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Editorial:
Higher Education Policies from Global Examples

Research on higher education has been gaining wider grounds as the number and severity of the forces surrounding higher education organizations have been increasing. A successful response to the forces of change requires research-based knowledge as well as a practitioner and/or policy-maker perspective. In other words, an effective response to the forces of change surrounding higher education requires the perspective of policymakers. In this issue of Higher Education Governance and Policy, we present five articles that open space for policy analysis.

In the first article, Sabzalieva challenged the assumption that major upheavals risk the survival of higher education organizations. The author presented findings from faculty members in three ex-Soviet countries in times of crisis. The results indicate that higher education institutions respond to crises with a variety of methods and tools, which suggest that these organizations are highly adaptive entities. The second article of the issue by Polat and Çelik investigates the universities' websites as tools for attracting international students. Conducting a visual analysis of the websites of 25 Turkish universities, the authors revealed that news on research accomplishments, conveying the teaching atmosphere depicting the physical environment and building are the elements of the websites that contribute to building a first impression on the part of international students. In the third article of the issue, Jiang studied the financial security of international students in China. Although there is a wide literature on international students' satisfaction, this literature rarely elaborates on specific factors contributing to international students' satisfaction. Jiang's study urged governments to support international students from developing countries in China. In general, the study highlighted the need to focus more on the well-being and satisfaction of international students in the era of higher education internationalization. In the fourth article of this issue Durak, Uzan, and Rebolledo-Robert conducted a comparative study on the expansion of higher education in Turkey and Chile. The study documented different tracks of expansion followed in Turkey and Chile, which lead to different social implications in each country. According to the study, the Turkish expansion policy is a quantitative oriented one and opens up a space for students from lower socioeconomic status to access higher education while the Chilean expansion policy stands on neo-liberal grounds and is mainly based on the privatization of higher education, which causes deeper segregation between lower and upper socioeconomic groups in the access into higher education in the country. The final article of the issue by Yaman elaborated on the legal basis of plagiarism, a growing ethical concern in the academic context. Analysing the content of five legal codes in the Turkish context, Yaman argued that legal code plurality does not equip higher education organizations better in battling against plagiarism. Rather, legal code plurality causes complexity in addressing ethical issues on legal grounds, which calls for a more unified and integrated legal base against plagiarism.

We expect that the articles in this issue will prove beneficial to international scholars and policymakers in higher education around the world.

Yasar Kondakci
Editor

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Surviving a Crisis: Transformation, Adaptation, and Resistance in Higher Education

Emma Sabzalieva*
UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

Abstract

After periods of crisis, it has been assumed that social institutions like higher education will also change radically – and perhaps even fail. In contrast to this expectation, this paper demonstrates that such moments of intense disruption result not only in transformation but are additionally accompanied by significant levels of adaptation and some resistance. Drawing from a larger study of the impact of crisis on higher education, this paper explores some of the ways that higher education responds to major political, economic, and social change at both system and organizational levels. Taking the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 as the moment of crisis, the paper presents findings from a comparative case study of three ex-Soviet countries with new primary source data generated by interviews with experienced faculty members at the frontline of change. Understanding what it takes for higher education to survive a crisis makes an important contribution to comparative higher education studies by showing the variegated ways that higher education institutions and systems respond to crisis and to filling the gap in theory-driven explanations of system and organizational responses to major change.

Keywords: Crisis, transformation, and adaptation, Resistance, change, and continuity, New institutionalism, Collapse of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

Introduction

Higher education never has to look far to find a crisis. Triggers for crises include questions of resourcing – typically who should pay for higher education and how much they should pay – debates over what type of education should be provided, student movements, protests against national politics, outcries against limits on academic freedom, and of course global challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic that is still unfolding at the time of writing. As has been wryly noted, 'an independent observer, should such a person be found… might form the idea that higher education was in a virtually constant state of crisis' (Tight, 1994, p. 363). This is not to undermine the many structural inequalities and ruptures that exist around the world, which continue to put lives at unacceptable risk, and which hinder equitable access to higher education. Rather, what this is intended to highlight is the wide range of ways in which the term 'crisis' has been mobilized in studies of higher education and to point to the need for greater conceptual clarity when it comes to how it is operationalized.

In response, the notion of crisis is developed in this paper through the terminology of major institutional change to study the effects of major political, economic, and social change on higher education. It has been assumed that social institutions like higher education will *either* change radically after periods of major institutional change *or* become so paralysed by the event of crisis, or major institutional change, that subsequent change becomes impossible. In contrast to this expectation, this paper shows that such moments of intense disruption result not only in transformation but are additionally accompanied by significant levels of adaptation and some resistance. Understanding what it takes for higher education to survive a crisis makes an important contribution to comparative higher education studies by showing

* **Corresponding Author:** Emma Sabzalieva, e.sabzalieva@unesco.org
ORCID: 0000-0001-7849-6411

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the variegated ways that higher education institutions and systems respond to crisis and to filling the gap in theory-driven explanations of system and organizational responses to major change.

In re-examining this common assumption about how higher education responds to change, the paper draws from the author's recently completed doctoral study on higher education's responses to major institutional change in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The doctoral study included a three-country comparative case study of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in Central Asia. It covered both their higher education systems and their higher education institutions (HEIs). The study's primary source of data is 36 in-depth field-based interviews with experienced faculty members, which is supplemented by descriptive statistics, academic literature, and government documents in English and Russian languages.

Not only a compelling choice of setting because of the region's recent heritage as part of the Soviet Union, Central Asia is significant both historically and strategically, 'perhaps both the most important and the most neglected part of the world and its history' (Frank, 1992, p. 44). In spite of this neglect, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 'brought renewed attention to the region. Central Asia's promising oil and natural gas reserves combined with its strategic geographic location between "East" and "West" put the region back on the map as a central site of the new "Great Game"' (Silova, 2011, p. 5). Furthermore, one of the puzzles that had prompted the larger study was to investigate why, despite a shared recent history, and despite inheriting a very powerful schema for higher education from the Soviet period, the commonalities between the three case study countries do not explain the ways in which higher education across the three countries developed differently and at different paces during the study period. In Kazakhstan, for example, there was a noticeable shift in how higher education changed as early as the late 1990s/turn of the twenty-first century (Heyneman, 2005; Yakavets & Dzhadrina, 2014). A five-year state plan for education and a law on the privatization of some HEIs were both published in 2000 (Ahn et al., 2018), marking a turning point in the scope and scale of higher education reform, whereas in neighbouring Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, this became visible only in the mid-2000s. In both cases this followed significant domestic upheaval: in Tajikistan, largely the result of a civil war[1] that hindered the possibilities for substantive responses to change during the 1990s (DeYoung et al., 2018) and in Kyrgyzstan following a series of events leading to the overthrow of the independent country's first President in 2005 (Shadymanova & Amsler, 2018).

The paper is organized as follows. The next section lays out the definition of crisis as major institutional change and the broader new institutionalist thinking that informs this conceptualization. This is followed by a summary of the larger study's methodological approach. The immediate aftermath of the major institutional change moment in the three case study countries under study is then discussed. Having established the context, key findings on higher education's responses to change at both system and organizational levels are presented, organized by the three main types of responses found in the study: transformation, adaptation, and resistance. From these three parts, the concluding section brings together a discussion of why some areas of higher education were transformed, others adapted, and yet others resisted change. This section also reflects on how the key finding of variation advances knowledge on how higher education responds to major institutional change beyond a simplistic 'all or nothing' binary as well as understanding what it takes for higher education to survive a crisis.

Crisis as Major Institutional Change

The study is grounded in new institutionalism, which offers an array of tools for understanding the relationship between institutions which, at the most fundamental level, refer to 'the rules of the game in a society' (North, 1990, p. 3), organizations and actors, their behaviour and their actions. New institutionalism has been shown to be highly applicable to the study of higher education (Diogo et al., 2015; Meyer & Rowan, 2006). Higher education as an institution can be understood in 'concrete terms as a set of specific and local organizations, roles, interactions, and economic transactions' (Meyer et al., 2007, p. 187). By framing it as an institution, higher education becomes part of a broader institutional

[1] The civil war in Tajikistan was fought on and off between 1992-97, displacing around 700,000 people – almost one in every six citizens – and killing almost 85,000 people.

framework, enabling attention to focus on the 'cultural scripts and organizational rules built into the wider national and world environments that establish the main features of local situations' (Maassen & Olsen, 2007; Meyer et al., 2007, p. 188).

More specifically, higher education can be framed as a social institution. This distinguishes it as having the purpose of satisfying the needs of the many and/or the goal of supporting a social system (society) from other forms of institutional order where the institution's primary function is economic or private (Prisching, 1993; Turner, 1997). As a social institution, higher education is embodied by organizations whose purpose is 'organised activity that maintains, reproduces, or adapts itself to implement values that have been widely held and firmly structured by society' (Gumport, 2005, p. 119). These organizations are higher education institutions, or HEIs. In relation to this, I further define higher education systems as dynamic organizational fields that vary across an array of factors that may include: type of higher education system, the variety of organizational types, system size, qualifications awarded, funding models, governance, processes or products, access, and collaboration (Schwartzman et al., 2015).

New institutional theory represents possibilities for explaining and predicting both continuity and change. Nevertheless, studies using this approach have overwhelmingly emphasized continuity rather than change (Hall, 2010; Streeck & Thelen, 2005). This accent on institutional persistence is to some extent inevitable given new institutionalism's development 'in the context of relatively stable economic systems' (Newman, 2000, p. 603). In recognition of criticisms of new institutionalism's problematic approach to change, there have been ongoing attempts to explain how to (better) account for change processes. In a study published more than 20 years after their original work on neo-institutionalism, March and Olsen (2008) provide a detailed account of how change occurs within institutions and in institutional frameworks, arguing that 'rules, routines, norms, and identities are both instruments of stability and arenas of change' and that 'change is a constant feature of institutions' (p.11).

While new institutionalism has developed approaches to explain institutional change, studies using this framing both generally and in higher education studies more specifically have been dominated by notions of incremental change. In higher education, the 'neo-institutional perspective tends to emphasize the stability of organizations and the barriers to change that exist within organizations' (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2000, p. 87). Though some have argued that in higher education, both continuity and change are 'heavily interwoven' (Stensaker, 2015, p. 104), the potential of higher education both to effect and to transmit change in dramatically changing contexts accompanying periods of major institutional change has not received sufficient attention (Brennan et al., 2004; Oketch et al., 2014; Polyzoi & Dneprov, 2010), particularly outside of Western, often North American, contexts (Newman, 2000; Pearce & Branyiczki, 1993).

Where higher education studies do account for the responses of organizations in radically altered institutional environments, the main tendency has been to assume that the result of major institutional change is similarly radical change within institutions and organizations because 'major transformations take place at moments of exogenous shocks' (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2014, p. 22). This has been termed the 'crisis argument' (ibid.) and assumes that if the rules of the game are transformed, organizational adaptation to the new rules – indeed, to the new game – is a necessary condition for survival and success. A smaller school of thought that stems from studies of other organizational/institutional forms but has relevance to higher education posits the opposite, finding that too much institutional upheaval actually inhibits organizational responses to change. It does so by hampering organizations' ability to learn because 'the schemas that facilitate interpretation and meaning are no longer relevant' (Newman, 2000, p. 606).

Taken together, these arguments present a binary explanation for higher education's responses to major institutional change that are grounded either in radical transformation or frozen stagnation. In fact, as this study demonstrates, the period following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was significantly more nuanced, leading to transformation but additionally to adaptation and resistance. In this paper, transformation (major change) is explored in the context of the dramatic expansion of the three higher

education systems and the HEIs within them, fuelled for the most part by privatization. Adaptation (incremental change) was evident in institutional upgrading and the growth of domestic branch campuses. Finally, resistance (continuity) was found in the organization of the curriculum and the resilience of organizational culture.

Furthermore, this pairing of transformation or stagnation has been inferred from responses that occur in stable environments, rather than the state of crisis or instability – that is, major institutional change – generated by events such as the collapse of the Soviet Union. Even less attention has been paid to the application of major institutional change to studies of higher education. In response, drawing from the more general new institutionalist literature as well as other studies of the collapse of the Soviet Union, major institutional change is defined in the context of this study as a radical or transformational shift in the institutional environment, accompanied by extreme economic shifts and leading to political regime change (Beissinger, 2002; Koning, 2016; Newman, 2000; Suarez & Oliva, 2005). These moments may be some years in the making, but ultimately can be pinpointed to a particular moment in time. Major institutional change, in other words, completely changes the rules of the game in which higher education operates. When major institutional change does take place, it is like an avalanche: infrequent but when it occurs, it is high amplitude, extremely fast moving, and far-reaching in scope (Suarez & Oliva, 2005).

Methodological Approach

The larger doctoral study informing this paper was a three-country comparative case study of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan covering the period 1985 to 2005, that is, shortly before, during, and after the major institutional change moment. The primary source of data is in-depth interviews undertaken during in-country field research in 2017. In total, 36 faculty members were interviewed, all of whom have considerable experience of working in higher education in Central Asia. 32 of the 36 respondents chose to do the interview in Russian. The remaining interviews were undertaken in English (two interviews) or a mix of English and Russian (two interviews).[2] The respondents were selected based on their experience of working either at Soviet-era HEIs, i.e., universities, institutes or the Academy of Sciences that were created during the Soviet period, and/or because they had experience of working at a post-1991 HEI, i.e., an organization founded in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union. 13 respondents were interviewed in Kazakhstan, 10 in Kyrgyzstan, and 13 in Tajikistan. Two thirds of the respondents were female. The interviews focussed on faculty members' understanding of developments at the HEIs they had worked at, beginning in the mid/late 1980s and progressing through to the current day. Respondents also discussed developments at the level of the organizational field of higher education in their country. This primary data was triangulated with descriptive statistics on quantifiable measures as well as document analysis of academic literature and policy documents published in English and Russian. This paper focusses on respondents' testimony and literature relating to the group of 77 HEIs that were established in the three case study countries during the Soviet period. Selected quotes from informants who worked or still work at those HEIs are used to illustrate the key findings.[3] Quotes originally in Russian have been translated by the author.

The Avalanche Begins

By the end of 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was no more. After over 70 years of existence, the Soviet Union dissolved: 'the Union that was supposed to be unbreakable fell apart overnight like a house of cards blown away by a light breeze' (Segizbaev, 2003, p. 5). More than three decades on, the significance of this historic event has begun to be forgotten despite the momentous shifts that ensued. Yet as Eliæson et al. remind us, 'social conditions that had come to seem part of just "how the world is" were transformed almost overnight and the course of history changed' (2016, p. xi). From

[2] The widespread and continuing use of Russian in Central Asian academia is the result of the twentieth century shared Soviet legacy and the close economic ties that still link the former Soviet space. English is growing as an alternative language of publication and academic communication, but even with greater integration into English speaking academic communities, it remains the case that the Russian language retains legitimacy as a working language among academics in and of the former Soviet space.

[3] Respondents who agreed to be part of the study did so under the conditions laid out by the author's institutional ethics board, which provided that quotes could be included but should be anonymized. As such, they are attributed in the text with a number and country name, but without additional identifiers.

the rubble of the collapsed Soviet Union, 15 independent states were created or re-emerged. With no previous history of statehood in their current geopolitical configurations, the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in Central Asia thus became independent for the first time in 1991.

The breakdown of the Soviet Union unleashed even deeper economic crises for Central Asia than had already been experienced in the late Soviet period. Even in resource rich Kazakhstan, GDP dropped by 39% between 1991 and 1996 and only began to recover at the end of that decade (Ahn et al., 2018). All three countries suffered from hyperinflation, which peaked in Kazakhstan between 1991 and 1994 (Yakavets, 2014). The effect of the crisis was prolonged in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, where GDP per capita dropped by 44% and 64% and real wages decreased by 50% and 87% respectively between 1989 and 1999 (Shagdar, 2006). Not only dealing with economic shock and, in the case of Tajikistan, civil war, the three newly sovereign states also had to grapple with processes of nation-building and state-building. The delegitimized communist ideology was no longer an option as it 'represented the Soviet past and did not correspond to the new geopolitical reality' (Mullojanov, 2019, p. 121). Nation-building efforts meant reviving and re-imagining the states' pre-Soviet heritages and simultaneously dealing with the inherited Soviet legacy of formal institutions – and doing all of this in an increasingly globalized environment in which privatized markets were in the ascendant (Grzymala-Busse & Jones Luong, 2002; Kotkin & Beissinger, 2014).

One such inherited formal institution was education, which during the twentieth century had become institutionalized throughout Central Asia according to the Soviet model. Education was a pivotal tool for achieving the state's communist project (Smolentseva et al., 2018) and was used in Central Asia to 'construct, develop and reproduce Soviet political, cultural, economic and social institutions' (Akyildiz, 2013, p. 14). The goal of higher education was 'to train a professional workforce for the needs of the state' (Kuraev, 2016, p. 184) and as such, the higher education system was closely connected to the economy. Higher education was highly centralized and organized with very little variation between Soviet republics (Kuraev, 2016). The higher education system was thus grounded in the communist ideology, fully state funded, and open in principle to all those who were qualified.

By 1991 the Central Asian republics were part of a network of almost 1,000 HEIs with an age cohort participation rate of around 15 to 20% (Platonova, 2018). The vast majority (90%) of HEIs were institutes that focussed on teaching a small number of specialized areas. Multi-faculty teaching-centred universities made up around 7% of the total number of HEIs and research mostly took place in the Academy of Sciences. Upon obtaining independence in 1991, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan inherited a total of 77 HEIs from the Soviet period, broken down by country and organizational type in Table 1. By 2005, the end point of the larger study, almost all of this group of Soviet-era HEIs remained operational. Yet, as the subsequent three sections demonstrate, within this 15-year period, this elite group of 77 had become part of greatly enlarged higher education systems, had dramatically expanded the number of faculties and course offerings, changed organizational status, and reformed their curricula. However, courses continued to be organized much in the way they had been during the Soviet era, and the organizational culture in the group of 77 was still highly recognizable from the previous era. This contrast between continuity in curriculum arrangements, organizational culture and massive system growth neatly illustrates the difficulties of attempting to delineate responses to major institutional change, even when the attempt is more nuanced than in previous studies.

Table 1. Distribution of HEIs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, 1990

Republic	Universities	Institutes	Academy of Sciences	Total
Kazakhstan	2	53	1	56
Kyrgyzstan	1	8	1	10
Tajikistan	1	9	1	11
Total	4	70	3	77

Transformation

Expansion, mainly driven by privatization, has significantly changed higher education across the three countries (and indeed the entire former Soviet space). As one respondent observed: "a major change has been the quantitative growth [in the number of HEIs]" (Respondent 36, Kyrgyzstan).

The number of HEIs had been static in the late Soviet period, but expansion in the number of HEIs is evident in the early 1990s across all three settings, stabilizing earlier in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan than in Kazakhstan, where the government began to take more hands-on measures to control the emergence of new institutions from the 2000s. In Kazakhstan, there was a sharp growth in the total number of HEIs from the base of 56 in 1990 to a peak of 185 in 2002. From a much smaller base, Kyrgyzstan's higher education system grew exponentially by nearly five times to 51 HEIs in 2005. Growth in Tajikistan, from 11 to 36 HEIs by 2005, was steadier than in the other two countries, continuing to increase incrementally in the first half of the 2000s after growth had tailed off in the other two countries. By 2005, the elite group of 77 had been joined by nearly 200 new entrants, with a total of 268 HEIs across the three systems (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of HEIs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, 1990 and 2005

Country	1990	2005
Kazakhstan	56	181
Kyrgyzstan	10	51
Tajikistan	11	36
Total	77	268

The peak expansion period for all three countries was the first half of the 1990s, when the proportion of HEIs increased by 84% (Kazakhstan), 85% (Tajikistan) and all the way up to 167% in Kyrgyzstan. Growth rates dropped in all three settings in the second half of the 1990s and are more similar in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (52% and 41% growth respectively) than in Tajikistan where the number of HEIs grew by 25% despite the shadow of civil war. In the first half of the 2000s, growth declined again in Kazakhstan to a very modest 6%, as by this time the government had begun to reassert control over the sector. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan growth was also more modest at 13% and 20% respectively. Yet over the course of the first 14 years of independence, the overall proportion of growth in the system is dramatic: nearly 200% in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, and over 300% in Kyrgyzstan (Table 3).

Table 3. Proportion of growth in the number of HEIs over time, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan

Country	1991-1995	1995-2000	2000-2005	1991-2005
Kazakhstan	84%	52%	6%	197%
Kyrgyzstan	167%	41%	13%	325%
Tajikistan	85%	25%	20%	177%

Following the adoption of new laws on education permitting private forms of higher education, the rapid emergence of private HEIs from 1992/93 onwards explains much of the growth in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In Kazakhstan, the number of private HEIs outnumbered the quantity of state-run institutions as early as 1996. As Kwiek (2013) found in Poland, the consensus was that rapid expansion was driven above all by a scarcity of resources: "People just wanted to make money. The quality [of provision] was ludicrous" (Respondent 26, Kazakhstan). Private HEIs in Kyrgyzstan also quickly became a feature of the higher education field, with 10 such HEIs already in existence by the time records begin to be available for 1995/96; by 2005, a third of the total number of HEIs were private.

Whereas privatization is perhaps the most compelling reason for system growth, expansion in the state (publicly funded) sector was also remarkable, particularly given economic constraints. In Kyrgyzstan, respondents discussed a government policy to use higher education as a social control, a buffer against youth unemployment and unrest. As one respondent recalled, the policy was "There are no jobs, everything is collapsing. Young people should be educated, even if they are unemployed" (Respondent 20, Kyrgyzstan). This example also speaks to the way that the government perceived higher education

as an instrument that could help resolve broader socio-economic challenges, and the close connections between higher education and the state as a legacy from the communist period. While private HEIs emerged in Tajikistan, the system has effectively been renationalized by a government that has been systematically consolidating authority and power since the late 1990s. As one respondent noted, despite collaborative relations between academics and policymakers in the early period of independence, these have since dissolved: "That way of working and those discussions don't happen anymore (Respondent 13, Tajikistan). In this way, almost all of the system expansion in Tajikistan has been in the public sector, bucking global trends for this time period.

If at the system level a key transformation was significant expansion, this trend was mirrored at organizational level in the group of 77 Soviet-era HEIs by the creation of multiple new faculties and courses. The emergence of new faculties and courses, primarily geared at fee-paying students, is part of the privatization of higher education that took place after 1991 and has significantly changed higher education across the three countries (and indeed, across the entire former Soviet space). This has been a major change because tuition fees did not exist in the Soviet Union, but when they were legalized in all three countries in 1992/1993, Soviet-era HEIs rapidly adjusted their structures in line with this new environment. The impact has been to expand the size of these HEIs, with the corollary that organizational structures have also had to shift and expand.

The "new faculties and degree specializations began to appear with the changes in the economy" (Respondent 1, Kyrgyzstan); changes were particularly prevalent in areas related to business and management. For example, one respondent who worked at a technical university explained that: "An Institute of Commercial Business and Management was opened at the start of the 1990s. It was wild then, everyone started to study law and marketing, and this one [department] was business." (Respondent 3, Kyrgyzstan). Whereas some respondents were disparaging about fee-paying students who were seen to have literally bought their way in rather than earned their place by merit, others pointed to the prevailing economic conditions as a reason for growth. As one noted, "In order to support state HEIs, they were allowed to offer private services and they recruited commercial [fee-paying] groups… At that time [1990s] it was survival… and holding on to what was left of the education system" (Respondent 35, Kazakhstan).

By introducing new courses and programmes that were based on HEIs' perceptions of what would appeal to students, there has also been a major shift from the previous mode by which courses and programmes were allocated centrally by Moscow based on labour market requirements. The subsequent skew across Central Asia away from science and engineering and towards social sciences subjects is a consequence of the shift from education to supply the economy to education based on student demand. In Kyrgyzstan for example, 67% of all students were enrolled in social sciences by 2001, compared to 7% in humanities subjects and 24% in natural and hard sciences (UIS Statistics, 2018).[4] In Tajikistan, expansion was driven not only by the introduction of new courses but also by the creation of special streams for part-time students who, by 2005, made up 30% of the total student population (Statistics Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, n.d.). Part-time students, almost always fee-paying, were typically seen as less well-prepared, as one respondent observed in stark terms: "They don't know how to write [an essay]" (Respondent 10, Tajikistan).

Thus, the transformation of higher education that was witnessed across the three countries was in large part accompanied by different forms of privatization. This brought with it multiple effects that included the expansion of the size of the national systems, the legalization of tuition fees, a skew towards social sciences courses, and a growth in the number of part-time students. As one respondent noted, "destroying something can be done quickly" (Respondent 25, Kazakhstan). Privatization was a significant departure from the preceding Soviet era of statism and communist ideology and arguably may have facilitated transformation in higher education by creating a *tabula rasa* for change.

[4] No data for this period is available for Kazakhstan or Tajikistan.

Adaptation

Other shifts seen in the group of 77 HEIs and at system level in the three countries have changed higher education but did not bring about the same substantive transformation in the function of higher education or the organization of HEIs. Two key adaptive changes were institutional upgrading and the growth of domestic branch campuses.

The process of institutional upgrading occurred when pre-existing upper secondary organizations were upgraded to become higher education institutions, and of those that already were HEIs, most took on university status. The phenomenon of institutional upgrading is also common across the former Soviet space and may be seen at least in part as a response to the lifting of tightly controlled caps on the quantity of universities during the Soviet period. Institutional upgrading has also occurred in universities and the Academy of Sciences. New organizational forms such as 'national university' were created in all three countries and the three main state universities from the Soviet period – Kazakh State, Kyrgyz State and Tajik State – were transformed into national universities in 1993 (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and 1997 (Tajikistan) to reflect their flagship status in the national system. The Academy of Sciences was also upgraded to become the National Academy of Sciences.[5] This followed a reputational logic, as shown in the Presidential decree in Kyrgyzstan that gave the aim of its reform as raising the prestige of the Academy to that of 'the highest state research institution' (Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, 1993).

Institutional upgrading fulfilled not only reputational but also academic and financial functions. One respondent, formerly a Rector (Vice-Chancellor), recalled: "When the Soviet Union collapsed, we converted from a polytechnic institute to a technical university at my initiative. A university has a wider scope, and you can offer a wider range of programmes at different levels" (Respondent 7, Tajikistan). The ability to provide multi-faculty education also broke away from the Soviet model of highly specialised institutes. The reputational and financial rationales for institutional upgrading often collided: institutional leaders "started running around, going to the capital city, asking them to be turned into HEIs... There's a difference between being the director of a technical school and the director of a university. There are more students, more fees, and greater status… There's definitely a difference in image" (Respondent 36, Kyrgyzstan).

The breaking away of constituent parts of Soviet-era HEIs and the creation of domestic branch campuses was referred to by one respondent as "division and multiplication" (Respondent 4, Kyrgyzstan) and helps explain at least part of the growth seen in the state higher education sector. However, not all the bids for growth or independence were successful. Having created two domestic branch campuses of the Kyrgyz State Technical University (KSTU) in the towns of Kyzyl-Köl and Karaköl, these campuses became independent HEIs but have since returned to KSTU's umbrella. The university's official history does not assess these independence attempts favourably: 'During these years [1990s], some regional branches began to turn into independent HEIs. However, time showed that such "transformations" were inappropriate and, as is said, everything has returned "back to its place"' (Kyrgyz State Technical University, 2014). In addition, a Mining Institute that had been formed from the university's Faculty of Mining has also been reintegrated into the central structure, leading one respondent to comment dryly that "they never learned to swim by themselves" (Respondent 3, Kyrgyzstan).

These division and multiplication patterns align with developments in Kazakhstan, but these trends came much later in Tajikistan, into the mid-2010s and therefore after the end of the study's timeframe (1985-2005). While the spread of higher education to parts of the countries that did not previously have HEIs has been a meaningful shift that has implications for access to higher education, the overall effect of 'division and multiplication' has been incremental rather than major. It has changed the number and location of HEIs, but in a way that replicated existing organizations, and not always with lasting impact as the KSTU example demonstrated. While government policy led to some of these adaptations in higher

[5] Since 2003, the Kazakhstani government has taken steps that essentially abolish the Academy of Sciences as a separate structure and merge its branches into existing state universities. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have retained their Academies with more or less the same structure.

education, for the most part, these were responses led by HEIs and their leaders which aimed at enhancing the status of individual organizations and expanding their operating scope so that they could incorporate a wider array of subjects and students (and therefore income from fees). This suggests that adaptive change may be more likely from the bottom up – that is, led by institutional leaders – whereas transformations were typically initiated by government, for example through policy change. Nevertheless, the study also found this happening in the other direction: adaptation from above and transformation led from below, thus painting a more nuanced picture of the overall situation.

Resistance

Whereas outright opposition to change was less evident from the findings, the persistence of previous ways of working and being organized in higher education speak to the notion of continuity as a form of implicit resistance to change. This was seen in the organization of the curriculum and the resilience of organizational culture, findings that indicated both opposition to reform directions as well as continuity with the pre-1991 Soviet higher education model.

Across the three countries, the higher education curriculum in state funded HEIs continued to be organized on a Soviet-era four-block model. The block model incorporates compulsory courses that all students take regardless of their degree and some mix of compulsory and optional courses relating to the degree. The effect was to continue a centralized archetype – although the centre was now national rather than Soviet-wide. In this model, students had limited options to shape their course of study. As one respondent recalled, "As the Head of Department, if I tell you you're going to take X or Y course, then it doesn't matter if the student needs it or not – that was how it was in the Soviet time and that is how it is now" (Respondent 9, Tajikistan). Even today in Tajikistan, the basic building blocks of the curriculum have remained strikingly similar to their Soviet orientation.

The content of what is taught, however, has had to change, in part due to the overnight withdrawal of centrally planned education: "Previously, the curriculum had come down from Moscow and you basically followed that plan" (Respondent 35, Kazakhstan). Curriculum change followed with the "ideological recoding" (Respondent 33, Kazakhstan) that came after the collapse of communism. The formerly compulsory block of so-called 'ideological subjects' (e.g., Marxist-Leninist Philosophy, History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) was replaced by national histories, languages and so on. Yet even this revised content remained centralized with government input and/or sign-off on the subjects to be offered: "It's still the case that the Ministry sends us curricula which they have approved. We can't introduce any changes" (Respondent 15, Tajikistan). On the one hand, this could suggest that the model inherited from the Soviet period continues to provide a sound prototype for the organization of higher learning. On the other hand, this points to continuity based on a lack of fundamental revision or rethinking of the structure of higher education. This may have arisen from minimal interest in or funding for higher education reform, or due to policy attention being focused on other social sectors.

Within organizations that were rapidly changing as part of transforming higher education systems, another effect of crisis was a shift in the value of the academic profession. This has generally been in a negative direction: "[While] the prestige of higher education remains high, the prestige of academic work has dramatically dropped" (Respondent 23, Kazakhstan). Nevertheless, despite this perception of reputational damage and the extreme economic difficulties in the early years of independence that led to a major outflow from the profession, academic staff in many Soviet-era HEIs have generally remained working at the same organization through the course of their career. This continues a practice from the Soviet period when great value was placed on working up through the system. This step-by-step progression valorised experience and promoted a deep understanding of the institutional culture and the work of the HEI. One respondent, an active emeritus professor at the same institution at the time of our meeting in 2017, recounted with some pride that "I've worked here since 1956… I was a student and a group leader, then an Assistant, a postgraduate student [in Moscow], Senior Lecturer, Professor, Dean, Pro-Rector for Science and then I became the Rector – that is to say, I've passed through all the stages" (Respondent 7, Tajikistan).

Regulations also supported a gradual career path during the Soviet period: senior lecturers could only be appointed with a minimum of five years' teaching experience; professors had to have at least five years' teaching experience after earning their Candidate of Sciences, although it was rare to be appointed to a professorship without having the higher level Doctor of Sciences (Japarova, 2004). Long-term service to the profession combined with a strong sense of loyalty to the same institution is one factor underpinning the resistance to change in the organizational culture. That is to say, with the same people working at the same institutions, the opportunity to significantly change the culture was diminished. As one respondent noted: "the old contingent is still there. That means that old ways of thinking, old forms of relationships and old perceptions haven't left" (Respondent 22, Kyrgyzstan). Resistance to change was also connected to the notion of tradition: "In principle we've retained the traditions of academic science… Of course, there is a deviation from this… but for all that we still practice basic science." (Respondent 6, Tajikistan). In this way, the stability of past Soviet practices had perhaps paradoxically become more deeply legitimized with the collapse of the regime in which these practices had been introduced.

Conclusion

By 2005, higher education in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan had experienced some major transformations, in other areas had been adjusted incrementally at the margins, and in other respects resisted change, continuing to be organized and structured as it had been in the pre-1991 Soviet era.

The legalization of tuition fees in 1992/93 led to the most radical shift of all in the group of 77 Soviet-era HEIs. This group of HEIs expanded new faculties and new courses to accommodate fee-paying students, and in the course of doing so, diversified their income sources. The purpose of income diversification was to reduce reliance on the state, which had traditionally provided full funding for higher education but which, in light of economic crisis in the early 1990s, had reduced funding allocations to HEIs. The impact of creating new faculties and courses was to expand the size not only of individual HEIs but of the higher education systems in each country.

Expansion was furthered by additional changes made by Soviet-era HEIs to their organizational structures. The process of institutional upgrading saw upper secondary organizations seeking to convert to tertiary organizations, and specialized institutions upgrading to become universities. This was also supported by new forms of organizational type created by government policy, such as the 'national' statuses bestowed on some universities and the Academies of Science. Soviet-era HEIs also deployed a 'division and multiplication' strategy, with some departments and faculties breaking off to form separate organizations and domestic branch campuses being created. Not all survived: over time, some of these offshoots closed or returned to the main campus.

Despite the scale of change, in 2005, the Soviet-era HEIs would largely have been recognizable to an observer of twenty or even more years previously. Jostling among a now much larger marketplace of HEIs, the group of 77 had what the newer entrants did not: history, a newfound sense of being the bearers of tradition, and faculty members whose loyalty to the organizations as well as to the idea of higher education compensated for low salaries and diminished (but not destroyed) prestige in society. This implicit resistance to change was also compounded by government policies in areas such as curriculum organization that effectively carried forward the previous organizing schema for higher education, particularly in Tajikistan.

As such, the findings both of the larger study and the elements discussed in this paper are significant in that they do not fully confirm the common proposition in the new institutional literature that major transformations only occur in times of external upheaval (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2014), but neither is there clear support for arguments that the extent of major institutional change inhibited organizational change (Newman, 2000). This discovery of variation is an important theoretical finding that serves to highlight the importance of comparative work. It is an important contribution to comparative higher education studies and to filling the gap in theory-driven explanations of system and organizational responses to major change. The discovery is also significant because of what these divergences tell us about pre- and post-1991 schemas for higher education, about the similarities and differences between

the three cases, and about the perceived value and purpose of higher education in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Transformation, adaptation, and resistance were not mutually exclusive as responses to major institutional change. As the example of course offerings showed, while there have been changes to the curriculum content, the basic organization of the curriculum in the group of 77 Soviet-era HEIs remained largely the same by the end of the study period. Thus, in attempting to better understand *what* it takes for higher education to survive a crisis, it is also important to ask *why* these differential and sometimes overlapping responses were identified.

As has been alluded to through the three cases, accounting for specific contexts (temporal, political, geographic, and so on) is essential to this process. Despite a shared recent history, and despite inheriting a very powerful schema for higher education, these commonalities did not explain the ways in which higher education across the three countries developed differently during the study period. Even though communism had been politically and economically delegitimized with the collapse of the Soviet Union, remnants of the previous system remain visible in higher education, particularly in Tajikistan. Furthermore, no new or distinct ideology emerged to replace communism, as a result of which it became possible for several different templates for organizing higher education to develop in the aftermath of 1991. One template rests heavily on a return to the pre-1991 equilibrium, as seen in Tajikistan; another – evident in Kyrgyzstan – is a blend of Soviet and non-Soviet structures and norms; and a third – the Kazakh model – draws quite heavily from outside systems in an effort to create a different type of higher education.

As indicated at the start of this paper, instances of crisis, or major institutional change, are relatively rare, and as such they are perhaps less well understood than the study of organizational change and continuity in more typical stable or incrementally changing environments. This remains an under-explored area that would benefit from additional research. One logical extension through which to continue to study higher education's responses to crisis would be to apply the concepts from this study to other parts of the former Soviet space. As Kotkin and Beissinger (2014) have suggested, 'one would expect the magnitude of the rupture [in this case, the fall of the Soviet Union]… to vary considerably across geographic, policy, and behavioural spheres and to exercise an independent effect on the degree to which old regime practices and beliefs might endure' (p. 10). Extending the countries researched would also help clarify the extent to which the themes arising in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are in keeping with the types of responses seen in other former Soviet republics. Beyond the Soviet collapse, another important historical case of rupture occurring at a similar time and that could also move forward theorizing is the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994. There is also ample scope to refine the definition of major institutional change, for example by considering the impact of more recent conflicts. This could provide frameworks for understanding higher education's responses to other types of wide-ranging crises such as climate change, institutional racism, and pandemics that bear 'avalanche' characteristics, but which build up and play out over a longer period of time.

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University Websites: Attractive or Casual?

Soner Polat[1*] & Caglar Celik[2]
[1]Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Kocaeli University, Kocaeli, Türkiye
[2]Gebze Centre for Public Education, Ministry of National Education, Kocaeli, Türkiye

Abstract

International student mobility is increasing around the world and the number of students who prefer Turkey for higher education is increasing every year. It is also important for universities to be able to influence students' preferences and attract more successful students. The most used and most important means of universities to introduce themselves to students coming from another country, to leave a positive image and to increase their organisational attractiveness are the corporate websites of universities. Universities create an image about themselves with the visuals they use on their websites. The aim of this study is to examine how universities in Turkey appeal to foreign students to look attractive. For this purpose, it has been examined by using visual content analysis whether there are contents that will positively affect the organisational attractiveness of the university for foreign students on the home pages of the websites of state and private universities in Turkey. Among 129 state and 74 private universities in Turkey, 25 universities were selected by proportional stratified sampling method. The codes determined as a result of the visual analysis were gathered under four themes. It has been found that universities mostly include their scientific studies on their websites, and private universities give more space than state universities to the educational environments, buildings, campuses and visuals of their students interacting in these environments, which create the first impression of the university for international students.

Keywords: University websites, Organisational image, Organisational attractiveness, International student

Introduction

Today, as a result of the rapid developments in education, technology and transportation, studying abroad becomes a distinctive experience for students. According to the report prepared by the OECD (2020), the number of international students worldwide was around two million in 1998, while this number reached 5.6 million in 2018. This situation has made international student mobility an important market for universities.

The number of foreign students in Turkey has also shown an increase similar to the increase in the number worldwide. While the number of the foreign students registered at universities in Turkey was 48.183 in the 2013-2014 academic year, it climbed up to 185.047 in the 2019-2020 academic year (YÖK, 2021). The number of foreign students in Turkey has nearly quadrupled since 2013. Due to the increasing international student mobility in recent years, the internationalization of universities is also gaining importance (OECD, 2021). In the 2019-2020 academic year, there are foreign students coming from approximately 200 different countries at universities in Turkey (YÖK, 2021).

Although the US, UK and China are leading in foreign student enrolment, some other countries like Canada, Australia and Japan are increasing their share in this market recently (Project Atlas, 2019). This situation leads to an increasingly competitive environment and universities need to provide information to students so that they can make informed choices. Websites have become an important tool for

[*] **Corresponding Author:** Soner Polat, spolat@kocaeli.edu.tr
[1]ORCID: 0000-0003-2407-6491; ***[2]ORCID:*** 0000-0003-2468-6097

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universities, as the internet is considered one of the main sources of information for potential students (Brown et al. 2009). Websites are a window through which universities introduce themselves to the world and are one of the most important tools that enable them to communicate with large audiences (Iloh, 2014). Through their websites, universities can provide information about their academic programs, campuses, facilities, research opportunities, and student affairs (Peker et al., 2016). Universities present their strengths, cultures, visions, values and images through their websites. The university's website is also one of the tools that enable them to present the identity of the university and the messages they want to give (Al-Qahtani, 2021).

Visiting a university's website has become the first visit to the university itself (Anderson & Reid, 1999). The official websites of universities are perceived as a basic resource by the majority of prospective students, and students first visit the websites of universities (QS, 2020). When prospective students enter the university's website, they visit the campus and the facilities offered by the university online. This process, which students go through to collect information on university websites, has an important role in students' decision-making processes (Poock & Lefond, 2001). Since the texts and images on the websites give the first organisational impression to the prospective students, the messages and images conveyed on the websites are extremely important (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014). They affect the decision-making process of the prospective students because one of the important factors affecting many decisions and actions that people will take is the image perception that people have about the organisation (Anctil, 2008).

When the literature is examined, there are studies related with student recruitment and university websites (Gordon & Berhow, 2009; Ihme et al., 2016; Meyer & Jones, 2011; Pegoraro, 2006) and university websites as a communication tool (Costales, 2012; Estera & Shahjahan, 2019; Iloh, 2014; Saichaie, 2011; Tang, 2011; Venuti & Nasti, 2016). However, there is a gap about the extent to which university websites attract foreign students. The purpose of this study is to examine how universities in Turkey appeal to foreign students to look attractive.

Literature Review

Organisational Image

Organisational image is defined as the whole of the effects that occur in the minds of individuals about an organisation (Barich & Kotler, 1991). It is related to various physical and behavioural characteristics such as the name of the organisation, its architecture, product/service diversity, tradition, ideology, and the quality of the impact it leaves on individuals interacting with the organisation. Organisational image is the instant mental picture held in the minds of individuals about the organisation and is what comes to mind when individuals see or hear the name of the organisation or see its logo (Gray & Balmer, 1998). According to Kennedy (1977), the organisational image includes two different dimensions: the functional dimension, which includes concrete features, and the emotional dimension, which includes feelings and attitudes towards an organisation.

Today, organisations aim to attract more qualified individuals in order to adapt to the rapidly changing environment and to be competitive in market conditions. In order to achieve this, organisational image plays an important role. A strong organisational image provides an important competitive advantage for organisations (Davies & Chun, 2002). A positive image not only attracts large numbers of individuals but also attracts higher-quality individuals (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). For this reason, creating a good image for organisations and ensuring the sustainability of this image contributes to the effectiveness of organisations. In the context of globalization, online appearance stands out as an important concept in order to compete in the market. Establishing trust in websites is considered important for organisations to be competitive (Balmer & Greyser, 2002). For this reason, developing a positive organisational image and increasing organisational attractiveness through the internet is gaining more and more importance for today's organisations.

Organisational Attractiveness

Organisational attractiveness is the whole of the feelings and thoughts that individuals have about certain organisations as potential employment places, as well as the perceived characteristics of the organisation

that cause these feelings and thoughts (Highhouse et al., 2003). The concept of organisational attractiveness is defined as individuals who want to take part in an organisation describe the organisation as an "attractive work environment". Organisational attractiveness can be expressed as being perceived as attractive by existing individuals in the organisation and potential individuals to join the organisation, and these individuals having positive feelings and thoughts towards the organisation (Bingöl & Aksu, 2019). Individuals' image perceptions of the organisation and the extent to which they find the organisation attractive are important factors in the formation of their intention to join the organisation. This also applies to universities and prospective students. In the study conducted by Güler and Basım (2015) on high school graduate candidates, it was determined that the attractiveness and reputation of the organisation positively affected students' intention to join a higher education institution. Therefore, students choose the university by taking its image and attractiveness into consideration.

University Choice Process

Choosing a university is a complex process, especially as the student's needs and circumstances are involved in the process. The most widely used concept of university selection was developed by Hossler and Gallagher (1987) and is defined as a process that students go through to determine which university they will attend. University decision-making models generally consist of three critical stages: (I) the aptitude at which the person decides to go to university, (II) the search in which a person begins to search for information about universities and narrows down his alternatives, and (III) the choice in which the student evaluates the alternatives and decides which university to attend. As students develop strong desires to go to university, they begin to focus on where they want to go. In the search phase, students use a variety of strategies and ways to obtain information that will ultimately inform university decision-making. One of the most used tools today is the websites of universities.

Higher education institutions can influence the decision-making processes of prospective students to choose their own institutions by creating campus trips and informative websites for visits to university facilities for prospective students through promotional campaigns (Menon, 2004). However, considering the students who want to get to know the institution from another country, activities such as campus visits are not likely to take place. For this reason, the website is used as an important tool for the higher education institution to introduce itself and to increase its attractiveness by leaving a positive image especially on potential students who will come from abroad.

Ramli (2019) stated in his study that the ranking and image of the university is an important criterion that affects the decision-making of foreign students. They also revealed that having an environmentally friendly university with a physically attractive campus is a powerful factor in influencing their decision-making processes. Factors such as the image of the university, perceived quality, and recommendation from friends are powerful factors that influence foreign students' decision to choose a university. Polat and Arslan (2017) also gathered the factors affecting the university choices of international students under five headings in their studies. These are academic factors including quality of education, university reputation, quality of academic staff and reputation of scientific research; organisational factors including the quality of the university campus, its physical and technological infrastructure, the level of internationalization of the university and postgraduate education opportunities; economic factors including scholarship opportunities and characteristics of the city; individual factors including department choice based on interests and abilities, and cultural similarity; and social factors including the suggestion of acquaintances and the social opportunities of the university.

University Websites

From an academic point of view, the websites of universities are very important for all potential students. A visually appealing and easy-to-use website is often the first impression a university makes. Even before asking for information or expressing interest, prospective students and others visit an organisation's website and look for information. University websites are becoming an increasingly useful source of information for prospective students (Moogan, 2011). The home page of the university website is the first view of the university for many prospective students (Greenwood, 2012). Since the homepage is the first look at the organisation, individuals can evaluate the organisation simply by visiting its website. Brown and colleagues (2009) state that the information provided on university

websites is generally more effective in informing prospective students. Given the increasing use of websites, it is important for universities to pay attention to how they communicate with prospective students through their websites and to update their websites regularly, and the words, pictures and symbols found on the homepages of websites are where the university starts to establish relationships with its students (Hartley & Morphew, 2008).

Images on websites are an important component in the transmission of both explicit and implicit messages. Images of architecture (e.g., traditional and modern) and landscape (e.g., greenery, lawns and trees) shape students' impressions of the organisation (Ramasubramanian et al., 2002). Students associate academic quality with features such as traditional campus architecture and landscape. Such images are linked to concepts of legitimacy and reliability, such as corporate longevity and traditions. The use of architectural and landscape images to represent the organisation has a strong effect on structuring and/or validating students' expectations about an organisation (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014).

There are also practical considerations to consider when developing an effective website. When students visit the websites of universities, they should be able to get the information they need to make informed decisions, and the images on the websites should reflect the life in the new country, the facilities to be encountered, the resources, the culture and even the weather (Mogaji, 2016). Poock and Lenfond (2001) stated in their study that content and organisation/architecture are the most important features of university websites. In the study by Karani and colleagues (2021), in which they measured the effect of university website usability on satisfaction, they stated that the features affecting users' satisfaction were respectively content, layout, readability; user interface design; performance and effectiveness; navigation and links. In case of paying attention to these issues, the results will be beneficial for both the university and the students, and as a result of their experience, the students will have a positive image perception towards the university and develop a sense of satisfaction from the moment they access the website.

In summary, websites are the most commonly used tool for universities to represent themselves to their prospective students, especially to the international students who have almost no chance apart from using corporate websites to learn about the university. The image that the universities create on their websites can affect students' university choice process positively or negatively. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the literature by targeting the organisational images on the university websites for international students.

Methodology

Sample

The population of the research consists of 203 (129 state and 74 private) universities in Turkey in the 2019-2020 academic year. The proportional stratified sampling method was used in sample selection. Stratified sampling involves the process of classifying elements in the universe so that a more representative sample can be obtained. The sampling frame is first divided into categories or strata of relatively homogeneous subpopulations that have theoretical or essential meaning in the research. The researcher then takes independent random samples from each of the layers. Each of the sample layers, therefore, represents a sampling frame, and the selection of sample items proceeds as in simple random sampling or systematic random sampling (Tracy & Carkin, 2014). In this direction, universities are divided into 10-year strata (such as those established between 1970-1979) according to their foundation years. Then, the number of universities in each stratum was determined and the required number of universities from each stratum was determined proportionally in order to reach the sample number of 25. Samples from each stratum were determined by simple random sampling technique. The sample consists of 17 state and 8 private universities.

Coding

In the research, the screenshots of the home pages of the websites of the universities were analysed by the visual content analysis method. As the websites are constantly updated communication tools, the screenshots were taken on the same day in the 2020-2021 academic year. In addition to saving

screenshots as images, the sites have also been saved as a whole in order to allow the sites to be reviewed offline due to possible updates on the websites.

According to Krippendorf (1980), content analysis is a research technique used to make reproducible and valid inferences from data to their context. In the content analysis method, the frequency of certain visual elements in an image sample is determined and then these frequencies are analysed (Rose, 2002). In this study, the stages of Rose's (2002) visual content analysis method were followed. In the first of these stages, the images to be analysed are determined. Then, based on these images, categories are created for coding. Images are coded according to the categories obtained and the results are analysed.

In the research, firstly, the images on the websites were determined. In order to create the themes, a literature review was conducted on the images of universities and the preferences of international students (Cubillo, Sánchez & Cerviño, 2006; Polat & Arslan, 2017; Saichaie & Morphew, 2014). These studies have themes like academics, institution image, economy, personal reasons, student life, programme evaluation, campus aesthetics and value. By putting the similar themes from the literature together, four main themes were created. The homepages of the websites were coded within the framework of four determined themes. Coding was made for each website and these codes were placed under the themes on the Excel file. In order to test the reliability of the coding, a second coder was informed about the themes and codes, and the visual content analysis was repeated. As a result of the two analyses, the results of the two encoders were examined and they showed 95% similarity. Then, the frequencies of the codes were calculated. In order to interpret the differences between state and private universities, frequencies were calculated separately.

Results

The codes found out as a result of the visual analysis are grouped under four themes: (I) Academic, (II) Organisational, (III) Social and (IV) Economic.

Table 1. Visual content analysis results of university websites

Theme	Code	*f*	State Uni.	Private Uni.
Academic	Scientific study	24	16	8
	Quality	15	8	7
	Department information	9	3	6
Organisational	Physical environment	14	8	6
	Student photo	13	7	6
	Promotional video	12	7	5
	Organisational numbers	12	10	2
	Internationalization	8	5	3
	Map	4	4	0
Social	Social media accounts	25	17	8
	Social events	20	13	7
	Political news	11	8	3
	Important day celebrations	9	7	2
	Sports events	8	4	4
Economic	Accommodation	5	0	5
	Scholarship	3	1	2
	City promotion	1	1	0

Three codes were determined under the "Academic" theme. These are the "Scientific study" code, which includes scientific studies, publications, conferences, and symposiums made by universities, the "Quality" code, which includes the quality awards and success rankings of universities, and the "Department information" code, which universities introduce their departments. When the websites of the universities are examined in terms of "Academic", it is seen that while almost all of them have scientific studies/research, these activities are generally conferences and symposiums organized within their own structure. Scientific studies are followed by quality-related posts, and it has been found out that universities present their quality certificates and national/international rankings for quality less than scientific studies. In the last place, it was seen that the promotion of undergraduate/graduate/doctorate programs of universities took place.

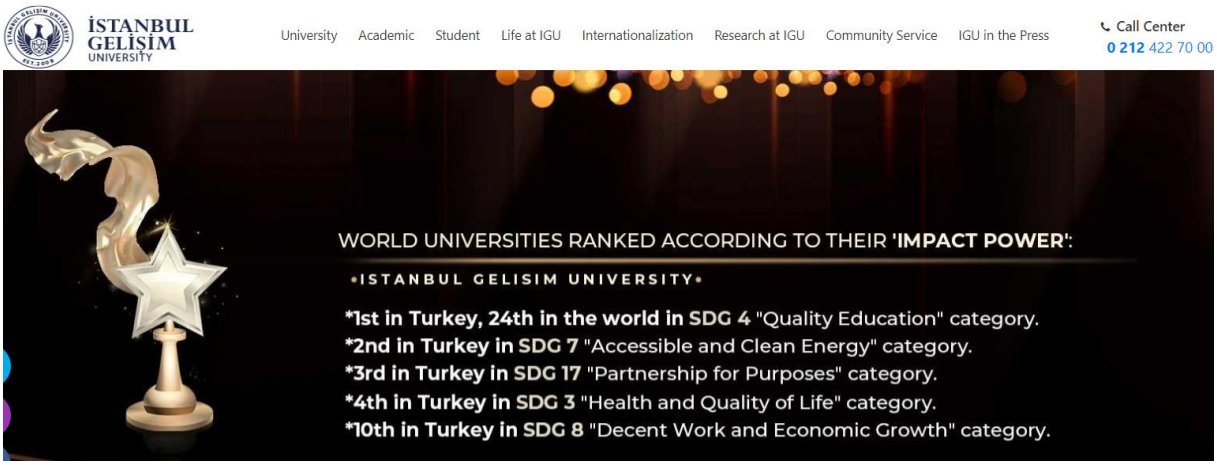

Figure 1. Example of "*Quality*" coding in the Academic category

Six codes were determined under the "Organisational" theme. These are the "Physical environment" code showing the campus, buildings and gardens of the university, the "Student photo" code showing the students at various places in the university, the "Promotional video" code containing the video prepared to promote the university, the "Organisational numbers" code which provides numerical information about various units related to the university, the "Internationalization" code which shows the cooperation and projects carried out by the university at the international level, and the "Map" code which indicates the location of the university.

Under the "Organisational" theme, it was seen that about half of the universities share the physical environments including the campus, nature, building, and the students who are engaged in different activities in different parts of the university. Relatively similarly, it has been found out that half of the universities present numbers related to different subjects such as institutes, departments, academicians, and students. These codes are followed by internationalization-oriented posts showing the cooperation and projects carried out by universities at the international level and maps showing the location of the university.

Figure 2. Example of "*Physical environment*" coding in the organisational category

Figure 3. Example of "*Internationalization*" coding in the Organisational category

Five codes were defined under the "Social" theme. These are the "Social media accounts" code owned by the university, the "Social activities" code for various events held at the university, the "Political news" code, which includes the news the university shares about political issues on the agenda, and the "Important day celebrations" code, which includes the news the university shares about important days such as holidays and anniversaries, and "Sports events" code indicating the sportive events held within the university.

When the "Social" theme is examined, it is seen that all universities have more than one social media account and these social media accounts are on all websites. It has been observed that the majority of universities include social activities such as music, theatre and conversations on their websites. Social events are followed by the reactions of the universities to the political events on the agenda and the posts they make to celebrate national and religious special days. Under this theme, the sports activities organized within the university or in which the school teams are included are at the lowest level on the home pages of the websites of the universities.

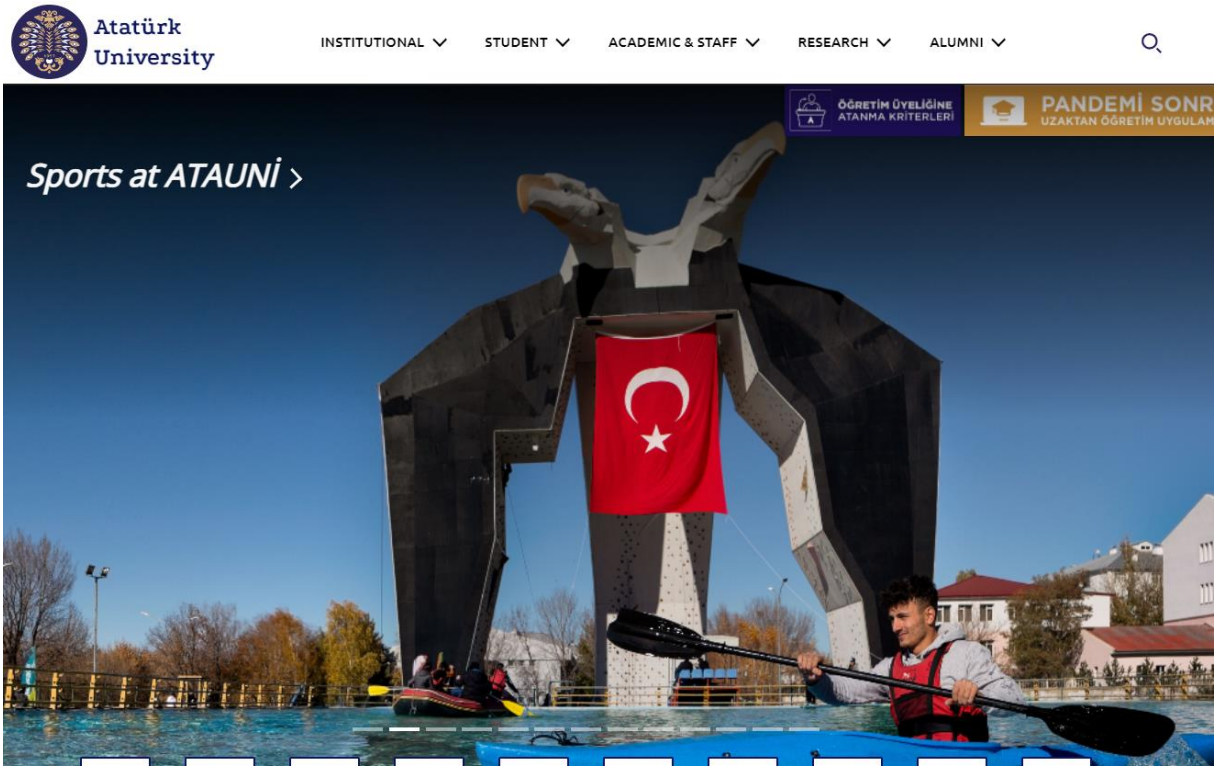

Figure 4. Example of "*Sports events*" coding in the Social category

Three codes were determined under the "Economic" theme. These are the "Accommodation" code, which shows the accommodation opportunities for the students of the university, the "Scholarship" code, which shows the scholarship opportunities offered by the university to the students, and the "City promotion" code, which is intended to promote the city where the university is located. Under the theme of "Economic", which includes issues related to the financial situation of students, it has been observed that very few universities include accommodation and scholarship opportunities that students can benefit from. In addition, almost none of the universities have shared anything to promote the city they are in.

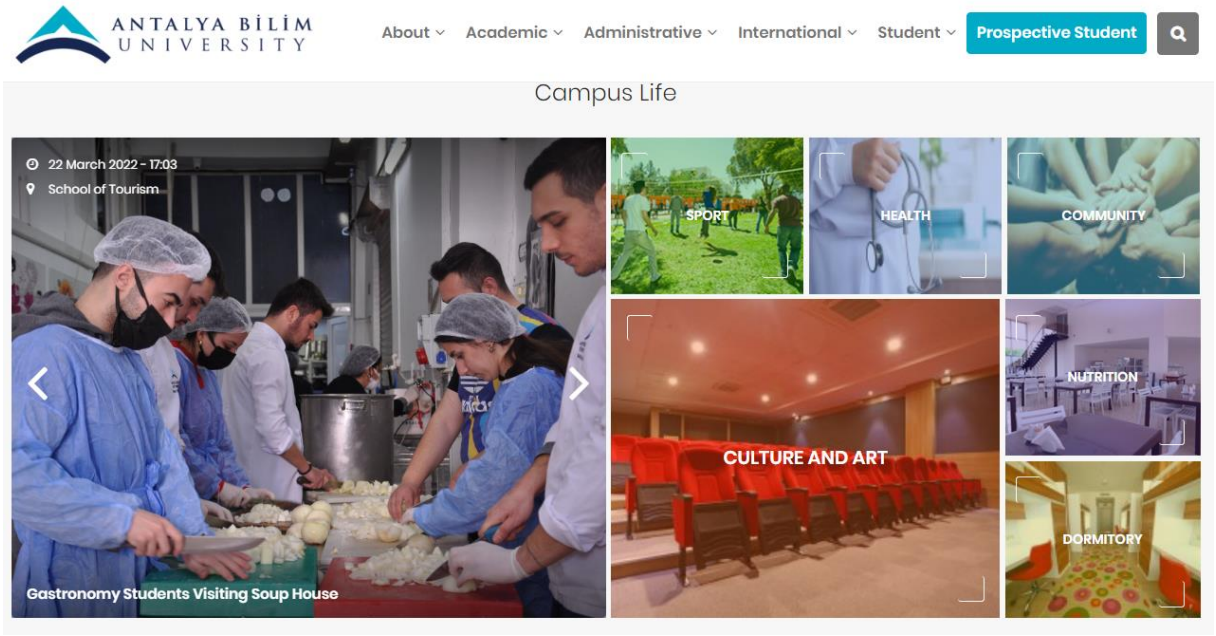

Figure 5. Example of "*Accommodation*" coding in the Economic category

Discussion and Conclusion

Visual content analysis on corporate websites, which is one of the most important ways of introducing universities to international students, creating a positive image about themselves in students and increasing their organisational attractiveness, which will create a sense of choosing themselves in students, provides important findings about universities.

According to the results of this research, which was conducted to determine whether there is content that will positively affect the organisational attractiveness of the university for foreign students on the home pages of the websites of public and private universities in Turkey, universities highlight their scientific studies. As a result of the research conducted by Poock (2006), it was determined that the most searched information by prospective students was department information and program introductions. From this point of view, it can be said that state universities in Turkey are not sufficient to provide students with information about their departments, while private universities include more of their departments on their websites compared to state universities. It is observed that universities present their awards and quality certificates rather than providing information with their departments/programs. When evaluated in terms of foreign students, the most important place where prospective students can get information about the departments offered by the university is the websites of the universities. If students cannot easily access information about the program they are interested in, they assume that it is not offered and visit another university's website (Hudson, 2018). In this respect, although state universities in Turkey give importance to presenting their scientific studies and quality certificates, it has been seen that they are deficient in presenting the information international students need to learn and the education they will receive, and they cannot provide a full organisational attractiveness to these students.

In the research conducted by Vilnas-Yavatz and Tifferet (2009) to determine what prospective students think about university websites, it was determined that the visuals presented on the websites play an important role in influencing the students' perspectives on the university. As a result of this research, it has been found that those who visit the websites of universities associate the building images presented on the websites with the impressions left by the organisations, such as the quality of the service provided, the attractiveness of the campus and providing a pleasant experience. In addition, Peifer (2012) found that students interacting in different places and activities within the university increase the attractiveness of the university. From this point of view, the websites of universities in Turkey do not include sufficient visuals of their campuses and students, and they are limited in terms of attracting students who will come from abroad and who have limited or no knowledge about the university to the university and leave a positive image for these students. When public and private universities are compared in this respect, private universities, with the effect of being commercial organisations, include more content about their campuses and students in order to introduce themselves and leave a positive image to international students compared to state universities.

In another study examining the effectiveness of the university's websites (Mechitov et al., 2004), features such as online applications, registration information, virtual tours, education information, department information, and search function come to the fore. Similar to campus and student images, promotional videos that will provide comprehensive information about the university on the websites of universities in Turkey have been included at a moderate level. "Internationalization", another subject that may attract the attention of international students, is not sufficiently included in the websites of universities. This situation may create the perception that the vision of the university is not at the highest level among students coming from other countries and may reduce the desire of students to join the organisation.

When the websites of universities are examined from a social point of view, there are images and links related to the social media accounts of the university on all of the websites. A study on students who will choose a university (QS, 2020) shows that students use social media accounts extensively and use these accounts to obtain more detailed information about the university. It can be concluded that universities in Turkey also use social media accounts effectively to attract international students. Social activities such as speeches, symposiums, music and poetry activities are frequently featured on the websites of universities, and this also contributes to creating a positive image about the university for students. However, the low level of sharing about sports activities may negatively affect the attractiveness of universities for international students.

In the study of Mechitov and colleagues (2004), students especially want to learn about internships, accommodation, information about university activities and organisations, and the area around the institution. From this point of view, there is very little information on the websites of universities in Turkey about the accommodation, fees and scholarship opportunities that international students especially want to learn. This situation creates economic uncertainty about the university choice of international students and lowers the attractiveness level towards the university. While the information about scholarships and accommodation is very limited on the websites of public universities, private universities frequently include these titles on their websites in order to increase their attractiveness for students.

As a result, it can be said that the efforts of universities in Turkey to create a positive image and attractiveness for their international students on their websites are not sufficient. With the effect of the fact that private universities are commercial organisations, it seems that there are more efforts to create a positive image about themselves on websites compared to state universities. Although universities mostly include scientific studies, social media and social activities on their websites, the first and most important effect on a foreign student is the university campus and the visuals of their students. In this respect, if universities include visuals of educational environments, buildings, campuses and students interacting in these environments on their websites, it will leave a positive image on prospective foreign students. Since the university websites are the only source of information for international students, the universities can give more details about the accommodation facilities and the scholarships the students

can have in their websites. Also, providing more information about their programs and courses will help the universities be more selected.

As with any research, this study also has limitations. This research focused only on university websites. Since websites are environments that can be updated, the results presented in this study are related to the data of the period in which the data was collected. The sample of the research is limited to 25 university websites. Future studies can be done on the websites of all universities in Turkey or by examining the website of a university in more detail. In addition, the subject of this study can be examined through interviews with international students who have preferred universities in Turkey or a scale that can be developed in this regard.

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International Medical Students' Financial Security in China: Lessons from an Individual Case Study

Qinxu Jiang*
Social Contexts and Policies of Education, Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Abstract

Financial security affects international students' success and wellbeing and is a cause for great concern. However, it is still understudied in the literature. This is an especially important issue in countries where most international students are self-financed and/or originate from developing countries. This is the case in China, which hosts a large number of international students, and where such research is still lacking. This exploratory study was a case study of a high-achieving international medical student in China who experienced (and overcame) financial difficulties. Findings of the study have important implications for policy and practice, and call for Chinese universities' policy concerning the financial needs of disadvantaged international students and supporting them with financial resources. The implications also include the need for Chinese universities to reduce overreliance on commissioned agents to recruit international students and strengthen the supervision of said agents.

Keywords: International education, International medical students, Financial security, Student success, Educational policy, Mainland China

Introduction

With the advancement of China's "*One Belt, One Road*" Initiative and the deepening of the internationalization of higher medical education, countries along the "*One Belt One Road*" route have become the driving force for the growth of international students studying medicine in China (Zhou, 2022). In 2018, about 68,600 international students came to China, accounting for 26.58% of the total number of students studying in China that year (Zhou, 2022). International medical students have become the largest group of international students in China except for language categories (Zhou, 2022). These students who are mostly from low-income countries of Asia and Africa try to seek a degree of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS). Their success is critical as they are likely going to constitute potential healthcare professionals in their home countries, where human resources for health are in great demand (Liu et al., 2017). The MBBS program is significant as it is the only program that is under the direct supervision of China's Ministry of Education (MOE) offered to international students. For examples, China MOE decides the annual recruitment number of authorized universities based on evaluation of their program quality. There are forty-five authorized universities including "985", "211" and other qualified provincial higher education institutions. One of the attractions of the six-year MBBS program taught in English is that host universities approved by the MOE are recognized by the Medical Council of China and WHO in the directory of World Medical Schools (China Education Center, 2020). Other advantages include the relaxation of admission requirements, affordable tuition fees, available scholarships and internship opportunities, China's medical expertise and equipment, and a perceived stable and safe society (Zhao, 2018).

* **Corresponding Author:** Qinxu Jiang, jiangviolet86@hotmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-7881-3349

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Statistics by 2018 show medical degree-seekers who were granted Chinese government scholarships excluding provincial government scholarships accounted for only 8% of the total population of 55,225.[1] However, these scholarships cannot cover all fees (Liu & Qian, 2021). It is estimated that approximately 9 out 10 international medical students are fee-paying. The local government scholarships for international students in China are only for merit-based scholarships, and there are no scholarships for those in need (Zhang, 2017). China still has most of its international students from economically underdeveloped countries and regions (Zhang, 2017). For those whose financial conditions are really difficult but fail to apply for the full scholarships, the local government scholarships for international students lacks work-study supporting policies, which cannot ensure that poor students with excellent academic performance can complete their studies (Zhang, 2017). At institutional level, compared with the scholarship system for domestic students, the types, scale, and coverage of such scholarships specially set up for international students in China are relatively limited (Liu & Qian, 2021). When poor international students encounter financial hardships, off-campus part-time employment is forbidden in China, which may further exacerbate their conditions (Gao et al., 2016). Therefore, financial security can be of great concern to self-financed international medical students.

Literature suggests that international students are likely to encounter many challenges and problems in a new environment (Sherry et al., 2010). Financial difficulties are one of the salient issues. Some general factors contributing to international students' financial hardship include (but are not limited to) low family finance status, political or economic changes in the students' home countries (Okusolubo, 2018), financial emergencies triggered by robbery or loss of paid work (Sawir et al., 2009), theft, fines, accidents or tenancy requirements (Marginson et al., 2010), costly health insurance (Yan & Berliner, 2013), changing exchange rates (Banjong, 2015), part-time employment restrictions, expensive tuition fees, cost of living and textbook prices (Okusolubo, 2018), and limited access to financial aid (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007), unforeseen critical incident like the COVID-19 global pandemic (Study International Staff, 2020). Another cause can be related to intermediary misconducts. For example, Yang (2018) found that local agents in India charged students interested in studying for an MBBS in China 'seat-booking fees' on a 'first come-first serve' basis. They also used the information to which they were privy in order to manipulate students into choosing universities they recommended to serve their own interests.

Negative consequences brought about by the financial difficulties of international students can be detrimental to the students' wellbeing and quality of life, especially in relation to their health. Financial stress often pushes international students to seek mental health counselling (Banjong, 2015). They are likely to have trouble concentrating on their academic studies or taking an interest in social activities (Yan & Berliner, 2013). Kono and colleagues (2015) found that in Japan, international students who were not covered by scholarships were more prone to depression. Yan and Berliner (2013) noted that some international students reported additional stress from being unable to afford expensive nutritious food. Similarly, Nasirudeen and colleagues (2014) found international students from China, Myanmar, Nepal, India, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia studying in Singapore experienced financial challenges due to high living expenses. In the same study, students who had more limited finances reported higher acculturative stress than those who received over one thousand dollars per month through scholarships and other sources of income. In Forbes-Mewett and Sawyer's (2016) study, university personnel in Australia reported that some international students experienced extreme financial strain and worked long hours to make ends meet, resulting in loss of sleep.

Financial problems can also affect international students' academic performance and ability to complete their studies. Banjong (2015) found that international students who had financial difficulties tended to demonstrate weak academic performance. Okusolubo (2018) found that fee-paying African students attending US universities tended to struggle with tuition fees, health insurance, housing, food, clothing, and many other necessities that were basic requirements for survival in the US. Consequently, they became distracted from their academic studies and failed courses (Okusolubo, 2018). Sherry (2010) found over half of the international students experienced financial difficulties in a U.S. university, which

[1] An internal document of Department of International Cooperation and Exchanges of Ministry of Education.

took a toll on their studies and life. Other studies found that some international students engaged in illegal work off campus without a work permit (Okusolubo, 2018; Yan & Berliner, 2013), potentially putting themselves at risk of exploitation or deportation. For instance, in China, international students who worked illegally to support themselves experienced exploitation but were afraid to ask help for fear of being held accountable (Zhao, 2008).

Theoretical framework

Human security, defined by Marginson and colleagues (2010) as "maintenance of a stable capacity for self-determining human agency" (p.60) lays the theoretical foundation for this study. The term "security" embraces both economic and social aspects of international students' experiences concerning finances, work, housing, health, personal safety, immigration, universities, language, family and friends, loneliness and intercultural relations (Marginson et al., 2010). The focus of the present study is the financial aspect of international student security (i.e., financial security).

Financial security is recognized as one of the most critical determinants of international students' success and wellbeing (Devlin & McKay, 2018; Smith & Khawaja, 2011), yet Marginson and colleagues (2010) maintained that "financial security concerned many international students but interested few researchers" (p.92). Research has been conducted in Australia, the UK, and Zealand regarding the financial experiences of international students (Marginson et al., 2010; Sawir et al., 2009), but latest studies are scarce. As the world has been changing rapidly, it is of great significance to keep studying this field to better understand international students' financial experiences. Moreover, in the context of mainland China especially, there is little research delving into this field.

Research Questions

As indicated above, financial security is critical to international students' success, yet little is known about international students studying in China. This study thus attempts to fill this gap by highlighting a unique case of how a high-achieving international MBBS student encountered and overcame unexpected financial difficulties while studying in China to realize his dream of becoming a doctor in his country. Three overarching research questions guided this study:

i. What were the causes of the participant's financial difficulties?
ii. How did these financial difficulties affect the participant's experience of studying for an MBBS in China?
iii. How did the participant overcome these financial difficulties and successfully obtain his degree?

This study, although limited to one case, significantly contribute to the knowledge-based on financial security of international students in two aspects. First, while previous studies have been focused on the Western context, this study may add to relevant literature by providing empirical evidence in China. Second, it may be the first time that insights into the issue of financial security of international students are obtained from a unique case in a socialist society.

Methodology

The present study used a single case study design to look at events, collect data, analyse it, and report the results (Yin, 2012). The case concerned an international medical student, who served as the main unit of analysis. It is argued that the lived experiences of this single case are unique, unusual, and intrinsically interesting (Merriam, 2009), so gaining an in-depth understanding of this case is worthwhile (Punch & Oancea, 2014). The purpose of this study was not to generalize the results to a wide population but to explore, and gain a deep and holistic understanding of, the financial difficulties and the issues entailed that an international medical student encountered in China. It neither aims to glorify this case, but rather use it to demonstrate the challenges and difficulties that many similar students with comparable backgrounds and motivations face as international students pursuing their dreams and education.

The Participant

The participant was from a developing country in South Asia. At the time of this study, he was working as a licensed clinical doctor fighting against COVID-19 in the biggest public hospital in his country after

having graduated from a medical school in China. The researcher used to work at the same university where this participant was enrolled in the MBBS program and had established good rapport with him.

This participant was purposively selected for this study because of his experiences, which were "unique, atypical, perhaps rare attributes or occurrences of the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam 2009, p. 78). He had endured financial difficulties throughout his six years' study in China yet had succeeded in his studies, passing the medical licensing examination in his home country at his first attempt and finding a job in a renowned public hospital in his hometown. Some of his peers also underwent financial hardships, but they either terminated their education or were fortunate enough to suffer only a temporary setback, which ultimately did not affect their studies. The choice for this single case is also related to the difficulties in finding students, successful and unsuccessful, with similar characteristics that are willing to share their difficult experiences while studying abroad with expected and unexpected financial difficulties. Besides, the rareness and uniqueness of this individual's experiences is believed to provide insights in understanding motivations, actions, and reflection on the whole experience of being an international student in his condition.

Data Collection and Analysis

Before the study commenced, ethical approval was obtained from the author's university. The participant was debriefed in detail about the study and signed a written informed consent form before any data was collected. To protect the participant from being identified, his demographic information has been altered, and all the data collected was encrypted during the interview and further secured by means of password protection only available to the author.

Data was collected using the email interview method (Rosalind & Holland, 2013). The participant was unavailable for a face-to-face interview because of the geographical distance between interviewer and interviewee. Due to the participant's limited Internet access at home and a hectic work schedule, web interviews or telephone interviews were also difficult. Consequently, a mutual agreement was reached whereby the participant would respond to the interview questions in English via email. Based on the participant's initial responses, the researcher raised further questions for elaboration and clarification purposes, thus making the data collection an iterative process (Zucker, 2009). The email interviews spanned from late July to late August 2020 with an overall email exchange of 16.

This approach, although laborious and time-consuming, was perceived as the most convenient, comfortable, and flexible for the participant. The advantage of this asynchronous approach is that it "allows participants greater scope to think about any questions asked and, as such, often encourages more descriptive and well thought out replies" (Lewis, 2006, p. 5, as cited in Rosalind & Holland 2013) and also gives "both researcher and participant time for reflection on the responses, and on the future direction of the research" (Edward & Holland, 2013, p. 49). Furthermore, this method of spatial separation might decrease the chances of embarrassment for the participant and is considered less intrusive (Rosalind & Holland, 2013).

Thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the data in this study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Analysis was conducted manually. Key words and sentences were identified as initial codes. The author and a graduate student majoring in public health coded the interview transcript separately and then cross-checked to generate initial codes. Similar codes were combined to form a theme. The initial themes were carefully discussed until a consensus reached. The theme framework was further revised until a final category was formed.

Trustworthiness

Member checking was conducted with the participant to validate whether these categories and themes were accurate. External auditing was carried out with the help of a faculty member from the author's university. Self-reflection was conducted to try to minimize any possible researcher bias as the researcher's subjective feelings and working experience may influence the interpretation of data (Creswell, 2012).

Limitations

There are several limitations of the study. First, the data only came from a single source: the participant, albeit based on several email interviews that took several hours. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to a wider population and are not intended for such a purpose. Second, the findings of this study may not be applicable to other populations, contexts, or situations. Third, researcher bias, or the researcher's own subjective feelings, might have affected the interpretation of the findings. Fourth this case was unique and most likely difficult to replicate. Finally, yet importantly, the information gathered was based on participant retrospection, which might not have been completely accurate due to potential memory errors. Despite these limitations, the study has contributed to the scholarship of international student financial security, especially in a Chinese context.

Results

Section One: Causes of Financial Difficulties

Low SES background: The participant was from a low-SES family with a limited annual income. The father was a farmer and the mother a housewife. His siblings went to school aiming to overcome their family poverty through education, in the belief that education would provide promising career opportunities and upward mobility, but one of the two siblings had to quit school later as a result of the family's financial difficulties. The participant was placed on a waiting list for a medical institution offering a scholarship in his own country and had hopes of obtaining a place for free. His choice to become a doctor stemmed from both his desire to improve his family's finances and an awareness that it could lead to a better life, not only in his home country but also abroad. Unfortunately, corruption in the educational system meant that the participant would be obliged to 'buy' a vacancy at a price he could not afford. This adverse situation pushed the participant to seek less expensive medical education opportunities elsewhere, namely, in China, as the participant mentions:

> I wanted to choose a field which can lastly provide me and my family a good life not only in my country but all over the world…I chose China as my study destination because the full scholarship application cost nothing other than the processing charge.

When the participant applied to his host university, there was no direct online admission system in place. Applicants of his cohort were recruited through commissioned agents partnered with the university. All the information that the participant learned about his admission and the university came from this particular agent, who informed him that he had been granted a provincial government scholarship operated via the university. The participant's family thus made a financial plan for his prospective six years' study in China before his departure, which they assumed would work.

> The agent told us that we had to pay nothing, except for flight tickets and paperwork charges which could be paid later after arriving at the college.

Agent fraud: The agent scammed him, precipitating his financial predicament after he arrived in China. The fraud was committed twice. First, although the scholarship granted by the host university was essentially free, the agent forced him to pay a substantial sum of money for the agency charges as well as a scholarship seat fee. The university trusted the partnering agent to inform the participant about the scholarship, but the agent held back vital information and took advantage of the information gap to line his pockets by 'selling' the scholarship place to the participant at an exorbitant price.

> The agent was supposed to do all the paperwork and gave us all the information. We agreed because my friend was already studying in that college. So, we had no doubts. We managed to obtain the money for the flight ticket. Everything was going smoothly and the way we planned…after my arrival, then agent started calling and showed us the money we had to pay. I thought we were done, but that was just the beginning. we were asked to pay around 66,000 RMB for this full scholarship seat and agency charge. This was the point where we got cheated. My class started already, and my family had no money to pay. Agency and agent started threatening to us that they would cancel my registration and I had to return back leaving my study.

The participant once attempted to confirm the scholarship information with the student affairs office at the university, but the staff member in charge of his cohort brushed him off and refused to become involved. He even suggested that the participant should quit school if he could not afford the tuition fees.

> I wanted to talk with dean about this situation, but the staff member in charge started scolding us saying not to be a troublemaker. He said 'You have no rights to talk with our dean and school leaders', deal with the agent. Or you can leave [China] if you cannot afford tuition fees.

The participant was left with no choice but to pay the agent as he wanted to continue his education in China. His family borrowed money from relatives and paid the agent, but even at this point the solution was not sustainable on a short-term basis as recognized by the participant:

> Then my family talked to the agency, requested a lot to decrease the amount. Finally, they decreased the fee by 20,000rmb. They asked us to pay 46,000rmb within one month time which also we could not manage it.

Second, the provincial government scholarship that the participant received did not cover all of his tuition and accommodation fees (which the agent promised it would), something the participant only discovered later from the staff member in charge. This was contrary to the agent's verbal promises that his scholarship would encompass all fees and expenses. As a result, the participant was hit with an additional unanticipated expense of 4,500 RMB fees payable to the university each year. This was an additional financial burden on his family, who were already in debt. To make matters worse, the currency exchange rate between his national currency and the Chinese RMB was unfavourable.

Overall, the participant indicated that the agent was the main reason why he had experienced financial distress in that the agent had not only deliberately provided the wrong information regarding the scholarship, but he had also failed to inform the participant about the information regarding the remaining fees payable (after the scholarship coverage) per year. The agent's deception not only ruined his family's initial financial planning but also consequentially severely and negatively affected every aspect of his life and studies in China, as the participant concluded:

> We made a plan for everything, but nothing worked as planned. Conditions and situations were totally different from what we imagined and planned. I can say the only factors leading to financial difficulties were misguiding and wrong information provided by the agent.

Section Two: Impact of Financial Difficulties on Study, Life, and Wellbeing

The participant found it difficult to concentrate on his daily studies because of his constant worries about paying his fees and managing money for food, insurance, visa, and other daily expenses. The participant was unable to afford basic study materials like medical textbooks, which were typically more expensive than non-medical textbooks. Without study materials, his academic learning and performance were adversely affected. All these setbacks led the participant to consider giving up his studies. This sense of insecurity was stressed by the participant:

> Every time I felt insecure and did not know what would happen next. As a result, I could not give 100% to my study, could not get the expected result and grade too… I was unable to buy proper books and notebooks which was essential for study… not being able to pay tuition fees, not being able to manage study materials, books, foods and clothing as I had no options left…I thought of giving up the degree many times.

This lack of funding also led to difficulties in meeting his daily needs concerning clothing and food, which augmented the risks to his health and constrained his lifestyle, conditions that are often associated with the plight of poor people (Okusolubo, 2018). Similar to the social isolation that poor people tend to suffer, the participant was driven into social isolation, since his financial difficulties also hindered his social relationships. He had to cancel or avoid involvement in social activities that required money to

be spent, as socializing typically required financial input. In desperation, he resorted to borrowing some money from friends but was not able to repay them. Eventually, he was unable to maintain ties with his existing circle of friends, which ultimately had a negative impact on his emotional and mental health. This is contrary to the basic expectation that international university students immerse themselves in the local culture and build social networks (Leong, 2015).

> I could not eat the normal and healthy food…It directly degraded my health and put me in high risk and getting sick anytime… Whether it was cold or summer season clothes, I had to manage with the same clothes for 2 to 3 years. I lacked everything.

> Friend circles became bad as I became unable to return their money which I asked and took from them as a help during difficulty times. They started disliking me. They stopped helping me, they put you out of the friend circle at last and started avoiding me.

Throughout this period, he was mostly unsupported by the university services, who were well aware of his plight. He felt prejudiced and discriminated against because of his financial situation. During his 1st and 2nd years, when he tried seeking financial help from the university service in charge of international students, he was rejected, humiliated, and warned by the staff member in charge not to bother the university services, as he recounts:

> I already had a bad impression with him during the starting of my college regarding my admission and agency. This time he said, "you are not supposed to ask help in here, this is against rule…You came here on your own, you are supposed to do everything by yourself, you are the one who choose to study abroad, not us. So, it is better for you to manage yourself. We can do nothing for you." He also warned me, "if you come to disturb me again with such shameless issue, you will get punishment letter and you will lose all your scholarship." Not only this, when I got help from my friend in paying tuition fees, he even investigated me how suddenly I paid the fees. I explained him that my classmate helped me. Then he called my classmate in office and asked so many questions about why you helped him and later suggested her not to help as this is inappropriate and against the rule.

Surprisingly, this same staff member exposed the participant's financial predicament indirectly in a class meeting consisting of other first-year classmates in the same cohort; as a result, some of his classmates started avoiding him and excluding him from their circles. During his last year, when he was unable to pay the remaining tuition fee, he tried seeking help again from the student affairs office. There was now a different member of staff in charge, who also rejected his request for assistance.

> She denied saying she has no any right to do so and help me. She added, "this is against the rule if I help you and this is not fair." I even asked her that it was my last year, my whole career depended on this but as usual she showed no interest in helping me. Instead, she asked me to pay as soon as possible as I was one of the last one doing internship without paying fees… She gave me two options, first pay the fees. Second was to leave the college, go home, manage to raise more money.

He later tried appealing for assistance from a higher authority in the university, who verbally agreed to help him but failed to keep her word. Instead, she became suspicious of how he had paid the previous tuition fees and started investigations into the participant similar to the previous member staff.

> I did not know why, but I was called twice in the office and was investigated how much money I got before and what I did with that. Instead of helping, they kept investigating me about all help which I got previously. After that, I waited 1 month, still no response from any staff member.

During his last (6th) year of study, the participant was unable pay off his tuition fees of around 4,500 RMB. As the university had failed to assist him yet again, he was fearful that he would be forced to terminate his studies, so he participated in an off-campus advertising event to earn some money. This is an illegal activity for international students in China, and the police caught him and one of his friends from the same course. The case was subsequently dropped, and neither student received any punishment as it was considered a minor case.

This incident underscored the participant's desperate financial plight. Despite this, the university's management continued to dismiss his appeals for any form of financial assistance. In fact, there was further discrimination against the participant, and even punishment in the form of refusals to provide essential paperwork he and his friend needed for their licensing exam or job application after graduation.

> The staff member in charge started treating us like criminals. I did not want to talk further about how the management treated us. It was the moment where our good academics, grades, our all performances, our all help and work we did for office and school was nothing…When we asked help, the staff member in charge along with that previous member of staff in charge started laughing. This was one of the many embarrassing moments…I knew that quick job was a mistake…but the member of staff in charge never focused on what led me to do it… they would never understand what conditions I gone through, how much I cried, how much I apologized, never felt the cold I felt during winter and the hardships I went through.

As highlighted earlier, the financial difficulties took a toll not only on the participant's academic learning and social life but also on his general wellbeing and mental health. He experienced an array of negative feelings of helplessness, negativity, fear, loneliness, loss of self-efficacy, hopelessness, depression, even suicidal thoughts, during extreme situations as he reflected:

> Difficult times made you feel helpless, worthless. You had no any choice and idea how this would go, how to fight back with it, how to survive this crisis and move on…Loneliness would occupy you. You lost self-confidence. Negativity kept on building as friend circles and normal life drastically changed. It seemed you had no one to help you and you had no support and hope whether you would be able to get out from these difficulties or not…You began to fear from the staff members, thinking when they would start asking you to pay fees, when they would ask you to leave your study and go home. This fear kept on building. You began to live a different life totally which only included negativity and bad thoughts… Feelings of loneliness, negativism, depression and suicide surrounded me for a very long time.

Section 3: Factors Promoting Survival and Resilience

Support from family and friends: The participant's family was unable to provide further financial help after their initial efforts, but they continued to give solid emotional support to him with encouraging words. At first, the participant received some help from friends, but as he was unable to pay them back, his friends gradually avoided him. However, he had one special friend, the only classmate who was able to sympathize with the participant's plight, who helped him consistently both financially and emotionally through their six years of study.

> My family was helpless like me but still they used to say do not worry, everything will be ok. My family's helped me a lot. They tried different ways but could not manage money for my tuition fees but still they used to say be strong, not lose hope… I used to talk with my family about all the things.

> My [special] friend helped me in paying my first, second and third-year tuition fees [after scholarship] … with foods, notebooks, buying [second-hand] laptop, the best tool for study notes without books …clothes, pocket money, insurance fees, visa fees…friendship helped me in improving my health and confidence.

Support from a special staff member: Another administrative staff member, not in charge of this participant's cohort, noticed he was in dire straits and approached him to check if he needed assistance. She extended a helping hand, helping him from his 3rd year and onward by personally providing him with not only financial assistance, including money, food, clothing, textbooks, and other life necessitates, but also the emotional support he most needed until he graduated. A few other staff members also provided their instrumental support after hearing his story from this special staff member. Her involvement marked a life-changing turning point for him. When the participant was in extreme difficulty managing tuition fees for his 6th year, this staff member helped him out once more by utilizing her personal savings.

> Throughout my journey, this person kept motivating me. When we were in bad condition, we needed someone who showed hope, who showed support and help, who motivated and encouraged us…she helped me to overcome my difficulties not only financially but also psychologically…She was the one behind my success, happiness, good results and finally leading me to achieve my dream of graduation. That special staff member was there for me every moment. I thank her for changing my life.
>
> I sent the money for my parents' medicines and treatment which this person used to give for my family. If she would not be there my family would not have received treatment and medications. As a whole our family would have been collapsed in the middle of the journey (of my studies).

The special staff member, as a bridge connecting international students and the university, also obtained help from the university to aid the participant financially during his 3rd and 4th years. Through this special person's efforts, the university's aid effectively mitigated the participant's tuition fee pressure; they also offered him a part-time campus job with monthly pay for some time.

> University is the one who made me what I am today. The special staff member played the most important role in nurturing my life…I can say university and the staff member has played most important and vital role in overcoming my difficulties. It is the staff member and the university who plays the biggest role in helping we students having financial difficulties as our future depends on it.

The university's support was provided on an exceptional basis and was all due to this particular staff member, meaning that this support was more an exception than the rule. It also indicates that if a staff member wishes to help international students at the university level, he/she could actually make a difference. However, as soon as the special staff member had been transferred to another post after the student's 4th year, the university support ceased. Thus, the participant once again fell into financial difficulties and had trouble paying his tuition fees in his 6th year.

Resilience & religious beliefs: Besides receiving social support from his family, the special friend and the special staff member, and university financial support, the participant's own coping mechanisms of resilience and religious beliefs also equipped him with the drive and motivation to face and overcome challenges and difficulties to realize his dream of becoming a doctor.

> Life teaches us everything if you are not to quit. Later you will come to know how beautiful life is when you achieved what you tried and worked hard for.

Overall, this study has found that agent fraud and the mere provision of wrong information – specifically, about the participant's scholarship and university fees – was the root cause of the participant's financial difficulties. Though the actions were few and of negligible concern to the agent, it had a significant impact on the participant, causing a snowball effect to the extent that his studies, quality of life and even mental wellbeing were affected almost to a breaking point. His difficulties were further compounded by the lack of empathy and biasness shown by multiple parties – whom we should note have a duty of care towards students such as the participant – that the participant had tried to turn to for assistance. It was only with the support from his family and friends, his own resilience, and the extraordinary efforts by an administrative staff from his school, that the participant was eventually able to complete his studies and graduate successfully with a MBBS degree.

Discussion and Conclusion

This case study explored a high-achieving international medical student's unique experiences of financial difficulties and his resilience and survival in China. It provides new insights into the financial challenges experienced by a low SES background student and the financial security of international students in China. This is worthwhile research because the topic has seldom, if ever, been investigated among a population of international medical students who need financial assistance during their years of studies.

This study has extended the literature by highlighting the negative aspects of universities' use of commercial education agents to recruit international students. In China, the practice of using third party commissioned agents is a prevalent and dominant recruitment method among universities (Lin & Liu, 2022; Ma et al., 2018; Pan & Bai, 2020; Shi, 2019). For instance, Shi (2019) indicated over half of international students were enrolled by agents in one comprehensive university in his study. On a positive note, the use of agents, considered as a cost-effective measure by universities (Choudaha, 2013; Lin & Liu, 2022;), has helped universities recruit international students to fulfil their marketing goal (de Wit, 2016), and some universities and students seem satisfied with the agents (Parr, 2014). Nevertheless, reliance on the use of agents can have a negative effect on interests of both students and institutions (Lin & Liu, 2022; Ma et al., 2018; Shi, 2019). Choudaha (2015) points out that the use of commissioned agents to recruit international students remains controversial as the quality, reliability and ethical conduct of agents can differ greatly (Feng & Horta, 2021). Intermediary agencies, which are profits-oriented, ask applicants and universities for intermediary fees, which increases the economic burden of both students and universities (Lin & Liu, 2022). Since there is competition for students among universities, this would lead to a vicious phenomenon of increased fees by agents (Shi, 2019). Due to a lack of strong supervision on intermediaries, dishonest intermediaries may engage in corruption, and even conduct false propaganda and deception, which could increase the risk of damage to quality of students and institutional image (Lin & Liu, 202; Ma et al., 2018). This situation and the apparent lack of will by the hosting university to solve this student's agent/financial related situation may relate to more generalized cases of corruption that may still be found in Chinese society and academia (as argued by Welch (2020)).

The findings are in line with those of previous studies showing that financial hardships can adversely affect international students' academic performance, completion of studies, and psychological wellbeing (Banjong, 2015; Yan & Berliner, 2013). The study also confirms that "finances are a common source of insecurity and distress" among international students (Margison et al. 2010, p.91). However, the finding that the international student in the present study experienced prejudice and discrimination on the part of university management and peers as a result of his poor financial condition is new to the literature. The findings of the present study also indicate the importance of support from family and friends, confirming that social networks and friendships are an important component of sufficient safety in literature (Potter & Lee, 2012). Social support provides effective and essential resources that international students rely on to cope with difficulties and achieve life satisfaction (Jiang et al., 2020). In line with those of previous studies (Philip et al., 2019; Wang, 2009), the present findings revealed that the participant's resilience and religious beliefs were major factors enabling him to persevere in his studies – such that it led to his academic and career success. He was able to maintain a high academic standard despite years of difficulties; if the circumstances had been more favourable, it is entirely possible that he might have achieved much more.

Undoubtedly, many international students do manage to persevere in their studies despite the difficulties involved, although not all have the support and help of their family, special friends, and student affairs personnel (Marginson et al., 2009), or religious beliefs. There are other factors that contribute to inner resilience and perseverance, for example, humour (Gebhard, 2012) or a positive attitude towards solitude (Sawir et al., 2009). Nevertheless, not everyone is strong-willed or has an inner strength. When facing a difficult situation, some students may give up and withdraw from their studies (Gebhard, 2012). Should universities simply dismiss the plight of these students just because of their financial situation or for other reasons? Universities should nurture such students so that they can reach their full potential for they have the potential to excel with appropriate efforts, encouragement, and support. "International students are not a vulnerable population lacking agency and rights" (Marginson et al. 2009, p. 450), but should have the consumer rights and human rights to access financial security from the governments and universities to complete their education (Marginson et al., 2009).

The findings highlight the importance of the institution's role in influencing international students' financial security and in supporting them and changing their lives, whether for better or worse, which is in accordance with Cho and You (2015) and Leong (2015). Compared with local students, international

students generally are more vulnerable and have less backup in a crisis (Marginson et al., 2009). The present study supports Jiang and colleagues' (2019) claim that when universities provide students with support, students' school-life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing could increase. Ironically, universities can also become the source of difficulties for students when the latter ask for help: "the solution is the problem; the problem is the solution" (Marginson et al., 2009, p. 293). International student tuition fees are an important source of a university's revenue, but this in no way justifies the university treating the students as 'cash cows' (Choudaha, 2017) and leaving them in a "sink or swim" situation. It is also irrational and morally reprehensible for student affairs personnel to interpret students' seeking financial help as 'making trouble'. Pressurizing a high-achieving international student to quit his studies and career dreams during his last year for the sake of 4,500 RMB instead of trying to understand and help him, as was the case in the present study, is not a humane act on the part of a university. It is also unethical and can negatively affect the institution's or the nation's international reputation, creating an impression of the institution as a purely commercially driven entity (Marginson et al., 2009) rather than a bastion of higher education that universities should aim to be – to facilitate student internationalization (Horta, 2009). Universities should not leave the responsibility of security and safety to the students themselves; they need to identify and protect the financial security of international students (Marginson et al., 2009).

This study indicates that enhancing international students' financial security to help them succeed can also benefit the university itself. How universities respond to international students' security needs may affect their opportunity of "investing in their students who later become their brand ambassadors" (Choudaha 2016, p. III) as word-of-mouth referral can influence students' application decisions (Schulte & Choudaha, 2014) and whether they choose to study in China. Besides this, the passing rates of international medical students' licensing exams largely determine China's reputation regarding the quality of its medical education (Banerjee, 2015). This, in addition to students' achievement in their careers, their satisfaction with the university management, facilities, safety and so forth, affects students' decision to select China as their study destination. Hence, Chinese higher education institutions should maximize their efforts to support and help students not only to enable them to pass the exams but also to ensure their overall wellbeing during their stay under their care in China. In the case of the participant in this study, his home country, where doctors are in great demand, has been blessed with the efforts of a talented young doctor who is now playing a significant role in saving patients during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Helping international medical students succeed in their studies so that they can give back to their home country or to the world: this should be the mission and humanitarianism of international medical education.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy and Practice

There are several implications of the study for policy and practice. First, it is found that commercial agents can be a curse to harm international students' benefit if without proper supervision from institutions. When universities rely more on agents to disseminate information to prospective students, they would give a chance to them to take advantage of students. These findings suggest that institutions hosting international medical students in China should provide clear current and accurate information through their English websites to prospective students (Liu, 2015; Shi, 2019). Information such as admission criteria, scholarships, estimated living costs, employment and so forth will help students make informed decisions and plan their budget, and should thus be detailed and easily accessible on the institutions' websites. Direct online admission facilities should be set up to protect prospective students' benefits. Universities using commission-based agents should take care to choose trustworthy legal agents, reduce their reliance on them and carry out the eliminate and renew intermediary agencies according to their service quality (Pan & Bai, 2020). They should provide transparent information on their websites, such as a list of companies and agents that they work with and share legal responsibilities for the international students that these agents bring to the university. This will ensure that the universities become major stakeholders and will encourage them to "monitor" the students.

Second, the findings of this article show that the hosting university lacked awareness of the participant's financial difficulties and was not ready to provide financial assistance. These findings are aligned with the argument by Forbes-Mewett and colleagues (2009) that the Chinese government and universities

need to develop tailored policies and practiced to provide a financial safety net for vulnerable international students. Proactive and strategic financial support mechanisms can be cultivated to empower students to overcome their financial crises and enhance their financial security to achieve academic and wider success (Devlin & McKay, 2018). Such mechanisms could include the provision of on-campus part-time jobs or more scholarships and funds, especially for high achievers (Yang & Meng, 2009). To facilitate international students' academic studies, careers and wider success, universities should invest time and effort proactively (Choudaha, 2016). There should be a portfolio of international medical students from low SES backgrounds after admission so that the department in charge can monitor their lives and wellbeing to provide timely assistance and counselling if necessary.

Third, as the findings show, some of staff members failed to acknowledge the participant's financial hardships and refused to provide help when needed due to lack of empathy and bias against him. By contrast, when the special staff member recognized this issue, she was able to not only help the participant with financial assistance but also comfort a wounded soul. These findings indicate that it is essential that international office personnel be trained to meet the human security needs of international students (Marginson et al., 2009) by helping them develop cultural sensitivity, observation skills, empathy, sympathy, and intercultural competence. This could make a difference in international students' lives. In Chinese universities, student affairs personnel are usually responsible for coordinating various aspects of international students' affairs (Jiang & al., 2020). They have direct interactions with students and play a critical role in care work and in their lives and success. Encouraging these staff to spend more time caring for and listening to students will allow them to increase their capabilities and improve their understanding of the financial difficulties international students might be experiencing. Their words, attitudes and behaviours may mould the way international students feel about the host institution and Chinese education. Potential bias and discrimination against students due to their economic hardships should be replaced with a mindset of respect, empathy, and compassion.

Last but not least, more research into international student finances in China is warranted as knowledge of the phenomenon remains unclear. In other popular countries hosting international students, such as the UK and Australia, researchers have commenced studies on the sources of international student income, how and where the students spend money and how they cope financially (Marginson et al., 2010; Study International Staff, 2020). As one of the major education providers of international students in the world, such studies are urgently needed in China.

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The Expansion of Higher Education in Emerging Economies: Examples from Turkey and Chile

Tugay Durak[1*] , M. Furkan Uzan[2], & Valeria Rebolledo-Robert[3]
[1]UCL Institute of Education, University College London, London, United Kingdom
[2]Southampton Education School, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom
[3]Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Abstract

Turkey and Chile, both emerging economies, have accomplished the upgrade of their tertiary education systems to a universal level over the last two decades, whilst following different expansion strategies. While Turkey established more than 50 public universities, particularly in the least developed regions, enabling students from lower socioeconomic status to gain access higher education in their locale, Chile facilitated the privatisation of its higher education sector, effectively segregating the lower and upper socioeconomic classes with regard to their access to higher education. In this theoretical paper, we aim to analyse the higher expansion strategies of Turkey and Chile with a particular focus on the consequences of rapid higher education expansion in both countries. The paper starts by presenting the motivations behind attaining higher education and then continues with a delineation of the Turkish and Chilean higher education systems. After summarising the above expansion strategies, the paper then focuses on how the recent bold expansion strategies have boosted tertiary enrolment in each of these countries and the consequences of the rapid expansion in terms of quality of, and fair access to tertiary education.

Keywords: Higher education expansion, Massification, Emerging economies, Turkey, Chile

Introduction

Worldwide, there is a growing tendency towards the massification of higher education (HE). The number of tertiary students globally has more than doubled over the last two decades, rising from 100 million in 2000 to 235 million in 2020 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022). Also, UNESCO's data on national HE systems creates the impression that HE expansion is occurring in almost every state, though at changing rates. The tertiary systems in many high-income countries achieved 'universal' access, in Trow's (1973) terminology, prior to the turn of the millennium. While some low-and-middle-income countries (LMICs) have achieved the universal phase in the last few decades, many of the world's least-developed countries are only able to provide higher education for small segments of their societies. To illustrate, according to the recent statistics published by UNESCO (2022), the worldwide gross tertiary enrolment ratio (GTER) doubled between 2000 and 2020, rising from 19% to 40%. While GTER is 77% for OECD member countries, the least developed countries' average GTER stands at only 11%.

Even though the massification process started earlier in the developed nations, some emerging economies have shown significant progress in expanding their national tertiary systems by following aggressive tertiary expansion strategies (Özoğlu et al., 2016). As two conspicuous examples, Turkey and Chile, both emerging economies, followed bold expansion strategies that both ostensibly resulted in the rapid increase in the countries' tertiary enrolments. The GTERs in Turkey and Chile reached

[*] **Corresponding Author:** Tugay Durak, t.durak@ucl.ac.uk
[1]ORCID: 0000-0002-8171-4915; ***[2]ORCID:*** 0000-0002-1023-8018; ***[3]ORCID:*** 0000-0001-6616-7979

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115% and 93%, respectively, in 2019, increasing by almost 90% for Turkey and 55% for Chile since the beginning of the millennium (World Bank, 2022a). Despite their economic and educational similarities, these recent periods of rapid HE expansion in both countries has been boosted through quite different expansion strategies. However, limited attention has been paid to the massification processes of these countries in the pertinent literature. Investigating how the different policy interventions of these countries have impacted issues regarding quality and fair access to HE might also help to illuminate the pros and cons of the associated strategies. This might help to further elucidate the lessons to be learned from emerging economies that have experienced the rapid expansion of their higher education systems. Hence, this paper aims to manifest the tensions between quality and fair access evinced within the Turkish and Chilean HE systems through a historical and comparative perspective.

In this theoretical paper, we comparatively examine the HE expansion processes of the Turkish and Chilean HE systems, considering the commonalities and divergences in these two countries and general worldwide patterns. The examination focused on the strategies to augment new HEIs and remove fiscal barriers to allow for widening participation throughout the recent expansion period of the last two decades. We first present a background on higher education systems in both countries by outlining their previous expansion strategies. This section will be followed by an investigation and comparison of the recent rapid expansions of the Turkish and Chilean HE systems, particularly with regard to the issues mentioned above. We finish by assessing the similarities and differences between the rapid expansions of the Turkish and Chilean HE systems to draw an all-encompassing picture of the pros and cons of the strategies utilised by each country to enhance both quality and fair access to HE.

Conceptual Framework

This paper conceptualises higher education expansion policies in terms of two intertwined domains; the source of establishing new places, and the type of fiscal support offered to gain access to higher education. Here, the literature regarding LMICs will be utilised as both countries have similar characteristics to the LMIC countries during the period considered in this study, even though Chile has recently begun to be listed among the high-income countries (World Bank, 2022b). Although the contemporary world is experiencing a post-massification era (Jongbloed & Vossensteyn, 2016) or an era of high participation in higher education systems (Marginson, 2016), LMICs have been facing severe problems in terms of keeping pace with such high participation trends as they have limited resources to utilise (Schendel & McCowan, 2016). In LMICs, the widening participation agenda has been prioritised to engage with global trends with the intention of boosting the high-skilled labour force in line with knowledge-based economy discourse. Yet, the impetus of the expansion strategies in LMICs differs from that in high-income countries as the majority of LMICs do not have adequate resources to enhance higher education access through taxpayers' money alone. This is accelerating the privatisation of HE in LMICs, also aligning with the neoliberal agenda that aims to increase competition across higher education institutions (HEIs) and, therefore, ensure quality (Jamshidi et al., 2012; Kromydas, 2017).

At the time of writing, around one-third of global HE students are enrolled at private HEIs (Levy, 2018). Private providers have a more salient role in HE expansion in certain countries including Korea, Hong Kong, Brazil, Chile, India, the Philippines, and the US, according to Marginson (2016), where private HEIs are the main medium of HE expansion in these countries. In Brazil, the rapid growth of private HEIs in the sector has yielded a rapid increase in HE enrolment; student enrolments increased from 1.5 million in 1992 to over 7.5 million in 2012 (McCowan, 2016). The traditional explanation that the needs of the labour market is the main factor driving HE expansion is too simplistic. Students do not enrol in tertiary education purely for the economic return that an HE degree might offer; rather social expectations and socioeconomic background play a significant role in the decision to enter HE (Aamodt & Kyvik, 2005). Trow and Burrage (2010) argued that family aspiration is the main driver for the increase of tertiary enrolments, regardless of the changing social and economic developments, because families are well aware of the advantages that an HE degree could offer in terms of paving the way for social mobility or for preserving their children's social position. Betterment is limitless; therefore, families always demand HE for their children to improve or preserve their social status, albeit that upward social mobility through an HE degree is mainly a middle-class phenomenon because, as Marginson (2016) argues, while the upper class are not expecting an economic return for tertiary

education and the lower class are not aware of the potential economic gains possible via higher education, the middle class seeks social upgrade through higher education attainment. Therefore, HE attainment forces a certain 'quasi-obligation' on the middle class (Trow, 1973). This might explain students' and families' ongoing willingness to pay significant amounts of money to private HEIs. This fact notwithstanding, social demand is mostly insufficient to explain the level of tertiary enrolment in many countries as its increase clearly requires available places at HEIs.

Herein, governmental bodies play pivotal roles in different parts of HE expansion, including creating available places, monitoring, and funding in many national HE systems. Since establishing new universities requires financial assistance, access to HE is limited without a stable economy that provides resources for HE (public or private) and places in the labour market (Kaiser & Vossenteyn, 2005). State interference is most apparent when an HE system moves to the next phase of massification of HE (Marginson, 2016). In addition to creating available places at HEIs, central governments are generally the main sponsors or financial regulators of tertiary education, as in the case of Turkey, but some countries, including Chile, will share the financial burden with private providers, and with families and students through tuition fees.

In the following sections, Turkey and Chile, both emerging economies, are presented in a comparative sense as distinct examples of the above, as the former pursued the "state control" model, which appoints the state as the sole authority to organise and conduct the system, while the latter followed the "state supervising" model, which accepts the state's role is to reconcile a large autonomous system (Dobbins et al., 2011), throughout their HE expansion processes. Additionally, special attention is given to the recent rapid expansion processes since both countries' tertiary massification levels have been upgraded over the last two decades from the mass phase to the universal phase by following different strategies. Before scrutinising the recent expansion strategies in both countries, the two countries' higher education systems and previous expansion strategies will now be described.

Higher Education Systems and Previous Expansion Strategies in Turkey and Chile

Turkey

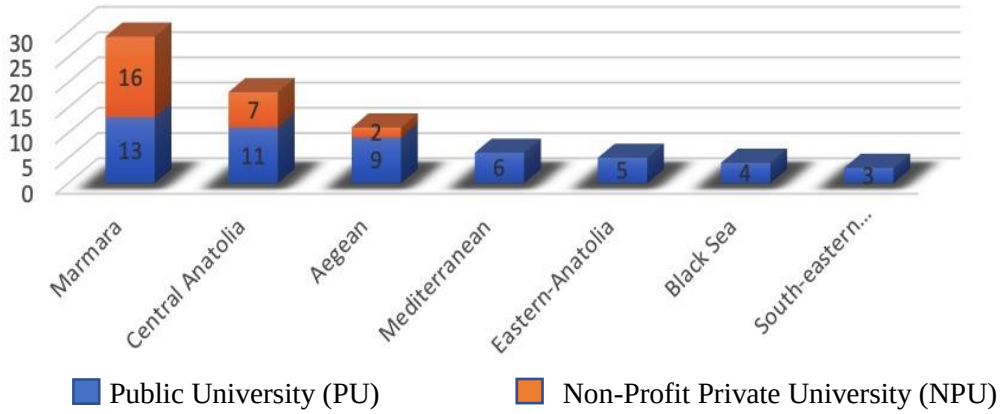
Turkey has a large-scale tertiary educational system composed of nearly 8 million students, 201 HEIs, and approximately 150,000 academic staff, according to recent official figures released by the Turkish Council of Higher Education (https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/). Almost half of the tertiary students are pursuing open education degrees while 52% of open education tertiary students are pursuing a bachelor's degree, 48% are on short-cycle programmes. Also, the number of foreign students enrolled at Turkish universities has quadrupled since 2013/14, reaching 224,048 in 2020/21.

The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) administers the Turkish HE system in accordance with the Higher Education Act numbered 2547. As a result of the ongoing expansion efforts, particularly those recent ones that have been taken in place since the turn of the millennium, GTER in Turkey reached 115% in 2019 from 40% in 2008 (World Bank, 2022a). Before delving into the recent rapid expansion of Turkish HE, previous expansion strategies should be discussed to gain a better understanding of the expansion process as a whole.

The first efforts that can be considered "expansion" were made after the enactment of the Higher Education Act number 2547 in 1980; due to this, eight public universities (PUs) were opened, though in fact these universities are created through the conversion of existing HEIs, such as academies, colleges, etc., into universities. More importantly, private providers were allowed to establish HEIs. Here, we need to specify that private providers can engage in the system merely in a "foundation university" format as a non-profit private university (NPU) but which is supported by the government through the allocation of land for free and tax reductions (Guzman et al., 2022). Hence, even though there are serious discussions regarding the extent to which these universities are operating for non-profit purposes (Coşar & Ergül, 2015; Fırat & Akkuzu ,2015), in the Turkish HE system, the sense of "private university" is different from that of many other countries across the world, including Chile. The first NPU university, Bilkent University, was established in Ankara in 1984 and non-profit private

universities (NPUs) have been contributing to the HE expansion in Turkey ever since. Additionally, the CoHE has been established as an autonomous legal entity to regulate and oversee the HE education sector in Turkey in accordance with the Higher Education Act (Gür & Çelik, 2011). Since 1981, the CoHE has been the principal organization in charge of the Turkish higher education system (Tekneci, 2016).

The second expansion occurred in 1992 with the establishment 24 universities (23 PUs and one NPU), predominantly in the western regions of Turkey and, giving a total number of universities of 53 (51 PUs and two NPUs). After two public universities' openings between 1992 and 1994, according to Sargın (2007), the Turkish higher education sector continued to expand through private providers until 2005, contrary to previous state efforts. Except for two universities established in Izmir and Mersin, all NPUs were opened in Istanbul (16), located in the Marmara region, and Ankara (7), located in Central Anatolia.



Graph 1. Regional distribution of HEIs in Turkey in 2005 (Source: Statistics Unit of the CoHE)

As discussed above, the new public universities were set up in different regions of Turkey, taking the uniqueness in local advancement into consideration. The propensity to build up new PUs and NPUs in major urban areas, for the most part in western districts, proceeded until 2005. This approach reinforced the supremacy of major urban communities in giving advanced education and has been detrimental to increasing the parity with significant urban communities across the country. In total, migration flows in Turkey from less developed to metropolitan regions and urbanization procedures have been profoundly connected. The migration flow is generally from the eastern to the western regions of Turkey. With this movement stream, universities were generally set up in major cities (for the most part in the west) until 2005 (Sargın, 2007). This propensity exacerbated the dissimilarity in higher education enrolments across different regions. After 2005, a series of expansion strategies were initiated, as will be discussed below, that resulted in an immense increase in GTER in Turkey, from 35% in 2005 to 115% in 2019 (World Bank, 2022a).

Chile

Chile has a diverse and highly privatised tertiary education system, composed by nearly 1,200,000 students, enrolled in 142 HEIs (58 universities, 34 professional institutes, and 50 technical educational centres) (SIES, 2022). Only 23.3% of higher education institutions are public, with 83.2% of students enrolled in for-profit private institutions, while enrolment reached a total of 1,204,414 students in 2021 (SIES, 2022) and GTER had risen to 93% in 2019 (World Bank, 2022a), with 57% of students enrolled in universities (SIES, 2022). The tertiary enrolment rates in Chile have increased by 517% over the last 30 years (SIES, 2022). Nevertheless, this had not been the norm in the twentieth century. The Chilean HE system entered the higher participation phase during the first years of the twenty-first century, following the prevalent global trend.

Between the 1960s and mid-1980s, the Chilean HE sector could be characterised as being in an elite phase where strict selection processes were the norm and with a student population composed mainly

of the upper class. The first effort that can be considered expansion occurred during the student movement at the end of the 1960s, which aimed to expand higher education to other parts of society (Bernasconi & Rojas, 2003). As a result, from 1967 until 1973, the current seven universities of that time expanded across the national territory through regional campuses, with enrolment approaching 15%. Over only a few years, the public investment doubled from 1.08% (in 1967) of GDP to 2.11% (in 1973) (Brunner, 2015).

The second period of expansion occurred as a direct consequence of the new regulations established during the military dictatorship (1973-1990). In 1980, an educational reform, called "Decree Law 1980" (Decreto Ley, 1980), was introduced that transformed the Chilean HE system. The reform addressed three key aspects of the Chilean HE system: first, diversification of investment and the reduction of public expenditure by introducing student fees in public HEIs; second, the increase in educational suppliers by opening the HE system to the market and reducing and relaxing the requirements to open an HEI, with the aim of attracting private investors; and third, through the established neoliberal economic model of the Pinochet regime, competition among HE institutions and the creation of different types of academic programmes was stimulated. After the reform, a massive number of private providers emerged in parallel with a significant reduction in public funding. By the end of 1989, the total number of HEIs had grown by more 2,250% and public funding was less than 0.5% of the GDP (Brunner, 2015). HE offers and student enrolment increased mainly because new HEIs, primarily vocational centres, provided short courses that charged low fees and did not apply any selection process for its intake of students (Espinoza, 2017). At the end of the dictatorship in 1990, GTER had reached 18.5% (World Bank, 2022a).

During the 1990s, economic growth and political stability increased the wellbeing of the population, especially in terms of access to essential services such as health, housing, and education (Bernasconi & Rojas, 2003). As a result of increased welfare and the high number of high school graduates, a massification period within the Chilean HE began, mostly on the demand of students from the middle and upper classes. The GTER rose by more than 15.7% in 10 years (1990-1999), and reached 48.8% in 2005 (World-Bank, 2022), albeit that the gap between thee social classes in tertiary enrolment had been exacerbated over the years; for instance, while the percentage of students from the first quintile (the poorest one) in HE rose from 4.4% in 1990 to 9.4% in 2000, the proportion of the fifth quintile (the richest one) in HE increased from 40.2% in 1990 to 65.6% in 2000 (Bernasconi & Rojas, 2003). After 2005, surprisingly similar to Turkey's HE expansion period, Chile's GTER rose from 48.8% in 2005 to 93% in 2019, though by following a quite different expansion approach, as discussed below.

As presented above, although both counties' expansion processes date back decades, both countries' HE systems have upgraded from the mass phase to the universal phase (GTER > 50) in less than 15 years by employing bold and disparate expansion strategies that are thus worth investigating and comparing. In the following section, the recent HE expansion strategies in Turkey and Chile are presented with a specific focus on the strategies used to establish new HEIs and to provide economic support to students.

Higher Education Expansion in Turkey and Chile since 2005

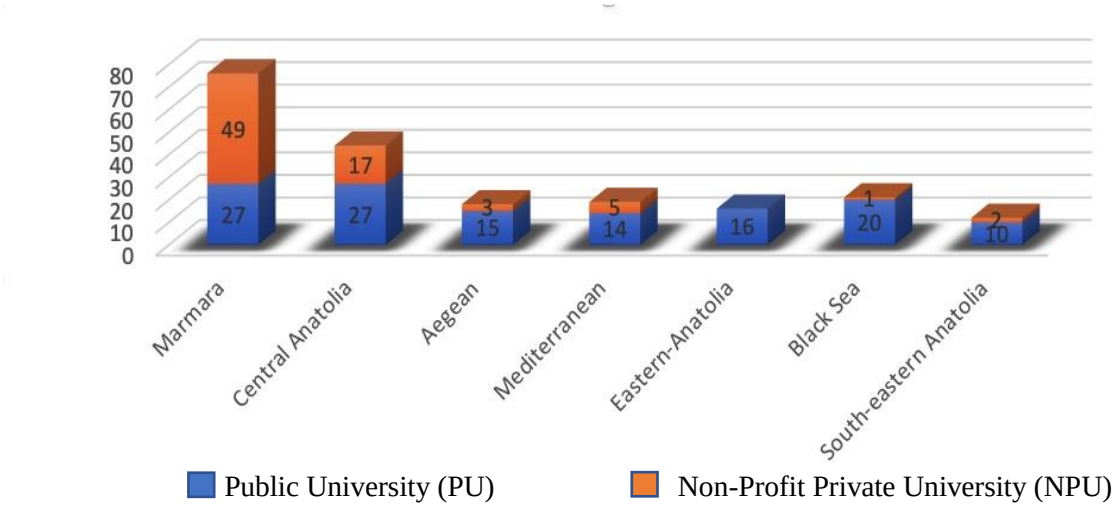
Establishing New Places

Enlarging the number of HEIs is one of the prominent strategies of HE expansion. The majority of LMICs utilised private resources to create new places as they have limited resources. In Chile, too, the massification of HE was mostly a private phenomenon in terms of investment and provision (Brunner, 2015; Williamson, 2019). Family expenditure was three times higher than public spending in terms of proportions of GDP in Chile, whilst public expenditure on tertiary education was less than 0.4% of GDP, ranking Chile as having the second- highest private expenditure on tertiary education, just after South Korea (OECD, 1998). Additionally, by 2000, state student aid was only available for students enrolling at public and private institutions created before the 1980 Reform (i.e., traditional universities) which had 46.1% of the total tertiary enrolment at that time (Espinoza & Gonzalez, 2013). Besides, these traditional universities were the HEIs where students from the middle/upper classes tended to study. The

state fund, the University Credit Solidarity Fund, also known as the FSCU (according to its Spanish acronym), were only available for traditional universities, therefore students enrolled in other institutions were ultimately entirely dependent on family income to be able to access HE, yielding disproportionately greater barriers for students from lower socioeconomic status to obtaining an HE degree. Therefore, as Paredes (2015) argues, the state financial aid was a regressive policy, where the state funds students those in need less and where students from the lowest economic backgrounds were denied state help. Overall, Chilean students from high socioeconomic backgrounds attained disproportionately more in tertiary education over the years.

In contrast to many LMICs, Turkey embarked upon a firm public-funded tertiary expansion crusade with the motto "one (public) university for each city" in 2006, with the particular aim of reducing regional disparity in level of education (Mercan, 2016). Because the disparity across the least developed and most developed regions is quite evident in the distribution of HEIs, for example, while a smaller number of public universities is present in the least developed regions, as shown in Graph 2, the majority of universities are located in the most developed regions. Subsequently, in 2006-2008, 41 public universities were established in the less-developed provinces, as opposed to previous university locations which were in densely populated, developed regions of Turkey. In 2008, each of the 81 provinces had had at least one state university regardless of the population and developmental level. Arguably, the locations of the new universities have been effective at increasing tertiary enrolments by offering tertiary education for locals who intend to study in their own domicile.

Although Turkey followed a public-funded expansion route rather than encouraging competitiveness across universities, in contrast to Chile and the majority of LMICs, there are a number of underlying economic motivations for this decision. University openings are seen as an economic investment by the state because an HEI increases the market value of locals by offering a university degree, creates job opportunities for the region through the recruitment of the local people for various purposes on the university campuses, and generates income for the local market as they offer essential services to the university students and staff. Therefore, economic expectations from university openings have been frequently cited in the public and political sphere by various MPs and politicians (Arap, 2010). Additionally, new university openings, particularly in the less developed regions, aim to diminish the migration flows towards the major cities as many students, sometimes with their families, were migrating to the big cities to enter HE (Sargın, 2007). As can be seen in Graph 2, in every district, the quantity of HEIs has expanded as compared with 2005. The provincial difference as far as HEI circulation tends to decline, despite the strength of Marmara and Central Anatolia locales. At present, through this bold state intervention, every region has at least one state university and a private university except for the Eastern-Anatolia region, which is the poorest in the country.



Graph 2. Current regional distribution of HEIs in Turkey (2022) (Source: Statistics Unit of the CoHE)

Overall, courtesy of the "one (public) university for each city" policy, recent expansion in Turkish HE system has arguably provided much greater parity in access to students from various backgrounds than the highly privatised Chilean HE system by removing barriers to students in the less developed regions. As the public-funded model in LMICs normally only provides higher education to a small elite group (Oketch, 2016), achieving this through public funding is arguably a noteworthy development. Nonetheless, there have been various challenges stemming from the route that followed through the recent rapid HE expansion in Turkey. These newly opened universities have faced shortages of both quality academic and administrative staff (Akçiğit & Özcan-Tok, 2020; Gök, 2016). The academic performance of public universities, as measured by the rate of researchers with publications, has been fluctuating since 2007, despite a steady increase until 2007. Besides, some of these newly opened universities have struggled to fill the quotas determined by CoHE in certain academic programmes, particularly those perceived to have limited career opportunities (Gür, 2016; Özoğlu et al., 2016). More importantly, sustainable funding of the HE sector, rather than solely being subsidised by the public sources, should be considered, as it is known that constraints in the funnelling of money from governments to universities means strong limitations, especially for LMICs (Schendel & McCowan, 2016). This has been evident since the Turkish economy started to stagnate in 2014 and public universities have been allocated less funding, despite their increasing numbers. The decline of Turkish universities in the major global rankings continues as a result of lack of funding, high student/academic staff ratios, and so on.

Supporting/Funding students

Another somewhat vexing question that policymakers across the world have been facing is the price tag of tuition fees and how students will be supported in the context of their widening participation. In a highly privatised model, the norm is for students and families to pay, whilst government may offer a degree of support through loans. For instance, in 2005, the Chilean government embraced a fair access policy in tertiary education for a large sector of the Chilean population (OECD, 2009). In the same year, tertiary enrolment at non-traditional universities accounted for 62% of the total (SIES, 2019). Yet, the state aid for this group of students was still not available; instead, private bank loans were offered as an alternative for those families able to provide an adequate guarantee on the loan. Eventually, the incumbent government initiated the state-guaranteed loan system, known as CAE (*Crédito con Aval del Estado*) in 2005 for students in need of a loan to study at an HEI. Through the CAE loan, the aim was for the net enrolment ratio of the cohort (18- 24 years) to reach 50% by 2012 (OECD, 2009), in particular by enrolling students lacking the funds to study at an HEI. Initially in the CAE loan system, private banks provided the CAE credits to students at an almost 6% rate of interest, with students paying the loan back following graduation. If a debtor student is unable to pay, the state acts as a guarantor and pays the debt to the bank at a higher rate of interest, with the debtor student ultimately then settling their debt with the state.

The impacts of the CAE loan started to emerge just two years after its implementation. In 2007, the annual growth of enrolment increased to 18%, in comparison with the 6% average annual growth of the preceding five years (SIES, 2022). In the subsequent 13 years from 2005 to 2017, tertiary enrolment increased by 197%, rising from 595,240 to 1,176,724 (SIES, 2022). It could be argued that the growth in tertiary enrolment is a direct result of the public policy that supports students who were excluded in the previous stages of HE expansion, for example, in 2010, seven of ten students were the first in their families who were able to study in tertiary education (Leiva & Campbell, 2016). In total, the CAE loan has benefitted 874,929 students between 2006 and 2017 (Holz & Poblete, 2018).

Nevertheless, the CAE loan system has given rise to a number of problems over the years. First, the CAE loan covers only a proportion of the tuition fees. In Chile, HE fees are not regulated; instead, each HEI establishes its tuition fees independently. The government applies a standard tuition fee for each HEI, thus for the institutions which have higher tuition fees, students need to incur additional private loans to pay the difference, which ends in additional debts (Paredes, 2015). Second, there were significant differences between the CAE and FSCU loans. For instance, the CAE's interest rate was three times higher than FSCU's interest rates at that time. Also, while CAE beneficiaries are required to pay back the loan after the graduation in equal instalments regardless of income, the FSCU loan is paid up

to 5% of monthly income. Consequently, student debt increased immensely. Currently, 40% of graduates and dropouts who were CAE beneficiaries are in default (Páez et al., 2018).

The above scenario triggered one of the biggest protests in the country since the return of democracy in Chile (Guzman, 2012; Pavlic, 2018). In 2011, thousands of secondary and university level students took to the streets to protest the Chilean neoliberal HE system and its inequalities. According to Guzman (2012), a strong feeling of injustice and indignation among the Chilean youth due to the lack of attention being paid to their grievances by the governments was the main driver of the protests. Since 25% of students were financing their studies with the CAE loan (Paredes, 2015), a strong social force and solidarity in the movement grew among Chilean society. The students' demands can be summarised according to five key points: more state expenditure on tertiary education, improved participation of disadvantaged populations, reformation of the neoliberal HE system in Chile, the abolishment of for-profit education, and finally a free HE for everyone (Bernasconi, 2012). In 2011, the new government offered to introduce changes to the HE system and provide extra funding for scholarships and fee-reduction benefits. Consequently, the interest rate of the CAE loan was reduced to 2%, and the form of payment was eased and equalized to that of the FSCU loan. Nevertheless, the government did not agree with the structural transformation of the HE system demanded by students (Bernasconi, 2012). In 2014, the new Chilean president, Michelle Bachelet, agreed to structural changes to HE, and a set of HE reforms were introduced in the Chilean Parliament. As a result, in 2016, the free education programme (*Gratuidad*) for the most needy was initiated.

In the free education programme, the new widening policy had a different approach in terms of access. First, the programme provides secure access to students that come from the lowest income quintile. Second, the benefit is not constrained by the merit of the students, as in the other state scholarships. Third, the resources come directly from the state finances without any third-party involvement. Fourth, the benefit is available for students enrolled at a range of HEIs, not only in traditional universities. Finally, the state recognises HE is a right, and thus its involvement must be more significant than purely that of a financial guarantor. In short, the policy covers the tuition fees of the students, and any non-profit HEI with four or more years of accreditation can participate. Currently, 31.5% (376,433 students) of the total enrolment benefits from the programme in which 48 HEIs participate (MINEDUC, 2019). In these four years of implementation, the free-education programme has not increased enrolment significantly. The average annual growth between 2016-2019 was only 0.6% (SIES, 2022). This is partly because of a shift of students from the lowest quintiles with the CAE loan to the free-education programme. For instance, the participation of the poorest quintiles in the CAE in 2017 was 15% less than in 2014 (Parliament, 2019).

Meanwhile, in Turkey, in 2012 the incumbent government removed tuition fees for all levels of tertiary education in PUs to lift the financial barriers to Turkish students. Thus, HE became free in Turkey, as it is in high school and primary education. This makes tertiary education entirely accessible to students from lower socioeconomic levels. Hence, the abolition of tuition fees resulted in a 'bonanza' of student numbers in higher education, with the number increasing sixfold since 2012, from around one million to six million, excluding open university students (CoHE, 2021a). However, the abolition does not cover NPUs, which are also noteworthy in Turkey's recent rapid expansion period. Although private providers have been taking part in the Turkish HE expansion since 1984, the most significant increase was recorded after 2005; indeed, the number of NPUs in Turkey has almost tripled, rising from 25 in 2005 to 74 in 2021. Yet, private university students only represent 15.4% of the country's total enrolment (CoHE, 2021a) and, with some exceptions, the sector mainly plays its role in HE enrolment by accepting underachieving students for a fee despite their low central exam scores.

Along with the abolition of tuition fees, Turkey has been offering public-funded grants and loans to students from low-income families via the Higher Education Loans and Dormitories Institution, as it is known that students from low-income families struggle to cover the expenses of university life (Crawford et al., 2016; Herbaut & Geven, 2019). Applicants are examined according to their incomes, and thus whether they deserve to be offered a grant, or a loan, or indeed whether they are entitled to any support at all. For instance, 50% of all applicants are entitled to one or both forms of support in their

final year. However, the amount of support is designed to cover pocket money, which is one-fifth of the minimum wage. Also, the number of students offered grants encompass only 6% of the population, while 16% of students are supported by loans.

In summary, Turkey designed its HE expansion through bold state intervention by creating new places and tuition fees, while the CAE loan was the main driver in increasing tertiary enrolment in the highly privatised Chilean HE. Nevertheless, negative effects regarding student debt and inequalities caused mass student protests in Chile, and the free education programme emerged as the state's reaction to student frustration. Meanwhile, the financial predicament of students who have loan debts to the state has been a growing problem in Turkey as graduate unemployment has increased accordingly. Despite not turning into massive protests in the same manner as Chile, Turkish students reacted differently to these problems, as discussed below.

Discussion and Conclusion

Although both countries experienced a military coup d'état in the 1980s, the consequences regarding higher education were quite different. As a mediator of the system, Chile introduced a neoliberal model that diminished universities' public funds year on year, whilst at the same time encouraging privatisation to increase competition. Meanwhile, privatisation of the Turkish HE system has remained remarkably mild compared the Chilean HE system. Additionally, before making higher education totally free in 2012, the PUs in Turkey were charging a low amount of tuition fee. However, in Chile, dissimilarity in the price tag associated with private HEIs resulted in confusion as the massification period was primarily driven by families with the economic resources to invest in their children's education, i.e., "the mobilization of private resources." (OECD, 2009, p. 234). Hence, successive governments had offered increased support by extending the benefits of loans to reconcile students' and families' demands and market realities. However, these interventions only provided palliative solutions. Considering similar patterns are also evident in the countries that have highly privatised HE sectors (Morley & Lugg, 2009; Schendel & McCowan, 2016), there might be a lesson to be learned. If governments merely offer palliative solutions to soothe the existing turbulence, problems will just be repeated. In one way or another, social demand forces them to think about more entrenched solutions, as happened in Chile in 2016.

Nonetheless, abolishing tuition fees and providing free public HE through many HEIs does not mean removing the barriers to access to HE for all and the diminishment of socioeconomic inequalities. Herein, the key problem is attempting the expansion without a reasonable focus on quality (Schendel & McCowan, 2016). Because, if there are significant differences in the quality of HEIs, the value of a degree from a less-qualified HEI will be derogated, while having a degree from a top university would maintain such a value. Hence, first, the competition to access the latter will be increased, and second, access to the former will become meaningless. In both cases, the tyranny of the elite occurs, and students from low-income families in rural areas will be disadvantageous, as it is known they cannot pay the expenses of being far away from their family home (Chankseliani et al., 2020). This is evident in Turkey by the number of vacant positions in the recently opened universities. Without students enrolled in the open education system, the gap between the number of students who applied for the university entrance exam and enrolled in university programmes has gradually been increasing over the last few decades in Turkey (CoHE, 2021b). Data shows that the proportion of students who applied for university entrance exams and enrolled in university programmes between 2004-2009 increased to 54.2% from 30%. However, the ratio then gradually decreased in the following years, bottoming out at 35.8% in 2019. A noteworthy reason for this is the number of vacant quotas in university programmes.

In 2017, some 214,430 quotas in university programmes were not accepted by any student. The CoHE conducted a survey in the following days on students who participated in the university entrance exam but did not prefer to accept a university position. The results of the survey were shared with the public, and it was underlined that "employability" is the main driver of students' preferences (CoHE, 2018). Given that the great majority of these vacant positions are placed in universities that were established after the rapid expansion policy, students gained a negative perception about the credibility of these universities on future career preparation and employability. The problems that these universities have

been facing, e.g., staff shortages, and lack of quality, which are vociferously emphasised in the related literature (Cin et al., 2021; Gök, 2016; Özoğlu et al., 2016; Polat, 2017) might be the essential reasons for that perception.

Consequently, there are crucial lessons to be learned from both cases for LMICs. Problems with accessing university in a highly privatised HES can quickly become an urgent issue requiring immediate action, as instant cash flow is needed for students to enrol. As seen in the case of Chile, major upheaval in students' budgets turned into massive street protests more than once. However, palliative offerings to save the day ended with the recurrence of problems, but in a more complicated way. Yet, making HE free for all is not the only solution; as Schendel and McCowan (2016, p. 408) note, "attention to the quality of higher education is essential in ensuring that access is meaningful for students and that institutions can make a positive contribution to society beyond the issuing of diplomas". As seen in the case of Turkey, quotas in the recently established universities have been preferred lesser as access to these HEIs is not meaningful to students. Although the situation has not turned into street protests, students (and families) reacted differently by waiting for the next university entrance exam to access top universities or otherwise just gave up their participation in HE. Arguably, this might be more detrimental in the long run than what happened in the Chilean case because problems become concrete imperceptibly, and underlying reasons might become entrenched issues until they are actually perceived.

Overall, in both countries, future agendas should address making access to university meaningful. The key issue here is providing quality HE for all and enriching graduate employability, as both countries have been challenged in terms of employing university graduates, which is ultimately the main impetus of their motivation to attend HE. Hence, future research should focus more on engaging feasible policies and practices in graduate employability through higher education attainment. However, it should be noted that policies implemented after centralist decision-making processes had become unsustainable and resulted in counteractions being taken by students, such as the street movements in Chile and enrolment preferences after university exams in Turkey. Therefore, future policies must be constituted by considering the agendas of all the relevant stakeholders within society.

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The Legal Responses to Plagiarist Academics: The Practicality of Regulations in Turkish Higher Education

Adem Yaman*
Department of Internal Audit, Rectorate, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Canakkale, Türkiye

Abstract

This study follows a basic pattern of qualitative research while examining the practical manageability of Turkish regulations against plagiarism in academic platforms. The dataset comprises the Law of Intellectual and Artistic Works and four higher education regulations. This study analyses the related documents according to descriptive analysis. The analysis shows that the variety of legal regulations have led to a sophistication of procedures following during the investigation and decision-making of plagiarism cases in academic platforms. Therefore, higher education authorities should make an effort to constitute one unified, comprehensive and detailed law against unethical behaviours, mainly plagiarism, in academia.

Keywords: Plagiarism in academic platforms, Legal responses to plagiarism, Case of Turkish regulations, Practicality of plagiarism regulations

Introduction

Plagiarism is one of the most serious problems concerning intellectual property. In particular, the music and film industries have detailed laws and regulations of copyright to prevent plagiarism. The publishing sector also witnesses many lawsuits related to similarities in various books as a sign of plagiarism. In addition to books, academic publications include monographs, theses, dissertations, scientific articles, project reports, research data, and conference papers that are common sources of plagiarised ideas (Demircioğlu, 2014a; Macfarlane et al., 2014; Özenç-Uçak & Birinci, 2008; Regmi, 2011). Although many countries have established complex legal measures to inhibit plagiarism in academia, such laws and regulations contain practical deficiencies from the definition of plagiarism to the implementation of penalties.

Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's words or ideas and using them without properly crediting the original sources (Blum, 2009). As is widely known, plagiarism includes "handing in someone else's work as your own, copying words/ideas without proper citation, giving incorrect information about the source, changing words but copying sentence structures without citation, and copying so many words/ideas from a source even you cited it" (plagiarism.org, 2017, December 9). To prevent such unethical usage of other people's words/ideas in students' work, universities have developed various policies and practices including academic honesty codes (McCabe et al., 2002), 'research and publication ethics' courses (Beauvais et al., 2007), and punishments for plagiarist students (e.g., failing the course, temporary debarment, or dismissal from the university) (IPPHEAE, 2013; Larkham & Manns, 2002; Walker & White, 2014). Universities also impose serious penalties against plagiarist academics, but the examination and adjudication process for plagiarism cases differs because of legal regulations in their home countries (Berlinck, 2011; Demircioğlu, 2014b; Gücüklüoğlu & Ayvaz-Reis, 2014; IPPHEAE, 2013; Sonfield, 2014; Sutherland-Smith, 2011).

* **Corresponding Author:** Adem Yaman, ademyaman@comu.edu.tr
ORCID: 0000-0002-3065-5329

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Developed countries accept plagiarism as an illegal action and respond to plagiarism issues in their intellectual property rights (IPR) and copyright laws (i.e., IPR and Copyright Acts, Canada (CIPO, 2017)). Research councils in these countries have mostly established a comprehensive set of codes for ethical research conduct (i.e., The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (ARC, 2007)). These countries also have nationwide academic associations, and such associations generate policy suggestions for faculty discipline including plagiarism acts (i.e., Faculty Misconduct and Discipline in the United States of America (AAUP, 2005)). Combining IPR and copyright laws, codes for responsible research conduct and policy suggestions for faculty discipline, universities in developed countries have generally formed their own policies and practices against plagiarism (Uslu, 2017).

Similarly, universities in many European countries such as Germany, Finland, France, the Netherlands, or the United Kingdom (Glendinning, 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2013d; 2013e) have established institutional regulations to prevent plagiarism. However, other developed countries around Europe such as Italy, Sweden, or Spain (Demoliou, 2013; Foltynek, 2013; Glendinning, 2013f) have a nationwide/state-wide higher education management unit that manages all sorts of legal regulations. There are also many developing European countries (e.g., Hungary, Lithuania, Romania (Glendinning, 2013g; 2013h; Stabingis, 2013)) in which universities are governed by a national unit. These national management units both in developed and developing European countries have largely determined the legal responses to plagiarism, and their regulations guide the actions against plagiarist academics in universities (IPPHEAE, 2013). Each European university system has also benefitted from Europe-wide policies for IPR/copyright and research integrity to develop preventive mechanisms against plagiarism (ALLEA, 2000; 2017; EC, n.d.; SE, 2016). Despite these European frameworks, policies for plagiarism in European academia are highly inconsistent, and legal procedures in each European country face various impracticality concerns (IPPHEAE, 2013).

As a candidate country for the European Union, Turkey has also followed European policy recommendations. To adapt to European policy frameworks, Turkey recently updated The Law of Intellectual and Artistic Works that was originally published in 1951 (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951). The Council of Higher Education in Turkey (YÖK) – a nationwide higher education management unit – has also disseminated the Principles for Ethical Behaviours in Higher Education Institutions (YÖK, 2014). Moreover, YÖK (n.d.) has also published "Instructions for the Ethics of Scientific Research and Publication in Higher Education Institutions". In addition to this legal document, the Interuniversity Board in Turkey (ÜAK) formulated "Regulation for the Examination on Associate Professorship" to guide the investigation of unethical cases in nationwide tenure applications (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015). Furthermore, the Turkish government has specified national faculty-discipline regulations, including serious penalties for plagiarism such as dismissal from the academic profession (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016).

Examining the gaps in these Turkish legal documents will be helpful in evaluating similar deficiencies within procedures against plagiarist academics in other European countries. There are also many countries outside Europe where academic corruption, dishonesty, and misconduct are a rising problem (e.g., China, Middle Eastern countries, and South Africa (de Jager & Brown, 2010; Horn, 2017; Macfarlane et al., 2014; McCabe et al., 2008; Moten, 2014; Yang, 2005)). Moreover, developed countries such as Australia and Canada (Devlin, 2003; Egan et al., 2016; McKee & Belson, 1990; Sharman & Wilshire, 2007) have established serious penalties to minimise plagiarism cases in universities. Investigation of Turkish legal regulations against plagiarism may also provide valuable insights for countries outside Europe to query the applicability of their regulations against plagiarism. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to define the legal responses in Turkish laws to plagiarist academics and to examine the practical manageability of Turkish regulations against plagiarism in academic platforms. For this purpose, the research questions are:

1. How was plagiarism defined in the Turkish legal regulations?
2. What are practical implications against plagiarist academics in the Turkish legal regulations?

Methodology

This study was designed in a basic pattern of qualitative research. Merriam (2013) describes a basic qualitative design as a pattern used by researchers to define and understand the constructionism and/or symbolic interaction within the dataset including people's views or other sources such as written/audio/visual materials. Following this definition, the researcher analysed the Turkish case of legal regulations against plagiarism in academia.

Data Sources

In this study, the dataset is composed of varied Turkish laws that address acts of plagiarism. Therefore, the dataset here includes secondary data through the related documents. The documents were collected from the official websites of governmental units such as The Legislation Information System of the Turkish Prime Ministry, YÖK, and ÜAK. The documents in the dataset are:

i. The Law of Intellectual and Artistic Works (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951).
ii. Principles for Ethical Behaviours in Higher Education Institutions (YÖK, 2014).
iii. Instructions for the Ethics of Scientific Research and Publication in Higher Education Institutions (YÖK, n.d.).
iv. Regulations for the Examination on Associate Professorship (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015).
v. The Law for Changes in the Structure and Duties of the Ministry of National Education (introduced the latest faculty discipline codes) (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016).

Data Analysis

During the analysis, the researcher carried out document analysis (Bowen, 2009) and benefitted from the descriptive analysis technique (Neuendorf, 2017). For document review, descriptive analysis is the examination of data sources to specify the existing parts, sections, or information related to a topical concept (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Following the descriptive approach, the researcher firstly overviewed the documents to identify sections related to plagiarism. Based on the titles of related documents and also previous studies in Turkey (i.e., Alev & Genç, 2015; Demiral-Bakırman, 2015; Demircioğlu, 2014a; 2014b; Gücüklüoğlu & Ayvaz-Reis, 2014), the researcher coded these sections specifically to explore the connection between plagiarism and IPR, definition of plagiarism on academic platforms, official structures for plagiarism control, and penalty system for plagiarising academics.

The researcher then double-checked with the assistance of another researcher who has qualitative inquiry experience to re-code these documents. The inter-coder reliability was calculated as .81 using Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula *[consensus on data/(consensus on data + dissidence on data)]*. An inter-coder reliability of .70 (at least) is accepted as a sign of adequate internal reliability. After ensuring internal reliability, the researcher enumerated the legal regulations against plagiarism cases in universities. The researcher then presented the results of the analysis for each legal document, as in the next section.

Findings

The first legal document examined in the study was The Law of Intellectual and Artistic Works (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951). Although this law was originally published in 1951, it contains many updates and additions such as the latest changes of October 01, 2017. This law does not include the word 'plagiarism', but does include several sections referring to plagiarism from varied sources (e.g., scientific and literary works, musical works, fine art works, and cinematographic works).

For example, article 71 (sub-article 1) in the document states: "A person who puts his/her name on others' work and presents the work as his/her own is punished with six months to two years imprisonment or a judicial fine. If the person disseminates the work in question, he/she is punished with up to five years imprisonment and there is no consideration for a judicial fine" (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951, p. 2413). Article 71 (sub-article 3) also indicates: "A person who quotes from other works without citing the source is punished with six months to two years imprisonment or a judicial fine" (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951, p. 2413). Lastly, article 71 (sub-article 5) states: "A person who improperly cites the source(s) via insufficient, wrong, or fallacious citations in his/her own work is punished with up to six months imprisonment" (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951, p. 2413). All these sections clearly show

that plagiarism is an illegal action within the scope of IPR in Turkey. However, this document does not present any criterion or procedural direction to decide in plagiarism case(s), especially on academic platforms, whether they occurred or not.

The second legal document in the dataset is the Principles for Ethical Behaviours in Higher Education Institutions (YÖK, 2014). This document presents definitions of various unethical academic behaviours (e.g., fabrication, falsification, duplication, slicing, unfair authorship, and violating the principle of voluntary participation). According to the document, plagiarism means "to present and publish others' ideas, methods, data, works, and publications partially or completely as the presenters' own work without proper scientific citations to correctly indicate the original source(s) or without necessary permissions" (YÖK, 2014, p. 2). The document expands the definition of plagiarism as "taking others' findings or artistic works without indicating their source (via italics, quotation marks, footnotes, etc.), presenting others' ideas by paraphrasing in their studies without proper citations, or improperly/fallaciously citing the original sources" (YÖK, 2014, p. 6). Beyond a detailed definition of plagiarism acts, the document does not offer any direction regarding how university authorities should deal with plagiarism cases in academic publications.

Another legal regulation is the Instructions for the Ethics of Scientific Research and Publication in Higher Education Institutions (YÖK, n.d.). In this, plagiarism is accepted as one of the most common unethical behaviours in academia and defined as "presenting partially or completely others' ideas, methods, data or works as his/her own work without properly citing the original source(s)" (YÖK, n.d.). The law regulates the criteria for constituting research ethics committees in universities. For example, universities can set up separate ethics committees for social sciences and humanities, health sciences, and science and engineering; and each committee must be composed of seven professors from the related disciplines.

Furthermore, the document outlines the procedural steps for ethics committees to examine ethical violations in universities. In brief, these steps are: a) collecting all information and documents related to the assertion(s) of unethical behaviour, b) opening and recording the file for each violation case, c) informing ÜAK whether the accused academic is in the process of the national examination for associate professorship, d) taking written defence/apologia from the accused academic, e) discussing and voting on the ethical violation case in the related ethics committee, f) presenting the official decision regarding the ethical violation case to the rectorate. According to this document, following the related legislation, the university rectorate is responsible for carrying out the administrative, legal, and penal process for the academics (except those involved in examination for nationwide tenure) who violate the ethics of scientific research and publication. Although the document introduces a clear definition of plagiarism on academic platforms and duties for the ethical committees in universities, it does not include any criterion or directive to highlight what can be counted as evidence for the plagiarism act (i.e. similarity reports, expert opinions, etc.), how intended plagiarism can be distinguished from accidental plagiarism, how the committee decides on the scope of the plagiarism, or the appropriate punishment(s) for the plagiarism case.

On the other hand, YÖK reports assertions related to ethical violations by academics to ÜAK if someone reports a suspicious situation(s) related to unethical behaviours to YÖK instead of the related university. Last year, YÖK delegated its authority to ÜAK to carry out investigations regarding reported unethical behaviours by academics (YÖK, 2016). ÜAK operates the directives in The Regulation for the Examination on Associate Professorship about the reported plagiarism suspicions (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015). In this document, ÜAK follows a similar procedure in universities to constitute ethics committees. These ÜAK ethics committees are responsible for investigating plagiarism suspicions both for academics currently in the process of tenure examination or academics accused of plagiarism to YÖK. To check reported plagiarism suspicions, ÜAK constituted three independent ethics committees, namely, for science and engineering, health and sports sciences, and social sciences, arts and humanities (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015).

According to the Regulations for the Examination on Associate Professorship, the ÜAK ethics committees firstly carry out a preliminary examination of the documents related to the plagiarism (and also other types of unethical behaviours) accusation to decide whether the documents are sufficient to proceed to detailed investigation (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015). However, the document does not provide any information about the types of evidentiary documents for plagiarism act(s). The document does not also include any article to highlight whether the committee has to take written or oral defence from the accused academic. Article 7 in the document only states that the scientific jury will continue with the tenure examination if the assertion of plagiarism is not true for the accused academic (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015). The same article also indicates that ÜAK will accept the candidate as having failed in the tenure exam and will request YÖK and the related university (generally via YÖK) to apply the anticipated discipline and administrative processes (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015).

Although The Law of Intellectual and Artistic Works indicates possible punishments for plagiarists (if the plagiarism accusation is investigated in court), the other three laws-regulations established by nationwide higher education units such as YÖK and ÜAK do not propose any punishment for plagiarism or other unethical behaviours in academic platforms. However, the Turkish government recently published The Law for Changes in the Structure and Duties of the Ministry of National Education and regulated anticipated punishments against unethical behaviours in academia (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016). Article 26 (sub-article b) in this document states that anticipated punishments for unethical behaviours in (public or foundation–non-profit private) higher education institutions include: an official warning, reprimand, reduction of salary (one-off or regular), freezing of promotion, dismissal from the academic profession, and dismissal of public servant professions. Article 26 allows adding all these punishments to The Law of Higher Education (Turkish Official Gazette, 1981) and The Law of Public Servants (Turkish Official Gazette, 1965).

This latest regulation (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016) does not include the word 'plagiarism' as a term, but contains the same definition of plagiarism as in the Instructions for the Ethics of Scientific Research and Publication in Higher Education Institutions (YÖK, n.d.). Article 26 (sub-article b-5) in this regulation suggests dismissal from the academic profession for plagiarist academics (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016). This is a serious punishment for academics because academics in Turkish public universities are employed with civil servant status. YÖK also informs each public and foundation university of the names of plagiarist academics; therefore, there is no way for plagiarist academics to obtain another academic position in other Turkish universities.

However, the document indicates that 'scientific research and publication' ethics committees – without stating which committee (university or ÜAK) is responsible – must carry out a preliminary check for ethical violation accusations (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016, p. 5). Interestingly, the document proposes a punishment of salary reduction (single time) for those who make groundless assertions related to ethical violations (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016, p. 5). With this regulation, the accused academics have the right to examine the reported documents, to call witness(es), and to present a written/oral defence (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016, p. 6). Ethics committees can also request an expert opinion from various people including senior academic staff who work in the same discipline as the accused academic (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016, p. 7). Despite such fair directions, the document states only that the High Discipline Board has the right to implement dismissal from the academic profession (Turkish Official Gazette, 2016, p. 7). In the document, the High Discipline Board is defined as the Higher Education Council (the top management board in YÖK), but there is no information about the criteria for the final decision of the Higher Education Council. In addition, the document does not give any information to outline how ethics committees or boards/councils distinguish intended and accidental plagiarism, or determine the seriousness of the plagiarism act if it is intended plagiarism.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the legal responses to plagiarist academics were outlined through official documents in Turkey. The explicity of definitions and rules related to plagiarism was also examined in these legal regulations. Furthermore, the practicality of Turkish regulations is discussed below in terms of the manageability of official procedures to evaluate plagiarism acts in academic platforms.

The analysis contains five different legal documents from three different Turkish management units, namely The Prime Ministry of Turkey, YÖK, and ÜAK. It can be understood that each document aims to regulate a different issue related to unethical behaviours, including plagiarism. However, these documents lead to sophistication of procedures following during the investigation and decision-making of plagiarism cases in academic platforms. For example, one document proposes a simple but an admissible definition for plagiarism acts in academia (YÖK, n.d.) while another expands the definition of plagiarism to include the rules of proper citations that each academic is expected to know (YÖK, 2014). As a prominent problem in practicality, this definitional extension does not offer any criteria to decide whether the plagiarism act is intended or not. Moreover, the analysed documents do not anticipate any differentiation between intended and accidental plagiarism in terms of punishment. Many studies (Demiral-Bakırman, 2015; Özenç-Uçak & Birinci, 2008; Sonfield, 2014; Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Ünal et al., 2012; Yanikoski, 1994; Yorke et al., 2009) confirmed that distinguishing intended and accidental plagiarism and deciding the severity of anticipated punishments are important administrative problems all around the world.

Additionally, the documents in the dataset create a duality related to which ethics committee (university or ÜAK committee) is responsible for carrying out the investigation while universities are responsible for operating lawful, administrative, and punitive processes in all cases. As another point, they indicate only the establishment of three broader disciplinary ethics committees with seven members on each committee, both at university and national (ÜAK) levels. Alev and Genç (2015) discussed that no one person could master such a large disciplinary area to evaluate any plagiarism case via only his/her expertise knowledge, and the absence of sub-committee structure is an important omission in the smooth management of plagiarism investigations in Turkish academia. De Wet (2010) and Egan (2016) put similar arguments forward in their studies on ethics committees in other countries. Hoover (2006) and Downes (2017) also claimed that both plagiarist academics and their universities lose more prestige with each plagiarism case, so university ethics committees might tend to focus only on negligible points instead of seeking undeniable evidence during the plagiarism investigations. To avoid such an approach to plagiarism suspicions, Turkish higher education authorities as well as higher education policy-makers in other countries can establish only one nationwide ethics committee including at least one member from each discipline and can delegate power to this committee to form a sub-committee (composed of members from the same/the closest discipline of the accused academic) for each unique plagiarism case.

National research councils in many countries (with the exception of the European Research Council) have published codes of conduct for ethically responsible research as a guidance for universities to establish their own 'research and publication ethics' scheme. However, many researchers (Blum, 2009; Macfarlane et al., 2014; McCabe et al., 2003; Sutherland-Smith, 2010; 2011; Walker & White, 2014) argued that the variety of universities' research ethics and academic integrity structures have caused inconsistency in plagiarism investigations and in anticipated preventive and punitive measures. In this aspect, higher education systems governed by a central unit might benefit from the regulatory power of a national higher education management unit to ensure consistency in legal responses to plagiarism (and also other unethical behaviours) in universities. For example, YÖK could institute one comprehensive law that embodies academic integrity rules, definitions and signs of unethical behaviours, and the organisation of investigative structures could form a uniform legal procedure in terms of the investigation process and preventive/punitive measures against unethical behaviours in Turkish universities.

In most cases, Turkish academics who are victims of plagiarism or their legal representatives (generally publishing firms) go to court if the plagiarist person/people have commercially published and disseminated the victim's work as their own publication (Demiral-Bakırman, 2015; Demircioğlu, 2014a). According to The Law of Intellectual and Artistic Works (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951), Turkish courts generally evaluate such cases as a copyright violation and punish the acts with an administrative fine (rarely with imprisonment). This law is important in acknowledging plagiarism acts as IPR violations, but gives all authority to the court judge due to lack of clear criteria on deciding whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Furthermore, neither IPR law nor higher education law includes

any section, article, or direction to guide the evaluation of plagiarism from works in other languages into Turkish works, despite the experience of legal cases on the suspicion of crosslingual plagiarism by the ex-president of YÖK. Many researchers (Cezka et al., 2008; Potthast et al., 2011; Sousa-Silva, 2014) agreed that it is not easy to detect multilingual plagiarism acts. Legal procedures should therefore include special rules, especially about the usage of ICT technologies, similar to monolingual plagiarism cases.

All in all, the Turkish case of legal responses to plagiarist academics includes various higher education regulations and the IPR law. These regulations generate various obstacles that limit the practical manageability of the legal procedure against plagiarism acts. First of all, Turkish laws create difficulty in defining acts within the concept of plagiarism. Moreover, they do not include any direction to distinguish intended and accidental plagiarism nor evaluate both types of plagiarism with the same perspective. Only one regulation, The Law of Higher Education (Turkish Official Gazette, 1981) with its latest updates, specifies the same punishment for each sort of evidenced plagiarism act by academics. This law proposes dismissal from the academic profession for plagiarist academics without overseeing the extensiveness of plagiarism.

Against this serious punishment, the higher education regulations in the dataset create another practicality problem related to the investigation and decision-making process for plagiarism cases. They include only the establishment of ethics committees both at university and national level for various discipline areas, but do not provide any information to answer several important, pertinent questions. What is acceptable evidence for the plagiarism accusation? What are the roles/duties of committee members? How does the committee benefit from experts? What are the criterion/criteria in selection of experts? In addition to the initial defence, does the committee give another opportunity in the last phase of the investigation to the accused academics to present his/her final defence against the projected evidences? Although The Law of Intellectual and Artistic Work (Turkish Official Gazette, 1951) adds an administrative fine and imprisonment as two more types of punishment for plagiarism acts within the framework of IPR/copyright violation, this law also includes undetailed directions for plagiarism cases.

To eliminate all the practical imperfections outlined above, Turkish lawmakers should constitute a long, detailed, but unified and comprehensive law against unethical behaviours, mainly plagiarism, in academic platforms. Turkish authorities should also add informative-preventive measures (e.g., 'research and publication ethics' training, ethical contracts with academic staff, or interactive ethics guidelines for academic staff) in addition to thorough punishments. It is obvious that such an exemplary law will have the potential to become a global reference for other countries concerning academic integrity and research ethics regulations.

Although the Turkish case of legal regulations on plagiarism includes many global approaches in terms of punishments such as dismissal from the profession, an administrative fine, or imprisonment, each country has a different legal environment. Therefore, similar studies can be carried out with various examples from different countries to better understand legal attitudes towards plagiarism in global academia. Country-comparative research can also be designed to identify how cultural differences influence the basis of the legal approach (e.g., informative, preventive, or punitive) against plagiarism in different countries. Furthermore, the analysis resulting from this study can be used to develop a survey or interview form in order to collect qualitative or quantitative data related to the opinions of the academic community on legal responses to acts of plagiarism.

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