

social and cultural experience (63.3%), income level (51.7%), and competitive ability in the employment market (45.2%). In Macau, students cited economic income (77.2%), competitive ability in the employment market (65.8%), social and cultural experience (51.0%), and academic ability (42.1%). Thus the mainland students in Macau valued economic factors much more than their counterparts in Hong Kong; and the students in Hong Kong valued academic enhancement. Both groups valued the social and cultural benefits.

CAREER PLANS

Many respondents stated that they planned to go abroad after graduation—28.4 percent in Hong Kong and 44.8 percent in Macau. In addition, 45.2 percent in Hong Kong and 39.6 percent in Macau looked forward to going wherever they could find opportunities for personal development. In Hong Kong, 23.3 percent of respondents indicated that they would return to the mainland, while the proportion in Macau was 4.9 percent. Only 2.8 percent in Hong Kong and 11.0 percent in Macau indicated that they would stay in the host territory.

These findings reveal the distinctive characteristics of mainland students in the SARs, compared with their counterparts in mainland China and in foreign countries. Many chose to go to SARs because they saw the territories as a transit station and the several years as a stage in preparation for lifelong careers or for going abroad. Compared with students who remained on the mainland, these mobile students might be somewhat more international. However, compared with Chinese students in foreign countries, they were less distant from their homes and had a stronger potential to return.

To some extent, Hong Kong and Macau still play the role as the bridges for mainland students' international mobility. However, this role has been challenged by the increasing direct cooperation and exchange between foreign institutions and mainland Chinese universities and by the enhanced internationalization of mainland higher education. ■

India: The New Private Sector

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IHE devotes a column in each issue to a contribution from PROPHE, the Program for Research on Private Higher Education, headquartered at the University of Albany. See <http://www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/>.

India has a long tradition of private higher education, dating back to the Gurukul system thousands of years ago. Under this system, the select few, mostly from the Brahmins (the learned) and the Kshatriyas (the warriors), attained knowledge by staying with the guru at his private dwelling over a long

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period of time. They did not have to pay tuition fees, but after the completion of their education-cum-training the guru could ask for a *dakshina* (financial payment). Today, talking about private higher education in India usually involves for-profit private professional institutions.

In 1947/48, India had just 20 universities and 496 colleges. By 2005/06 the numbers grew to 348 universities and 17,625 colleges. The private sector comprised 57 percent of the total higher education system by the 1980s and rose to 75 percent in the 1990s, absorbing students but also raising the demand for higher education by making it accessible and affordable. The rise of private higher education can be seen as the fallout of the economic liberalization policy launched in 1991. Whereas the old private higher education sector depended mostly on the government for financial support, the new private institutions are basically self-financed and career oriented.

THE NEW PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Most of the new private universities—such as the National Institute of Information Technology and Aptech—have either been established under the private universities acts passed by various state governments or registered with the Ministry of Trade and Commerce. A private institution can also be established as a “deemed” university that specializes in academic fields comparable to university programs and undertakes vocational programs in emerging areas relevant to society in general.

With the massification of higher education and decline in public funding—if the goal is to provide higher education to at least 20 percent of the student-age cohort—the government has no choice but to rely on the private sector. Currently, only 11 percent of the age cohort has access to higher education.

Of the 17,625 colleges in India today, only 5,386 are government aided; the rest are mostly self-financed. The number of students seeking professional training in the fields of engineering, medicine, management, information technology, and teacher training outside the public universities has grown from less than 15 percent in the 1990s to 50 percent today. According to some reports, up to 75 percent of higher education institutions in India are privately managed.

Some of the new private institutions—such as the Times School of Marketing and the Kirloskar Institute of Advanced Management—hardly bother to obtain recognition from the University Grants Commission's All India Council for Technical Education. Being market oriented, these institutions have the capacity to absorb their trainees in their own enterprises. Thus they enjoy more autonomy and less accountability.

ISSUES AT STAKE

Notably, India's private primary and secondary schools have greater credibility than private higher education institutions. The prevailing ambiguity about the quality of education provided by the new private institutions creates skepticism. Most have thrived primarily because of the craze among Indians for "degrees" and "diplomas." Only a tiny number of private higher education institutions are quality conscious. They do not face mandatory evaluation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Board, nor does the system protect the interests of students under the Consumers Act.

Ambiguity prevails over the very nomenclature of "private higher education"—making it difficult to distinguish government-aided private institutions from the nonprofit public or for-profit private ones. Most of the new private institutions function under the guise of charitable trusts. Though these

The private institutions have succeeded in converting the traditional "temples of learning" into market-oriented "diploma mills."

institutions are not allowed to earn any profits, most of them succeed in making huge profits by charging substantial fees and making underhand dealings at the time of admission. They are able to take advantage of anxious students, and their families who are not absorbed by the public universities.

The private institutions have succeeded in converting the traditional "temples of learning" into market-oriented "diploma mills." They know how to take advantage of the surge in demand for higher education and professional training in a country with a growing middle class of 350 million and 60 percent of the population below the age of 25. The neoliberals and round-the-clock media have succeeded in spreading the myth that the more you study the better your job prospects. Private higher education in India has thus become a lucrative business.

The government and the judiciary are now bent on curbing the commodification and commercialization of higher education by the new private institutions in the name of equity and social justice. In a caste-ridden and hierarchical society, higher education remains the sole hope for the vast majorities toward social mobility. That is why the current coalition government is insisting upon reservation of up to 49.5 percent for the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes

through the 93rd constitutional amendment act. We also find frequent judicial interventions over trivial administrative matters pertaining to the common entrance exam, fee structure, and management quota.

In fact, two bills dealing with the contentious issues of reservation and regulation of private higher education are currently under active consideration in Parliament. Though passage of the earlier bill introduced in the Rajya Sabha (upper house) in August 1995 was blocked by resistance from the private sector itself, some states—such as Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, and Chattisgarh—succeeded in passing the private universities acts in the last several years. These developments have resulted in conflicts between the central and state governments and feuds between the judiciary and the executive. ■

Planning for Higher Education Change in Madagascar

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For the last year, work has been under way on a strategy for higher education reform, quality improvement, and a transformation in Madagascar. After some delay, that process has been joined by the major tertiary institutions.

Higher education in Madagascar developed in the 1950s as part of the French Institut des Hautes Etudes. The University of Antananarivo was established on this base in 1961 with 723 students focusing on law, medicine, pharmacy, science, and the arts. Five regional centers were established in 1975, becoming regional universities in 1988. In 1989/90 the universities were required to admit all students who passed the baccalaureate. From 1975 to 1990 the number of students more than quadrupled, to 37,000. Judging that experiment a costly failure, the government returned to competitive admissions, reducing the total number of students to an average of 20,000 from 1994 through 2002. Increases since that time have been modest. In 2006 the total student population at the six public universities was 37,152.

Private tertiary institutions developed primarily during the past decade. Most provide training in business, languages,