Quality Management, Performance Measurement and Indicators in Higher Education Institutions: Between Burden, Inspiration and Innovation

Cláudia S. Sarrico  
Higher Education Team  
OECD Directorate for Education and Skills

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Rationale for performance and quality management in higher education
Higher education is rapidly expanding

Share of 24-34 year-olds with a tertiary degree across OECD and G20 countries

Note: The figures in these graphs are estimates based on available data. The population estimations are based on the OECD annual population projections.

But there are quality challenges…

Percentage of graduates with low literacy and numeracy

And equity challenges…
Access rate gaps for 18-24 year-olds

How to read this chart: Panel A: In Slovenia, 18-24 year-olds without tertiary educated parents are about 40% less likely to enter a bachelor’s or long first degree programme than other 18-24 year-olds. Panel B: In Chile, 18-24 year-olds without tertiary educated parents are about 40% more likely to enter a short-cycle programme than other 18-24 year-olds.

Source: Indicators of Education Systems (INES) Survey on Equity in Tertiary Education.
And relevance challenges…
Businesses collaborating on innovation with higher education or research institutions

And the costs of higher education are becoming increasingly difficult to manage…

Expenditure on education institutions and number of students by education level, 2005=100

From Burden to Inspiration and Innovation
Questions

Quality?
Equity?
Relevance?
Financial sustainability?

Erosion of trust

Accountability mechanisms

Attempt to restore trust

Normative perspective on trust

Rationalist-instrumental perspective on trust

Burden

(Stensaker and Harvey 2011)
(Stensaker and Gornitzka 2009)
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<th>Highlights</th>
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<td>Higher education provides graduates with favourable economic and social outcomes, but the low</td>
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<td>basic skills of some graduates is a cause for concern</td>
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<td>Inequity of access by socio-economic and migration background is a persistent challenge</td>
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<td>Only 4 in 10 bachelor’s students are able to complete on time, and 2 in 10 do not complete at all</td>
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<td>Young doctorate holders in higher education employment find less job security than their</td>
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<td>predecessors and their peers in other sectors</td>
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<td>Higher education research and development relies heavily upon public funding, and establishes</td>
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<td>limited collaboration with businesses on innovation, especially for small and medium enterprises</td>
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<td>There is an increasing focus on engagement activities, but frameworks for measuring activities do not yet exist</td>
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<td>Open access to scientific documents remains limited</td>
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<td>Although quality is difficult to measure, governments are increasingly trying to link funding and other policies to the quality of teaching and research</td>
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<td>Data limitations prevent comprehensive performance assessment of higher education systems, but improvements in measurements are possible</td>
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Benchmarking Higher Education Systems
Source of inspiration and innovation

https://doi.org/10.1787/be5514d7-en
Country reviews

Reviews of National Policies for Education
Rethinking Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Brazil

Reviews of National Policies for Education
The Future of Mexican Higher Education
PROMOTING QUALITY AND EQUITY

Higher Education
Higher Education in Mexico
LABOUR MARKET RELEVANCE AND OUTCOMES

Higher Education in Norway
LABOUR MARKET RELEVANCE AND OUTCOMES
The mobilisation, allocation, and management of financial resources: public funding for teaching, research, and infrastructure; private revenues raised by higher education institutions; student fees and student financial support.

Human resources management: attracting, recruiting and selecting the higher education workforce, the structuring of the higher education workforces, and inducing the desired performance from the higher education workforce.

Resource governance and coordination: coordinating demand and supply (study places, programmes, and institutions), the network of provision (institutional collaboration, alliance, and mergers), and student pathways.
Attracting, recruiting and selecting the HE workforce

- Recruitment process
- Staff profile
- Staff numbers

Structuring the higher education workforce

- Employment status of academic staff
- Academic roles and working time
- Digitalisation of teaching and learning

Inducing the desired performance from the HE workforce

- Staff appraisal
- Promotion
- Remuneration
- Professional development
- Mobility
- Retirement
What is happening to quality and performance measurement and management?
Performance Model

Context

(Talbot 2010, Bouckaert and Halligan 2008)
(Sarrico, 2018)
Towards integration and squaring the circle

- Different measurement and management instruments
- Steering mechanisms: professional, state and market regulation
- Performance indicators
  - Economy
  - Efficiency
  - Quality: from internal to external quality, from intrinsic to extrinsic motivations, from improvement to accountability
Towards integration and squaring the circle

- Integrative frameworks, at system, institution and unit level
  - National and supra-national (ENQA, INQAAHE, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank)
  - Institutional – increasingly integrated:
    - In wider management and governance arrangements
    - Different missions: learning and teaching, research and scholarship, engagement
    - Different organisational levels: institution, sub-units
    - Different quality and performance dimensions
What has resulted from the quest for performance in higher education?
Research productivity and quality up
  – Economic and social impact?

Rankings, reputation and the quest for world-class universities
  – Lack of attention to the quality of teaching and meaningful engagement with the wider world

Poor education provision less likely
  – Study success increasingly addressed
  – Learning outcomes and learning gain?
  – Graduate labour market outcomes?
  – Wider social outcomes of graduates?
More and better?

- Engagement
  - Emphasis on technology transfer and commercialisation of research
  - Less on wider civic and social engagement
  - Difficulty in measuring ‘valorisation’
- Performance-based funding in addition to basic government allocations
  - Ex-post – reward for good past performance
  - Ex-ante – performance agreements
- Growing importance of third-party funding in addition to core funding and student fees
  - Continuing Education
  - Knowledge and technology transfer
  - Service provision
  - Endowments and other philanthropic donations
What does the future hold?
Some possible trajectories

- Self-accountability -> societal accountability -> societal engagement  
  (Hazelkorn, 2016)
- Bias towards research addressed
  - Measurement of learning outcomes and learning gain
  - Initiatives to improve the quality of teaching
- More attention to human resources management and professional development
- Valorisation agenda
  - More emphasis on the social impact of higher education
  - More engaged graduates, knowledge exchange, and civic and social engagement
- From ‘world-class universities’ to ‘world-class systems’