

if China's growth and development continues and if the country makes the full transformation from developing to developed country. On the whole it can probably be expected that the secondary education enrollment rate will continue to rise at a fairly steady rate to reach approximately 90 percent before leveling off.

#### ENROLLMENT LEVELS

Tertiary education enrollments vary widely across countries, but in the Chinese case still appear fairly low compared to most other countries. The Chinese figure of 21.6 percent is not only below that of developed countries (i.e., Japan 57.3%, the United States 81.8%, and Hong Kong 33%) but is also below that of many developing countries (i.e., Malaysia 39%, Columbia 30.8%, and Thailand 45.9%). It would thus appear likely that China's tertiary education sector will continue to grow in size in the future, perhaps not as rapidly as in the past but nonetheless at a fairly steady rate. Perhaps the only factor that will constrain this growth is the aging of the Chinese population.

At some stage in the future the tertiary education sector's growth will slow down. Until that happens, however, it would appear that a combination of strong growth of the Chinese population and rising participation rates in education will continue to drive expansion of the system.

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#### NUMBERS OF STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

Based on data from 2006 the largest number of students studying outside of their country of origin (not including intra-European Union students) are from China. Students study abroad for reasons such as desire to emigrate, attraction to more prestigious institutions, and lack of educational opportunities in their own country. It is difficult to infer much from the figures except to say that although Chinese students study abroad in large numbers they do not do so at any particularly high rate compared to that of other countries. The ratio of Chinese higher education students abroad compared to Chinese students in higher education in their home country was 0.38 percent of students in the 15-to-25-year age group. This figure is not particularly high compared to most other countries (i.e., Japan 0.82%, Hong Kong 7.59%, Malaysia 1.84%, Thailand 0.45%, and Indonesia 0.16%). It would be expected, therefore, that in the future Chinese students will remain the largest group of national students studying abroad unless there is some dramatic change to the rates of countries like India and Indonesia.

#### CONCLUSION

The rapid growth of the tertiary education sector in China over the past few years can be expected to continue for some years to come. This trend will not fully prevent problems of the quality of graduates, the appropriateness of their qualifications, and the related issue of employability. The second main point is that while growth in Chinese student numbers studying abroad may not remain as great, most likely in the future they will constitute the largest national group studying abroad. ■

## Indian Higher Education Internationalization: Beware of the Trojan Horse

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India's parliament is often accused of inaction or long delays. The case of the Foreign Education Bill, bottled up for two years because of disagreements in the ruling coalition government, may be a case where delay is a good thing. India's higher education policies are of crucial importance for the country and also of great relevance for the many foreign universities wishing to set up shop. The Indian press reports that 40 international universities have sought land from the government of Maharashtra in the Mumbai-Pune-Nashik area to establish campuses. These trends provide just one indication of the tremendous foreign interest in the large and lucrative higher education market in India. Some foreign universities are already working in India, mostly in collaboration with Indian partners.

India might be the world's largest single market for foreign universities. The country has a significant unmet demand for higher education access—currently only 10 percent of the age group attend university—half the proportion in China and well below the rate in most rapidly developing and middle-income countries. Further, India has a huge unmet demand for high-quality higher education. The number of places available in India's very small top sector—the Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institutes of Management, and similar institutions—is tiny when compared to the demand. Thus, foreign institutions see a tremendous opportunity for lucrative growth in the Indian market.

**REASONS FOR CAUTION**

Some stakeholders who see higher education simply as a tradable commodity that can be bought and sold internationally favor opening borders without restriction for educational products of all kinds. The for-profit higher education companies, many private universities, the international testing companies, and increasingly some universities and government agencies in the exporting countries—such as the United Kingdom and the United States—have this perspective. People who are convinced that higher education is more than a commodity have much to worry about in the rush toward importing and exporting universities and academic programs because the idea of academic work as preparation for citizenship, preparation for critical thinking, and similar “public good” goals often get swept away by the importers and exporters. The traders are interested in selling products in immediate demand, such as management studies, and not in sustaining research universities, enhancing access and equity for underserved communities, and the like.

Why do foreign universities and education companies such as Laureate Education Inc. wish to enter the Indian market? The motivations are complex but very important to understand. One goal is clear—everyone who enters the Indian market wants to extract profits—mostly by offering academic programs in fields that are in high demand. With very few exceptions, foreign providers are not interested in investing in high-cost academic infrastructures such as science laboratories and research facilities. They wish to minimize the investment and maximize the profit, like any corporation. Some countries, including the United Kingdom and Australia, have a national policy to earn profits from higher education exports. Thus the British Council and similar organizations assist British educational institutions to maximize their export potentials. The British Council is no longer mainly in the information business but rather is focused on export promotion.

The United States differs in some respects but essentially follows the British and Australian pattern. The United States has no national higher education policy. Higher education policy is mainly a responsibility of the 50 states, and no state has declared higher education an export priority. Unlike the United Kingdom or Australia, the United States has a strong private higher education sector, and the private universities and colleges have been most aggressive about overseas exports. It is likely that the largest number seeking to enter the Indian market will include low-end private schools seeking to earn a profit.

The for-profit sector is also much stronger in the United States than is the case elsewhere. The two largest players are Laureate Education Inc. and the Apollo Group (owners of the University of Phoenix and other institutions). Laureate's strategy is either to purchase existing universities outside the United States (they own 29 universities and postsecondary institutions on three continents) or to establish new schools. Laureate started a university in Andhra Pradesh, a state friend-

ly to foreign providers, but pulled out when the regulatory environment seemed too complex.

The top American private and public universities—20 percent or so of the total of more than 3,000 colleges and universities—have complex motives for entering the Indian market. For the most part, they are genuinely interested in internationalization, and see India as an important player, economically and educationally, in the 21st century. They are concerned with their “brand image” and wish to expand it in one of the world's major higher education markets. They may use their Indian outposts to recruit bright Indian students, and academic staff, to come to the United States for studying. Their Indian branch campuses will provide a place where their own students and faculty can study and do research. And, of course, in most cases the universities will seek to earn money from the programs offered in India.

The problem for India is the myriad of institutions at the bottom of the American academic hierarchy, both for-profit and nonprofit. These players are likely to concentrate on entering the Indian market, with one essential reason for being in India—to earn money. While many of these institutions will

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offer respectable academic programs, some will try to cut corners. Vetting and regulating these institutions will not be easy. There will be no help from the highly regarded American accrediting system. So long as an institution is accredited (and US accreditation measures not high quality but rather the minimum standard), there are no official guidelines concerning institutional quality. These schools will offer the programs in India that they feel will attract students and may well have little commitment to either a long-term presence in India or to maintaining good quality.

**THE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT BRANCH CAMPUSES**

As India carefully considers its policies concerning allowing foreign institutions into the country, a number of central issues must be addressed. What is the motivation of the foreign institution? Is everything about the foreign branch transparent and open? What is the status of the foreign institution in its own country? Is the foreign institution capable of offering the same quality in India as it does at home, and is that quality deemed of an acceptably high standard in the home country? Is the foreign institution able to deliver its programs in India using its own faculty, and does it have appropriate infrastructures such as libraries, e-learning facilities, and laboratories to deliver the programs it proposed? Is the foreign

institution able to sustain its academic offerings over time in India?

Allowing foreign institutions to set up shop in India is not the only road to the internationalization of Indian higher education. Twinning programs, joint degrees, exchanges of students and professors, sharing of curriculum, and other relationships are possible and more likely to ensure that essential Indian control over Indian higher education is maintained.

So far, India's main contribution to world higher education is the export of students, many of whom do not return. India needs to engage more with the rest of the world, but not at the expense of giving up academic sovereignty. Higher education is not, in the end, purely a commodity to be bought and sold on the international market. Higher education represents an essential part of a nation's patrimony and a key to future prosperity. (This article appeared in *The Hindu* (Chennai, India), July 15, 2008). ■

## Caste, Class, and Quality at the Indian Institutes of Technology

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The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), established through an act of the Parliament and aided by the central government, have been playing a pivotal role in technological manpower development and research programs. Entrance to the IITs is made through the Joint Entrance Examination. Every year, about 300,000 students appear for just 3,000 seats. Though it is very tough to get admission into the IITs, these institutions remain the most sought after.

A conflict is now under way between the seven IIT directors and the Ministry of Human Resource Development over the June 9, 2008 order asking the institutes to implement a 15 percent quota for the Scheduled Castes, 7.5 percent for the Scheduled Tribes, and 27 percent for the Other Backward Classes in the faculty from 2008/09 academic session. Usually the term Other Backward Classes implies "socially and educationally backward classes." According to the 1931 caste-based census, there are 2,399 backward castes or communities in India.

Though the reservation policy for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students at the IITs existed since 1973, the ruling UPA (United Progressive Alliance) government directed the University Grants Commission to extend reservation to lec-

urers and professors in all centrally aided institutions except the minority institutions in 2005. In order to pave the way for reservation, the 93rd constitutional amendment was also passed in December 2005. In January 2006, the Central Educational Institutions (Reservations in Admissions) Act came into force, making it mandatory to reserve 27 percent of seats for the Other Backward Classes in all centrally aided institutions, including the IITs. The June 9, 2008 order extended the reservation to the appointment of faculty as well.

All the IITs provide reservation for these students. They also offer reservation for administrative posts ranging from the most junior employees to deputy registrars. Now they are required to reserve posts for lecturers and assistant professors in science and technology and up to the professor's level in management, social sciences, and humanities.

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It is hard to imagine, however, that faculty will use the caste factor to get entry into the prestigious and elitist IITs. Though the order was signed by Seema Raj, director of technical education at the Ministry of Human Resource Development on the recommendations made by the standing committee of the IIT Council, many faculty members believe that the order has been thrust upon the IITs by the ministry itself. According to them, matters of such strategic importance should have first been discussed in the IIT Council, but in this situation a decision was made without having consulted the stakeholders. The ministry, on the other hand, has taken the stand that the IITs have been skirting around the reservation policy despite the fact that they were never exempted from it.

### RESERVATIONS ABOUT RESERVATION

IIT directors have expressed their dissent against reservation for faculty appointments. They are insisting that the UPA government should revoke its decision. Whereas the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bhabha Atomic Research Center, and the Harish Chandra Research Institute are exempt from reservation—for being "institutes of national importance"—it has been made mandatory for the IITs despite their being of equal reputation, if not more. The question arises why there should be reservation only for the position of lecturers and Assistant Professors at the IITs in the case of science and tech-