

**CONCLUSION**

This article criticizes the unsophisticated use of citation analysis for the evaluation of individuals, departments, institutions, and systems. The misuse of citation analysis distorts the original reasons for creating bibliometric systems. Inappropriately stretching bibliometrics is grossly unfair to those being evaluated and ranked. The “have-nots” in the world scientific system are put at a major disadvantage. Creative research in universities around the world is downplayed because of the control of the narrow paradigms of the citation analysis system. This system overemphasizes work written in English. The hard sciences are given too much attention, and the system is particularly hard on the humanities. Scholarship that might be published in “nonacademic” outlets, including books and popular journals, is ignored. Evaluators and rankers need to go back to the drawing boards to think about a reliable system that can accurately measure the scientific and scholarly work of individuals and institutions. The unwieldy and inappropriate use of citation analysis and bibliometrics for evaluation and ranking does not serve higher education well—and it entrenches existing inequalities. ■

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## Affordability and Accessibility

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This report provides comparable cross-national data on affordability and accessibility of higher education. It shows how different countries perform on a spectrum of indicators of affordability and accessibility and allows nations to see how well they are doing relative to other countries around the world. The report also assigns different rankings to countries' efforts in making education accessible and affordable.

Including both costs and resources, the report uses the following sets of indicators to look at affordability: costs as a fraction of ability to pay support as a fraction of ability to pay, support as a fraction of costs, and cost minus support as a fraction of ability to pay. The indicators used for accessibility are participation rates; attainment rates; the educational equity index (the quantification of educational inequality by measuring the degree to which students from high-socioeconomic-status backgrounds—as measured by paternal education levels—as are overrepresented in higher education; and gender parity index.

The *affordability* section of the report looks at data on afford-

ability of higher education in 15 countries. The report compares countries on six different measures of affordability (as a percentage of ability to pay): education costs, total costs, net costs, net cost after tax expenditure, out-of-pocket costs and out-of-pocket costs, after tax expenditures. These taken together provide the following weighted overall affordability ranking: (1) Sweden, (2) Finland, (3) the Netherlands, (4) Belgium (Flemish Community), (5) Ireland, (6) Belgium (French Community), (7) Austria, (8) Germany, (9) France, (10) Italy, (11) Canada, (12) Australia, (13) United States, (14) United Kingdom, (15) New Zealand, and (16) Japan.

*The United Kingdom and New Zealand are near the bottom of the ranking because of high costs and low national incomes.*

The analytical findings of the study on comparative affordability reveal a number of trends. Sweden is the most affordable country because of its combination of low educational costs, generous grants, and high take-up of loans. Finland and the Netherlands also do well because of low to middle educational costs, generous grants, and reasonable but limited loan programs. Because of limited student aid programs, the rest of continental Europe fares only moderately well despite low educational costs. The United Kingdom and New Zealand are near the bottom of the ranking because of high costs and low national incomes.

The *accessibility* section of the report looks at data on accessibility of higher education in 13 countries. Using the four different indicators of accessibility, the country rankings are as follows: (1) the Netherlands, (2) Finland, (3) United Kingdom, (4) United States, (5) Canada, (6) Australia, (7) Ireland, (8) France, (9) Sweden, (10) Italy, (11) Germany, (12) Belgium, and (13) Austria.

The findings on comparable accessibility suggest that the Netherlands and Finland have high participation rates and good or excellent gender parity scores. Finland's high score is largely due to its very high participation rates. The Netherlands gets the top spot because of its excellence in education equity and gender parity. The United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and Ireland cluster in the mid-to-high zone of the rankings, which demonstrates striking evidence of policy congruence across a shared linguistic zone. Germany, Belgium, and Austria fare well in terms of gender parity index, but are at or near the bottom of the other three accessibility measures. None has a particularly high participation or attainment rate, and all of them have student bodies that are elite relative to the national make-up.

Overall, the report concludes that Finland and the Netherlands are the “undisputed success stories” of the survey in terms of both accessibility and affordability. Both have large student bodies, high attainment rates, extensive grant pro-

grams, and student bodies that are fairly reflective of broader society. While there is some clustering, the data and rankings suggest quite strongly that the links between accessibility and affordability are not straightforward. For example, with the exception of Finland and the Netherlands, no country has consistently high scores across both the affordability and accessibility rankings.

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## Foreign Higher Education Activity in Francophone Africa

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Previous research on foreign educational activity in Africa has mainly focused on the English-speaking parts of the continent. Based on a substantial report, this article is an attempt to gauge the scale and nature of transnational higher education in francophone Africa and to raise practical questions over the sustainability of the francophone capacity-building model versus the more revenue-generating model generally found in the anglophone world.

Francophone Africa consists of 29 countries (18 where French is the official language, 6 where it is one of two official languages, and 5 where French is not one of the official languages but still has a powerful presence). The combined population is approximately 394 million (conflicting figures). Francophone Africa does not constitute a single political, economic, or cultural entity, and member countries exhibit a highly varied scale of foreign educational activity. There is a correlation between national economic conditions (i.e., GDP per capita) and level of foreign activity, with the least-developed countries remaining largely unaffected by this type of provision. The most active and diverse sites of transnational higher education are concentrated in the North African and Indian Ocean regions.

There is a growing demand for transnational higher education across francophone Africa. Although very few countries have developed regulatory frameworks for transnational high-

er education, most governments have encouraged this type of provision in an attempt to curb study-abroad rates and maximize tertiary participation. Other perceived benefits include domestic capacity building, widening student choice, and enhancing innovation and competitiveness in the sector. Yet opportunity is matched by attendant risk. Political upheavals and uncertainty have deterred foreign investment in certain countries. There appear to be limited possibilities for institutional partnerships due to a widespread lack of local expertise. Concerns over financial risk have also been raised due to the tradition of “free university education for all.” Incoming providers have reported difficulties in subsidizing the costs of tuition fees and in many cases have failed to secure local investment. The lack of regulatory framework for foreign providers might facilitate entry into the market, but concerns have also been raised over “soft market” value.

Until now, the vast majority of foreign educational projects have been spearheaded by the developed countries of the francophone world (particularly France). The Agence universitaire de la francophone (AUF), an international body dedicated to promoting a language “under threat,” has been at the forefront of developments. A “top-down” capacity-building approach has been adopted, in line with the inherited francophone tradition of “free university education for all.”

### TRENDS IN FOREIGN PROVISION

There would appear to be no comprehensive list of transnational higher education in francophone Africa. The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education’s report provides 20 examples of both face-to-face and distance/online foreign educational activity in order to distill emerging models and trends. Large-scale foreign operations that were established prior to the mid-1990s have generally been in receipt of multilateral funding (mainly from the AUF) and are almost entirely owned and operated by a consortium of foreign actors. This could reflect an attempt to reduce operational costs and share risk management, particularly as the majority of entities continue to subsidize student fees. This scenario appears to have limited the potential for widespread access, as the majority of tuition-free programs are confronted by growing capacity problems.

There is evidence over time of greater ambition and commitment on the part of joint ventures. The overall shift is from small-scale, capacity-building projects (generally sustainable over a limited funding period) to more large-scale, economically driven ventures. There is a potential shift toward a branch campus model in countries such as Mauritius, Senegal, and Lebanon, where national authorities have explicitly invited foreign institutions to commence operations. The diversification of actors (particularly from the United States and India) suggests that not only French-speaking countries have an interest in operating in francophone Africa.

While still a minority trend, e-learning is increasingly viewed as a viable alternative to large-scale face-to-face delivery.