
Introduction

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Biographical notes: S. Peter Horn has a PhD in International Finance, and a Masters in International Tax Law from Regent University's School of Law. He is Chancellor of the International School of Management – a small privately funded university offering Masters and doctoral degrees in business. It is the institution's focus on quality and continuous improvement that has proven to be the key component in maintaining its competitive advantage in the international education environment. His current research interests focus on quality in education, international tax law and modelling the international financial markets. He is Chair-elect of the Board of Commissioners for Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Programs for the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), sits on their Strategic Planning Committee and is President of the International Council of Business Schools and Programs (Region 8). He is also a member of several US and European corporate Boards.

A World Bank study shows a distinct correlation between economic development and the development of higher education. In countries belonging to the OECD enrollment ratios in higher education averaged over 50% compared to 21% in middle income countries and 6% in low income countries.¹

In addition, studies conducted by the UN clearly show that the 'quality of a country's higher education sector and its assessment and monitoring is not only key to its social and economic well-being, it is also a determining factor affecting the status of that higher education system at the international level. The establishment of quality assurance systems has become a necessity, not only for monitoring quality in higher education delivered within the country, but also for engaging in delivery of higher education internationally. As a consequence, there has been an impressive rise in the number of quality assurance and accreditation bodies for higher education in the past two decades'.²

The general theme of this Special Issue of the *International Journal of Management in Education* focuses on quality assurance. Since the 1980s, cross-border higher education through the mobility of students, academic staff, programmes/institutions and professionals has grown considerably. In parallel, new delivery modes have appeared, such as campuses abroad, electronic delivery of higher education and for-profit providers. These new forms of higher education offer increased opportunities for improving the skills and competencies of individual students but also present new challenges in ensuring quality – developing appropriate procedures and systems in order to maximise the benefits and limit the potential drawbacks of the internationalisation of higher education on quality.

Designed to develop, promote and coordinate research on quality assurance issues in education management; this Special Issue of the *IJMIE* also seeks to help professionals, business educators and policy-makers to contribute, to disseminate information and to learn from each other's work. The international dimension, albeit with a quality assurance focus, is emphasised in order to overcome cultural and national barriers and to meet the needs of accelerating technological change and changes in the global economy.

Notes

- 1 Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Recent Progress; Challenges Ahead by Elaine El-Khawas Graduate School of Education University of California, Los Angeles Robin DePietro-Jurand and Lauritz Holm-Nielsen The World Bank, 1988.
- 2 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education Paris, 2005 (http://www.chea.org/pdf/UNESCO_Guidelines.pdf), last accessed on 11 April 2009.