Competition in Higher Education Branding and Marketing

National and Global Perspectives

Edited by Antigoni Papadimitriou

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Editor
Antigoni Papadimitriou
School of Education
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, MD, USA

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This book is dedicated to my colleagues and friends around the globe who continue to support and inspire me. This book is for all of us who try to survive and succeed under multiple challenges.

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Editor and Contributors

About the Editor

Antigoni Papadimitriou is Assistant Professor of Leadership at the Division of Public Safety Leadership, School of Education, The Johns Hopkins University. She also is a visiting professor at Solvay School of Economics and Open University HCMC in Vietnam where she teaches Performance Evaluation. A highly motivated, dedicated experienced international higher education scholar with research and teaching activities in across the globe (Greece, Norway, Netherlands, the USA, Western Balkans, and Vietnam). Antigoni's research agenda includes higher education leadership, quality management, marketing and branding, assessments of student learning, as well as mixed methods research. Currently, Antigoni's work focused on branding and marketing in higher education, leadership, innovation, and community development.

Contributors

Germán Álvarez-Mendiola works for the Department of Educational Research at the Centre for Advanced Research and Studies. He has a large experience as a teacher in secondary and high school levels, as well as a Professor at undergraduate and graduate level. His research interests are: public policies and organizational change in higher education; private higher education; lifelong learning policies and institutions;

and adult learners in higher education. He coordinates the book series "Higher Education Library" of National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions. He is a member of the International Committee of International Workshops on Higher Education annual series.

Gerardo Blanco Ramírez is Assistant Professor in the Higher Education Doctoral Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston. His research explores the intersections of quality, branding and position taking in the context of global competition in higher education. This analysis incorporates critical perspectives of globalization and internationalization. Gerardo is an internationally engaged scholar and his research and teaching span across four continents. His work has been published in the *Comparative Education Review, Higher Education*, and *Studies in Higher Education*, among many others.

Leon Cremonini is a researcher at the University of Twente's Center for Higher Education Policy Studies since 2006. A graduate in International Political Science from the University of Bologna, Italy. Leon has worked both in Europe and in the USA. His research focuses on higher education policy reform, internationalization, quality assessment, university and program rankings, equity and access to higher education, and higher education in emergencies. He has worked in several countries across Africa and Asia as well as with the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Leon has presented papers and published on these topics.

Noah D. Drezner is Associate Professor of higher education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and founding editor of the journal *Philanthropy & Education*. He is internationally known as a leading researcher on educational philanthropy. His research interests include philanthropy and fundraising as it pertains to colleges and universities, including higher education's role in the cultivation of prosocial behaviors. Currently, Dr. Drezner's work is based in identity-based philanthropy. In other words, he is researching how a person's social identities affect their giving to higher education and how colleges and universities can engage their alumni in more inclusive ways.

Miguel Alejandro González-Ledesma holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the Scuola Normale Superior de Pisa, in Italy. Since 2016 he has a postdoctoral position at the Research Institute on University and Education (IISUE) of the National Autonomous University in

Mexico (UNAM). He is also lecturer on Geopolitics at the School of Philosophy and Literature (FFyL-UNAM). His research interests lie in the area of Higher Education studies, particularly governance, funding, quality assurance, and student movements.

Decky A. Ismandoyo earned his Bachelor degree of Visual Communication Design from Petra Christian University in Surabaya and then Mr. Decky continued his Masters degree in the field of Creative Marketing at Surabaya University in Surabaya. Since 2013, he has been pursuing his Ph.D. in the field of Visual Arts at Institute Seni Indonesia (Indonesia Arts Institute) in Surakarta, Central Java. His research focuses on visual advertsing strategy. In his professional life, Mr. Decky owns "Adaide", a design agency which has already served lots of institutions and companies as the clients.

Queenie K.H. Lam is a Ph.D. candidate of the Centre for Higher Education Governance Ghent (CHEGG) and the International Centre for Higher Education Research-Kassel (Germany). Her Doctoral project focuses on university marketing communication, particularly, branding and rankings. Queenie is also project manager of the Brussels-based Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), where she has been responsible for the management of EU projects and policy research on issues related to the internationalization of higher education. Queenie holds a B.A. (Translation) and an MPhil (Communication) degree from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and an M.A. (International Higher Education Development and Research) from INCHER-Kassel.

Patrício V. Langa is Associate Professor of Higher Education Studies at the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in South Africa and Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in Mozambique. He is a visiting scholar and Research Fellow at Danube Krems University, Austria. He is also adviser to UEM Rector on Strategic Planning. From 2012 to 2015, he served as the Executive Director for External Evaluation of the National Council on Quality Assurance in Mozambique (CNAQ) and currently holds the position of Non-Executive Director. Langa founded and served as Director of the Centre for Higher Education Studies and Development (CESD). He is a founding member and current President of the Mozambican Sociological Association (A.M.S). Langa's research interest are located the intersection of sociology and higher education studies in Africa. He has published in both Sociology and higher education Journals.

Jelle Mampaey is Assistant Professor of Marketing at Open University (Heerlen, The Netherlands) and a member of EqualDiv@Work, an international network of researchers with an interest in socio-demographic diversity management in organizations. He holds a Masters in Psychology and a Doctoral degree in Business Administration. His research focuses on marketing and management in higher education.

Gerald W. McLaughlin has been the Director of Institutional Research at Virginia Tech and at DePaul University. He has served as President of the Association of Institutional Research and the Southern AIR and has been recognized as a Distinguished Member in both. He has authored and co-edited numerous publications. His current research interest include analytic methodology, metrics for institutional diversity, and the use of college rankings.

Jacqueline E. McLaughlin Ph.D. is Assistant Professor of educational innovation and research and Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment at the University of North Carolina (UNC) Eshelman School of Pharmacy. She has authored and co-authored publications in higher education and health professions education concerning various aspects of quality and measurement.

Josetta S. McLaughlin Associate Professor Emerita of Management at Roosevelt University, has authored and co-authored publications in business and higher education. She served on the faculties of Roosevelt University and Radford University where courses taught include strategic management and corporate social responsibility and sustainability. Her current research interests include business ethics, institutional sustainability, and student diversity and success.

Dr. Jenny Ngo is a senior lecturer and a scholar at Sekolah Tinggi Teknik Surabaya in Surabaya, Indonesia. Dr. Ngo received her both Masters and Ph.D. degrees in Education from University of Twente in 2002 and 2013 respectively. In 2012–2013, Dr. Ngo was one of the teaching staff at the faculty of Behavioral Sciences, University of Twente, the Netherlands. Her primary teaching and research interests include academic English, (educational) leadership and management, and educational branding. In her professional life, she is a leadership program developer and trainer.

Kem Saichaie is Associate Director of the Center for Education Effectiveness and a Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of California, Davis. His research interests include academic and organizational identify, pedagogical innovations, and the role of space and technology on student learning. Kem has published in a variety of outlets including, *The Journal of Higher Education, International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and New Directions in Institutional Research.* He is the co-author of *A Guide to Teaching in Active Learning Classrooms: History, Research and Practice.* Kem received his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa.

Hayes H.H. Tang is Assistant Professor at the Education University of Hong Kong. A sociologist, Hayes is interested in the fields of education policy, academic profession, and youth studies. He is committed to create new knowledge in application for enhanced alignment between education and the world of work/professions in East Asia's entrepreneurial societies. Currently, he conducts researches on graduate entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial intentions, and research-intensive universities. His recent publications include "Academic capitalism in Greater China: Theme and variations" (2014) and "Knowledge exchange by the Hong Kong academic profession: In comparative perspective with South Korea" (2017).

John Taylor Professor, has over 20 years of experience as a senior manager in higher education and in higher education research. He has been employed at the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, and Southampton, and is currently a visiting professor at Lancaster University's Department of Educational Research. John has worked in Europe, Asia, Africa, South and North America, conducting professional development trainings and comparative research on strategy and planning; resource allocation (including *inter alia* marketization and value for money); governance and organizational structures; internationalization and globalization; quality management in higher education; and access and widening participation.

Jarrett B. Warshaw is Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology at Florida Atlantic University. His research interests include postsecondary organization, finance, and policy, with an emphasis on understanding how colleges and universities change, adapt, and innovate in relation to their external environments. He received his Ph.D. from the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia, where he was a Presidential Fellow of the Graduate School.

Nelson C. Zavale is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education at Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique. He is also the Executive Director of the Centre for Higher Education Studies and Development (CESD) and researcher of the UEM Academic Quality Office. Currently, he is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Centre for African Studies, University of Basel, Switzerland. Zavale has published in the fields of curriculum studies and sociology of education.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Mapping the Global *Brandscape* of Higher Education

Gerardo Blanco Ramírez

To understand the changes that are reshaping higher education, an analysis of the language utilized to discuss contemporary universities is illuminating. Consider, for example, the following phrase, by a senior university administrator: "I'm sorry for being late to the meeting; I was dealing with a social media crisis." In a different time, this sentence would have caused confusion. Today, however, many higher education administrators have experience responding to postings on social media, such as Twitter™ or Facebook® that portray their institutions in a negative light and that requires their immediate attention. In a different setting, another administrator may pose the following question in a meeting: "I think these are good ideas, but we need consider how these initiatives will affect our university's brand." These phrases illustrate that ideas and activities related to marketing and branding have entered the life of colleges and universities. Higher education scholars have, thus far, engaged only marginally with these phenomena. This book intends

G. Blanco Ramírez (✉)
University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, USA

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to engage with and contribute to ongoing conversations about marketing and branding among scholars and practitioners of higher education around the word.

Language does not merely reflect or represent a changing reality. Language—as poststructuralist theorists suggest—is constitutive and helps shape our constructed social realities (Jørgensen and Phillips 2011). Branding and marketing conversations reflect and reinforce the marketization of higher education (Brown and Carasso 2013), an increasing consumer orientation (McArdle-Clinton 2008), and what some have called the "consumerist turn" in higher education (Naidoo et al. 2011). As Stensaker and D'Andrea (2007) suggest, "the word branding suggests that higher education is increasingly becoming part of an emerging higher education market" (p. 5). Using language as a metaphor for understanding branding and marketing in higher education is a justifiable approach because consumption constitutes a language (Berger 2010) and because marketing is about conveying messages, and therefore, relies on linguistic tools (Oswald 2012). Marketing is the communication component of the strategic branding process for an organization (Eshuis et al. 2013).

Arjun Appadurai (1996, 2000) argues in very a compelling way, that globalization takes place through "ethnoscapes, mediascapes…" (Appadurai 1996, p. 33). Taking up this idea, and arguing that the surge of branding initiatives in higher education is linked to globalization, the idea of *brandscape* suggests that higher education institutions develop brands, not in isolation, but rather as part of a branding landscape. This branding landscape can be equated to the neoinstitutional concept of field (Scott 2008) and the isomorphic dynamics (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) within. The contributions in this book illustrate many ways in which a consumer turn has entered higher education. They also illustrate the ways in which higher education stakeholders—administrators, policymakers, and students—respond to an increasingly integrated and competitive global field of higher education. This analysis of how university brands interact with each other is akin to the process of mapping a territory, which is the main goal of this book.

Motivations for Branding

The idea that colleges and universities are complex organizations that adapt to their external environment has long been accepted in higher education scholarly circles (Enders 2004; Manning 2013; Papadimitriou 2011).

A changing environment would, then, require organizational adaptation. Following this logic, if one seeks to make sense of the emergence of branding and marketing, it is necessary to look at changes in the environment. While many complex trends can be traced, one can point to the following set of influences: (a) globalization, regionalization and internationalization, (b) increasing privatization, and (c) growing demands for accountability. While many other elements could be added to the argument, the combination of these three elements accounts for many of the changes in the higher education landscape in recent years. For example, increased globalization, regionalization, and internationalization lead to a relatively small but significant number of internationally mobile students. These students are seen are revenue sources for colleges and universities that now compete with each other to attract those students (Marginson and Rhoades 2002). This phenomenon is exacerbated by decreasing public investment in higher education, which leads to privatization (Levy 2006). This privatization does not involve exclusively the creating of private higher education institutions, but the privatization—via fees and profit-oriented activities—of public universities.

Linked to the decreasing investment in higher education is a growing questioning of the value of higher education. Conversations that cast doubts on the value of higher education are often accompanied by calls for increasing accountability. Given that traditional forms of quality assurance have recently come into question (e.g., Gaston 2014), colleges and universities engage new strategies to demonstrate their value to the public. These strategies involve participation in accreditation schemes and in rankings. Therefore, while it is unlikely that a single student may be contemplating the choice between attending her local community (2-year) college or move to a different country to pursue a degree in a selective institution, global competition is an important influence on the emergence of branding and marketing in higher education.

Global Competition and Position-Taking

In recent decades, a sense of integration among higher education systems has been noted in the literature. As higher education systems are increasingly intertwined, individual institutions need to differentiate themselves from potential competitors, often through marketing campaigns and the use of quality assurance mechanisms (Knight 2007). As an example of this need for market differentiation, it is possible to identify universities around the world that have resourced to US accreditation as a way to demonstrate international standards of quality. This has been extensively researched in Mexico, for example (Blanco Ramirez 2015). One of these studies documented how one of these Mexican universities built an entire marketing campaign around their recently obtained US international accreditation:

> Some participants at the Mexican university suggested that, via the accrediting agency, they were now connected to reputable US institutions: 'we are accredited by the same agency that accredits Stanford, UC Berkeley and University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)'. (Blanco Ramirez 2015, p. 334)

This association with prestigious US institutions was then used as the foundation for a marketing campaign that involved printed and electronic media alike. It is noteworthy that this Mexican higher education institution is private and depends on tuition as the main source of revenue. This example illustrates the importance of position-taking in higher education. The concept of global position-taking deserves attention given its influence on marketing and branding in the context of higher education. Given the way that marketing and branding have been defined in the field of higher education (Gibbs and Knapp 2012; Maringe and Gibbs 2009), we can establish a connection between theses activities and global position-taking. As Marginson (2007) noted, position-taking has gained importance among the activities that university administrators carry out. From a neoinstitutional perspective (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Scott 2008), maintaining legitimacy within a field (i.e., higher education) is of great importance. This is perhaps further accentuated in higher education (Meyer et al. 2007). Therefore, quality assurance and legitimacy in the context of higher education are intertwined.

Marginson (2006, 2007), building upon Bourdieu (1993) theorizes that in position-taking, higher education institutions exercise their institutional agency in order to take position while at the same time, institutions encounter the boundaries of the system that positions them. The process of higher education position-taking is perhaps best illustrated through international rankings. Most higher education institutions have aspirations to rank at the top and yet very few of them are truly competitive (Hazelkorn 2015). This process of agency and system interaction results with a few research institutions, usually located in developed English-speaking national contexts (e.g., Australia, UK, and US), positioned at the top with few chances of being challenged. While the positions at the end are relatively stable, lower tiers tend to be more competitive. Just like neoinstitutional theorists, Marginson's analysis—which relies on Bourdieu—emphasizes the importance of legitimacy. All these themes resonate with branding and marketing in higher education.

Legitimate higher education institutions can be overwhelmed by the competitive pressures of new providers. This is particularly salient in rapidly growing contexts, where private institutions are absorbing the majority of the higher education growth. For example, Bangladesh has experienced an explosive growth of higher education providers to meet the demand of new enrolments. However, this growth has made difficult to differentiate legitimate and educationally oriented institutions from those that exclusively seek profit. The result is a negative reputation of the entire private higher education sector in that country (Blanco Ramírez and Haque 2016). Gibbs and Knapp (2012) suggest that "as educators we need to get our message through the clutter of competitive consumerism" (p. 5). As a result, Gibbs and Knapp define marketing in the following terms:

> Marketing is a social and managerial process through which institutions and individuals obtain what they want through creating, offering and exchanging products and services with others. The management of that process involves…pricing, promotion and the distribution of ideas, goods and services in such a way as to create exchanges that satisfy individual and institutional objectives. (p. 5)

This definition makes clear that marketing is complex and that it involves different aspects. This definition also emphasizes fit between a service and potential consumers. From a critical standpoint, there is extensive literature opposed to the construction of students as customers (Saunders 2015; McArdle Clinton 2008). However, Saunders and Blanco Ramírez (2017) argue that many aspects of higher education are already neoliberalized and commodified. Therefore, a resistance of disengagement would be ineffective. Rather than ignoring that many already consider students as customers, it is important here to engage and explore these market-driven ideas to imagine new possibilities. This reality is fully captured in Gibb and Knapp's (2012) assertion that educators can utilize marketing strategy in order to advance the educational mission of their institutions.

Accordingly, some of the aspects involved in marketing include market and consumer research, segmentation, pricing, advertising, recruitment, fundraising, among others. As a result, the chapters in this book will refer to these different aspects. Among these functions, branding takes an important place given that international position-taking takes place through brand construction and development.

Understanding Brands, Branding, and Marketing?

In order to understand branding in higher education, it is important to first understand the concept of brand. Oswald (2012) defines brands as "multidimensional sign systems" (p. 51) that are ruled by convention. While complex, this definition illustrates that brands have a communicative function. Berger (2010) argues that "the essence of branding lies in the claims a product has to being distinctive and having social attributes not found in competing products" (p. 79). Ng and Koller (2013) argue that branding relies on the "deliberate use of metaphor" (p. 133). As we can see, the differentiating effect of brands constitutes their main purpose. In the higher education context, for instance, the brand of a particular university separates its programs, its students, and its alumni from those from competing institutions. Oswald (2012) suggests that brands rely on the public's preconceptions in order to establish positive associations with a brand. Berger (2010) and Oswald (2012), therefore, take a semiotic approach to branding. This merely means that they approach brands from the perspective of symbols within a larger system, akin to language.

Following the semiotic perspective on branding, Berger (2010) suggests that any brand involves denotative and connotative elements. The denotative elements are evident and may include colors, shapes, letters, names, among others. Connotative elements are intangible and rely on associations. For example, the number 1863 could be found as a denotative element in a university brand. This number connotes the university's foundation year. This connotation may elicit associations such as tradition, experience, et cetera. Evidently, these associations depend on the audience and may vary significantly. Going further in the conceptualization of brand elements, Lencastre and Côrte-Real (2010, 2013), present a multilayered model for the brand. They argue that it is possible to identify "three basic pillars of the brand: identity, object and response"

(Lencastre and Côrte-Real 2013, p. 489). These authors warn against the risks of falling into "myopia" (p. 489) by ignoring any of these three elements.

The brand model proposed by Lencastre and Côrte-Real (2010, 2013) also follows a semiotic orientation. This approach can effectively be applied in the context of higher education. For example, the identity dimension of a higher education brand may involve the colors, typography, and images that a university utilizes to build its identity. Most universities have developed style or brand guidelines and encourage their use in consistent ways. The second pillar, the object dimension, involves the services the university offers. The third layer, the response pillar, involves the associations an audience makes in relation to the other elements of a brand. This model illustrates the complexities that brands involve. Moreover, Lencastre and Côrte-Real's model would suggest that marketing and branding in higher education demand attention to each of the three elements in the model. Of particular importance is the fact that these three pillars of branding are often uncoordinated in the context of higher education. In general, the identity pillar is delegated or outsourced to marketing experts who develop a particular campaign. However, the experts on the object pillar are arguably members of the faculty and staff, who execute the university's mission. However, these members of the academic and nonacademic staff are often not consulted. Finally, current and prospective students, as well as the public in general, are the experts in relation to the response pillar. While marketing agencies may keep the public in mind, this is frequently done without coordination with the object pillar. Perhaps this is why one can observe that marketing and branding campaigns result in a "sea of sameness" (Clayton et al. 2012, p. 182), despite the differentiating purpose that such campaigns are supposed to serve.

Numerous international examples of higher education research utilize the abovementioned semiotic conceptualization of branding in higher education. For instance, Ng (2014a) explored how capitalist values are enacted in Singaporean universities through metaphors of dynamism and movement. Other metaphors utilized in this context include flexibility as a metaphor for student empowerment, which is aligned with the neoliberal value of individualism (Ng 2014b). Also following a semiotic understanding of branding there have been studies (Blanco Ramírez 2016; Papadimitriou and Blanco Ramírez 2015) that visually analyzed the content of higher education in publically displayed spaces. These examples point out the utility of semiotic understandings of brands and branding in higher education.

This Book and Its Contributions

Having discussed the current state of global competition in higher education, this chapter has explored existing models for making sense of marketing and branding in higher education. This analysis suggests that semiotics-based models have been influential in contemporary research even though theorization has been limited in the field. This edited collection brings perspectives on marketing and branding in higher education from different regions and countries. The case studies reflect perspectives from admissions and enrollment management to alumni. The cases illustrate the challenges and paradoxes involved in positioning higher education institutions in a competitive global field. Each of the following chapters explores whether it is possible to identify global patterns in university branding and marketing, and what those patterns may be. The chapters also seek to identify theories or models that can support new and more critical research on the topic. New methodological approaches are of central importance in this book.

In Chap. 2, Saichaie and Warshaw explore websites of institutions that are members of the exclusive Association of American Universities, some of the most prestigious US postsecondary institutions. Their focus is on academe-industry links and how students are recruited into these initiatives. In Chap. 3, Álvarez-Mediola and González-Ledesma compare and contrast branding strategies employed by Chilean and Mexican universities that belong to three different reputational strata.

In Chap. 4, Mampaey explores brand communication among Flemish higher education institutions in Belgium. With a focus on mixed-methods research, Papadimitriou—in Chap. 5—analyzes how universities in the Western Balkans (re)position themselves in the web. This study examines local homepages as well as English homepages in relation to quality, exotericism, and the use of social media in that region. In Chap. 6, Langa and Zavale examine how Mozambican higher education institutions use branding to differentiate themselves, promote their image and gain advantage in an increasingly competitive social field of higher education. Ngo and Ismandoyo, in Chap. 7, examine the impacts of education brand on students' decisions through advertising brochures for higher education institutions in a single Indonesian city Surabaya.

In Chap. 8, Lam and Tang explore branding among public universities in Hong Kong. By adapting the concept of corporate branding to the analysis of their self-representations in four distinctive types of communication materials (strategic plans, vision and mission statements, student recruitment materials, and press releases), the authors introduce a new approach to university branding study by examining the content alignment in addition to the content itself. Drezner, in Chap. 9, explores existing literature on why social identity should be considered in higher education marketing and provides recommendations for practice. In Chap. 10, Cremonini and Taylor focus on the concept of university hubs and apply this construct to the analysis of branding in the higher education sector in Qatar. In Chap. 11, McLaughling, McLaughlin and McLaughlin analyze the role that rankings have on multiple stakeholders of higher education institutions. They highlight some of the credibility challenges that higher education rankings face, and explore alternatives. Lastly, the concluding chapter in this collection identifies themes, theoretical and methodological trends that run through these chapters.

As the following chapters illustrate, branding and marketing are complex higher education strategies that require empirical and conceptual examination. A theoretical driven multidisciplinary approach may prove effective for understanding these emerging phenomena more deeply and for improving their practice. This practice is likely to continue increasing in importance. Returning to the opening metaphor in this chapter, it is possible to conceptualize branding and marketing as tools that assist higher education faculty, administrators, and practitioners in navigating the complex *brandscape* of higher education.

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CHAPTER 2

Pathways from Academe to Industry: An Empirical Analysis of Academic Marketing to Prospective Students

Kem Saichaie and Jarrett B. Warshaw

Universities and private industry have long exchanged money, people, and knowledge to profit from markets. Back-and-forth flows of research dollars and discoveries can be lucrative in the knowledge economy, and while activities are not always fruitful, they may in some cases lead to additional resources and prestige for partners and contribute to regional and national economies. In channels between academe and industry, markets and profits, moving students into the workforce may be the "greatest contribution of all" (Geiger and Sá 2005, p. 19).

Trained for specialized forms of work, college graduates may reify institution–industry relations and pathways to high-technology fields

K. Saichaie (✉)
Center for Educational Effectiveness, University of California, Davis, Davis, CA, USA

J.B. Warshaw
Department of Educational Leadership & Research Methodology, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, USA

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and jobs (Lane 2012). For states with income taxes, their salaries may broaden tax bases without government raising actual tax rates (Feller 2004). In the 1960s, some students protested academe's involvement in external relationships that threatened public-good missions of universities (Leslie 1993), but within a contemporary political and economic context many students now extend and leverage networks to pursue entrepreneurship for personal and societal gains (Mars and Rhoades 2012; Mars et al. 2008; Slaughter et al. 2002).

A number of stakeholders seek to influence relations among students, academe, and industry. For example, the Kauffman Foundation finances campus programs for student entrepreneurs who are considered crucial to economic development (Torrance 2013). Since the 1970s, federal and state governments have heightened investments in university–industry research (Geiger and Sá 2008), and they have further invested in students through subsidies and financial aid, positioning them as consumers who purchase higher education goods and services (Saunders 2014). Their recruitment—the sheer competition for them—has become frenzied.

Indeed, many institutions have expanded their academic marketing and admissions operations to meet enrollment goals. Utilizing technological advancements, these institutions increasingly embrace digital mediums of reaching external stakeholders. Through text and visuals, institutions can be very deliberate in their self-depictions. As Metcalfe (2012, p. 52) observes, "we can consider an image of a higher education institution, especially an official view, as being, by extension, a truth-claim about the institution itself." Additionally, the development of Enrollment Management divisions suggests institutional commitments to *targeted* student recruitment by optimizing allocation of resources, distribution of students across degree programs, and the skill and ability levels of students on campus for retention, completion, and prestige (Hossler 2015).

Printed and digitized viewbooks (glossy, multicolored booklets highlighting institutional features) are prominent approaches through which institutions market academics to prospective students. To "sell" them on their schools, institutions often emphasize higher education as a private good for individual benefit (Hartley and Morphew 2008). Universities have been known to invest millions per year in website marketing (Schneider and Bruton 2004), as nearly all prospective students search college websites (Anctil 2008). Advertising and consulting firms produce the majority of research on institutional websites, and their research often lacks theoretical foundations and, thus, extends empirical knowledge gaps about how institutions communicate with students (Saichaie and Morphew 2014).

In this study, we seek to contribute conceptually and practically to understanding the effects of the wider political economy on student–institution relations. Moreover, in the context of the knowledge economy, we aim to unpack what academic marketing suggests about boundaries of higher education, student roles on campuses, and what future career success looks like and conveys about institutional values. By way of conclusion, we address research and policy implications for institutional leaders who shape expectations and experiences for students on their campuses (e.g., Mangan 2012; Young 2013).

University–Industry Relations: Background and Context

Universities and Specialized Knowledge

For more than 100 years, universities in the US have had resource- and knowledge-exchange relationships with industry. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of elite institutions have appealed to the private sector for subsidizing research and organizational development (e.g., Veysey 1965). Thus, universities have held economic relevance by producing and leveraging specialized knowledge. Academe and industry do not always initiate or embrace partnerships, but when they do, through the act of transferring research discoveries and producing graduates, economic growth may occur (Geiger 2004).

By the twentieth century, World War I, World War II, *Sputnik*, and the Cold War further positioned universities as integral to industrial and national competitiveness. In each epoch, policy-makers foregrounded research policy, and their education initiatives in science were increasingly important for developing human capital (Gumport 2011). In the 1980s, as the economy became knowledge-based, research and education were entwined with economic policy and aimed to support industrial strategy (Slaughter and Leslie 1997).

Organizational Adaptations

In the 1970s and 1980s, many campuses had changed along with shifts in the surrounding political and economic environment. Some institutions expanded technology transfer operations after the passage of the Bayh-Dole Act, which granted intellectual property rights to federally funded investigators and streamlined the process of applying for patents, and in the 1990s a number of universities built up research parks and incubators to facilitate market-oriented research with industry (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Enrollment patterns changed as well, with many students embracing curricula and programs to prepare for professional careers, especially in emerging high-technology fields. Because of this development, some researchers and analysts have called for balanced rather than targeted public funding for research, teaching, and service to help universities support cycles of economic growth (Feller 2004).

While higher education alone does not drive economic development, state and federal policy-makers increasingly perceive universities as important for regional and national growth (e.g., Warshaw and Hearn 2014; Geiger and Sá 2008). Research policies tend to capture much analytical attention, yet student dynamics in this arena are somewhat muted in extant literature.

Students and the Political Economy

Student learning and development has received close attention over the years, but this literature tends to overlook broad political and economic influences on undergraduates. Responding to this knowledge gap, Mars et al. (2008) studied undergraduate student entrepreneurs at two public research universities. They found that students, who are state-subsidized, utilized curriculum for entrepreneurship and "university infrastructure specifically designed for that purpose" of capitalist rather than public-good activity (p. 639).

Internships, co-op programs, business competitions, and intellectual property rights for undergraduates can facilitate exchanges of students between academe and industry, and market influences may permeate academic departments and curricula (Campbell 1997; Mars et al. 2008; Rhoades 2000). Together, such developments reveal institutional environments in which students may leverage resources to access shape, and enter industry and markets.

For many students, decisions to attend and graduate from college are economic; they may receive financial returns from investments in higher education. Society, too, can benefit in tax revenue, volunteerism, low crime rates, and, through other channels, increased health and longevity of citizens (McMahon 2009). Links between higher education, workforce development, and economic growth may incite more federal and state investments (Lane 2012).

Government's targeted appropriations to institutions may inform universities' allocation of resources. Departments, faculty, and students may receive disproportionate shares of funding based on claims of proximity to and productivity in markets. But funding does not necessarily follow student enrollment and can stratify based on other biases (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004).

Student and university interests can and often do diverge. Universities involved in industry-and-government collaboration may prompt student protests, such as those of the 1960s at Stanford University (Leslie 1993, pp. 241–249). Institutions' pursuits of revenues may increase financial costs and health and safety risks for students (Slaughter et al. 2009). As institutions work toward self-interests and goals, promoting market and consumer mentalities, they could indeed limit student learning by de-emphasizing individual agency and empowerment to learn (Saunders 2014).

Competition for Students

When interests of stakeholders' overlap, there can be powerful results. Robust, profitable industries, such as pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, have emerged from academic research, institution-industry partnerships, faculty consulting, training of students for scientific careers in private laboratories, and policies that favor investment in and deregulation of innovation. Developing human capital allows institutions to shape labor markets and claim importance externally (Geiger and Sá 2005, 2008).

Amid system-wide deregulation and competition in higher education, institutions have initiated targeted recruitment strategies for students (Hossler 2015). The literature on academic marketing focuses primarily on viewbooks and mission statements (Hartley and Morphew 2008; Morphew and Hartley 2006; Taylor and Morphew 2010), and, as Hartley and Morphew conclude, viewbooks tend to emphasize private benefits of degree attainment. Institutions' reliance on websites has heightened since the late 1990s (Hossler 1999), and website marketing closely matches analog counterparts, promoting individual gains from higher education (Saichaie 2011; Saichaie and Morphew 2014).

Resources and technological advancements have fueled web-based marketing to prospective students (Hossler 1999; Schneider and Bruton 2004). Yet research on websites has been limited. Research on academic marketing to prospective students is conceptually and empirically lean, precluding an understanding of how institutions craft messages to shape relations with and expectations for students (Saichaie and Morphew 2014).

Purpose and Research Questions

At the interstices of academe, industry, institutions, and students, knowledge gaps remain. In particular, it remains unclear how institutions first aim to recruit prospective students into academe–industry links. This study seeks to understand how universities portray pathways to industry to prospective students, asking:

1. In what ways do universities portray boundaries between academe and industry, students and markets?
2. What are the messages conveyed about students' roles in this context?

Theoretical Framework

To anchor our study conceptually, we draw on institutional theory, academic capitalism, and concepts of strategically deployed shifters (SDS).

Institutional theory addresses the broad boundaries and normative environments within which universities, industry, and students interact. It suggests a field of organizations and actors comprised of rules, reward systems, cognitive-cultural meanings, and taken-for-granted understandings (Campbell 1997; Scott and Davis 2006). In this way, the images and text on universities' websites are likely infused with values and meanings rooted in the shared beliefs and expectations of peer institutions, industry, and students. Websites can invoke phrases and visuals to connote legitimacy as perceived within a field. Additionally, institutional theory accounts for isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983), in which universities may emulate one another by way of mimetic pressures (e.g., mirroring those who have appeared successful), normative influences (e.g., adopting approaches from a professional network), and coercive elements (e.g., following regulatory, legal mandates) to appear relevant to stakeholders.

Academic capitalism problematizes field dynamics. The theory of academic capitalism collapses distinctions between universities and environments (Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004), a distinction institutional theory emphasizes rather than debunks. It addresses entwinement of government, universities, and industry that, since the 1980s, has tightened. Federal and state governments may adapt legal, regulatory environments and target funding to stimulate academe-industry partnerships and economic growth. Institutions may selectively allocate resources and employ market ethos to restructure and stratify programs, professors, and students based on claims of productivity in generating external revenues, and transition from serving the public good to becoming an academic capitalist/knowledge regime. Students have often been portrayed as participants of exchange between academe and industry (Slaughter et al. 2002), while recent empirical work suggests that undergraduates actively leverage market opportunities (Mars and Rhoades 2012; Mars et al. 2008).

Institutional theory and academic capitalism address the issues of values and field dynamics, but neither directly accounts for academic marketing. Within the context of academic capitalism, marketing messages to prospective students may become SDS. In higher education marketing materials, terms (e.g., excellence, diversity, leadership) can have many purposes and referential primes. Urciuoli (2003) labeled these terms SDS: "people using term X in a referring expression in field A are engaged in a different pragmatic activity from those using the formally identical term X in a referring expression in field B" (p. 396). "Student entrepreneurship" could highlight campus opportunities for career development, but deployed with other concepts (e.g., innovation, leadership, research, technology) it can refer to institutions' market interests. Thus, depictions of student roles may reflect some agency but as constrained by institutional context.

Our guiding concepts suggest external entwinement of universities and blurred boundaries of engagement (RQ1). They also address ways in which institutions may communicate campus expectations for students (RQ2). Next, we outline our empirical approach.

Data and Method

Data for our study came from publicly available websites of 16 US research universities from the Association of American Universities (AAU). We focused on this sector because AAU members receive disproportionate shares of federal research funding and demonstrate longstanding ties, since the AAU's formation in 1900, to industry and government (e.g., Slaughter et al. 2009). The unit of analysis is each institution's websites. In total, we analyzed 48 web pages from our sample, about three sites per institution, across which we then traced effects of institution–industry relations on academic marketing.

AAU Sample

The 16 institutions comprise four subgroups, constituting a stratified sample. We selected and matched universities according to undergraduate profiles, control, selectivity, and geographic region (Hartley and Morphew 2008; Saichaie and Morphew 2014). The technique permitted depth into each institution and subgroup, while also considering the breadth of variation across universities and subgroups in our sample. These data do not tell us how messages and underlying values have been formed, or how effective such marketing has been. But these data may express what—and who—institutions value (Metcalfe 2012). And they may help us understand points of contact among prospective students and institutions, entranceways from academe to industry.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred between March 2012 and April 2012, and August 2013 and September 2013—time periods when students actively gather information about colleges and academic programs (Hossler et al. 1999).[1] Logically, institutional officials and admissions officers are aware of this timing and update content accordingly. We analyzed changes in data at two points in time to strengthen internal validity.

To ensure consistency in data collection, we conducted key word searches on institutional home pages and admissions websites. Key words

[1]We reviewed the data again in September 2016 from the institutions. Our preliminary analyses suggest similar discourse to that analyzed during the original collection periods.

were constructed a priori, based on the guiding conceptual framework and what students are likely to use. We entered each key word on institutional home pages: "entrepreneur," "entrepreneurial," "entrepreneurship," "entrepreneurship center," entrepreneurial curriculum," "entrepreneurial courses," entrepreneurial major," and "entrepreneurship studies." When the path yielded a menu page, we used one degree of separation, one-page click away (Mitra and Cohen 1999), as well as short, direct information routes to data analogous to the path prospective students take (Poock and Lefond 2001).

Data Analysis

We employed content and discourse analyses. Content analysis is empirically grounded, suited for textual and visual data, and helped identify messages and meanings (Holsti 1969). Furthermore, content analysis permitted identifying themes and their frequencies. We followed Krippendorff's (2004) strategy of reduction and sampling for data and inferring and unitizing themes.

For close examination of textual and visual data, we used discourse analysis and developed rubrics to guide us (Fairclough 1995; Kress and van Leeuwen 2006) and adapted them from prior studies of academic web-marketing (Saichaie and Morphew 2014). Moreover, rubrics provided for systematic analyses, providing criteria by which to classify and code data (Saichaie 2011).

Findings were distilled into working categories (e.g., "entrepreneurship centers"). Then we aggregated categories into sets of emergent themes (e.g., "academic descriptions of entrepreneurship centers") to form selectively coded narratives (e.g., "academic structures to leverage for economic gain"). Together, the analytic steps led to within- and cross-group results for the sampled institutions. Next, we present our study's empirical results.

Findings

Three core themes emerged from our analysis: structures, processes, and pipelines. Through various organizational structures, the institutions in the sample presented opportunities for students to acquire specialized knowledge for economic benefit. Processes of training, largely rooted in curricula, suggest aims to certify student entrepreneurs. Finally, universities in our study depicted cocurricula as ways for students to prepare for and enter industry.

Structures: Building for Economic Gain

Institutions in our study highlighted organizational structures that expressed commitments to entrepreneurship in four key areas: organizational location (e.g., strategically, physically); ranking and prestige; academic context (e.g., teaching, research); and individual benefits to students. These areas introduced prospective students to programs and showcased how the programs were positioned to support the achievement of student and institutional entrepreneurial goals.

Organizational location. Across sampled universities, industry and market opportunities were presented as emanating from campus locations or offices and “centers,” places with differing levels of attachment to and affiliation with academic departments. Nine institutions had centers in business schools or colleges (Florida, Georgia Tech, Minnesota, PSU, Texas, USC) and two institutions linked with programs in engineering (Columbia and Princeton). Five institutions had multiple entities on their campuses (Illinois, Michigan, Stanford, UNC), while three institutions featured stand-alone units (Carnegie Mellon, MIT, WUSTL). Organizational formations varied among institutions, but missions overlapped in articulations of reaching and attracting prospective students.

Ranking and prestige. The entrepreneurial outlets at all of the institutions’ websites signified prestige in other manners as well, notably in their active and pivotal campus roles. The messages conveyed an expansive range of opportunities that current, and select, students, faculty, alumni, donors, and guests engaged in. Topics included prominent speakers, grant and personal awards, high-profile events, programmatic rankings, student, faculty, and alumni innovation. The CalTech Entrepreneurs Club displayed photographs from their trip to SpaceX and included a quotation from its founder, Elon Musk. Stanford’s embedded video from its “Pay It Forward” speaker series featured Mark Zuckerberg, founder and CEO of Facebook. PSU celebrated “Start up Week” that featured prominent (and alumni) entrepreneurs. MIT featured its Digital Shingle Project where “every year hundreds of MIT graduates ‘hang out their shingle’ and start companies from the ideas, technology, and skills they gain from MIT, resulting in 200 to 400 businesses started annually.”

Five of the institutions (CMU, Florida, Michigan, UNC, USC) promoted the ranking of their entrepreneurial programs on their home pages, often in conjunction with the ranking of business or MBA programs. For example, at USC:

> The USC program has consistently ranked among the top programs in the nation and has been ranked #1 by *Princeton Review* and *Entrepreneur Magazine*. *Business Week* with *U.S. News and World Report* labeled the Greif Center as 'one of the best Entrepreneurship programs' in the country.[2]

University of Florida's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovations chose to visually present its top-ranking visually putting a "No. 1" graphic on a picture of business figures.

Academic context. Thirteen institutions emphasized the academic context of entrepreneurship, presenting learning and research opportunities for prospective students. The Illinois Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership's stated mission was to "encourage entrepreneurial awareness and initiatives across all disciplines at the University."[3] Minnesota's center worked to "inspire and educate the next generation of entrepreneurs." UNC's Kenan-Flagler Center for Entrepreneurial Studies touted "award-winning innovation in entrepreneurial pedagogy."[4]

Teaching frequently was paired with research as many of institutions also chose to emphasize the central role of research endeavors. Research activities appeared in missions at 10 institutions. At Texas, "The Herb Kelleher Center for Entrepreneurship Growth and Renewal is…about teaching, learning and researching entrepreneurship and business enterprise."[5] Stanford integrated research and teaching: "As a single point of contact for entrepreneurship at Stanford, the Stanford Entrepreneurship Network (SEN) is a federation of over two dozen entrepreneurship-related campus organizations that conduct research, teach courses and/

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[2] Retrieved from: http://www.marshall.usc.edu/faculty/centers/greif 04/23/13.

[3] Retrieved from http://business.illinois.edu/ael/curriculum/index.html 04/23/13.

[4] Retrieved from http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/programs/undergraduate-business/curriculum/customize-degree/entrepreneurship 04/23/13.

[5] Retrieved from http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/Centers/Kelleher-Center.aspx 04/23/13.

or provide outreach services."[6] USC mentioned its stature in terms of teaching and research: "The Lloyd Greif Center for Entrepreneurial Studies is among the nation's leaders in entrepreneurship education and research."[7]

Individual benefits. Some institutions incorporated commercial benefits in their messaging academic. UNC spoke broadly: "Entrepreneurial career opportunities come in many forms, whether you want to start your own company, work for a start-up, find an entrepreneurial opportunity within a larger company, or go into related areas such as venture capital or social entrepreneurship."[8] MIT was specific, offering "Industry Focus" in fields such as biotechnology and healthcare, energy, and materials technology that helped students "delve into the specific challenges and solutions of entrepreneurship in a particular industry."[9] Minnesota called attention to commercial activity that stemmed from a particular course: "Carlson School Class Opens Doors to Careers, Bathrooms Company sprouted from Entrepreneurship in Action class."[10]

Data suggested structures to ensure students would receive individual support for entrepreneurial endeavors. The structures connected students to prestigious campuses, faculty, peers, and external stakeholders. This subtheme would play out more so as the institutions focused on particular curricular affordances for skill-building and a platform to explore careers.

Processes: Training and Certifying Student Entrepreneurs

Institutions presented processes that would develop students into entrepreneurs and business leaders. Elements of the academic core were oriented toward industry- and market-goals. Curricula and instruction became primary means of helping students acquire skills—and credentials—for employment.

Curricular preparation. Fifteen institutions promoted specific curricula for developing and certifying entrepreneurial skills and know-how. At

[6] Retrieved from: http://sen.stanford.edu/ 04/23/13.
[7] Retrieved from: http://www.marshall.usc.edu/faculty/centers/greif 04/23/13.
[8] Retrieved from: http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/entrepreneurship 04/23/13.
[9] Retrieved from: http://entrepreneurship.mit.edu/ 04/23/13.
[10] Retrieved from: http://www.csom.umn.edu/holmes-center/ 04/23/13.

USC's Lloyd Greif Center for Entrepreneurial Studies, "Undergraduate students looking for an opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills in a dynamic environment that engages the real world will find what they're looking for in the Lloyd Greif Center for Entrepreneurial Studies."[11] Washington University in St. Louis's (WUSTL) program descriptions were analogous to USC's: "Students will have the opportunity to build on ideas, skills, inventions and perspectives from their primary disciplines to enhance the creativity and excitement of the entrepreneurial process."[12] Columbia highlighted benefits of interdisciplinary approaches for students, as "engineering and technology classes provide students with a focused look at the development and diffusion of new technologies from both a commercial and social perspective."[13]

Public institutions evinced messages consistent with those at private universities with course descriptions. A Michigan course (Problem Solving, Troubleshooting, Entrepreneurship, Intrapreneurship, and Making the Transition to the Workplace) helped "students hone and enhance their problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, and troubleshooting skills and to ease the transition from college to the workplace."[14] Georgia Tech broadly promoted its leadership minor as: "Training for the next generation of leaders."[15]

Social entrepreneurship was a curricular or programmatic feature on websites at 10 institutions in our study. Princeton's Keller Center bridged "technology and society through innovation, leadership, and entrepreneurship."[16] Georgia Tech's Institute for Leadership and Entrepreneurship advocated "socially responsible and sustainable value creation." Illinois positioned social entrepreneurs as "changemakers," offering opportunities to develop in the field: "Interested in starting or

[11] Retrieved from: http://www.marshall.usc.edu/faculty/centers/greif/curriculum/undergrad 04/23/13.

[12] Retrieved from: http://sc.wustl.edu/Curriculum/Pages/MajorMinorConcentrations 04/23/13.

[13] Retrieved from: http://engineering.columbia.edu/entrepreneurship_minor 04/23/13.

[14] Retrieved from: http://www.cfe.umich.edu/classes 04/23/13.

[15] Retrieved from: http://scheller.gatech.edu/programs/under/prospective/cert/cert_eng_entrep.html 04/23/13.

[16] Retrieved from: http://commons.princeton.edu/kellercenter/courses/overview.html 04/23/13.

joining a social venture—a not-for-profit organization, or a for-profit organization with a social mission? Illinois has many options for you to *build your skills*—courses, programs, a range of co-curricular activities"[17] (emphasis in original).

"Innovative" pedagogy and curricula were prominent, though seldom defined. Penn State's Farrell Center for Corporate Innovation and Entrepreneurship championed "creation and management of educational programs in corporate innovation and entrepreneurship; research; and outreach."[18] Minnesota claimed "Teaching Real-World Skills Through the Holmes Center, faculty with applied entrepreneurial experience deliver an innovative curriculum that features experiential courses and creative problem-solving opportunities."[19] USC's "faculty—a diverse mix of academics and entrepreneur practitioners—together offer undergraduate and graduate programs designed to help students acquire the tools, develop the skills, and cultivate the mindset central to organizing, launching, and managing successful new ventures." Internships complemented instruction in much of the sample as well. Princeton reinforced its claim with a recent alumna's testimonial about "independence to pursue my projects in the way that worked best for me, but I also received constant mentorship. This internship solidified my belief that I want to work in the startup world after graduation."[20]

Student–faculty interaction. Despite messages of teaching and skill-building, infrequently were students and faculty shown interacting together in the classroom or otherwise. Six institutions (Georgia Tech, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, PSU, UNC) featured faculty visually. In fact, only a total of 13 images included student/faculty interaction.

Pipelines: Industry and Markets

Institutions in our study illuminated various "pipelines" that served to connect prospective students to entrepreneurial, industry networks. Specifically, pipelines entailed student organizations (clubs, societies) as well as competitions and events. They presented professional

[17] Retrieved from: http://business.illinois.edu/ael/curriculum/index.html 04/23/13.

[18] Retrieved from: http://www.smeal.psu.edu/uge 04/23/13.

[19] Retrieved from: http://www.carlsonschool.umn.edu/strategic-management-entrepreneurship/courses.aspx 04/23/13.

[20] Retrieved from: http://commons.princeton.edu/kellercenter/index.html 04/23/13.

development activities for students to leverage for pathways to industry (e.g., biotechnology, engineering).

Student organizations. Fourteen universities promoted student-entrepreneurship organizations, such as the MIT Entrepreneurs Club and Penn State Entrepreneurs Network. Competitions occurred across nearly all sampled institutions. There, undergraduates vied for monetary prizes and to pitch ideas to business executives. The "Columbia Engineering Fast Pitch Competition"[21] allowed students the opportunity to hone their "elevator pitch" skills. At Minnesota, students could partake in the Minnesota Cup, "the largest statewide new venture competition in the country."[22]

Institutions further showcased the prowess of their home-grown talents and funding streams for students. Michigan featured the following text about significant funding obtained by a start-up: "U-M startup AlertWatch secures $1M in seed funding."[23] CalTech promoted its "FLoW Business Plan Competition Launch Event" where first prize was $100,000, opportunities to "Connect with investors, entrepreneurs, and technologists in clean energy."[24]

Professional development. Other institutions marketed opportunities for direct student-industry contact. Stanford's Entrepreneurship week featured events to tighten student–industry links (e.g., the Entrepreneurs Career Expo and Art of Networking). Illinois presented an expansive view of the ways its Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership prepares students for post-graduation: "We offer a broad base of workshops, lectures, and experiential learning programs that reach out to the campus and the community, including internships and business plan competitions that have involved hundreds of students and have impacted local firms."[25] Minnesota credited its innovative programs, "The Holmes Center collaborates with more than 250 members of the entrepreneurial business community each year to speak, mentor, and hire interns."[26]

Professional relationships. The majority of the institutions mentioned relationships with high-profile businesses. According to Michigan's

[21] Retrieved from: http://engineering.columbia.edu/entrepreneurship 04/23/13.

[22] Retrieved from: http://www.csom.umn.edu/holmes-center/ 04/23/13.

[23] Retrieved from: http://www.cfe.umich.edu/ 04/23/13.

[24] Retrieved from: http://www.entforum.caltech.edu/ 04/23/13.

[25] Retrieved from: http://business.illinois.edu/ael/ 04/23/13.

[26] Retrieved from: http://www.csom.umn.edu/holmes-center/ 04/23/13.

entrepreneurial home page, "our graduates have fueled the formation of many of the world's leading companies, including Google, Domino's Pizza, Sun Microsystems, Stryker Corp., H&R Block, Borders and Federal Express."[27] Visual images marketed the type of connections—and potential career prospects for students—made possible through participation in campus activities and networking. Princeton signified the strength of its alumni network by describing connections between its graduates and companies, such as Mint and Progressive Insurance, and displaying the corporate logos of these firms prominently.

Data suggested "business/corporate" language and market focuses on institutions. Institutions tightly coupled the discourse around skill-building and professional development that sought to facilitate student connections with industry. The institutions touted the extensive relationships with the commercial/private sector to demonstrate their deep connections to industry. In this way, students might largely receive private gains from education with other, broader learning and development benefits.

Discussion and Implications

In the knowledge economy, many universities have deepened their longstanding engagement with industry and markets. Several have intensified commitments to preparing students for jobs and careers in which the utilization of specialized knowledge carries potentially lucrative benefits (Geiger and Sá 2005; Lane 2012). Some students could be "tokens of exchange" between academe and industry (Slaughter et al. 2002), while others exercise agency as entrepreneurs (Mars and Rhoades 2012). Yet little is known about institutional efforts to recruit prospective students into academe–industry relationships. This study has sought to contribute to understanding academic marketing to prospective students about pathways to industry. We close with a summary of our analyses and implications for institution-student dynamics.

Universities in our study have developed new organizational forms to anchor training for students. These campus units (e.g., entrepreneurship centers) seem portrayed as academic departments that conduct teaching, research, and service. As institutional theory suggests, organizational structures communicate values (Scott and Davis 2006), and their

[27] Retrieved from: http://www.cfe.umich.edu/ 04/23/13.

marketing, in our analysis, evinces specialized study to facilitate economic gains for students in their careers. Language conveys norms (Fairclough 1995), with distinctions between "training" and "educating" in our sample. Skills are foregrounded with pedagogical approaches less prevalent, constituting "training" benefits of studying at universities rather than entering industry directly. Campus structures, featured in our study, may thus extend the packaging of knowledge for economic transactions (Saunders 2014).

Indeed, representations of curricula in our study suggest academic opportunities to attract and certify student entrepreneurs. Faculty who pursue market-oriented research have tended to guard instruction from external stakeholders (Campbell 1997). Yet in our analysis, we see increasing external influence over curricula, which could come, in part, from the involvement on campuses of external funders, such as the Kauffman Foundation.

Entwinement of teaching and markets underscores academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004), but, rather than supplanting public for private good, the market environment on campuses may present a nexus for students to leverage (Mars and Rhoades 2012; Mars et al. 2008). Recall that academic marketing messages in our study emphasized personal gains, such as training for entrepreneurship, and social benefits from applying academic learning to societal problems. While many may argue that students seek postsecondary education across majors and programs to enhance potential earnings (e.g., Saichaie and Morphew 2014), data in our study reveal explicit links among academic training and niches within the labor market.

The concept of the strategically deployed shifter (SDS; Urciuoli 2003) provides a critical perspective of ways in which institutions in our study operationalize text and image. Layered among enticements to personal and social gains, institutions in our analysis addressed prospective students with relational discourse. PSU presented a "high touch" approach:

> …Smeal focuses all these resources on you, the student. From day one, you will have an academic adviser to help you navigate through your academic career. And our freshman seminar is a small, intimate course

> designed to help you learn the basics about academic life and business, and transition successfully into your college years.[28]

Stanford referenced its geographic location to contextualize the educational experience: The use of relational discourse seemed to position students among resources and people, but in a way that would benefit institutions' own place in these relationships.

The portrayal of cocurricular campus experiences seemed to strengthen the market messaging of institutions in our study. Student clubs, institutional events, and networking opportunities were depicted as pathways to markets. In the context of the current political and economic climate, cocurricula, in our study, may become an opportunity for personal growth utilized for entrance into careers. We see further evidence of academic capitalism through the permeation of external environments in marketing messages of campuses. As the concept of SDS suggests, these messages may seem intended to advocate campuses helping students, while universities could ultimately benefit in collaboration goals with industry and accountability to government and external funders (Geiger and Sá 2008).

But what does entrepreneurship, as presented at these institutions, look like? Who does it include and exclude? What messages are being sent about the use of higher education for certain forms of career success? Our visual analyses encompassed over 100 images. Analogous to prior research (Hartley and Morphew 2008; Saichaie 2011; Saichaie and Morphew 2014), our study's data were consistent and rather homogenous across institutions. For instance, websites seldom showed students, faculty, or other participants engaged in the learning process (e.g., working in classrooms; conducting experiments; reading books and studying, etc.). These images fell into consistent categories of:

- student(s) posing in front of/with an award (e.g., trophy, novelty-sized check);
- student(s) posing with an invention/business concept/presentation; and
- students posed in pairs or a small group of five or fewer, and students in formal, business attire (e.g., suit, tie).

[28] Retrieved from: http://www.smeal.psu.edu/uge 04/23/13.

Marketing messages could be similar across sampled institutions, due to field influences that persuade conformity in appearance for legitimacy and relevance. Images throughout this study evinced shared values of personal gain and meritorious accomplishment from utilizing practical applied training and supportive relationships on campus. However, there are some fine-grain nuances that emerge from close visual analysis.

With regard to the type of people who represent institutions and programs, men appeared twice as often as women in the sampled images. The Midwest group had the highest number of men, but this subgroup also employed the most images ($n = 37$) on its sites. The South group had the fewest number of women on web pages in the sample, though it had the fewest images on its sites.

Generally, the differences between and among the sample institutions and groups seem superficial. The programs in the Midwest place the strongest emphasis on teaching. The institutions and programs in the West mention their linkages to Silicon Valley, though institutions in the East did so as well. Most places have overlapping curricular with business or finance programs. All promote relationships with industry vis-à-vis name-dropping (e.g., referencing names of corporations). The institutions are quick to talk about the prestige of their programs and benefits for individual students, even in the case of social entrepreneurship. This aligns with previous research examining messages of higher education institutions to prospective students; essentially, the message to students is that it is "all about you" (Hartley and Morphew 2008; Saichaie and Morphew 2014).

Thus, academic capitalism appears to work *on* and *for* select universities, industry, individual students, and geographic regions. While conformity in appearance to national marketing trends may strengthen institutions' external claims as legitimate economic actors, it can *stratify* which students benefit, the types of experiences and careers that students may have, and where students may work after graduation. As our data suggest, marketing messages tend to privilege white men who pursue high-technology entrepreneurship in urban, metropolitan centers. Institutions in our study may promote these students who can contribute to economic growth, but miss opportunities to shift stratification toward new equilibriums of equity among undergraduates and also serve local needs and developing industries (Rhoades 2000).

In turn, our study raises questions for institutional policy and research. First, consideration of admissions practices seems warranted, for enrollment management could reinforce the stratification depicted in marketing messages. Second, persistence, learning, and completion could be examined, since outcomes for students in entrepreneurship programs are unclear. Third, cross-sector comparisons may shed light on the extent to which some institutions (e.g., elite research universities) may prepare students for high-status, lucrative, and geographically unbounded jobs and careers as compared to others (e.g., community colleges). Fourth, our study is part of a growing call for using different methodological approaches (e.g., critical, visual) and forms of data to help researchers and practitioners examine increasingly nuanced questions about institutions and students (Metcalfe 2012; Saichaie and Morphew 2014). Finally, business majors—and entrepreneurs—may spur economic growth, but whether that assertion is true—an assertion perhaps driving universities' initiatives in this arena—requires clarification.

Conclusion

In our analysis, institutions utilized messages and images of structures, processes, and pipelines to recruit prospective students into industry-academe links. Together, themes suggest universities offer academic training to prepare and certify entrepreneurs and blur boundaries between academe and environments for students to leverage for economic benefit. Structures, processes, and pipelines magnify and reinforce one another, constituting integrative ways that universities in our study encourage students' self-movement to industry and markets. Our study may thus contribute to the research literature on academic marketing by moving beyond broad considerations of higher education as a private or public good and focusing on specific pathways from academe to industry. In addition, this study provides initial evidence of the importance of disaggregation in analyses of academic marketing and branding. We perceive issues of equity in institutions' text and visuals that differentiate which students, industries, and geographic regions appear to benefit the most in this arena. The extent to which this differentiation becomes stratification, especially within the context of academic capitalism, could become a focal point in future work that addresses emerging student-institution dynamics.

Whether students are benefiting in the ways marketed to them is unclear, but their institutions' *appearances* of success in this arena are resonant. Institutions can succeed when stakeholders perceive them as legitimate, even when the efficacy of their practices is difficult to assess (Scott and Davis 2006). Academic marketing may reify agreed upon truth-claims (Metcalfe 2012), yet institutional leaders and administrators should consider carefully how these beliefs shape campus realities. Moving forward, institutional leaders and administrators could consider shifting some of the focus in their academic marketing—and opportunities and outlets for students on campuses—to matters of equity, distinctiveness, and balance in institutional purpose and values. These messages may include emphasizing and actively portraying preparation and careers in public service, nonprofit leadership, and public health, for example. The strong influences of academic capitalism could, however, be difficult for institutional leaders and administrators to resist, engraining market mentalities and industry orientations in official representations of and sanctioned opportunities on campuses. With mission, enrollment, status, and resources on the line, signs of resistance to the political economy may be hard to imagine.

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CHAPTER 3

Marketing Context and Branding Content of Private Universities in Chile and Mexico

Germán Álvarez-Mendiola and Miguel Alejandro González-Ledesma

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G. Álvarez-Mendiola (✉)
Researcher at DIE-CINVESTAV, Centro de Investigación y de Estudios Avanzados, Mexico City, Mexico

M.A. González-Ledesma
Instituto de Investigaciones sobre la Universidad y la Educación de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (IISUE-UNAM), Circuito Cultural Universitario, Coyoacán, Mexico

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This chapter analyzes the *branding content* developed by private higher education institutions (HEIs) in Chile and Mexico, taking into consideration the specific *marketing contexts*, which impose conditions for the design and promotion of institutional identities. Market competition is a key variable to explain institutional behavior among private HEIs.

After 30 years of market-oriented reforms, higher education systems (HES) in Latin America have become *combined systems* with an important participation of private actors in the provision of educational services and a growing share of private expenditure, even in public institutions. The privatization in Latin American HES presents great differences in each country, depending on the share of enrollment in private sector and the proportion of private resources within the total expenditure on higher education (HE) (Brunner 2011). In Chile, where the degree of privatization is greater than in Mexico and public regulations promote market behaviors, branding content expresses competition for the best students, who have access to public funding to pay for their studies. In Mexico, where the degree of privatization is less and public regulations are weak, branding content is related to the target population's ability to pay.

In both countries, private HEIs undertake branding actions that have different characteristics and purposes in terms of consolidation or acquisition of reputations and, therefore, of attracting particular clientele. Since growing market competition creates pressures for HEIs to differentiate themselves through competitive advantages, they need to emphasize and transmit their distinctive features (selling points). In theory, branding in higher education is:

> … a manifestation of the institution's features that distinguish it from others, reflect its capacity to satisfy students' needs, engender trust in its ability to deliver a certain type and level of higher education, and [should] help potential recruits to make wise enrollment decisions (Chapleo 2010, p. 173).

From this point of view, branding should produce a clear idea of the identity and uniqueness of the represented product with the intention of orienting the economic decisions of clients that institutions have identified as their target. However, since HE branding is not a neutral device of institutional identity and information, it aims to influence consumer choices through content that tends to fit the conceptions on university education that different audiences typically have, which, in principle, are shaped according to social stratification.

Nevertheless, the consumer's consideration of the "education product" is problematical, because its attributes are of a fundamentally symbolic nature and, in addition, its "acquisition" (obtainment of a degree) requires a considerable amount of time and resources, so the existential comparison of quality is impossible. The consumer's decisions, consequently, are conditioned by persuasive messages that are highly symbolic and that do not necessarily correspond to the actual characteristics of the product offered, quality for instance (Zapata and Tejeda 2016, p. 207).

However, if branding does not necessarily involve truthful communication of a HEI's identity and uniqueness and if, in addition, it does not represent the education product, what does it transmit? What institutional characteristics does it promote? What values, conceptions and sentiments does branding appeal to? What economic messages does it send to potential consumers? What institutional achievements does it promote? In short: how are branding contents articulated in a situation where HE is dependent on different aspirations, motivations and expectations?

Methodology

Through comparative analysis, we look for similarities and differences between institutions and countries. With the purpose of organizing a general field of comparison and address the context of marketing, the first step was to organize four categories: (1) degree of privatization of HE systems; (2) public regulations (consumer empowerment mechanisms and incentives to improve quality); (3) tensions between institutional isomorphism/differentiation, and (4) segmentation of HES according to consumers' socioeconomic profiles.

Although marketing contexts are different and there are many universities, Chile and Mexico are comparable since they have a strong segmented HES where institutions set differentiated prices. So the second step was to establish three major segments of institutions: high, intermediate and low. The *elite segment* is composed of a handful of institutions aimed at economic, political and social elites. The *intermediate segment* is a very broad set of institutions aimed at the middle sectors of society. And the *low segment* is made up of institutions whose clientele typically come from the lower social classes. These three segments were established from the tuition prices, which allow identifying the social sectors that institutions can attract. The institutions in each segment share similar characteristics in both countries, although the forms in which they occur vary between institutions.

Materials for studying context marketing and HE segments came from different sources: specialized literature on higher education in Latin America (LA); HE public policy documents in each country; studies on the differentiation of HES; tuition fees, as well as data on the position of the universities analyzed in the QS University Rankings: Latin America 2016 (LAQS Ranking).

The next step was to select two institutions for each segment in Chile and Mexico, in order to explore how the marketing context influences the content of branding. Thus, this chapter studies six cases of private institutions of higher education in each country. The criteria for selecting the institutions were: (a) tuition fees according to a range of registration prices that defines the limits of each segment; (b) position of prestige according to the accreditation of academic programs and the position in national and international rankings; (c) carrying out (or not) research and predominance (or not) of teaching over research. In the case of Chile, we added a geographic criterion to include institutions from different regions. With regard to Mexico, we added the criterion of the predominant form of organization, which is the network.

As a fourth step, to know the content of the brand, we looked on websites (in Spanish) of the selected institutions studied in Chile and Mexico the messages emitted, and placed them within a small set of categories: (1) institutional highlights; (2) subjective values; (3) economic messages; and (4) institutional achievements.

These categories allowed us to follow the fifth step, that is, to know the fundamental purposes of branding, which, in a synthetic form, were grouped in *reputation strengthening*; *reputation building* and *catch-all campaigns*. The first refers to branding content that serves to reinforce prestige already acquired, consolidated and widely recognized; the second refers to contents that seek to show that the institution has prestige; and the third refers to a branding as a diverse range of products and discounts to attract students.

The sixth move was to approach to the alignment between the institutional identity, institutional offer, commercial purposes and target populations. To do this we use three categories that allow characterizing the adequacy of branding content: (a) *consistency* (the stability and coherence of the emitted messages); (b) *definition* (if messages are clear and accurate); and (c) the *focus* (the sharpness and concentration on one or a few relevant features) of the branding content. These categories may have an opposite. In reality, we do not always find extreme cases, but rather cases that are located somewhere between the poles. However, by using these categories in opposite forms we seek to highlight the fundamental traits found in institutions' branding content.

Branding in Latin America

Degree of Privatization

Branding theories, research and techniques in HE are associated with the increase in privatization, with the resulting reduction in public funds and the internationalization of the educational market (Chapleo 2010; Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2006; Williams and Omar 2014; Wörner et al. 2016). Although internationalization in LA is incipient compared to developed countries, privatization is more relevant, for example, than in most countries in Western Europe. The growth of private spending and enrollments in Latin American HES has generated a context where competition increasingly explains the behavior of higher education institutions, which resort to marketing and branding practices.

In Latin America, private enrollment fluctuates between 28 and 82% (Argentina and Chile, respectively), a proportion that is similarly reflected in private expenditures. Chile belongs to the group of countries where more than 50% of enrollment is in private HEIs and more than 50% of spending is private, so Chilean HES is one of the most privatized in LA. Mexico, for its part, is among the countries with less than 50% of enrollment in the private sector and with more than 50% of spending coming from public resources.

Privatization contexts make it possible to explain differences and similarities in institutional behaviors to attract and retain a growing number of consumers. On the one hand, the number of institutions increases and offerings are diversified. On the other, consumers influence directly and indirectly the level of resources to which HEIs have access (*i.e.,* allocation of competing public funds or revenues from enrollment fees). Institutions seek to insure the loyalty of consumers through branding, and for this reason, it is a resource for managing an organization's reputation (Mampaey et al. 2015).

Public Regulation

Practically every government in LA has introduced market tools to regulate HE. Through competition for resources, HEIs are encouraged to generate their own revenues and adopt organizational behaviors typical of the new public management. In addition, the influence of the market has been boosted, mainly through privatization of supply and, through this means, by promoting professional profiles consistent with the needs of the productive environment. The specific combination of these elements in each country is different. In general, public controls endeavor to regulate the quality of educational services through systems of accountability (among public HEIs) and accreditation, as well as tools that empower consumers.

In Chile, the state regulation of HEIs has two main instruments: accreditation, whose objective is to ensure the quality of the system, and financing through the state guarantee of bank loans to students (Credit with State Guarantee—CAE). However, there is a widespread perception that, on the one hand, quality policies have not been able to regulate new private institutions and, on the other, that the loans did not solve market problems, financing their inequities and failures and allowing banks and institutions to obtain profits with public resources and promoting a high indebtedness of Chilean families (CEPPE, CIAE, FEUAH 2013). Administratively, there are four types of HEI: universities, professional institutes, technical training centers and schools of the Armed Forces and Order. The government allocates resources to finance the offer of public and private institutions that belong to the Council of Rectors of the Chilean Universities (CRUCH). The rest is composed of private HEIs that depend on self-generated funds through tariffs and selling products and services.

In Mexico, the regulation of higher education is done mainly through extraordinary fiscal financing and evaluations to institutions, programs and professors. Accreditation of academic programs has become important as one of the conditions for HEIs to have access to funding. However, this framework only applies to public, not to private institutions, which enjoy wide margins of discretion. In Mexico, the authorization of the HEIs to operate may come from different sources: permission from the state government, federal authorization, presidential decree or incorporation into public universities. Thus, in a single federative entity, private institutions coexist with different rules (De Vries and Álvarez 2005).

Differentiation/Isomorphism and Segmentation

Both privatization as well as public regulations create an environment in which private HEIs have an incentive toward differentiation, but also toward isomorphism. On the one hand, the offerings of programs and study alternatives, prices, types of clientele and administrative settings are multiplied. On the other, institutional development policies and communications strategies follow the model of those institutions with greater reputations. Paradoxically, this phenomenon, called the academic drift, creates incentives for nondifferentiation (Neave 1979; van Vught 2008).

In Chile there are areas of undifferentiation between the public and private attributes of institutions and there are shared features between different types of institutions: they function as corporations with academic, administrative and economic autonomy, have a common normative framework, develop lucrative activities, are subject to the same quality assurance procedures and have similar management modalities (Brunner 2009). In Mexico, an immense majority is dedicated mainly to the teaching in bachelor's degree; the prevailing educational model puts the teacher in the center; the duration of the most academic programs is similar, and the degrees awarded are the same.

Interinstitutional differentiation is found in historical development and traditions; the nature of institutional missions based on values and ideologies; financial and human resources available; quality of academic personnel; knowledge areas covered; and programs offered (Brunner 2009). In the private sector, in addition, there is differentiation by clientele, forms of organization and, even, geographic location (Álvarez 2011).

Branding in Chile

Privatization

The Chilean HES operates as a complex services market. The current reform promoted by the administration of Michelle Bachelet aims to subsidize a large portion of demand; however, competition between private HEIs to capture market segments is well established and will continue into the future. The fact that this HES is openly a market has an influence on the behavior of the government, consumers and HEIs themselves. In contrast to what occurs in the rest of the region, there is no ambiguity to define HE as a consumer good, which reinforces market behaviors that express themselves in branding content.

The Role of Government

Funding policies have encouraged the rise of a booming HE market in Chile. The drastic reduction and reengineering of the educational budget between 1980 and 1990 resulted in a complex system of conditioned funds to subsidize demand, in a private credit market, with or without the guarantee of the State, and in the creation of subsidy programs focused on poor and/or talented students. In this context, the awarding of public funds to those who comply with quality standards is an incentive for private HEIs to accredit their programs. The government, in addition, has insisted on empowering consumers through watchdog organizations, such as the Servicio Nacional del Consumidor (SERNAC) [National Consumer Service], which is charged with verifying the truthfulness of HEIs' advertising campaigns and of their academic offerings, as well as request sanctions in the case of noncompliance (SERNAC 2015).

Differentiation and Isomorphism

The statutory and financial *differentiation* of institutions divides the system into three levels: traditional HEIs (private and state CRUCH); private elite and private teaching institutions. There is isomorphism within each segment due to the fact that flagship institutions are role models, in accordance with the quality hierarchy of certain rankings (for example, QS) and the NAC (National Accreditation Commission), based on indicators such as publications and patents for the elite segment or the academic offering's economic and work placement relevance.

Market Segmentation

Among the 51 private universities in Chile, we can distinguish three HEI segments according to the annual cost of enrollment. The first is between 8300 and 4700 dollars (elite); the second, between 4500 and 3700 dollars (intermediate); and the third, between 3600 and 2000 dollars (low). Prices segment demand by consumption capacity, but the lack of resources is not an insurmountable barrier, given the availability of private credit (with or without State guarantee), scholarships and student aid.

Policies focused on poor youths have increased their representation in higher education. It is remarkable that between 2000 and 2010, quintiles 1 and 2 increased their participation from 6 to 27% and from 22 to 31%, respectively. Meanwhile, quintiles 4 and 5 have remained stable, so we can infer that demand in well-to-do sectors reached a point of equilibrium (González-Ledesma 2015).

Branding Content in Six Chilean Universities

(a) Elite Institutions. These are research universities with the highest prices in the market. They offer medical degrees (the most expensive in their offering), are accredited and have access to public resources through subsidies in support of demand and funds for research. Branding strategies and content are oriented toward *consolidating the reputation* they already enjoy. These institutions participate in the public debate, disseminating the points of view of their academics on diverse topics. Another common characteristic of these institutions is publicizing their institutional achievements on the web and through print media.

Universidad del Desarrollo
This is one of the most expensive universities in the country (between 16,000 and 8500 dollars a year for medicine and architecture, respectively), and has 13,000 students distributed among 26 degree and postgraduate programs; it occupies the 161–170 position in the QS University Ranking for LA. On its website, the UdeD highlights its institutional project ("to be one of the best universities in the country"); quality of campus life; its international trajectory and the quality of its infrastructure. It defines itself as an institution with initiative, a leader, with a Christian outlook and vocation for the country's development. Because of its characteristics, the UdeD receives state transferences through its students. It also has scholarship and student aid programs.

Universidad Diego Portales
As one of the most dynamic institutions among the country's private universities, it brings together 14,000 students distributed among 33 degree and postgraduate programs, and its enrollment fees fluctuate between 12,000 and 7700 dollars annually. It occupies the 46th position in the QS rankings for LA. The UDP emphasizes the quality of its educational offering, the link between teaching and research, international mobility, as well as its social commitment. The institution presents itself to the public as a young and dynamic university, suitable for talented

students and, at the same time, as an institution committed to academic achievement, innovation and scientific development. It receives state subsidies, has scholarships, student aid and credit plans.

(b) Intermediate Institutions Segment These are the HEIs with intermediate prices (they do not offer degrees in medicine); oriented mainly toward teaching (some do research). The degree programs they offer are usually accredited, so they have access to public financing as well as to funds for research. Unlike elite HEIs, branding content in this segment combines *reputation building* strategies with *massive recruitment* campaigns of applicants. They resort more frequently to print and electronic media to promote themselves during the enrollment period through messages that emphasize institutional achievements and strengths in the most "vulnerable" areas of the private sector (quality, infrastructure, accreditation, presence in rankings).

Universidad Autónoma de Chile
One of the most expensive private institutions in this segment (from 9900 to 4600 dollars annually, dentistry and public administration); it has an enrollment of 22,000 students in 20 degree and postgraduate programs; occupies the 301st position in the QS ranking for LA. The institution mainly promotes the quality of campus life, its infrastructure and the possibility to study a semester in another country. Among its messages, it highlights its commitment to quality (only 11 of its degree programs are accredited), science and regional development. It offers different scholarship and credit programs, in addition to the possibility of receiving state transfers in the accredited degree programs.

Universidad Central de Chile
It provides services to 13,500 students, distributed among 30 university degree programs, three evening programs and 12 technical degree programs. The UCD occupies the 201–250 position in the QS ranking. Annual fees fluctuate between 6800 and 1900 dollars. It emphasizes its international impact, the accreditation of some of its programs, the growth of its infrastructure and, above all, the availability of scholarship programs. The messages are focused on efficiency and professionalism as cardinal values of a young but determined institution. It has scholarship and student aid programs, besides receiving funds for accredited degree programs.

(c) Middle-Low Institutions Consisting of the cheapest universities and mixed institutions (university degree and technical programs) in the market (between 3500 and 2000 dollars a year). They are not accredited or lost their accreditation in the midst of scandals due to misappropriation of funds or academic fraud. Their market niche is among the lowest economic sectors, as well as underperforming students. Within this segment are concentrated a significant part of the offerings of executive degree, evening, night and distance learning programs. Their promotional activity is extremely intensive in print media (especially local), as well as in public transportation. Since they lack serious institutional achievements, they concentrate their messages on the advantages they offer economically and upon graduation. A good deal of the complaints for misleading advertising are directed toward this type of HEI.

Universidad SEK
It belongs to the international SEK network, founded in Spain at the end of the nineteenth century. It has 4500 students distributed among 17 bachelor's degree programs, with an average cost of 2700 dollars annually. It is not in the rankings and has lost its accreditation for all of its degree programs. The U. SEK emphasizes the affordability of its fees, the diversity of its extracurricular activities, as well as its postgraduate programs. It presents itself as an "institution for everyone," with affordable and easily attainable university or technical degrees. It has enrollment discounts and student aid programs.

Universidad Miguel de Cervantes
It has an enrollment of 2000 students in eight degree programs. It emphasizes its effort to achieve accreditation; the number of professors with postgraduate degrees, and its affordable prices. It is not ranked and has only one accredited degree program. It presents itself as a Christian inspired institution, and as the "most inexpensive in the market" (2200 US dollars a year). It has scholarship and student aid programs.

Branding in Mexico

Privatization

The Mexican HES has a low level of privatization (low percentage of enrollment in the private sector and a high percentage of public financing). The explosive expansion of the private sector, which lasted two decades, came to an end in 2008. Presently, 2000 establishments of different types, sizes and geographic distribution concentrate 30% of total enrollment.

Role of the Government

Private HEIs require a Registro de Validez Oficial de Estudios [Registration of Official Validity of Studies] (RVOE), which has no bearing in determining quality (De Vries y Álvarez 2005). Regulation of the private sector is limited and has no impact on marketing. Program accreditation is no guarantee of quality, but awards a status that many HEIs use in their advertising. No legislation exists to guarantee the rights of consumers, avoid undue withdrawal of profits and prevent misleading advertising.

Differentiation and Isomorphism

Differentiation in the market is expressed in terms of the size of institutions; their form of organization; prices; and clientele. There is a prevalence of regional and national networks organized by powerful entrepreneurial interests that, in a process of creation of oligopolies, gain market share from small and medium-sized institutions. Being part of a network is mentioned as a distinctive element of brands.

Educational policies favor differentiation through accreditation of academic programs. Nevertheless, HEIs must follow the same standards, thereby diluting the effects of differentiation. In addition, conventional programs tend to be similar and many private institutions offer similar modalities of lesser duration ("executive" BAs) and open and online programs.

Market Segmentation

The HEI market is segmented based on socioeconomic sectors. The elite segment is small—with diversified offerings and some specialized establishments—and occupies high consumption niches. The intermediate segment is very extensive, with variable prices and diversification. The low segment is also broad, but with very little diversification and low prices. According to some estimates, 10% of programs are in the elite segment; 50% in the intermediate and 40% in the low.[1] Price intervals in

[1] Business administration programs were taken as a reference, under the supposition that all private institutions offer some sort of program in this area.

each segment are considerably broad. In 2011 the monthly price of programs in the elite segment fluctuated between US dollars 831.00 and US dollars 1,977.00. In the intermediate segment, the range was US dollars 164.00 to US dollars 800.00; and in the low segment, US dollars 18.00 to US dollars 163.00 (Álvarez 2011).

In general, consumers possess little information about the quality of institutions. Prestige is more related to prominence than to academic reputation, so only those institutions that have been consolidated compete. Nonetheless, there is no real competition to attract the best professors and students, since most private institutions do not have academic degree programs and recruit students for their ability to pay, not for their performance. Since the main rationale is competition for status, students opt for the institution that satisfies their socioeconomic aspirations.

Branding Content of Six Mexican Cases

(a) Elite Institutions This type of institution usually carries out research in social and technological areas. There are programs in medicine, but hardly any in humanities and almost never in the exact and natural sciences. They occupy differentiated market niches: entrepreneurial elites, cultural and intellectual elites and political elites. Branding strategies and content seek to *consolidate the reputation* that has been attained. These institutions publicize their achievements profusely in conventional media and the Internet.

Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (Tec)
The Tec is a system of 26 establishments in various states, with 53,000 students. Its branding is focused on *entrepreneurial* and *technical training*; *leadership* of its graduates; the *international component* of its academic program; the *flexible curriculum*; *research*; and the spaciousness of its infrastructure. The Tec claims to be unique because of its *innovative* model, its *prestige*, its *relationships with businesses and institutions*, its education with a *human touch*, its *social service* projects and its faculty.

Enrollment fees are very high, around US dollars 1,000.00 monthly in professional, nonclinical courses. Both prices, as well as scholarships and credit programs it offers, are not relevant in the branding.

Quality through accreditation and position in rankings is a strong asset that is already incorporated into the brand identity.

Universidad Iberoamericana (UIA)
The UIA in Mexico City is part of a network of Jesuit institutions with more than 20,000 students at eight different universities. It has a *humanistic* and *social justice* outlook. Its aim is to educate persons who are *free*, *caring*, *sensitive* to suffering and *committed* to a *just society*. The educational model has *interdisciplinary components*, with *flexible curricula* that respond to *students' needs*, where professors encourage the exchange of ideas. It adds a dimension of *international competition*.

It states that it has "world-class" installations, emphasizing its library as one of the most important in LA and its FM radio station.

Enrollment fees, which are very high, around US dollars 1,300.00 monthly,[2] as well as the scholarships and credit programs it offers, are irrelevant in the branding.

For the UIA, its quality is verified by its research and by its social commitment, more than its national and international accreditations, which are fully incorporated in the brand.

b) Institutions in the Intermediate Segment They are teaching institutions and very few offer programs in medicine. They make great efforts to seek accreditation for their programs in order to attain legitimacy and academic reputation. Their branding strategies and content are mainly to build reputation and attract demand. In general, they make intensive use of the media to disseminate their messages.

Universidad del Valle de México (UVM)
The UVM belongs to Laureate International Inc. It has 37 campuses with 65,000 students. It is the biggest private university in Mexico.

The UVM projects an aspirational image of success through *buzzwords* about *quality*, *education for employment*, *citizenship* and *internationalization*. The educational model is *focused on learning*, is *flexible* and *relevant* for the global society; it provides *an integral education*, competencies and technological integration. It has a diversified offering for *working students and adults*.

[2] With a number of courses equivalent to 30 h weekly.

Prices fluctuate between US dollars 323.00 monthly in business administration programs and US dollars 555.00 in medicine. Its range of fees, payment options and scholarships allow it to expand its clientele, made up of mid-level sectors interested in job placement.

The UVM puts its prestige in the fact that it is part of Laureate International, in its position in the Mexican ranking of Selecciones del Reader's Digest and in the accreditation of the Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas de Educación Superior (FIMPES) [Federation of Mexican Institutions of Higher Education]. It stresses that its graduates earn more and obtain employment faster than their peers from other universities.

Universidad Marista (UM)
The UM belongs to a small religious network that brings together 5183 students in small establishments. The one in Mexico City has 1558 students.

The UM follows the Christian ideals of the Marist Brothers. Its integral educational model promotes an environment of work, friendship, family and faith, the development of persons who are ethical, informed, critical, sensitive to social problems, responsible and rational with a spirit of service. It offers conventional programs, mainly in the areas of administration and engineering.

The UM's fees are affordable for sectors with medium incomes and it stresses the aid it provides for payment of tuition to economically needy families. It gives importance to the attention of deaf students, which makes it an inclusive institution.

With no obvious emphasis, the UM lists the accreditations it has achieved and its membership in the Asociación Mexicana de Instituciones de Educación Superior de Inspiración Cristiana [Mexican Association of Christian Inspired Institutions of Higher Education], the International Marist Network and the FIMPES.

(c) Low Segment Institutions They are oriented toward education with an emphasis on employability and ascending in socioeconomic status. They have little or no professional reputation and most have no accreditation. They offer technical and professional programs in traditional and nonconventional modalities, such as weekend courses. Their branding content and strategies are aimed at attracting demand. Some display vigorous promotional activity in conventional media and the Internet.

Aliat Universidades (AU)

AU notes that it has more than 50,000 students in 30 establishments in the country, and declares that it has consolidated itself as the most affordable and far-reaching network in Mexico.

AU is aimed at a young, working-class population that wants to study at an institution with competitive fees. With values linked to work and effort, AU promotes education for quick employability. It proposes to mold ethical citizens with a human touch. At the core are the needs of students, who are offered flexible hours and tutoring. It offers traditional schooling programs, programs for adult learners and online programs, mainly in bachelor's degrees, and a plan for recognizing previous studies. The network promises the best cost-benefit relationship, through credit with the fixed payments that are lower than tuition (which students can continue to pay after concluding their studies), scholarships and discounts.

AU places importance on its membership in FIMPES, on the fact that it has accredited programs and on its inclusion among the 100 best institutions in Selecciones del Reader's Digest's University Guide. It emphasizes its organization as a network. AU displays a clear strategy of expansion and improvement.

Universidad del Desarrollo Profesional (UNIDEP)

UNIDEP is a network that belongs to Grupo Educativo ICEL [ICEL Educational Group] (Grupo Nacer Global), which comprises six universities with different names and 81 campuses in 20 states in the country. UNIDEP has 41 campuses. It is a large network focused on topics of employability and work success that offers flexible programs (schedules, weekend and online courses) for traditional students and workers, in accordance with the needs of the productive sector in the region.

Among the reasons it cites for students to choose it are: proximity, affordable tuition, scholarships and payment plans; RVOE [official recognition of the validity of studies]; professional internships; job placement; successful graduates; and ties with companies.

Tuition fees do not appear in its marketing. Prices are low, approximately US dollars 200.00 monthly, which makes it affordable for middle and lower middle classes. In addition, it offers discounts of 20–25%.
There are no references to prestige, and mentions of quality are vague.

Table 3.1 Branding content by selected universities in Chile and Mexico

Segments	Countries	Profile[a]	Institutional Highlighted Features	Subjective Values	Economic Messages	Institutional Achievements	Purpose Characterization	Branding content characterization[b]
	Chile							
Elite	U. del Desarrollo	Public Funding Access Research, LAQS[c]=161-170	Institutional Project Campus Life Internationalization Infrastructure	Entrepreneurship Christian Humanism Leadership Social Commitment	Scholarships and Student Aid /Not Relevant for Branding Purposes	Research and Public Policy University-Government Agreements Recruitment of Outstanding Academics Improvement of Academic Programs	Reputation Strengthening	Consistent Well-Defined Focused
Elite	U. Diego Portales	Elite, Public Funding Access Research, LAQS 2016=46	Quality Education Research & Teaching Third Mission Commitment Internationalization Continuing Education	Excellence Young Talent Environment Scientific Commitment Innovation Friendly	Scholarships and Student Aid / Not Relevant for Branding Purposes	Ranking Position in LA Research Innovation Research and Public Policy National Awards UDP Honoris Causa Art, Environment and Community Commitment	Reputation Strengthening	Consistent Well-Defined Focused
Intermediate	U. Autónoma de Chile	Intermediate, Public funding Access Mostly Teaching. LAQS 2016= 301	Campus Life International Mobility Infrastructure	Quality Assurance Regional Commitment Research activities	Loans & Scholarships / Relevant for Branding Purposes	Facilities/Equipment Quality Assurance Scientific Production Public Funding for Research Num. Scopus publications	Reputation Building & Catch-All Campaigns	Consistent Focused
Intermediate	U. Central de Chile	Intermediate, Public Funding	International Mobility	Efficiency Professionalism	Scholarships and Student	Economic Aid Facilities	Reputation Building &	Consistent Unfocused

		Access, Teaching LAQS 2016=201-250	Accreditation Infrastructure Scholarships	Young and Determined HEI	Sid / Relevant for Branding Purposes	Employability % Accreditation	Catch-all Campaigns	
Low	U. SEK	Low No public funding Access Teaching No Ranking	Affordability Extracurricular Activities Postgraduate Offering	Easy to Get into HEI Suitable for "Everyone"	Scholarships and Student Aid / Relevant for Branding Purposes	Non	Catch-All Campaigns	Non- consistent Unfocused
	U. Miguel de Cervantes	Low No public funding Access Teaching No Ranking	Accreditation Affordability % Faculty with PhD.	Christian Humanism Innovation Suitable for "Everyone"	Scholarships and Student Aid / Relevant for Branding Purposes	Non	Catch-All Campaigns	Consistent Focused
	Mexico							
Elite	Tec de Monterrey	Elite Entrepreneurial National Network Teaching with Research High Quality LA THE Ranking 2016=8 LAQS=7 Formally Non- Profit	Entrepreneurial and Technical Education Graduates Leaders Research Internationalization Flexible Curriculum Ample Resources	Competitiveness Entrepreneurship Cutting Edge Social Service	Scholarships and Credit, not Relevant to Branding	Training Leaders Generation of Businesses Employability National and International Accreditation Position in Rankings	Reputation Strengthening & Brand Reputation	Consistent Well-Defined Focused
	U. Iberoameri cana	Elite Entrepreneurial/Int ellectual Jesuit Network Catholic Teaching with Research High Quality because of Academic Prestige LAQS 2016=23	Integral and Humanistic Education Interdiscipline Free and Committed Graduates Flexible Curriculum Attention to Needs of Students Library Third Mission	Christian Inspired Social Justice Caring Solving Social Problems	Scholarships and Credit, not Relevant in Branding	Research Social Commitment Graduates National and International Accreditation, Little Relevance in Branding	Reputation Strengthening & Brand Reputation	Consistent Well-Defined Focused

Intermediate	U. Valle de México	Intermediate Segment National and International Network Teaching High Quality Average Reputation LAQS 2016=201-250	Student-Centered Education Offerings for Traditional and Working Students International Content Competent Graduates Employability	Professional Performance Values: Integrity, Service, Social Responsibility	Scholarships Flexible Payments, Credit, Differentiated Prices	Mentions in QS Ranking Accreditation FIMPES Graduates with Better Salaries and Prompt Employment	Reputation Building and Catch-All Campaigns	Consistent & Defined, but Many and Dispersed Elements Focused
	U. Marista	Intermediate Segment Catholic Network Low Quality Scant Reputation LAQS 2016=301+	Integral Education Critical Training Sensitivity to Social Problems Conventional Offering Attention to Deaf Students	Marist Christian Values Work Friendship Family Faith Spirit of Service	Economic Aid, Little Relevance in Branding	Accreditation Membership in Religious Educational Associations Membership in FIMPES	Reputation Building	Consistent Defined Focused
Low	Aliat	Low Segment National Network Teaching Low Quality Scant Reputation	Affordable Network Education for Prompt Employability Ethical Education with Human Touch Diversified Offering for Traditional and Working Students Flexible Schedules Tutoring	Work Effort Human Touch	Better Cost-Benefit Relationship: Fixed Payments Credit Scholarships Discounts Important Issues in Branding	Membership in FIMPES Inclusion in the 100 Best of Reader's Digest Guide	Catch-All Branding	Consistent Well-Defined Focused
	UNIDEP	Low Segment National Network Teaching Low Quality	Diverse and Flexible Programs Offerings for Traditional and Working Students Employability Work Success Proximity RVOE	Pragmatic Values: Training for Demands of Productive Sector	Affordable Tuition Scholarships Payment Plans	No References to Prestige Vague References to Quality Successful Graduates Ties with Businesses	Catch-All Branding	Consistent Defined Focused

[a]Both in Chile as well as in Mexico these institutions are non-profit organizations. Nevertheless, through different mechanisms, they withdraw profits for their owners, which makes them in practice business organizations that seek profits

[b] randing is consistent when messages are stable, coherent, and relatively durable; is defined when their messages are clear and accurate; and is focused when it is sharp and concentrated on one or a few points. This characterization allows a quick and global assessment of the adequacy of the branding content of the institutions with their profile, characteristics, values, economic messages and achievements that appear in their websites. Through these characteristics it is possible to have an approximation to the alignment between the identity that they project, the institutional offer, the commercial purposes and target populations

[c]QS University Rankings: Latin America 2016

Table 3.1 gives a synthetic view of the analysis of each case. This table serves as a basis for the comparative analysis presented in the next section.

Comparative Analysis

In this section, we address a synthetic comparison of the common characteristics of institutions' branding content within each segment in Chile and Mexico. In general terms, we find that elite segment institutions tend to *strengthen reputation*; the institutions of the intermediate segment look for the *reputation building*; and the institutions of the low segment deploy *catching-all campaigns* for a wide range of audiences, especially young and adult workers.

High Segment

In Chile and in Mexico HEI branding in this segment is aimed at elites. While in some cases the objective is economic elites, in others it is political and intellectual elites. In both countries, the universities highlight their efforts to consolidate themselves as research universities. Institutional projects are important in this segment. Some HIEs highlight entrepreneurial and technical training, while others emphasize an integral education. Each one possesses a well-defined identity.

The internationalization component is present in both countries, although in a different sense. In Chile, agreements with prestigious HEIs in other countries and the possibility of academic exchanges are highlighted; in Mexico, internationalization doesn't need to be especially emphasized, since it is a characteristic that is completely infused in the brand. What's more, the values the institutions appeal to are, in general, similar, although there are differences with regard to the importance they are given: some stress excellence, others quality assurance, others still competitiveness and social justice.

In elite Chilean universities there is a certain emphasis on scholarships and economic aid to students, but in Mexico, those topics have little relevance in the branding.

The achievements advertised by universities point toward the type of impression they want to make on their audiences. In Chile, one is partial to its role in the design of public policies through research and the recruitment of high-level professors; another underscores innovation in research and its positions in university rankings. In Mexico, one emphasizes having leaders that create businesses, while another points to the research and social commitment of its graduates. All mention their position in the rankings or accreditation of their programs or the different awards or honors they have received.

In this segment, branding plays a clear role in strengthening a position that has already been attained. It is consistent, well-defined and focused, according to institutional identity and the target audience.

Intermediate Segment

These are HEIs that oriented toward teaching and that seek to attract middle-class social sectors. Branding is different between Chilean and Mexican institutions. The first emphasize internationalization, infrastructure and accreditation of programs; the second, the central importance of the student, attention to working students, and employability of graduates. In another case, with Catholic values, the emphasis is on an integral education, sensitive to social problems.

The values they project are, in general, similar, but with different emphasis in Chile, some favor quality, commitment to the environment and research; others, efficiency and professionalism. In México, values associated with professional performance are promoted. Another institution concedes relevance to traditional values.

In Chile, credit and scholarships play an important role in institutional branding, but only one of the Mexican universities gives importance to these topics.

Among the achievements, Chilean institutions include facilities and equipment. In one case, quality, scientific production and attainment of public funds for research are highlighted. In another, employability and financial aid for students stand out. Mexican HEIs highlight their membership in FIMPES and accreditation of programs. In one case, references to the stars received in the QS Ranking and the good jobs and salaries of graduates are added.

In this segment, branding seeks to build reputation and, at the same time, attract demand through specific messages for the target audience. There are also generic messages, such as employability, in which there is supposedly a broad interest. In general, branding is consistent and defined, but in some cases, it includes too many elements and the focus is diluted.

Low Segment

The low segment institutions are aimed at the lower class segments of the population. It usually sends “aspirational” messages, focused on a future with good employment and income. Its messages are concentrated on affordability, although there are different elements in the different cases. In Chile, one highlights extracurricular activities, and another the accreditation of its programs. In Mexico, both emphasize employability, a diversified and flexible academic offering for traditional and nontraditional students.

The values are different: in Chile, both institutions point out, as a value, that they are suitable for everyone. One adds Christian humanistic values. In Mexico, the values are pragmatic, associated with work, effort and adapting to the demands of the productive sector.

In all institutions scholarships and student aid play a significant role in branding. In Mexico, payment plans and the cost-benefit relationship are also underscored.

Chilean cases do not highlight institutional achievements in their branding. One Mexican institution mentions its membership in FIMPES and its inclusion in a local ranking as a reference for quality. The other includes vague references to quality, but emphasizes that its graduates are successful. In all cases, the intent of branding is to attract demand; it is consistent and well-defined according to its commercial aims and the target population.

General Conclusion

In this section, as a general conclusion, we propose a reflection on the nature of branding in terms of market contexts and the degree of privatization in each country, and on the purposes and characteristics of branding content according to the segment in which we have identified them. In short, we can say that the branding displayed by institutions in countries with a high degree of privatization, such as Chile, is more dynamic than in countries with a low degree of privatization, which is associated with high institutionalization of educational markets, something that does not occur in Mexico. In countries where the educational services market is relatively small, branding has a more “domestic” dimension, since it is aimed at mobilizing preferences of specific segments of potential clients, consolidating the loyalty of those who are already clients, and broadening their presence in other localities and, to a lesser degree, attracting international demand for degrees.

Branding Context and the Type of Institution

The marketing context and the type of institution impose strong conditions on branding content. In the case of Chile, the nature of the regulatory environment, especially the condition of being accredited in order to be able to receive public funds, produces a reference framework for the academic prestige that many HEIs aspire to. In Mexico, the weak regulatory environment leaves the field open for branding that follows the preferences and wishes of different audiences.

But differences can be seen in each segment. In general, in the elite segments, branding strengthens the existing position of predominance and exclusivity, with an emphasis on the quality of the institutional project, in a communications rationale that transcends enrollment cycles. In this segment, there is a reference to research as a symbol of prestige. However, Chilean institutions are oriented toward a branding that projects them as comprehensive universities, while Mexican institutions emphasize their orientation toward the elites. We can also observe that religiously inspired institutions highlight Christian values and, in some cases, social justice.

In the intermediate segments, despite common features, there are greater differences in branding content. In the cases that we studied, emphasis is placed on the academic models, diversification of offerings, employability and, in some cases, the central importance of the students and options for working students. This segment appeals to any element that can be presented as a quality factor, from accreditation of programs and position in some international ranking to membership in certain associations or placing in a local ranking.

In the low segments, we perceive, in general, branding with aspirational content, aimed at sectors of society eager to improve their status. Hence, the insistence on flexible educational models, focused on work performance, on credit terms and on values regarding effort and adapting to the demands of the economy.

Characterization of Branding

Branding mobilizes the imaginary of audiences through the values attributed to a university education in terms of social status, professional success and, even, promoting social segmentation as a necessary condition for guaranteeing privileged spaces for socialization.

The problems derived from informational asymmetries between those who offer and those who consume educational services lead to a lack of correspondence between the image advertised by HEIs and the actual quality of the education they provide, especially in intermediate and low segment institutions. In the Latin American context, this situation is an incentive to reduce education to the values, aspirations and feelings that HEIs promote as part of their efforts at competitive differentiation.

In consolidated institutions, however, which correspond to elite universities, we observe that branding is consistent with what the institution offers and, in this sense, is well-aligned with the imaginary of its audiences, which are usually better informed. In the intermediate segments, institutions appeal to a great diversity of issues that are present in the broad and diverse imaginary of the middle classes: from aspirations of upward mobility and employability to credit terms. In these institutions, branding is consistent with what they say about themselves, but it isn't always clear that this is associated with what they actually offer. Low segment institutions are also very diverse: they are directed at audiences who aspire to acquire qualifications to obtain a better job, emphasize ease of study and discounts, and their references to quality and prestige are insubstantial or nonexistent. In this type of institution, there are cases of deceptive advertising. Branding is weak and is intended to attract students who don't have access to higher priced institutions.

Seen as a whole, in accordance with the analyzed contents, branding is unevenly developed in each country. We can detect how the context of privatization and public regulations, as well as interinstitutional segmentation and each establishment's profile, produce differences in what these establishments project in order to consolidate, build or avoid the disappearance of their brand.

This chapter has sought to provide contributions to an emerging field of sociological research on university branding. On the one hand, given the scarce production of theories and methodologies in this field, we have proposed a set of concepts and categories that can guide the research. First, we proposed a relationship between market contexts and public regulation with branding content, according to the degree of privatization of HES and considering that the dynamics of branding is given by the conditions of interinstitutional competition. Second, we have pointed out that there is a strong segmentation of systems according to institutional prices and prestige, and that within each segment the institutions display a branding content that is closely associated with messages that can express either the reputation strengthening, reputation development or the attraction of different clientele (catch-all campaigns) depending on their target population. Finally, we have proposed that the branding content can be assessed by the level of consistency, definition and focus that it has, based on the alignment between its institutional identity, educational offer and commercial purposes.

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CHAPTER 4

Brand Communication in Flemish Higher Education: A Comparison Between Types of Institutions

Jelle Mampaey

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are increasingly pressured to develop and communicate unique brands to compete in global and local markets. In the context of the marketization of higher education (Molesworth et al. 2010), unique brands have been conceptualized as establishing and sustaining relationships with consumers and other stakeholders (Chapleo 2010). From this perspective, unique brands are necessary to reduce competition and attract sufficient resources. In theory, HEIs have leeway to differentiate by differently emphasizing and communicating values such as excellence, accessibility, the third mission, international orientation, academic orientation, collaboration and evaluation (Mampaey et al. 2015). For instance, two directly competing universities (e.g., two universities in the same city) can reduce competition

J. Mampaey (✉)
MST—Management, Science and Technology, Open University, Heerlen, The Netherlands

CHEGG—Centre for Higher Education Governance Ghent, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

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by communicating unique brands. University A may emphasize accessibility by arguing that it especially values access to socially disadvantaged students, whereas University B may rather communicate a brand of high-quality, excellent services (see also Brown and Mazzarol 2009). In this way, the universities reduce competition by targeting different market segments.

That being said, in practice, the development and communication of unique brands are quite challenging (Chapleo 2007). Empirical studies on branding of HEIs paint a rather pessimistic picture (e.g., Chapleo 2007; Davies and Glaister 1996; Hartley and Morphew 2008; Mampaey et al. 2015; Wæraas and Solbakk 2009; Naidoo et al. 2014). These studies often focus on brand communication but some studies (e.g., Chapleo 2007; Naidoo et al. 2014) also investigate other aspects of branding such as internal branding or brand development. Brand communication could be defined as the self-presentations of HEIs in mission statements and other publicly available documents, pictures and symbols.

Obviously, self-presentations may or may not correspond with internal reality and from a new institutional perspective it could even be expected that HEIs often build gaps between their self-presentations in written, formal documents and their informal, actual activities to demonstrate conformity to the external environment while also maintaining internal flexibility (Meyer and Rowan 1977). For instance, when self-presentations create the impression of an ethnically and racially diverse student population in pictures on the university website, this does not necessarily correspond with the internal reality (Pippert et al. 2013). In this literature, there seems to be a growing consensus toward the convergence thesis (see also Vaira 2004). Accordingly, branding is conceived of as a symbolic activity that HEIs use to signal compliance with their institutional environment which leads to clichéd self-presentations such as "we are the best", "we conduct world-class research" and so on (Wæraas and Solbakk 2009). This "conformity trap" argument resonates with higher education research on the so-called academic drift, which means that lower status HEIs try to copy the structures, norms and values of highly prestigious, traditional universities in their quest for legitimacy and status (e.g., Harwood 2010; Morphew and Huisman 2002).

However, the existing studies on the self-presentations of HEIs mainly focus on content-related processes. In particular, they focus on the content of self-presentations in, e.g., mission statements and they often conclude that this content is quite similar across HEIs, although it should also be noted that some studies draw a more nuanced picture (e.g., Kosmützky and Krücken 2015; Mampaey et al. 2015). We aim to advance the existing literature by investigating branding of HEIs from a more holistic perspective focusing on the branding contents and styles in mission statements. Branding style is defined as the language structure underlying the contents in mission statements. Empirically, we investigate branding by focusing on mission statements in Flemish higher education. In specific, we investigate whether similarities and/or differences in brand communications could be identified by comparing the contents and styles in mission statements of different types of HEIs.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, we describe how we conceptualize branding content and style by drawing from different theoretical approaches. Second, we present our research design, which is a multiple case study of the mission statements of 20 Flemish HEIs. Third, we present our findings. Finally, we discuss our findings in light of recent debates in the higher education literature and provide suggestions for future research.

Conceptualizing Branding Content and Style

We define branding as augmenting services with values and communicating them to key stakeholders, in line with earlier higher education research (see Chapleo 2007). In this chapter, we focus on one aspect of branding, in particular, brand communication or the communicated values in self-presentations of HEIs. Hence, we focus on the symbolic dimensions of branding. In the organization science literature, there is widespread consensus that postmodern organizations are pressured to engage with symbolic management in that the latter increasingly affect relations with constituencies (Alvesson 1990; see Mazzarol 1998 for a similar argument in higher education). Compared to substance (or the real services and activities of institutions), symbolic management is under certain conditions a more important determinant of the relations with stakeholders. As strikingly formulated in a follow-up paper by Gioia and Corley (2002), "looking good" may be more important than "being good". Hence, symbolic management is "a crucial skill [...] in a particular kind of socio-cultural context and in specific organizational conditions" (Alvesson 1990, p. 373).

Why is symbolic management more important than substance and what are the specific sociocultural and organizational conditions? One of the conditions is the continuous and rapid changes in postmodern societies. Traditionally, it was argued that organizations need a stable and substantive essence that distinguishes them from competitors. However, postmodern economic and social conditions (e.g., globalization, technological evolutions, flexible work) trigger continuous and rapid changes in the external environment of organizations, which are also reflected in the internal organizational context. Subsequently, the sociocultural environment makes it hardly possible to develop a stable and substantive essence. What is needed then is symbolic management. In other words, postmodern conditions force organizations to shift their attention from substance to image (Alvesson 1990).

Another condition triggering the crucial role of symbolic management is the lack of self-evident meaning of organizational services. In organizations where the meaning and significance of services is self-evident, the management of meaning is quite useless. However, in organizations characterized by intangible services with ambiguous and contested meanings, symbolic management of meaning is highly relevant in that organizational actors can proactively contribute to the creation of meanings. This also implies that in such a context, constituencies (de)value the organization based on their judgment of image instead of substance.

Symbolic management is also more relevant in case of distance between constituencies and organizational services (Alvesson 1990). In case of close contact, constituencies form impressions based on their direct experience with the services. However, in case of distance, impressions are formed based on other sources such as websites, mass media, public appearances of staff members, second-hand sources and so on. Subsequently, symbolic management is especially important toward constituencies who have no close contact with the organizational services. This is, however, not to say that organizations can project meanings that are obviously false. Symbolic management should rather be conceived of as a practice of emphasizing certain aspects of the organization and give them an organization-specific meaning, while also de-emphasizing other aspects.

HEIs can be conceived of as typical examples of organizations characterized by intangible services with ambiguous and contested meanings (Dill 2003) embedded in turbulent, rapidly changing environments (Yang 2003). Whereas there is widespread consensus on the type of services (i.e., research, teaching and service to society), their meaning is ambiguous and contested. In particular, there is no consensus on the essence of high-quality services. For instance, the meaning of good research is highly contested. Some constituencies will argue that applied research is more valuable than fundamental research, others will build the opposite argument. Higher education may be conceived of as one of the organizational fields with the lowest consensus on the substantive activities needed to guarantee service quality. Subsequently, contemporary HEIs could be conceived of as typical “postmodern, image-obsessed organizations” (Alvesson and Spicer 2012, p. 1204) that are pressured to manage relations with constituencies through symbolic activities instead of substance.

Branding Content

As noted before, our perspective focuses on content- and style-related processes underlying the brand communication of HEIs, which we conceptualize as two dimensions of symbolic management (see also Mampaey and Huisman 2016 for an analogous study in British higher education). Branding content is defined in line with our earlier work in Flemish higher education (see Mampaey et al. 2015). We identified seven value clusters that Flemish universities emphasize in their self-presentations including excellence, accessibility, the third mission, academic orientation, collaboration, international orientation and evaluation. Each value cluster is associated with a specific set of value-laden word labels that frequently occurred in publicly available documents such as mission statements, welcome addresses and strategic plans. These word labels also define the value clusters. In specific, excellence is associated with world labels such as top, leading, prestigious and effective. Accessibility is related to, e.g., equal opportunities, respect, pluralism and widening access. The third mission is communicated with word labels such as applied, technology transfer, valorization and social responsibility. Academic orientation is associated with, e.g., research-based, fundamental, basic and academic freedom. Collaboration is related to, e.g., networking, partnership, cooperation and multidisciplinary. International orientation means, e.g., internationalization, global, mobility and world citizens. Finally evaluation is communicated with, e.g., quality assurance, control, regulation and accountability.

Branding Style

Branding style is about the language structure underlying communication with key stakeholders. Argumentation scholars have demonstrated that both content- and style-related processes determine the (in)effectiveness of communication (e.g., Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969), but these insights have been largely neglected in the higher education branding literature. The study of Huisman and Mampaey (2016) is an exception in that it focused on similarities and differences in branding styles of British HEIs. It was found that highly reputed institutions deploy a different style of communication compared to lower reputed institutions.

Theoretically, we draw on Searle's Speech Act Theory—at least the adapted version in Huisman and Mampaey's (2016) study—to conceptualize branding style. We distinguish between four branding styles: assertives, commissives, directives and expressives. The main idea is that the content of self-presentations can be constructed in different ways depending on the speech act that is used. *Assertive self-presentations* construct the content of the message as an objective fact (e.g., "We offer world class education and research", "Our university is internationally oriented"). *Commissive self-presentations* on the contrary construct the content of the message as an ambition or a commitment (e.g., "We strive for world class education and research", "Our ambition is to be an internationally oriented university"). *Directive self-presentations* attempt to change the behavior of the audiences directly (e.g., "Please visit our world class institution", "Welcome to our international university"). Finally, *expressive self-presentations* express the psychological state of the speaker (the writer of the mission statement), which may construct the content of the message as a subjective attribute in the eye of the beholder (e.g., "We truly belief that we offer world class education and research", "We are convinced of our international character"). Huisman and Mampaey (2016) also argued that assertives are in theory the strongest speech acts with the strongest effect on perceived legitimacy and attractiveness of the university because they present the content of the speech act as an objective fact, although it should also be noted that they did not directly measure the effect of the branding styles on audiences' perceptions. They also argued that expressives are the weakest speech acts in that the content of the speech act may be presented as a subjective impression of the speaker. The strength of the other two speech acts is situated between these two extreme poles.

Methodology

In this chapter, we interpret the self-presentations of Flemish HEIs through the lens of the concepts of branding content and style as conceptualized in the theoretical framework. Empirically, we investigated the branding contents and styles in a multiple case study (Yin 2013) of the mission statements of the 20 HEIs currently operating in Flanders. Flemish higher education is a binary system with five research universities, one transnational university (a research university with campuses in Flanders and The Netherlands) and 14 teaching institutions, although this number is continuously decreasing due to mergers. The research universities provide academic education in a wide range of disciplines resulting in academic master degrees, combined with fundamental and applied research. The 14 teaching institutions provide professional education resulting in professional bachelor degrees, combined with applied research. Most teaching institutions are also rather comprehensive, but some are highly specialized in specific areas such as arts, marine engineering and nautical science.

Flemish higher education is publicly funded. Funding mainly comes from Flemish government (80%) and student numbers and numbers of publications are important criteria in the funding processes: higher numbers imply more public funding. Hence, HEIs are pressured to compete for consumers (i.e., students). Tuition fees are fixed and relatively low, under 1000 Euro at the time of our study (per year and per student). Flemish higher education has been typified as a system with a conflicting mix of market pressures to differentiate from competitors and institutional pressures to be the same (Mampaey et al. 2015).

Data Collection

Our unit of analysis was the mission statement. We collected a data set of 20 mission statements in August/September 2016. All mission statements could be found on the websites of the HEIs. These mission statements were written in Dutch (except for the University of Brussels) and we translated some excerpts in English to include as examples in our paper in the very last phase of the writing. By focusing on mission statements only and excluding other publicly available documents such as welcome addresses and strategic plans, comparability is enhanced. Mission statements have also been used as a unit of analysis in earlier research (e.g., Davies and Glaister 1996; Hartley and Morphew 2008) as these publicly available documents are widely used in higher education worldwide. It can also be argued that mission statements are prototypical tools in the self-presentation of HEIs.

Data Analysis

Our data analysis was a content analysis (Krippendorf 1980) focused on the identification of similarities and differences in the mission statements of the 20 Flemish HEIs. Each utterance was first of all coded in terms of its underlying style (assertive, commissive, directive or expressive self-presentations). It should be noted that each sentence can consist of one or more utterances. Second, each utterance was also coded in terms of its content, i.e., values of excellence, accessibility, the third mission, academic orientation, collaboration, international orientation or evaluation. In theory, each utterance can consist of multiple styles and contents. It should also be noted that intercoder reliability may not be perfect in that other higher education researchers may interpret the styles and contents differently, although intercoder reliability was extremely high in our earlier research on branding in higher education. That is, different researchers consistently agreed regarding the underlying contents and styles in utterances. In earlier research (Huisman and Mampaey 2016; Mampaey et al. 2015; Mampaey and Huisman 2016), we used similar techniques of data analysis. To illustrate the data analysis, we include the example of the interpretation of branding styles and contents (in bold and between brackets) of a section of the mission statement of the University of Leuven:

> KU Leuven […] was founded in 1425 **(assertive + excellence)**. From its Christian view of the world and the human, KU Leuven endeavors to be a place for open discussion of social, philosophical and ethical issues **(commissive + third mission)** […] KU Leuven offers its students an academic education based on high-level research **(assertive + academic orientation / assertive + excellence)**, […] To this end, KU Leuven

> works together actively with its research partners at home and abroad **(assertive + collaboration / assertive + international orientation)**. […] It [KU Leuven] pursues a proactive diversity policy for its students and staff **(commissive + accessibility)**.

After the coding process, we investigated the frequencies of all value clusters and styles across the 20 HEIs by counting all codes in the mission statements. We also analyzed the antecedents of branding content and style and we focused on the type of institution. We investigated whether, how and why similarities and/or differences could be identified in the mission statements of different types of institutions. We compared research universities, teaching institutions and the transnational university. The transnational university was inductively coded as an additional type of institution given that it appeared to be an outlier.

Findings

We found both patterns of convergence and differentiation between research universities and teaching institutions. We identified four types of convergence. Convergence could first of all be identified in the dominant (hence most frequently occurring) value cluster in both types of institutions: the third mission. Hence both types of institutions predominantly presented themselves as organizations that contribute to society and economy via, e.g., technology transfer, research valorization and applied research, although it should also be noted that the specific vocabulary differed. For instance:

> Ghent University […] aims to be an enterprising university with a focus on the social and economic applications of its research findings [excerpt from the mission statement of Ghent University, a research university]

> Hasselt University is a young, dynamic center of expertise for teaching, research and service provision. It regards it as its social responsibility to contribute actively to a sustainable and innovative region. It aspires to be a hub in this innovation web. Hasselt University therefore attaches great importance to cooperation with other centers of expertise, companies, government agencies and organisations in Limburg and beyond. [excerpt from the mission statement of Hasselt University, a research university]

> PXL University College professionalizes people and organizations and contributes to prosperity and well-being. [excerpt from the mission statement of PXL, a teaching institution]

Convergence also occurred with regards to the set of value clusters that is communicated. Both types of institutions communicated about the third mission, accessibility, collaboration, excellence and international orientation. Third, convergence was observable in that none of the institutions communicated the value cluster of evaluation. Finally, in both types of institutions, the most dominant branding style is the assertive self-presentation, followed by the commissive self-presentation. Directive self-presentations were not deployed. For instance:

> The VUB is a competitive, high-quality, socially committed and internationally-oriented university located in Brussels. [assertive self-presentation in the mission statement of VUB, a research university]

> VIVES University College responds to the societal challenges of today and tomorrow by offering modern and competence-based higher education, innovative applied research and service to society. [assertive self-presentation in the mission statement of VIVES, a teaching institution]

> KU Leuven aims to actively participate in public and cultural debate and in the advancement of a knowledge-based society. [commissive self-presentation in the mission statement of KU Leuven, a research university]

> Gent University College aims to excel in education, research, service to society and […] arts. [commissive self-presentation in the mission statement of Ghent University College, a teaching institution]

When it comes to differentiation, we found five types of differentiation. The first conspicuous difference is that to a limited extent, different values are communicated. Academic orientation is only stressed in research universities. For instance:

> The University of Antwerp develops, provides access to and disseminates scientific knowledge through research, teaching and academic service to the community and accomplishes these tasks in a spirit of academic freedom and responsibility. [excerpt from the mission statement of the University of Antwerp, a research university]

Subtle differences could also be identified in the relative emphasis on values. In research universities, the third mission was the most dominant value cluster followed by (1) accessibility, (2) collaboration, (3) excellence and (4) academic orientation. The least dominant cluster was international orientation. In teaching institutions, the third mission was the most dominant value cluster followed by (1) excellence, (2) accessibility and (3) international orientation. The least dominant cluster was collaboration. Conspicuously, accessibility is more dominant than excellence in research universities whereas the opposite pattern could be identified in teaching institutions. This finding is quite surprising given that excellence is traditionally associated with research universities whereas teaching institutions are typically conceived of as highly accessible. Subtle differences could also be detected with regards to the meaning of the values: the general pattern is that teaching institutions tend to define values more concretely. In research universities, the meaning is more abstract. For instance, with regards to the most dominant value cluster, research universities tend to refer to the third mission in very vague terms by using word labels such as societal impact, contribution to the world and the region, and so on. On the contrary, teaching institutions tend to use more concrete labels. An illustration could be found in the comparison of meanings in the mission statements of the University of Leuven and the University College of Leuven and Limburg (UCLL) where the latter is more specific about its willingness to contribute to fossilized systems:

> From its Christian view of the world and the human, KU Leuven endeavors to be a place for open discussion of social, philosophical and ethical issues and a critical center of reflection in and for the Catholic community. [excerpt from the mission statement of KU Leuven, a research university]

> Our scope reaches beyond boarders, our mind is open toward what lies ahead, we encourage innovation and the challenging of fossilized systems/systems reluctant to change. [excerpt from the mission statement of UCLL, a teaching institution]

We also identified subtle differences in the branding style. Research universities only deploy assertive and commissive self-presentation, whereas teaching institutions also deploy the expressive self-presentation, although this branding style only appears peripherally. For instance:

> We are proud of our graduates. We have a belief. We, Odisee … Believing in the power of people. [expressive self-presentation in the mission statement of Odisee, a teaching institution]

> Every year we look forward to the arrival of foreign students. They allow our students to experience the world, different cultures, different customs and languages. [expressive self-presentation in the mission statement of PXL, a teaching institution]

The last type of differentiation could be identified in the transnational university, which was an obvious outlier in our sample. The self-presentations of this university clearly differ from all other HEIs in that the international orientation is the most dominant cluster in the mission statement. The other clusters are subordinated to the international orientation in that collaboration, excellence and academic orientation are all defined in the context of the international mission of the university. Also, this university was extremely assertive. At the level of the entire population of HEIs, assertive self-presentations were to a certain extent counter-balanced with other speech acts (commissive self-presentations in research universities, commissive and expressive self-presentations in teaching institutions) but this pattern did not occur in the transnational university, which only deployed assertive self-presentations. An excerpt from the mission statement illustrates this analysis:

> The transnational University of Limburg (tUL) is a unique partnership between two universities in two countries: the University of Hasselt (UHasselt) and Maastricht University. This tUL is an extraordinary example of internationalization of higher education in Europe: after all, tUL organizes research and education on two campuses in two different Member States. [excerpt from the mission statement of tUL, a transnational university]

Discussion

Overall, our study provides further empirical evidence for the argument that in mission statements of HEIs, branding is a symbolic activity that HEIs use to signal compliance with their institutional environment. An analysis of the dominant value clusters in Flemish higher education revealed patterns of convergence between types of institutions. In specific, the third mission was the most dominant value cluster in research universities and teaching institutions. The assertive style of communication was most dominant in all types of institutions. That being said, subtle differentiation could also be identified with regards to the emphasis on other value clusters. Conspicuously, relatively speaking, accessibility was more dominant in research universities and excellence was more dominant in teaching institutions, which seems as if the world is turned upside down. Indeed, similar to other higher education systems, the traditional links between research universities—excellence and teaching institutions—accessibility have also been strong in Flemish higher education. This finding casts doubt about the role of mission statements. In higher education, they may not be utilized as marketing tools which signal the strengths of HEIs, but rather as instruments to communicate future aspirations, even if the communication style is often assertive. Further evidence of this perspective on mission statements could be found in the fact that directive self-presentations were not deployed. If mission statements would be deployed as marketing tools, one could expect at least some directive self-presentations in some HEIs in that this branding style is an attempt to change the behavior of the audiences/markets directly.

Conspicuously, to a certain extent, branding styles were associated with objective long-lasting status hierarchies between research universities and teaching institutions. The objective status appears to constrain the branding style underlying the communication of institutionalized values. The general pattern was that the higher status of research universities is related to more assertive styles of communication. Lower status teaching institutions communicate about similar values (except for the value cluster academic orientation), but in a more nuanced way, by counter-balancing assertive and commissive self-presentations with expressive self-presentations. This confirms our assumption that higher education is mainly an image-driven sector (see also Huisman and Mampaey 2016). The higher status research universities that are associated with powerful images and perceptions of excellence have more leeway to communicate clichéd self-presentations (e.g., "we are the best"), independent of the objective quality of these institutions. In turn, the more nuanced brand communication of lower status teaching institutions has the potential to reproduce the objective status hierarchies through a process of self-fulfilling prophecy. Further research is needed to explore the mechanisms underlying the relationship between status hierarchies and branding. We assume that branding, and brand communication, in particular, is an important instrument in the reproduction of status hierarchies, but this hypothesis requires large-scale testing.

Our study introduces new theoretical approaches and methodologies to study the branding contents and styles of HEIs. The existing studies on the self-presentations of HEIs mainly focus on content-related processes. In particular, they focus on the content of self-presentations in, e.g., mission statements and they often conclude that this content is quite similar across HEIs. The purpose of this study was to investigate branding of HEIs from a more holistic perspective by focusing on the branding contents and styles in mission statements. This perspective provides strong evidence of convergence at the system level in combination with subtle differentiation between research universities and teaching institutions. Conspicuously, we also found strong differentiation in the mission statement of the transnational university. The implication is that there may be more room to maneuver and hence stronger differentiation in HEIs that operate outside the traditional sectors in a higher education system.

We have focused on the mission statement as our unit of analysis in that this channel of communication is widely used in higher education worldwide and it is a prototypical tool in the self-presentations of HEIs. Indirectly, our study provides evidence for differentiation between countries and between different channels of communication. Indeed, in an analogous study in UK higher education focusing on brand communication of HEIs, we found other branding contents and styles in another channel of communication (see Mampaey and Huisman 2016). In specific, in welcome addresses, excellence was the most dominant value cluster, which was mainly expressed with assertive self-presentations. Future studies may be oriented to further explore (the antecedents of) similarities and differences between countries and/or channels of communication.

Conclusion

Our main conclusion is that a more nuanced perspective is needed in the higher education branding literature. Accordingly, our study should be seen as one of the first attempts to provide a counterweight against the idea in the higher education literature that branding leads to "rather bland and clichéd self-presentations" (Wæraas and Solbakk 2009, p. 453). To a certain extent, clichéd self-presentations could also be identified in our study, especially when it comes to the most dominant value cluster and branding style. That being said, from an alternative lens zooming in on a combination of different value clusters and speech acts, subtle differences could also be identified. The implication is that, depending on the theoretical approach and methodology, some higher education researchers will find similarities in brand communication of HEIs, while others will find differences.

Our study has some limitations. We investigated brand communication of HEIs and its antecedents, but we did not focus on the consequences. In other words, we found subtle differences in brand communication between types of institutions, but we did not focus on the effects of these differences. Future research might investigate these effects, for instance, whether the subtle differences between types of institutions cause and/or sustain long-lasting status hierarchies in higher education. Second, we did not directly compare different countries and different channels of communication. In this way, the comparability of the sample is maximized, but at the same time, the generalizability of the findings decreases. Third, we only focused on brand communication and we excluded other aspects of branding. Future research may further explore the link between antecedents, processes and consequences in international comparisons of the brand communication of HEIs and its relation with other aspects of branding.

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CHAPTER 5

Using a Mixed Methods Approach to Examine the (Re)Imaging of Higher Education Institutions in the Western Balkans

Antigoni Papadimitriou

Introduction

The motivation for the current study derives from my involvement as a senior researcher in the project "European integration in higher education and research in the Western Balkans" (NORGLOBAL) and it had the aim of strengthening the capacity of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans (WB) in the area of educational research in general, and higher education and research policy analysis in particular. In order to collect data and communicate with higher education administrators in the region, first I chose to visit all the higher education institutions (HEIs) websites, some of which worked well while others were broken or did not work in the English version in particular. After I had completed the website investigation for the purpose of the NORGLOBAL

A. Papadimitriou (✉)
Public Safety Leadership, The Johns Hopkins University,
School of Education, Baltimore, MD, USA

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and had published several articles and book chapters, I decided to explore further marketing and branding in the WB region and beyond. Our publisher Palgrave Macmillan offered another motivation for the current version. During the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) with Gerardo Blanco Ramirez, we organized a symposium about Marketing and Branding in higher education, and I presented the paper "WB websites and branding" (Papadimitriou 2014).

The overall objective of this chapter is to present how HEIs were positioning themselves on their websites' homepages during summer 2014 and for that purpose I adopted a sequential mixed methods design. The empirical laboratory for this mixed methods research became the higher education institutions from the Western Balkans.

Branding and Western Balkans

National and international competition has been a catalyst for branding in higher education (Stensaker 2007). Therefore, managerial strategies such as marketing and branding become a priority to HEIs in order to create an identity advantage at the national, regional, and international levels. Furthermore, branding has become an additional marketing concept adopted by HEIs which is now usually associated with the creation of images for the purpose of increasing "sales." In higher education, the purpose of developing a brand is not only to sell "products and services," but also to communicate "corporate identity" in order to promote attraction and loyalty (Bulotaite 2003). Marketing is the communication component of the strategic branding process for an organization (Eshuis et al. 2014; Kavaratzis 2004). Currently, HEIs websites are one of the most important parameters for communication (Celly and Knepper 2010), and are becoming a key data source in the study of branding (Chapleo et al. 2011).

Western Balkans is a fairly new European region, now defined by the formula "ex-YU[goslavian] countries—Slovenia+Albania" (Zgaga 2015, 71). Most of the countries in the region have a shared history as part of the former Yugoslavia and they are now free to go their separate ways. Consequently, each of these countries has experienced the deconstruction and the reconstruction of their national systems of higher education (Papadimitriou and Stensaker 2014, Papadimitriou et al. 2015). The WB in this study refers, as many regional treatments do, to Albania (AL), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH), Croatia (CR), Kosovo[1] (KO), Montenegro (MO), Serbia (SE), and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

Methodology

In order to provide an understanding of how Western Balkans HEIs were positioning themselves on their websites' homepages, this study adopts a sequential mixed methods design (Creswell 2013). The first order of research was to identify all public and private universities from the region. The study took place between June and August 2014. At that time, 119 universities in actual operation were listed by the Ministry of Education and Quality Assurance Agencies. In the first stage the methodology for analyzing the data involved several phases:

1. I collected data about university characteristics such as age (year of establishment), location (country and city), and ownership (public and private). In this analysis, the ages of the universities were collapsed into three categories: universities established before 1989 were characterized as "old"; universities established during the period 1990–2003 as "in transition"; and those established after 2004 as "new." An additional characteristic included a distance parameter or field-position "central" and "periphery," which identified a university's location from each country's capital (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Leblebici et al. 1991). Information from the data derived either from HEIs websites and/or other university documents. These variables may also be termed as control variables, used in the later part of the analysis to understand self-presentation within the sample universities.
2. I created a list with all HEIs and I checked online for all HEIs' websites. My initial research found a few institutions' sites had broken pages; those institutions were excluded from the study. Most HEIs websites are multilayered; thus, the data for this study were drawn from two resources: first from outside layers of the institutions' websites—i.e., the front pages of the institution at the central level and then from English websites. I used content analysis first to collect data about:

[1] UNESCO omits Kosovo.

a. the languages on the websites: the national one (i.e., Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian, etc.) and English. Then I coded each language in order to be able to analyze quantitatively the quality information.
b. I collected data regarding the logo. Here I used two dimensions: "available/not." I did not analyze the type of the logo.
c. I also collected data regarding pictures, images, video, etc. Here I used two dimensions: "available/not." I did not analyze the type of images.
d. I analyzed the websites in order to define whether each institution had followed major, current trends, specifically the inclusion of social media. By mentioning social media links, I mean social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc.) (Bozyigit and Akkan 2014; Greenwood 2012). I also developed codes for each type of social media in order to analyze quantitatively.
e. Finally, I collected data regarding quality and accreditation. Front HEIs homepages (national languages) expected to host quality assurance agencies, accreditation using English names. Here I used two dimensions: "available/not."

3. The second type of data was derived only from the English websites. The normal procedure was to allow one click at the heading, namely English. In English websites, I looked for another heading, namely mission/vision statements as well as president's/rector's welcome messages, where I used two dimensions: "available/not."
4. After this phase, I re-analyzed the data through a further review of the mission/vision/welcome statements collected. This phase can be considered as a more inductive approach which "seeks to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved" (Caelli et al. 2008, p. 3). Thematic analysis is a search for issues that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly et al. 1997). Boyatzis (1998, p. 161) defined a theme as, "a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon." The process involves the identification of themes through "careful reading and re-reading of the data" (Rice and Ezzy 1999, p. 258), while Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006, p. 82) considered it "a form of pattern recognition within the data, where

emerging themes become the categories for analysis." In this final analysis, I was looking for themes about *quality* (accreditation, quality assurance, university achievement, excellence, European Standards, Bologna Process, ISO standards etc.) and HEIs *exotericism* (internationalization/regionalization/Europeanization etc.). Finally, this analysis helped in order to build our understanding of how HEIs in the WB position themselves by utilizing messages about quality and *exotericism or exocentric*.

Limitations

As mentioned by other similar studies, limitations of this study clearly exist. Highlighting these limitations, (Bozyigit and Akkan 2014) referred to the phenomenon that websites of institutions are continuously being updated and changed; thus, the results of the study represent a fleeting, almost fluid, one-time sample valid only at the time of collection. In order to overcome these limitations, researchers will likely have to retain dated, time-stamped images of the websites for future studies and comparisons. In order to validate and track changes, I keep images from only ten universities homepages' websites for future studies. However, this is not the case regarding the English documents (mission/vision and welcome messages) as I used thematic analysis and the documents are available for future comparisons.

Main Findings

The main results of this study are presented in the following two sections: the first one reflects data from HEIs homepages, while the second section reflects data from HEIs English homepages.

HEIs Homepage First View

Online data revealed a majority 70.5% of the HEIs (84 out of 119 that were sampled during the Summer of 2014) used the online environment to publicly present themselves. Regarding public versus. private ownership, data indicate that 40 out of 45 public universities (88.8%) appeared with websites while in the private sector only 44 out of 74 institutions (59.45%). During that sampling, the most broken or non-responsive websites mostly pertained to the private HEIs in Albania; however, five of the Albanian public universities also contained broken or non-responsive webpages. Table 5.1 provides information about the sample as well as information about the establishment of the higher education law and the establishment of the HEIs in the region. Table 5.1 also provides information about HEIs websites translated into English.

Under data for branding, each university's homepage contained the university logo. Within this data set, mostly the older, public universities made the year of establishment very visible in each of their logos. Similarly, most of these older universities included symbols such as flags, buildings, and Latin letters. In contrast, the newer, private HEIs chose logos with more modern schemes and several times with just letters; however, this current study did not include further analysis of each logo. Data from these homepages also contained the use of visual/audio-visual images (photographs, interactive pictures, and videos). Most of the institutions used an enormous number of visual/audio-visual images in an effort to create a favorable impression to viewers (stakeholders). This current study used only two dimensions as to whether websites did or did not include visual/audio-visual images. However, I remember that I discovered pictures mostly in private HEIs from the USA (Statute of Liberty, US passports Symbols of dollars) and the UK (red busses, Buckingham Palace).

The current study also collected data about the translation of the websites into different languages beyond the national. HEIs used either verbal (the name of the language) or little flags. HEIs, especially for English translation, used either the UK or the USA flag symbol. In Albania, 12 out of 25 (six public and six private) HEIs appeared without a second language. One public university appeared having Italian and French, while two private universities appeared to have only English homepages. In BH only one out of 17 HEIs appeared without an English website; however, two of the English websites were broken. One private HEI also included English and Turkish, another private HEI appeared having Croatian, and another HEI only an English homepage. Another private HEI appeared with Italian and German flags; however, those pages appeared in local language. I did not systematically visit the translated websites. Four HEIs appeared to use Serbian as a local language, and one private school noted Turkish, Bosnian, and Croatian. In Croatia all public universities appeared having both Croatian and English websites; one of them appeared with Italian as well, while the one private HEI in the sample appeared without English. In Montenegro,

Table 5.1 Mapping HEIs in the Western Balkans and their homepages

WB	*HE Law*	*Establishment of public HEIs*	*Number of public HEIs*	*Active homepages*	*Homepages in English*	*Establishment of private HEIs*	*Number of private HEIS*	*Active homepages*	*Homepages in English*
AL	1999	1957	15	10	3	2002	34	15	5
BH	2007	1949	8	8	3	2004	16	9	6
CR	2003	1669	7	7	4	1997	2	1	–
KO	2003	1970	2	2	–	2000	3	2	1
MO	2003	1975	1	1	–	2006	2	2	2
SE	2005	1904	6	6	4	1989	7	6	1
FYROM	2000	1949	6	6	5	2001	10	9	6
Total			**45**	**40**	**19**	**Total**	**74**	**44**	**21**

all three universities appeared having Montenegrin and English websites. In Kosovo all HEIs appeared with English websites, one private HEI appeared having only English website; another with Albanian, English, and Turkish; another with Albanian and English; and another one with Albanian, Bosnian, English, and Turkish. In Serbia 11 out of 12 appeared with Serbian and English and only one private HEI had only a Serbian website. In one private HEI data revealed that France appeared as a different language. All HEI websites in FYROM appeared in national language and English. One private HEI had English website only, two HEIs appeared with additional language such as Albanian, another two HEIs included Turkish and Albanian, and another one included Serbian and Spanish. Here I need to highlight that I only checked visually if the language appeared on their homepage and not about the actual translation of the websites.

The homepages also analyzed information about quality and accreditation signs. In this domain, data indicate that in the national homepages only three public HEIs (Croatia, Serbia, and FYROM) included words such EUA-IEP (European University Association—Institutional Evaluation Programme); additionally, three private HEIs (BH, Kosovo, and Serbia) appeared to have messages (in a small picture) about being accredited by agencies outside of the country (also provided the names of the accreditation agency). In another private HEI from Albania there appeared, in a small rectangular image, "our programs follow the Bologna standards."

The final topic area investigated by using first order homepages websites was the use or availability of social media appearing on these homepages. A visual search of each page sought out the current social media internationally recognized symbol. Under that visual analysis, each symbol of social media was checked (see Fig. 5.1). This figure represents an overall visual of the type of social media present at each institution. For the period under study (Summer 2014), the most popular social media were:

- Facebook: 77% of private HEIs were using that platform and 74% of the public sector.
- YouTube was the second most used platform at 61% in private sector and 52% in the public sector.
- Twitter was in the third place; however here the public sector seems to use more—42%—and the private 34%.

- LinkedIn appeared in the final place where it was used 37% in the public HEIs and 15% in private HEIs.

Figure 5.2 provides another picture by social media within HEIs in each country. Data show that Facebook and YouTube appeared in all countries. Albania's HEIs appeared with less use of social media. LinkedIn is attractive to public HEIs in Kosovo (100%), Serbia (83%), FYROM (43%). While this study was being performed and a time-capsule of

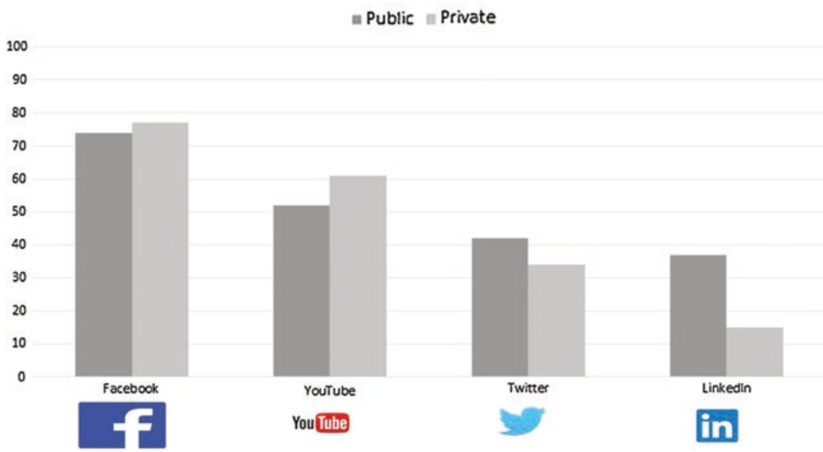

Fig. 5.1 Overall picture of social media in WB public and private HEIs

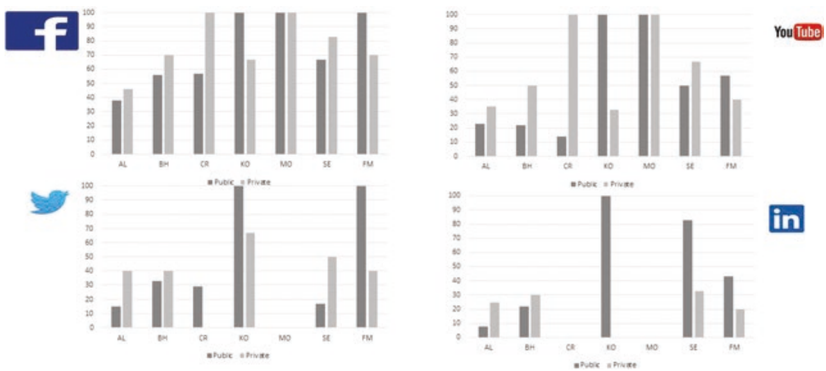

Fig. 5.2 Distribution of social media within public and private HEIs in the WB

one period's (Summer 2014) data were recorded, HEIs in Croatia and Montenegro did not indicate the use of LinkedIn. Twitter also seemed unpopular in Montenegrin HEIs, yet Facebook was most popular in the public HEIs in Kosovo, Montenegro, and FYROM.

Next Click: English Homepage Analysis

In this second phase, I first identified how many HEIs translated their homepages into the English language. For this analysis, I only checked it by clicking the English sign (flag or verbal) to see if the site provided me with the English version. In several cases even after having clicked the English button, the websites appeared unresponsive because the homepage did not change; consequently, I did not include those HEIs as having English websites. Although findings from this analysis showed that 41 out of 84 HEIs translated and communicated their "brand," the overall breakdown between public and private institutions revealed 19 out of 40 were public universities, and 21 out of 44 were private institutions. Table 5.1 includes the sample that I called English web respectively for both public and private HEIs. During my search, one of the goals I had was to find communicative messages or documents that specifically contained vision/mission and president's/rector's welcome. Therefore, I performed "several clicks" in order to find those documents for further analysis. In this final analysis, I was looking for themes about *quality* (accreditation, quality assurance, university achievement, excellence, Bologna Process, European standards, ISO standards etc.) as well as for themes focusing on HEIs' *exotericism* such as international, European and/or regional. Table 5.2 presents the main findings (themes) of the content analysis that I retrieved from the 41 English websites in the region. While Table 5.3 presents the quantitative data of the sample.

Data reveal that from 40 English websites I found themes about *quality* in five public universities' welcome messages (three from Albania, and one each from Croatia and Serbia); however, all of them were universities located in the periphery and mostly old universities. I also found messages about *quality* in six mission/vision statements (one in BH and Croatia and two in Serbia and FYROM). Among these, half of them were located in periphery and half in urban cities and almost all of them were old universities. I also found messages about *exotericism* in five

Table 5.2 Analyzing English homepages in the WB focusing on *quality* and *exotericism*

		Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
	HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
Albania	1	Highly professionally qualified national and international staff	The university is also known internationally because of much inter-university collaboration with many associates and collaborators around the word	No document	No document
	2	Commitment to students' needs: quality education	Our university is a partner university in different projects of the European union network	No document	No document
	3	Future plans Improving the quality of curricula and teaching and research facilities	N/A	No document	No document
	4	Opportunity to study following American standards of HE at a reasonable cost, at home. We continue our long path to excellence	Member of US universities group. Partners with European universities	N/A	Provide knowledge to succeed in international work environment
	5	Graduating with the possible highest quality- links with the labour market Our objective excellence 2020: excellence labour market function and contribution to development	N/A	No document	No document

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

		Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
	HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
	6	Dealing with university standards or broader European sister	Our students continue their studies in European universities	No document	No document
	7	No document	No document	N/A	Successful laboratory within and outside of the country
	8	One of the few private with public reputation of a quality educational institution	Is a member of European network….. Has made partnerships and agreement with international institutions	Promote scientific excellence and innovation	Regional institution in the WB and the Eastern Mediterranean
Bosnia Herzegovina	1	Serve as a center of high quality education Accredited by the council for HE Values quality	Outstanding students form 30 countries as well as the Balkans and Turkey English language school Cares for the common values of Turkey and BH	To become and a center of excellence and quality	Vision to become an internationally approved HEI Become a major hub in Balkans bridging the East to the West Mission's dimension: Internationalized HE
	2	N/A	Available to students from home and abroad Cooperation with all relevant institutions in the region and in the word	Recognized internationally for the quality of teaching	Become a recognized regional university

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

	Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
3	N/A	N/A	No document	No document
4	Be student here does not imply acquiring qualitative education is much more than that Our dream to become a brand	N/A	No document	No document
5	Excellence staff and faculty from top universities around the world	Our students have secured places at the best post-graduates programs in the word and are consistently employed by leading companies in the region and beyond Offers programs with global perspectives Unique partnership is able to offer a degree accepted not only in BH but also in the UK	No document	No document
6	N/A	Our university is standing at the turning point facing the European integrative process Become a leading HEI not only in BH but in the region as well	No document	No document

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

	Rector's/President's Message		Mission/Vision Statement	
HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
7	Aim to improve the conditions of quality in education process	N/A	Provide education and training of highly qualified personnel Application of European standards	Solving local and global challenges Become a respectable HEI in the region and internationally
8	N/A	Programs based on the American system of education Student become catalysts in the economic development of the region Curricula based on best practices and traditions of American universities and applying all the principles of the Bologna process initiatives by the European reform of HE Using Harvard "case study" method	Achieve excellence in the performance of the teaching process	Prepare graduates for HH, the WB and abroad Engage in technological and business development of the local community and region
9	No document	No document	No document	No document

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

		Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
	HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
Croatia	1	No document	No document	Provide high quality programs University shall ensure high level of student standard … increase the quality of communication	- Research teaching artistic activities in cooperation with a local national and international economic entities - Students careers closely linked with the local community
	2	Desirable place to study through high quality programs High quality employee The external evaluation indicates that we are in a nice track	N/A	No document	No document
	3	No document	No document	N/A	N/A
	4	No document	No document		Vision targets the inclusion to be within top 500 European Universities

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

		Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
	HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
Kosovo	1	Degree accredited in the US and is recognized all over the word	N/A	Deliver high quality American education to local students	Will be one of leading HEIs in Southern Europe
Montenegro	1	No document	No document	Create conditions for studying upon principles of high quality European education	N/A
	2	University is based on Bologna Declaration principles accordance with the latest European standards	N/A	No document	No document

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

		Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
	HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
Serbia	1	N/A	Be the participants to create new Europe the new word	No document	No document
	2	N/A	N/A	Study programs completely adapted to world standards Effort to make quality HE available to all	We like to be a regional university center which concerns itself with the development of the region
	3	No document	No document	N/A	Gathers students and educators from the country, region and Southwestern Europe The university is decisive to integrate itself into European academic environment… as an important international institution of HE on the Balkans.
	4	No document	No document	Provide superior education and exceptional knowledge Set the stronger standards in HE	N/A

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

		Rector's/President's Message		*Mission/Vision Statement*	
	HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
	5	Provide optimal conditions to students by to-quality standards	Building new bridges of cooperation with European and world renowned universities research centers	No document	No document
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1	N/A	N/A	No document	No document
	2	No document	No document	Provide quality in all segments of its functioning	University wish is completely integrated in national and international environment Continuous process of Europeanization and internationalization with provided relations to international universities
	3	No document	No document	Provide the highest level of educational, scientific and research excellence	Is committed to offer nationally and internationally recognized opportunities for education
	4	No document	No document	No document	No document
	5	No document	No document	N/A	Promoting scientific disciplines in accordance with the requirements of the region and the country
	6	N/A	N/A	No document	No document

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

	Rector's/President's Message		Mission/Vision Statement	
HEIs	*Quality*	*Exotericism*	*Quality*	*Exotericism*
7	No document	No document	No document	No document
8	Accredited programs for graduate and undergraduate studies	Located in the heart of the Balkans, is the gathering point for students from all over the region including Turkey	No document	No document
9	We emphasise quality and induvial attention, students receive quality customer service	N/A	Provide excellence in HE by combining the best European and American educational standards	European and American educational standards
10	N/A	Modern European university for the country and the region	Highly qualified university	Is committed to global progress
11	We apply most modern methods of HE, with a precise and complete application of the Bologna process Commitment to excellence	N/A	To create, implement and maintain higher quality education	N/A

(continued)

Table 5.3 Mapping the *quality* and *exotericism* messages in English homepages in the WB HEIs

	Public						*Private*					
WB	*Active home-pages*	*Home-pages in English*	*Welcome messages*		*Mission/ Vision*		*Active home-pages*	*Home-pages in English*	*Welcome messages*		*Mission/Vision*	
			Qual	*Ex*	*Qual*	*Ex*			*Qual*	*Ex*	*Qual*	*Ex*
AL	10	3	3	2	–	–	15	5	4	3	1	3
BH	8	3	–	2	1	1	9	6	4	3	3	3
CR	7	4	1	–	1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–
KO	2	–	–	–	–	–	2	1	1	–	1	1
MO	1	–	–	–	–	–	2	2	1	–	–	–
SE	6	4	1	1	2	2	6	1	–	1	–	–
FYROM	6	5	–	–	2	3	9	6	3	2	3	2
Total	**40**	**19**	**5**	**5**	**6**	**8**	**44**	**21**	**13**	**9**	**8**	**9**

Quality: Qual, Exotericism: Ex

welcome messages and in eight mission/vision statements. The majority of those universities were old and located in periphery except in Serbia where two universities were urban. I did not find *exotericism* themes in public universities from Kosovo and Montenegro. Data from the private sector indicated more institutions hosted themes about *quality* in welcome messages (13) and mission/vision statements (8). Similarly, more themes about *exotericism* appeared in nine welcome messages and in nine mission/vision statements. The majority of those HEIs mentioned *quality* and *exotericism* in their English documents were mostly new and located in urban cities, except in the FYROM were those institutions were mostly in *transition age* (1990–2003) and located in the periphery.

Messages about *quality* related to teaching, research, and services were found in several documents which highlighted that the institutions adopted European standards and the Bologna principles. Furthermore, among mostly private institutions their websites highlighted that they had adopted US standards to educate students in their home country. Those HEIs that included *quality* themes also mentioned the quality of the faculty and the staff in an effort to promote excellence and innovation. Messages about HEIs *exotericism* mostly related to regionalization effort such as "to become a hub in the Balkans" or "become a regional institution in the WB". Most of the public universities highlighted that they participated in several European networks, collaborated with many associates abroad, and that they would like to become recognized among European universities; while on the other hand, some HEIS wanted to be recognized as Southeastern European universities. Some institutions from Albania, BH, and the FYROM expressed their interest to include Turkish students.

Discussion and Conclusions

This exploratory study identified tangible, website data indicating how higher education in the Western Balkans (re)images itself by language choices in their websites. Also from this data, I could argue that institutions take advantage of the online environment and demonstrate their existence in a competitive marketplace.

Almost all of the websites included in this study appeared with logo and pictures, and almost all of them seemed to promote their identities through the innovative marketing avenues found in the social media. This study examined whether those universities included social media platforms without examining how they were presented in those platforms. However, other studies have found that European universities have promoted their offerings (courses, research services) via their social networks platforms (Asderaki and Maragos 2012) including Canadian universities (Belanger et al. 2014), as well as universities from Australia and New Zealand (Raciti 2010). The current study suggests that future studies especially performed by local researchers (or/and familiar with WB languages and alphabet) could possibly investigate more closely how Western Balkans universities engage primary stakeholders on popular media platforms and what type of conversations and discussion WB universities initiate.

The current study analyzes English websites in relation to *quality* and *exotericism*. Data for the period under study (Summer 2014) revealed that mostly private HEIs took the advantage to communicate to viewers by hosting documents in English. Legitimacy issues concerning private higher education institutions in the region remain a concern (Brankovic 2014, Papadimitriou et al. 2016). The mushrooming of private higher education in the region has been discussed in several studies as well the notion of quality in those institutions (Brankovic 2014). For legitimacy among private HEIs, some of those institutions used the Bologna Process; however, Bologna is mostly silent on private higher education. Although an analysis of the documents revealed both public and private sectors mentioned the Bologna Process, which may indicate the WB's ambition of returning to Europe (Papadimitriou et al. 2015; Rupnik 1992). Similar explanations could also be the demonstration of several signs about quality and European standards hosted in the local HEIs websites. It seems that both sectors, especially in English, use words such as quality, excellence, innovation, European standards, or Bologna Process to reposition themselves—or in other word, they used those terms for deBalkanization.

One of the interesting findings, although not surprising, was the fact that mostly public universities in the periphery included in their mission/vision statement the *exotericism* dimension as well as themes of *quality*. Perhaps universities on the periphery in the region wanted to use the translated English websites as a tool to gain prestige or legitimacy. On the other hand, urban old universities may have been perceived as "elite" within the region. Students might prefer the urban old universities and for that reason, those universities may not have discovered the *exotericism* purpose and the *quality* as important parameters to be communicated through university websites. Papadimitriou (2011) noted "that quality practices such EUA-IEP adopted mostly in Greek peripheral universities to gain prestige and to show that *the sleepy peripheral university was becoming more Europe-minded* (paraphrasing DiMaggio and Powell 1991, p. 70)," and she interpreted that phenomenon as a "sign of trying to establish legitimacy through mimetic isomorphism" (p. 193).

As noted, this study took place during the Summer of 2014; however, recently (September 2016) I took a quick trip revisiting several websites in the region. This quick web-surf revealed that several HEIs in the region have updated and changed their websites; most of them were using high-quality presentations, and might have hired professionals to redesign their websites. However, in 2014, most of the websites hosted myriad of colorful pictures. Some of these observed changes might reflect how a metamorphosis among universities has emerged as they have awakened and taken seriously the benefits of a competitive, modern (perhaps more efficiency) website where they include English translated homepages, where they host their rankings (if any), locate their facilities and their services, and moreover, include areas for future students and alumni, all of which are now in English. The current trip demonstrates that future research on marketing and branding is needed in the region mostly by researchers understanding Western Balkan languages.

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CHAPTER 6

Branding and the Search for Competitive Advantage in the Field of Mozambican Higher Education Through the Use of Websites

Patrício V. Langa and Nelson C. Zavale

*Faculty of education, Institute for Post-School Studies, University of the Western Cape, Western, Cape South Africa; Curriculum Studies and Teacher Training Department, Faculty of Education Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique.

**Curriculum Studies and Teacher Training Department, Faculty of Education Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique.

P.V. Langa (✉)
University of the Western Cape/Eduardo Mondlane University, Cape Town, South Africa

N.C. Zavale
Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique

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Introduction

Globally, higher education is currently characterised by increasing competition in the marketplace (Langa 2010; Stabile 2007; Langa 2006; Bok 2003). Like corporations and companies, higher education institutions (HEIs) have to attract potential stakeholders in order to guarantee their survival in the marketplace. HEIs compete with each other for financial and human resources, including the best students, professors and researchers, symbolic and intellectual resources (Zemsky et al. 2001; Wangenge-Ouma and Langa 2010). The growth in student numbers, the decrease or constraints in government higher education funding, the introduction of performance-based government funding and the opening up of higher education to private funding are some of the factors responsible for the emergence of a competitive higher education environment (Altbatch et al. 2009; Wangenge-Ouma and Langa 2010). These factors are linked to the scarcity of financial resources, the most important of all resources for the survival of universities. In the context of a diversity of higher education suppliers, HEIs are forced to pursue strategies to survive and position themselves within the marketplace (Wangenge-Ouma and Langa 2010; Beneke 2011).

Branding becomes one of the strategies used by HEIs to attract potential stakeholders. As Chapleo (2004) and Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana (2007) indicate, in order to face national and international competition, universities all over the world search for ways to define their identity, to differentiate themselves and attract the best students and academic staff. Given this context, a number of scholars have examined the mechanisms used by HEIs to position and differentiate themselves in the marketplace (Mortimer 1997; Klassen 2000; Waerras and Solbakk 2009; Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2006).

According to Waerras and Solbakk (2009), studies on branding in organisations are often conducted in light of two analytical approaches. One approach focuses on how organisations build their image internally, before conveying it to external stakeholders; another investigates the ways in which brands are externally communicated to target particular groups. The former focuses on strategies used to communicate the brand to external audiences, through advertising and promotion; the latter carries out in-depth analysis to understand how organisations build their image internally before selling it externally.

In this chapter, we discuss how Mozambican HEIs, in order to position and differentiate themselves within the increasingly competitive field of higher education, communicate their brands externally through the use of websites. We build on the previous studies, as we borrow the branding meta-language from the field of corporate marketing. However, we distinguish our analysis from other approaches, and extend the current state of research in the field in two ways: (a) theoretically and (b) methodologically.

Theoretically, we decided to combine the business marketing concepts with the Bourdieu's sociological approach (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Langa 2006; Langa 2011).

Our understanding of branding in higher education is more sociological, and it distinguishes itself from the 'strictly' business marketing perspective and concept of branding. By broadening the business marketing perspective and combining with the sociological view, we intend to capture the relational dimension of branding in the field of Mozambican higher education. The quest for brands and branding is, in our view, a response to the relational and sociological presence of the 'other', that is competing HEIs suppliers in a developing field (Zemsky et al. 2001; Langa 2006; Langa 2011). Therefore, higher education institutions, as competitors in the 'business' of providing higher education services in the Mozambican context, need to demarcate each other through building particular branding identity.

Methodologically, we examined verbal and non-verbal elements of websites, since no attempt has previously been made to combine both elements of branding present in the institutional websites or Internet webpages. Websites can represent one of the most powerful windows used by HEIs to convey their image to the outside world. According to the Hanover Research (HR), university website can be used as the ultimate brand statement. A homepage can be a key component in the student experience and can make or break decisions about whether to attend or not a programme. A university's homepage became the hub of its web presence and in attempting to appeal to a diverse range of visitors; the challenge is staying intuitive and organised. If visitors have to go back to your homepage every time to find the content they are seeking, they are not likely to stay on your site very long. Website navigation represents an integral component of overall site architecture from which all content can flow from (HR 2014).

Universities develop websites to identify and differentiate themselves from their competitors and to convey positive perceptions and associations in the minds of potential clients. However, despite recurrent use of websites as branding strategies, only limited research on branding in higher education has focused on websites (Chapleo et al. 2011). Waerras and Solbakk (2009) indicate that most of the literature on building an image in academia is concerned with how HEIs communicate their image or brand externally to attract potential stakeholders, rather than on how they build their identity internally (Klassen 2000; Opoku et al. 2006, 2008; Hemsely-Brown and Oplatka 2006; Tang 2011; Chapleo et al. 2011; Drori et al. 2013).

This literature highlights the fact that the external promotion of a university brand can be done in different ways, such as emblems, seals, building architecture, web pages, newspapers, sports mascot, formal dressing and so forth.

We also found four recently published papers on how websites are used in different countries to promote universities' brands (Opoku et al. 2006, 2008; Chapleo et al. 2011; Tang 2011).

Our analysis of this literature reveals four prevailing features or trends. First, the study of websites as university branding strategy is often done by scholars working in the field of business marketing (Opoku et al. 2006, 2008; Chapleo et al. 2011). Higher education is not their main discipline or theoretical field of study; it is their empirical field of study. Second, and consequently, this literature fundamentally uses the conceptual, theoretical and methodological meta-language of corporate marketing. Third, this literature studies the ways in which websites as university branding strategies are used in different countries (Opoku et al. 2006, for South African universities; Opoku et al. 2008, for Swedish universities; Chapleo et al. 2011, for British universities; Tang 2011, for American and Chinese universities).

Fourth, there is a difference on the kind of variables studied on websites: some scholars study the non-verbal elements (Tang 2011), and others study the verbal elements (Chapleo et al. 2011). The image—that is, the brand—trademark and other non-verbal and verbal elements that universities display on their websites are used to convey a message of distinctiveness, uniqueness and appeal to certain constituencies, such as students, parents, funders and the public in general.

In the following sections, we discuss the notion of brand and branding in a brief literature review. Second, we confer the theoretical and methodological concerns of branding in higher education. Third, we utilise some Mozambican HEIs to illustrate how branding is used strategically in this sector. Then, we present the findings and some interpretative discussion of these branding strategies in the context of our theoretical framework. Finally, we present some concluding remarks.

Literature Review

Brand and branding are typically business marketing concepts used to examine specific phenomena taking place in the field of higher education (Waeraas and Solbakk 2009). In management, the word 'brand' refers to the "image that a specific product or a service represents in the mind of its customers, and to the position it occupies within the marketplace vis-à-vis its potential competitors" (Aaker 1991, p. 7). The American Marketing Association defines a brand as a "name, term, symbol, design or a combination of these items intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Beneke 2011, p. 33). This concept highlights the fact that a brand is a symbol (verbal or non-verbal) which identifies a product or a service and, at the same time, differentiates it from other similar products available on the market.

A brand is different from the product or service itself. A brand is the sum of associations, perceptions and feelings that consumers have in relation to the product (Achenbaum 1993). Customers usually have associations and perceptions about the product both before and after its consumption. Prior to consumption, customers have indirect and non-experiential perceptions of the product. Their previous associations are usually based on secondary sources, and are conveyed through communication strategies or images provided by the seller of the product or through feedback from other customers. On the contrary, experiential perceptions about the product are made after the consumption of the product. But both may be different from the intrinsic value of the offering itself: associations linked to the product may underestimate or overestimate its intrinsic value (Anchenbaum 1993; Siguaw 1999).

A brand is, therefore, the way in which a product is portrayed. A brand is built to be meaningful to an organisation's internal audience, as well as to speak to external audiences (Shampeny 2003). A brand is closely linked to an organisation's mission statement, and it is composed of: (i) promise—the single compelling idea that defines the offering; (ii) uniqueness—the attributes that capture its spirit and differentiate it in the market; and (iii) performance—the tangible deliverables that support the brand's offering and against which it can be measured by end users (Heist 2004).

Keller (2008 quoted in Beneke 2011) suggests that brands are useful for producers in a variety of ways. Brands are (i) a means of identifying products and organisations in the marketplace; (ii) a means of legally protecting unique features; (iii) an indicator to satisfied customers of a certain level of quality level; (iv) a means of endowing products or organisations with a unique association; (v) a source of competitive advantage; and (vi) a source of financial returns.

While brand is the image of the product and all the associations that are linked to it, branding is the process of building such an image. According to Balmer (2001, p. 281), branding means to "make known the attributes of the organisation's identity in the form of clearly defined branding proposition". The branding process entails four essential ingredients (Berry 2000).

- Relevance—What makes the institution's offerings relevant to key audiences?
- Awareness—If few people are aware of an institution's existence, then brand-building is even more crucial.
- Positioning and Differentiation—Why is the institution distinct in the eyes of the customer? What sets it apart from others within the peer or competitor set?
- Consistency—A brand can only be developed through the delivery of a consistent set of messages, ideas and interactions over time.

The literature on branding (Chapleo 2004; Ind 2004) identifies five steps in the process of building an organisation's brand: (i) the definition of its mission and vision; (ii) the understanding of the market and of potential stakeholders' needs and expectation; (iii) the identification of the attributes differentiating the organisation's products and services from peers'; (iv) the definition of the brand promise, the involvement of internal audiences in developing the brand strategy; and (v) the delivery of the brand promise to potential stakeholders.

Branding in Higher Education

Branding in higher education, in contrast to that in corporations, is shaped by the nature its offerings. HEIs mainly offer services, as opposed to manufactured goods produced by companies. As Van Vught (quoted in Wangenge-Ouma and Langa 2010, p. 123) notes, higher education offers 'experience goods': clients of universities are only able to judge the relevance and the quality of the outputs of higher education when they are able to experience them. To choose a specific higher education institution in a context of several peer-competitors, potential clients face the market failure of imperfect information or asymmetry. Wangenge-Ouma and Langa (2010) suggest that this specificity of HEIs lead them to represent themselves in the best possible ways, often (over-) emphasising their qualities and image to convince clients.

Anchenbaum (1993) and Siguaw (1999) refer to two kinds of perceptions that customers may have about any organisation or product, depending on whether or not they have already experienced the organisation's offering. Prior to consumption, customers have non-experiential-based perceptions and, after consumption, experiential-based perceptions. Non-experience-based perceptions are usually based on secondary sources, and conveyed through communication strategies or images provided by the seller or through other customers' information.

The dilemma of branding in higher education is that effective branding should be experienced-based (Beneke 2011). The only way for clients to have experiential perceptions of higher education offering is through consuming it. But, in order to consume higher education services, in a context of competition, clients need to have been convinced on the quality of the services being offered. Convincing a potential customer of this quality is often done through secondary sources, such as images and brand promises provided by the higher education institution or through other clients' information. This dilemma makes the process of branding in higher education a complex phenomenon worth studying.

Websites as Higher Education Branding Strategies

The literature on websites as a branding strategy encompasses four features. First, it is often done by scholars working in the field of business marketing (Opoku et al. 2008, 2006; Chapleo et al. 2011). These scholars are primarily concerned with how corporations use websites as their branding strategies, and they study HEIs as one kind of organisation, among others, that use websites to convey their brands. In other words, higher education is not their main discipline or theoretical field of study, since their core discipline is business marketing; higher education is (occasionally) their empirical field of study.

The second feature of the literature on websites as a branding strategy in higher education is a consequence of the first trend: it fundamentally uses the conceptual and methodological meta-language of corporate marketing. For example, Opoku et al. (2006), through the concept of brand personality and through multistage methodology, measured the way South African business schools use websites to position and differentiate themselves in the crowded MBA education marketplace. A similar study was undertaken by Opoku et al. (2008) in relation to Swedish universities. Another study (Chapleo et al. 2011) used the concepts of functional and emotional value of a brand promise and a multistage methodology, to study the way UK universities effectively communicate their brands through websites.

The third feature of the literature is the trend of studying the ways websites are used differently by different countries. As indicated above, Opoku et al. (2006) studied the South Africa business schools; Opoku et al. (2008) explored Swedish universities; Chapleo et al. (2011) studied the UK universities. All these studies are based on only one country. Tang (2011) represents one of the rare cross-country studies, by comparing the visual elements of university websites in the USA and China to determine whether culture might play a role in a university's branding strategies.

Tang (2011)'s findings show that US and Chinese universities use different visual elements in their websites to sell themselves. These findings enable us to state the hypothesis that different cultural contexts may influence the way websites are designed and used as branding strategies.

The fourth feature of the literature is the difference between the kind of variables analysed on websites: some scholars study the visual and non-verbal elements, and others study the verbal elements (messages) contained in the websites. Tang (2011) studied the visual elements of universities conveyed through websites: the author's findings demonstrated that US universities' websites often contain, as visual elements, single person or small groups of people, whereas Chinese universities' websites often contain buildings, campus views and university gates. From these findings, Tang (2011) concludes that US universities tend to sell themselves from a perspective of "who they have", while Chinese universities tend to sell "what they have".

Chapleo et al. (2011), with the view of understanding the way UK universities communicate their brand through websites effectively, analysed the brand promise's messages within their websites. They compared the weight of, and place occupied by, functional variables (teaching, research, management, innovation) and emotional variables (international projection and social responsibility) within the UK universities' websites.

In summary, the literature on the use of websites as university branding strategy is mostly undertaken by scholars of the field of business marketing. It uses the conceptual and methodological approaches of the business marketing field and tends to study the ways websites are utilised as a branding strategy by universities operating in different countries. The literature suggests that contextual differences are relevant in explaining branding strategies and tend to analyse separately non-verbal and verbal elements.

Theory

Our theoretical framework differs from that of previous studies. While adopting the meta-language of branding developed within the field of business marketing, we use Bourdieu's sociological concepts of field and capital to interpret the explicit verbal or non-verbal symbols used by HEIs to promote themselves through websites. Bourdieu's sociological approach enables us to highlight the relational dimension of the branding process in higher education as a feature of a competitive emerging and dynamic field. We conceived the field of higher education in Mozambique as a "space of play and competition in which social agents and institutions possess the determinate quantity of specific capital (political, economic and cultural in particular) […] confront one another in strategies aimed at preserving or transforming this balance of forces" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 76).

In Mozambique, HEIs began to use branding more recurrently as a survival mechanism in response to increasing presence of competitive peers operating in the same social space. Branding became an important tool for HEIs to differentiate themselves from one another. We are concerned with how, through websites, Mozambican HEIs communicate their brands to position and differentiate themselves within the field of higher education. Since the mid-1990s, higher education in Mozambique has experienced a rapid process of expansion, differentiation and diversification (Beverwijk 2005; Langa 2006). The number of institutions increased from one in 1962, in the colonial period, to three in the mid-1980s, following the country's independence. From 1995 onwards, as a consequence of the liberalisation of the economy, the number of HEIs expanded rapidly and by 2012 there were more than 44 HEIs, of which 17 were public and 27 private (DICES 2012).

The expansion in the number of HEIs was accompanied by an increase in student enrolment. In the mid-1990s the number of university students was less than 4000. By 2012 there were almost 130,000 students across the country. The expansion and diversification of higher education suppliers, combined with the inadequate funding of public universities and over-reliance of private HEIs on student fees, created and intensified the competition among institutions (Mário et al. 2003; Wangenge-Ouma and Langa 2010). In Mozambique, as elsewhere, HEIs compete mainly for students, financial resources, and intellectual and symbolic resources (including prestige, academic staff and research).

Bourdieu's approach has been used before to analyse branding issues in higher education. For example, Naidoo et al. (2014) used Bourdieu's framework at two English business schools to analyse the way different stakeholders (academics, management, professional staff and students) view branding as a mechanism to enhance the institution's reputation, and engage themselves in the construction, communication and control of their organisation's brand image. The findings reveal tensions in the way these groups view their institution's brand and reputation as well as the way in which they engage in the institution's branding.

Our chapter focuses on how universities convey their brands to external audiences to distinguish themselves from their peers and competitors. While Naidoo et al. (2014) used empirical data based on perceptions and experiences from the different stakeholders concerning their institution's brand, we retrieved our empirical data from universities' websites and we did not analyse how these websites are perceived by different internal university stakeholders. However, we consider that their insights are relevant for our future research. We also take a different methodological approach from that of previous studies. As referred to above, despite the fact that the concept of brand involves both verbal and non-verbal elements, no studies as far as we knew have been examined both non-verbal and verbal branding elements contained in universities' websites. We attempt to combine these two elements, as described next.

Methodology

Since this study focuses on the use of websites as a branding strategy, we excluded from the sample those HEIs without a website, as well as those institutions whose websites were out-of-service between August 2012 and July 2014. We have chosen to focus on websites because they represent one of the powerful windows through which HEIs convey their image to the external public.

Tables 6.1a and 6.1b below show the sample of websites we visited. We attempted to visit the websites of 41 institutions. In case the main website was not accessible, we looked at alternative sites or other social network service available online, mainly Facebook. Of the 41 institutional websites visited, 26 websites were accessible (63, 4%) and 15 inaccessible (36, 6%), at least during the period we browsed them. 12 of the 26 accessible websites were from public institutions and 14 from private; 23 of the 26 accessible websites were the institutions' main websites, and only three (Dom Bosco, ISMMA and ESEG) were Facebook. From the 15 inaccessible websites, five were from public institutions and ten from private.

To retrieve elements from the accessible websites, we used the concept of brand as a verbal and non-verbal symbol or a combination of both, to identify a product or a service and, at same time, to differentiate it from its peers in the market (Beneke 2011, p. 33). Despite the fact that this concept of brand involves both verbal or non-verbal

Table 6.1a Sample of visited websites of public HEIs and year of establishment

No	*Accessible websites*	*Period of visit*
1	Eduardo Mondlane University—UEM (1962)	August 2012; July 2014
2	Pedagogical University—UP (1985)	August 2012
3	Higher Institute of International Relations—ISRI (1986)	1986
4	Military academy (2003)	July 2014
5	Higher Polytechnic Institute of Tete—ISPT (2005)	July 2014
6	Higher Institute of Public Administration—ISAP (2014)	July 2014
7	University of Lúrio—Uni-Lúrio (2006)	July 2014
8	University of Zambeze—Uni-Zambeze (2006)	July 2014
9	Higher Polytechnic Institute of Gaza—ISPG (2005)	July 2014
10	Higher School of Journalism—ESJ (2006)	July 2014
11	Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts—ISARC (2008)	July 2014
12	Higher Polytechnic Institute of Songo—ISPS (2008)	July 2014

Table 6.1b Sample of visited websites of private HEIs and year of establishment

No	*Accessible websites*	*Period of visit*
1	A-Polytechnic University—A-Polytechnic (1995)	August 2012
2	Catholic University of Mozambique—UCM (1995)	August 2012
3	Higher Institute of Science and Technology ISCTEM (1998)	August 2012
4	Saint-Thomas University of Mozambique—USTM (2002)	August 2012
5	Higher Institute of Technology and Management—ISTEG (2008)	August 2012
6	Higher Institute of Transports and Communication—ISUTC (1999)	August 2012
7	Saint-Thomas University of Mozambique—USTM (2005)	July 2014
8	Jean-Piaget University of Mozambique—UJPM (2005)	July 2014
9	Dom Bosco Higher Institute—Dom Bosco (2008)	July 2014
10	Monitor Higher Institute—ISM (2008)	July 2014
11	Higher Institution of Communication and Image—ISCIM (2008)	July 2014
12	Mother Africa Higher Institute—ISMMA (2008)	July 2014
13	Alberto Chipande Higher Institute of Technology—ISTAC (2009)	July 2014
14	Higher Institute of Management, Finance and Business—ISGECOF (2009)	July 2014

elements, as our literature review reveals, no previous research studied both non-verbal and verbal branding elements contained in the universities' websites. Some studies only focused on non-verbal elements (Tang 2011). Other studies focused only on verbal elements (Chapleo et al. 2011). Thus, our attempt was to retrieve and analyse both verbal and non-verbal elements contained in Mozambican universities' websites.

Methods Used to Analyse Non-verbal and Visual Elements

To retrieve non-verbal (visual) elements, we used Tang (2011)'s model. Tang (2011) retrieved and analysed pictures contained in American and Chinese universities' websites from two perspectives: pictures of buildings ("*what they-have*" pictures) and pictures of people ("*who they- have*" pictures). Concerning "what-they-have" pictures, we analysed all pictures of buildings, including pictures of facilities and services offered by each institution, such as laboratories, libraries and ICT room facilities. However, regarding the "who-they-have" pictures, we extended and adapted Tang's concept to the Mozambican context. By the "who-they-have" concept, Tang meant mainly the academic staff, whose profile is used by American universities to promote the institution's reputation.

Initially, we had decided to use the same category, but in the Mozambican context, universities rarely sell themselves visually by pictures and CVs of their academic staff; rather, they often include in their websites pictures of students and professors in graduation clothing (gowns), pictures of managers of the institution, as well as pictures of prominent national and sometimes international personalities: some institutions select heroic celebrities (see UEM, ISAP in Table 6.2 in the discussion section), others choose political figures (ISRI, AM) and religious leaders (USTM). Therefore, we also decided to analyse pictures of personalities with whom each institution identifies itself.

Besides the "who-they-have" and "what-they-have" pictures from Tang (2011)'s model, we have also decided to analyse "what-they-do'" pictures. This decision is based on the fact that, after analysing all the websites, we concluded that some institution sell themselves visually through the kind of activities they do both in and outside campus, such as academic conferences, military parades, rectors and managers visiting different faculties, and the academic community undertaking fieldwork and providing services to society.

Analysing Websites' Verbal Elements

Apart from non-verbal elements, we also retrieved and analysed verbal elements contained in websites. Though we were inspired by Chapleo et al. (2011)'s paper, we did not use their approach directly. These scholars analysed the promise in brand messages within UK university websites by comparing the weight of and place occupied by functional variables (teaching, research, management, innovation) and emotional variables (international projection and social responsibility). Instead, we analysed positioning statements viz. the mission statements, values, catch-phrases, and slogans about the quality of the facilities and services provided by HEIs.

Our decision to do this was based on the fact that the definition of mission and values of an organisation is mentioned by relevant literature (Chapleo 2004; Ind 2004; Gray et al. 2003) as one of the essential steps in the process of building an institutional brand. We decided to analyse catch-phrases and slogans because, as Mcknight and Paugh (1999, p. 50) point out, "universities use slogans as a strategy of matching their philosophy and culture to potential student-customer". We have also decided to analyse the facilities and services offered by each higher education institution.

In order to retrieve and analyse the mission statement, values, catch-phrases and slogans, we accessed the main website of each institution to verify, copy and analyse each of these elements. Some institutions do not include their mission statement and values in their main web page, but in their alternative web pages. In this case, we searched mission statements and values in the alternative web page. As Table 6.2 (in the findings section) shows, some institutions do not have or do not include their mission statement and values in their main or alternative websites.

Mozambican HEIs with catch-phrases and slogans always put them in their main websites. The absence of a catch-phrase or slogan in any institution's main websites often means that the institution does not have a catch-phrase or slogan. Finally, to retrieve and analyse the range of facilities and services offered by each higher education institution, we used both visual and textual elements. Some institutions do not describe textually the kind of facilities they offer, but they do it visually, through pictures; others do not provide pictures, but describe textually their facilities.

Findings and Discussion

Table 6.2 summarises the findings of non-verbal and verbal elements retrieved and analysed from the 26 websites of Mozambican HEIs to which we have access. From our analysis, several institutions differentiate themselves using photographs, slogans or catch-phrases, values and mission statements, facilities and services they provided. Based on these items, Table 6.2 depicts the positioning statements of HEIs to differentiate themselves in the field. These items include the year in which the institution was established (showing endurance and tradition). For instance, UEM and ISUTC state in their websites that: "*Although the university is still young, it is the first and oldest in the country and that for many years was the sole institution*" (UEM, Table 6.2). ISUTC states that it is: "*the 8th to be established in the country and that is a school essentially devoted to training engineers, but also offers management studies*" (ISUTC, Table 6.2). The specific area to which the institution is devoted is used as a distinctive marker: UP is dedicated to Teacher Training; ISUTC to engineering and ISRI to training of diplomats. In highlighting their areas of expertise the institutions are sending a message to their 'clients'—they are the 'best'. The services/facilities provided (nearly all private higher education included in this sample), its values (USTM, UCM, A-Politécnica), or its pedagogical approach (A-Politécnica),

Table 6.2 Analysing brand and HEIs differentiation through names, symbol or combination of these items in institutional websites

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
UEM (2012, 2014)	• Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambican Hero—First President of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique—FRELIMO, One of if not the first Black Mozambican to receive a Doctorate in the USA) • Video of Rector • Students and academic community in conferences	"The best brand of Higher Education in Mozambique" "50 Years of Higher Education (in Mozambique)" The prime higher education in Mozambique"	"Although the university is still young, it is the oldest and it was, for many years, the only university in the country" "Producing and disseminating scientific knowledge and promoting innovation through research as the foundation for the activities of teaching and community service, educating new generation with humanist values in order to face the contemporary challenges and promote the society's development"	Not mentioned	Longevity or Antiquity, Experience, "the prime-university" Quality Research-oriented

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
UP (2012)	• Main building	"Share with us the dream of creating a better world through education"	"UP is devoted to training teachers" "If you intend to study in a University that gives value to competences, know-how and human beings as a whole, join us"	Not mentioned	Training of educators/teachers (area differentiating)
ISRI (2012)	• Main building • Rector • Head of State's image • Prime Minister image • Students dressed in graduation clothes (gowns)	"Leading institution in international relations and diplomacy"	"For more than 20 years we have graduated hundreds of diplomats and experts in international relations" "We train cadres with a higher level of understanding and skills in international relations, diplomacy and public administration	Not mentioned	Leader and unique in training diplomats (area differentiating)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
AM (2014)	• Main building • Officers in military parade, holding flags, during a graduation ceremony • A cadet officer being attributed an insignia by superior Commanders, in a presence of the Head of State	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Unique in the field of military officer's training (area differentiating)
ISPT (2014)	• Main Building • Students dressed in graduation clothes, with the former Mozambican prime-minister	Not mentioned	"To promote social and economic development of local communities, through a technical and professional education, an education oriented to the economy, spinoff companies, as well as to the delivery of professional services"		Pedagogical approach and oriented to community service (professionalization, linked to the economy and development of local communities)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISPG (2014)	• Students undertaking fieldwork, academic program visualized by pictures (for example, hydraulic engineering academic program is portrayed by an image of a bridge; Zootechnics by a picture of a cow; Agricultural Engineering by a picture of cultivated fields, and agricultural economy, by a picture of crops for sale) • Managers and directors of the institution • Deputy-minister for Higher Education; • Personalities from partner institutions'	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Services provided (virtual library)	Pedagogical approach (practical and fieldwork-oriented training) services and facilities

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISAP (2014)	• Main building • A photo of the institution's magazine with figures of some of the country's prominent historic personalities	"Top Mozambican institution in professionalization of the Public Administration and in the training of the country's active leadership"	"Training and Capacity-building in Public Administration of leaders and cadres in position of management, enhancement of leadership capacity, academic and technical-professional training of civil servants working in public administration, with a view of good governance"		Pedagogical approach and area differentiating (professionalization of the Public Administration's civil servants and managers)
ESJ (2014), Public, established in 2006	• Main Building • Academic community in conferences • Professors and Students dressed in graduation clothes	Not mentioned	"To train experts in communication sciences skilled to satisfy the aspirations of the society" "To be a renowned higher education institution in the field of communication sciences, capable of contributing to the construction of an informed society"		Leader in the field of communication sciences (area differentiator)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
Uni-Zambeze (2014)	• Professors and students in graduation clothes • Rector and managers visiting colleges and faculties	"Teaching, learning, acting and winning"	"The mission of the university is to produce, disseminate and apply knowledge, based on academic freedom and plurality of critical reasoning; the university promotes higher learning and contributes to a construction of a society based on humanistic principles, to which knowledge, creativity and innovation are seen as factors for growth, sustainable development and well-being"	Not mentioned	Comprehensiveness of academic areas provided and values (critical reasoning, humanist values)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
Uni-Lúrio (2014)	• Main building • Students laughing and embracing one another • Students in graduation clothes • Students in medical clothes • UNESCO's representative in Mozambique • University's academic community undertaking community fieldwork • Rector of the university	"Excellent, high standard, competitive and internationally recognized higher education" "Science, development and compromise"	"Educating a new generation of competent professionals, tasked with the development, science and well-being of local communities"	Not mentioned	Community service (training professionals compromised with the development of local communities)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISPS (2014)	• Main Building showing inside of classrooms • Campus under construction • Students' residence building • ICT room • Students dressed in graduation clothes, with the former Mozambican prime-minister	"A school for the energy sector"	Not mentioned		Community service (providing energy to the community)
ISARC (2014)	• Arts and crafts • Inside of conference room with academic community interacting	Not mentioned	"Training artists, technicians and cultural administrators in different areas of arts and crafts; promoting and developing scientific and technological research in arts and crafts"	Not mentioned	Unique in the field of arts and crafts (area differentiator)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
A-Politécnica (2012)	• Main building • Rector • Academic community in conferences	"Humanism, Rigour, Professionalism"	"The A-Politécnica's mission is to contribute to enhancing the educational, technical and scientific level of Mozambicans, through the highest standards of education in teaching students and training professors, and by adopting a theoretical-practical and professional approach to the contents"	Description of the physical infrastructures and facilities/services, such as Library, recreation,	pedagogical approach (professionalising contents) facilities/servicesand values

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
UCM (2012),	• Buildings • Graduates • Personalities (deputy minister of education)	"Celebrating quality and innovation"	"Based on catholic principles, UCM is guided by the following values: Promotion of the person and life; defence of freedom and independence; promotion of solidarity; promotion of citizenship; democracy and patriotism" "Oriented by the catholic principles, the UCM's mission is (i) developing and disseminating scientific knowledge and culture; and (ii) promoting, in several areas of knowledge, an integral and permanent education of citizens, committed with the life and with the sustainable development of the Mozambican society, as well as of the world in general"	Library, recognition of the students' sacrifice and effort	Catholic values, facilities, quality

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISCTEM (2012)		"In a context of the rapid development of HEIs in the country, ISCTEM assumes the challenge of offering an education that makes a difference"	"Beside academic activities for secondary and tertiary education, ISCTEM has characteristics that make it different and innovative"	ICT laboratory, Laboratory for entrepreneurial simulation, Junior enterprise for innovation and entrepreneurship, Centre for Juridical Training, Centre for Social Sciences Research, Dental Clinic)	Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Facilities/services for innovating while studying

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
USTM (2012)	• Buildings • Founder (high-ranking cleric Alexandre José Maria dos Santos) • Students at graduations ceremonies • International university ranking tables (2012), showing that USTM is among the best HEIs in Mozambique	"to be the country's leader in the integral and integrated education of the human being, observing the rich tradition of academic excellence, research and service of quality"	"For many years I have wished to contribute, personally, to the development of the Mozambican people, considering the human in its whole sense. The human education in its several senses, namely cultural, academic, technical, but above all, moral and civic, was one of the major objectives since the beginning"		Values (Moral and civic education Integral education) Good position in ranking (One of the best universities in Mozambique)
ISTEG (2012)	• Main building • Classrooms • Rector • Academic community in conferences	"Our School at the service of the people"	"ISTEG's mission is to contribute to the permanent and flexible academic, professional, technological, development and training in the fields of management, law, economics and finance, from a multidisciplinary perspective"	School transport, Parking, swimming pool, sports ground, garden and personalised attendance	services/facilities

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISUTC (2012)	• Main building • Graduates	10 years "Prepare your future, with a solid training"	The 8th oldest in the country A school essentially devoted to engineering, but also offers management studies	Administrative services ICT services	Experience, Area differentiator (engineering)
Jean Piaget (2014)	• ICT room, laboratory's equipment and public transport for students • Guest engineer from the Porto University (Portugal) delivering a speech • Pictures of several civil engineering buildings under construction • Students interacting with Professors	"Your future depends on us"	Not mentioned	Administrative services, library, bookshop and a wide range supporting services, infrastructure and facilities for pedagogic, scientific, technical and entertainment purposes, including for having meals)	Services/facilities provided

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ESEG (2014)	• Students in T-shirts with ESEG's seal • Students having lessons and professors lecturing in classrooms • Professors dressed in doctoral clothes	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not clear
Dom Bosco (2014)	• Main building • Classrooms	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	
ISM (2014)	• Main building • Classrooms • ICT room • Students inside classrooms	"Meet the specificities and demands of national labour market through distance teaching	"to provide students with a high quality education, supported by modern ICT that meet local demands"	Not mentioned	Pedagogical approach (distance learning)

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISCIM (2014)	• Main building • Multimedia laboratory • Classrooms • Parking • ICT room • Conference room • Library • Medical centre • Pictures of students in HD • Students managing cameras		ISCIM's mission is to meet social demands of a high quality education, as well as to participate in poverty fighting, through creating opportunities to new generations in the field of communication, multimedia, marketing, management and law	Not mentioned	
ISMMA (2014)	• Main building • Students • Managers of the institution addressing an audience in conference room and in church building		"Provide higher education in the field of education and social action and training professionals equipped with high moral and ethical values" "Develop research programs capable of solving ethical and moral problems of communities"	Not mentioned	Services/facilities provided

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

Higher education institution	*Photos and images*	*Positioning: slogan, strapline or catch-phrase*	*Values and mission statements*	*Services provided*	*Differentiating elements (our analysis)*
ISGECOF (2014)	• Main building • Managers • Rectors with his CV • Conference room • Pictures of the university's managers signing an agreement with a bank	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		
ISTAC (2014)	• Multi-usage laboratory and juridical clinic	"Promoting scientific development"	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	Services/facilities provided

represent an asset—a social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital which the institutions display to demark its position in a growing competitive field.

HEIs in Mozambique use brands not only to identify themselves, but also to highlight their difference vis-à-vis other competitors with regards to longevity, experience and tradition (UEM), expertise in a specialised area (UP, ISUTC, ISRI), facilities/services, their pedagogical approach and even their association with prestigious personalities in the political and religious arenas. We argued that, through branding, HEIs seek to obtain the resources and capital necessary to exist and survive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

When UEM claims that it is "the best brand of higher education in Mozambique" and that it is the "Prime higher education in Mozambique" (Table 6.2), it is positioning itself in a competitive social space through branding. UEM, in this case, is not simply stating what could be regarded as a true or false claim, but it is sending a message to its peers and targeting certain constituencies by highlighting its brand and uniqueness.

Confronted with the presence of competitors offering the same services, HEIs feel the need to distinguish themselves by establishing a niche, an area of expertise or excellence and by defining a brand. ISRI, for instance, states in its website that it is "a Leading institution in International Relations and Diplomacy" (Table 6.2). Apart from this claim, ISRI depicts in its website pictures of the Head of State and Prime Minister, to show its uniqueness.

In Table 6.2 we have presented most of the positioning statements, both verbal and non-verbal of the HEIs, demarcating their position in the field and distinguishing themselves through branding.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we argued that branding is one of the strategies used by HEIs to survive in the increasingly competitive field of higher education in Mozambique. HEIs build their name and image and promote it as a brand to mobilise financial, symbolic and intellectual resources by attracting prospective students, government, donors and corporations that guarantee their survival in a growing competitive field of higher education providers.

We examined how HEIs use websites to portrait and represent their image so as to differentiate themselves from their competitors. We identified four ways in which HEIs distinguish themselves from their competitors: years of (establishment) existence; area of specialisation; services/facilities provided; pedagogical approach; and images of personalities on their websites.

Our argument was reinforced by the evidence that HEIs tend to use brands to compete for the scarce resources available in the field. Institutions use brands to promote their identity, difference and uniqueness to motivate potential clients to 'buy' their products and services. Further questions may be raised regarding the use of brands in higher education: How do potential clients perceive these brands? Do they really feel attracted to the institution? This is a sensible way forward for further research.

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CHAPTER 7

Higher Education: The Impacts of Educational Brand on Students' Decision to Enroll Through Advertising Brochures for Higher Education Institutions in Surabaya Indonesia

Jenny Ngo and Decky A. Ismandoyo

For higher education institutions (HEIs), the educational brand is one of the important factors in marketing their university, in terms of products (fields of study) and services. Brand, according to Aaker (1997), is usually associated with a particular image that can create certain associations in the minds of customers. The brand image is also one of the critical factors in the willingness of prospective customers (in this chapter, high school students) to connect with a company (in this context, higher education institutions). Therefore, unique brands can strengthen the brand image of an institution or a university (Fianto 2014).

J. Ngo (✉) · D.A. Ismandoyo
Sekolah Tinggi Teknik Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

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Over the last 10 years, many higher education institutions in Indonesia including Surabaya city have set up and improved their institutional brand attributes to impress the public, particularly high school students. One of the many ways is through advertising brochures. Advertising brochures are automatic machine makers that can not only convey the impression of making sales calls and taking orders, but also influence purchasing decisions (Duncan 2008). The decision-making process is important since individuals are directly involved in obtaining and using the goods on offer (Kotler and Armstrong 2008). Thus, advertising brochures are considered an effective brand equity for Indonesian HEIs. They can cover much information on each study program and its curriculum, advanced facilities offered by universities, and prospective jobs after graduation. The brochures can deliver clear information on the university's qualities which may attract prospective senior high school students to apply directly to universities, meaning an increase of student enrollments.

Like other higher education institutions in Indonesia, many institutions in Surabaya also start improving their advertising brochures to be able to attract high school students to enroll. Surabaya is Indonesia's second largest city and the capital of East Java province. It is on the northern coast of East Java province and is divided into 163 districts and 31 subdistricts. Surabaya is rich with the human resource; it is the second most populous city in Indonesia (after Jakarta), with the population of 2.843 million (as of 2014, Online, www.surabaya.go.id). Its people are also relatively well-educated. The city has 69 higher education institutions.

This chapter investigates the impacts of educational brand on students' decision to enroll through advertising brochures for higher education institutions in Surabaya Indonesia. Moreover, it aims to better understand the role of a university brand in increasing student enrollments.

Theoretical Framework

(Educational) Brand

Past studies show that there is still no consensus about what a holistic definition of brand should be. Kotler (2000, p. 396) defines brand as the name, associated with one or more items in the product line, which is used to identify the source of character of the item(s). The American Marketing

Association (AMA 2003 as cited in Kotler et al. 2007) describes brand as a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competition. This new definition of a brand focuses more on the differentiating aspect of branding. Brands, however, serve a variety of key roles at the interface between product design, customer relationships, and marketing communication (Rowley 2001 as cited in Kotler et al. 2007). Brand is essentially a "marketer's promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services consistently to the buyer" (Kotler et al. 2001, p.188). Nha and LeBlanc (2001) define brand as people's impression about an organization.

The concept of branding, as applied to higher education, is somewhat different from branding in the commercial sector. Bosch (2006) describes brand as who the university is and what makes the university different from others from the stakeholders' perspective. Bosch (2006) highlighted two key elements: (a) brand meaning is closely related to the beholder (students and their parents) who experienced the brand; and (b) the characteristics of a university (e.g., its study programs). Nha and LeBlanc (2001) present students' impression, opinion, and belief as the dimension of brand. The brand is defined by where the university's values and the constituents' expectations (students, parents, communities) intersect. Most notably, brand in higher education is about the existence of the characteristics of a brand or other things that make a brand what it is and different from others (or its uniqueness).

As universities in Indonesia find the need to compete and differentiate themselves from others, good marketing strategies have become increasingly important. Among other many ways, advertising brochures are considered to be one of the least expensive and effective ways to promote universities to attract prospective students (Rustan 2009).

Advertising Brochure

Advertising brochures are an important informational indicator through which consumers judge product quality, which motivates their buying behavior (Rustan 2009). Within the educational system, advertising brochures are one of many ways to describe and present a university for students when selecting schools (Ibid., 2009). In a brochure, media designers usually form layout elements on a page with two main purposes. The first one is to deliver information that is accurate and complete, and the second is to read comfortably, and this includes easily finding the needed information, navigation, and esthetics (Ibid., 2009).

In general, all graphic designs including media campaigns or publications such as brochures contain part of or all of their constituent elements. These constituent elements are text elements, visual elements, and invisible elements (layouts). Rustan (2009) explains the layout elements in the brochure as follows:

1. Layout includes margin and grid. A layout is considered full if it has full of pictures and texts in the brochure, the layout looks elegant if there is an empty area in the brochure after image and text, and the simple layout if there are only one picture and one column of text displayed.
2. The text element is a group of elements in the form of visible text in a layout. This includes headline, deck, credit line, body copy, subhead, pull quotes, caption, callouts, kickers, initial caps, indent, lead line, space, header and footer, running headline, footnote, page number, jump lines, signature, nameplate, and masthead. The text appears unreadable when performing large size with big typeface, the shaped text appears with a character, and the text looks interesting if it has a shape, color, and good communication.
3. Visual element is a group of elements in form of photographs, artwork, infographics, rules, boxes, inzet (small visual element in a big visual element), and points. Brochure with visual color looks attractive by having a bright color, and good pictures.

In the making of a brochure, creative processes are needed to produce an attractive design. The creative process of making a brochure comes together with the making of other print media. Layout strategy plays an important role in influencing readers. It means that layout can affect and direct readers toward brochures. Antin (1993) suggests that strategy layout is one of strategies to accommodate readers by giving the information in an easy and right way. A good, interesting, and attractive layout consists of three parts. First, put a large image in the middle of the brochure, second, put the headlines which are smaller than the image under the image, and third, input a text column. In short, a good layout is a layout with pictures on the top, followed by headline, and text column. A bad layout tends to be unread (Ibid., 1993).

Student's Behavior: Decision to Enroll

As described earlier that advertising brochures can help students distinguish and define differences among schools, and subsequently affect their selection intent. In other words, they most likely provide a positive influence for students to buy. They are considered more effective because they establish the product's character and value proposition, convey the character in a distinctive way, and deliver emotional power beyond a mental image (Kotler et al. 2007). According to Duncan (2008), advertising brochures are automatic machine makers that can not only convey the impression of making sales calls and taking orders, but also influence purchasing decisions. In this context, advertising brochures present the education brand of an institution that may influence students' decision (behavior) to select a university.

Based on theoretical inferences in the literature review, two hypotheses regarding the relationship among the various concepts were respectively delineated and tested:

H1: Advertising brochure has a significant effect on educational brand.
H2: Educational brand has significant effect on students' decision to enroll in a university

To reach the purpose of the study, elements of advertising brochures, educational brand in terms of the characteristics of a university, and students' behaviors in terms of their decision to enroll were the variables measured in this chapter. To investigate the impacts of advertising brochures on the educational brand, we used the three main elements (i.e., layout, text, visual) as important constituent elements that conveyed the position of a university brand. Consequently, good and attractive brochures which delivered the characteristics of a university clearly could attract students' attention and finally their decision to enroll.

Using a survey method, the questionnaire, having a total of 15 questions describes three variables aiming to investigate the relationship between advertising brochure and educational brand and students' behavior. The first variable contains nine questions related to layout, texts, visual in each brochure of two outstanding universities in Surabaya. The second variable addresses three questions related to education brand focusing on a specialty of the universities. The third variable describes three questions related to students' behavior (i.e., decision to select) toward the universities. The questionnaire was pilot tested with randomly chosen high school students measuring the reliability of questions. The results showed Cronbach's alpha above 0.70 implying that the questions are reliable in measuring the factors under study.

Method

Sample

Based on the data from the National Accreditation Board for high schools and Madrasah (BAN-S/M, 2015), there are 173 high schools (both public and private) in Surabaya and there are only 56 high schools (both public and private) having an A-accreditation. These accredited high schools were the starting point for our sampling. It would be great to have the 56 high schools as our sampling. Due to time and budget limitations, ten high schools were selected via a random sampling. The target groups were students in grade 12 who were preparing themselves to choose a university. We sent an official letter to the ten high schools describing and explaining the purpose of the study. Some challenging time was faced regarding some complicated and long procedures to get some approval from high schools. The results turned out that only four high schools agreed to get involved in the study.

The study used an advertising brochure of two outstanding universities representing the education brand, one is specialized in Information Technology (IT) and the other one in entrepreneurship. These two universities were selected as the objects for our study because first, the fields of study, both Information Technology and Entrepreneurship are highly desirable by high school students; second, both of the universities are more qualified and popular with their own specialization of study than other universities; third, many high school students choose these two universities because of their study qualification. Both selected universities are accredited "B" as a good institution by National Accreditation Board (BAN-PT 2016). Their B-accreditation are valid until 2020.

Data Collection

A quantitative research approach was selected as the most suitable method to investigate the impacts of educational brand on students' decision to enroll through advertising brochures. For data collection, a questionnaire covering the three variables was developed. The questionnaire was distributed to grade 12 students. After receiving approval from the principal of high schools, we visited the schools and guided the students to fill out the questionnaire. In the class, we explained the purpose of our research, then distributed the questionnaire to all students, next showed and explained the advertising brochures of university A and B via a big screen. To maximize the accuracy and reliability of our data, we described and explained clearly the meaning of each question regarding the brochures to all students. We assisted the students until they completed the 15 questions in the questionnaire. A total of 80 questionnaires were obtained for the research. The response rate was 100% in which all students filled out the questionnaire correctly. The answers were valid.

Of the 80 respondents, 59% were female and 41% were male. The vast majority of the respondents (56%) were from social sciences and 44% of the respondents were from pure sciences. These suggest that the predominance of female students and social sciences at schools. The average age of the respondents was between 16 and 17 years old.

Measures

For measuring the items related to dependent and independent variables, a five-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 = s*trongly disagree*, 2 = d*isagree*, 3 = n*either agree nor disagree*, 4 = *Agree*, and 5 = s*trongly agree*. A descriptive analysis was used to describe the basic characteristics of the data. A regression analysis was carried out to examine the relationship between the advertising brochure and the education brand and the students' decision on the university of their choice.

Results

Reliability and Validity Analysis

After final data collection, reliability and validity were first tested using confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed that the five latent variables in the study exceeded the 0.6 criteria for reliability with Cronbach's alpha (1972) ranging from 0.704 to 0.732. The results indicated good internal consistency among the latent variables. Furthermore, the results also imply no measurement deviation.

Advertising Brochure

The high school students were asked to indicate their opinion (from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5)) on the advertising brochure of "A" university specializing on Information Technology and "B" university specializing on Entrepreneurship. Regarding the layout element, the majority of the respondents think that the advertising brochures of both universities were not attractive at all. They think that the layout of the brochures was full of pictures and texts. Regarding the layout of the IT university brochure, 39.4% of the respondents think that its layout was full. While 45.5% of the respondents think that the layout of the entrepreneurship university brochure was full.

Regarding the text element, the majority of the respondents think that the text element in both university brochure was good and satisfying. The findings showed that 69% of the respondents indicated that IT university provided a brochure with appealing headlines with a unique use of IT language, for example, ICT certification: *Mikrotik*, SAP, Oracle. The clear and readable texts in the IT university brochure attracted the respondents' attention representing 86% of the respondents. Concerning the entrepreneurial university brochure, in general, more than 60% of the respondents agreed that this university presented interesting texts in the brochure. The university also uses a unique use of entrepreneurial language, for example, entrepreneurship journey, a quantum leap. These results showed that 69% of the respondents agreed that both university brochures represent the characteristics of their university. The use of specific words or phrases in the texts represents the characteristics of the university itself.

Regarding the visual element, the results show that both university brochures have appealing and eye-catching visuals. Regarding the IT university brochure, more than 80% of the respondents said that the photographs showed the characteristics of the IT university by representing the modern IT laboratories. Further, they (81%) said that the artworks (colors) in the IT university brochure were attractive using bright and contrast colors. Concerning the entrepreneurial university brochure, 69% of the respondents said that the photographs represented the characteristics of the entrepreneurial university by showing students with their products. 74% of the respondents thought that the artworks (colors) in the entrepreneurial university brochure were attractive.

Educational Brand

The high school students were asked to indicate their opinion (from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5)) on the educational brand defining characteristics/values of IT university and entrepreneurial university. Interestingly, 40% of the respondents said that they only heard but did not really know the existence of the IT university but 40% of the respondents said that they knew the popularity of this IT university. Around 45% of the respondents confirmed that they took the IT university brochure because of its popularity and IT characteristics. Regarding the entrepreneurial university, 45% of the respondents said that they did know the popularity of this university. More than 51% of the respondents said they definitely took the brochure of the entrepreneurial university because of its popularity and specialization.

Students' Decision

The high school students were asked to indicate their decision on choosing a university (from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5)). The results indicated that more than 50% of the respondents reported that the characteristics (specialization) of the university were one of the important factors for them to choose their future university. Interestingly, the results showed that the respondent's parents played a very important role to help them choose a university. The results indicated that more than 50% of the respondents think that their parents prefer them to choose the entrepreneurial university to the IT university. In addition to this, more than 35% of the respondents said that they were interested in choosing more the entrepreneurial university than the IT university. Around 20% of the respondents reported that they were confused which university they would choose.

Regression Analysis: Relationship Between Advertising Brochure, Educational Brand, and Student's Decision

The regression analysis was conducted to measure the relationship between each element of the advertising brochure, education brand, and students' decision to enroll in a university. The results showed that these positive beta values of the three elements had a significant effect (all $p \leq 0.05$) on education brand. Further, the results showed that the visual element has the highest regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.55$), followed by text element ($\beta = 0.38$) and layout element ($\beta = 0.27$). This suggests that the visual element is a strong factor influencing the educational brand. The study's findings are in line with the theory (Antin 1993) explained earlier that readers (in this contexts students) usually look at the image first (i.e., logo, characteristics of programs, quality or even affordable tuition) presented in the brochure followed by the headline (in form of text). In short, the good and appealing advertising brochures, conveying a clear and informative description of the university, did influence the students' perception on the education brand of a university. This study, thereby, supported hypothesis 1.

Further, the results showed that the education brand has a moderate and significant positive impact ($\beta = 0.48$, $p \leq 0.05$) on the students' decision to enroll to a university. This suggests that the education brand of both IT university and entrepreneurial university did influence the students' decision to enroll in either one of them, thereby supporting hypothesis 2. The finding is in line with the study by Chen and Chen (2014) indicating that a better university brand image (based on its specialization of the study program) would positively affect students' decision to enroll to the selected university. Moreover, the strong and good educational brand image of a university also positively influence parents' perception to encourage their child to study in that university.

In overall, the conceptual framework of the study was supported indicating the hypothesized model has a goodness-of-fit ranging from 24 to 51%. Advertising brochure with appealing visual layout was a good model for predicting educational brand ($R^2 = 48\%$) and a strong brand showing good quality of characteristics of a university was a good model for predicting students' decision ($R^2 = 51\%$) to enroll to the university.

Discussion

The findings of the study showed that the participants were not interested in reading a brochure with full layout. They think that the full layout of the university brochures brings up a lot of information as well. The study by Rustan (2009) indicates that the main goal of brochures is to provide and to ease important information to readers. The massive amount of information in form of text column makes the readers not interested in taking on the brochure. They perceive that advertising brochures which contain too much information will make them difficult to find the important information needed.

Further, this study's finding is in line with the study by Antin (1993), which indicates that a good and interesting brochure will lead the readers' attention to the images and then to the title. Based on this study, more than 80% of the respondents were attracted to the brochures of both universities because they provided such wonderful images (photographs) with bright and eye-catching colors. Further, this study also supports the study by Blakeman (2004), which indicates that the brand identity (in our context is educational brand, characteristics of the university) is created through a good style layout. The result of this study showed that more than 50% of the respondents said that they took the brochure because of the strong characteristics (educational brand of the university) shown in the brochure.

The use of text as a headline with a large size will attract readers' (in this context, students) attention rather than the other brochure elements (Harrower 1993). From the texts in the advertising brochure of IT and entrepreneurial university, this study's findings are in line with the study by Harrower (1993), which indicates that the use of language and type of the corresponding text characters attract the respondents much more. In the brochures of both universities in this study, the IT university used the language of ICT, for example, *Mikrotik*, SAP, Oracle and the entrepreneurial university used the language of entrepreneurship journey, a quantum leap to your future. The study by Ogilvy (1985) explains that the important texts (i.e., headline) which are the vital part of printing advertisement should use bigger sizes and strong type of fonts (serifs and sans-serif bold). The brochures of both universities used big sizes for headlines and important words which focus on their educational characteristics.

Moreover, the use of many bright colors conceptually makes brochures much more interesting and attractive to readers. The readers' interest will be much stronger when some photographs are embedded in the brochures. Photographs become credible media and the impression of "believable" and reinforce the message to the readers (Harrower 1993). The presence of visual elements through color and photographs will give power to the educational brand providing that the information is convincing. In this study, the brochure of the IT university provides some photographs of the modern IT laboratories with modern computers which show the educational brand of the university that is IT. In addition, the brochure of the entrepreneurial university also provides some photographs of young entrepreneurs with a formal suit which show the characters of entrepreneurship, that is, business people.

Moreover, the findings of this study confirm another study by Rustan (2009) indicating that attractive brochures help students distinguish and define differences among the two universities. In this study, the participants can distinguish the characters of the IT university and the entrepreneurial university by just looking at the particular words or phrases (i.e., ICT or entrepreneurship journey) and the photographs (i.e., the modern IT laboratories and the young entrepreneurs). The findings indicated that more than 40% of the participants said that they recognized the characteristics of the university (brand) based on the visual elements in the brochure. It is because the educational brand of the two universities was informatively and clearly shown in the layout, text, and visual elements in the brochure. In other words, this chapter, in line with other studies by Antin (1993) and Gu (2013), suggests that the presence of the university brochure particularly through visual displays will show the power of the educational brand of the university.

Further, the study found the positive and significant effect of educational brand on students' decision to enroll. This indicated that the brand image of a university was significantly related to the students' decision to enroll. In other words, the better the brand image perceived by the students, the higher the willingness of the students to enroll. This chapter found that the students' perception on the characteristics of a university (i.e., IT or entrepreneurship) as the educational brand of the university do influence the student's behaviors to enroll. The findings indicated that more than 50% of the respondents reported that they would choose a university based on the characteristics of the university (brand). This chapter, therefore, supports the other studies (Chen and Chen 2014; Fianto 2014) indicating that when perception of brand is good in terms of quality, services, and satisfaction, it will affect the customer's preferences in making purchasing behavior.

Based on the overall analyzes, this chapter suggested that attractive brochures helped students distinguish and define differences among the two universities, Information Technology and Entrepreneurship. Interesting and appealing advertising brochures with good visual representation did affect the educational brand of the university presented. This chapter also suggested that a better university brand presenting the characteristics of its university had a significant positive effect on students' decision to enroll. The results did support hypotheses 1 and 2 of the study. In conclusion, the conceptual model was a good model for predicting the students' decision to enroll through educational brand and advertising brochures.

Implication and Limitation

Higher education institutions in Surabaya, Indonesia have been confronted with tight competition from many International higher education institutions (offshore) which offer double or joint diplomas and from national universities which offer competitive tuition fees. In order to survive in the competitive student markets, universities should maintain and strengthen their educational brand image through good advertising brochures to influence students' decision to enroll. This chapter showed that advertising brochures can be the strength for a university in building the educational brand image in the minds of prospective students. Designing attractive advertising brochures and creating and establishing excellent educational brand image can be strategic assets in influencing high school students on choosing a university. Moreover, this chapter can be useful for marketing practitioners in universities particularly in Surabaya and generally in Indonesia. The university marketers may use our study for their marketing purposes and for comparative perspective in the future.

This chapter is subject to several limitations. First, the respondents were from four accredited schools in Surabaya. As mentioned earlier in the methodology section, only four high schools out of ten schools responded to our research invitation. Second, some schools were reluctant to be the target of the survey. They said that they were busy with the national examination for students of the 12th grade. It would be better for future research to have wider targets from many high schools.

This chapter strongly recommends that universities should improve their advertising brochures presenting the power of the brand image of the university. It is because the educational brand of universities deeply influences high school students' willingness to choose their future university. This chapter is also useful for the region in which high school students will not choose a university outside Surabaya city. Moreover, it is expected that universities in Surabaya will attract high school students outside Surabaya to study in the region. As such, the region keeps the flow of the economy (tuition fee) within the region itself. Moreover, it is expected that after graduating from the university, graduates still work in Surabaya.

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CHAPTER 8

The Notion of Branding in the Higher Education Sector: The Case of Hong Kong

Queenie K.H. Lam and Hayes H.H Tang

This chapter seeks to clarify the notion of branding in the higher education sector by using the case of Hong Kong where neoliberalist reforms have been carried out in the past two decades. The ethos of Hong Kong universities had been elitist before the two waves of massification (Lo and Tang 2017; Tang 2015). The University of Hong Kong was the only university for training colonial bureaucrats and professionals from 1912 onwards until The Chinese University of Hong Kong was established in 1963. Only very talented students in Hong Kong were granted access to these two universities before the two waves of massification. The first wave of massification took place in the 1990s when the British colonial government encountered a legitimacy crisis in governing the city which was destined to return to the People's Republic of China (PRC) (Tang 2015). Reacting to

Q.K.H. Lam (✉)
Centre for Higher Education Governance Ghent, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

University of Kassel, Kassel, Germany

H.H.H. Tang
The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong

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the palpable authoritarianism and political unrest of China at the turn of 1990s, many Hong Kong people left the city. The colonial government, in response, substantially broadened the access to universities through the establishment of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 1991 and the granting of university status to four local post-secondary colleges—Hong Kong Baptist University, City University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University in 1994, and Lingnan University in 1999. The higher education system in Hong Kong was predominantly constituted of these public-funded universities until the second wave of massification, which was realised in the 2000s by the establishment of self-financing post-secondary community colleges and the introduction of associate degree programs.

For nearly half a century, Hong Kong universities, as public institutions, were not seen as competitive actors in the way the corporate setting operated them (Hasse and Krücken 2013). In Hong Kong, the competitive discourse appeared only in the late 1990s when neoliberal ideology penetrated the public sector and when Hong Kong became an integral part of the PRC under the "One Country Two Systems" arrangement. The idea of "branding" Hong Kong reportedly emerged in 1997 when much attention was focused on Hong Kong's return to the PRC (Information Services Unit of Hong Kong SAR Government n.d.). Subsequently branded as "Asia's World City" in 2001, Hong Kong ambitiously positions itself on par with London and New York as a leading player of globalisation. Heavy investments have been made to develop "world-class" hardware (infrastructures) and software (manpower) in Hong Kong so as to maintain its competitive edge in global competition. Public universities, being at the forefront of human resource development and knowledge production, have been challenged with new social expectations to provide quality education responsive to the fast-changing world and to engage in cutting-edge applied research that brings about innovations (University Grants Committee [UGC] 2010).

Specifically, strong policy drives were introduced in the first decade of the twenty-first century to develop Hong Kong into a "regional education hub" (UGC 2004a, b, 2007, & 2010) and to shape its higher education system as one of the six pillars of Hong Kong's new (knowledge) economy (Hong Kong SAR Government 2004, 2009). Through a series of system-wide (UGC 2004a, b, & 2010) and institution-specific (UGC 2016) higher education reviews in the past two decades, public universities in Hong Kong were repeatedly "recommended" to identify their strategic priorities and to develop differentiated roles based on their unique strengths with which they could aspire to "international competitiveness" (UGC 2010, pp. 95–97). Such reviews, coupled with the introduction of competitive-based funding instruments, not only for research but also teaching and fundraising activities, have effectively brought about changes in university management culture.

Among all the changes, strategic planning and branding practices are the most noticeable due to their inherent need for external communication. The practice of institutional strategic planning was first introduced by CUHK in 2004/2005 and peaked in 2008/2009 when most of the institutions entered into similar exercises. By 2016, all the public universities in Hong Kong have an institutional-level strategic plan. Through these planning documents, it becomes apparent that the notion of branding has gained unprecedented importance in university management. Four of the seven public universities explicitly spell out branding as a strategic priority, whereas three others indicate related activities, such as image/reputation-building and positioning.

In Hong Kong, there is no doubt that "branding" has become a popular practice in university management. Behind the popularity of university branding, there is, however, still a lack of conceptual clarity on what constitutes a university brand and what kind of activities are attributable to a university branding process.

This study adapts a corporate branding definition by Balmer (2001), as discussed below, to empirically investigate how Hong Kong public universities present themselves through different corporate communication materials (the English language version of their strategic plans, vision and mission statements, student recruitment information, and press releases), and the extent to which the self-representations in the different types of communication materials indicate a coordinated approach to branding. A combination of manual and computer-aided content analysis methods, which are detailed in the methodology section, has been used.

Conceptual Framework

There is a growing body of literature touching on different aspects of university branding. These include studies exploring why universities brand (Mampaey et al. 2015; Stensaker 2007; Weerts et al. 2014), how they brand (Deephouse 1999; Drori et al. 2013; Mampaey et al. 2015; Marginson and Considine 2000), what kind of universities tend to brand

(Brown and Mazzarol 2009; Chapleo 2011; Zemsky et al. 2005), and the challenges universities face in branding (Temple 2006; Chapleo 2007; Wæraas and Solbakk 2009). The pros and cons of university branding are often discussed in these studies as well.

There have also been several attempts to define "branding" in the higher education context. Some see branding as a project by which university administrators augment the services provided by their institution with the institutional value so as to facilitate and enable potential consumers to recognise these values confidently and appreciate them (Chapleo 2007; Mampaey et al. 2015). Others see it as a processes of articulating the essence as well as precise and consistent description of a university: what it "is", what it "stands for", and what it is going to be "known for" (Wæraas and Solbakk 2009), or a comprehensive part of the marketing and the strategic decisions in a university (Litten 1980; Stensaker 2007).

Yet, there remains a lack of consensus on the definition of a university brand or university branding as a process. Besides, the term "branding" and "brand" are often used interchangeably with similar terms, such as identity, reputation, and image, by those who research on the subject and those who practice higher education marketing and branding. Arguing that "a real understanding of branding in its fullest context" (Chapleo 2011, p. 420) is important; Chapleo attempted a "fuller definition" of university branding:

> university branding concerns defining the essential and distinct essence of the institution, encapsulating this and clearly articulating it through distinct, clear and consistent messages to multiple stakeholders internally and externally. (2011, p. 419)

However, this definition has not been applied in his study and Chapleo has conceded that applying such a definition in higher education would be challenging. So the fundamental question of "what universities mean by branding", raised in an earlier study (Chapleo 2004 as cited in Chapleo 2011), was again asked without an answer in his later study (Chapleo 2011).

We share Chapleo's view that it is important to develop a full-fledged definition of university branding due to a growing need to investigate how the effectiveness of university branding should be evaluated and measured in order to justify the growing importance of branding on university strategic agenda (Rolfe 2003 as cited in Chapleo 2011) and the increased spending on such activities (Jevons 2006 as cited in Chapleo 2011). In light of this, we drew upon the marketing literature of Balmer (2001) which suggests that the confusion in defining the concept of branding and its relations with other marketing related concepts is not a problem of the higher education sector alone.

Balmer (2001), who aims to make sense of the many foggy concepts of marketing by going through the history of marketing, offers the following explanation of the defining characteristics of a "corporate brand":

> A corporate brand involves the conscious decision by senior management to distil and make known the attributes of the organisation's identity in the form of a clearly defined branding proposition. This proposition underpins organisational efforts to communicate, differentiate, and enhance the brand *vis-à-vis* key stakeholder groups and networks. A corporate brand proposition requires total corporate commitment to the corporate body from all levels of personnel. It requires senior management fealty and financial support. Ongoing management of the corporate brand resides with the chief executive officer and does not fall within the remit of the traditional directorate of marketing. (p. 281)

Balmer (2001) also differentiates a corporate brand from other closely related terms (e.g. image, reputation, identity, marketing communications) and maps the relationship among them. According to his understanding, a corporate *brand*, like corporate *reputation* (the enduring perception) and corporate *image* (the immediate mental perception) (p. 257), is a concept concerning the "perception and positioning" of an organisation and how it is "seen" rather than what the organisation "has / does" as in corporate *identity* or what an organisation "expresses" as in corporate *marketing communications* (p. 283). As for the relationship among them, corporate *reputation*, *image*, and *brand* are seen as an objective of effective business *identity* management which is realised through the channels of *corporate communications.* By effective identity management, Balmer refers to the alignment of various types of identities, including "desired identity", "actual identity", "communicated identity", "conceived identity", and "ideal identity" (Balmer 2001, p. 276).

Balmer's definition and explanations above offer more specificities than Chapleo's (2011) for application in research and practice, but they are not tailored for the higher education sector. Besides, he does not explicitly define what "branding", as a process, entails. Therefore, to apply his concept of a corporate brand in a university setting, which is known for its complexity, one would face yet another challenge of defining what kind of "identity management" and "corporate communication" activities are attributable to the process of university branding, in addition to the known challenge of defining what a university brand is.

In view of the above, we have decided to adapt Balmer's concepts around a corporate brand for application in the higher education sector. The following working definition of university branding is thus proposed to guide our study:

> University branding is a perception management process in which a university consciously seeks to align the different types of identities (i.e. "desired identity", "actual identity", "communicated identity", "conceived identity" and "ideal identity") through centrally coordinated corporate communications to reiterate the institution's positive unique points of difference so as to stand out in a competition.

As an exploratory study, we have taken vision and mission statements as a proxy of "communicated/desired identity" (what the university wants to be or to do), student recruitment materials as a proxy of "communicated/actual identity" (what the university is), press releases as a proxy of "communicated/actual identity" (what the university does), and university strategic plans as an indicator of a university's conscious decision to brand or not.

The originality of this study lies in the broad, horizontal approach looking for the signs of coordination and alignment, or the absence of such, in university branding by examining the four distinctive types of corporate communications materials named above. Moreover, this is the first study which looks into the branding of individual universities in Hong Kong and includes a large quantity of university press releases in branding analysis.

Methodology

Sampling

Analyzes in this study are based on a total sample of seven public universities founded before 2016 in Hong Kong. These include three "pre-1994 universities": The University of Hong Kong (HKU), The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), The Hong Kong University of

Science and Technology (HKUST), and four "post-1994 universities": Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), City University of Hong Kong (CityU), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), and Lingnan University (LU). Branding materials analyzed, adopting Balmer's definition of total corporate communication instrumental for corporate branding (Balmer 2001, p. 253), include four distinctive types of communication materials: strategic plans, mission and vision statements, university self-descriptions on a government-sponsored portal targeting non-local students (studyinhongkong.edu.hk), and press releases.

Data Collection

The above listed communication materials were collected during the study period 2015–2016 and last updated in August 2016. The documents were captured with the use of Zotero, an open-source online research tool that automatically senses content in a web browser for adding to a web-based reference manager, or DownThemAll!, an open-source download manager that allows one to download all the links or images contained in a webpage with one single click(for massive downloads of press releases). Only the English language materials were analyzed in this study given that English is the common official language of the public universities in Hong Kong. Press releases in both Chinese and English languages were therefore cleaned to remove duplicates in Chinese. In the analysis of this study, we focused only on three selected universities (HKU, CUHK, PolyU) offering press releases for the longest comparable period (2003/2004–August 2016). The numbers of press releases used are: 2 021 (CUHK), 1 918 (PolyU) and 1 296 (HKU). Only online data were collected and used in this study.

Data Analysis Methods

A combination of manual content analysis methods and computer-aided content analysis methods was employed in this study. Texts that warrant close reading and are of manageable size were coded manually in search of common and distinctive topics. These include the strategic plans, the vision and mission statements, and the self-descriptions for student recruitment. The large quantity of press releases was first analyzed automatically with the topic modelling technique, which is an unsupervised, probabilistic method of discovering the latent semantic structure in large collections of documents (Blei 2012). To facilitate the interpretation of the topic modelling results, an open-source text analysis software, TXM (Heiden 2010), was used to examine the context in which these topics appeared.

Findings

The presentation of the findings is organised by the types of communication materials analyzed, rather than by themes, to show the differences in the self-representations in these distinctive types of materials, as well as the signs of alignment, or the lack of it, found in these materials.

Strategic Plans as an Indicator of a Conscious Decision to Brand

Regardless of the actual implementation of a strategic plan, it indicates a university's conscious decision to engage in branding or not. As shown below, we found that four out of the seven universities in Hong Kong explicitly mention "brand/branding" as a strategic priority under the following subheadings in their strategic plans:

- Our enabling platform—Communications and Branding (The University of Hong Kong [HKU] 2016),
- Six developmental areas—Community Engagement, and HKUST Brand (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology [HKUST] n.d.),
- Five strategic areas—Internationalisation, Branding, and Marketing (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University [PolyU] 2012),
- Five overarching strategic themes—Enhance Good Governance and the CityU Brand (City University of Hong Kong [CityU] 2015).

CUHK, LU, and HKBU did not explicitly refer to "brand/branding" in such plans, but in other related terms. Under the subheading "Engagement", CUHK set establishing a distinctive identity, and enhancing reputation, visibility and positioning as one of its goals (The Chinese University of Hong Kong [CUHK] 2016). LU indicated its plan on "positioning" itself as "a unique liberal arts institution with Hong Kong characteristics" under the subheading "Positioning of Lingnan University" (Lingnan University [LU] 2009). HKBU's Vision 2020 (Hong Kong Baptist University [HKBU] 2014) lists "Improved publicity and image of HKBU for attracting quality students" as one of the intended outcomes of the strategic theme "Improvement in attractiveness and agility of HKBU programmes…".

Our analysis shows that all seven universities in Hong Kong are concerned about their positioning, reputation, image and visibility, although not all of them explicitly state branding as a strategic priority. Those who do state branding as a priority, however, are inclined to adopt a more corporate and proactive approach to marketing and communications than those who do not. Apart from HKUST, which has dedicated a section explaining what the HKUST brand is about, CityU stated explicitly its intention to strengthen "corporate branding strategies" and PolyU announced its plan to establish a "centralized marketing function at the university level". The branding strategies of CityU have not been detailed in the strategic plan, but the university did launch a complete makeover of the university's brand, including its visual identity—the logo and colour scheme, in 2015 (CityU 2016). The only exception is HKU which shows awareness of its "brand", or rather "reputation" built over the years, and its intention to capitalise on it, but no clear signs of planning for a branding strategy.

Vision and Mission Statements as a Proxy of Communicated Desired Identity (What the University wants to be/do)

Identity is a building block of a corporate brand (Balmer 2001). University's vision and mission statements are important texts portraying the desired identity of the universities and are seen as an important organisational instrument for reinforcing the branding activities of a university (Kosmützky and Krücken 2015). By analysing the vision and mission statements of the seven universities, we seek to distill the branding messages incorporated in such identity-building statements.

The analysis of the vision statements shows that they all start with the *aspiration* of being recognised as or becoming a leading/first-class/world-class/premier institution excelling in one area or another, except HKU which states its position "as a leading international institution of higher learning in Asia" as a *matter of fact*.

The vision statements, except that of HKBU, also share a common international orientation. They either wanted to be recognised internationally or to become a global university. Given the special status of Hong Kong in Greater China, all three pre-1994 universities

(HKU, CUHK, HKUST) and a post-1994 university (PolyU) further expressed a cascaded geographical orientation of "local, rest of China/national/regional, international/global/world" or in a reversed order emphasising first the global level (HKU and HKUST).

The extracts of the vision statements are shown as follows:

- HKU: The University of Hong Kong, as a leading international institution of higher learning in Asia…through a global presence, regional significance, and engagement with the rest of China.
- CUHK: To be acknowledged locally, nationally, and internationally as a first-class comprehensive research university…
- HKUST: To be a leading university with significant international impact and strong local commitment.
- PolyU: Be a leading university that excels…for the betterment of Hong Kong, the nation, and the world.
- CityU: City University of Hong Kong aspires to become a leading global university, excelling…
- HKBU: HKBU aspires to be a premier institution of…
- LU: To excel as an internationally recognised liberal arts university distinguished by outstanding…

From a branding perspective, the striking similarities in the structure of the vision statements, choice of words and geographical orientation may not effectively differentiate one university from another in Hong Kong or beyond. When it comes to differentiation, one of the three virtues of a corporate brand (Balmer 2001, p. 281), Hong Kong universities have been found to have adopted a cautious two-tier approach, or what was called strategic balance (Deephouse 1999; Mampaey et al. 2015), of embedding their uniqueness in the global excellence discourse. CUHK points out its "bilingual" tradition and its task in the "preservation" of Chinese knowledge. PolyU, formerly a polytechnic, aspires to excel in "professional education" and "applied research". CityU, another former polytechnic, also aspires to excel in "professional education" and to create "applicable knowledge". LU, a small and less known university, finds its niche as one of the "Top 10 liberal arts colleges in Asia" providing "whole-person education". HKBU highlights its "broad-based, creativity-inspiring education" and heritage of Christian higher education. What is interesting is that the uniqueness of HKU, which often comes up as a top Asian university in international rankings, and HKUST, which has been a global player, has been "neutralised" by the ubiquitous use of terms like "leading" and "global" by other universities.

Student Recruitment Material as a Proxy of Communicated Actual Identity (What the University is)

It is noted that all universities, except CUHK, import some phrases of their vision statements into the self-descriptions, thus showing some alignment between the vision statements and student recruitment materials. Moreover, the overarching themes of excellence and the cascaded geographical orientation found in the vision statements are also visible among almost all the self-descriptions.

Having said that, the universities found rather different foci to present themselves to the prospective students even though they all addressed common themes like excellence, their internationality and China links, age and history, employment market for the graduates, and learning experiences. Particularly with the use of ranking information and history of the institutions, interesting picks, and twists can be observed.

Regarding ranking positions, a positional value often used for branding, four out of seven universities (HKU, HKUST, CityU, and PolyU) make direct references to rankings in the self-descriptions. Coincidentally, they are also the ones that explicitly mention brand/branding as a strategic priority. The CityU example below demonstrates how a post-1994 university can generate an impression that it has been among the top 10 or so, in specific areas, and approximately top 100 in the world by using different rankings selectively and creatively:

- According to the latest Quacquarelli Symonds ranking, CityU is 11th in Asia, 108th in the world, and fifth in the world's top 50 universities under 50 years of age.
- Ranked No.3 in the greater China area in Engineering/Technology and Computer Sciences in the 2014 ARWU by Shanghai Jiao Tong University.
- Ranked second in Asia Pacific region in The UTD Top 100 Business Schools Research Rankings by the University of Texas at Dallas.

The three other universities (CUHK, HKBU, and LU) do not make direct reference to specific rankings. HKBU's self-description is too brief to include anything specific. LU claimed that it is "one of the Top 10 liberal arts institutions in Asia" without giving the information source. There is a reason to believe that the abstinence of CUHK from using rankings, although it has reasonably good positions to show, is a conscious decision due to the clear position taken by the President of the university against rankings (CUHK 2013; Sung 2011, June 28). However, it may also be the result of not having a conscious decision to brand.

Regarding history and age, another set of facts and figures that are considered important for branding, we found that all the universities, except CUHK and CityU, mention their years of foundation and history. HKU is proud of being "Hong Kong's oldest tertiary institution, with a history that stretches back over a hundred years." HKUST, founded in 1991, describes itself as a young and dynamic university. PolyU, HKBU, and LU, which were upgraded into universities in the 1990s, proudly trace back the birth of their institutions to their pre-university time to demonstrate their significance:

- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has a proud history dating back to 1937. Formerly known as Hong Kong Polytechnic, the institution was granted university status in 1994.
- Hong Kong Baptist University was incepted in 1956…In 1983, the then Hong Kong Baptist College became a fully funded public tertiary institution. In 1994, the Institution achieved University status…
- Lingnan University…was incorporated on 30 July 1999 following the enactment of the Lingnan University Ordinance. Its history, however, dates back to 1888, when its forerunner, the prestigious Lingnan University in Guangzhou, China, was founded.

On the contrary, CityU, keen to replace its "polytechnic" identity with one of a "global university", is consistently silent about its history in the self-description and the strategic plan. The statement "We are neither constrained by tradition, nor rigidly defined with a fixed identity. This makes us receptive to new people and ideas and to diversity" (CityU 2015, p. 18) in the strategic plan may provide some explanation.

Comparatively speaking, the silence of CUHK over its founding year and history, as well as its bilingual tradition, in the self-description appears incoherent with the emphasis it placed on its bilingual tradition and its mission to preserve Chinese knowledge in the vision and mission statements.

In terms of the themes addressed by different types of universities, we found that the self-descriptions of HKUST, PolyU, and CityU share more commonalities among themselves than with others. They are also more likely to emphasise the professional and innovative aspects of their teaching and learning activities. This is likely due to their common technical background. While HKU, the top university in Hong Kong, is brief about its study programs and the learning experiences offered, these three go into great length to describe student related experiences. For example, PolyU puts great emphasis on its state-of-the-art facilities, particularly the "award-winning teaching and research hotel" for the tourism and hotel management programs. CityU features the creation of Discovery-Enriched Curriculum as its uniqueness.

The self-descriptions of HKBU and LU also focus on students but are relatively brief, likely because of their disadvantaged positions in the system which do not offer them a lot of options. HKBU's traditional vision of "whole-person education" has been widely adopted by other universities in Hong Kong, so it highlights its Christian education background and differentiates itself from the rest. LU, another small university, tries to turn its small size into a positive attribute by positioning itself as a "liberal arts university with Hong Kong characteristics".

Press Releases as a Proxy of Communicated Actual Identity (What the University did)

C*orporate communications* are the channels to achieve business identity management (Balmer 2001, p. 283) and thus branding in a broad sense. Press releases are the major output of corporate communications. The topics addressed in university press releases are therefore an important source of information for branding analysis. Using a combination of topic modelling method and keywords analysis, the press releases of the top two universities (HKU and CUHK) and a post-1994 university (PolyU) for the period 2003–2016 (August) were analyzed to identify distinctive topics that the universities presented to the media and the general public.

The results of the topic modelling show that CUHK and HKU have more common topics between the two of them than with PolyU. The major difference between them is that CUHK has been more likely to issue press releases about scientific discoveries (e.g. medicine and climate change) than HKU. HKU has mainly used the press releases for announcing events (e.g. exhibitions) and regular surveys (e.g. forecast of Hong Kong economic outlook), which CUHK also did (e.g. CUHK's public lectures series and its survey on the HKSAR Government's popularity).

Comparing the three universities, PolyU's distinctive academic topics, such as "fashion-design-industry" and "tourism-hotel-industry", are largely consistent with those it identified as unique study offers in its student recruitment materials. The distinctive topic "event-alumnus-support" and the recurrent use of the keywords "industry" and "community" also coincide with its strategic plan of leveraging "the long-standing and strong industry partnerships", and the support of its "300 000 strong alumni community in Hong Kong, the Chinese mainland and the wider world" to promote itself as "a unique brand locally and globally" (PolyU 2012). Although we cannot establish any causal relationship between the press release topics and the same topics addressed in its student recruitment materials and strategic plan, we do observe a high degree of consistency in the topics addressed in its different communication materials.

Similarly, we observed that the distinctive academic topics in the press releases of CUHK on climate change and medical research also coincide with those identified in its strategic plan. However, such topics are not specifically highlighted among its comprehensive offers in the student recruitment material. The press releases, however, show the impact of the university's introduction of a public lecture series as a means for enhancing publicity and public engagement.

Discussion

As shown in the case of Hong Kong, the concepts of a university brand and university branding are far from clear in practice. Even for the four universities that explicitly state brand/branding as a strategic priority (CityU, PolyU, HKU, HKUST), only CityU specifically mentions the plan to enhance its "corporate branding strategies". Their announced priority to brand/branding in the strategic plans is not followed by specific branding strategies but a rather generic plan for improving (social) media exposures, rallying support of internal/external stakeholders (especially alumni), and developing a communications strategy. Besides, except HKUST, none of them have clearly articulated what their brands are.

By applying Balmer's concepts around a corporate brand (Balmer 2001), we may argue that different activities which improve corporate communication and engage the community fall into the broad definition of corporate branding. However, noting that the essence of a successful brand lies in the alignment of the various identities of an organisation rather than the range of activities undertaken to achieve that, the listing of a wide variety of corporate communication activities itself is not precisely a branding strategy. In this sense, we argue that while many Hong Kong universities are conducting some sort of branding activities, few of them clearly articulate their brand propositions and a plan to brand instead of a plan to communicate a presumably existing image. Strictly speaking, we may say that they are not branding.

Having said that, comparing the seven universities, universities with an announced priority to brand/branding are more likely to consider an institutional strategy to marketing and communications than those who did not use the term specifically (CUHK, HKBU, LU). This applies particularly to new, post-1990s, public universities with a technical background (CityU, PolyU, and HKUST). They are not only more ready to talk about branding in the strategic plans and adopt an institutional approach to communication, but also display more signs of alignment in their self-representations carried by different communication materials. Older, comprehensive universities (HKU and CUHK) or new universities focusing on liberal arts education (HKBU and LU) are neither clear about their plan to brand nor showing clear signs of a coordinated approach to branding.

The above finding echoes that of previous studies which found that new, post-1992 universities in the UK (Chapleo 2011) or position-disadvantaged universities (Brown and Mazzarol 2009) tend to rely on branding, rather than reputation, to create a competitive edge against the more prestigious players. What we have found to be different is that not all new or position-disadvantaged universities tend to engage actively in branding, but only universities with a technical background (HKUST, CityU, PolyU). One reason could be that these universities do not have a strong reputation compared to the old comprehensive universities but are more likely to compete internationally for students and resources due to their technical background less bound by local social or cultural contexts.

Another reason could be the "sandwich" position of these universities, as demonstrated in the case of Hong Kong. The analysis of the self-representations of the universities in different types of communication materials shows that HKUST, CityU, and PolyU have a lot in common both with the older, comprehensive universities (HKU and CUHK) and the smaller universities focusing on non-technical subjects (HKBU, LU). They share the grand vision of the older comprehensive universities to excel as well as globally the emphasis of the smaller universities on student experience. To differentiate themselves from the other two groups, they are more likely to use rankings in their self-representations and to resort to a few unique, though sometimes trivial, attributes (e.g. Polyu's "award-winning teaching and research hotel" which has been "rated highly by TripAdvisor") or creativity (e.g. CityU's Discovery-Enriched Curriculum). Such inclination of technical universities to brand and brand through the use of rankings deserves further research along the types of universities.

Overall, we found that Hong Kong public universities commonly practise the act of strategic balance (Deephouse 1999; Mampaey et al. 2015) in their self-representations. Across the board, they aspire to be globally competitive and excellent, in line with the government's policy goal of developing the city into a "regional education hub". Meanwhile, they struggle to present their uniqueness in the system based on, sometimes beautified, reality. The balanced presentation of system-wide aspirations and institution-specific realities may be interpreted as a rational decision of the universities themselves to find their niche for survival amidst strong accountability demands from the government. However, it must be noted that Hong Kong universities, though autonomous in operation, are strongly advised via top-down government policies to adopt "role differentiation" (UGC 2010) so as to avoid competition among themselves. Their struggle to present their uniqueness may well be the result of external pressure from their major funder as well. The link between policy discourse and the branding of individual universities in Hong Kong is not the focus of this study. However, there are signs of interesting correlations that future studies may further explore.

Conclusion

In this study, we have broadened the approach for examining how universities brand themselves by adopting a corporate branding framework to examine their self-representations carried by four distinctive types of communication materials (strategic plans, vision and mission statements, student recruitment materials, and press releases) that may or may not be immediately associated with branding. With this approach, we did not only analyze the content of the self-representations but also the alignment, which is an essential feature of branding, of their communicated desired and actual identities in these different types of communication materials.

Based on our proposed working definition of university branding, there is still much work to be done for the development of a full-fledged definition of university branding as a process. University corporate communication covers a wide range of internal and external communication activities carried out at institutional and departmental levels that are not always clearly defined. Many of them may serve a branding purpose, but not all of them are relevant to branding. The communication materials selected in this exploratory study are relevant and different enough to represent the message carriers of the communicated desired and actual identities of the universities. However, there are many other corporate communication activities and products that have rarely or never been systematically analyzed for their interplays and alignment. Further studies adopting such a broad definition of corporate branding to examine the alignment of branding messages may consider a comprehensive coverage of source materials, or so-called media collateral (e.g. websites, corporate design, media kit, promotional videos, social media, advertisements, etc.), for a brand audit-like analysis based on in-depth case studies.

Given the complexity of the organisation and operation of a university, defining a single university brand has been a known challenge in practice and research. The process that universities take to communicate and enhance a brand internally and externally, at institutional and departmental levels, is even more challenging to map out. Even universities that have openly announced their intention to brand may not have a full grasp of the range of activities attributable to branding, not to mention of content alignment in such activities. Not only the growing number and types of corporate communication activities, but also the variety of the formats of their outputs in the form of texts, images, videos, instant messages, etcetera, pose additional challenges to researchers trying to make sense of the concept of a brand and branding. Traditional manual content analysis methods may not meet the needs of present day realities in this particular field.

In this study, we have tested a combination of manual and computer-aided method so as to include press releases in substantial quantities.

This has enabled us to broaden the choice of source materials for analysis but it does not come without limitations. As universities are not standardised in the way they disseminate information online, there remain difficulties in gathering comparable data and in cleaning the data to remove irregularities. This is just an example to illustrate that digital methods by no means guarantee large quantities of "useful" data although they do help immensely in broadening the search area for potential source of information to facilitate more comprehensive analyzes. Manual control remains essential in both data collection, as well as data interpretation.

Finally, we conclude that the branding or marketing activities that the seven Hong Kong universities engage in are only parts of "a big elephant", as in the fable of a group of blind men trying to make sense of an elephant. Some of the universities, particularly post-1994 technical universities, seem to have grasped more parts than others or even found the links between the parts. Some of them took the parts as the whole. This sends a message to the practitioners that for branding to work, it is indeed important to first understand branding in its fullest context. Without that, their branding activities may not be much different from general, uncoordinated, marketing, and communication activities and their goal to brand cannot be effectively achieved by the means they propose.

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CHAPTER 9

Alumni Engagement in Higher Education: A Matter of Marketing and Leveraging Social Identities

Noah D. Drezner

Colleges and universities are increasingly looking to build lifelong relationships with their alumni. These relationships are predicated on loyalty, reminiscing about their youth and college experiences, and remaining connected to classmates and friends. Institutions hope that this ongoing relationship also results in alumni giving. There is a growing literature on alumni motivations and university engagement strategies. However, few connect this work to the literature on marketing. This chapter connects these to literatures together.

The academic literature on marketing is usually situated in the business field or discipline of Economics. Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) described the marketing literature as "theoretical-normative in nature and … based on models developed for use by the business sector" (p. 319). As early as 1972, we can see the use of business administration literature in the field of higher education. A.R. Krachenberg (1972), a professor of business administration at the University of

N.D. Drezner (*)
Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY, USA

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Michigan—Dearborn, argued in an opinion piece in the *Journal of Higher Education* that it was time to bring the concept of marketing into higher education. However, this decision does not come without critique. Since the marketing literature is based in the for-profit arena, questions about the appropriateness of its use in nonprofit higher education arise. Scholars have questioned the use of business techniques and customer-centered approaches in higher education, specifically around whether college is a public or private good (Bok 2003).

Some of the first scholars to introduce marketing theories into higher education explicitly used business terms to describe higher education more as an industry. Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) note that, with regard to education marketing, Kotler and Fox (1985) defined students as products and employers as customers. Also borrowing from the for-profit sector, Levitt (1980) noted that university offerings, such as courses, should be viewed as products. Many higher education scholars and administrators at colleges and universities are uncomfortable with commercialization of the academy (Bok 2003). Barrett (1996) argued that "it is both regrettable and ominous that the marketing focus, explicitly borrowed from business, should be accepted and even welcomed" in higher education (p. 70).

While the concerns of the commercialization of higher education are well founded, there are aspects of marketing that can be beneficial to higher education. Marketing is rooted in the idea of exchange. Exchange requires that there are at least two parties that each have something that the other values. In the realm of colleges and universities, there are two main exchange paths. The first is between students and their alma mater, in which they exchange tuition for education. The second is between donors and the institution, where stakeholders exchange time and money and receive gratitude in return (Drezner and Huehls 2014; Kotler 1975).

I argue that some stakeholders not only give their time and money for gratitude, but in exchange for larger societal benefit. Philanthropy is a mechanism for citizens to reclaim higher education as a public good (Drezner 2015). Donors regularly use philanthropy as means to express their values and beliefs (Frumkin 2008; Tobin 2001). By making voluntary contributions to higher education, donors are saying that other's education and the production of knowledge benefits more than only the individual (Drezner 2015).

In this chapter I argue that by using relationship marketing techniques coupled with identity-based philanthropy strategies, universities can build more responsive and larger alumni donor bases. In the coming pages I review the current literature on relationship marketing in higher education, introduce identity-based fundraising, and share the results of a relevant alumni giving experiment. I conclude with implications for practice.

Social Exchange & Relationship Management

Scholars categorize this exchange relationship between a person and a nonprofit, such as a college or university, as a *social* exchange (Ben-Ner and Gui 2003; Holländer 1990). Social exchanges are not purely economic in nature. They assume that people choose to make decisions to help others rather solely on the basis of what will give themselves the most personal economic benefit. The social exchange literature is situated in the disciplines of Economics, Sociology, and Psychology. Social exchange theory assumes that relationships are interdependent (West and Turner 2007).

Given this interdependence, relationships are often nurtured between nonprofit organizations and individuals. In the 1990s the idea of relationship marketing emerged as a central tenant of the marketing literature and practice (Palmer 2002; Sheth and Parvatiyar 2002). However, the importance of relationship development has existed since the turn of the last century. Simmel (1908) noted that relationships evolve and endure even when the initial conditions and reasons for the relationship change. Drezner and Huehls (2014) suggest that this explains alumni relationships with their almae matres. These relationships were first built between student as learner and university as purveyor of knowledge, and then evolved to alumni as benefactor and university as alma mater.

Much of the relationship management literature suggests that organizations should view their stakeholders as partners in which there is more than just a transactional exchange (Dwyer et al. 1987; Sheth and Parvatiyar 1995a, b). By developing a more reciprocal relationship, scholars note the potential for long-term and greater depth in the relationships (Hunt 1997, 2000; Hunt et al. 2002; Hunt and Morgan 1995). Within the context of philanthropic giving, these less transactional and more ongoing-relationships result in greater participation in fundraising campaigns and larger gifts (Worth 2002, 2010).

Relationship marketing (Andruss 2001; Block 1998; Remley 1996; Selladurai 1998; Squires 1997) is an appropriate tool for higher education, as institutions are looking to build long-term regular donors, rather than rely on discrete, one-time gifts (Arnett et al. 2003, 2004). The relationship with alma mater begins before matriculation and, if nourished, can last for decades after graduation. Philanthropy scholars—those who study higher education as well as other nonprofits—note that renewing a donor is much less effort and cost than acquiring a new one (Sargeant 1999; Sargeant and Shang 2010; Temple et al. 2016). This is likely the case because longer-term relations have developed characteristics such as trust, commitment, and collaboration, which often increase over time and interaction (Blau 1964; Dwyer et al. 1987; Homans 1958).

Organizational Identification as a Means to Relationship Building

One aspect of relationship management is the development of organizational identification. The concept of organizational identification is part of identity theory (Stryker and Burke 2000), in which a person chooses to define themselves by the organization. In the past I suggested that in the context of higher education, "I am a student at . . ." or "I am an alumna of . . ." are good examples of the phenomenon (Drezner 2011). Mael and Ashforth (1992) found that there are aspects of both the institution and the individual that feed into an alumnus/na's organizational identity. Mael and Ashforth (1992) and Leslie and Ramey (1988) found that organizational characteristics such as distinctiveness and prestige affect organizational identity. Individual characteristics also affect a person's organizational identity. Mael and Ashforth (1992) found that time spent at the institution, the existence of a mentor, overall satisfaction, and perception of the graduate's time at the college or university (sentimentality) all lead to positive organizational identities. Arnett et al. (2003) found that those with more salient alumni-identities are more likely to be donors to their alma maters. Therefore, it seems that building pride within an institution's alumni-base—through the sharing of good news, accomplishments, high rankings, etc.—has an impact on an alumnus or alumna's organizational identity and relationship with their alma mater.

Relationship Marketing & Marginalized Populations

While the relationship marketing literature is beneficial when exploring higher education fundraising, Drezner and Huehls (2014) caution us that much of the extant literature does not take into account diversity. There is a lack of exploration in how racial, ethnic, gender identity, or religious diversity within populations of stakeholders affects marketing. However, there is considerable evidence across bodies of research that there is a difference in how those who have marginalized identities form relationships with institutions.

Relationships and organizational identity are based on experiences. Each alumnus or alumna experiences college differently. However, there is considerable evidence that students with marginalized identities often have different perceptions of campus climate, experience on campus, and their sense of belonging on campus (Hurtado and Carter 1997; Rankin and Reason 2005). Therefore, it is important for scholars and practitioners to explore these different experiences and their effect on alumni giving. Institutional advancement practitioners should leverage these social identity differences and potentially build different marketing strategies to properly engage alumni. However, currently, few institutions do.

Philanthropy & Identity: A Pragmatic Marketing Approach

Philanthropy has long been associated with "a relatively small number of White families and individuals [mostly men] who enjoyed access to education, owned major businesses, held leadership positions in government, dominated professions and inherited wealth" (Council on Foundations 1999, p. 7). This definition of philanthropy or understanding of who is philanthropic is no longer acceptable. Research over the past 25 years has pushed to expand our understanding of who is philanthropic and to show how prosocial and philanthropic behaviors within communities of color and of women often differ—but still exist—from that of White men who have traditionally been regarded as philanthropists. However, as a result of this problematic definition of who is philanthropic, most solicitation efforts are geared towards White, wealthy, often heterosexual men, thereby not engaging others in the process (Drezner and Huehls 2014).

Beyond the social justice aspects of making more inclusive and culturally sensitive engagement strategies within higher education fundraising, there are pragmatic reasons to diversify your donor base (Drezner 2013). The cost for higher education in the U.S. continues to increase beyond inflation, making college out of reach for more and more students and their families (Ehrenberg 2012; Hemelt and Marcotte 2011). As such, colleges and universities have responded with increasing tuition discounting programs in the form of scholarships. These programs are becoming increasingly reliant on philanthropic donations (Ehrenberg 2012; Hillman 2012). As a result, institutions are devoting more of their annual fund, an allotment for unrestricted giving, to term scholarships and a greater percentage of their comprehensive campaigns to endowed scholarships (Kaplan 2012). The expectations that institutions have for philanthropy and fundraising in higher education have increased (Bernstein 2013).

As a result of the continually decreasing funding and the interest to expand affordable access to more students, higher education administrators argue that there is need for alumni support. Philanthropy was once viewed as a value-added but not required revenue stream, especially in public higher education (Walton et al. 2008). However, now it is essential. Institutions, private and public alike, are turning more and more to private giving in order to meet budgetary demands. Currently, alumni giving accounts for 26% of voluntary support to higher education and is the largest source of philanthropic giving (Kaplan 2014). These voluntary alumni donations account for 7.6% of expenditures at research universities and nearly 20% at private liberal arts colleges (Kaplan 2012). Understanding the increasing need for philanthropic dollars for most college and university budgets, institutions need to explore new and innovative strategies for alumni engagement and giving (Drezner 2013; Gasman and Bowman 2013).

Further, as fundraising campaign goals grow, smaller and medium size gifts are becoming more and more important to raising the dollars needed (Drezner 2015; Grenzebach, Glier and Associates 2010). The small and medium sized gifts not only help reach current campaign goals, but are important in the cultivation of future campaign leadership gifts. Andrea McManus (cited in Drezner 2013) argued that fundraising professionals must engage all potential donors in the giving and the reasons they wanted to support others by moving beyond merely “closing the gift” and working with the “usual suspects.”

Illustrating Relationship Marketing with the Use of Philanthropic Mirroring

Creating a fundraising, or marketing, strategy that centers around a person's interests is not a new premise. Drezner (2013, p. 4) notes "'Donor centric' fundraising has been the hallmark of major gifts programs from their inception." However, he argues that identity-based fundraising is more recent. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2012, p. 2) define identity-based philanthropy as "a growing movement to democratize philanthropy from the grassroots up by … raising and leveraging resources by and from a community on its own behalf, where 'community' is defined not by geography but by race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation." In other words, identity-based philanthropy allows donors to support those like themselves. This is not a new concept, per se. There is a long tradition of Jewish Federation and Catholic Charities that solicited support with religious identity in mind.

Social identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, are some of the organizing characteristics of how a person identifies themselves (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Often those who have marginalized social identities have strong affinities for their identity based on the experience of exclusion (Shen 2013). By engaging alumni through appealing to their social identities and acknowledging how they see themselves and what is most important to them, advancement officers are able to tap into what Daphna Oysterman and colleagues have called the identity-based motivation (IBM) model (Oyserman and Destin 2010; Oyserman and Markus 1998). The IBM model posits that people act in identity-congruent ways when they feel that actions are aligned with their identity. Drezner and Huehls (2014) suggest that the IBM model is a way to explain alumni participation and engagement.

Building upon the IBM model, social identity, and social distance theories are used to develop and test the philanthropic mirroring framework (Drezner under review). In this work, I posit that alumni engagement increases when alumni social identities are mirrored in solicitation efforts. Using my National Alumni Giving Experiment (NAGE), I found that respondents who share at least one marginalized social identity with students profiled in a fundraising solicitations are more likely than others to assign more importance to the cause and to give greater amounts.

In my experiment I used fictitious annual fund solicitation letters. Communications between an institution and its alumni can be seen through the relationship marketing lens. In this case, I wrote four different letters describing an individual student profile. The first version described an individual student who is academically high achieving and to whom the institution has awarded a merit-based scholarship. The second described an individual student with a general financial need as a result of the recent market downturn. The third version described an individual student with a financial need related to the student's first-generation status. The fourth letter described an individual student with a financial need related to a lack of parental support after son/daughter came out as gay or lesbian. In addition to the different versions, I also randomly assigned the gender, race/ethnicity (White/African American/Latino), and name (John/Juan, Mary/Maria) of the student.

I built my fictitious solicitation letters with the understanding of theories of social distance and the identifiable victim. Bogardus (1925) described social distance as the gap between different groups in society, where those who are 'socially close' are those we feel most close to, and therefore, those with whom we have more distance we feel less kinship toward. In other words, "Where there is little sympathetic understanding, social farness exists. Where sympathetic understanding is great, nearness exists" (Bogardus 1941, p. 106). Karakayali (2009) classifies social distance as an affective distance, or one in which empathy, or lack thereof, can shorten or lengthen gap between two people or groups.

It is possible to decrease social distance by sharing information about others, specifically individuals. Within philanthropic research, some have found that when a specific person is described, over generalizations or mere statistics, both number of gifts and size of donations increase (Kogut and Ritov 2011). Kogut and Ritov (2011) have postulated that there is a singularity effect in the identifiable victim, in which solicitations to support an individual are more likely to receive positive reactions than requests to help a group. Much like relationship marketing—this strategy is about creating a connection with the potential donor. In fact, I found by creating an "identifiable victim" and reducing the potential social distance between the alumnus and the potential student being helped, found that donor participation in giving increased. Further, nearly one-quarter (24.1%) of respondents who had never given to their alma mater before said they would give for the first time. Additionally, of those who had given before nearly one-third (28.6%) said they would increase their giving.

In the NAGE, I found mirroring at least one marginalized identity increases the perceived importance of the cause and the likelihood of a donor increasing the size gift from their prior donation. Interestingly, the identity did not have to be mirrored exactly. Just the fact that an alumnus read a letter about a student with a marginalized identity—even if it was not shared—led the alumnus/na with a different marginalized identity to support them. However, those with privileged identities mirroring identities in a solicitation letter did not increase participation, importance, or size of gift. The marginalized identity might be stronger than the privileged identity because those who are marginalized by society generate stronger identities that are based on oppression (Morris and Muller 1992). Once evoked, this stronger shared identity might lead to philanthropic action.

Implications for Practice

What does this all mean for practice? One of the central tenants of relationship marketing is building trust (Hunt 1997, 2000; Hunt et al. 2002; Hunt and Morgan 1995). Drezner and Anderson-Long (2015) found a relationship between trust, perceived importance of a cause, and giving behavior. As such, colleges and universities should try to build trusting relationships with their alumni. As mentioned earlier, alumni of marginalized communities often experienced their time in college differently than the majority due to racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination and alienation while students. In an attempt to build trust with these alumni and forge a new relationship, colleges and universities should acknowledge their past mistakes. For example, we know that all college campuses have their histories, many of which might include segregation, quota-systems, and less than welcoming campus environments. The lack of an affirming campus climate (or even the perception as such) is a reason that some alumni choose not to give—or to give less generously—to their alma mater. When engaging alumni of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, and queer (LGBTQ) alumni, or others who might have endured a difficult campus climate, it is important to acknowledge the past and indicate how the campus has changed since the alumnus or alumna was a student.

To further build a relationship with their alumni, advancement officers should truly engage their donor's whole-self in their solicitations. Advancement officers often speak about the importance of donor-centric fundraising strategies, where the donor's interests and experiences are used to align the donor's philanthropic goals with the institutions, fundraising priorities. However, the vast majority of colleges and universities have very poor demographic data. This stems from older alumni never sharing their race and ethnicity because institutions were not traditionally collecting this information before the US Department of Education began monitoring racial composition and persistence in the 1980s. There is also an unwillingness to collect or record LGBTQ demographic data, even when offered by the alumnus or alumna. The lack of willingness to record LGBTQ identities when freely offered by an individual raises questions about those institutions' commitment to donor-centric fundraising (Garvey and Drezner 2013; Drezner and Garvey 2016). To better market initiatives, news, and opportunities that might speak to an alumnus or alumna's identity, institutions must do a better job collecting and maintaining demographic data.

Further, to build a longstanding and meaningful relationship with alumni fundraisers should develop culturally sensitive solicitation strategies. Lori Spears (2008), in her research, found that when institutions used the same strategy to increase alumni giving for majority populations as with minority populations, the initiatives that were effective for White alumni were not effective with other populations. Therefore, college and university development officers should think about how they frame all solicitations from the annual fund to major gifts.

This leads to the central marketing implication for practice: the concept of segmentation (Jonker et al. 2004). Strategic marketing and successful annual fund solicitations require that the right message be sent to the right alumnus or alumna. It is clear from this chapter and my experience as a former fundraising professional that cookie-cutter solicitations do not work. Solicitations need to be appropriate and inspiring for alumni to give. There are many ways to segment in higher education fundraising. Many strategies are regularly employed by colleges and universities (e.g.; donor/non-donor, class year, major, etc.). However, used less are social identities for segmentations. Yet, if used properly, and if solicitations are built in culturally relevant ways, this form of segmentation can be very successful, as seen in the NAGE.

Conclusion

As higher education fundraising is becoming more and more popular and essential around the world, university development officers will need to think about how to best integrate marketing techniques into their fundraising plans. Donor-centric fundraising is known to be the most successful. However, that is very difficult when it comes to annual fund solicitations. By using relationship marketing techniques along with being conscious of how the identities and cultures of alumni might affect their giving, universities can build strong fundraising strategies that speak to their alumni.

In the preceding section, I lay out a number of ways that practitioners can think about their work in alumni engagement and fundraising using relationship marketing techniques while being sensitive to the different social identities of their alumni. However, perhaps the most important suggestion for practice is to engage alumni volunteers in order to seek their advice. By asking for their opinion and doing your best to use their help, you will not only build a stronger relationship with those individuals you are working with, but you will likely do better at engaging the larger population. I cannot overstate it enough; if you seek advice from alumni—especially those historically marginalized—please use their wisdom. You do not need to implement all of their suggestions, but putting their thoughts aside will only continue to hurt the long term relationship you are trying to build.

This chapter is only a small venture into how the marketing literature can be connected to the philanthropic studies literature. There is a need for more research that further connects the two fields. The options are nearly endless as to what future research can be explored. However, given the number of marketing scholars at colleges and universities connecting with a constituency within their own institution can be a simple extension of the work that they are already doing and can help their university along the way.

This chapter attempts to connect two different fields of study in ways that have not yet been done. By thinking of annual fund strategy a form of relationship marketing, there is an opportunity not just for practice but for theoretical development. Too often higher education scholars shy away from the marketing literature due to its connection to the for-profit world. However, there is much more room for overlap while still maintaining the proper level of critique.

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CHAPTER 10

Branding by Proxy? How Hubs Market (or not) Higher Education Systems Globally: The Example of Qatar

Leon Cremonini and John Taylor

Branding in higher education can operate at many different levels; the institution may have a brand, so might a particular school or department, and so might a specific program. In this chapter, however, the process of branding is considered at a national level, looking at how a government can encourage the development of an educational hub and by so doing attempt to establish an international brand for its broad higher education offer. This chapter is based upon a case study of Qatar, and aims to identify some key principles to be followed in similar cases. Today's national higher education systems operate in a complex global market with vast reputational differences across systems. Increasingly, governments

L. Cremonini (✉)
Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS),
University of Twente, AE Enschede, The Netherlands

J. Taylor
Department: Educational Research, Lancaster University,
Lancaster, UK

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around the world invest in so-called "education hubs" to brand their higher education. Hubs are designated geographic locations hosting tertiary providers of perceived excellent quality, and are often believed to foster national prestige in a short time span (Altbach 2010; Clifford 2015; Dessoff 2012).

From this perspective, education hubs are exemplary to explore how—on a global level—new forms of competition between higher education systems are evolving. By being home to top universities, hubs intend developing internal capacity to boost the international appeal of a country's higher education and research sector and attract foreign investment (Knight 2014). Hence, they are both a country's "branding tool" and a means for self-preservation in the market-oriented global higher education ecosystem. A number of cases attest to this. For example, Singapore's Global Schoolhouse project (established in 2002) was part of the country's strategy to become a major player in the knowledge economy (Mok 2008); and Dubai's strategy is recruiting "reputable international HEIs that can lend their brand equity" (Knight 2011, p. 229). Hubs may coincide with entire nations wishing to become international centers of higher education, or be dedicated zones within a country. They predominantly (though not exclusively) house foreign higher education institutions in countries where local provision is not judged of international repute. For instance, after the Gulf and Asia, Botswana is today the first African Education hub (Knight 2014, pp. 145–164).

The underlying question this chapter wishes to answer is: what are the likely effects of hubs on the balances of the global higher education market? To answer this question, we propose a framework to understand if and how countries can make themselves more attractive globally by establishing higher education hubs. Qatar's Education City is presented as a case in point to test the framework.

A Theoretical Background

According to theories of academic capitalism (see e.g. Slaughter and Leslie 1997), higher education institutions seek to generate revenue from their core educational, research and service functions. This can take the form of knowledge production (e.g. research leading to patents) to the faculty's curriculum and instruction. For providers choosing to operate in a hub is not inherently different from other entrepreneurial activities such as marketing for tuition-paying students, searching for government and foundation funding, and promoting alumni donations (Bok 2003, p. 10). Institutions deciding to join a hub are simply exploiting a new market opportunity. It is a strategic choice in the process of establishing international branch campuses. Clifford (2015, pp. 26–33) identifies five stages in this process that is, consideration, gathering support, country identification, screening, and operationalization. Deciding whether to operate in a hub is part of screening opportunities in order to gauge potential financial or reputational benefits and risks. For example, joining a hub may reduce operational costs thanks to support from the host government (ibid., p. 10).

However, from a hosting country's perspective creating an education hub is distinctly innovative. It is a considered effort to create critical mass and strengthen the tertiary education sector, with expected spill-overs on other parts of the country's economy. The key elements that constitute a hub's backbone include (Knight 2011, p. 227; 2014, pp. 13–28):

- Its *planned nature* (a hub "is more than a coincidental interaction or co-location of actors working in the education and knowledge sectors");
- Its objective to build *critical mass*, thus including multiple actors (an individual branch campus does not constitute an education hub);
- The inclusion of *local and international actors* (i.e. providers, producers and users of education, and training and knowledge services and products) and the *strategic engagement among these actors* (e.g. sharing facilities);
- The *nature of its outputs*: cross-border education, training, knowledge and innovation initiatives.

Several reasons may drive countries to want to become education hubs. Knight (2014) proposes five rationales for planning and establishing education hubs, including (i) economic, (ii) education and training, (iii) knowledge generation and innovation, (iv) human resource (HR) development, and (v) status/soft power reasons. Economic rationales are deemed the dominant ones. They may take the form, *inter alia*, of increases in foreign investment or of strengthening the higher education sector overall (for example because of a boost in reputation following the presence of top-ranked institutions). Education and training, as well as HR motivations, address fundamental issues such as the alignment between education and labor market needs, (local) participation goals, the quality of local higher education, local capacity building, and preventing brain drain. Finally, the "status/soft power" rationale concentrates on building a prestigious and attractive brand for the host country. However, while a hub is often used to market the national higher education system, governments may underestimate key aspects that make a higher education environment appealing to operate in, such as access opportunities, the performance of national providers, and institutional autonomy.

Therefore, concentrating excellence to become more attractive in the global higher education market might not necessarily produce the anticipated benefits. For instance, an education hub may improve the host country's pull for (foreign) students and researchers but reduce resources for developing the capacity of local providers; empowering top western universities to operate abroad might merely strengthen established architypes of the research university and exacerbate inequalities in the global higher education market rather than promote a more balanced global higher education ecosystem. And government-sponsored hubs might in fact jeopardize some of the features that characterize world-class institutions, such as academic autonomy (Clifford and Kinser 2016).

Integral to these points are assumptions that (a) global competition in higher education is shaped by center-periphery relationships, as suggested by world-systems theories, and (b) that patterns of management and knowledge production are increasingly similar and founded on a common understanding of what is appropriate and meaningful, as argued by neo-institutionalists (see e.g. Cremonini and Antonowicz 2009; Drori et al. 2003; Friedman 2005; Jakobi 2007; Kolster 2010, 2014; McMahon 1992; Meyer et al. 2006; Mohrman et al. 2007, 2008; Rogers 2003; Stiglitz 2007; Wallerstein 1974; Zucker 1983).

We argue that the choice to concentrate primarily "western" excellence in a hub is rooted in a neo-institutional approach to internationalization that does not reshape significantly the global higher education market or shift the balances of power between countries. From this perspective, the chapter contributes to a broader academic and policy debate about global competition in higher education and whether a concentration of (foreign) excellence does indeed strengthen the market position of host countries. First, we propose a framework by which we can understand different types of hubs. Then, to test the framework we explore the example of Qatar, which in the 1990s was one of the first countries to introduce its Education City. Qatar also introduced, in the early 2000s, a new scholarship system enabling students to study abroad, but only at institutions of higher quality than Qatar University (QU), its only public university (Augustine and Krop 2008).

One can argue that these policies reinforce existing inequalities between systems because they invest in foreign provision rather than in building the national higher education system. From this perspective, Qatar's hub experience showcases the potential contradiction between goals and policy. The government's principal aim in establishing Education City was to educate Qataris rather than to attract foreign talent (as, for example, the United Arab Emirates attempted). For decades, highly educated "expats" had been filling positions for which locals were unqualified. Today it is Qataris, not foreigners, who benefit from priority admissions into the Education City branches (Bollag 2016). However, this exposes the possible contradiction of expecting sustainable improvements in national education performance by favoring foreign supply of higher education rather than developing the national higher education.

Although hubs are implemented differently across several countries, at the heart of the matter lie three fundamental issues related to the regional motivations for establishing them, and the potential to increase the host country's attractiveness:

1. *Access*: do hubs help to improve access to higher education for the local population or do they simply showcase the country (i.e. being a "reputation tool") to generate revenue by attracting students from across the world?
2. *Spill-over effects on the national system*: do hubs have a positive effect on the higher education system in terms of quality (e.g. increasing cooperation with the national providers; joint research projects, promoting student exchanges within the country), or do

they create a (further) divide within the system between prestigious foreign providers and poorly funded local providers of low quality?

3. *Funding and institutional autonomy*: should tax payers meet the cost to support foreign providers (whether based in a hub or not)? If yes, does this affect the autonomy of institutions that choose to operate abroad?

Methods

As indicated above, this chapter intends to provide a theoretical contribution to the debate on the marketization of higher education, with an emphasis on how several countries try to sell their *higher education system* through attracting foreign excellence in concentrated hubs. The chapter uses one case (Qatar) to propose a framework that can help us understand to what extent this is true and under what conditions. Data for this chapter came from publicly available websites, policy documents, press releases, as well as academic literature on hubs (with a stronger focus on the case at hand), and discussions with two experts. Based on this data, we have proposed a 2 × 2 model (see Fig. 10.1) based on the following questions:

- Why and how do hubs develop ("motivation")?
- What are the (intended and unintended) consequences of hubs and for whom ("implementation issues")?

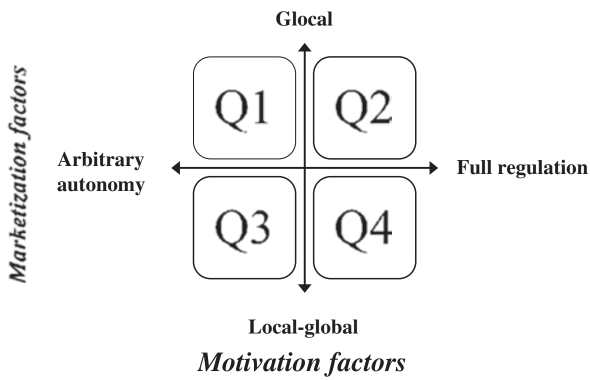

Fig. 10.1 Framework for interpreting hubs (models). *Source* Authors, based on Knight (2014)

Understanding the "Hub Debate"

At this point, it is necessary to recall the possible friction relating to the contribution of hubs to hosting countries. On the one hand, establishing an international hub is justified on the grounds of national benefit. Hubs can be considered a "branding tool" because they concentrate excellence in the higher education system. Just as institutions focus on certain prestige generators, such as student quality and research, to increase their market share in the higher education "industry" (Brewer et al. 2002), one may posit that hubs are prestige generators for a peripheral system wishing to increase its market share of global higher education exports. Thus, hubs are expected to provide new exogenous and endogenous resources (including staff, students, external research funding and public funding) to boost the volume of national higher education production overall. At the same time, as mentioned earlier, this expectation is built on the neo-institutional tenet holding similarity in higher education and knowledge production as a driving force in today's global higher education market. From this perspective, an education hub is an instrument of national visibility and recognition in the periphery only because, by hosting particular institutions, it reinforces global imbalances based on existing notions of excellence defined by the center.

Hence, this chapter explores the discrepancy between the potential for hubs to rebalance the global higher education market by concentrating excellent higher education in peripheral countries, and the fact that hubs take advantage of, but do not challenge, the existing center-periphery divide since they host elite western institutions. To confront this problem, we start by discussing Knight's (2011, 2014) framework, which categorizes the different types of hubs and clarifies key definitions. The remainder of the chapter will test this framework by providing a potted history of Qatar's Education City and considering its role in modernizing the Emirate's higher education.

A Framework to Position Types of Hubs

So far, this chapter has used the term "education hub" to describe policies that concentrate (perceived) excellent tertiary level institutions within a defined physical location. However, a framework to evaluate the role of hubs in global competition requires a classification to position them. Higher education systems can establish different forms of hubs to compete in the global market.

Literature producing such a classification is scant. Knight's research in this field remains the most seminal to date. Knight and Lee (2014) developed a typology including three ideal models of hub (i.e. the "student", the "talent", and the "knowledge" hub). Moreover, they identify different modalities of planning (from reactive to strategic) and implementation (from fragmented to integrated) (ibid.). Expounding on Knight's work, this chapter proposes a framework built along two dimensions to cluster education hubs. First, hubs can take a number of forms depending on governments' motivations in setting them up, and the intended audiences. Second, they differ in their design and implementation within the context of higher education marketization.

On the first dimension hub models may include four types, i.e. the original three identified by Knight (2014, pp. 25–26), plus a fourth which is often implied but rarely made explicit, namely a "political hub".

"Student hubs" are meant to widen access to higher education learners and modernize domestic providers. Student hubs cater for international students, expatriate students (i.e. children of expatriates working in the country) and locals. The primary strategies are to support the establishment of foreign branch campuses and collaborative programs. These hubs are the most common. They are meant to be shining centers of excellence in the world, ensure local students are educated at the same level as those attending the best universities in the world and make the country's higher education brand visible to students all over the world. Branding will emphasize the student experience, quality of facilities, and the global opportunities to students on graduation; visual branding will use the latest technology and will be bright and inclusive.

Second, "talent hubs" aim at training a skilled workforce able to cover the country's development needs. Hence, they typically encourage programs that are relevant for the local labor market. These hubs intend to make a country more competitive through greater economic independence. But this means that host governments might steer institutional policies, which is a potential risk for academic autonomy. Branding will tend to focus on the quality and utility of programs, their contribution to the nation and their employer orientation.

Third, "knowledge hubs" want to produce new knowledge that has the potential for commercial use. Research is not only focused on higher education institutions, but also other research performers such as independent institutes and think tanks. This kind of hub promotes public-private partnerships and corporate investments, often seeking to attract the Research & Development (R&D) sections of international companies. For this hub, the government might also increase public R&D funding or try to attract foreign direct investment. Countries adopting this hub strategy want to compete in knowledge production and commercialization. Branding will focus on the facilities available, innovation and opportunities for researchers.

Finally, "political hubs" are driven primarily by a country's desire to enhance its political influence and international status in the region and globally. Promoting the country's brand as a higher education and research center of excellence, or creating international partnerships are means to that end. Hong Kong is an example of this type of hub. Reflecting its historical and cultural context, being an education hub—and hence increasing the number of students and researchers who are exposed to its higher education—is a way to compete in the region. Singapore, too, has developed as a hub to showcase itself as a "gateway between East and West, a suitable place from which to launch expansion into Asia" (Blackmore 2016, p. 74.). Here, branding will often be associated with national character and ambitions.

The four types of hub just described represent different ways in which countries use higher education hubs to compete in the world. Different forms of competition call for different sorts of hubs. While the types are ideal, the purposes they fulfil are not mutually exclusive. For example, a hub can aim both at producing knowledge for commercial use and attracting students; it can be a way to promote a country's political and economic visibility and also to train the workforce for national development. Indeed, most hubs cover different ambitions. The ideal types should be seen as representing their primary, but not the sole, focus. To interpret hubs, and particularly Qatar's experience, we develop a two-by-two matrix based on two continua. The first dimension looks at the motivations while the second looks at how they translate into a hub's design and implementation. No hub is neatly positioned on the extremes of these spectra. None the less, combining the two dimensions leads to models which can help understand the design, organization and contribution of education hubs.

On the first dimension, we term student and talent hubs as "glocal" because their predominant motivation is national socioeconomic development (i.e. of the national labor market and society) using the internationality of higher education trade. At the opposite side, knowledge and political hubs fall under what we call "local-global" by virtue of their focus on boosting international power through internationalizing local knowledge production and branding the country itself.

The second dimension looks at how motivations may translate in the design and implementation of education hubs. Hubs are designed to compete in the global higher education market. On the one hand, they reflect commercialization because concentrating the "best offer" is how (peripheral) countries brand themselves to tout higher education. On the other hand, the planned nature of hubs and heavy government inducements to participating institutions appear associated with hide-bound models of state control that restrict inter-institutional competition. Knight (2014) identifies a range of planning and implementation approaches. In her model, planning ranges from reactive (i.e. responding to exogenous factors to make a hub attractive) to strategic (i.e. linking hubs intentionally to national priorities); implementation ranges from fragmented (no coordination among a hub's activities) to integrated (full and systematic coordination among a hub's activities).

Building on Knight's planning and implementation continua, for the purposes of this framework we hypothesize two opposing extremes showing how providers can relate to each other and to the host country. At one extreme, the government allows providers to operate without setting rules. Within the hub institutions compete freely, government has no say in academic matters, and financial support is absent. This status we may call "arbitrary autonomy". At the other end of the spectrum, inter-institutional cooperation is a hub's essential requirement (e.g. to maximize efficiency) and the government makes fundamental decisions on curricula, research priorities and other operational matters. This extreme shall be labelled "full regulation" (see Fig. 10.1).

This proposed model has two key uses. First, the different quadrants enable us to categorize different type of hubs and understand why they emerge and with what (intended) consequences. Second, this typology can help us understand how hubs may change over time. We use the example of Qatar to position this particular experience within our model. From the first perspective, Qatar's hub experiment would fit (tendentially) in Q4. The key motivation for its establishment was to build local capacity by attracting international providers. Qataris ineligible for the prestigious Education City providers were expected to continue enrolling at QU (Moini et al. 2009). On the "marketization axis", the massive financial endowments provided to participating institutions entail strict rules (such as the—relatively recent—obligation for new providers to team up with Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU)).

However, this typology can also help us understand how hubs can change over time. For example, in more recent years Qatar's rulers seem intent on investing in a future institution that is seen, above all, as Qatari rather than a "western guest institution" (Hodges 2013a, b). This suggests that Qatar's hub model is shifting towards Q2, namely a greater focus on local development and opportunities (also in response to increasing internal criticism), whilst maintaining—and indeed strengthening—central government control.

Development of an Educational Hub in Qatar: A Case Study

Thus far, this chapter has discussed the potential role of hubs in fostering better education, better and more research, and increasing capacity and the higher education market share of hosting countries. It has emphasized that hubs are often marketing tools to "brand" countries' higher educations. Yet, they do not necessarily succeed. Depending on where we position a hub on the framework presented above, one may identify threats to institutional autonomy, and inequalities between higher education systems might be perpetuated rather than reduced.

The next sections will cursorily describe the Qatari hub experiment and its role in shaping Qatar's higher education and the discourse on higher education more generally. Education City is the flagship initiative but other initiatives have taken place over the years to make Qatar a higher education hub, such as promoting international collaborations in research and establishing and hosting research initiatives. Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), and Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), are examples (Ibnouf et al. 2014). Next, we provide an overview of the key challenges the country has been facing, the reforms it has implemented to address them, and how the hub concept is expected to contribute to future development. Finally, conclusions will be drawn, based on the proposed framework, on the role of Qatar's hub in positioning the country globally within the higher education ecosystem.

Qatar's Higher Education

Qatar's higher education includes private and national institutions as well as branch campuses such as those located in Education City. To date Qatari public higher education institutions include QU and HBKU.

At the turn of the century QU was the only national provider, enrolling almost 9000 students, mostly Qatari women (60%). Males represented about 19% while non-Qataris formed the rest of the student population (13% female and 8% male) (Moini et al. 2009, p. 10). Over the years, female representation in higher education remained very strong and growing in recent years, while at the same time there was a decline in enrolment rates despite a growth in enrolment numbers (UNESCO 2008, 2016).

Several factors may have contributed to these developments but it is hard to deny that the country's sweeping higher education reforms of the past 20 years—particularly establishing a higher education hub—played a decisive role (see also General Secretariat for Development Planning 2008; Ministry of Education and Higher Education 2011). The most important reforms include:

1. The reforms of QU, which began in 2003 in response to a number of shortcomings in its performance (e.g. time to degree, high student-staff ratios, lack of experienced academic staff, low student engagement, a disproportionate female enrolment because young men typically enter public employment in government administration, the army or police without a degree, etc. (see Moini et al. 2009; Hodges 2013a, b)). Reforms included consolidating QU's institutional autonomy, improving internal decision-making processes (e.g. through decentralization), modernizing academic structures and services and pursuing accreditation of its programs[1]; graduation requirements were made more stringent, which was met with resistance because it questioned a widespread "sense of entitlement" in society (see e.g. Scott 2013);
2. The scholarship reforms, designed to promote better and more relevant education for Qataris (Stasz et al. 2007). The new scholarship included different levels of "prestige". The so-called "Emiri scholarships" were meant for future leaders; the "national scholarships" support students "with the potential to become qualified professionals in the different sectors of the State of Qatar"; and the "Employee Scholarship Program" is for employees in defined sectors to pursue advanced degrees (Master or Doctorate). A loan-based program has been initiated to cater to students who

[1]A detailed overview of the recommendations for reform is presented in Moini et al. 2009, Chapter 3.

are ineligible for scholarships (e.g. Qatari and non-Qatari who are accepted at one of the programs offered at Education City).[2] Scholarship types and eligibility criteria are adapted regularly[3];

3. The establishment of the QSTP in 2004[4] and the QNRF in 2006[5] to a showcase the country's research and innovation (Ibnouf et al. 2014). The former requires companies to invest in applied research, development and testing of products and services, and technology-related training in Qatar (eligibility depends on the level of investment and proportion of staff involved in R&D and training).[6] The latter fosters international collaboration in research and promotes national and regional growth in order to diversify Qatar's economy and improve its educational provision in specific fields (e.g. health and environment).[7]

Education City

Establishing Education City as a hub is perhaps, the most audacious experiment to make Qatar a world class center of knowledge and higher education. Although the hub itself is the case on which most of this chapter's arguments are based, one must keep in mind a fundamental principle in policymaking, which holds that any policy should be understood in the context of the policy mix wherein it rests (de Boer et al. 2017). Hence, the set of reforms mentioned above play a key role in the national strategy to become a knowledge-based society, although Education City epitomizes visibly the government's efforts.

Education City is a 2500-acre campus just out of Doha. Launched in 1997 by the Qatar Foundation[8] to upgrade the country's human capital, it was conceived as a flagship community hosting universities and colleges of world repute that offered relevant programs for Qatar's labor market. The key goal was, thus, to "bring world-class education

[2] Retrieved from: http://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/admissions/financial-aid-scholarship.

[3] Retrieved from: http://www.edu.gov.qa/En/SECInstitutes/HigherEducationInstitute/Offices/Documents/hei07072010E.pdf; http://www.edu.gov.qa/En/SECInstitutes/HigherEducationInstitute/Offices/Pages/ScholarshipOffice.aspx.

[4] Retrieved from: http://www.qstp.org.qa/home.

[5] Retrieved from: http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/.

[6] Retrieved from: http://www.qstp.org.qa/home/free-zone/requirements.

[7] Retrieved from: http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/About-Us/Vision-Mission.

[8] Retrieved from: http://www.qf.org.qa.

to Qatar" (Gonzalez et al. 2008). Qataris who attend Education City-offered programs receive full scholarships. Moreover, from the beginning the country's royal family chose to cover all the operating costs for the branch campuses that provided "equal quality" programs to their home base (see also Bollag 2016; Knight 2014). This means that the government is ultimately responsible for all the annual operating costs to support Education City, representing a very substantial investment (Knight 2015).

Education City began by sponsoring select North American university branch campuses but has since expanded to other (western) countries. Currently there are nine universities in Education City, including HBKU, Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar, Texas A&M University at Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Georgetown University in Qatar, Northwestern University in Qatar, HEC Paris in Qatar, and UCL Qatar.[9] About 4000 students in total are enrolled. Enrolments range from 77 to over 500[10] (see also Knight 2014; Rubin 2012; Sakimoto and Chapman 2011; Stasz et al. 2007).

While making Qatar a more attractive location for higher education institutions to operate, a fundamental justification for the massive investments entailed in this project was the so-called "Qatarization" process. Top foreign providers operating in the country were expected not only to be a brand for Qatar, but an option for more and better post-secondary education for Qataris (ibid.). However, within the country a divide became increasingly apparent between an elite cluster of foreign universities and the national public university (QU). From this perspective, marketing Qatar globally as an education hub risked widening the gap within the country between more privileged and less privileged students.

[9] Retrieved from: http://www.qf.org.qa/.

[10] Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2015/12/06/dohas-education-city-by-the-numbers-enrollment-diplomas-faculty-finances/?tid=a_inl; Knight 2014, p. 52 Table 4.2; HBKU website; institutional websites.

Conclusions

The previous sections described different types of higher education hubs and proposed a framework to understand if and how effectively hubs can contribute to improving the market position of their host higher education systems in a global competition. The case of Qatar was used to draw conclusions because it features a number of interesting characteristics, including the strong justification given by "Qatarization", the full government financial support for all activities within the hub, and the criticism it has gained from within the system about a broadening divide between the prestige of national vs. international provision.

By examining Qatar's initiatives, the chapter wished to test a set of underlying beliefs about hubs' contributions to marketization policy goals, which can make systems more competitive globally. Education City is part of a worldwide trend in establishing education hubs purportedly to enable (perceived) weaker systems to compete with word-class higher education systems.

The data enables us to address the three key issues raised at the outset of this chapter as important in deciding whether a hub is a good investment to make a higher education system attractive to the outer world, and more successful overall by exploiting the strengths of foreign quality. These issues included:

1. The potential or expected impacts of higher education hubs on access: if there is an unmet demand it will be interesting for higher education institutions to establish branch campuses in a hub. At the same time, a hub can be a means to fill that unmet demand in the country;
2. The impact of a hub on the national system's performance and reputation: many a country finance and support hubs because they believe that the international prestige brought by top-rated institutions will "trickle down" to their system;
3. The impact of a hub on institutional autonomy: the design of the hub and the level of government financial support and regulation can impact the autonomy institutions will have in their operations—from curricula to research to collaborations. In turn, this will impact the attractiveness of a country as a possible destination for foreign branches.

Possible Effects of Hubs on Access Patterns

Hubs can be valuable instruments for governments to address imbalances in participation such as in the ratios of males vs. females and locals vs. foreigners. From this perspective, the case of Qatar highlights several problems. Females are overrepresented in the Emirate's public higher education (i.e. QU) but have limited opportunities to access excellent programs abroad, particularly because of travel restrictions; males generally underperform because they are often guaranteed public employment regardless of whether they hold a tertiary level qualification or not; but at the same time, bright Qatari youth often choose to study abroad, contributing to the "Arab brain drain" (see, *inter alia*, Gonzalez et al. 2008; Stasz et al. 2007).

Therefore, it is significant that from the outset Education City was intended, *inter alia*, to enable young Qatari women to enter top international universities without leaving the country (Pollock 2007) as well as to promote participation by Qatari nationals. For example, HBKU's president Dr al-Thani indicated to the *Financial Times* that "there are increasing numbers of Qatari applicants to the Education City universities" (Kerr 2013). Moreover, Qatar's English-language digital news service *Doha News* (Kovessy 2014) reported that in 2014, under the purview of HBKU (which oversees Education City and falls under QF), Education City officials, adjusted the criteria for merit-based scholarships to reward "loyalty" to Qatar.

However, society and students may not necessarily judge hubs as optimal solutions to promote access for all. Popular media outlets (both Qatari and not) have reported accusations about the elitism Education City ostensibly promotes (Roberts 2015). For example, the *Doha News* (2012) reported that QU students were aggrieved by the lavish graduation ceremonies for Education City students. The *University World News* (Hodges 2013a, b) quoted a female Tweeter as saying "QU students feel themselves to be outcasts […]. There are efforts to create a wedge in society and have two social classes, one that has access to elite private educational institutions while the other, the people at large, have access only to government educational institutions".

Do Hubs Make the National Higher Education System More Attractive?

Education City has expanded its roles. It is not only a multiversity offering education and research, but a hub to market itself towards a diverse clientele (i.e. not just students). These developments are meant to draw more people to Qatar for study, research, and business, and also to draw more Qataris to Education City and reverse current brain drain. Therefore, Education City and the other endeavors of the QF are designed to market Qatar's scientific developments and national reputation more broadly (Rubin 2012).

However, the case of Qatar does not prove conclusively that massive investments in a hub improve system performance and make it more attractive on the global market. Education City was part of a comprehensive policy agenda, which included, *inter alia*, substantive reforms of the national university. Yet, QU has not become an "attraction element" of Qatar's higher education. The hub is, in effect, a "proxy" to market the country but its display of excellence has contributed to a sense that national provision is being sacrificed on the altar of elitism (Hodges 2013a, b). From this perspective, a hub not necessarily markets the higher education system wherein it is located but may in fact market other systems represented by the guest institutions (effectively reinforcing a global center-periphery divide).

For example, although women do have more opportunities to access top higher education without leaving the country, this effectively translates into "access to high quality westernized instruction" (Pollock 2007). The predominance of western providers in the country has raised concerns beyond the student body. For example, in what has been widely interpreted as a criticism to the massive investments to attract foreign universities to Qatar, former minister of economy and commerce Mohamed Althani expressed his fears of excessive foreign education, stating (Althani 2013, pp. xviii–xix):

> I also fear that too much foreign education has crept into our culture and lives. It is important to learn English and French, but we should make sure that our children's education is based on their own language and culture.

Using our model, hosting governments such as Qatar's may choose strong(er) regulation, making fundamental decisions on how providers must operate (e.g. limited internal marketization and limited institutional autonomy—Q2 and Q4). However, this can have a cost on how attractive the location will remain and what providers will accept to operate there.

Do Hubs Affect Institutional Autonomy?

Since in Qatar all operating costs to support Education City (and the other initiatives to make the country a global knowledge center) represent a very considerable public investment, questions must be asked regarding the sustainability of this model and particularly its effects on institutional performance, academic freedom and autonomy (Clifford and Kinser 2016; Knight 2015). If all costs are covered, educational and strategic choices of institutions risk becoming merely a matter of government policy, limiting institutional autonomy at multiple levels. In turn, this can make the country less marketable in the global higher education industry.

Already at the stage of seeking opportunities to settle in a hub, potential foreign providers are likely to be faced with constraints on their autonomy depending on the partnership agreements and the host country's agenda. Moreover, there is a risk that academic freedom is obstructed, especially when host countries demand institutions to establish branches in specific fields of study as a condition to operate in the hub (Clifford and Kinser 2016). Today, foreign institutions in Education City are increasingly requested to collaborate amongst themselves and partner with HBKU (Hodges 2013a, b; Kerr 2013).

Discussion and Implications

This chapter began with the premise that public investments in higher education hubs can be understood from the perspective of center-periphery relationships and increasing isomorphism in patterns of management and knowledge production. Through hubs, countries hope to gain a competitive edge in marketing their higher education and science systems in the world. From this perspective, establishing a hub may seem a good policy to redress imbalances in the global higher education market or shift extant global center-periphery balances.

The framework proposed in this chapter attempts to understand how countries may position themselves in the global higher education market by designing and implementing different forms of hubs. Countries may strengthen their position by emphasizing national development or by internationalizing knowledge production; a government might take a hands-off or a hands-on approach, with implications for the autonomy granted to foreign operators.

In our analysis, we used the example of Qatar to test a framework to understand how hubs can operate and how they can be used as a marketing tool for an entire higher education system. Our analysis questions the role of hubs in reshaping a world balance and in reaching all of the desired government objectives. Instead, a more nuanced picture emerges, where benefits are often accompanied by unexpected consequences and peripheral countries do not necessarily gain stronger reputations but may reinforce the reputation of already prestigious higher education systems.

In the case of Qatar, the hub reinforces the status of western providers but hardly that of the oldest—and until recently only—national provider. Despite a wide range of reforms, the government invested more heavily in foreign world-class providers (Khatri and Kovessy 2015). Hence, prevailing perceptions about different higher education systems remain, and may incentivize elitism (Roberts 2015). In turn, this raises the question whether a hub is actually a "conservative force" that reduces rather than "massifies" higher education opportunities in society and promotes the national system or others.

There are, however, also signs that a hub might have a stronger *regional* than global impact. Education City strengthens the Emirate's regional role. Without making conclusive allegations, one may envision a gradual change in the core-periphery model towards "multiple cores" with potentially conflicting values (e.g. on institutional autonomy and academic freedom). The current core-periphery theories and the notion of global isomorphic tendencies may be at the heart of why hubs are set up in the first place. Governments investing in a higher education hub may wish to gain a competitive edge through the opportunities globalization provides to access excellence on an international scale. However, policymakers should consider carefully how their motivations and marketization decisions affect the hub's operations.

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CHAPTER 11

Higher Education Institutional Rankings: Evaluating Their Credibility for Branding and Marketing

Gerald W. McLaughlin, Josetta S. McLaughlin and Jacqueline E. McLaughlin

Higher Education Institutional (HEI) rankings are listings of postsecondary programs that show how institutions compare to one another on some combination of factors. For many, HEI ranking can complement branding strategies designed to promote programs, schools, colleges, and universities. Opportunities to create, communicate, and validate a school's brand are buoyed by the internet and by the publication of HEI rankings that cover a myriad of institutional attributes, from best college

G.W. McLaughlin
Associate VP Emeritus, Enrollment Management and Marketing, DePaul University, Chicago, USA

J.S. McLaughlin (✉)
Associate Professor Emerita of Management, Roosevelt University, Chicago, USA

J.E. McLaughlin
UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA

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to most diverse. As a result, institutional webpages that incorporate an HEI ranking to communicate institutional brand are becoming increasingly visible to students and other stakeholders of higher education.

This chapter informs those who use, or would like to use, HEI ranking for branding on the internet and other marketing materials about how to determine the credibility of an HEI ranking. First, we examine literature concerning the extent to which students are influenced by HEI rankings. We then provide a brief history of HEI rankings and how they have evolved as a tool for communicating the brand promise. Next, we identify issues of source legitimacy, data integrity and stability of methodology, all of which help users of HEI rankings make informed decisions about how to use these schemas. A discussion of rankings for professional schools exemplifies unique issues that can surface when rankings are made for specialized programs, such as those that are nested within institutions. We conclude with a discussion of efforts by the International Ranking Expert Group (IREG) to create a framework for improvement and refinement of methods used to develop credible HEI rankings

Administrator and Student Perspectives on HEI Rankings

Because institutional rankings are among the more visible tools used by students to search for their institution of choice (Egan et al. 2015), institutions increasingly publish favorable rankings as part of their branding strategy. Research has long shown that there is a relationship between improvement in the rankings and the acceptance rate and test scores of the entering freshman class. For example, Monks and Ehrenberg (1999) found that improving one's rank in *U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges* was associated with increased selectivity, an increase in yield, and improvement in admission scores for liberal arts colleges and national universities that were at the top of the ranking list. This work was expanded by Meredith (2004) who found that movement in and out of the first quartile of rankings had a particularly large effect on freshman admissions. In a more recent study based on *U.S. News & World Report Best College Rankings*, admission rates increased by .3% when the rank of the institution improved by one position. This change in enrollments appears to be more sensitive for institutions ranked in the top 25 (Ren 2014).

Surveys of freshmen on their reasons for choosing a particular college or university are also driving the use of institutional ranking in marketing and branding. In the 2015 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey of American freshmen students, approximately 20% of students rated college rankings in national magazines as very important for deciding to go to a particular college (Egan et al. 2015). College rank was more highly rated than wanting to live closer to home (8%), being admitted through an early admittance program (16%), the advice of the high school counselor (10%) and the advice of a teacher (7%). On the other hand, how the institution ranked was less important than eight other reasons, among them, a good academic reputation (70%) and graduates getting good jobs (60%). The social activities for the college were also rated as very important (44%). It is thus not surprising that there are now rankings on academic reputation, economic value added by the degree, and a large number of social aspects of an institution.

Recently published European research also found that institutions use rankings in their marketing efforts and that they invest in strategies to improve their image or brand (Hazelkorn et al. 2014). Rankings are used by institutional leaders in the academic community and by governments or national education authorities. A large percent of survey respondents believe rankings influence prospective students (70%), prospective researchers (66%), other institutions (65%), authorities in charge of higher education (63%), and prospective teaching staff (52%). Half believe rankings influence benefactors, sponsors, investors, funding bodies, and similar organizations. The survey respondents use a variety of ways to publicize their brand based on their ranking. Some refer to their place in a band —“we are in the top –x.” Some refer to the specific rank—if it is sufficiently high. Some use a cluster of rankings to demonstrate geographic status and reputation while others compare themselves to national institutions. The higher ranked institutions believe the rankings are more influential. Respondents from over two-thirds of ranked institutions (69%) believe rankings have a positive impact while less than one-fifth of the unranked institutions (17%) believe rankings are a positive influence. The authors conclude that the relationship between ranking and reputation is likely strong because rankings are often based on reputation, and reputation is often based on ranking.

Taken together, why HEI ranking has emerged as a robust marketing component in branding and is used extensively in college admissions is clear. The relationship between rankings and enrollments is large enough to attract the attention of those who want to create more awareness and interest in their particular institution. In fact, it is increasingly difficult to find a college or university website that does not contain one or more positive claims concerning the institution's ranking. The claims are intended to promote the success and strengths of the college, communicate those characteristics, and validate the legacy that higher education is delivering on its brand promise.

The Legacy of HEI Rankings

Publications leading to institutional rankings first appeared in the early 1900's with British and American studies of men who were considered geniuses. Most prominent were Alick Maclean's published study *Where We Get Our Best Men* (1900) and Havelock Ellis's study on how many geniuses attended specific institutions (1904). In 1906, James McKeen Cattell published *American Men of Science: A Biographical Dictionary*, a work that paved the way for institutional ranking in the US. In 1910, the American Association of Universities asked Kendric C. Babcock of the Bureau of Education to publish a study of undergraduate training that could help graduate schools determine which applicants were best prepared (The history of ranking 2016). He conferred with deans, presidents, and others but for political reasons, the study was suppressed.

By the middle of the century, other precursors to current rankings were developed based on the number of imminent individuals who attended, graduated from, and were taught at various institutions. In 1930, Prentice and Kunkel measured academic quality by the number of a college's undergraduate alumni listed in *Who's Who in America* (Myers and Robe 2009). Initiatives to examine colleges and universities based on their reputation among various groups such as college deans and provosts also appeared on the horizon. Rankings of undergraduate studies appeared in the 1950s and 1960s and became a national phenomenon in the late 1980s and 1990s with reports published by for-profit organizations such as *U.S. News & World Report, Money Magazine*, and *The Princeton Review* (Myers and Robe 2009). Publishing HEI rankings was becoming a profitable option for companies. At the beginning of the 21st Century, global academic ranking of world universities gained prominence with work done by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University, which provided global rankings of universities for comparison against Chinese institutions (About academic ranking of world universities 2016).

HEI rankings thus grew from seeds planted more than a century ago by a privileged sector of society (i.e., those who had the means to attend college). It has since expanded beyond privilege to encompass many factors, some of which reflect the value-added by higher education (e.g., socio-economic factors, equal opportunity). In the US, attributes incorporated into ranking metrics have expanded from traditional characteristics such as institutions by type, best value, net price, and early career earnings to include happiest students, most beautiful campus, best food on campus, and a multitude of other aspects and characteristics. This proliferation of data collection on attributes requires that sources of data be identified and that the data be critically examined.

Assessing the Credibility of HEI Rankings

Today's use of HEI ranking appeals to a much wider audience and appears to be more transparent, inclusive, and useful to the general public. However, critics argue that some ratings are trivial and reflect attributes that do not contribute to a quality education. Use of HEI rankings as part of the marketing and branding strategy requires that the institution understand the purpose of a ranking, how it was constructed, and whether it will be perceived as accurate and trustworthy. The user must be able to (1) establish the legitimacy of the organization publishing the ranking, (2) document the integrity of the data and (3) evaluate the methodology used in construction of the ranking. The purpose of this section is to help readers better evaluate the credibility and reliability of these products.

Website and Publisher Legitimacy

A recent study of European institutions found that 75% use the publisher's website to learn about the ranking methodology (e.g., variables used, data collected, weightings applied) (Hazelkorn et al. 2014). Trusting the integrity of HEI ranking is thus contingent on being able to establish the legitimacy of the organization that creates and publishes the ranking (McLaughlin et al. 2005: 334). The publisher, for example, should be recognized as an expert—or knowledgeable—and the data should be verifiable (e.g., replicable, reproducible, comparable) and accessible to the extent possible.

In general, data from legitimate publishers are believed to be reliable and valid. For example, government websites are generally assumed to be trustworthy. As such, HEI rankings published on government websites or those using government data are commonly accepted as legitimate more so than are institutional rankings based on data from non-vetted surveys. Data from non-governmental organizations such as higher education associations and advocacy groups require more scrutiny. Each of these organizations should identify their mission and purpose for publishing HEI rankings on their websites. Similarly, for-profit business organizations such as those publishing the *U.S. News & World Report Best College Rankings* should make it clear to readers that they are a for-profit business that is publishing a consumer product. A caveat is that, even when the organization provides documentation on a website, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether the organization has posted HEI rankings on an informational site, an advocacy site, or a for-profit business site. If the rankings are published by an individual or party not associated with a known organization, it may be difficult to obtain information to determine the legitimacy of the site. In cases where documentation and information needed to assess the legitimacy of the website is missing, the institution is using the published rankings at their own risk.

Data Integrity and Information

Data integrity concerns whether available data meets acceptable standards for use in ranking institutions. As a starting point, the data source (e.g., government data, association data) should be recognized as authoritative, and the data should be verifiable, interpretable, accessible, and reliable. Any data sets constructed from the raw data should be sufficient, relevant, timely, and generalizable. The data should be evaluated using general standards of data integrity. This requires documentation of the source and analysis of the data (McLaughlin et al. 2005). If the data do not meet the test of integrity, then the institutional ranking should be considered suspect and inappropriate for use in branding.

For developers of HEI rankings, one of the most trusted sources of data for ranking is national databases. As of 2016, almost all countries collect some data on higher education institutions, with some countries having longstanding and extensive data bases. For example, the US Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS), located in the US National Center for Education Statistics, includes a myriad of data about US higher education institutions (e.g. enrollment, spending, location, student and faculty characteristics) for more than 40 years (IPEDS n.d.). These data are publicly available for download and have been used extensively for ranking and creating comparator groups for institutional benchmarking.

Less trusted are data from websites provided by organizations that create portals for collecting self-report data. Nevertheless, not-for-profit and for-profit organizations (e.g., educational associations, for-profit vendors serving higher education) are becoming a major source of supplemental reporting data. They are collecting institutional-level data (e.g., employment and salary data, student opinion) and making it available for use in institutional rankings. Some organizations using website portals to collect data are well-known (e.g., Payscale, LinkedIn). Others are relatively new and working to establish credibility for their data. For example, Niche, founded in 2002 by Carnegie Mellon University students, uses student opinion surveys to collect data on a very broad range of college attributes from diversity, food, and dormitories to party life (Best colleges ranking methodology n.d.). The data are frequently from anonymous individuals who may or may not be providing accurate or verifiable information, thus raising questions about the integrity of the data.

Though government data tend to be trusted, the data themselves can pose problems for developing and interpreting HEI rankings. First, the data definitions may change over time; second, the interpretations of the data definitions (e.g., faculty, student, course) may differ across institutions or countries. The consistency of definitions of variables over time is especially critical when developing international ratings, across countries. Third, issues around data are further aggravated by missing data, concerns over the correctness of the data being submitted, and questions of fairness. When credible evidence indicates that measures differ across cultures or academic disciplines (e.g., research funding, journal publication statistics), the data should be shown to be valid and should be collected and reported for each context being examined. Finally, ranking organizations themselves may compromise data by changing data definitions or by asking the institution for data that are not normally collected. For these reasons, issues of data integrity are frequently a focus of critics who raise questions concerning the validity of institutional rankings (Espinoosa and Tukibayeva 2014).

Issues of Methodology and Stability

> The challenge of building an educational brand is compounded by collegiate ranking methodologies, which make institutions' value propositions blatant, though not necessarily accurate. (Lockwood and Hadd 2007)

Methodologies used in HEI rankings are frequently criticized as inappropriate. For this reason, it is risky to brand an institution with a ranking that fails to present an adequate discussion of its methodology. Although an institution's challenge to methodology is sometimes moderated when it attains a higher rank, this does not diminish the importance of researching methods prior to using the ranking in branding.

An important source of information for evaluating ranking methods is the *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators* (2008). This source identifies key methodological issues that need addressing when constructing a ranking from multiple variables. Measurement aspects that should be presented in a ranking's methodology include, but not limited to, missing data; normalization, weighting, data aggregation, validity, and stability.

Missing data Missing data can skew any analysis and must be managed appropriately. One of the simpler ways to handle missing data is to delete the institution for which data are not available. If an institution with missing data is not deleted, the question is whether the data are missing at random. For data missing at random, the missing information can be estimated and replaced using the mean or median of the variable. For data that are not missing at random, more sophisticated imputation methods should be used. Any time data are missing, evidence describing the nature of the missing data (i.e., random or not random) and how that information is handled (e.g., institution removed from ranking, imputation) should be provided by the ranking organization. [In situations where specific institutions are not required to report data, the exception should be noted and the data not considered missing at random. For example, US institutions that admit all who apply are not required to report the number of applicants, the number accepted, and the number enrolled (IPEDS n.d.).]

Normalization When variables measured on different scales (e.g., graduation rate and average class size) are included in a ranking, there needs to be a methodology for converting the variables to a common scale. Various normalization methodologies include ranking of the individual measures, standardization of the measures, normalizing to a (1, 0, −1) scale, and creating a categorical scale based on percentage distribution. *U.S. News & World Report* sets the "best" (usually highest} institution at 100 and computes the proportion of each other institution—thereby giving all measures set on a similar scale (How U.S. News calculated the 2017 best college rankings 2016).

Weighting Following normalization, weights should be assigned to each variable. Statistical methods for developing weights include regression analysis and Principal Components Analysis. There are also judgmental methodologies, such as asking a panel of experts. Some rankings avoid this issue by allowing the user to assign their own ranks or by producing the complements and ignoring any combined ranking. For example, *U-Multirank* does not create a combined rank score but rather allows users to change performance measures, change the performance scores, and select the number of institutions they want to view (Our approach to ranking 2016).

Data Aggregation Aggregating the data by summing scores from the individual variables, sometimes called Weight-and-Sum, can cause problems when interpreting and using rankings. The problem occurs when summing scores mathematically allows a higher score on some variables to mask a lower score on other variables. For example, this aggregation methodology, as used by *US News & World Report Best College Rankings,* can allow a higher score for high faculty salary to compensate for a lower score on graduation rate. The question is whether it is appropriate for an input variable, like faculty salary, to mask the performance on an outcome measure like graduation rate. Ranking scales do not usually require a minimum performance on individual components before they are included in the ranking (Clarke 2002). It may be more appropriate to require that an institution meet a minimum level of performance on a set of characteristics to be included in a ranking.

Construct Validity Construct validity is typically interpreted based on the relationship of the ranking to other scales and variables and to the extent that a variable measures a specific construct. If a ranking scale is measuring academic excellence, for example, it should have positive relationships with those things that are thought to measure academic excellence (i.e. convergent validity) and not have positive relationships with those things not thought to represent academic excellence (i.e. divergent validity). For example, U-Multirank reported the results of a study in which a survey of EUA member universities identified the importance of indicators to their strategic planning and institutional monitoring. The results of this survey allowed U-Multirank to claim that "12 out of 15 most important items (are) covered by U-Multirank" (Federkeil 2015). Most of the evidence of construct validity in rankings however has come from individual researchers and very few rankings present their own evidence.

Stability A final methodological issues is the stability of the rankings from year to year. Rankings that do not demonstrate adequate stability imply a lack of reliability in their data and methods. Institutions that use rankings in branding that are not stable place themselves at risk for having to explain to stakeholders during subsequent years why they "fell" in the aspect being ranked.

Efforts to address the methodological issues noted above are evolving. For example, the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence has developed a ranking audit for use in constructing HEI global rankings. This effort will be discussed in the final section of this chapter. First, however, we will examine the special case of HEI ranking for professional schools.

Professional Schools and HEI Rankings: An Example of Context

Broadly speaking, professional schools are graduate-level institutions (frequently but not always found within larger universities) that train students for careers in a specific field that may require or provide opportunity for professional licensure or certification after graduation. Examples of professional school disciplines include architecture, nursing, teaching, management, pharmacy, medicine, and law. The landscape of professional education is rapidly changing amid advances in educational technology and pedagogy, proliferation of schools, increased competitiveness for admissions, growing amounts of accessible information, and ongoing demands for accountability and transparency from stakeholders (McKee and Eraut 2011). As a result, a growing number of ranking platforms have been developed in an attempt to assess value, demonstrate success, and promote reputation in professional schools.

Ranking platforms in the profession use a wide range of criteria for determining ratings, such as peer and alumni assessment, admissions data, student outcomes, budget, and licensure pass rates. Yet the extent to which these criteria align with and reflect what's truly important and unique about professional disciplines remains unclear. Further, concerns about the quality and adequacy of these metrics inhibit many institutions from utilizing rankings to affect strategic change. Administrators and leaders in professional schools and colleges must be prepared to engage in conversations about rankings (e.g. evaluate methodologies, interpret findings, discuss relevance) and help shape the development of metrics that more accurately reflect the mission and vision of the discipline or profession.

Relevant Aspects of Professional Education There are a number of aspects to professional education that warrant consideration in the development and use of HEI rankings in branding. Of critical importance is the quality and availability of data to measure attributes that are reflective of the professions. While strides have been made in the United States to collect and make publicly available a wide range of educational indicators for higher education, including institutional and student level data (e.g. IPEDS), this level of transparency lags in professional education. This lack of data limits our ability not only to create composite metrics for use in ratings but to engage in national-level research that could promote the effectiveness of our institutions. Data availability and measurement is further complicated by the fact that outcomes traditionally used to evaluate US undergraduate education (e.g., graduation rates, retention) lack variability in some professions. In pharmacy education, for example, graduation rates and licensure pass rates tend to average above 90%. This raises some question as to how we measure quality and outcomes in professional education—in other words, what outcomes or data points indicate how well professional programs are preparing students for success in the workforce? At the global level, this type of measurement is even more complex given that scope of practice and related educational outcomes can vary widely based on varying national policies.

Further, some professional schools are coupled with 4-year institutions (e.g. undergraduate universities) while others are independent schools (e.g. no other degree programs offered). For those affiliated with a university, the professional school might have its own admissions processes and requirements, its own academic calendar and tuition structure, and its own degree requirements. In addition, professional disciplines often have their own accrediting body, which sets standards for accreditation above and beyond the standards required for the university. A medical school coupled to a 4-years institution in the southeastern United States, for example, might have regional accreditation standards to meet as a part of the university (e.g. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges) and national accreditation standards to meet as part of the medical profession (e.g. Liaison Committee on Medical Education). Many universities also provide faculty and researchers with opportunities to serve in multiple schools or departments with adjunct or dual appointments, particularly in cases where research interests in two units overlap. A faculty member with expertise in global health economics, for example, might have a primary appointment in a school of business and an adjunct appointment in a school of public health, making it difficult to determine the extent to which that expertise and success is attributed to one unit or the other. These aspects of professional education, among others, introduce unique challenges to defining and capturing data that are accurate, specific, attributable, and reflective of the school or profession.

In addition to aspects of professional education that are unique, there are similarities to traditional higher education that make rankings subject to scrutiny. Like other higher education institutions, professional schools can vary widely in terms of size, specialties, resources, and values. When a ranking platform collapses quality into a single metric and applies that metric across the entire profession, it is unlikely to capture relevant aspects of all schools.

Implications for Rankings in Professional Education Despite the challenges associated with collecting data that is valid and reliable, the role of rankings in branding higher education institutions can generally extend to the professions as well. Rankings in professional education have significance for the profession, for the schools in that profession, and for the prospects considering that profession or school. At the level of the profession, rankings can signal opportunities to work with respected colleagues. For schools, favorable rankings can generate potential student interest, prompt alumni engagement, increase donations, enhance visibility, and enable benchmarking. For students and prospective students, rankings provide a mechanism for evaluating the extent to which a program aligns with their interest if the ranking actually includes data that are related to those interests.

Concerns about the quality and adequacy of metrics often inhibit institutions from utilizing HEI rankings as a tool to affect change in professional education. Understanding the recent history of ratings and rankings and basic criteria for measurement/data integrity can position administrators to evaluate the quality of rankings and promote the development of rankings that are valid, reliable, and meaningful for supporting decision making. Given the proliferation of ranking systems and increasing number of degree programs in professional education, administrators and leaders in these disciplines must prepare themselves to engage in conversations about HEI rankings and help shape the development of these metrics. Administrators and educators should work with ranking organizations to create rankings that more accurately reflect the mission and values embodied by professional disciplines. Understanding these issues will better position professional schools to better promote the unique contributions and aspects of their institutions that contribute to the development of students.

Creating Standards for HEI Rankings

Current efforts to address issues around creating, documenting, and promoting global standards for HEI ranking are designed to eliminate the confusion and cacophony in discussions of rankings, whether for the whole or parts of an institution (e.g., colleges, schools, programs). In 2004, an international group of individuals involved in HEI rankings was convened by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This group, the International Ranking Expert Group (IREG), formed the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence (IREG Observatory) as "an international institutional non-profit association of ranking organizations, universities and other bodies interested in university rankings and academic excellence" (About us n.d.). At IREG's 2006 meeting in Berlin, the group identified principles for quality and good practice in HEI rankings. The resulting principles (i.e., the Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions) were identified within a framework for the "elaboration and dissemination of rankings". The intent was to create a system for "continuous improvement and refinement of the methodologies" that could be used to develop credible HEI rankings. As part of its oversight, IREG developed the IREG Ranking Audit initiative.[1] Based on the Berlin Principles, it was developed to "enhance the transparency about rankings; give users of rankings a tool to identify trustworthy rankings; and improve the quality of rankings" (IREG Ranking Audit n.d.).

The IREG Ranking Audit identifies criteria for evaluating the process and outcomes of HEI ranking. Criteria are organized into five categories: (1) Purpose, Target Groups, Basic Approach; (2) Methodology; (3) Publication and Presentation of Results; (4) Transparency, Responsiveness; and (5) Quality Assurance. The audit's criteria are made available on-line by the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence (IREG Ranking Audit n.d., p. 7).

The Berlin Principles and IREG Ranking Audit represent efforts to focus attention on quality assurance in HEI rankings. The audit's criteria are consistent with best practices in data integrity and with widely accepted standards for educational and psychological testing (*Standards for educational and psychological testing* 2011). In addition, consistent with the Berlin principles, institutions have the right to challenge data.

The primary concern of critics of the IREG's audit framework is that it does not require that rankings be accompanied with empirical analytical evidence that they are valid for their intended use, that data have sufficient reliability, or that data should be sufficient, relevant and timely given the target population. This is a particular concern when HEI rankings need to demonstrate that they are free from bias when data are collected across institutions from different cultures. A second concern is the algorithm that is used in a decision to award for the IREG Audit's quality label and corresponding logo—"IREG approved". Criteria are divided into regular criteria (10 criteria) and core criteria (10 criteria) with the regular criteria weighted one and the core criteria weighted two. Based on evidence from the developer of the ranking, each criteria is rated on a scale of 1 to 6 with 1 being "Not sufficient," 3 being "Adequate," and 6 being "Distinguished." "Audit can be with conditions if there are deficits with regard to core criteria." Other than this consideration, if a ranking gets an average of "Adequate" it receives the

[1] http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/pdf/RANKINGS/Sadlak_IREG.pdf

quality label. This means it can be "not sufficient" on multiple criteria as long as it is "Distinguished" and/or "Strong" and/or "Good" on of criteria to bring its average back to "Adequate". It would seem to be desirable to require that a ranking needs to meet a minimum standard for each criterion.

In summary, development of the IREG guidelines represents progress in identifying and encouraging the continuous improvement of HEI rankings. This is important for building confidence in their appropriateness for branding. Rapidly changing technology and methodology will make it possible to augment these guidelines with insights from a wide array of stakeholders. This will make it possible for organizations publishing rankings to develop credible rankings for use in branding by both the larger multi-college institutions and for subunits such as a medical school or other discipline which differs from the larger university in very distinct ways. These guidelines can also contribute to development of credible rankings for branding institutions that are located in distinctly different culture.

Conclusions

Institutional administrators and students perceive HEI rankings as useful sources of information and believe that they signal the benefits of choosing a specific institution or program. Though the origins of HEI rankings can be traced back to sources published more than 100 years ago, the internet has made publication of HEI ranking accessible to stakeholders globally. As a result, it is imperative that institutions evaluate the benefits and dangers associated with using HEI rankings in branding. Prior to using a ranking on its website, decisions makers must be knowledgeable about the methods and data used to create the ranking and the legitimacy of publisher. Examination of special cases such as health sciences also demonstrates the need to be knowledgeable about differences across and among cultures, disciplines, programs, and institutions and their missions. Efforts to recognize these differences and create standards for HEI rankings are evident in the work of the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence.

In today's connected world, HEI ranking will occupy a permanent space in the higher education market. Critics and proponents want to ensure that the rankings are based on reliable and valid data, properly operationalized variables, correctly defined categories, and sound methodologies. When done correctly, HEI rankings can enable institutions to make better informed decisions about how to brand themselves as unique.

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CHAPTER 12

Conclusions and Reflections on Branding and Marketing in Higher Education

Antigoni Papadimitriou and Gerardo Blanco Ramírez

Revisiting Higher Education Competition

National and international competition has been a catalyst for branding in higher education (Ng 2014). Therefore, managerial strategies, such as marketing and branding, have become a priority to higher education institutions. Higher education decision makers employ marketing and branding strategies to create an advantage for their institutions at the national, regional, and international level. Brand building is becoming a deliberate goal for higher education (Maringe and Gibbs 2009), although the sector lacks comprehensive theoretical models of higher education marketing and branding. The development of a set of clear brand principles may not be easy given the complexity of higher

A. Papadimitriou (✉)
Johns Hokpins University, Baltimore, MD, USA

G. Blanco Ramírez
University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, MA, USA

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education institutions. To fill some of the research gaps in a useful and influential way, the present volume has presented theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions to higher education academics, professionals, and graduate students. The purpose has been to understand challenges and opportunities of branding and marketing within the global context of various higher education systems from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America. The study of branding in higher education has not been explored widely, however, the topic of branding itself has been around for many years. Even though the branding of *product* may not be directly correspondent to branding in higher education, research on this topic provides valuable information that would be beneficial to higher education institutions and to their leaders for future actions as well as for marketing and management strategies.

It has been noted that branding is not altogether a new concept: "Branding began sometime around 1500 B.C., when the ancient Greeks marked their cattle,… however, branding initiatives relevant to an institutional enterprise began in 1931" (Muntean et al. 2009, p. 1066). Clifton et al. (2009) assumed "it was of course by burning that early man stamped ownership on his livestock, and with the development of trade buyers would use brands as a means of distinguishing between the cattle of one farmer and another" (p. 14). For centuries, people have used stamps on products to differentiate between brands of different regions in the world. These examples illustrate that branding has traditionally served a differentiating purpose. However, higher education branding has been described as a "sea of sameness" (Clayon et al. 2012, p. 182). These observations make the need for new examinations of marketing and branding in higher education more pressing. The comparative dimension allows the development of a more holistic understanding of marketing and branding. From a comparative point of view, this book explores the *brandscape* of global higher education. In the introduction, Blanco Ramírez opened the stage by integrating ideas about competition, globalization and marketing in the content of higher education. We will return to these ideas in the final section.

The first empirical chapter in this volume, by **Saichaie and Warshaw**, analyzed discourse on websites of Association of American Universities institutions. Historically, universities and industry have exchanged money, knowledge, and people to profit from markets. Moving students into the workforce could be the strongest economic contribution to such efforts. Therefore, the authors asked the following research question:

How do universities recruit prospective students into academe-industry links? Their analysis revealed that institutions: (1) showcased organizational developments that provided specialized knowledge for students to leverage for economic gain; (2) highlighted curricula to develop—and certify—student entrepreneurs; and (3) presented co-curricula as pathways to industry. Together, these themes suggest academic messaging that serves market interests, differentiating which students may benefit most. They suggest institutional leaders and administrators could consider shifting some of the focus in their academic marketing—and opportunities and outlets for students on campuses—to matters of equity, distinctiveness, and balance in institutional purpose and values. These messages may include emphasizing and actively portraying preparation and careers in public service, non-profit leadership, and public health, for example.

Subsequently, Chap. 3, by **Germán Álvarez-Mendiola and Miguel Alejandro González-Ledesma,** analyzes the relationship between marketing context and branding content of six private universities in Chile and Mexico. Conditions for placement and promotion of higher education and institutional efforts to design a marketing identity vary according to the degree of privatization, diversification and segmentation of higher education systems. Therefore, while in Mexico branding content is embedded in a low regulated framework for private sector, Chilean HEIs branding rests in a deeply institutionalized market environment. However, through a web content analysis, the authors identify three similar branding orientations in private universities: strengthening reputation, building reputation and catching-all. Branding targets high, middle or low-income audiences by highlighting symbolic values, economic messages and institutional features to influence audience's perceptions and mobilize economic decisions of current and potential users/customers.

Jelle Mampaey in Chap. 4 investigates similarities and differences in brand communication between different types of higher education institutions in Flanders (Belgium). Earlier research on HEIs branding have consistently focused on branding content, but this chapter provides a more holistic analysis by examining content- and style-related processes underlying brand communication. Theoretically, it approaches branding content by drawing from earlier research on communicated values in higher education. Branding style is conceptualized based on Searle's Speech Act Theory. Empirically, it focuses on the mission statements of 20 Flemish HEIs. The study identifies similarities in branding content and style, as well as some subtle differences. Then it discusses its findings in light of recent debates in the higher education branding literature.

Then **Papadimitriou's** research captured a one-time (Summer, 2014) collection of data from ever-evolving, continuously updated website homepages from the Western Balkans public and private universities. Using a sequential mixed methods design, data revealed many factors about how each institution wished to publically position itself within the constraints of all the immediate stakeholders. The Western Balkans regional definition in this, as in other studies, includes the countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Data indicated a competitive, online marketplace where each institution sought new stakeholders though graphics, logos, special identity icons, and use of social media for advertising. Document analysis revealed exotericism and quality messages as well as use of English, however not in all HEIs. Papadimitriou suggests that more research on marketing and branding are needed in the region mostly by researchers understanding Western Balkan languages.

Chapter 6 by **Patrício V. Langa and Nelson C. Zavale** examines how Mozambican higher education institutions use branding to differentiate themselves, promote their image and gain advantage in an increasing competitive social field of higher education. They discuss the notions of brand and branding in higher education, while distinguishing from marketing. The authors provide the theoretical and methodological basis for examining branding in higher education. Drawing from the Mozambican case study, they examine some strategies used by higher education institutions to create and promote their brand to a variety of stakeholders. They identify four ways in which higher education institutions distinguish themselves from their competitors: years of existence, area of specialization, the services/facilities they provide, the pedagogical approach they use, and the images of personalities shown on their websites. Finally, they conclude that branding is becoming a strategy used by institutions to survive, pursue or even maintain competitive advantage.

Then **Chap. 7** by **Jenny Ngo** and **Decky A. Ismandoyo** examines the impacts of education brand on students' decisions through advertising brochures for higher education institutions in Surabaya Indonesia. The chapter uses a random sampling in selecting the accredited senior high schools in Surabaya as the target groups and two outstanding accredited universities, representing Information Technology and

Entrepreneurship programs as the objects. A questionnaire was administered to senior high school students in grade 12. The study indicated that attractive brochures helped students distinguish and define differences among the two universities. Moreover, the study found that the brand image of a university was significantly related to the student's decision to enroll. Student's good perceptions on the educational brand was a good model for predicting the students' decisions to enroll in the university.

In **Chap. 8**, the authors **Queenie Lam** and **Hayes H.H. Tang** observe that branding is a stated strategic priority of four out of seven public universities in Hong Kong. However, the branding activities they propose miss the essence—the alignment of their various identities. By adapting the concept of corporate branding to the analysis of their self-representations in four distinctive types of communication materials (strategic plans, vision and mission statements, student recruitment materials, and press releases), the authors introduce a new approach to university branding study by examining the content alignment in addition to the content itself. Findings show that while all Hong Kong universities have balanced their self-representations between excellence and uniqueness, new technical universities that openly state branding as a priority show more signs of alignment in the communication materials.

Noah D. Drezner in **Chap. 9** explores existing literature on why social identity should be considered in higher education marketing and provides recommendations for practice. University advancement officers are tasked with engaging the public in order to create and further relationships and to increased donations. There is a complex strategy at most US colleges and universities that leads to the engagement of alumni and others. These relationship strategies can be view as a form of marketing. Historically, American higher education, like much of the non-profit sector, engaged all of its constituencies in very similar ways, with some differences mattering on the size of donation. However, as higher education continues to diversify and becomes less homogeneous, more nuanced strategies, that take into account social identity and cultural difference, are needed. Drezner's chapter attempts to connect two different fields of study in ways that have not yet been done. By thinking of annual fund strategy a form of relationship marketing, there is an opportunity not just for practice but for theoretical development. Too often higher education scholars shy away from the marketing literature due to its connection to the for-profit world. However, there is much more room for overlap while still maintaining the proper level of critique.

In **Chap. 10 Leon Cremonini** and **John Taylor** propose a framework to understand if and how hubs contribute to stronger positioning of higher education system in global competition, and they use the case of Qatar to draw conclusions. Increasingly, governments around the world invest in so-called “education hubs,” which host excellent tertiary providers. Hubs show how, on a global level, new forms of competition between higher education systems are evolving. By being home to top universities, hubs are believed to be both a country’s “branding tool” and a means for developing internal capacity. The analysis suggests that a hub does not necessarily strengthen the national position but may actually reinforce existing inequalities in perceived prestige between systems.

Chapter 11, written by **Gerald W. McLaughlin, Josetta S. McLaughlin, and Jacqueline E. McLaughlin,** focused on the importance of addressing two concerns before using the rankings—how rankings are used by stakeholders and whether the rankings are credible. Higher education institutions are ranked on almost every conceivable attribute. As a result, HEIs ranking has emerged as a robust marketing component in branding and is used extensively by institutions. This chapter provides an overview of whether stakeholders are influenced by HEIs rankings and a discussion of three important ranking issues—source legitimacy, data integrity, and methodology. A discussion of professional schools identifies the unique issues that surface when rankings focus on specialized programs. The authors conclude with a description of the International Ranking Expert Group initiative to create a framework for developing and evaluating credible rankings in higher education field.

Main Themes in the Book

The point of departure in this volume was that marketing and branding in higher education responded to the pressures of competition like sailing competitions in rough water and under turbulence weather conditions (the cover of this volume). In this context, HEIs need to establish a sense of organizational identity and communicate this identity effectively, namely brand themselves. Having this common theme, the authors present variations that respond to the specific context of each study. As the chapters illustrate, research on marketing and branding in higher education is at a crossroads. Growing attention on these topics requires new and sophisticated methods to explore and analyze information.

The chapters in this book exemplify the struggles that researchers interested in marketing and branding in higher education face in order to adapt existing research approaches. As we can see, most researchers employ some form of socio-communicative research approach. The use of language and discourse as metaphors or methodological strategies is salient across the chapters. Another challenge lies in the analysis of unstructured data. Visual data presents particular challenges and several chapters in this book illustrate creative efforts to make sense of complex data.

Copyright and the use of intellectual property when researching marketing and branding in higher education is of particular concern. From a different perspective, but also involving ethical decisions is the issue of consent and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Given the extensive use of visual and digital data, it is often unclear whether research on marketing and branding in higher education fits traditional definitions of research with human participants. The use of social media further complicates these challenges because social media integrate individual and organizational identities in digital environment (Blanco Ramírez and Palu-ay 2015). Therefore, researchers focused on the topic need to develop guidelines of ethics and behavior that respect participants' rights, including privacy, and intellectual property.

In addition to ethics and copyright, the comparative perspective of this volume illustrates the challenges of multi-national and multi-lingual studies. The chapters illustrate the value of comparative and international studies. Local researchers, in under-represented countries and languages, are well positioned to contribute to the field by conducting research in their home languages as not all websites and documents are published in English.

Challenges

Higher education institutions need to communicate their values to the public if they are to remain as relevant social institutions. For this reason, attention to marketing and branding is important. Critical perspectives are necessary in order to identify the abuses and perils of the marketization of higher education, while dismissal of the importance of marketing or disengagement from competition may prove devastating for the future of universities. While many challenges are ahead, three issues related to higher education branding and marketing are particularly critical: (a) brand equity, (b) the role played by exclusivity, and (c) the risk of counterfeiting.

Brands rely on establishing positive associations (Lêncastre and Corte-Real 2013; Oswald 2012). As a result, marketing frequently relies on aspirational information and tends to augment the positive attributes of a product or service. Brand equity, or "the value that the consumer ascribes to the brand" (Mourad et al. 2011, p. 403) constitute a risk in higher education because brand equity can be completely disconnected from activities of the higher education institution (universities and colleges). In other words, a higher education institution with very high brand equity, namely with very good status, may not live up to its reputation.

Branding relies on differentiating one's product from the competition. However, this idea operates well in the context of private goods. Higher education, in contrast, retains elements of a public good. While exclusivity may be a positive attribute for the branding of conventional products, exclusivity—or elitism—is not necessarily a positive attribute for higher education institutions or programs. Administrators and other higher education practitioners need to determine what boundaries should limit the influence of marketing and branding on their activities.

The third issue is related to the authenticity of brands and, conversely the risk of counterfeit. In a context of increased competition, some higher education institutions may want to profit from the good reputation of other institutions and utilize denotative brand elements, such as names, colors and logos in order to associate with well-established universities. This risk is particularly prominent in contexts where copyright enforcement is lax.

In this *brandscape* arena practitioners and higher education researchers need to collaborate like the captain and the grew, need to track the wave conditions, and find the optimum capacity in order to sail close to the true wind.

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