Managing the Unmanageable: the Management of Research in Research-Intensive Universities

by

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All around the world, the importance of research undertaken within universities and other institutions of higher education is widely recognised by governments, industries and diverse stakeholders. Indeed, it is likely that the contribution of higher education in the generation of new ideas and knowledge, and as an economic driver, has never been higher. At the same time, universities face a rapidly changing environment shaped by pressure on funding, an emphasis on quality assurance and the increasing impact of globalisation, marketisation and new technology. Such pressures for change have placed a particular emphasis on the need for effective management of higher education institutions.

This article aims to bring together these two themes, looking at the management of research universities. What are the key management characteristics of some of the world’s leading research-intensive universities? Are there particular models of internal organisation, leadership, resource allocation and human resource management that lend themselves to the successful encouragement of research? Further, how do these approaches relate to some of the inherent difficulties in the management of research?
Incorporation and University Governance:  
A Comparative Perspective from China and Japan  
by  
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This article is mainly concerned with the impact of incorporation on changes in public sector higher education in both China and Japan since the 1990s. The article deals with the context and the major policies and processes concerning incorporation of the public sector in the two countries. It then examines influences exerted by incorporation on patterns of governance in the public sectors of China and Japan by focusing on changes in the relationship between government and individual corporations and institutional leaderships and governance structure. Based on a discussion of similarities and differences in incorporation of the public sectors in the two Asian countries and other major OECD countries, and also between China and Japan, the article concludes by identifying a comparative perspective of two models of incorporation.

The Professional Doctorate:  
from Anglo-Saxon to European Challenges  
by  
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This paper addresses the debate on the third cycle of European higher education. Currently, much attention is paid to improving the structure and quality of doctorate education in the European context of the Bologna process and the Lisbon objectives. However, alternatives to the traditional doctorate are hardly addressed in the policy documents of governments and other agencies. The promise of one of these alternatives – the professional doctorate – is discussed. Without suggesting this alternative to be the ultimate solution to problems in the third cycle, the paper argues that a dual policy strategy seems appropriate: improving the traditional doctorate and allowing alternatives to flourish.
Widening Access through Partnerships with Working Life
by
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Dalarna University has doubled its student numbers during the past five years, and now has the highest proportion of students from non-academic backgrounds of Swedish universities (37%). The province of Dalarna combines steel and paper industry in a number of relatively small towns with large areas of sparsely populated countryside. By tradition, people in Darlarna have one of the country’s very lowest rates of university-level education and the establishment of the university in 1977 did little to change this situation. This was true up until the late 1990s, when the University began to set up a number of steering councils together with representatives of different areas of working life. The external representatives chair the councils and have in practice a considerable amount of influence on both undergraduate programmes. The first of these, which was set up together with the education authorities in the region, has for example had a major impact on the structure of teacher education, on the types and rates of in-service learning and on the development of the schools themselves, combining research and practice. The Council for Educational Development was followed by similar bodies for the social services, for healthcare and for industry. The paper discusses the opportunities and hazards involved in a university establishing this type of body.

The paper also discusses the collaborative establishment of Learning Centres in the fifteen municipalities of the province and how these have contributed to major increases in tertiary participation, particularly in rural areas. Both these types of development make new demands of staff and university administration.

The Politics of Access:
Measuring the Social Returns on Post-Secondary Education
by
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In my paper I will examine the most recent data on the cost and financing of a post-secondary education. I will also examine the burgeoning debate in Canada about the relationship between tuition fees and access to post-secondary education.

In recent years longitudinal data collection has improved and there is now a relatively wide body of research tracking the effect of higher tuition fees and student debt in Canada. After outlining this data landscape, I will then interrogate the question of equity.
and access in light of what we now know. Recent discussions about access have focused on the constrained finances of national governments and the funding shortages experienced by universities. The outcome of these discussions has, more often than not, been the downloading of costs to students and their families. That shift in the financing of an education from the state to the individual begs a series of questions about equity and access. Questions such as: Is the shift to individualized financing inevitable? If not, what are the politics of this shift? What is an acceptable level of student debt? At what point does debt become a prohibitive factor for low income families? Do ‘innovative’ policy ideas like a graduate tax or savings schemes really cushion the blow of fee hikes? Is increased financial assistance (i.e. loans) an equitable answer? To what degree do other intersecting social and economic factors affect access? How does the prospect of increased debt and fees depress the participation rate of those already lacking social and financial capital? Though I will offer few definitive answers to these questions, my paper will, I hope, contribute some new dilemmas that are decidedly missing from the largely econometric analysis of fiscal reforms in higher education.

Though my data will be primarily Canadian, I will also make the case that many of these dilemmas are at forefront of recent developments in European higher education policy. In particular, the recent and heated debate about ‘top up’ fees in Britain closely mirrors the ongoing national debate in Canada about equity, access and the cost of post-secondary education.


by

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From the start of the academic year 2001-2002, people without completed secondary school were enabled to enter higher education based on documented non-formal learning:, realkompetanse. Based on interviews with key personnel at selected universities and university colleges, and on quantitative data from the applicant register, the paper presents results from an evaluation of this reform in Norwegian higher education. The evaluation indicates that the reform, by and large, works according to the lawmakers’ intentions in providing a second chance for learners not usually linked with higher education. Still, findings suggest considerable variations in how the universities and university colleges have adjusted to the reform. Geographical location and supply of students are factors contributing to the institutions attitude to the reform. University colleges in rural areas with a low numbers of applicants are, in general, the most positive

1 This paper is based on a study previously published in Norwegian, see Helland and Opheim 2004.
to the reform and it seems to be easier for applicants to be assessed as qualified for studies.

“Where are the Boys? Gender Imbalance in Higher Education”
by
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The gender breakdown in higher education in Canada and other western countries has switched from an imbalance in favour of men to an imbalance in favour of women over the last two decades. Programs to attract women into higher education have worked very well. At the University of Guelph for example, 70% of the students are women. Should educators be concerned about this phenomenon? Are there short- and long-term negative effects of gender imbalance? If so, what can and should educators do about the imbalance? Should programs to attract men into higher education be implemented? What accessibility steps can be taken to create a gender balance in higher education? This paper explores the changes in the gender profile at universities and colleges in Canada, the United States, and other countries. Potential economic, social, and political causes and effects of gender imbalance are proposed. Accessibility techniques that could be used to create gender balance in university and college programs are explored.

Promoting a Lifelong Learning Society in China: the Attempts by Tsinghua University
by
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Contemporary society has evolved into a knowledge-based society. With more and more challenges and uncertainties, a traditional, once-and-for-all education could never satisfy people’s demand for upgrading their knowledge and skills in order to adapt to the rapidly changing environment. Lifelong learning has become an effective and necessary way to cope with these problems. With this background, China has come to realise the great significance of lifelong learning and has firmly embarked on the mission to create a lifelong learning society.

However, because of the uneven development between different areas within China, the uneven distribution of learning resources has been one of the greatest obstacles to the realisation of a learning society in China. As a top university located in the cultural and educational centre of China, Tsinghua University has taken on a multi-dimensional role in the process of eliminating regional imbalance and promoting China’s lifelong learning.
society. It will also advocate, disseminate, impart thrust, and provide. For years it has placed much emphasis on providing education/training services for the common people by opening its door to society. Moreover, since 2003, Tsinghua University has subscribed to a national programme “Constructing the theory and practices of lifelong learning system in China” which is sponsored by the China Ministry of Education. As part of the programme, Tsinghua University has initiated four pilot learning projects covering four mainstream sections of Chinese society, namely learning city, learning countryside, learning community and learning army.

Based on the studies carried out by Tsinghua University, this article describes the implementation and effects of these four pilot projects, which can also be seen as a vivid snapshot of the construction of lifelong learning society in China.