative coverage of all activities. Twenty per cent of the interviewees were from a business-related academic department. Twenty-five per cent of interviewees were library staff, and fifty-five per cent were registry staff. These proportions were relatively consistent over all sites.

The questions were supplied to the interviewees prior to the interviews to allow preparation. Each person was asked:

- What are the main tasks you do?
- What percentage of your time do you spend on each task?
- Why do you do these tasks?
- Thinking of the tasks that you have listed, how do you satisfy yourself that you are getting the job done?
- What changes would you like to make to make your job easier/more efficient?

This paper now focuses on the responses to the fourth question.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – ACADEMIC

A considerable amount of research has been done identifying possible performance measures for teaching and research activities in academic departments. Examples of these are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. **Performance indicators for teaching and research****Teaching Indicators**

Staff workloads (teaching contact hours)
 External reviews of courses, teaching methods, examination papers
 Class distribution of degrees awarded
 Non-completion rates
 Success rate of Masters and Ph.D. Students
 Student assessment of teaching methods and staff
 First destinations of new graduates
 Careers of graduates five years after graduation

Research Indicators

Publications (per capita)
 Citations (per capita)
 Research income (as % of total income)
 Research grants (per capita)
 Peer group assessment of research output

Source: Adapted from Taylor, 1987, Table 1, p. 29.

However, as Rutherford (1987) notes, “most of the interviewees were of the opinion that *all* areas of their work (that is, teaching, research and administration) should be included in any system of appraisal” (Rutherford, 1987, p. 96, emphasis added). This research has taken that approach. Table 2 lists mechanistic measures for those activities where mechanistic measures are appropriate. It should be noted that the list includes administrative responsibilities which, it was found, are a significant part of the activities of an academic department.

Although interviewees themselves have suggested that the above measures are appropriate, they nevertheless expressed some reservations. For example, despite Ramsden’s (1991, p. 129) findings that student questionnaires offer “a reliable, verifiable and useful means of determining the perceived teaching quality” of courses and academic units, staff were not uncritical of formal student surveys:

“Students evaluate every course, every semester. Unless a course has changed, the results tend to be the same every semester. We probably don’t need to do them so often. Also, new courses and new techniques tend to score lower, because students like certainty and structure, and don’t like change.”³

“We are trying to develop ways of measuring performance. We don’t do it well. You need to judge performance based on the product, *i.e.* how the students are doing. I suggest that we need to ask students after they have been out of the university for two years, ‘Are you satisfied with the education you received?’”

Table 2. **Academic department measurable activities with suggested performance measures**

Activity	Performance measures
Teaching	Peer review (internal/external) Formal student surveys Achieving goals set in professional review meetings
Research	Meeting target set Number of publications Number of conference proceedings Ph.D. progress reports
Departmental administration/financial management	Adherence to budget targets
Administration – staff	Staff turnover Number of satisfied staff
Preparation of staff professional review reports	Meeting the deadline with correct information
Solving staff and student technical problems	Achieving goals set in professional review meetings
Staff higher education	Examination results
Typing	Number of reworks Number of errors
Administration – student	Student evaluations
Student enquiries/complaints	Number of student complaints Number of satisfied students
Enrolments	Number of errors in enrolments Posting student letters by due date
Processing exam results	Meet all deadlines accurately
Responding to requests for new courses	Achieve targeted EFTSs
Technical support	Number of technical faults
Community relations	Increase in student numbers against target set
Public relations	Money from fundraising.

Source: Authors.

Staff also believe that feedback is only as useful as the questions asked. At one institution, a university, a professional advisory unit prepares the survey. It was agreed that it was better to get professionals to design the questionnaires, yet staff should have input as well. At institutions, such as colleges of education

and polytechnics, where research is a minor activity, teaching performance is assessed through the use of external moderators. External peer review of examinations and course content does help to establish and maintain quality in teaching. Linke (1992, p. 197) supports this view of multiple measures of performance for teaching and research: "Notwithstanding the desire for relevance of individual indicators, in reality the complexity of teaching and research makes it impossible for any single measure to provide a valid and comprehensive assessment of either characteristic". However, this technique is not used in universities.

Further, consider the measure "staff turnover" for assessing the activity "administration – staff". This measure may not be acceptable to all institutions.

"This institution is very generous in subsidising fees and giving time off for staff to get further education but often once people have obtained a higher degree they leave because the only possible avenue for staff growth is in administration here College and there is not enough room for growth."

The rate of staff turnover may therefore not reflect any dissatisfaction with staff administration. This example also illustrates the difficulty of making institutional comparisons.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – REGISTRY

"It is interesting to note that while there is currently much anguish about the special nature of academic work and the sensitivity which must be employed when designing performance management schemes for academic staff, little is written about the needs of general staff in universities" (Hughes and Sohler, 1992, p. 43).

This research seeks to fill that void. Registry staff were readily able to offer mechanistic measures for some activities, as shown in Table 3.

Again, staff warned against uncritical acceptance of such measures. For example, when monitoring printery management by the measure "achieving pre-determined turn-around times", this measure should be used with caution:

"For extramural material the target is one month. We usually do it within two weeks. There can be delays but these are usually caused by incompleteness or errors in the material provided. This is beyond Printery's control."

Likewise, for the activity "enrolments" one could use the number of complaints to measure performance, but "some users may be dissatisfied but might not complain".

Table 3. **Registry measurable activities with suggested performance measures**

Activity	Performance measures
Overall institution performance	Within budget
Sectional performance	Within budget Formal student/customer surveys
Managing self-funding activities	Meet revenue targets Achieving target additional enrolments in regular courses
Quality management	External audit
Preparation of statement of objectives	Completion by due date Relative success at getting funding compared with other institutions
Information systems trouble shooting	Problem fixed
Preparing reports	Meeting due date Accuracy of report Continuously improve the cut off date for provision of information
Payroll	Correct payment by due date
General performance	Internal and external customer satisfaction
Managing printery	Absence of complaints Achieving predetermined turn around times Number of outages of paper Amount of paper wasted
Printing	Number of reworks
Managing staff	Low staff turnover Adherence to relevant legislation and University policy Number of staff complaints Successful conflict resolution
Enrolments	Number of errors in enrolments Number of complaints Time taken to enroll per student
Answering enquiries on courses and cross credits	Number of complaints Number of people NOT returning with same problem
New course appraisal	Course acceptance
Organising graduation	Meeting all deadlines Everybody that wants a seat gets one
Preparation of calendar	Meeting expected production deadline Keeping within budget
Processing student loans and allowances	Student access to funds within 7 days Number of errors in student loan applications

Table 3. **Registry measurable activities with suggested performance measures** (cont.)

Activity	Performance measures
Buildings maintenance, cleaning, custodial	Number of breakdowns in buildings Building and maintenance problems acted on within target time \$/EFTS; \$/m ²
Capital projects	Within budget
Meeting requirements of relevant legislation	Number of checks completed on time
Client liaison/external meetings/conferences	Increase in enrolments in targeted area
Preparation for meetings	Meeting deadlines
Managing research fund	Growth in income Total research income vs total research output
Supervision of academic research and development	Prepare reports by due dates
Planning	Meeting agreed planning cycle deadlines Reaching milestones and finishing projects
Design and review of quality assurance systems	Systems accepted and operating
Managing student accommodation	Avoidance of unscheduled fee rises

Source: Authors.

Finally for the activity “managing research funds” a mechanistic measure of “total research income versus total research output” was suggested, but quantity of output may not necessarily mean quality:

“We have a new system for measuring research output. Eighteen categories of research output are recorded, *e.g.* publications, patents, software development, addresses, etc., but there is no quality weighting because the University does not want bias as this would discourage academics. We use it informally to target people and departments not doing so well and we give them advice.”

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – LIBRARY

There is more written on performance measurement in libraries than other non academic departments (for example, see Stevenson Smith, 1991). Some activities identified by librarians with suggested mechanistic measures are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. **Library Measurable Activities with suggested performance measures**

Activity	Performance measures
Special projects	Project completed
Report writing	Meeting deadlines
Answering reference questions	Number answered to customer satisfaction Time spent Size of queue
Acquisitions	Number of errors Number of acquisitions processed Number of days until order placed
Processing interloan requests	% of material obtained within a target time Number of interloans processed per employee
Desk work	Number of enquiries processed per employee
Processing book requests	Processed in day of arrival
Invoicing lost books	Invoice produced within a target time
Cataloguing	Books available for users within a target time after arrival Absence of backlogs Number of books catalogued (productivity measure) Meeting predetermined target time Failed searches
Troubleshooting	Problem solved Number of complaints
User education	Number of users who are not competent database users Library link with every course Meet degree course requirements Student evaluation Tutor evaluation
Discharge and shelving	Book processed and returned to shelf within target time
Surveying library users	Administered as scheduled
Library management	Meeting staff and budget targets
Resource evaluation	Number of times customers need to go outside this library for resources
Gaining validation and accreditation	Feedback from accreditation panels
Provision of technical services	Minimal backlogs Number of faults
Installation of new systems	Meeting established implementation date target
Daily task completion	Ticking off list

Source: Authors.

Librarians also pointed out some limitations of such measures. For example, for the measure “number of reference questions answered to customer satisfaction”, the criticism was:

“We can measure things like the number of reference questions answered or the time spent on answering them, but this quantity doesn’t measure whether the question was answered correctly, or whether we spent an hour with one questioner and had a long queue of people waiting who were not being satisfied. A staff member may be a perfectionist and spend a long time on getting things perfect, but this may not be a profitable use of time. We have to try to measure quality as well as quantity.”

Similarly, one can measure the activity “processing interloan requests” by “the percentage of material obtained within a target time”, but interloans involve external parties who may cause delays outside the control of the library. Therefore this measure would be better split into: 1) processing the initial request within a predetermined time, and 2) once the interloan has been received from outside, making it available to the requester within a target time.

Library staff noted that they can measure performance but there are difficulties in measuring quality:

“We can measure performance in the library, but this is difficult to do. A lot of things are done in project mode, so we can use project completion as a measure of performance, but we cannot measure quality. We do not have quality service measures in this library and we do not have time to establish them. We should establish quality measures by defining our client groups and establishing what they want.”

More analysis would be necessary to determine how such mechanistic measurements would be made, which ones could be used for comparison both within and between institutions, and how to determine an appropriate weighting for each performance measures. Even if these problems can be resolved, there remain many activities that may not be measurable.

NON-FORMAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

For many activities in all areas, it was very difficult for staff to identify mechanistic performance measures, because such activities are “not task-defined”. Linke (1992, p. 195) supports this view: “They [performance measures] are (...) an aid to decision making (...) – but in no sense a substitute for what is an inherently subjective process”. The difficulty in identifying performance measures related particularly to activities at senior levels:

“*Management* activities are not well defined. Processes don’t allow more than self-appraisal to your superior.” [Emphasis added.]

“For some of my responsibilities it is not so easy to tell. Sometimes you feel satisfied you are handling your work well. In other areas it is not possible to be so confident.”

Staff believe their activities can best be evaluated by informal feedback. Informal feedback can come from peer assessment:

“We use peer evaluation through our in-house staff development courses.”

“Colleagues will tell me if they think I’m doing something wrong.”

“I practice ‘management by walking around’.”

“I get feedback from colleagues when not doing a good job. There is a lot of accountability to the institution, e.g. staffing and budget targets, but I don’t value them as much as team feedback and good communication.”

“Extramural staff use informal feedback from course supervisors. When there is good staff morale, they feel they can come and discuss problems.”

However, Gillett (1989, pp. 32-36) cautions against the use of peer review, as it does not provide a true performance indicator.

Other sources of informal feedback include:

– Student assessment:

“We meet regularly with students and staff in committees.”

– Other departments:

“I get feedback from academic departments and they seem reasonably happy with my work.”

“We get comments from the teaching staff on the new book display. Quite a few people check it every week. Clearly we’re buying what they think we should be.”

– Other institutions:

“We talk with our counterparts at other universities. We find out what we’re doing that they’re not, to get an impression of the breadth of programmes, but this doesn’t say how successfully we’re doing our job, or if the programmes are the best. It’s not very reliable feedback.”

– Managers:

“We get comments from the Deans – usually only if it’s bad news. They don’t often give good comments.”

“The Head of Department will send messages saying ‘well done’.”

“Managers are satisfied with the advice I give.”

- Meetings of the Employers' Association and talking to colleagues at conferences:

"Conferences give us an idea of how we are keeping up with the play."

"Through networking at conferences and through email we can compare how we are doing."

"By attending conferences I have established a strong network across the universities. We keep in touch very well. There is co-operation – we meet two days a year for sharing what is good, and we can compare our performance with others."

Many staff employ informal systems of self appraisal:

"I diary all I do and use it to record, reflect and plan for next year."

"I make lists of what I want to accomplish each week, even if I only get through a third."

"I use self review, by comparing my performance with my established objectives."

"I use self focus to keep myself on track and share my accountabilities with my colleagues."

However, some staff felt that relying on informal feedback for performance measurement was "notoriously unreliable". For example:

"Getting feedback for myself is very difficult."

"I do get negative feedback but not positive!"

However, it was felt that more feedback would be desirable:

"A lack of complaints from departments, or positive feedback may be used, but this alone is not adequate, because some things we do the departments know nothing about."

"It would be desirable to have more feedback – we have a wee way to go on that."

This feedback could come from formal performance appraisal systems which are in place in some of the institutions. For example:

"We use a quality assurance programme which includes a statement of intent for each section and each function within each section. This includes performance objectives and performance measures. (...) Staff also have annual appraisal meetings with their immediate supervisors. The process has been helpful, as it brings each department's needs to top management."

However, the view was expressed that there are some problems with the frequency of formal appraisal systems.

“Despite there being an appraisal interview once a year, I still feel there is a lack of feedback – I only get feedback when things go wrong.”

“Sometimes achieving objectives is difficult because you have to make objectives on top of your normal tasks. Once a year is enough because the formal process is time consuming. Less formal feedback every couple of months would be good.”

“It is impossible for my boss to give feedback. There is not enough time to discuss things. He can only evaluate me on meetings we have. At them we have a list of 16-18 points and [have to] get through them quickly.”

CONCLUSION

This paper has reviewed the literature relating to performance measurement in tertiary education. Using an activity based management approach, activities were identified for registries, libraries and an academic department in five tertiary institutions. This research has been innovative, because employees themselves have determined the performance measures. As Johnson (1992, p. 94) points out, performance evaluation systems determined on this basis “should encourage people to improve, not impair” their performance.

However, even with employees determining the measures, it is clearly evident that some activities are not appropriately evaluated by mechanistic measures. For these activities, particularly for staff at senior level and where the outputs are not clearly defined, staff believe their performance can best be evaluated through the use of informal feedback from a number of sources. Where institutions put in place formal appraisal systems, the performance measures should reflect the type of activity undertaken by the staff member.

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NOTES

1. From an analysis of a sample of New Zealand universities' annual reports.
2. Details of other aspects of the research are available from the first-named author.
3. All quotes from employees are enclosed in speech marks.

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LEARNING SUPPORT FOR FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to provide a typology of initiatives based on a survey of learning support schemes for university students. In general terms, the forms of learning support scheme available differ from one another according to three criteria: the type of personnel providing the students with learning support, the area that the support focuses on, and the function of the support. In addition to offering a description of the initiatives observed, the article will seek to identify the issues, strengths and weaknesses of the various approaches. The reasons for the development of learning support policies for university students will be examined in the first instance; the conditions for the emergence of such a policy will be examined subsequently. Lastly, attention will be given to what might be the perverse effects of the introduction of a learning support scheme, particularly where it encourages people to avoid problems and cease questioning the education system as a whole.

INTRODUCTION

The failure rate in the first year of university studies in francophone Belgium has been distressingly steady for over 20 years (CIUF, 1993). 55 per cent of students fail every year: some drop out, perhaps early in the year, while others repeat a year or transfer to a new subject. In Belgian universities, where there are low entrance qualifications, the first year performs *de facto* the role of selection, and even the role of guidance for certain students. Most European countries

experience this phenomenon of first-year failure: figures are well covered in the media, with the press regularly getting hold of stories and giving them considerable publicity. It may be that discussion of university failure focuses too much on the fetish of failure rates, and we therefore forget to observe in greater detail what the student has learned, the meaning and relevance of what he has learned, and his “moveability”. Here, too, there are some disturbing “failures”: for example, How many students only study for their examinations? What do they take into the second year of what they have “memorised” in the first year? Do universities attain the noble objectives that they claim to pursue? and in particular, Do large first-year groups and the assessment really teach students to “think for themselves”?

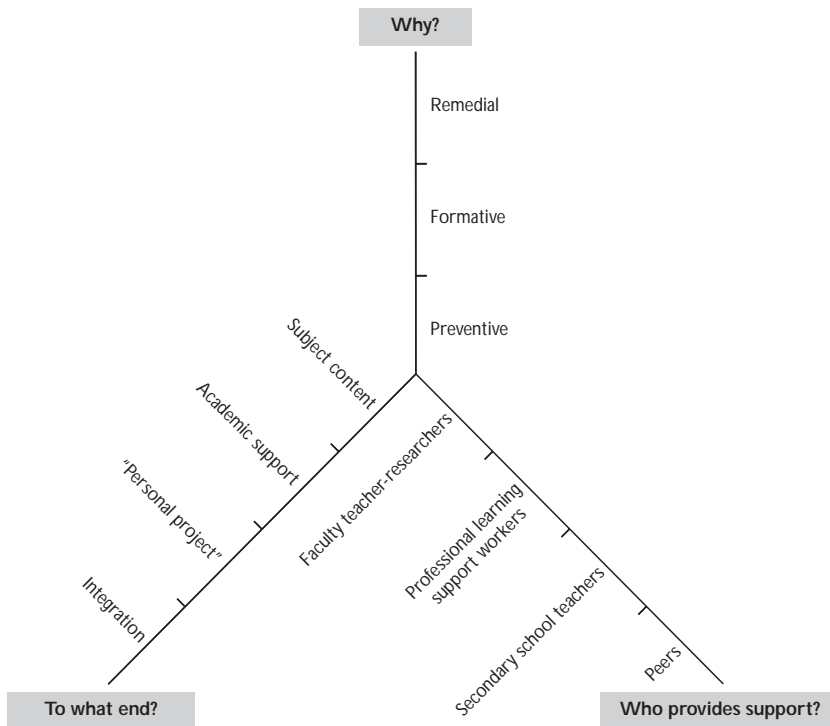
Perrenoud (1996) mischievously points out that, in a real campaign against academic failure, it is essential for this failure to be recognised as a “problem”; to put it in another way, failure must offend and disrupt, and be seen as dysfunctioning. University failures are undoubtedly more disruptive these days for three main reasons:

- Firstly, there has been a growing demand for higher education among the population at large since university doors were opened wide during the years of affluence. In our society, which we happily refer to as the knowledge or information society, obtaining a university degree means one is almost certain to earn more and have access to a status-enhancing career. Salary levels are clearly linked to the degree that students have obtained, as is the rate of unemployment. It is therefore understandable that a larger number of young people, who have often known nothing but economic crisis, should try to achieve the best possible degrees. Going to university is no longer the preserve of the few; it has become an opportunity given to everyone to obtain a respectable, well-paid job. Failure has therefore become *socially* more unacceptable. Even this social pressure to broaden access to higher education is rational, but it still poses major problems including the over-qualification of jobs and the exclusion of those who can only aspire to lower-level jobs (White Paper on Education, 1995).
- On a more prosaic level, failure is expensive. Public expenditure cuts encourage us to see failures as real financial waste. Accordingly, although the proposal to ban repeating in lower secondary education in Belgium was partly based on pedagogical arguments, it was approved unanimously because of the savings that are automatically made. In a society where it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain education expenditure, widespread academic failure in the first year is becoming *economically* unacceptable.
- Even though the link between the level of education and economic development has yet to be demonstrated, there is agreement that the latter

depends increasingly on the application of advances in science and technology, and therefore on the development of a country's "grey matter". Quite simply, expenditure on education is an investment (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1988). Raising the general skills level of the population as a whole is an objective common to numerous countries; there is therefore a demand, this time articulated by nations, to train skilled people in order to ensure competitiveness and growth in their economies.

As widespread failures in the first year have a much greater impact nowadays for the reasons just set out, universities have adopted a range of initiatives in recent years in order to provide students with learning support. A variety of approaches are on offer. In this article, we will only examine how, without fundamentally challenging the overall organisation of education, universities attempt to

◆ Figure 1. *Typology of learning support schemes for university students*



help students with their personal study during the year. Formulas of academic support provided by universities are differentiated one from the other according to three key criteria: the type of personnel providing students with learning support, the area that the support focuses on, and the function of the support (Figure 1).

WHO PROVIDE THE SUPPORT?

A survey of forms of academic support reveals that universities have sought to solve the problem in four ways. They are not mutually exclusive; nor does this list of support practices claim to be exhaustive. In particular, new information technology is opening up interesting opportunities for independent distance-learning.

Faculty teacher/researchers

One approach currently being developed involves tutoring carried out by teachers; in this system, each student is allocated a tutor from the faculty teaching body, often on condition that he does not teach the student in question. Regular, one-to-one meetings take place with the aim of giving better support to the student, and the individualised assessments of results in the initial examinations are critical stages in the tutor-student relationship. The tutor's task normally consists of helping the student to plan his personal study and assess progress with him. Before long, the tutor's role commonly involves giving support and encouragement, and even acting as confidant; he is often in a good position to build up the student's confidence and, for once, the latter has a chance to discuss matters on a one-to-one basis with a member of the teaching staff. The qualities expected of a tutor are being a good listener, accessible, credible but also clear and to-the-point in the feedback sessions that he gives the student on the progress he has been making in his studies, and an ability to keep to deadlines.

Another variant of the same approach involves each teacher/researcher who teaches students acting as "godparent" to some of them (between 3 and 5). The interviews that form part of this scheme are intended to demystify examinations and temper students' anxieties, and include discussions on their study methods before and after the examinations. The advantage of this approach is that the "godparents" have an intimate understanding of the teaching problems associated with the subject. The disadvantage is that predictions can begin to come true automatically: this is because of the danger that the person providing the support, who also acts as assessor, may fall in with the image he forms of the student during the "godparenting" sessions.

Some teachers in France have formed study skills support teams that combine a knowledge of the subject and an interest in thought processes. An example is the “Work and communication techniques” module available to first-year DEUG students at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris.

Professional study skills support workers specialists

In this approach, support is in the hands of specialists in learning strategies; for example, Noël (1996) and Romainville (1994) have designed seminars aimed at developing students’ meta-cognitive skills. It should be borne in mind that the objective here is not so much to adopt a prescriptive approach to study skills support; rather it is to make students aware of the steps they themselves are taking and help them analyse them, so they can construct a personal method suited to the situation in which they find themselves.

In this context, we should also refer to the work of Auquièrre *et al.* (1990). This seeks to help students, at the beginning of the academic year, to discover how they really function as learners, to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to appreciate the different styles of teaching they will be exposed to. This type of support also includes activities developed by French language proficiency centres that provide students with intensive coaching in reading and writing skills.

The dangers with this approach, in which academic support is handed over to “specialists”, are twofold. Firstly, it is important to bear in mind how closely related learning strategies are to the type of material to be learned (Romainville, 1994); for example, taking notes in History does not require the same skills as it does in Mathematics. In one way, then, subject teachers are best placed to make their students aware of the mental approaches demanded by their disciplines. Secondly, there is the danger that, by passing support over to specialists, teachers may feel that these concerns are no longer their responsibility: just as we set up a commission to get rid of an irritating problem, so we may feel able to pass learning support over to a specialist and wash our hands of all responsibility.

Secondary school teachers

In France particularly, some universities employ secondary school teachers to provide first-year learning support. As they do not have to concern themselves with research, they can more easily devote their time to learning and make themselves more accessible; furthermore, by being “on both sides of the fence”, they are more able to appreciate specific features of the transition between secondary education and university. However, there are those who see it as a dangerous precedent driving a wedge between research and teaching; they argue that the combination of these two missions characterises universities in a fundamental and distinctive way.

Other students

Approaches that involve tutoring by another student have been extensively developed in recent years. There are two main reasons for this. The first is linked to what most countries demand of universities: given the enduring crisis in public finances, governments say universities will have to “do better with less” in the years to come. The second is associated with the difficulty that universities have in fulfilling their most noble objectives, namely encouraging students to think for themselves. The development of comparable competences calls for active confrontations in small groups where the student is an actor in his own learning. Theories of socio-cognitive conflict (Doise and Mugny, 1984) demonstrate that the interaction between peers is a powerful motor for learning.

Modes of tutoring are extremely varied. On the basis of an exhaustive survey, Topping (1996) isolates nine differentiating dimensions:

- **their relationship to what is being taught:** some tutoring schemes aim to get students to revise subjects, while others are more concerned with study methods or, more generally, with integrating the student into university life;
- **the organisation of the group:** one or more tutors may work with groups of different sizes (2-30 students); the tutoring is sometimes carried out on a one-to-one basis;
- tutor and students may be in different **years** (usually a second-year student in charge of a first-year group), but they may all be in the same year;
- similarly, some tutoring groups are formed by grouping students at the **same level of studies**, or by allocating the students a tutor who may be in the same year, but who has provided evidence of a level of competence in the area on which the tutoring focuses (*e.g.* he has passed the intermediary tests);
- each person's **role** may be determined from the outset, or it may evolve: in some schemes, all students in a same-year peer group take turns at being the tutor (Topping *et al.*, 1996);
- **the material conditions and the timing** may also vary considerably: Should the tutoring take place on university premises or outside? During lectures or afterwards?
- the **target group** may consist of all students in a given year, or of a particular sub-group (*e.g.* failing students or students at risk);
- **tutors** are traditionally selected from among the better students, but other approaches have also been tested: for example, some projects have opted for tutors of average ability so that the challenge of achieving a better

command of the subject is more equally shared out among group members;

- lastly, the **objectives** of the tutoring also vary; they may include learning subjects, attitudes or social behaviour, helping the student to attain greater commitment or integration, and circulating information among students and staff, etc.

Generally speaking, tutoring forms part of a broader policy for combating failure. In first-year Science at Orsay (Université de Paris-sud), for example, tutoring is just one element of a broader scheme introduced when the DEUG was being re-structured in 1984; the objective is to combat failure and reduce drop-out rates (*Les Cahiers de l'ADMES*, 1994). The tutoring itself contains a number of distinct elements ranging from remedial sessions run on a voluntary basis by teachers or students from the previous year, to *La Boutique*, an informal information and support unit.

Another example in an Economics faculty is reported by Noël (1996). In this scheme, after the January examinations, students who have passed at least two of the five compulsory exams may receive specialised instruction in one or two of the subjects that have given them trouble. In an unusual approach described by Haelewyck *et al.* (1992), the tutor, who is a student in a higher year, is responsible for the formative assessment of 4-5 students; he sets the tests, marks them using a grid provided by the teachers, and tries to remedy any perceived shortcomings. This form of tutoring is an attempt to implement Keller's *Personalised System of Instruction*.

Lastly, *Supplemental Instruction* (Martin and Arendale, 1993) is a form of academic support that was developed at the University of Kansas and soon adopted extensively elsewhere in the United States. It basically involves small groups of students meeting three or four times a week under the supervision of an older student (the "leader") to revise the course. These tutors attend the classes, take notes and read all the necessary material, and receive brief training in how to run the revision groups. They also have frequent meetings with the teacher.

Most of the various experiences of tutoring carried out in universities identify the same strengths:

- An anxious, shy student who is not sure of himself is more likely to seek help from an older student than from a teacher. This older student can also better understand the younger student's problems; he will be more willing to take an interest in the latter's life, he will be less authoritarian, and the student will be more at ease.
- Students in peer groups are more active, they interact and get rapid feedback, and their opportunities for asking and answering questions increase considerably.

- The tutor, who is normally more accessible than the teacher, can respond usefully to the specific questions that students ask.
- The benefits to be derived from tutoring are reciprocal: the tutor clearly gives the young student assistance, while at the same time he asserts his personality, consolidates his knowledge and expands his know-how as a teacher. Teaching is a way of learning all over again. The tasks of clarifying, simplifying and providing examples, which are part and parcel of tutoring, enable the tutor to deepen both his knowledge of the subject and his social skills. Moreover, there is a well established dynamic whereby a student who needs a tutor at the beginning of the year often becomes a tutor himself later on.
- The advantages of tutoring are even greater as tutors have received training and the tutoring is very structured: each person knows exactly what his role is, and the way in which tutoring functions is clearly defined. In particular, the training aims to enable the tutor to develop appropriate attitudes: these include not solving students' problems for them, not reproducing lecturers' "professorial" behaviour in miniature, and not providing his own solutions to problems, particularly relating to study, on the grounds that that they are universal.

Of course, tutoring is no panacea. In particular, the practical organisation of tutoring means that an enormous amount of time and effort goes into such matters as the selection, training and monitoring of tutors and the organisation of group meetings. Lastly, the quality of services available to students varies considerably according to the tutor.

TO WHAT END?

The purpose of academic support also varies according to the approach used.

Subject content

Many learning support approaches aim initially to help students absorb the course material, understand how to make use of it, and attempt to apply this knowledge (*e.g.* through help with work placements and personal study). In some institutions, academic support is provided by teaching assistants who are employed specifically for this purpose and organise activities designed to prevent or resolve academic failure. These activities include tests of core knowledge and skills in a particular subject, study skills seminars adapted to course content, and revision sessions on specific points.

Study skills support

Study skills support is understood to mean either any teaching activity delivered by a teacher or group of teachers as part of their teaching programme, or a course specifically designed for the purpose, or assistance with personal study outside the university timetable, which aims to enable students to improve their methods of study, or more broadly, how to learn. There is a range of techniques: they include individual and collective sessions, training in strategies for learning and the development of meta-cognitive skills, and assistance from teachers or peers (*i.e.* tutoring).

A large number of development seminars in learning skills (“intellectual know-how”) have been organised in recent years (Romainville and Biasin, 1990). The experience conducted at Grenoble in first-year Science DEUG (Arnaud, 1989, in Bireaud, 1990) is an example of this type of approach: following an earlier survey that uncovered problems associated with these methods, Chemistry faculty members ran four workshops in acquiring study skills know-how such as note-taking, preparation for a written or oral examination, problem-solving and time management.

These seminars are open at the beginning of the year to all students who are interested; they are normally organised in small groups. However, seminars of this type may only be available to students whose results are felt to be unsatisfactory. For example, in an experience described by Deneff *et al.* (1990), they were offered to students whose average mark was below 6/20, but whose motivation and ability to work hard (as judged by a guidance council) suggested that they would be able to pass the first-year examination in two years. These seminars are not compulsory, but they are still seen as restricting by students who have to accept the idea of repeating a year and, what is more, starting there and then in January. This explains why so few students opt to follow this programme; we shall return to this issue in due course. The idea underlying this kind of programme, which is extended over two years, is to focus on the pace of learning of the students concerned.

These first two aims of learning support (course content and approaches to learning) are clearly not radically different issues, but rather two poles on a single continuum. Subject-related support is more content-based and inevitably probes the student’s thought processes, whereas study skills support, which has more to do with ways of learning, can only be understood in relation to the specific subjects in question.

The student’s “personal project”

Several studies (Bireaud, 1990) show that many students have no “personal project” (*i.e.* a plan of what they want to get out of their time at university). When

the French DEUG was being revised, provision was made for a “guidance” phase at the beginning of the course. Nowadays, this time is used to provide students with an overview of the various subjects they can choose from, and may include information on jobs in the relevant sector. Sometimes, at the end of the guidance phase, there are also tests on the subjects studied, and results are discussed with students at guidance interviews. In certain universities, such as Nice, students who do not achieve the necessary level in these tests to pass the DEUG at first try are sent off for 20 weeks’ coaching aimed at bringing them up to the required standard (DEUG 0).

Le Forestier *et al.* (1993) offer students in first-year Biological Sciences a “work placement” option; this mainly consists of one week’s training and some preparatory sessions. The aim is to give students a chance to broaden their understanding of employment, and enable them to develop their “personal project”. Supporters of this system have also noticed students’ learning methods becoming increasingly independent, and their work less specifically focused solely on passing examinations.

This approach also includes the development of a “knowing-what-the-future-holds” scheme; this aims to incorporate a support module into the project that Faudé *et al.* (1992) offer their students in the first guidance semester. These authors consider that a combination of a lengthening economic crisis, and the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find employment, is making it more important than ever for students to “sort out a project for themselves”. This new requirement calls for students to have competences like being able to set objectives, take decisions, control their social environment in a socially mature way, and understand economic and social developments and particularly developments in the labour market.

Generally speaking, universities have taken a number of initiatives in providing students with information and guidance. Most of the big universities have one or more information, documentation and study/job guidance centres where students, or prospective students, may seek advice (or follow-up advice) on their education project .

Integration into university life

Other learning support approaches are specifically designed to enable students to integrate into university life. The transition between secondary and university education is always a delicate period; it is, as some suggest, like a “second birth”. For example, it is vital for young students to form a circle of friends quickly, and such objectives are pursued by some tutoring schemes, and by the “information days” that universities are now organising with increasing frequency; freshmen seminars perform a similar function at American universities.

They also help to reduce the drop-out rate, because students feel supported by the initial contacts they have been able to make during these seminars.

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF LEARNING SUPPORT?

The target group issue is closely linked both to the time of the year when the support is provided and, more intrinsically, to its objectives.

Preventive support

This kind of support is available at the beginning of the academic year, or shortly beforehand. It aims, as a precautionary measure, to imbue students with the skills felt to be necessary for academic success at university. The target group may consist of all students who have enrolled in a given department, or only some of them, possibly on the basis of their previous studies. Another preventive support approach, particularly in countries with no selection at university entrance, involves admission interviews. Here, the student is asked to identify his project and discuss it with the senior member of the department; the latter will then draw the student's attention to particular requirements and any core knowledge/competences involved. The information week may also take this objective on board.

Remedial support

This kind of support addresses shortcomings that are picked up in initial interviews or examinations. For example, Deneff *et al.* (1990) report on a scheme of remedial seminars organised in the Medicine Faculty after the January examinations; they are run for students who have been identified as having a specific problem, but whose chances of overcoming it are rated highly.

Similarly, the individualised remedial monitoring described by Lega (1993) is, as the name suggests, aimed at students who have failed the Physics examination in January. It consists of setting students two problems per week, which they are asked to solve on their own and to a deadline, that is to say under something close to examination conditions. Afterwards, they individually describe the difficulties that they have encountered.

There have also been attempts to introduce mastery learning into universities (Famelhart, 1992; Beckers, 1992). This approach is based on formative assessment in first level Medicine. Sessions take place throughout the year in such a way that the student receives immediate feedback on his academic performance;

this ranges from an analysis of his level of knowledge and competences required at the beginning of the year to correcting answers in the first examinations.

Students in Belgium may now spread their first year at university over two years; this option is open to those who have enrolled for the first time and applied for it. The scheme includes compulsory complementary coaching designed to bring them up to the required level; the programme for this is jointly agreed by the university authorities and the student concerned, and is based on the student's January results. However, the experience of this type of remedial programme reveals that students are reluctant to sign up (Denef *et al.*, 1990). Many reasons may explain why students who really need the academic support on offer turn it down (Romainville, 1992). Firstly, they are afraid of being labelled as "problem students" and of being marginalised accordingly; one solution might be to enrol students anonymously in remedial groups and leave them in their normal student group for other activities. Secondly, first-year student culture is focused not on learning but on passing examinations and, as most students see the latter as something of a lottery, they tend not to enrol on remedial programmes during the year. Their reaction tends to be one of "Well, I'll give it a go. You never know!" To encourage them to adopt a culture of reaching the required standard, it would be necessary to include benefits such as a progressive enhancement of their achievements or a chance to sit examinations more flexibly. Thirdly, students who have problems do not dare admit it: it takes courage to acknowledge only half-way through the year that failure is the most likely outcome. Some prefer to ignore this almost certain danger and only admit their failure to their parents, close friends or even themselves when it can no longer be covered up.

Study skills support

Unlike the previous support system, which functions on the "academic clinic" model, the objective here is to support students in their studies with a view to developing skills considered to be integral components of their education. For example, basic courses in note-taking are offered not only because they deal with a problem facing many students, but also because one aim of higher education is to provide students with the vocational skills that employers have come to expect; being able to take quick, intelligent notes in a meeting is one such. Study skills support seminars (Romainville and Biasin, 1990) may therefore be seen as sessions that allow each person to develop his learning skills. It follows that the objective is no longer one of reducing the number of failures, but more broadly one of raising the quantity and quality of successes.

In a similar vein, Chapeaux (1992) reports on an experience that trained Engineering students in the techniques of group working. This project aimed not only at making students study more actively, but also at enabling them to

develop group-working skills and achieving a better match between education and skills demands in industry.

Study skills support has the advantage of being presented positively in that it aims to develop skills and talents. All too often, the term “support”, or “learning support”, has negative, palliative associations and students feel they have been invited to attend a “psycho-pedagogical clinic” as “people suffering from study sickness”. What is more, the issue of support has been too narrowly focused on the first cycle of studies, and even on first-cycle failures. The focus should therefore be broadened to include discussion of other support schemes such as supervision of work placements, support with work carried out at the end of the academic cycle, help with preparing the thesis, and assistance in the transition from university into employment.

CONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

This illustrative, rather than comprehensive, overview of individual and institutional initiatives briefly sets out the many and varied methods used to provide university students with learning support. In addition to the classification set out in this section, a number of important questions still need to be addressed; What is the relative importance of these various approaches? How effective are they?

In addition, there may not be general agreement on the idea of academic support in higher education; a few fragmented elements of a recent survey are set out below by way of illustration. The sample identified 125 teachers in higher education outside the university sector,* and the survey (Ségec, 1996) specifically reported that, although 69 per cent of teachers claimed they organised a form of guidance to help students with their personal study, in 9 cases out of 10 it took the form of subject-based help linked to understanding course content; this included additional meetings, formative assessments, individual help during revision sessions, and marking personal study. Study skills support appears to be second to learning support. The teachers interviewed also said that providing guidance in higher education is never easy. Those who choose to offer it run up against problems linked to a shortage of time and to the size and variety of student groups. And those who reject the idea and have no plans to organise a scheme give reasons which are listed in Table 1.

* A feature of the Belgian system is the large HE sector that has grown up alongside universities; courses are often shorter and more vocationally biased. The sector covers about half the number of students in higher education.

Table 1. Arguments justifying the failure to provide guidance in higher education

Guidance is not practicable "not enough time and too many students"	65 %
Guidance has no place in higher education "at this stage in their studies, it is important for students to take responsibility for what they do and respond to concrete situations unaided..."	22 %
Guidance must be given by somebody outside the course	8 %
Other	5 %

Source: Segec 1996.

More fundamentally still, the survey shows that a decision to introduce a study skills support scheme may well be largely based on a specific idea of education (Ségec, 1996). To put it in another way, if the teacher believes that each student acquires a corpus of knowledge (itself under construction) in a personal manner, it is an integral part of his job as a professional teacher to support this activity. If, on the other hand, he thinks that teaching is the clearest possible presentation of a subject representing "truth" in that field, giving the student support in study methods is superfluous. If the thought process is clear and accessible, the student will learn; it is as simple as that. In this context, memorising comes down to storing a subject just as it is, so that it can be regurgitated unchanged and on demand – a little bit like keeping it in the freezer. Support has no place in education of this kind.

A decision to provide students with learning support is not unrelated to the teacher's view of himself and of what learning is all about, but the decision also depends on the investment that the teacher is prepared to make in his education mission: giving courses is an integral part of a teacher-researcher's job, nobody would argue about that; but supporting students through their long and arduous study processes is a much more gruelling task, and has deterred more than a few teachers. It is quite clear that the true university teacher may be identified on the basis of his position on support. The support issue is therefore fundamentally linked to the importance that the university community attaches to its education mission. It is now well known that this mission is frequently downgraded in favour of research (Romainville, 1996). In people's minds and in their day-to-day practice, the criteria taken into account in peer recognition, and therefore in recruitment and promotion, are associated with excellence in research. Perhaps because it is less easy to assess, less socially visible and, when all is said and done, more altruistic, teacher-researchers are reluctant to focus on another aspect of their job:

getting students to learn. Academic support is undoubtedly a clear indicator of the emphasis that teacher-researchers place on this latter mission.

Besides, depending on their representations of this mission, even if academics are prepared to concentrate hard on their teaching work, they tend to favour one type of support over another. If they think that they have to deliver general, post-secondary education to the largest number of students in order to raise the country's overall standard of education, learning support in the first cycle of university studies is vital; if, on the other hand, they set out to install a filtering mechanism, and then deliver advanced education to the élites of tomorrow, second-cycle support gets pride of place; there again, if university teachers concentrate on the training of future researchers, they will place more emphasis on graduate studies support by giving meticulous support to young researchers producing their theses. In short, the importance attached to this type of support is partly determined by the teaching mission that each individual teacher chooses to adopt.

Lastly, it is important to expose what might be a perverse effect of academic support. The introduction of a learning support system for students should never be used as an excuse for no longer questioning the education system as a whole. For example, we sometimes see support being used in a desperate attempt to patch up the weaknesses of a course, when what is needed to resolve the students' learning problems is a fundamentally re-designed course. In such circumstances, support becomes a kind of crutch, or an alibi for keeping the education system as it is despite its imperfections. What is more, as students (or at least some of them) manage to extricate themselves from difficulty thanks to learning support, these schemes paradoxically become curbs on innovation. This failing has been exposed by Meirieu and Develay (1992) with regard to study skills support in particular. Their view is that helping students to alter their methods of working can be used as a way of skirting round problems, or of not tackling other levers of change head on. They also refer to study skills support as a "professorial crutch". We believe the same could be said of adult education. Adults who return to studies are often more critical than colleagues who have gone to university direct from secondary school. They are motivated by clear demands for education, which they embrace either for the purposes of vocational training or out of pure interest, but they are more prepared to expose defects in the system; an example of this is the importance given to memorising facts in the first year. A significant percentage drop out. Some universities have organised study integration seminars for this target group, despite the fact that their arrival should be used as an opportunity for a general review of the philosophy underlying university education.

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THE PLACE OF RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND TEACHING IN NEWLY ESTABLISHED UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

There has been spirited debate concerning the relationship between research, scholarship and teaching in universities. While some people argue for the coexistence of these tasks under one roof, others suggest they are "inescapably incompatible". One explanation for this incompatibility may be related to academic workloads. The process that apportions time to academics to pursue research, scholarship and teaching creates anomalies. Consequently, academics speak about "teaching loads" and "research opportunities". However, the variance between these tasks is accentuated in newly established universities seeking to redefine the balance between academic pursuits. Utilising qualitative and quantitative data, this paper sets out reasons for the perceived incompatibility and identifies the worldview of academics that impel these perceptions about research, scholarship and teaching. Finally, in the light of the diverse nature of academic tasks, it is suggested that new approaches to resourcing teaching and research might be developed in newly established universities.

INTRODUCTION

The debate about the place of research, scholarship and teaching in universities is both emotional and problematic. While some people argue for the coexistence of these activities (McCaughey, 1992), others firmly believe them to be

“inescapably incompatible” (Barnett, 1992). In this context, producing reputable peer recognised research and scholarship is not a part-time occupation. Others also view the skills required to research or teach competently as mutually exclusive (Allen, 1988, pp. 108-110). In addition, academics interpret the nature of research, scholarship and teaching entirely differently, feeling despondent about their “teaching load” yet enthusiastic about their “research opportunities”.

Australia in the late 1980s and early 1990s provided an example of how changes to the higher education sector stimulated debate about research, scholarship and teaching in newly created universities. The implementation of government policy created several new universities by reducing the number of existing providers through a series of amalgamations. By 1992, many new institutions, which had previously placed teaching at the cornerstone of their Mission Statements, began a reappraisal of their role in a new and competitive environment. However, while the governing bodies of these new universities contemplated change, prosperity was invariably linked with an institution’s capacity to attract large numbers of funded students to high quality undergraduate courses. In this setting, undergraduate teaching significantly influenced the determination of workloads. Moreover, the ways in which academics perceived the fairness of their workloads in this embryonic university environment had the potential to seal the fate of research, scholarship and teaching as the university culture developed. This paper examines some of the broader issues pertaining to research, scholarship and teaching in a faculty of education in a newly created university. While it is a discrete case study, the discussion of the findings has implications for higher education management.

TYPES OF ACADEMIC PURSUITS

The literature in the field of academic workloads consistently suggests that the main tasks of academics include teaching, undertaking research, engaging in scholarship and serving the organisation, profession and community (Bélanger, 1990; Ladd and Lipsett, 1972, 1974, 1976). The fundamental nature of these tasks is reflected in performance indicators which generally take into account achievement across these areas. While the exact time expended on each task is difficult to quantify with any degree of certainty, two American surveys provide valuable insights into the substance of workloads in higher education (Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, 1996; *The Chronicle Almanac*, 1992).

In general, teaching includes time spent on lecturing, conducting tutorials or workshops, developing course material, marking assignments, consulting with students, writing and marking exams and attending team meetings. The supervision of doctoral theses is also part of this dimension although it is not generally a

Table 1. **Time devoted to academic activities**

Activity	Time devoted to pursuits – lower and upper limits
Teaching and related activities	40-55%
Research and scholarly activities	25-35%
Service related activities	15-30%

Sources: Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, 1996; *The Chronicle Almanac*, 1992; Bélanger, 1990.

dominant feature of teaching in newly established universities that do not have well developed doctoral programmes. Research and scholarship include time expended in identifying a problem, designing an instrument, collecting and analysing the data and presenting the findings. Scholarship includes all time expended on producing tangible scholarly material which has been subjected to peer review. Frequently, the latter stages of research and scholarship overlap. Service has two dimensions, including work with the professions as well as serving on university or faculty committees. An estimate of the time devoted by academics to each task is presented in Table 1.

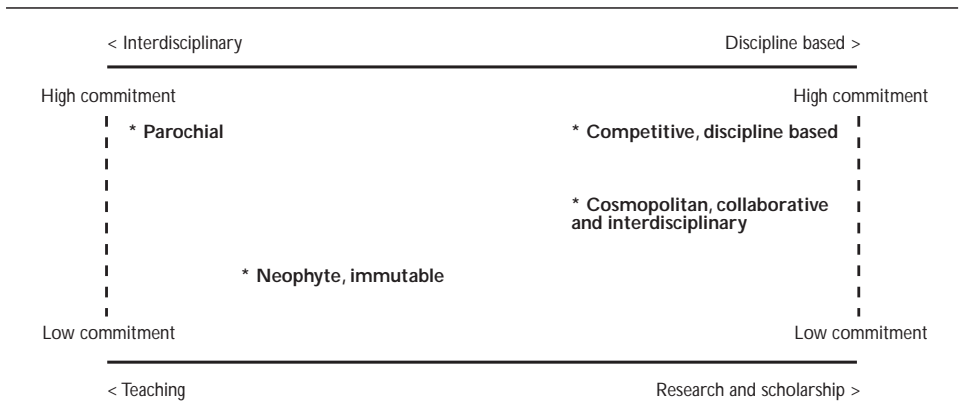
While assigned workloads quantify “activity”, they are traditionally associated with time spent teaching. Workloads may also recognise strategic management duties performed beyond normal service expectations. Even so, when “teaching time” is used exclusively as the basis for calculating one’s workload, anomalies can, and do, arise. Workloads may not adequately differentiate between the demands of teaching at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The nature of teaching can also vary between on-campus and distance education. Furthermore, workloads generally fail to reflect the role of research, scholarship and entrepreneurial activity in an academic’s life (Bélanger, 1990). This lack of recognition may place some academics at a distinct disadvantage because it can be surmised that those who are productive in their assigned workload, normally based on time spent teaching, are equally productive in their unassigned and non-teaching activities (Bélanger, 1990).

INVESTIGATING THE ISSUE

The relationships between research, scholarship and teaching were explored in a preliminary case study of a faculty of education in a newly established university which offered courses by internal, part time and distance mode.* In

* A preliminary version of arguments presented in this paper was the subject of a seminar discussion at the AARE/NZARE Joint Conference held at Deakin University in Australia in November, 1992.

◆ Figure 1. *Worldviews in research, scholarship and teaching*



Source: Author.

1993, the faculty had decided to move to a one department structure, which replaced a programme focus, although the research plan and teaching profile developed prior to this reorganisation also emanated from a centralised management structure. With the dean as the senior faculty manager, both academic and administrative power was exercised through this position. While there was spirited debate about the balance of research, scholarship and teaching within the faculty, the well defined management structure meant that decisions were generally based on an accord between all stakeholders. However, the dean, who had been recently appointed with significant experience in higher education management, strongly influenced the on-going debate through the incorporated management structure.

During this process, anecdotal evidence was gathered and used in conjunction with participant and non-participant observations of the faculty and its decision making processes between 1990 and 1993. Information gleaned from a faculty informant, utilising methods common in qualitative research in social settings, was also used between 1992 and 1994 (Bogden and Biklen, 1992). The notes taken of the observations and information gathered through the informant were then used to develop a topology of worldviews of research, scholarship and teaching within the faculty. Using a semiotic method of analysis (Fiske and Hartley, 1978), the data were categorised according to the structural oppositions of: teaching-research; discipline based-interdisciplinary; collaborative/co-operative-competitive; parochial-cosmopolitan; and, commitment-abrogation. For example,

some “parochial” staff members worked entirely within the faculty while other “cosmopolitan” members of the faculty worked with colleagues at universities in Australian and elsewhere. Voting for various issues at faculty board and the semantics of the arguments used by staff in presenting their cases for or against particular issues also revealed implicit attitudes toward the place of research, scholarship and teaching in the faculty. In addition, official university and faculty records provided information about the participation and productivity of academics during the period.

A nominal 1 200 hours of teaching-related work each year was used as a base for calculating the assigned workload. This figure recognised preparation, ongoing minor subject development, all face-to-face contact, distance education teaching, assessment, setting assignments and examinations, consulting with students and single subject co-ordination duties. There was also an allowance for those who co-ordinated discrete areas such as postgraduate studies or performed strategic administrative tasks at the faculty level.

For the purpose of this study, the teaching component of the workload was assumed to be equal for all staff because of the static application of the formulae for calculating workloads. In the component of service, several academics received higher duties allowances as co-ordinators, associate deans or heads of courses, thus reducing service requirements for other academics significantly. The time devoted to community service generally was estimated to be at the lower limits. In these circumstances it was hypothesised that a comparative analysis of staff productivity and the degree of staff participation in research and scholarship would provide a path to forecasting how research, scholarship and teaching might develop as a university culture takes hold within the faculty.

In 1990 and 1991 there were approximately 44 full-time staff in the faculty. By 1994, there were 42 equivalent full-time staff members. These numbers were estimated by considering staff employed on project funds as well as the level of temporary and part-time staff support. However, while some 60 part-timers served the faculty’s programmes in various capacities, few had either the potential or opportunity to deliver meaningful contributions to research and scholarship. In contrast, full-time staff possessed such attributes. The majority of these were lecturers (Level B) with other positions occupied by either senior lecturers (Level C) or the professorate (Levels D and E). The position descriptions for Level B and above included, *inter alia*, the pursuit of research and scholarship as a fundamental obligation.

The official confirmation of the levels of participation and productivity of staff across the range of academic tasks is important because it is an authorised record of performance. Of course, the quality and relevance of the outcomes were open to interpretation (Moed *et al.*, 1989). Nevertheless, it remained a register of consequence in the university given the position of a senior university manager who

stated that “if it’s not in the university’s *Research Report*, it doesn’t count”. While one candid measure of output is certainly the number of quality publications (Jauch and Glueck, 1975), many inexperienced staff in the faculty balked at becoming actively involved in research and scholarship because of the competitive nature of the tasks. Having peers scrutinise one’s ability is a daunting and sometimes negative experience. Thus, in an emerging university environment it seems unwise to use quantitative data as the sole determinant of performance in research and scholarship.

The university implicitly ranked “scholars” by number of publications and “researchers” by the source and the size of a grant. However, the outcome was somewhat counterproductive as it discouraged less experienced academics from venturing into the non-teaching realm. Notwithstanding the validity of this view, the university was in a new and competitive higher education sector and both research and scholarship required quantitative measures. However, for the purpose of this study, a set of general categories, more appropriate to an emerging university culture, was developed. These are set out in Table 2.

A liberal approach was adopted to determine what qualified for entry into each of these categories. Nevertheless, to appear in the “published” category, material must have undergone a process of peer, collegial or external review. Availability in the public domain was also a criterion for placement. However, electronic publications were excluded given the developmental stage of publishing via this medium. What counted as “research” was interpreted generously compared to more exacting definitions referred to by established universities (Allen, 1988).

The data were also ameliorated by subjective knowledge. An informed reading of the University’s *Annual* and *Research Reports* as well as various *Faculty Reports* also provided data although the convoluted processes of intra-university communication often resulted in an individual’s involvement in a project being either understated, overstated or omitted. In some cases, reported projects were

Table 2. **General categories in research and scholarship**

- All “published” material
 - International conference and/or seminar papers
 - National and local conference and/or seminar papers
 - External competitive grants and contracts
 - Internal university wide competitive grants and contracts
 - Internal faculty or departmental competitive grants
 - International and national high profile consultancies
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Source: Author.

discontinued. While supposedly using similar reporting procedures, the university's and the faculty's reports read like two different sets of information. Nevertheless, the University's *Annual Report* and *Research Report* remain official records.

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

In this study, participation in research and scholarship became a focus. Establishing the degree to which academics participated in research and scholarship was important as it provided objective criteria which could be used by the faculty to identify and if necessary seed neophyte researchers and scholars. Thus, where four staff co-authored a paper or executed a research project, it was seen as involving four individuals and not .25 of a staff member as might be the case when performance is measured at established universities. While this method was imperfect and did not consider the quality or impact of the scholarship (Moed *et al.*, 1989), it was an important measure. In terms of building a university culture, participation by staff in research and scholarship is an indispensable element.

RESULTS

Drawing on the available data, Table 3 provides a general overview of productivity and participation in research and scholarship. Table 4 indicates the participation of the faculty's most active academics in securing research and scholarly outcomes. In terms of participation by academics in research and scholarship in 1994, the most significant finding was that 28 per cent of the faculty

Table 3. **Productivity and staff participation in research and scholarship**

	1990	Staff involved (%)	1991	Staff involved (%)	1994	staff involved (%)
Scholarship						
Scholarly works*	7	34	16	34	31	45
Conference papers	33	29	23	36	68	50
Research	14	36	12	34	16	36
Consultancies	2	7	1	2	2	9

* Books, edited material, journal articles, other refereed, etc.

Source: Author.

Table 4. **Participation of active academics in research and scholarship**

		Percentage		
		1990	1991	1994
		Level of involvement in all projects		
Research				
	Most productive academic	16	19	33
	Two most productive	31	32	60
		Level of involvement in all publications		
Scholarship				
	<i>Scholarly works</i>			
	Most productive academic	29	29	20
	Two most productive	54	46	33
	<i>Conference papers</i>			
	Most productive academic	18	23	13
	Two most productive	33	36	23

Source: Author.

reported “no participation”. While other staff produced papers, presented at conferences and conducted research, most tended to focus on one pursuit. Nevertheless, although increased productivity in scholarship was a promising sign of an emerging university culture, the relatively static levels of participation in research were less than encouraging. As well, only marginal increases in productivity in research were achieved by 1994.

DISCUSSION

Levels of participation

The level of active participation by staff emerged as a critical factor in determining the eventual profile of research, scholarship and teaching within the faculty. However, the results indicated that a significant number of faculty members had either marginal or no involvement in research and scholarship. Yet, the figure of 28 per cent “no participation” reported by faculty members in 1994 is remarkably consistent with the findings of the Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute (1996). The institute found that 27.6 per cent of American faculty failed to contribute articles to either refereed or professional journals. In this study, extenuating circumstances such as “work in progress” or “articles under review” were offered to explain low productivity in these areas for particular

years. However, such a defence failed to adequately explain non-productivity over consecutive years.

A positive outcome in research and scholarship in the faculty is revealed in the close analysis of the data. A shift in academic pursuits was discerned as the output of scholarship increased significantly. The growth in the number of conference papers in 1994 was certainly a seeding ground for research and more scholarly work in the faculty. As such, pursuits of this type were resolutely encouraged by management. However, by 1994 no researchers were actively engaged in producing conference papers. This seemed to indicate that researchers concentrated their efforts in achieving tangible outcomes which had significance for bibliometric data.

As the model of university funding which allocated resources to faculties based on their research performance (Fransson, 1989) began to be implemented within the university, non-competitive research waned. A close analysis of the data indicated that there were significantly fewer outcomes in the non-competitive area with neophytes contributing to increased productivity in scholarship. In contrast, there was a concentration of the research effort. Significant increases in the number of external competitive grants were achieved even though participation had remained steady. At the same time, more staff had begun to openly express their desire to become actively involved in the research process. Yet, experienced researchers were required to lead the way. The two most productive academics in research in 1994 were involved in achieving six out of the ten research outcomes. While these changes in pursuits increased faculty productivity accordingly, the evolving culture in the faculty may actually work against the long term development of research skills among the staff. In particular, the significant decline in the number of non-competitive research projects in 1994 was worrying because such projects are generally the terrain of neophyte researchers.

The emphasis on the research quantum implicitly reinforced the proposition that “brownie points” were really located in the production of competitive research and peer reviewed scholarship. In this milieu, fewer faculty members saw value in pursuing project or consultancy work. While many projects are competitive in the sense that the money is awarded on merit and the published results are frequently subjected to peer review, many academics suggested the time taken to prepare substantial submissions was not justified as it went unrecognised in workloads. In addition, the infrastructure introduced by the management of the new university meant that the process of applying for projects was now managed centrally with the university taking a substantial management fee for providing this service. What was previously handled pragmatically at the faculty level had become a “convoluted and superfluous process”. For some, it “was just not worth the strain and pain that comes when dealing with the central administration”. In a similar vein, experienced researchers shied away from secur-

ing project work to concentrate on competitive research. As one researcher put it, while “project work brings accolades to the faculty, there is more value for me in refereed publications and competitive research”. The new research emphasis in the faculty by 1993 posed strategic questions in the context of workloads. If funding was increasingly directly related to research and scholarly output, faculty managers seemed to have little option but to actively support staff who had either demonstrated a willingness to become involved in research or possessed a track record. Unfortunately, such positive discrimination will not always create an environment conducive to producing researchers and scholars in the longer term. In the shorter term, however, it may well bolster the faculty’s budget.

The number of PhDs within the faculty as well as the numbers engaged in higher degree studies positively influenced productivity in research and scholarship. Holders of PhDs had already received their research training, and in staffing terms, they were solid investments in the light of the emerging university culture. So too, as more staff engaged in pursuing higher degree studies, the production of conference and seminar papers increased. In the years in question, some 50 per cent of staff were pursuing higher degrees. Furthermore, there is also a correlation in this study between research and scholarly output and academic qualifications. Of the eight most productive academics in 1991 and 1992, six held a PhD degree. With increases in the number of PhDs, similar ratios emerged in 1994-96. There is another, perhaps less clear correlation between output and experience in the wider context. Those academics who were the most productive researchers and scholars had experience at established universities, even if it was only in the context of obtaining their PhD degree.

Teaching also emerged as a factor in the evolving profile of research and scholarship. Academics who taught at a distance or predominantly in the post graduate area believed they were “disadvantaged by the workload distribution” which assumed “all (had) equal teaching commitments”. Those who taught internally held similar views. Nevertheless, both groups saw significant differences in the time required to teach effectively at the undergraduate and post graduate levels. Many argued the case for loadings in these areas. Furthermore, regardless of teaching modes, all staff were keenly aware that their work of an entrepreneurial nature was seldom recognised formally by the faculty.

The extent to which workloads shaped productivity and participation is open to conjecture. No doubt, the influence of gender, marital status, ethnicity, change and peers also affected participation (Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). Yet, the reported low participation rate in research and scholarship by some staff caused concern for managers within the faculty, especially in the face of estimates which suggested these tasks should account for up to 35 per cent of an academic’s time. This issue was debated at various forums by management and staff. Schemes were implemented to increase the profile of research

and scholarship in the faculty. Informal mentoring was introduced in some research projects and conference funding was allocated competitively based on tangible outcomes. However, managers actually stopped short of directly asking unproductive academics in the area of research and scholarship what they did with their time. This question was begging to be asked, especially considering all academics in the faculty had an equal teaching load. Yet, in the collegial atmosphere of the faculty, accountability fell victim to consensus politics.

What faculty members think about teaching, research and scholarship

How staff members viewed the purpose of research, scholarship and teaching in higher education influenced the debate about the appropriate mix of these tasks within the faculty. While the attitudes of staff were diverse, four main bodies of opinion emerged. Each body of opinion recognised the fundamental role of teaching in achieving the mission of both the university and the faculty. One group of academics, or about 40 per cent of the faculty, however, saw teaching as the academic activity, *par excellence*. This tempered the view of other tasks with one lecturer boldly asserting that “researching and publishing papers (were not his) responsibility”. Another stated unequivocally that he originally “came (to the institution) to teach and that’s what (he would) continue to do”. Members of this group were prone to criticise those who they believed neglected teaching in pursuit of research, scholarship and entrepreneurial activity. Some academics were openly chastised for “dodging teaching”. The group also opposed priority funding for research and scholarship at the expense of teaching. These views were adhered to stoically given the fact that most academics in this group had originally arrived at the superseded institution when teaching was its primary function. Nevertheless, the views of this group had some credence among the faculty, principally because its members were people whose careers had matured with the institution. In many cases they had previously held senior positions in the institution and their knowledge of its history was considerable. Yet, in a wider context, the significance of the recent changes to the Australian higher education sector, begun in the late 1980s, was somewhat underscored by this group. They can be characterised as academics with parochial worldviews which influenced their attitudes toward the place of research, scholarship and teaching in a newly established university.

A second group consisted of approximately one third of the faculty. They recognised there was a pressing need to increase the profile of research and scholarship and were disposed to support innovative strategies in this regard. However, they were also ambivalent towards research and scholarship. One lecturer cited his “colossal teaching load” as an impediment to participating in research and scholarship while another felt that her “inequitable teaching load (meant she would be) lucky just to survive the semester”. Of course, the risk here

is that the quality of teaching will deteriorate if a person perceives their workload as excessive. Yet, as neophyte researchers, some accepted invitations from experienced researchers to join a project. Others were receptive to formal and informal mentoring schemes. The group also supported the allocation of faculty funds to seed research and group members drew on their considerable experience in teaching, learning and curriculum studies as a basis for commencing rudimentary research projects. Members of the group intermittently saw themselves as neophyte researchers and focused their non-teaching efforts on producing conference papers in sufficient numbers and elementary research projects to justify their employment in a competitive academic labour market. However, their actions implicitly reinforced teaching as a cardinal pursuit. In other words, despite a proclivity toward research and scholarship, their basic attitudes tended to be immutable. As a consequence of their actions, the *status quo* was maintained.

A third group, or about 15 per cent of the faculty, acknowledged the need to further develop research and scholarship in the faculty and pursued those ends vigorously through productivity in competitive and non-competitive areas. They viewed research and scholarship as obligations and surreptitiously criticised faculty members who failed to take this responsibility seriously. In the hard-nosed surroundings of a competitive university environment though, dedicating research funds to seed neophyte researchers was not a prudent investment. Basically, the group wanted a larger slice of the university's and faculty's research dollar for themselves. As one academic asserted, "the dean must back people who have a track record – I don't mind taking people on board but money is simply too scarce to throw at inexperienced researchers". Nevertheless, group members encouraged others to participate in their research and caustic replies followed when these overtures were rejected. This rejoinder would be exasperated if the rationale for rejection was related to workloads. One lecturer's position was that "you just have to find the time – being an academic is not a nine-to-five business". Individuals generally saw that all academics should pursue research and scholarship as a means of contributing to knowledge. However, a pragmatic side to the group's attitude was also evident as many viewed productivity in research and scholarship as an expeditious means of securing promotion. This group generally consisted of newcomers to the university who had brought with them experience gained at established institutions. They can be characterised as staff with cosmopolitan rather than parochial worldviews. This profile enabled them to incorporate interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches and establish inter-faculty and inter-institution links in their research and scholarship.

The final group held a similar view to the cosmopolitan view sketched above, but with two notable differences. They were overtly critical of the failure of the other groups to recognise research as the pinnacle of academic activity. The cardinal importance of scholarship in general and research in particular was

espoused in relevant faculty forums. Moreover, they embraced a rugged individualism. One member of this group responded to a neophyte researcher's declaration about the difficulties she faced in becoming involved in research with the gibe "if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen". Still another indicated that if a particular staff member "spent less time sitting in the staff room reading the newspaper and bleating about his workload, he might even manage to produce something". Generally, individuals in this group were strong leaders who gathered around them a small band of master's apprentices. They were academics with a competitive and discipline based research background which shaped their worldview. The cardinal place of research, and to a lesser extent scholarship, was seen by this group as a given in the faculty.

In the context of the above, worldviews of research, scholarship and teaching can be placed on a research-teaching, discipline-interdisciplinary continuum. While this topology delineates several worldviews, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. At least one point of intersection is the fundamental role of teaching in achieving a university's mission. Thus, none in the faculty believed that the establishment of anything like a "discrete research school" was a sensible proposition in a fledgling institution. The worldviews suggested that a mix of research, scholarship and teaching must be found which complemented the divergent views within the faculty.

Academics as mentors

Mentoring was seen by management as a relevant strategy to create commitment to research and scholarship. However, not everyone was convinced that mentoring schemes provided a realistic solution. While many experienced staff were committed to mentoring, the process of determining workloads failed to recognise the significant amount of time required to be an effective mentor. As a consequence, many staff shied away from mentoring in the face of perceived inequalities in their workloads. For one competitive researcher, mentoring was "a great idea, as long as someone else does it". Thus, in the case of the eight most productive researchers in the faculty, only three projects in which they were involved had a genuine mentoring scheme. While a few competitive researchers openly supported informal mentoring and encouraged neophyte researchers to avail themselves of the opportunity, most in this group felt that a PhD degree was the most appropriate path to acquiring research skills.

On the one hand, a belief that "mentoring offered significant opportunities and experience for new academics" was lauded. On the other hand, perceived anomalies in workloads forced some faculty members to conclude that "mentoring schemes (were) a waste of scarce time". Thus, mentoring in the faculty was strong at the level of rhetoric but weak in practice. Given the division of opinion

with regard to mentoring, the ideal course of action would have been to make mentoring an apportioned component of an academic's workload. This had not occurred in the latter stages of 1996.

The role of the faculty manager

The role of a faculty manager with regard to influencing the mix of research, scholarship and teaching was an arduous one. The senior faculty management deliberated on the long term implications of acquiring funds based on the research quantum. In addition, management appraised the diverse range of opinions in the faculty about the ideal combination of research, scholarship and teaching. These were complex and on-going undertakings because even "the teachers" saw anomalies in their workloads as a result of the area in which they taught. The diversity of opinion generally in the faculty began to affect morale.

In the faculty in early 1993, morale was low for several reasons. Future directions in teacher education were uncertain and there had been significant changes to both the university's and faculty's key management positions since 1989. While feelings of uncertainty will generally exist in times of change, the sustained and still unresolved debate about the place of research, scholarship and teaching appeared to have adversely affected morale. No doubt, when academics identify challenges to their *raison d'être* appearing on the horizon, periods of cynicism will ensue.

One option for the faculty to diffuse these feelings of trepidation was to establish a discrete graduate school within the faculty as a means of ensuring a viable balance between research, scholarship and teaching without devaluing the role of teaching. Such a development may have allayed the fears of all concerned about how the faculty would develop to the year 2000 and beyond. However, faculty management avoided considering this option seriously in the belief that it "would create a group of second class citizens". Yet, staff either possessed or did not possess the experience and qualifications to warrant belonging to a graduate school. Membership seemed to be a case of self-selection. This was especially so given that some 28 per cent of the faculty reported no involvement in research and scholarship over prolonged periods. In addition, there was a correlation between those who held parochial worldviews and a lack of participation in research and scholarship. However, if it could be assumed that "teachers" were the most ideal people at the teaching workplace, the notion of a graduate and undergraduate school might be sustained. Yet, it was not quite that simple. Curiously, the most outstanding undergraduate teacher in the faculty was also a collaborative researcher and scholar. In addition, comparatively fewer of those who held parochial worldviews competed successfully for grants in areas such as curriculum, learning and teaching compared to those with more cosmopolitan

views of the world. However, the benefits of creating a graduate school with a focus on research and scholarship, and attaching less experienced staff periodically to this structure, seemed to outweigh the disadvantages of creating a two tiered system. The caveat placed on this development was that teaching excellence would not be lost to undergraduate students. Nevertheless, the development of a two tiered system was still bubbling away in the faculty in late 1996.

Another option for management to increase the profile of research and scholarship was executive action. However, in the collegial environment which permeated the faculty, this option was rarely exercised. Long terms goals were seen to be best achieved by either stealth or default. That is, promote research and scholarship in faculty policy and inexorably move toward its full implementation. However, in a five year period, the faculty lost seven of its senior staff including five PhDs, three members of the professorate and two other senior academics. Most had moved to senior positions at more established universities. In all cases these staff members held cosmopolitan worldviews or were competitive researchers. While the positions were generally filled by equally qualified external appointments, many of the management positions vacated by the departing staff were filled by existing faculty members, many of whom adhered to a parochial view of the world. As key staff moved on, a parochial worldview gained strength. However, the extent to which this mindset motivated staff to seek greener pastures is debatable. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence support this interpretation and the management profile in the faculty in 1997 is remarkably similar to that which existed in 1987. As one exasperated faculty member strongly asserted at a management meeting, “the more policies and ideas we put in place to activate change, the more we stay the same”.

CONCLUSIONS

While the case study reported here is of limited scope, some preliminary conclusions can be made. Some academics were far more productive than others in research and scholarship and this emerged as a significant factor in the faculty’s attempt to grapple with the institution’s university status. Of course, further work is required to determine whether the levels of productivity accomplished by some were not achieved by “dodging teaching”. In terms of management responses to the issue, more decisive action may have had positive consequences for the morale of the faculty. There can be little doubt that morale suffered when the perception existed that the few carried the many in a faculty where the benefits were shared equally (Bélanger, 1990).

The case for introducing more organised approaches to mentoring within the faculty as a harbinger of a university culture was also reinforced given the

difficulties faced by the faculty in implementing a scheme voluntarily. Researchers who saw themselves as mentors could have played a leading role by involving other staff in research and scholarship, but to be effective they needed to be formally recognised by the faculty for their contribution. The findings of this study partly supported the case for separating teaching and research in the faculty. A graduate school which provided a focus for research and scholarship as well as teaching, might have been a step to resolving workload anomalies.

Finally, while the case for seeking alternatives to the *status quo* was justified, solutions could not be found in consensus politics. This conundrum arose partly because academics were not held accountable for what they actually did in the faculty. Ultimately, the issue of the place of research, scholarship and teaching posed a significant dilemma for management. While it was a relatively uncomplicated task to identify productivity in research and scholarship (Jauch and Glueck, 1975), formulating appropriate responses to induce changes in the behaviour of unproductive academics was another issue entirely. If one accepts the proposition that teaching and research can coexist and staff should actively pursue all academic tasks, then those who shirk this responsibility can be held accountable by management. However, if one believes teaching and research are “inescapably incompatible”, the case for a graduate school is strengthened. In this scenario academics are still accountable, but their roles are more clearly defined. In either case, skilled higher education management is the prerequisite for change.

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REFORM AND CHANGE IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: THE NEED FOR AN HOLISTIC APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

A critical aspect of the higher education reform movement in Central and Eastern Europe is the maintenance of a balance between greater institutional autonomy and public accountability. This is particularly evident in the area of financial management and gives rise to interesting comparisons with experience from United Kingdom universities where the search for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the management of increasingly scarce resources has led to enhanced devolution of budgetary responsibility. This article reports on findings from research which analysed the experience at two United Kingdom universities. Drawing upon collaboration with universities in Romania and the Republic of Macedonia those findings are related to the reform movement in Central and Eastern Europe where institutional managers are facing planning and resource allocation issues associated with decentralisation, formulaic approaches and increased transparency. On the basis of the findings, it is argued that institutions will need to adopt an holistic approach to the management of change and address a wide range of issues related to staff, structure and systems if effective financial management is to be achieved.

INTRODUCTION

The current higher education reform movement within Central and Eastern Europe is leading to some interesting comparisons with the situation in the United Kingdom. The purpose of this article is to relate the findings from research at two United Kingdom universities during the late 1980s and early 1990s (Thomas, 1995) to the situation currently facing institutional managers in the increasingly autonomous universities of Central and Eastern Europe. Examples will be drawn in particular from recent collaboration between the United Kingdom and Romania where the theme of reform and change in higher education is becoming well documented (Mihailescu and Vlasceanu, 1994; Sadlak, 1994; Eisemon *et al.*, 1995) and the Republic of Macedonia on which little has yet been written.

Fundamental to this reform movement is the need to enhance managerial capability in the face of the greater responsibilities which enhanced autonomy brings with it. The meaning of autonomy, however, is a complex issue and cannot be divorced from the parallel theme of accountability (Mauch and Sabloff, 1995). Within this context workshops were held in March 1995 at the CEPES-UNESCO headquarters in Bucharest and two months later in Skopje under the auspices of the Open Society Institute (OSI) and CEPES. The workshops were attended by rectors and senior staff from Romanian and Macedonian universities respectively and have led to further interaction through study visits and seminars. It was apparent from the discussion and reports from working groups at those workshops that the theme of policy and change in higher education and the relationship between autonomy and accountability were of particular significance in the area of financial management.

In Romania, for instance, urgency was given to the situation in the context of the Romanian Education Law, 1995 which established a Higher Education Funding Council charged with the task of advising the Minister of Education on "the annual allocation of budgetary funds to higher education institutions" (CNFIS, 1995, para 1.2*b*). The principle to be adopted is that in allocating core funding: "resources should follow students" (CNFIS, 1995, para. 2.1). The Council has only recently begun to discharge its responsibilities, but it is already evident that the change from a centralised, historic system to a new formulaic methodology will involve a shift in resources between institutions and that the movement towards enhanced institutional autonomy will place upon managers wider discretion and greater responsibility than hitherto for the internal allocation of those funds. Meanwhile, in the Republic of Macedonia, senior staff perceive a need for the development of "new criteria for the distribution of resources" and an increase in transparency in funding methodology (Macedonia, 1995).

The above paragraphs highlight two issues: the way in which funds are allocated to institutions and the way in which institutions allocate those funds to their constituent parts. This paper relates primarily to the latter issue, but the evidence from the United Kingdom is that the former can affect the latter in that increased transparency in national funding methodologies increases pressure on managers to create income and expenditure accounts for each academic unit and to use those accounts as a basis for internal allocations. This development has taken place alongside a decline in government funding with consequential pressure for increased efficiency and effectiveness in the management of resources and a need to encourage academic departments to earn more non-government income. There has therefore been a move in some United Kingdom institutions towards greater devolution of budgetary responsibility to a departmental, faculty or school level.

These issues of internal resource allocation, and in particular the concepts of budgetary devolution and the use of formulaic approaches, are already emerging as issues of debate amongst institutional managers in universities in Central and Eastern Europe. Romania, for instance, has adopted a funding methodology not dissimilar to that of the United Kingdom in which the Funding Council will allocate a block grant to each university, whereas in the Republic of Macedonia where universities "are rather loose associations of faculties and other institutions (...) with a very limited degree of power for the university as such and a very high degree of independence of the member institutions" (Soptrajanov, 1995), government allocates grant directly to faculties with a consequential issue of the role of the university *vis à vis* the faculties in the planning process (Macedonia, 1995). These issues are, of course, influenced by the history and culture of the various countries.

It is not the purpose here to dwell on the consequences following from those different traditions, but to note that in both countries institutional managers are beginning to grapple with the managerial issues of planning and resource allocation which greater financial autonomy brings. On the evidence of recent research in the United Kingdom, changes from historic, centralised systems to devolved, formula-based systems are as much about cultural change as financial management (Thomas, 1996). The thrust of this article is that if this change process is to be effective institutional managers must adopt an holistic approach to financial management. To adopt a particular technique or methodology with the aim of improving the efficient and effective management of resources may not in itself achieve the desired outcome unless accompanied by supporting action. Moreover, the United Kingdom experience also confirms that enhanced autonomy carries with it a responsibility at both departmental and senior university management level to implement effective systems of accountability. This experience from the United Kingdom based on greater devolution from the university to

the faculty or departmental level is equally applicable to the situation facing managers in Central and Eastern Europe where the issue is one of devolution from governmental to institutional level.

This paper will therefore explore the experience from the United Kingdom mindful of some of the issues which are likely to face managers in Central and Eastern European institutions in the context of greater autonomy and accountability in the area of financial management.

CONCEPT OF AN HOLISTIC APPROACH

The concept of an holistic approach to management is well documented in the literature. Leavitt (1965), for instance, classified organisations as a diamond in which task, technology, structure and people were seen as interacting variables which are highly inter-dependent. This is consistent with two other concepts: that of "organisational architecture" which views organisations in terms of work, people and the formal and informal organisational arrangements (Kochan and Useem, 1992); and that of the "high-performance work system" which brings together work, people, technology and information in a manner that optimises congruence or "fit" among them (Nadler *et al.*, 1992).

None of these variables is static, however, "so that change in any one usually results in compensatory (or retaliatory) change in others" (Leavitt, 1965, p. 1145). Moreover, changes to the variables "could presumably be consciously intended, or they could occur as unforeseen and often costly outcomes of efforts to change only one or two of the variables" (Leavitt, 1965, 1145). As Donaldson (1987) has observed failure to appreciate the inter-related nature of these variables may lead to a period of mismatch, a view shared by Mohrman and Lawler (1993) who stated that "organisational change is not just a matter of changing technologies, structures, and tasks. More fundamentally it entails a change in values and beliefs that employees hold" (p. 242). The introduction of new resource allocation methodologies, which is the focus of this article, clearly changes the tasks expected from members of staff and affects their goals, but as Perrow (1967) observed "for a radical change in goals to be a successful one, it may require a change in technology, and thus in structure, or else there will be a large price paid for the lack of fit between these variables".

These internal variables, however, are also subject to influences from the external environment (Stacey, 1993). It is the challenge of management to maintain "dynamic equilibrium" between these different sets of forces (Scott Morton, 1992). As Shattock (1992) has observed, three universities in the United Kingdom

which encountered special financial difficulties in the 1980s “seem to have based their policies on a false view of the external environment” (p. 249).

UNITED KINGDOM EXPERIENCE

Turning now to the experience in the United Kingdom in seeking more efficient and effective methods of allocating increasingly scarce resources, the methodology at both a national and institutional level has become more formula-based. At a national level, an historic funding pattern was replaced in 1986 when the University Grants Committee (UGC) introduced selectivity in the funding of research based on an assessment of the strength of each university department's research and a funding methodology for teaching which was based on student numbers and a unit of resource which varied between subjects but not between universities (UGC, 1985). Although the methodology was made clear by the UGC the various coefficients in the formula were not divulged. When the Universities Funding Council (UFC) replaced the UGC in 1989, however, it became more open about the coefficients it used, whilst maintaining the concept of a block grant to universities and insisting that it was the universities' responsibility to determine how funds were allocated internally. This policy was maintained when the UFC was itself replaced in 1992 by the Higher Education Funding Councils, although there are still some areas of historic opaqueness in the methodology (Johnston, 1993).

This greater transparency at a national level impacted on internal resource allocation procedures. Some universities had adopted a formulaic approach in determining allocations to academic departments for some years. These methodologies had varied between institutions (Shattock and Rigby, 1983), but now that institutions knew how much each of their basic units was “earning” there became greater pressure to reflect the national formula at an institutional level. Encouraged by the comments in the Jarratt Report (1985) on Efficiency Studies in Universities, the adoption of departmental profit and loss statements became, in some institutions, an increasingly significant performance indicator in the allocation of resources.

Alongside this movement towards more formulaic approaches, there developed a trend towards enhanced devolution to faculties and/or departments. There had always been some delegation to these levels, but, again under the influence of the Jarratt Report (1985), the range of expenditure which was delegated increased. Responses varied between institutions with the most significant changes occurring in those universities which delegated salary expenditure as over 70 per cent of a department's costs fell under this budget head. Perhaps of even more significance than the range of items delegated was the fact that in

some institutions heads of budget centres were given wider powers of virement between budget heads and were allowed to carry forward from one year to the next surpluses and deficits.

Moreover, combined with the introduction of formulaic approaches, incentive schemes began to be incorporated into the resource allocation methodology. For instance, a specified percentage of research overheads or fees from overseas students was allocated to those departments attracting that income. Such developments introduced a level of expectancy into departmental strategic planning in that certain activity was known to attract certain income. The intention was to make clear at a departmental level the pressures of the turbulent external environment and to encourage, through flexibility, empowerment and an entrepreneurial attitude, income generating activity and the more efficient and effective management of resources.

CONSEQUENCES

The above section has given a very brief outline of what has been a complex and far reaching process. It is becoming evident, however, that devolved, formula-based approaches to financial management need not necessarily represent the preferred or the optimal response in the search for efficient and effective management of resources. Williams (1992), for instance, found in a survey of fourteen universities a range of practices from those institutions which had substantial devolution to a departmental level to those which claimed little movement towards devolution. Consequently, he sees such models as “points on a spectrum” between central control of resources and autonomy to a department or faculty. Such views are consistent with those of Sharpe (1994) whose analysis of the management of the schools system in Australia leads him to discuss devolution in terms of a continuum.

The findings of Williams (1992) and Sharpe (1994) provide valuable background to a recent in-depth study of two United Kingdom universities which have adopted concepts of devolved financial management (Thomas, 1995). The findings from that study indicate that attempts at improving financial management by adopting devolved, formula-based systems of resource allocation can lead to unexpected consequences (Thomas, 1997) and can be counter productive unless accompanied by an holistic approach to the management of change.

The experience shows that the introduction of such systems affects the tasks of members of staff. Members of the senior management team and heads of department have to become adept at understanding and manipulating data. This comes more naturally to some heads of department than others. Generalisations

are always dangerous, but by training and professional background the science orientated heads of department may be more comfortable with such an approach than their arts-based colleagues. With their responsibility to represent the interests of their department in the various forums of the university, those heads with a ready understanding of the methodology will be found to have an advantage in the micro-political environment which surrounds the resource allocation process. Indeed the study demonstrated that the introduction of a formulaic methodology did not lessen the part played by sub-unit power which others have found to be influential in the allocation process (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1974; Salancik and Pfeffer, 1974; Hills and Mahoney, 1978), particularly during times of financial restraint (Davies, 1985). Moreover, wider budgetary responsibilities inevitably test the management capabilities of heads of department. In particular, the "worry factor" for a head of a department in deficit can be considerable.

Not only has devolution had a considerable impact on the tasks of heads of department, it was also noticeable that at the level of the central administration there was a necessity for a change in roles. In particular, there was a shift in emphasis towards: an interpretative and tutorial service for deans and heads of department; a change from an establishment function to a more managerial and advisory function in the Personnel Office; and a need to increase and extend the financial management capability in the Finance Office. As a consequence, there became a qualitative difference in the work required from many members of staff in the central administration. As one member of staff observed, it was no longer a matter of simply processing routine things: more imagination was required and the job became more demanding.

IMPLICATIONS

To transfer the findings of the study to the context of Central and Eastern Europe is, of course, fraught with difficulties. Limited resources, legal constraints and established practices all provide formidable obstacles. Nevertheless, "pressure to reform the financing of higher education has mounted in virtually every part of the world" (Ziderman and Albrecht, 1995, p. 1). Those pressures were noticeable during discussion at the workshops in Macedonia and Romania and are indicative of the additional responsibility placed on institutional managers as a consequence of the shift from strong central governmental control of detailed decision making to greater institutional autonomy and accountability. On the basis of the study effective response to these pressures will require an holistic approach addressing issues of staff development, management information systems and institutional structure. Each of these three aspects will be considered in turn.

Firstly, devolution is as much concerned with cultural change as with financial management. Consequently it needs to be recognised that the institution is a collection of individuals and that the staff have to be prepared for the change. As Palfreyman (1989) has observed, change to an entrepreneurial culture requires not only consideration of issues of efficiency and effectiveness, but also a sensitivity to the people orientated issues of skills, style and shared values. Such an approach is dependent on changing the attitude and value systems of individuals and on internal problem solving, involving flexibility and informal networks.

Such changes imply two consequences: a programme of training and development for academic and administrative staff needs to be established as part of a wider organisational learning process; and the appointment of staff to senior positions such as dean and head of department needs to take into account managerial as well as academic capability. There is of course a conflict here between managerial and academic imperatives, for the need to emphasise management skills for heads of department may be to the detriment of their academic work and personal satisfaction. The danger is that recognition of a training requirement follows the change process rather than being used to prepare staff in advance.

Secondly, a successful system of devolution relies on an adequate university-wide management information system. Such systems require the provision of timely, consistent and easily understood information which is consistent between academic departments and the central administration and between the various task areas within the central administration. The evidence from the study is that variations in the nature of budget centres through size, discipline and historic preference, lead to the growth of different management information systems; a multiplicity of budget centres increases the difficulty of establishing a campus-wide integrated system; and the development of such a system requires micro-political as well as rational argument. Notwithstanding these factors, failure to ensure that such systems are in place before the level of devolution is increased will lead to duplication of effort, an increase in overhead costs and a potential for serious financial mismanagement.

Thirdly, the study demonstrates the importance of appropriate institutional structures, in particular in terms of the role of committees, the designated budgetary unit and administrative support. Critical committees exist in relation to the resource allocation process and the composition of these committees influenced behaviour patterns, the details of the approach adopted and the level of effectiveness. In particular, the membership of deans or heads of department introduced a conflict between their representational and managerial roles leading to micro-political influence in determining what are presented as objective data. On the other hand, a smaller committee with a narrower membership base, may not be conducive to a wide university ownership of issues. Moreover, even the

objectively presented decisions of a small, non-representational committee reflect the values and perceptions of the change agents.

One of the decisions which these critical committees will have to make is the appropriate level to which to devolve. The evidence of the study is that the primary academic unit is assumed to be the appropriate managerial unit. Much will depend upon the culture of the institution, but there will be significant repercussions from this decision. For instance, many small departments may be viable academic units but may be too small to be able to exercise the financial flexibility which devolution is supposed to offer. On the other hand when a budget centre is created above the level of the historically accepted basic unit by amalgamating small departments for managerial purposes, there appears a tendency to create a secondary mechanism for the distribution of resources to those smaller units.

Consistent with what has been said above about the training and appointment of senior staff, it is important that heads of budget centres have the structural and personal authority to implement change. The concept of elected chairmanship, still prevalent in some institutions, has to give way to appointed academic managers if the concept of devolution is to prove an effective approach. Similarly, such a shift of emphasis requires a re-orientation of administrative support. Devolution and formula-based systems provide budget centres with an opportunity to influence their own futures within the university's overall strategic policy. Such an approach implies a level of decentralisation in administrative support, with administrative staff becoming "part of integrative problem-solving groups rather than resentful onlookers sharpshooting from the outside" (Thompson, 1965). The extent to which this decentralisation will be physical will depend upon the size and structure of the institution. There is, however, a need for what might be described as "psychological devolution" of administrative functions with support staff seeing their role as a facilitator and encourager and as an integrative part of budget centres' hopes and aspirations, whilst at the same time maintaining their monitoring role.

In summary, the experience from the United Kingdom study is that in addressing issues of financial management, and in accepting the responsibility associated with increased decentralisation, institutional managers in Central and Eastern Europe will need to adopt an holistic approach and will need in particular to:

- prepare and train staff in techniques associated with financial management;
- institute staff development policies and programmes;
- emphasise the importance of communication between staff working in different areas of the institution;

- implement appointment and promotion procedures which recognise the need to recruit and maintain high calibre staff who can exercise flexibility, initiative and responsibility;
- understand and appreciate funding methodologies employed by the government and/or its funding agencies;
- develop management information systems which can effectively support the new tasks expected from managers;
- review institutional structures (both officer structures and committee structures) to ensure that they can support the speedy decision-making which a competitive environment demands.

These may sound daunting objectives especially in view of the legal and financial contexts in which managers in central and eastern Europe are operating, but, as Ziderman and Albrecht (1995, p. 139) have observed, “overwhelming dependency on government has often left institutions ill equipped to manage their affairs effectively. Capacity building through management information systems, staff training and the development of a management culture within universities will have to complement financial reform”. The thrust of this article is that failure to address such issues may lead to goal displacement, with the institution being diverted from its primary role of teaching and research. It is therefore contended that effective management of change is dependent upon an holistic approach which recognises the inter-dependence of organisational variables and that a unitary approach, concentrating on only one variable is unlikely to be successful.

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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN RESEARCH FUNDING

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the impact of new funding arrangements for research in Sweden which are intended to cause a shift from the emphasis on disciplinary-based research (Mode 1) to multidisciplinary and problem focused research (Mode 2). It focuses on management at the institutional level. It will analyse the tension between the university as a unit for academic freedom and autonomy, and controls exercised by external funding bodies, private or public. The interviews with vice-chancellors indicate a strategic approach in order to meet requirement of stability, flexibility and autonomy of the institution.

INTRODUCTION

This paper analyses the impact of new funding arrangements for research in Sweden which are intended to cause a shift from the emphasis on disciplinary-based research to multidisciplinary and problem focused research. It focuses on management at the institutional level. It will analyse the tension between the university as a unit for academic freedom and autonomy, and controls exercised by external funding bodies, private or public.

There is a discussion today on a new way to create new knowledge. As opposed to the traditional intra-disciplinary method, the new way is pursued externally and has the aim of producing knowledge effectively. In the book *The*

New Production of Knowledge – The dynamics of science and research in contemporary societies (Gibbons *et al.*, 1994) the authors claim that a new way of producing new knowledge is being developed in parallel with the traditional way. The authors have named the models Mode 1 and Mode 2. Mode 1 is the traditional, intra-disciplinary way of creating new knowledge. The curiosity of scientists and their search for truth are the main driving forces. No direct importance is attached to the *usefulness* of the new knowledge. Critical thinking and testing that the knowledge is in some sense true are the central ingredients of this model. The intra-disciplinary criteria guarantee the quality of the research. In Mode 1 research matters are formulated and solved within the subject disciplines.

Mode 2 is multi-disciplinary and problem-based. The questions are posed in the environment in which the knowledge shall be applied. While Mode 1 is characterised by homogeneity and preserving the hierarchic organisation, Mode 2 has the characteristics of heterogeneity and a variable organisation. It includes different parties which work together on a problem which has been defined in a special and local context.

The models are based on different types of quality control. In Mode 1 prevailing intra-disciplinary criteria constitute the quality control. The questions posed are intra-disciplinary and the new knowledge is tested against earlier experience. The central issue is whether the knowledge is true in some sense of the term. The discussion takes place in a spirit of a *Context of Justification* to use Karl Popper's terminology. The driving force is the search for knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

The driving force behind Mode 2 is that the knowledge shall be of use to someone – industry, the state, or society in general. The knowledge is developed in an environment which has the character of negotiations between parties. Efficiency in the process of producing knowledge and usefulness of the knowledge produced are the central criteria in Mode 2. The authors point out the complementary relationship between the two modes. Mode 1 is a necessary prerequisite for the problem solving in Mode 2. But Mode 1 is not always adequate and therefore the intra-disciplinary criteria for quality control are supplemented by aspects of efficiency and usefulness in Mode 2.

During recent years considerable changes have taken place in the Swedish system for funding research. New sources of funds in the form of private research foundations and the research funds of the EU Commission have entered the Swedish research arena. These new sources have the special aim of supporting research which is considered useful and which can improve the competitiveness of trade and industry, *i.e.* research according to Mode 2.

PROBLEM FORMULATION

The problem which shall be analysed is how the universities, as autonomous organisations, manage to balance research work initiated by themselves according to Mode 1, and the external requirements on research work made under Mode 2. Three questions will be addressed:

1. In what way will research grants from external funders affect the management of institutions, especially the allocation of resources within the institution?
2. A crucial question is whether the funders of Mode 2 want to create new units within the universities, which are separate from the basic units, *e.g.* the subject-based departments.

To be able to answer the question of how universities regard the development of units which are separate from the basic units, the concept “unit” needs to be defined. Here everything is conceivable on a scale from loosely linked temporary networks to units which have premises and employees of their own outside the traditional institutional structure, *e.g.* physically separate organisations. In the following I will refer to *network* as the loosest form of co-operation. The next stage on the scale is the special *centre*. These are somewhat more permanent than networks. A centre can be a separate unit from the accounting point of view (an account or profit centre) and in certain cases can have a part-time administrator or director. At the other end of the scale we have *institute*. These have permanent organisational resources in the form of staff and premises. In certain cases these institutes can have their own premises with the institute’s name over the doorway.

3. Will the new external setting, with several different funding bodies, increase the autonomy of institutions? Or will there be an increased tension between the management of the institution and the academic leaders of the faculty board in defending different values in the system? (See the normative modes in Becher and Kogan, 1992, p. 10). For instance, the management of the institution may pursue control and efficiency according to Mode 2, meanwhile the faculty board might defend values according to Mode 1.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative and is based on interviews with vice-chancellors and/or pro-vice-chancellors, and bursars, as well as with deans and other representa-

tives of faculties. The interviews took place at the universities of Gothenburg, Linköping, Lund, Stockholm, Umeå, and Uppsala, and the Royal Caroline Institute, Chalmers University of Technology and the Royal Institute of Technology.*

THE CREATION OF A NEW FUNDING ARENA

In addition to the funding of research by the government, research councils and sector organisations, new funders have entered the Swedish research arena since 1994. Amongst these are the foundations established by the non-Socialist Government with money from the so-called "collective wage earners' investment funds". In total, eleven foundations were established. Among them the Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research, the Foundation of Knowledge and Competence Development, and the Foundation for Strategic Research. These foundations were established as private organisations. This meant that their operations lay outside the control of the Government.

The foundations were created to support research according to Mode 2 in order to increase the competitiveness of Swedish industry and companies. The aim is to build research environments, organised on a more or less permanent basis, for universities and trade and industry. An explicit condition stipulated by the funders is that the knowledge shall have practical relevance and be useful. The Foundation for Strategic Research wants to contribute to the development of Swedish research and postgraduate studies with the objective of strengthening Sweden's competitiveness. The Foundation of Knowledge and Competence Development wants to support higher academic education, for example persons with postgraduate degrees who have strong links with Swedish trade and industry. The Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research wants to promote the development of strong research environments of the highest international class of importance for Sweden's future competitiveness. Research shall be of significance for the solution of major environmental problems and for environmentally-friendly social development.

After heated political discussions in the autumn 1996, the Socialist Government managed to turn the private foundations into public foundations. The members of the boards will now be appointed by the government. But the aims of the

* The study was conducted within the work of The National Agency for Higher Education in Sweden, at the request of a government commission on the financing of research, in the autumn 1995. This article draws in part on that report published in Swedish in an Official Reports of the Swedish Government (SOU). See SOU 1996:29. "Forskning och Pengar", bilaga 5, "Externfinansieringens påverkan på fakultetsanslag och organisation inom universitet och högskolor", by Sjölund, Maivor and Odeberg, Stefan.

foundations have not, so far, been changed. Still they will contribute to research useful for trade and industry.

Another research programme was the establishment of so-called “competence centres” by a central government agency, the National Board for Industrial and Technical Development (NUTEK). These are funded by the government with the aim of building up centres for trade and industry and research. One of NUTEK’s criteria for building a competence centre is that the work done there shall be of importance for industry and the centre shall include researchers working with companies on an exchange basis.

Moreover, as a member State in the European Union, it is now possible for Sweden to apply for research funds administered by the Union. According to EU’s Fourth Frame Program relevance and usefulness are required for funding of research.

This implies that all the newly established foundations on the Swedish arena promote research according to the values in Mode 2. Another important condition on the part of the funders is that they require counterpart financing from the university for the project. This means that if the external funder provides half or a third of the funds for a project the university is expected to contribute a corresponding amount.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

In what way will research grants from external funders affect the allocation of resources at the faculty board?

The aim here is to analyse whether there is a correlation between the ability of a basic units, *e.g.* a subject discipline, to attain external resources and the allocation of money from the faculty board to the basic unit.

This correlation can be either positive or negative. A positive correlation implies that the faculty board wants to create an incentive structure for the basic units to compete, on a scientific ground, for external money. It can be seen as a quality label if the subject discipline in a peer reviewed process will get money for research.

A negative correlation implies that the faculty board, from a scientific perspective, will support basic units who fails to gain money from external funders. That may be small unique subjects or new subjects with few external funders.

The analysis show that the norms for distribution of money at the faculty board will be decided by the faculty board itself. There are different norms and formulas developed by different faculty boards. There are differences between faculty boards within the same institutions, and there are differences between

institutions as well. For instance, the faculty board of medical science in Stockholm will not use the same norms as other faculty boards in medical science at other universities.

However, it is clear from the interviews that there is a correlation between the ability of a subject discipline to gain grants in scientific competition and the money allocated from the faculty board. A successful basic unit will get more money from the faculty board. The norms and the calculation of how much money they will get as a reward will differ between the faculty boards, but there is a clear link in the majority of the cases.

But this is true only for grants obtained at research councils. The reason is the use of peer reviews for ranking applications. Grants obtained from funders such as the new foundations, described above, will not be followed by the same rewards from the faculty board. That implies that only research grants according to Mode 1 will be regarded by the faculty board as high quality research projects.

With a few exceptions the faculties are using a direct and positive link between the ability of a subject discipline to get external, peer reviewed, money, as a criteria for allocating resources. However, it is worth noting that only 10 per cent of the resources of the faculty board will be distributed in this way. The rest, 90 per cent, is tied up in permanent positions and other costs.

Even though a subject discipline may get only a small amount of money in the competition at the faculty board, the incentive system seems to work. The impression is that most parts are positive towards the system. It is interesting to note that the government has refrained from implementing a similar system at the national level.

The tendency of external financing to create new units according to Mode 2 next to departments

In interviews with university leaders it has emerged that external financing has a tendency to create units beside the basic units. For the universities this means that a dual strategy must be adopted. On the one hand the universities are interested in attracting new research resources to the universities. On the other hand the universities want to retain the initiative and decide themselves on the use of these funds.

The analysis shows that no permanent units have been established beside the basic units through the initiatives or demands of external financiers. The permanent units which do exist have, as a rule, been established by governmental decision. It can also be difficult to determine whether a unit has been established completely through the sole initiative of an external party. It is often a case of interaction between an individual researcher, or group of researchers, who have an idea for research work and a common interest with an external party.

Neither have NUTEK's competence centres, which are co-financed by NUTEK, the universities, and trade and industry, been given their own organisations with premises and employees. NUTEK's purpose has been to create a "long-term (5-10 year) concentration of resources with a sufficient critical content". The intention has been to create an organisational location and identity in these centres, with their own name on the door, so that companies can easily find their way in the research environment. However, during negotiations with the universities these competence centres have rather been given the form of special centres in the university. One requirement on the part of NUTEK has been that the centres shall have a director and shall be an independent accounting unit. There shall also be a board of directors for each centre with representatives of trade and industry. But the study shows that the active researchers are employed by the university departments.

The analysis indicates that there is some tension between the ambitions of the external funders and the strategy of the faculty or university to create the right environment for education and long-term research. The principle behind the university's policy is that there shall be a very close connection between education and research. According to university leaders this connection can be weakened if research is transferred to units outside the basic units which are responsible for basic education programmes at the universities. There is a danger that the direct link to education will be lost. Let us take a few examples from the faculty of social sciences at the University of Stockholm.

The Institute for International Economics, which came into existence in 1962 on the initiative of Professor Gunnar Myrdal and which, during recent years, has been led by Professor Assar Lindbeck, is internationally recognised. However the Department of Economics at the University of Stockholm tends to be overshadowed by this successful institute. It can therefore be difficult for the Department to attract the best researchers for research and education. This problem has been solved by the Department entering into agreements with researchers at the Institute so that they fulfil a teaching obligation at the Department. In this way the link between research and teaching is maintained. Other departments have also engaged researchers from institutes in a similar way for teaching basic courses.

Another problem which can arise through the establishment of institutes for specific research purposes is that the parent discipline can be depleted of research problems. At the University of Stockholm there is, for example, a Centre for Immigration Research (established by a decision of the government) and a centre for research into the public sector (SCORE) (decided on by the government after negotiations with the faculty). This means that immigration research and analyses of the problems of the public sector have "left" their basic units. The departments can therefore be said to have been depleted where the content of research is concerned.

This must be weighed against the fact that research work can develop positively in its own environment. But there is also a danger in establishing research fields which are too narrowly defined. In the long term the research environment itself can be depleted since the environment can become far too uniform. The lack of regular contact with students at basic level as well as with research students can also mean that in the long term the research environment will become diluted.

The practical strategy, which clearly emerged during the interviews, is that all persons who are active in a university should have their base, their work and their identity in a subject-based departments. This applies to both teachers and doctoral students. The foundation of the universities, and therefore their stability, is the subject-based departments. From this foundation networks and special centres can be extended or can be closed as questions and fields of research change. Traditional research (basic research) and the search for knowledge takes place in the departments according to Mode 1 without regard to the direct productive usefulness of the knowledge. In the centres researchers, doctoral students and practitioners meet to solve jointly formulated problems. In this process, which is similar to Mode 2, new knowledge is generated by problem solving. This knowledge can then be brought back to the departments. This takes place partly via researchers who take up and discuss the new knowledge in their teaching, and partly by doctoral students who apply and develop the new knowledge in their doctoral theses and teaching.

There are organisational (accounting) reasons as well as reasons in respect of content for this strategy. Administrative difficulties would arise if a person was to draw salary and take vacation from different organisational units at the same university. It is also complicated to account for doctoral students on different accounts. And not least the present "payment by results" system in which the university receives a payment for every successful doctoral thesis speaks in favour of a permanent attachment of the students to one basic unit. If doctoral students are organisationally attached to a multi-disciplinary unit which has research programmes of its own, the delicate task arises of allocating the performance of the students between this unit and the examining department.

This strategy means that the universities work against solutions which would mean the establishment of permanent units (institutes) with their own personnel and employees beside the department structure. These types of units lead to the adoption of certain solutions which can obstruct future development and flexibility. When the research problems which were the underlying reason for the establishment of a special institute eventually become obsolete, inertia will set in and obstacles to change will arise. The dismissal of staff and the closing of premises usually has a draining effect on the resources and energy of an organisation. If all the staff are based in a department they can return to their posts there – or go to

a new special centres to deal with new problems. In this way the subject-based departments represent stability in research work while the special centres create the flexibility which is necessary both for new ways of seeking knowledge and for spreading the new knowledge to new users and to society in general.

Another factor is the long-term development of knowledge. This chiefly takes place in subject-discipline research without the intention that the new knowledge shall have direct practical relevance. It is perhaps only in a perspective of 10 to 20 years, or even longer, that this knowledge may prove to have a more direct practical application. In the interviews it has emerged that university management and representatives of the faculties feel a certain apprehension about pursuing the long-term development of knowledge. For this to be possible, a balance in the amounts of faculty funds and external funding is necessary. The universities express the fear that faculty funds will decrease in proportion to external financing. This would diminish the possibilities of the universities and the faculties to run activities themselves.

More or less autonomy to institutions?

Will the new setting of the funding arena in Sweden imply more or less academic freedom for institutions or the boards of faculties?

There is a positive attitude among both vice-chancellors and deans to the new opportunities which the research foundations and external financiers can provide. Today the development of knowledge is complicated and complex. Researchers from several subject areas must co-operate in order to gain new knowledge. The new type of research financing makes such co-operation possible. This is particularly conspicuous in the technical, science subjects and medical faculties. In the same way there is a positive attitude towards the research schools initiated by the Foundation for Strategic Research. These are seen as additional facilities which create better conditions for doctoral students.

A certain change in attitude towards the financing of research of Mode 2 type can be seen among university leaders. Developments have meant that university leaders are now in a position in which they can negotiate more directly with external funders. This is different from the council funds which is a matter between the individual researcher and the council. NUTEK, for example, wants to sign contracts with university management. The same demands can be made in respect of EU's research funds. The universities originally had a somewhat sceptical attitude towards negotiating on funding and on the organisation of research. Now the universities have a more proactive attitude where this role is concerned. There is a positive attitude towards linking external contacts to research which can contribute resources and contribute to the formulation of problems. However, this is mixed with concern over future conditions in respect of basic education

and the long-term development of knowledge. This concern can be described with Georg Henrik von Wright's (1993) words on the dominance of the technosystem over social development. By technosystem Wright means an alliance between science, technology and trade and industry. The technosystem threatens the independent search for knowledge for the sake of knowledge. In the technosystem research and academic education tend to concentrate to an ever increasing degree on the objectives of growth, competitiveness and technical innovations.

The study detected some tension between the vice-chancellor and the deans. This tension shall not be exaggerated. But in some cases the vice-chancellors seemed more interested in and more eager to develop the institution by gaining funds according to Mode 2 than the deans as leaders of the faculty boards. The deans were more devoted to research funded according to Mode 1. The vice-chancellors interest in research work according to Mode 2 can be explained by the so called third task of the Swedish universities. By law they have an obligation to spread knowledge about their work, new knowledge and experience and how this can be applied. If research projects are conducted in co-operation with other parties (industry, companies) outside the institution, this task will be fulfilled.

From another perspective the new setting of research funding at the national arena may suggest that university leaders have a more strategic task. The vice-chancellors will take on the role as Chief Executives rather than the *primi inter pares* of the scholarly community (see Becher and Kogan, 1992, p. 64). The new situation implies that they have to use more tools and new tools in order to exert control over external as well as internal demands on the institution. They are no longer solely dependent on resources from the central authority. They have obtained more freedom to negotiate different solutions with external funders in order to attract more resources to their institutions. The work of the vice-chancellor will thereby increase in importance. But there will probably be greater demands for accountability. The crucial question is whether the institutions will manage to maintain their academic value system and autonomy under the new circumstances.

A central implication of the study is the imbalance which has occurred between internal university resources for research and the powerful new funds for Mode 2 research. This imbalance may, from one perspective, jeopardise the possibilities of the universities to appear as autonomous organisations. Their own driving force may be undermined since faculty budgets are constantly decreasing in size compared to external funds. The universities are in danger of becoming reactive organisations instead of autonomous organisations governed by norms which they establish themselves.

The critical question is the balance between internal resources, such as governmental grants and grants from research councils, and external financing from the private funds and EU. Technology and medicine are areas which are now balancing on the borderline with just over 50 per cent in external financing. This implies that the grants from the government will be tied up in basic equipment and the universities will be more dependent on external resources when choosing topics for their research. The autonomy of the institutions will then be at risk.

A future strategy on the part of the universities to protect their basic work, *i.e.* basic education and research, which is their unique function in the society, can be to make demands which mean that external funders have to pay for basic education and the long term development of knowledge. These should be seen as overhead costs in contracts with external funders. In this way it would be possible for the universities to protect the departments, the long-term perspective and stability in operations at the same time as they are flexible and participate in different forms of co-operation. Another assessment made by university management is that in the future it will be necessary to include more strategic considerations in the running of operations. Otherwise there is a danger that the universities will become organisations which merely react to external signals. It is therefore important to develop and maintain the autonomy of universities in order to be able to choose the emphasis of operations in the future.

The central authority, particularly the government, seems to have less control over the research agenda due to lack of resources. The governmental funds for research have decreased, not in size, but in importance as a tool to design the research agenda due to the introduction of private funds in 1994. These funds have substantial resources at their disposal to invest in research projects within their fields of interest. The universities are still totally dependent on the grants from the government for their basic research activities. But these grants are more or less tied up in fixed costs such as salaries, equipment, etc. Therefore it has been harder for the government to promote special research areas without increasing the total costs of research. Instead, the government strategy seems to be to re-allocate resources from research areas supported by the new external financiers to other areas of less interest for the private funds, such as humanities and social science (see SOU, 1996, p. 29). It is in this perspective that the action taken by the government in the autumn 1996 shall be seen. By transforming the private funds back into public funds the government will take a firmer control over the funds. The strategy seems to be a reallocation of resources from Mode 2 to Mode 1.

However, increased significance of leadership is not the same as increased autonomy for institutions. There are more actors taking part in the game on the Swedish research arena today than before. Obviously this gives more opportunities for institutions to find a funder. But the number of financiers involved is of

less importance in the discussion of institutional autonomy. If there are many funders with the same set of criteria the action taken by institutions will be of limited value. It seems more important to have a group of funders who will use different sets of criteria. That will give more freedom to institutions to choose different partners and thereby maintain autonomy. A balance between Mode 1 and Mode 2 among funders seems to create the best environment for institutions striving for autonomy. We will keep in mind that Mode 1 is a necessary prerequisite of Mode 2.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT BETWEEN MODE 1 AND MODE 2

The interviews with the management of the universities indicate that there are three strategic approaches. The universities seek to create an organisation which meets the requirements of stability, flexibility and autonomy. These three strategic requirements are of importance to the universities since they make it possible for the universities to perform their duty to society, namely:

- to run educational programmes which are based on a scientific foundation and on well tested experience;
- to run research programmes;
- to spread knowledge about their work, new knowledge and experience and how this can be applied.

Stability is needed for the long-term, unbiased development of knowledge. The subject-based departments are the foundation on which this work rests. It is within the departments that the development of knowledge relating to the particular subjects in question and the intra-disciplinary quality control take place. As organisational units the subject-based departments are responsible for basic educational programmes, research and post-graduate studies. They create thereby the conditions necessary to provide educational programmes which have a scientific base.

Universities try to attain flexibility in their activities by creating loosely linked networks or by establishing special centres in universities, between universities, or between universities and trade and industry. As a rule these are multi-disciplinary and work to solve problems that have been jointly formulated. The special centres consist of researchers and doctoral students and, in certain cases, include the participation of companies and trade and industry.

The autonomy of universities and colleges is founded on the intra-disciplinary criteria and the unbiased search for knowledge that form the basis of decisions on the emphasis of educational programmes and research. The interviews show that university management seeks to protect the autonomy of the scientific

environment. This is done in the first place by safeguarding the conditions under which the universities can perform research according to Mode 1, for example by increasing the budget of faculties which have received external funds from research councils since these have undergone an intra-disciplinary examination. At the same time the universities are positive to the idea of creating and developing forms of work according to Mode 2.

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UNIVERSITY-STATE RELATIONS: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to provide comparative perspectives of university-state relations. Since countries have different starting points and the trends go in somewhat different directions, formulations are proposed with which to examine different systems comparatively. The main examples taken are those of the United Kingdom, Finland, Norway, Sweden, France and Germany.

It is not easy to provide a comparative perspective of university-state relations; countries have widely differing starting points, and the trends go in somewhat different directions in different countries. There are also wide gaps between the actualities and the rhetoric and apprehension of change.

In this paper some formulations are offered with which to examine different systems comparatively. They are then applied to various systems.

The prime examples taken are the United Kingdom (with which there are comparable changes in Australia and New Zealand), three Scandinavian countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden), France and Germany. Brief references are also made to changes within the former Soviet block.

THE IDEAL MODELS

There are two ideal models of the Government of higher education institutions. The classic model has been that of the self-regulating higher education institution which sustains its own values and ways of working. Stated in maximum terms (Templeman, 1982), the academy's desired state was one in which "academic autonomy, whether defined and guaranteed by law, by financial independence, or by customary tolerance, is thus the necessary safeguard for the free and unfettered discharge of every university's primary duty, which is to permit intellectual non-conformity as the means of advancing knowledge".

The contrast is that of the dependent institution, characterised by higher degrees of dependency and sponsorship. Its objectives might be set externally; obvious examples have been military academies and teacher training colleges, or universities in totalitarian regimes. Or it can be an institution with no imposed limitations but unable to sustain itself on its own academic reputation. This might depend on financial support and other forms of sponsorship for doing what is considered useful. In a study undertaken ten years ago, some of us (Boys *et al.*, 1988) noted the vulnerability of institutions which had broadened their offerings from teacher training and now had to tailor-make their courses to what they perceived to be the wishes of employers. Thus the nature of higher education's relationship with Government and other sponsors is related to the kind of higher education provided.

These two forms have hardly ever existed in their pure forms. The richest American universities may receive most of their funds from public sources, if largely on their own terms. Even the most restricted of higher education must enjoy some intellectual discretion if it is definable as higher education.

These ideal models of higher education Government produce a range of second order models. Here we should make refer to Clark's triangle (1983), as extended by Becher and Kogan (1992). This depicts a triangle of interests in which academics are subject to professional-academic, state, including managerial, market and (in Becher and Kogan's depiction) welfare state forces. Some would now add the civil society. At different times, and in different places, academics find themselves moving between their own academic and professional concerns and the demands of the exogenous forces of the State, market or society. We could, if we so wished, take each country system and locate them within the triangle or quadrilateral. The position of systems changes over time. The movement from the professional to the market corner is evident in most. The movement in relation to the State has moved a lot in almost all systems.

A further depiction is that of Becher and Kogan (1992). This is a simple heuristic model which shows that systems have different levels – we preferred to keep it to four, but there is room for argument there.

A level is defined as one with its distinctive value orientation and enough authority to pursue it. For our purposes, the important point is how the levels connect with each other. We argued that decision and policy-making in higher education operate in two modes – the normative and the operational. In the normative mode, the linkages are those of evaluation. In the operational, the mode is that of allocations. As stated, the model is too limited. It needs to show, for example, how work at the base affects both norms and operations at the other levels. It needs to show how norms are created and mediated at the different levels. It could, however, be used to take apart the constitutive elements of Government at each level and the linkages between them and thus illuminate differences between countries.

Next there is available a range of categorisations with which to describe various changes. There is the range of *relationships* between Government and higher education institutions, as follows:

self regulation < > sponsorship-dependency;
 hierarchical relationship < > exchange relationship with sponsors;
 enabling/facilitatory/providing < > interventionary/regulative state (Neave and Van Vught, 1991);
 evaluation for control < > for development;
 welfare/ deficiency < > market driven funding;
 decentralised < > centralised;
 professionally < > managerially led system.

Again, it would be possible to locate systems on these spectra.

The relationships are worked, in different ways and with different intensities, through the following *mechanisms*:

legal controls/bureaucratic rules/guidelines;
 financial controls;
 normative/evaluative influences;
 competition/contracts.

And the *modes of governance* that result are managerial or collegial-professional or market or state control.

There are no simple correspondences between these different sets of characteristics though some seem to follow quite easily. Thus self – regulation goes fairly comfortably with collegial – professional modes of Government, and also with the market. The market is often used to mean no more than the use of contractual mechanisms specifying quality, timeliness and cost, or it can mean competition. Either of these may or may not be free of profit. Other categories are more multivalent: evaluation can incorporate a host of intentions, value positions and modes:

formative/summative;
managerial/developmental;
internal/external.

We could, given time and thought, locate different systems along these spectra. There are many other considerations to take into account, for example: the general political culture of the country; its resource capabilities; the extent to which there are strong interest groups acting either singly or through corporate networks to affect policy – the differences in these are substantial between the Scandinavian countries and between them and the United Kingdom.

THE CASE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom system presents the strongest case of change. At one time higher education was virtually free of Government controls and now is much less so. But at both times, it depended for the large proportion of its resources on Government.

From the early 1980s, the history of higher education in the United Kingdom made a sharp turn from its previous idiosyncratic history. In the Continental European countries the revolutions of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ensured that the university was incorporated in the national bureaucracy. By contrast in the United Kingdom “the status of academia as a property owning corporation of scholars, the purest expression of which was in the two Ancient British universities, was preserved (...). Until the first World War, British political life had no concept of ‘The State’ as a distributive or regulative entity particularly in the field of education (...) there existed a broadly held view which regarded education (...) as ill-served by state intervention. Instead there developed the idea of the facilitatory state which would provide resources to universities whose freedom would be enjoyed within an area of negotiation largely controlled by the universities themselves. The resulting autonomy was both institutional and individual, and embodied in charters and collegial self government” (Neave, 1985). In fact, until 1988 there was hardly any law of higher education in the United Kingdom.

Most of us perhaps romanticise the pre-1980s position. Scott, for example, (Scott, 1993 quoted by Meek, 1995) maintains that the “collegial university governed by the academic guild assisted by low profile administrators has been succeeded by the ‘managerial’ university dominated by an increasingly expert cadre of senior managers”, a trend caused by growth in size. In fact, however, some of the strongest and professor led universities in the USA and elsewhere are very large. Moreover, the collegial model was more an ideal than actuality in

many institutions. Not only were polytechnics, teacher training colleges and other non-university institutions not collegially governed, but some of our strongest university departments, particularly, but by no means exclusively, in the hard sciences and technologies, led managerially by strong professors. Such concepts as collegiality and centralisation must be construed strictly according to the level and contexts in which they are applied. Nor were all administrators low profile.

However, that there have been massive shifts in power and authority need not be denied. We wait for empirical work about the extent and impact of the changes, but the available simplifications help us to determine patterns from which to pick and mix.

In broad terms higher education-Government relations have shifted from one kind of corporatism to another. In the period before radical change, some of which was underway before the advent of conservative governments from 1979, the central authorities responded to classic elite networking. All was pretty implicit and passive; the interest groups were hardly noticeable because they did not need to be. There had been virtually continuous expansion on good unit costs from the 1950s. There was an almost perfect corporatist bargain (Cawson, 1982) in which the State gave resources and legitimacy in return for the creation of new knowledge and trained human resources. Negotiations were with co-opted elites who at that time were far more coterminous with the “true” academic elites than is now the case. Government’s client groups were allowed to set the agenda.

Since the 1970s, we have seen changes in assumptions about the nature of the State. In pushing back its frontiers Government simultaneously sought to reduce the power of the free-standing institutions and professions, particularly where these depended on beneficent and relatively untrammelled state support. That earlier freedom was an important artifact of British institutionalism.

In terms of our modelling and definitions, the United Kingdom stands as follows. Government’s approach to higher education has shifted from the exchange relationship, in which some ingredients of the trustful relationship subsisted, to a sponsorship-dependency relationship. In terms of the triangle of forces, the emphasis was moving from the mid-1980s from professional control to that of the State and the market. Van Vught has typified this, for the non-Anglo-Saxon systems, as a shift in the steering of higher education from the State control model to the State supervising model, a movement underpinned by the ideology of economic rationalism and privatisation (van Vught, 1989).

FRANCE

The French pattern of government is *sui generis*. For one thing, the divisions between universities, the *grandes écoles* (which uniquely place vocational education at the top of the status tree) and the directly funded research institutes display a nationally controlled but divided system. Whilst other systems accord to the university the function of holding together the disparate interests of the disciplinary bases, the French central administration “denies” the existence of the university and sustains a trans-university concept of national faculties. “The formal structure of the Ministry, the internal procedures, the relationships between the different offices and between the directions, split the universities into different kind of problem areas and, within these categories, into disciplines” (...). There was no place where a university was considered as an entity in its globality (Musselin, 1996; Chevalier, 1997). The procedures were based on the habilitation of diplomas and “therefore, reflection on the university as a whole made no sense while reasoning on disciplines and cycles was the norm”. The academics are civil servants first, and members of the institutional base only second, in direct contrast to their UK counterparts. Detailed national controls have been reduced, but universities remain fairly firmly under five Ministry of Education directorates, in spite of talk of regionalisation.

In terms of our modelling and definitions, France represents a fairly firm adherence to the State, whilst preserving strong professional power, in as much as academic expertise is recruited to and is powerful in national policy-making. But there is not an effective pattern of a negotiated order in which institutions can bargain as such with the centre. National decision-making is not able to take account of specific institutional problems, which are in any case cut into segments by the sectorisation of the central administration.*

GERMANY

In Germany, higher education regulation is shared between the State (*Bund*) and the provinces (*Länder*). Whilst the State is responsible for the overall policy framework and provides 50 per cent of building costs, new campuses and large equipment, *länder* develop their own regional laws of higher education. They agree new curricula, allocate budgets and are involved in the appointment of professors. Within the regional ministries there are *Hochschulreferenten* who act as

* The historical analysis reads differently in Marquand (1988) who typifies the State as growing highly interventionary before 1914, but not becoming a “developmental” state, as did Sweden.

correspondents between the Ministry and individual universities. But there is not available to the ministries the same level of academic advice as in France or the United Kingdom.

Whilst the German system, or systems as they might be typified, are well tied into a legalistic and formalised framework, the relationship between academics and the State has the main characteristics of a corporatist bargain. As depicted by Musselin (*op. cit.*), universities are rather integrated organisations with a stronger institutional position and (...) they are considered as real partners to the Ministry. German professors identify strongly with their institutions, and their committees have a real voice in decision-making. *Rektors* are appointed by faculty vote. When a professor is recruited there are bargaining procedures so that “the university invests in a faculty member and in return the latter commits himself more to his institution”. The central administrators make decisions on a case by case basis, and are thus quite unlike their French counterparts who also create global initiatives to which universities are expected to respond.

It should be added that in France, the evaluation of higher education has become more systematised, whilst in Germany, moves towards central authority systems have been more modest.

NORWAY

Previously Norwegian policy had largely contented itself with control over the macro-structure and budgets. Its power over academic matters largely applied to the existence or closure of courses. Each university had its own legislation and budget chapters. From 1990 onwards, two apparently opposing policies were set in train. Whilst the largely decentralised system of higher education gave way to more centralised policy-making emphasising integration and the rational use of resources, at the same time there were moves towards decentralised decision-making in budgetary and operational matters, including professorial appointments. Within the national planning system universities are set operating goals. This is part of the drive for the New Public Management. Government now interferes in a wider range of university affairs although in a less rigorous, rule oriented manner.

The system is strongly in the professional academic mode of government, but the interests of the State, and to a lesser extent, the power of the market, have become stronger. Norway exemplifies the importance of distinguishing between rule-driven and formalistic centralisation and rational planning centralisation.

SWEDEN

Swedish higher education has moved away from a “State Control Model” towards a “Supervising Model” (van Vught, 1989), transferring basic decisions and responsibility to the institutions themselves, as demands increase and resources decrease. This trend has been evident for quite a long time and with different governments, but reached its culmination in the reform of 1993. With its long historical tradition of powerful centralised steering and belief in rational planning the decentralisation process implies a radical readjustment.

While the national goals of the former Swedish higher education reform of 1977 were “distributive fairness” and “equivalent quality”, and there was an urge to reduce differences of status between the higher education institutions and programmes, the goals of the present reform are termed in the motto of “Freedom for Quality” and the national education institutions are encouraged to become more competitive both nationally and internationally and to develop their own profiles and specialities.

As in many continental countries, the curriculum was authorised by the State. This is no longer so in Sweden. It has always been, *de facto*, the work of the guild of professors, so that there, too, whether or not Government formally authorises them, curricula have been essentially a matter of professional judgement, albeit of collective academic rather than individual judgement.

In Sweden there is a strong reliance on evaluation as a way to public accountability and improvement of standards, but much reliance is placed on the institutions’ own creation of evaluative systems. In particular, resources are not allocated on the basis of national evaluations, but on a limited number of outcome measures. There has been an increased emphasis on the funding of research related to social and economic missions (Sjölund, 1998).

FINLAND

The Finnish authorities have been engaged in a major shift in the purposes, style and operational modes of central Government. Their general intentions “in developing the administration of education and science and, indeed, all public administration, are to review steering mechanisms, delegate authority, shift emphasis to performance and streamline the hierarchy and administrative procedure” (Finnish Ministry of Education, 1994, p. 43). In this respect Finnish policy is in accord with that of many other Western European systems that have moved from legal prescription and detailed rules-setting to control by outcomes and evaluation.

The Ministry remains the national planning authority responsible to Parliament for the performance of the system. Other elements of the central structure involve the participation of both the academic community and “consumers” of higher education in the work of Government. Thus the Ministry is advised by the Council for Higher Education which includes not only eminent academics but also representatives of industry, business and students. It has a formidable brief in advising the Ministry on the structure, scale, degree structure and quality evaluation of higher education.

Until recently, there were detailed controls over the financing, staffing and governance of universities. Finnish higher education had much freedom to determine its research agenda and to obey its own scientific rules and rhythms, but the rule book was thick. Appropriations were divided into several expenditure categories; as in many other systems funds given under any line item could be used only for the purposes given by that line, and had to be used in that budget year.

The Finnish Government deregulated its controls in an attempt to change the balance from detailed control to freedom and the use of discretion. From 1988 the system moved into a managerial and evaluative structure with elements of budgeting by results, and a shift to greater autonomy for the universities, including one-line budgets. The emphasis is now on agreements between state and universities, freedom of action and deregulation.

There is a formidable array of evaluative instruments which fulfil many different functions, including self-learning and development and public accountability and demonstration of worth. Through them the State can exercise both allocative and normative influences.

At the time of the OECD evaluation in 1992, some of the problems of benign change were beginning to emerge. There were some doubts about the effects of output budgeting. The sharp decline in resources reduced virtually the margin for discretionary behaviour, at a time when change was demanded. Universities were suddenly required to decide where to impose large cuts; they found it difficult to take on this analytic and political burden. Some universities may not have been convinced that they have freedom. Finally, moving from control to even limited autonomy required universities to develop their own organisation and take on new ways of thinking and working. This takes careful negotiation on internal policy making arrangements. If a Ministry releases its controls, a decision taking structure has to emerge at the institutional level.

The influence of centralisation and decentralisation on institutions

Observation of systems both western and further east suggests that wherever systems either centralise or decentralise, authority at the head of the institutions is strengthened. That is because the target of reforms is not the central state but

the professariat. Whatever space central government or the collegium yields is occupied by the rectorates. It seems as if systems need a minimum of authority at one level or another if they are to hold together disparate concerns and priorities.

In the old centralised systems, the State pressed hard on the universities. Even now in one Western country, perhaps more, universities must seek permission before buying a typewriter or allowing a room to be used for a conference. But in Western countries the State did not press hard on the professariat, and in those in the Soviet block, working habits and productivity were not within the central authorities' focus. Centralisation in those countries means or meant something quite different from current forms of centralisation in the United Kingdom or those following the United Kingdom's new models. In the United Kingdom it does not mean pettifogging and legalistic regulation but rationalistic planning through resource and quality assurance frameworks. Both centralisation and decentralisation bring a changed status for academics.

Some of the changes in HE's governmental frames and in the relative reduction in resources have led to changes in internal management follow:

- growth in total managerial and administrative work at institutional and infra-institutional level (Gornitzka, Kyvik and Larsen, 1996);
- changes in the tasks and relative power of academics and administrators within universities;
- increased range of tasks for non-academic administrators as well as increase in their numbers;
- development of academic administration: the bureaucratisation of the collegium.

In some systems at least, the numbers of those rated as administrators have grown. In Finland, for example, between 1987 and 1992, the numbers of teaching staff increased by 5.5 per cent whereas the totals of non-teaching staff rose by 20 per cent and administrative staff by 39 per cent (Visakorpi, 1996). But these functions are being taken up by academics as well as by non-academic administrators.

Increasingly, the interest of the State in matters of academic substance brings administrators to the boundary of the academic domain. Requirements placed on institutions to defer to quality evaluation increasingly bring departmental performance under institutional review. This can cause administrators to come quite close to monitoring academic performance.

Administrative structures vary according to country. In the English speaking countries, the vice-chancellor, or president or principal is seen as both the chief academic and the chief executive. The chief administrative officer is accountable to him/her in his chief executive role. In most countries, the director is now

explicitly subordinate to the rector. In the 1960s the role was established in Sweden, to the discomfort of some academics, because “the Government wanted to handle the growing university sector” and “a strong university director was needed to establish enough confidence in the capacity of the universities to handle their new tasks in a professional way” (Karlsson, 1996). With Swedish decentralisation in 1993 the appointment of directors became a local decision. In some countries the rector is elected for a period from two to five years, and therefore politically vulnerable, whilst the director is a permanent appointment; this may still affect the power relationships between the two lines.

Administration functions may be taken by academics as well as by non-academic administrators. Thus, a case study of the University of Joensuu (Hölttä and Pulliainen, 1991) shows how policy propositions which had been made by academic committees and individuals were prepared by officials who shared legal responsibility for them. This gave them considerable power as compared with that of the academics. But changes in structure led to an increase in the power of academic leaders. Decentralisation to the universities in Scandinavia brought “an academic recovery of power; this change has primarily affected a few academic leaders, not the whole academic staff” (Karlsson, 1996). Whilst this may ensure that new forms of strategic policy making are well informed by academic values and knowledge, a potential downside can be noted: “The contemporary environmental pressures for strategic policy making can lead to an alteration in the structure of authority within academic institutions. In its most dysfunctional form, this change in structure can result in an administrative centralisation or autocracy. But in a case of faculty participation (in six esteemed US institutions), the response to strategic change appears in the most effective instance to have led to a reassertion of academic meritocracy over pluralism and democratic participation” (Dill and Helm, 1988). There is plenty of new decision-making to go round, but administrators, too, may feel themselves squeezed by newly empowered academic administrators (Lockwood, 1996).

EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

Relationships between the universities and the State in Eastern and Central Europe present a fascinating contrast with those of the West. There are enormous variations on both sides of what used to be the East-West divide, but certain points emerge as possible generalisations.

Almost everywhere there were structural, resource-related and academic problems in the old systems. The structural issues were manifold: systems seemed simultaneously to insist on almost total dependence on the regulatory and resource giving capacity of the State, and the requirements to work within

doctrinal orthodoxies, whilst at the same time making no demands for academic or managerial efficiency at the institutional or professorial levels. So poor resources went alongside serious over-staffing of universities and research institutes. Deference, often enforced, to received ideologies went alongside deeply conservative academic and intellectual traditions which affected both research and teaching.

Now the publicly provided institutions are struggling between two worlds. In spite of intentions to the contrary, most national administrations sustain a legalistic and controlling hand over key disposal of resources, including the key ability to formulate staffing structures and posts. At the same time there is the rhetoric of market behaviour which universities find difficult to follow because of legal constraints, and the competition of private institutions which are largely free to act in their own ways, and also to take advantage of the poor salaries given in public institutions by recruiting their staff, some times on a part-time basis, from the public universities.

The legacy in Central Europe (and much might apply further east) has been noted in Darvas' analysis (1996) of institutional innovations in higher education:

- An over-regulated legal environment. These are both restrictive of new initiatives and "generally appear to protect the traditional, organisationally well-established institutions and make it difficult to either change the status of an existing one or establish a new one".
- Laws governing civic employment tie the hands of institutional leaders aiming at recruiting new full-time faculty and staff.
- There is not adequate legal regulation to enable non-profit financing; earmarked Government financing is also an obstacle to change.
- In addition, Government action does not tackle the problems of uneven age distribution of staff. It is also reported that reluctance to allow full competencies to the institutions has frustrated the growth of professional institutional administration and decision making.

SOME CONCLUDING GENERAL POINTS

It is difficult to provide large and useful generalisations from all of these national experiences. The following salient points, however, emerge:

- The relationships between the State and universities have changed massively in most countries. In the West, a reduction in controls is obvious in Sweden, Norway and Finland, and to a far lesser extent in France. The

United Kingdom stands almost alone in Europe in largely travelling in the opposite direction from the other countries.

- In the eastern and central European countries, relaxation of controls is far more patchy, and decentralisation is frustrated by the retention of regulations and procedures, which make it difficult for universities to use their freedom to build up professional administration competencies as well as by the serious shortage of resources.
- The position from which countries start affects the position in which they end up. Thus whilst most countries started from legalistic formalism, the United Kingdom has not moved to that position but to the rationalistic positions of the New Public Management.
- Almost all countries endorse the rhetoric of change towards accountability, efficiency and market behaviour. The ability of institutions to respond to these requirements is strongly conditioned by the legal frame, the political culture and resources.
- Quality assurance has been one of the most potent forces in shaping the relationships between the State and institutions, and institutions and individual academics. In its most governmental form, it supports such policies as selectivity, and deeply affects funding. At minimum it is a form of normative control in that it requires judgements of quality to be public.
- Changes in all directions seem to involve a strengthening of the role of rectorates and the institutional management. Regulatory patterns and resources may frustrate these developments.
- It remains a matter for empirical enquiry of how far the nature of the system affects academic performance.

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