
How National Contexts Shape Academic Work and Careers

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Study of Academic Work

Long history of national studies of academic work

Carnegie's 1992 survey was one of the first major empirical international studies

Changing Academic Profession (2007-08) signalled a new era of interest, including new comparative studies in Europe, East and South Asia, etc.

Study of Academic Work

- Studies of comparative policies and practices (Musselin's study of academic hiring in France, Germany, US)
- Major international study of faculty remuneration (sponsored by Moscow Higher School of Economics)

Work and Systems

- With the CAP and related projects we collect comparative data from faculty on their perceptions, and then analyze these data from national/system perspectives
- We can compare survey responses by country, but understanding why there are differences in response patterns is quite challenging

Our Study

- Objective is to begin with a detailed analysis of national systems, employment arrangements, and faculty career pathways
- To look across these national stories and develop basic typologies and core concepts that illuminate structural differences in how academic work and careers are constructed

Our Study

- We hope that the study will lead to the development of conceptual tools (categorizations, typologies) that will further the empirical, comparative analysis of faculty work

Method

- Development of a questionnaire designed to guide the description and analysis of national systems and career patterns:
 - Influenced by Clark, Musselin – sociological perspectives on systems and
 - Now reviewed and revised in light of input from national/comparative experts associated with previous studies

Questionnaire Elements

1. National employment context:

- Importance/impact of national employment regulations for all workers on faculty
- Limits on the employment of foreign citizens
- Are faculty civil servants
- National political context and issues of equity for women/minority populations
- National political context and academic freedom

Questionnaire Elements

2. The National Higher Education System

- Formal institutional differentiation
- Support for research
- Institutional autonomy
- Role of markets
- Influence of organized labour

Questionnaire Elements

- Academic Careers Within the National System
 - Preparing for an academic career
 - Academic career tracks
 - Basis of appointments
 - Progression
 - Relationships with colleagues
 - Salaries and contracts
 - Benefits
 - Issues of equity
 - Retirement

Development of National Case Studies

1. Brazil
2. Canada
3. China
4. France
5. Germany
6. India
7. Japan
8. Russia
9. South Africa
10. United Kingdom
11. United States

Comparative Analysis of Cases

- Comparative discussion of national cases will hopefully lead to the development of useful concepts and categorization systems
- Challenges
 - Studying a moving picture (need to look at change over time)
 - Complexity of diverse systems
 - Developing useful conceptual tools

THANK YOU!!

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