Revista DIGITAL

2° edición

ISSN 2806-5549

Revista científica educativa

Vol.2

Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa

República del Ecuador

Gobierno del Encuentro

Juntos lo logramos

Atributos de los Programas Académicos de Calidad en las Universidades en Países en Desarrollo: Estudio de caso de Universidades Ecuatorianas y de Universidades de otros Países Latinoamericanos

Mónica Urigüen. PhD[1]
2021

República del Ecuador
Gobierno del Encuentro
Juntos lo logramos

Resumen

A través de esta investigación se presentan los atributos o cualidades de los programas académicos de alta calidad, cuyo objetivo es contribuir a los países en desarrollo, como es Ecuador, para mejorar la calidad de sus programas.

Este articulo académico incluye lo siguiente: Introducción, con el estudio de los programas de alta calidad; Revisión de literaturas relacionadas con los programas de calidad; Metodología, para poder identificar las cualidades o atributos que influyen en los resultados de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, se utilizó la metodología cualitativa de teorías contextualizadas; Hallazgos o Resultados (los datos de este estudio provinieron de 60 entrevistados); Discusión; y, Referencias.

Los atributos resultantes de la investigación fueron clasificados en los siguientes grupos:

Participantes Altamente Calificados	• Profesores altamente calificados • Estudiantes altamente calificados
Culturas Centradas en el Aprendizaje	• Tronco común de los programas académicos con enfoque en el aprendizaje • Experiencias (pasantías) del mundo real • Culturas centradas en la lectura • Ambientes seguros para asumir retos
Enseñanza y Aprendizaje Interactiva	• Aprendizaje interactivo: teoría con la práctica, Persona y sujeto • Tutorías personalizadas
Requisitos de Conexión de Programas	• Planificación amplia y profunda de las clases • Productos tangibles

Recursos Adecuados	• Ayudas estudiantiles • Ayudas a docentes

• Recursos para la infraestructura de las instituciones

La investigación fue guiada por la Teoría de Compromiso con los Programas de Alta Calidad de Haworth y Conrad (1977). Once de los atributos de programas de calidad de este estudio se encuentran conectados a los de Haworth y Conrad, y dos son resultados propios de la autora; por lo tanto, constituyen su aporte teórico: Experiencias del mundo real, y Culturas centradas en el aprendizaje. El atributo: "Experiencias del mundo real" invita a un involucramiento activo de todas las partes interesadas en el diseño curricular para que conecte con la realidad. El segundo atributo, "Cultura centrada en el aprendizaje" no ha sido encontrado en literaturas anteriores.

Cuatro de los atributos de los programas de calidad son incluso más importantes en Ecuador y, posiblemente, en otros países en desarrollo, estos son: Profesores altamente calificados, Estudiantes altamente calificados, Culturas centradas en la lectura, y Experiencias del mundo real.

Esta investigación visualiza un mejor futuro para las universidades. En otras palabras, las universidades de América Latina rendirán cuentas a la sociedad y garantizarán a sus estudiantes programas académicos de alta calidad, lo cual contribuirá a un desarrollo más sostenible en cada país.

Palabras Claves:

Atributos, Programas de Alta Calidad, Experiencias del Mundo Real, Culturas Centradas en la Lectura, Ambientes Seguros para Asumir Retos.

[6] Mónica Urigüen, en el 2005, obtuvo su título de Ph.D. en Liderazgo Educativo y Análisis de Políticas, con énfasis en administración universitaria, planificación estratégica y evaluación, en la Universidad de Wisconsin - Madison (2000 – 2005). Ganó una beca otorgada por la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) para el Ph.D., conjuntamente con beca como profesora auxiliar de la misma Universidad. Tiene título de Master en Ciencias de la Educación en 1997, otorgado por la Universidad de Kansas – Lawrence. Para su maestría obtuvo una beca Fulbright – LASPAU. Es Licenciada en Administración con especialización en Talento Humano (1992) de la Universidad Tecnológica Equinoccial.

Abstract

This study sought to identify the key attributes of high-quality programs with an eye toward helping developing countries such as Ecuador advance program quality.

This investigation embraces the following parts: Introduction: studying high-quality programs, literature review of attributes of high-quality programs; Method, to identify program attributes that influence student learning outcomes, grounded theory; Findings (the data for this qualitative study came from 60 interviewees); Discussion; and, References.

Attributes of High-Quality Programs

Cluster One Highly Qualified Participants	Cluster Two Learning-Centered Cultures	Cluster Three Interactive Teaching and Learning	Cluster Four Connected Program Requirements	Cluster Five Adequate Resources
1. Highly Qualified Faculty **2.** Highly Qualified Students	**3.** Shared Program Direction Focused on Learning **4.** Real-World Learning Experiences **5.** ReadingCentered Culture **6.** Supportive and Risk-Taking Environment	**7.** Integrative learning: Theory with Practice, Self with Subject **8.** Exclusive Tutoring and Mentoring	**9.** Planned Breadth and Depth Course Work **10.** Tangible Products	**11.** Support for Students **12.** Support for Faculty **13.** Support for Campus Infrastructure

While I used grounded theory, my study was guided by Haworth and Conrad‘s (1997)

“Engagement Theory of High-Quality Programs.” Eleven of the attributes of highquality programs are closely connected to Haworth and Conrad‘s theory and the other two attributes—real-world learning experiences and a reading-centered culture—make the signature theoretical contributions of my study. Real-world learning experiences encourage the active involvement of stakeholders in designing curricula with real-world learning experiences. The second attribute—a reading-centered culture—has never before been identified in the literature.

Four key attributes are even more important in Ecuador and, possibly, other developing countries: highly-qualified faculty, highly-qualified students, reading-centered cultures, and real-world learning experiences.

This study envisions a better future for universities. That is, Latin American universities will become accountable to society by guaranteeing their students high-quality programs, which will assure more sustainable development within each country.

Key Words:

- Attributes: a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone or something.
- High Quality Programs
- Real-World Learning Experiences
- Reading -Centered Culture
- Risk – Taking Environment

• Introduction

The aim of this study is to define the attributes of quality programs in universities in developing countries: case studies of universities in Ecuador and in other Latin American universities. Therefore, what does quality mean in terms of higher education? What attributes are found in high-quality programs? How can universities in developing countries, especially in Ecuador, advance quality programs? This investigation sought to identify the key attributes of high-quality programs with an eye toward helping developing countries such as Ecuador advance program quality.

Why is there a need for quality in higher education? What does program quality have to do with students‘ development and growth? The principal reason for studying highquality programs is that higher education plays a significant role in improving individual lives as well as society. Therefore, establishing high-quality programs is critical. Studying quality programs in developing countries is especially important because the pivotal goal of education is preparing students for roles in which they can contribute to the development of their societies.

The first part of this paper advances the need for studying high-quality programs, especially in universities in developing countries such as in Ecuador. It also provides an overview of the higher

education system in Latin America and in Ecuador. The literature review embraces the attributes of high-quality programs. Then, I describe the qualitative research method that I used in my research.

In order to identify program attributes that influence student learning outcomes, I used grounded theory, an inductive approach in which a theory is generated based on the data I collected. Like Haworth and Conrad (1997), I used a "positioned subject" approach that grounded my research in the perspectives of diverse stakeholders (administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and employers). After the qualitative research method, I present the findings, where the data came from 60 interviewees: 48 interviewees were from Ecuador, one interviewee was from United States, and 11 interviewees were from other Latin American countries. The interviews were conducted at two different times in two different countries: in Ecuador during December 2001 and January 2002; and, I also conducted my research in Costa Rica during June and July 2003. At the end of this paper, I present limitations, some conclusions, and recommendations.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective or purpose of this study was to identify program attributes in universities in developing countries and how those attributes can contribute to positive learning outcomes for students. In regards to identifying attributes, I researched for the actions taken by stakeholders to engage in to develop the attributes, as well as the effects those actions have on improving students´ learning outcomes.

Past and Present University Education in Latin America

In Latin America, the first universities were established in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-centuries. For a considerable period of time, universities taught postsecondary and religious courses. According to the chronicler Diego Vasquez, the first university of the "New World" was founded in the Dominican Republic in 1583. In 1551, the Universities of Lima and Mexico were founded. In 1586, the first Ecuadorian university was founded: ***Universidad de San Fulgencio*** in Quito. In 1622, the Jesuits

established the ***Universidad de San Gregorio*** in Quito. Finally, between 1686 and 1688,[2] the ***Dominicos*** established the ***Universidad de Santo Tomás de Aquino*** in Quito, (Urigüen, M., 1997: 4). By the end of 17th century, the "Old World" had only 16 universities. When Harvard College was founded in 1636, Latin America already had 13 universities – a number that rose to 31 after Latin America's independence from Spanish control in the early 19th Century.

In brief, the colonial university was created within the framework of the cultural policy imposed by the Spanish Empire. Its mission was to tend to the needs of the crown, the church, and the upper classes of society. Native people were admitted as "exceptions" when they were related to members of the ruling classes.

The ***Universidades de Salamanca*** and ***Alcalá de Henares***, the two most famous colonial Spanish universities, were the models for universities in Latin American countries. Later, during 1918, the Cordoba Reform Movement took place in Argentina and established the principle of co-governance.[3] Co-governance has arguably restricted the advance in quality programs because of significant conflicts between university administration and political leaders.

Independence of Latin America from Spain gave new direction to higher education based on the revolutionary ideology of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Model. Among the key features of the Napoleonic Model and the Cordoba Reform Movement's principles are:

1) the emphasis on professional training;

2) the separation of teaching from research;

3) open admission;

4) free tuition to all students; and

5) the centralization of administration or what is known as university bureaucratization.

[2] Malo, H. (1984: 30). Hurtado, O. (1992: 19).

[3] Co-governance, a Cordoba principle, is the conception of a university's governance equally integrated by faculty, students, and administrators.

During the decades after the establishment of the Cordoba Reform Movement, open admission and free tuition to all students took place at public universities. These two Cordoba Reform principles resulted in a massive increase in students and subsequent low quality standards that jeopardized quality programs. To illustrate, in Latin American universities the number of students increased from 1.6 million students in 1970 to 5.9 million in 1984. The number of students at the ***Universidad Central*** in Quito, the largest university in Ecuador, increased from 11,000 students in 1967[4] to 43,000 students in 1972 as a result of the student movement that took place at ***Universidad de Guayaquil***. A similar situation occurred throughout the country.[5]

"In 1982 universities had 134,000 students,"[6] and "by 1994 public universities and polytechnic schools had more than 220,000 students."[7]

Since 1950, several new private universities have been founded in order to ensure quality programs that were being jeopardized by open admission and free tuition. Some of the actions that private universities took to guaranty quality programs were to apply admission tests and faculty hiring policies aimed at attracting faculty with outstanding academic credentials.

Higher Education in Developing Countries

In Latin America, it is important to note that there are often significant differences from country to country as well as from university to university despite the same colonial heritage. Some differences can be seen in political, economic, and educational systems, particularly in higher education systems. To illustrate, Schwartzman (1993: 9-20) says that one of the main differences within universities is the presence European immigrants in the history of their higher education systems: "Places with a strong presence of European immigrants and linkages, such as Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo, developed very different, and usually better institutions, than those that remained more isolated, such as Mexico or Rio de Janeiro." Another important difference has to deal with the influence of the Church and State and

[4] On May 29, 1967 the most important student movement toward free admission took place. During that student movement, 29 students were killed at Casona Universitaria – ***Universidad de Guayaquil.***

[5] Urigüen, M. (1997: 16).

[6] Grijalva, A. (1994: 126).

[7] CONUEP (1994: 17).

how they have affected higher education. For example, Mexico, Argentina, and Ecuador among others have large university systems dominated by a central, national university. If we compare these university systems with those decentralized systems in Brazil, Colombia, and Chile, we could find historical differences that may help us to understand the key differences in the universities. Rolando Arellano (2003) adds that Latin American universities have focused most of their efforts more on understanding and analysis of knowledge advanced in so-called "developed counties" rather than creating their own theories.

Higher Education in Latin American Universities since the 1980s to present

By the end of the 1980s, most military regimes disappeared in Latin America. At the time, campuses confronted a new challenge in the form of "economic stagnation."

According to UNESCO (2000), most public and private co-financed universities received funding from the State. In several Latin American universities, particularly in Ecuador, most faculty have not been earning enough money to devote full-time effort to their academic pursuits, research, and teaching activities; many need other jobs to supplement their income, and the quality of teaching has decreased. In Ecuadorian universities, the financial crisis has resulted in the deterioration of quality. Since professors have been receiving low salaries, universities are suffering the "phenomenon of high mobility, absenteeism, and abandonment of teaching"[8] To solve this problem at least partially, non-profit private corporations have been organized by universities to improve quality standards. To illustrate this point, universities have established contracts, received and invested money, hired staff, and paid better salaries to professors in cooperation with non-profit private corporations.

According to the book: The Internet and Higher Education: Identifying needs for learning analytics adoption in Latin American universities: A mixed-methods approach (2020), one of the strategies to

[8] UNESCO 2002-2003.

challenge the quality improvement in higher education in Latin America, could be Learning Analytics (LA), that is the measurement, gathering, examination, and information based on data about the learning processes. LA is applied in both: academic and commercial fields. LA includes: learning in educational research and evaluation sciences, educational technology; analytics in statistics, computer sciences, artificial intelligence, among others; and in human related design, such as: participatory design, sociotechnical systems thinking… "Latin American universities have fallen behind in LA adoption compared to institutions in other regions." Thus, applying LA, students will receive quality feedback and support for improvement; teachers and academic staff can get timely alarms and significant performance evaluations; and managers could rely on accurate information to implement adequate continuous improvements. Hence, "LA offers an opportunity to integrate data-driven decision-making in existing tasks."

Integration Process of Latin American Universities

According to many observers, Latin America needs to design a development strategy aimed at a more favorable reintegration of the region in the process of forming university alliances. In response to this need, the Union of Universities of Latin America (UDUAL)[9] has introduced strategies to assure the integration process of Latin American universities. UDUAL promotes cultural and academic integration with democratic principles in Latin American universities. To illustrate, faculty and students have the opportunity to participate in study abroad academic programs.

Following the international recommendations related to the integration process, Latin American countries have also established the Latin American Network Alliance for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (RIACES), which was created in May 2003 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. RIACES is a network alliance for inter-institutional cooperation that facilitates studies on Latin American integration via regional or subregional university cooperation in order to develop an integration culture and exchange of experience related to quality programs.

[9] UDUAL was founded on September 22, 1949, at the First Latin American Meeting in Guatemala. Currently, UDUAL has more than 160 university members from 22 Latin American countries. UDUAL has UNESCO´s approval, as a regional advisor.

Move toward More Liberal Education (LE)

By the mid-20th century, a number of Latin American universities chose to advance liberal education in their academic programs because university authorities believed there was a compelling need to pursue a more holistic education with a focus on learning. Currently, LE is part of academic programs at first-tier, higher education institutions. Therefore, only a minor sector of the populace in developing countries receives LE. Since LE has significant impact on each society, developing countries need leaders with ethics, well-educated alumni, and trained professionals for industry, academe, and affairs of state, states the World Bank Report (2000).

The movement toward more LE that universities in Latin America are experiencing coincides with the so-called "university reforms" supported by academic communities. Currently, these reform processes are aimed more at a redefinition of the relations between the State, society, and individual universities. The State, society, and individual universities join together as an academic community aimed at bringing about a profound transformation of academic programs in developing countries. To illustrate, in Ecuador, the ***Higher Education Law*** states that every academic program has to introduce subjects from liberal education in order to guarantee higher quality education.[10] All undergraduate and graduate programs in Ecuador should prepare students with cultural, humanistic, scientific, and professional knowledge, because those are their rights. The Ecuadorian Constitution should answer to public interest; therefore, that is education for all.

Recent Efforts to Improve Quality in Programs in Latin American Universities

The organization of universities as a system within a regional and sub-regional integration, the introduction of liberal education within academic programs, and the expansion and diversification of education for all, are some of the current efforts to improve quality in academic programs in Latin American universities. To illustrate the integration process, the ***Andrés Bello*** Agreement facilitates credit

[10] Ley de Educación Superior y Reglamento General, Ecuador.

transfer among Latin American universities that have improved academic quality. Another illustration of this academic integration is the new "distance education systems" in Latin America. Some of the current "distance education systems" or open systems in Latin America include ***Universidad Nacional Abierta*** (UNA) in Venezuela, ***Universidad Particular Técnica de Loja*** in Ecuador, ***Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia*** (UNED) in Costa Rica, ***Unidad Universitaria del Sur*** in Colombia, distance education system of the Universities of Brasilia, and UNAM of Mexico. Other recent efforts to improve quality in programs in Latin American universities are the improvement of teaching-learning methods, university planning, student-teacher relationships, and budget formulation.

Ecuadorian Universities: Reforms and Changes

Inadequate connections between the universities and the external environment, poor academic quality, weak management, insufficient funds, and lack of accountability systems are among the main problems that need to be solved. For these reasons, the Ecuadorian higher education system is currently undergoing reforms and changes to improve quality programs. Thus, in Ecuador, on April 12, 2012, the Accreditation System closed 14 universities in the whole country. Years later, two more universities were closed, and few other are still under quality investigation. Currently, some quality challenges persist.

The Ecuadorian financial crisis is one of the most significant obstacles to attaining highquality programs. "A top-down structural reform of higher education systems may no longer be possible or appropriate in Ecuador."[11] In contrast to reforms that are specific, large-scale, and embedded in law, accreditation and evaluation foster a much different and potentially more responsive approach to reform. It is much more difficult to change a law in a country such as Ecuador than it is to enhance the criteria, indicators, and processes of institutional change and evaluation.

Another significant obstacle in attaining quality programs is the small amount or total lack of research. According to Jameson (1997: 4 – 7), there has been remarkably little research done on higher education in Ecuador.

[11] Twombly (1997: 7)

According to Twombly (1999), reforming higher education in Ecuador has been sporadic and partial because for most universities, reform means curricular change and most would argue that their universities are already engaged in a reform process.

Among the main reforms to improve quality programs in Ecuadorian universities are:

1) continual redefinition of the mission and objectives of higher education;

2) creation of a higher education system;

3) development of closer relations between the universities and their environment;

4) encouragement of scientific and technological research;

5) improvement of university leadership within administrations;

6) increase in and diversification of sources of finances;

7) creation of a national system of evaluation and accreditation as a means for ensuring accountability; and

8) changes to the current higher education law.

To advance quality programs, Ecuadorian universities have started in the decade of 1990 a system of evaluation and accreditation, mostly patterned after the United States' evaluation systems. The evaluation system is aimed at assessing the following areas: leadership within administrations, missions, and institutional plans, budgets and finance, interactions between university and society, research, connected program requirements, interactive teaching and learning, and adequate resources. Every effort related to reform and change is being conducted through the "Ecuadorian Higher Education Council" (CONESUP).[12]

[12] According to the Ecuadorian Higher Education Law, Article 11, CONESUP is an autonomous and public institution responsible for planning, regulating, coordinating, and guiding the Ecuadorian Higher Education System (universities, polytechnic schools, and technological institutes). CONESUP also approves the creation of any new higher education institution.

Literature Review

This section of the study provides a literature review related to attributes of high-qualitynprograms, especially the literature on quality programs in universities in developed countries.

Conceptualizations of Quality

> Not only does it cover three classical functions of ***Ortega and Gasset***: teaching, research and extension, which amounts to the quality of its teaching staff, the quality of its program and the quality of its teachinglearning methods, but it also includes the quality of its students, its infrastructure and its academic surroundings.
>
> *UNESCO, 2002*

Seymour (1992) refers to quality programs as a day-to-day operating philosophy—a never-ending quality journey. Seymour & Associates (1996) promote Baldrige, a performance paradigm, as a robust system that stands in sharp contrast to the "weknow-it-when-we-see-it." Baldrige's criteria to assess quality programs are: (1) leadership; (2) information and analysis; (3) strategic and operational planning; (4) human resource development and management; (5) educational and business process management; (6) institutional performance results; and (7) student focus and student and stakeholder satisfaction. Sims and Sims (1995: 8) state: "The evolving view of quality programs takes it to mean the degree to which student and other stakeholder needs and expectations are consistently satisfied."

Haworth and Conrad (1997: 15) "broadly define high-quality programs as those which, from the perspective of diverse stakeholders, contribute to enriching learning experiences for students that positively affect their growth and development."

Views and Attributes of High-Quality Programs

Haworth and Conrad (1997: 3 – 9), in their "Engagement Theory of Quality," identify five views of quality: faculty, resource, student quality-and-effort view, curriculum requirements, and multidimensional/

multilevel views. According to Haworth and Conrad: "The faculty view enjoys direct empirical support from studies of the quantitative attributes of 'high-quality' programs insofar as researchers have found a strong relationship between measures of faculty educational training and qualification and program quality."[13]

Adequate resources—human, financial, and physical—are the sine ***qua non*** of highquality programs according to resources view. The resource view is supported both directly through research on the quantitative attributes of program quality and indirectly through objective indicator rankings.[14] A student quality-and-effort-view, for those advancing a student quality-and-effort view, suggests that well-qualified, involved, and motivated students are the centerpiece of high quality programs. In terms of the curriculum requirements view, Haworth and Conrad (1997) state that those advancing this view tend to emphasize three quality-related attributes: core and specialized course work; residency requirements that encourage on-campus study; and a culmination experience—such as a thesis, research project, or comprehensive examination. Finally, the multidimensional/multilevel view encompasses each one of the above views of program quality.

The Engagement Theory of High-Quality Programs: Conceptual Framework

Haworth and Conrad (1997: 27) define high-quality programs as follows:

> High-quality programs are those in which students, faculty, and administrators engage in mutually supportive teaching and learning: students invest in teaching as well learning and faculty and administrators invest in learning as well as teaching. Moreover, faculty and administrators invite alumni and employers of graduates to participate in their programs. In short, the theory accentuates the dual roles that invested participants play in constructing and sustaining programs of high quality.

[13] Haworth and Conrad (1997: 4).

[14] Haworth and Conrad (1997: 5).

The theory maintains that in high-quality programs, stakeholders – academics, students, and administrators – invest in five separate clusters of program attributes (see Table 1). Each attribute contributes to enriching the learning experiences for students that positively affect their growth and development. The five clusters of program attributes are: diverse and engaged participants, participatory cultures, interactive teaching and learning, connected program requirements, and adequate resources. Haworth and Conrad (1997: 28) state that the most important of these clusters is diverse and engaged participants because "faculty and administrators continually seek to attract and support faculty and students who infuse diverse perspective into—and who are engaged in— their own and others' teaching and learning." The authors also emphasize that stakeholders[15] in high-quality programs invest heavily in "participatory cultures" that emphasize a shared program direction, a community of learners, and a risk-taking environment.

These five clusters of the engagement theory encompass seventeen attributes. They are listed in *Table 1.*

Table 1
Five Clusters and Seventeen Attributes of High-Quality Program

Cluster 1	**Diverse and Engaged Participants**	• Diverse and engaged faculty • Diverse and engaged students • Engaged leaders
Cluster 2	**Participatory Cultures**	• Shared program direction • Community of learners • Risk-taking environments

[15] Stakeholders include: program administrators, faculty, and students, as well as institutional administrators, alumni, and employers. (Haworth and Conrad, 1997: 24)

Cluster 3	**Interactive Teaching and learning**	• Critical dialogue • Integrative Learning • Mentoring • Cooperative Peer learning • Out-of-class activities
Cluster 4	**Connected Program Requirements**	• Planned Breadth and Depth of Coursework • Professional Residency • Tangible Products
Cluster 5	**Interactive Teaching and learning**	• Support for Students • Support for Faculty • Support for Basic Infrastructure

"Interactive teaching and learning" is the third cluster of attributes of high-quality programs. Haworth and Conrad (1997) state that stakeholders actively participate in and contribute to one another's learning by means of critical dialogues about knowledge and professional practice, faculty-student mentoring, cooperative peer learning projects, outof-class activities and integrative and hands-on learning activities.

The fourth cluster of attributes of high-quality program is "connected program requirements." This cluster depends upon faculty and program administrators designing program requirements that challenge students to develop a more mature and unified understanding of their profession and its practice as they engage in breadth and depth course work, apply and test their course-related knowledge and skills in a professional residency, and complete a tangible product, such as a thesis, project report, or performance.

The fifth cluster, "adequate resources," includes monetary as well as non-monetary support for students, faculty, and basic infrastructure needs, in order to provide adequate resources, faculty, and students to concentrate fully on teaching and learning.

A Framework for Developing and Sustaining High-Quality Programs

Haworth and Conrad (1997) propose a framework that is intended to help faculty, administrators, and others learn about, assess, and improve the quality of undergraduate and graduate programs. Anchored in their engagement theory of quality programs, the framework reflects insights from the total quality management, organizational learning, and higher education assessment literatures. Their framework for assessing and improving the quality of academic programs places continuous learning among program participants directly at the center of the program improvement effort and underscores the integral roles that planning and evaluation play in this process. It encourages faculty, administrators, and other program participants to make their "working space a learning space"[16] through an ongoing and dynamic process of study, feedback, modification, and improvement.

Undergraduate and graduate programs must demonstrate a constant commitment to student learning by providing:

1. The Linking Pin: A Constant Commitment to Student Learning.

2. People Make Quality Happen: Inclusivity and Engagement.

3. Learning Never Ends: Continuous Program Improvement.

4. Thinking Multidimensionally: Multiple Methods of Assessment

Therefore, a constant commitment to student learning "is not an easy task: it challenges faculty and administrators to examine their beliefs about what their assumptions are, whom they should serve, and what they hope to accomplish in their programs."[17] This directing principle makes students and their learning the central purpose of program evaluation and improvement efforts. The second guiding principle is "people make quality happen: inclusivity and engagement." This tenet considers establishing participatory governance structures such as alumni councils, employer advisory boards, and open forums with students.

[16] Senge et al. (1994: 35)

[17] Haworth and Conrad (1997: 168)

The third principle for developing and sustaining high-quality programs considers the idea that "learning never ends: continuous program improvement." Haworth and Conrad (1997: 170) believe that meaningful quality assessment requires faculty and administrators to make their "working space a learning spac" in which they constantly examine and seek to learn about the inner workings of their own programs.

The final but not least important principle for assessing high-quality programs is "thinking multi-dimensionally: multiple methods of assessment." Haworth and Conrad provide two justifications for this principle. "To begin with, when a combination of methods is used, faculty and administrators are far more likely to develop a more holistic understanding of the quality of their programs…. Multiple methods have another advantage as well. Since they build on the strengths of different approaches, they help to cancel out the weaknesses embedded in a solitary approach to assessment."

Curricula Planning and Assessment Matter in High-Quality Programs

In broad strokes, the literature on program quality suggests that curricula planning and assessment are crucial in developing high-quality programs because both promote program continuous improvement. Curricula planning and assessment lead to continuous program design, recruitment of outstanding faculty according to each academic program's mission and vision, selection of students based on quality standards, and provisions of the resources and services needed for promoting more active learning.

Curricula Planning and Assessment Matter in High-Quality Programs

Rooted in a long-standing tradition of institutional attention to quality programs and shaped on the anvil of a period of retrenchment and accountability, assessing the quality of academic program has emerged as a central area of concern in higher education. Conrad and Wilson (1985: 31) advanced the following criteria for evaluation in academic program review *(see Table 2*).

Table 2
Criteria for Evaluating Academic Programs

Quality	Need	Demand	Cost
• Quality of faculty • Quality of students • Quality of curriculum • Quality of support services (library, laboratories and equipment, physical plant, computer facilities) • Financial resources • Quality of program administrators	• Centrality to mission and other campus programs • Value to society	• Present and projected student demand • Demand for graduate	• Cost effectiveness • Non-pecuniary costs and benefits

Quality Education for All

Recent literature suggests that Latin American countries need to re-think quality education for all, including diversity as an important attribute of high-quality programs. "Education for All in the Americas: Regional Framework of Action," UNESCO (2000) recommends advancing quality education for all into a national goal anchored in these common denominators: equity and equality of opportunity.

UNESCO advanced the following recommendations to Latin American countries that can help quality improvements: 1) create necessary frameworks so that education becomes a task for all and

that guarantee popular participation in the formulation of state policies and transparency in policy administration; 2) increase social investment in the entire educational system; 3) guarantee access and retention of all to the educational system; 4) assure access to quality education to vulnerable social groups;[18] 5) give greater priority to literacy training and education of young people and adults as part of national education systems to improve existing programs and to create alternatives for all young people and adults, especially those at risk; 6) continue to improve the quality of education, by looking at education institutions as learning environments and recognizing the social value of faculty and improving assessment systems; 7) formulate inclusive education policies and design diversified curricula and education delivery systems in order to serve the population that has been traditionally excluded for reasons of gender, language, culture, or individual differences; 8) increase and reallocate resources using criteria of equity and efficiency, as well as to mobilize other resources with alternative delivery systems; 9) offer high levels of professional enhancement to teachers/faculty and career development policies that improve the quality of their lives and the conditions of their work; 10) coordinate education policies that encourage multi-sector actions aimed at overcoming poverty and directed to populations at risk; 11) adopt and strengthen the use of information and communication technologies in the management of education systems and in teaching and learning processes; 12) promote educational leadership by granting individual institution autonomy with broad citizen participation; 13) organize universities as a system rather than as an entity located in one specific place or city;[19] 14) define administrative structures that take the university as the basic unit, with autonomy, with citizen participation and establishing levels of responsibility for each actor in the leadership process, in the control of results, and in accountability; 15) provide general education and liberal arts education to satisfy learning-for-life needs; 16) engage faculty, students, administrators, and leaders of the community by investing in shared program direction and active teaching and learning and cooperative peer learning; 17) provide books and other didactic and technological resources in order to improve student learning; 18) introduce community service,

[18] Latin America has opened university systems such as: ***Universidad Nacional Abierta*** (UNA) in Venezuela, ***Universidad Particular Técnica de Loja*** in Ecuador, ***Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia*** (UNED) in Costa Rica, ***Unidad Universitaria del Sur*** in Colombia, and distance education system of the Universities of Brasilia, UNAM of Mexico

[19] The ***Andrés Bello*** Agreement is a good example of such a system. It develops a regional analysis of the future of the Latin American countries in order to promote cooperative agreements among countries. These agreements focus on innovations and advances of science and technology and how those innovations and advance can contribute for the development of each country

social work, and university extension in all academic programs; 19) train faculty, administrators, and students so that they may promote and support learning in everyday life experiences; 20) reallocate resources by using a criteria of equity and efficiency with mechanisms for establishing budgets and allocating resources that include broad social participation that lend transparency and credibility to the management of resources and guarantee accountability; 21) develop university planning for the whole institution.

Quality Programs in Ecuador

The following are some of the challenges and the recommendations given by Jameson (1997), Twombly (1997, 2002), Kells, (1998), Conrad (2003), among others who have visited and analyzed the Ecuadorian Higher Education System. Kenneth P. Jameson, a visiting Advisor to Ecuador from the Economics Department at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, presented a paper titled "Social vs. Economic Reform: Higher Education in Ecuador" at the Latin American Studies Association Meeting which took place in Guadalajara, Mexico on April 18, 1997. Dr. Jameson wrote: "I will examine recent efforts to reform the higher education system in Ecuador.

My underlying concern is why fundamental reform of the social sectors is proving to be so much more difficult and whether there are strategies that might accelerate the process. Let me first situate Ecuadorian higher education. With 208,000 students it fits into Orozco's (1996) 'mid-and large-sized moderately massive national systems,' along with Chile and Cuba. Ecuador has moved more slowly than many countries in reforming the 'culture' of its universities." Jameson (1997) noted significant reforms in individual higher education institutions whose long-run effects will be quite significant. At the same time, conscious and systemic reforms have been unsuccessful; this returns us to the broader question of reform in Latin America. In Jameson words:

> Had reform programs been stimulated by conviction that improvements in the social sectors were central to solving the macroeconomic problems of the country, or that the social sector activities were central to the wellbeing of Ecuador, the actual reform efforts would have had a different character. They would have proceeded more rapidly and would have been more successful.

Universities are unquestionably influenced by the society of which they are a part. “Universities can only be as flexible, responsive, progressive, enlightened, and as vital as the broader political traditions their societies allow.”[20] It is within this context of economic crisis and political ineffectiveness that a few university leaders are proposing a system of evaluation as a means of bringing universities to achieve high-quality programs. High-quality programs need to be “in line with the needs of a postindustrial, global economy” suggests, Twombly (1999). Universities in Ecuador are caught in the transition between the traditional Napoleonic university that historically trained elites for primary professional positions (law, medicine, and theology), and the post-modern university whose role in the new global economy is to contribute to the ‘performativity’ of the economic system by training technologically skilled workers.”[21] To complicate the transition, Ecuadorian public universities are still operating under a concept of university-society relations and a definition of autonomy established in the ***Córdoba*** Agreement of 1918.” Resulting from the misconceptions of university autonomy, significant political influences have been affecting the Ecuadorian universities. In the Ecuadorian Constitution, Article 28 specifies that the State “recognizes and guarantees the autonomy of universities and polytechnics and the inviolability of their territory, giving them the rights of individuals” (in CONUEP 1994). Twombly emphasizes the fact that, “The Congress or government cannot do anything that affects in any way the normal function of a university and especially anything that affects its liberty and autonomy. This has resulted in a lack of overall coordination in the system” (Twombly,1997).

Forces and challenges that Influence the Ecuadorian Higher Education System

Following are some of the forces and challenges that influence the Ecuadorian Higher Education System, to illustrate; in the article Contemporary Higher Education Reform in Ecuador: Implications for Faculty Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention (2017) explains that: “there is a shortage of research on how Ecuadorian universities are coping with the contemporary reforms of higher education.” The

[20] Rothblatt (1995)

[21] Lyotard in Bloland (1995)

article describes the challenges administrators have in recruiting, hiring, and retaining faculty in an environment where both fiscal and human resources are limited. Higher education environment in Ecuador faces reforms and creates a space for the discussion on the perspectives of faculty, students, and administrators from both private and public institutions.

During May, 2003, Clifton F. Conrad,[22] Professor of Higher Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, led a workshop in Quito, Ecuador. The topic was, "Toward a Template for Ensuring High-Quality 21st Century Ecuadorian Universities in Light of Turbulent External and Internal Environments: Avoiding Pitfalls and Seizing Opportunities in Light of Experiences of Universities in the United States." Conrad (2003) wrote:

> The purpose of my address is to invite everyone in the audience to consider what you might do at your universities to ensure quality in the light of our experiences and ongoing efforts in the United States to maintain quality in the midst of significant external and internal influences. To put it another way, my address will explore the major forces influencing higher education in the United States and, in so doing, invite educators in Ecuador to reflect on the major challenges and opportunities in maintaining and enhancing quality in their universities in the 21st century. My comments are divided into three major parts. First, I begin by identifying and discussing the major external and internal forces influencing higher education in the U.S. today and, I believe, to a considerable extent in Ecuador as well. Second, I review and critique four popular models that universities in the U.S. have variously adopted to respond to these external and internal forces. In so doing, I explore both the proclaimed benefits and potential pitfalls for each of these four models. Third, I conclude by advancing a template for change and innovation anchored in specific courses-of-action—from institution-wide policies and practices to changes and innovations to enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning—aimed at maintaining and enhancing quality.

[22] Professor Conrad's visit to Ecuador was sponsored by the Ecuadorian Higher Education Council "CONESUP" [Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior] and *Universidad Internacional del Ecuador.*

Following my address, I invite you all to join with me in discussing both the challenges and opportunities you are facing in your universities and, in turn, to suggest specific courses of action for addressing both the challenges and opportunities you identify.

Conrad focused on the following external and internal forces influencing universities.

a. External forces

Demographic shifts in student clientele: more diversity, changing lifestyles (fasterpaced, technology-linked), and changing student expectations; changing expectations of employer/corporate culture: demand for technical skills and general education and continuing professional education; globalization: economic interdependence and need for diversity (people, experiences, and multiculturalism); technology: implications for workplace preparation and teaching and learning in the university; changing patterns in educational financing: public to private funding, which leads to increased emphasis on research and entrepreneurial activities; and public pressure for universities to advance private and public good.

b. Internal forces

Some of the internal forces identified by Conrad include the changing nature of knowledge production and dissemination; the rise of the entrepreneurial spirit; academic culture and socialization of new faculty and students; “rugged individualists;” the shortage of qualified faculty in some fields; university-wide pressure to reorganize and downsize in light of budget deficits.

The Ecuadorian Higher Education System needs to pursue the following:

- Link K-12 and higher education programs.
- Advance more collaboration among universities. “Taxi professors” is not collaboration. Working together and building bridges help in economic and environmental contexts.

- Introduce liberal arts programs. There is a tendency to develop technical programs and leave out the liberal arts and sciences.
- Introduce courses on weekends. Courses that can be very effective for learning especially for working adults. People are more engaged in intellectual vitality.
- Attract and retain highly-qualified faculty devoted to teaching and learning. In terms of teaching and learning. Conrad (2003) said: "ask yourselves: Am I doing more than I should? Am I engaging people? How can I make this a better world?"

• Method

In order to identify program attributes that influence students' learning outcomes, I used grounded theory, an inductive approach that generated a theory based on data I collected from 60 interviewees who participated in this study. Like Haworth and Conrad (1997), I used a "positioned subject" approach that grounded my research in the perspective of diverse stakeholders (administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and employers).

Anchored in a "positioned subject" approach, I designed my strategy for research and analysis. I used a two-stage sample in order to focus on stakeholders' understanding of quality of students' learning outcomes. In the first stage, during December 2001 and January 2002, I interviewed 48 participants mainly from two Ecuadorian Universities: *Universidad San Francisco de Quito* (USFQ) and *Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador* (PUCE). The first stage took place during December 2001 and January 2002. In the second stage, I interviewed 11 participants from Latin America and one from the United States. The second stage took place in Costa Rica, during June and July 2003. Similar to Haworth and Conrad (1997), I focused throughout on how participants described and made sense of their interpretations and understandings of what they believe contribute to most to high-quality programs.

Grounded Theory

Conrad (1982) in states: "Grounded theory may be defined as theory generated from data systemically obtained through the constant comparative method." According to Strauss and Corbin (1997), "grounded

theory methodology and methods (procedures) are now among the most influential and widely used modes of carrying out qualitative research when generating theory is the researcher's principal aim" These authors emphasized that grounded theory has spread from its original use by sociologists to the other social sciences and to practitioner fields, including accounting, business management, education, nursing, public health, and social work.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) first advanced the use of grounded procedures and techniques such as the constant comparative method, an inductive method of discovering theory, Glaser (1978), Strauss (1987), Strauss and Corbin (1990), and Denzin (1994) also advanced the use of this approach.

As a grounded theorist, my acknowledgment and consideration of my background and life experiences allowed me to be "theoretically sensitive" to the data I collected and analyzed. In order to provide the reader with an indication of who I am, I offer the following autobiography.

I was born in Quito, Ecuador. I obtained my Ph.D. Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, with focus on higher education administration, strategic planning, and evaluation, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2000 – 2005). I received a scholarship from the Organization of American States (O.A.S.) for my Ph.D (2000 – 2002). I got my Master's Degree in Educational Science in 1997, at the University of Kansas-Lawrence. I won a Fulbright – LASPAU (Academic and Professional Programs for the Americas) that scholarship was for my Master's Degree (1995 – 1997). I received my Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources Management in 1992, at the Technological University of Ecuador. I have worked for approximately two years as the main authority at five Ecuadorian universities (2012 – 2013). I also worked as Academic Vicerrector at two Ecuadorian universities, and as a Dean of International Affairs (2011, 2014, and 2018 respectively). During four years, I was the director of institutional self-evaluation within the Public Graduated Institution of Ecuador (2017); in the Pacific University of Ecuador (2009); and at Technological University of Ecuador (1997 – 1998). In addition, I have worked as a professor of human resources management, leadership, and administration at the Catholic University of Ecuador (*Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador* - PUCE) and at the Technological University of Ecuador (*Universidad Tecnológica Equinoccial*). I have also taught first and second year Spanish at the University of Wisconsin – Madison (2000 - 2002, and 2004). Since 2003, I have taught strategic

planning, evaluation, policy analysis for Master's Programs in Business Administration and in Education in several Ecuadorian universities. From 2002 – 2005; 2010 - 2013, I have served as an Academic Executive Officer and Advisor for the Ecuadorian Council of Higher Education System, as well as the Ecuadorian Council of Evaluation and Quality Assurance.

To generate a theory encompassing the attributes of program quality, I used the "constant comparative method." My research consisted of methodical data collection, coding, and analysis aimed at developing a theory. As developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the constant comparative method comprises: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting the theory; and (4) writing the theory. The first stage centers on data collection, clustering, and coding the information resulting from interviews/transcripts into related categories. To meet this end, I used a cross-program analysis or a program-by-program analysis. The information has been organized according to the major attributes of program quality identified by the participants, which Strauss and Corbin (1990) refer to as "opencoding." This process is also known as "theoretical abstractions or symbolic representation" (Haworth and Conrad, 1997: 221) because data are divided analytically. For this part of my study, I scrutinized transcripts and narratives by using the method of data reduction, meaning that data were analyzed by commonalities and differences. Data were coded and categorized by clusters, and various validity checks were completed. These validity clusters include contextual validation using multiple raters and member checks with focus groups. In the second stage, I used axial coding for integrating, relating, and testing the relationships of categories and subcategories against the data. I was looking at emerging themes and common patterns. I focused on methodically organizing and testing the attributes identified in the first stage to further refine a theory of program quality. Third, directed by the resulting code-list of the major program attributes and using cross-program discrimination, I delimited the theory based on "theoretical saturation" (Haworth and Conrad, 1997: 23). In this stage, I used selective coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) in order to unify the categories around a core category. Coding at this stage is not very different from the axial coding.

According to Strauss and Corbin, selective coding is performed at a higher, more abstract level of analysis. In their words, "Selective coding is the integrative process of selecting the core category, systematically relating to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that

need further refinement and development."[23]

Multi-case Study Design

Using the constant comparative method and with the intent of placing stakeholders´ perspectives as the focus of my research, I used an open, multi-case study design along with the "positioned subject" approach. For this multi-case study design, I organized my research around a sampling strategy in the selected programs and interviewees within each program that were representative of Ecuadorian public and private universities. I selected three programs at two private universities located in Quito, Ecuador: ***Universidad San Francisco de Quito*** (USFQ) and ***Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador*** (PUCE). For further testing and to continue the development of my theory, I interviewed 11 Latin American participants and on United States participant.

To define the attributes of program quality and the variations in terms of field of study, I chose three different fields within professions and sciences. From professional fields, I investigated business administration and biotechnology; from the sciences, I investigated biology. For the above, I investigated undergraduate level programs. Within each of the selected programs, I interviewed institutional administrators, program administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and employers. To triangulate the findings, I interviewed people who differed in terms of level of responsibility and level of interest.

Interview Process

Consonant with my positioned subject approach, I used focused interviews to obtain indepth information. To engage institutional administrators, program administrators, and faculty in conversations, I provided them with the topic to be covered in advance. Students were interviewed in focus groups. During the first-stage sample, only three of interviewees were not available at the research site; these three interviewees (one employer and two alumni) were contacted over the telephone. For the second-stage sample, four of the interviewees completed their responses by electronic mail. Involvement of participants was strictly voluntary.

[23] Strauss and Corbin (1990)

The interview protocol consisted of a set of preplanned, open-ended questions. The following questions guided my research: What program attributes in universities in developing countries contribute to positive learning outcomes for students? I addressed the following sub-questions for each attribute:

1. What actions do stakeholders engage in implementing the attribute?

2. What positive impact do these learning outcomes have on student growth and development?

When interviewees needed prompting, I asked questions such as: What do you think are the most important characteristics of the program? What have you and others learned? What activities or events have been most instrumental in contributing to your learning in your field? Where does "real learning" take place for students here? I also provided information when the requested question was unclear to the participants. In order to obtain in-depth information, I encouraged interviewees to establish the direction of the dialogue. In general, interviews were conducted as conversations where participants felt they were in a receptive environment in which they could share their thoughts and experiences.

I transcribed the recorded interviews. I maintained both confidentiality and anonymity. The names of the participants are not associated in any way with the research findings. Only code numbers identify the findings.

Trustworthiness

To enhance trustworthiness, I built triangulation into the study. I used a cross-program analysis. In order to label categories and subcategories, the information was coded according to the major attributes of program quality that I identified in this study. When it was appropriate, I used multiple measures. Judd, Smith, and Kidder (1991) suggest the use of multiple measures without violating any claim that one operational definition is superior. In addition, reliability and discriminant validity[24] will help avoid contamination from systematically varying constructs.[25] Le Compte and Goetz (1982) state: "Reliability refers to the extent to which a study can be replicated or reproduced."

[24] Discriminant validity refers to all valid measures that show good convergence with other measures of the same thing. It should also fail to correlate with measures that are supposed to tap basically different constructs (Judd, Smith, and Kidder, p. 51)

[25] Constructs refer to phenomena, both subject and object. Naïve hypotheses argue that one phenomenon or behavior—the subject in the hypotheses—causes or is associated with another phenomenon or behavior—the object (Judd, Smith, and Kidder, p. 10)

Validity requires reliability as a prerequisite. This study considered research validities such as construct validity which refers to constructs of theoretical interest that can be successfully operationalized in the research; internal validity, when conclusions can be drawn from the causal effect of one variable on another; and external validity, when generalization of results of this research can be replicated in other settings. As LeCompte and Goetz (1982) describe: "Establishing validity requires determining the extent to which conclusions effectively represent empirical reality and assessing whether constructs devised by researchers represent or measure the categories of human experiences that occur"

Further Testing of the Attributes of High-Quality Programs

As indicated earlier, my research had two stages. During the first stage I identified the attributes of high-quality programs: five clusters and thirteen attributes. Because this study was limited to two private universities in Ecuador, I wanted more evidence to confirm, test, and triangulate the attributes of quality programs that I identified in Ecuador. To this end, I extended my research. After two years completing the first stage of my research process, I had the opportunity to attend a graduate class in Costa Rica, where I met several international business professionals from different Latin American countries and universities. On the grounds that this was a splendid opportunity to further test the findings—attributes—resulting from the first stage, I decided to extend my research to a second stage. In this second stage, I interviewed twelve more participants.

Haworth and Conrad's "Engagement Theory," in concert with my building on and extending their theory, found strong support regardless the countries types of universities represented in the sample. In summary, in the course of two stages I was able to support with further evidence the attributes of high-quality that I identified during the first stage.

Sampling Strategy and Procedures

For sampling strategy, Straus and Corbin (1990) suggest a three-step process. The first step is "open sampling" to guide the initial data selection. Researchers have to choose and select the data that they believe are theoretically relevant to the inquiry of the study.

The second step is “maximizing opportunities to explore developing concepts under different conditions.” Once again, the researcher samples on the basis of theoretical relevance by using rational and variational sampling techniques and focuses on both connecting and discriminating the dimensions identified in the preceding stage. In the third step, the researcher uses “discriminate sampling” to test further previously developed dimensions, categories, and relationships across categories. At this stage,

Strauss and Corbin state that the sampling process becomes directed and deliberated because the researcher can make choices about whom and what to sample to obtain the required information.[26]

My sample at the two Ecuadorian universities and with the diverse Latin American leaders in the business field was selected by using the “positioned subject approach” (Haworth and Conrad, 1997: 16). According to the authors, this approach grounds the research in the perspective of diverse stakeholders, provides a strategy for research and analysis, and focuses on stakeholders‘ interpretations of the quality of students‘ learning outcomes within individual programs—including how people describe and make sense of the programs and what they believe contribute most to enriching their quality—always from their standpoint or perspectives. Haworth and Conrad‘s approach can also be combined with the “purposive sampling metho” (Judd, Smith, and Kidder, 1991). The reason “behind purposive sampling is that with good judgment and an appropriate strategy, we can handpick the cases to be included and thus develop samples that are satisfactory in relation to our needs.”[27] Diverse participants (the stakeholders) for this study were selected for their academic knowledge and experience. Participants‘ willingness to share their experiences, interpretations, expectations, and knowledge of the quality of students learning outcomes in individual programs were relevant factors for the success of my research.

Theoretical Sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity is the ability to give sense to data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) state that theoretical sensitivity is “the capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn‘t” While theoretical sensibility can influence the data collection and data analysis process, I trusted that my professional experience

[26] Straus and Corbin (1990)

[27] Judd, Smith, & Kidder (1991: 136)

enabled me to "separate the pertinent from that which it isn't." I understood that there were challenges related to theoretical sensibility because this study is qualitative and it, by definition, contains subjective interpretations of data.

Ethics

According to Kidder and Judd (1986), maintaining confidentiality is a key element in social research. One of the solutions is to have interviewees sign a consent form that informs the interviewees that their names will not be associated with the research findings. Since I had already known some of the institutional administrators, program administrators, faculty, and students at the two universities where I conducted my research, I followed the advice given by de Laine (2000: 134): "Appropriate boundaries between the researcher and subject may need to be maintained when in the professional role, to avoid ethical problems arising from different loyalties and expectations that have to do with the management of anonymity and confidentiality." I have ensured privacy and confidentiality by referring to participants and information through codes.

Selection of Programs

To provide essential samples for defining attributes of program quality, I selected three programs in professions and sciences: two business administration and biotechnology programs in the professions and biology in the sciences. I chose business administration programs because the largest percentage of each student body is enrolled in this field at the two universities (USFQ and PUCE). The two universities represented in the sample included one traditional university and one new university patterned after the United States liberal arts models. The student body at one of the institutions generally belonged to middle and lower classes while the student body at the other university was mostly comprised of upper class students. The three programs at both universities are prestigious on an Ecuadorian scale.

Selection of Interviewees within Programs

I selected the interviewees within programs by using the selective sampling method (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). The idea for selective sampling was used because I was able to locate interviewees

according to a preconceived but logical initial set of dimensions such as time or identity. I decided to focus this research on the two chosen Ecuadorian universities during a first pre-stage process in 1995. I conducted research at those universities with the aim of exploring the perspectives of university authorities regarding institutional self-evaluation processes. For the current study, I learned more about the attributes of program quality in both settings. Even though I knew people at both settings, I am confident that they did not have preconceived notions due to my participation as a researcher. By demonstrating respect and confidentiality to the interviewees' ideas and ideals, I was able to guarantee the credibility of the findings. De Laine (2000: 122) states: "Demonstrating loyalty and allegiance to workers' ideals and ideas and engaging in informal practices approved by the group, but not necessarily by upper management, could strengthen the trust between the researcher and subjects."

Participants

Participants included the Academic Affairs Director for the Ecuadorian Higher Education Council, 12 university authorities such as chancellors, vice-chancellors, academic directors, graduate school directors, and a director of student affairs, 12 professors, one administrator, 15 students, two employers, three alumni, and two student leaders were representative of Ecuadorian public and private universities. For further testing, I interviewed one participant from the United States living in Costa Rica and 11 participants who were representative of Latin America. The Latin American participants were from the following countries: one from Chile, two from Colombia, one from Costa Rica, four from Ecuador, two from El Salvador, and one from Peru. ***Table 3*** summarizes information about interviewees who participated in this study.

Table 3
Interviewees that Participated in this Study

Country	Institution	Interviewees	Subtotal	Total
Participants from Ecuadorian Universities				48
Ecuador	CONESUP	Academic Director	1	1
Ecuador	USFQ	Chancellor Vice-Chancellor Deans Directors Professors Students Alumnus Employers	1 1 2 2 5 8 1 1	21
Ecuador	PUCE	Rector Vice-Rector Deans Directors Professors Administrators Students Alumni Employers	1 1 2 2 7 1 7 2 1	24
Ecuador	FEPE[28] FENAUPE[29]	College Student Association Leaders	1 1	2

[28] Straus and Corbin (1990)

[29] FENAUPE: Ecuadorian Universities and Polytechnic Schools Federation.

Participants from the United States and various Latin American Countries					**12**
United States		University of California – Santa Cruz	1	1	
Chile		Fundación de Educación	1	1	
Colombia		Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana	1	2	
		Universidad Nacional Facultad de Minas	1		
Costa Rica		Universidad Latina de Costa Rica	1	1	
Ecuador		Universidad Católica de Guayaquil	1	4	
Ecuador		Universidad Laica Vicente Rocafuerte	1		
Ecuador		Universidad de Azuay	1		
		Universidad Estatal de Guayaquil	1		
El Salvador		Universidad José Simeón Cañas	1	2	
		Universidad Politécnica	1		
Perú		Pontificia Universidad Católica de Perú	1	1	
Total number of interviewees					**60**

Data Analysis

Consistent with the constant comparative method, I analyzed data following the four stage process. During the first stage, I reviewed the transcripts. I used the guiding question and the regulations to record in a codebook—on a program-by-program basis—attributes that at least three stakeholders considered significant. To organize data into categories, like Haworth and Conrad (1997), I coded data in clusters such as: attributes; reasons why the attributes are considered important by stakeholders; actions taken by stakeholders to establish the attribute; and consequences and effects of the attributes on students' learning outcomes.

The second stage involves to systematically refining and testing attributes of program quality to construct a theory of program quality. Thus, I used the list of program attributes contained in the codebook that resulted from the first stage of this process. I made constant comparisons of the data from the intervening programs in order to look for evidence that sustains, disproves, or modifies the

program attributes that were identified through the process. By doing so, I was able to construct, step-by-step, a preliminary theory of program quality.

In the third stage of data analysis, the guidelines for "theoretical saturation" were met. I delimited and tested the theory by discriminating among the inventory of program attributes. Haworth and Conrad (1997) suggest systematically looking for negative evidence to refute each of the attributes included in the emerging theory. I outlined a theory that embraces the attributes that were clustered. Consistent with Haworth and Conrad (1997), for each attribute the theory will include the actions taken by stakeholders to enact the attribute and the effects that these learning outcomes had on student development. To conclude, the fourth stage, the constant comparative method, was writing a theory of program quality.

I built a conditional matrix in order to distinguish and link levels of conditions and consequences related to the phenomenon under study. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), the conditional matrix enables the researcher to both distinguish and link levels of conditions and consequences specified within the axial coding model. The researcher may develop and visually portray a conditional matrix that elucidates the social, historical, and economic conditions influencing the central phenomenon; however, he says that this method is not frequently found in grounded theory studies.

In order to ensure that my findings accurately reflect reality, I introduced the "member check" technique (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992) to triangulate the understandings and findings. In doing so, I shared my notes and findings with key interviewees in order to obtain their comments based on the list of attributes of quality programs.

Interview Process and Protocols

To interview individual stakeholders at each university and to request their participation, I provided each interviewee with a letter of presentation including the following components: a brief introduction regarding my background; the intent of this study; a request for their voluntary participation in my study; and an acknowledgement of their right to privacy and a guarantee that their identity would remain confidential and that participants would be referred to only by codes.

Interview Questions

The interview questions included but were not limited to the following:

1. What program attributes in universities in developing countries contribute to enriching learning outcomes for students that positively affect their growth and development?
2. What actions do stakeholders take to implement the attributes?
3. What consequences and positive effects do these actions have for

enhancing student learning outcomes?

Limitations of This Study

First, most of the interviews were conducted only at two private Ecuadorian universities that are among the most prestigious in the country out of the 66 private and public universities approved by CONESUP (December 2004). Accordingly, the response to my interviews would probably not be the same if I had interviewed people in public universities. And second, I did not benefit from others' insight as I was the only researcher conducting this study. Having another person commenting, analyzing, and coding the information would have enhanced the process of presenting the attributes of quality programs in universities in developing countries.

• Findings

On the basis of what I learned from the 60 interviews, my data analysis was informed by a systematic endeavor to identify and weave together attributes of high-quality programs. I used the constant comparative method to analyze my interview material within and across the four selected programs at two private Ecuadorian universities and at an international meeting in Costa Rica. While in Costa Rica, I had the opportunity to interview 11 participants from different Latin American universities and one individual from a United States university. Based on my interviews, I identified 13 attributes and grouped

them into five clusters: (1) highly qualified participants, (2) learning-centered cultures, (3) interactive teaching and learning, (4) connected program requirements, and (5) adequate resources.

Table 4 summarizes the five clusters and 13 attributes of high-quality programs. The table also specifies the actions that stakeholders take to implement each attribute and identifies the positive learning outcomes for students.

Table 4
Attributes of High-Quality Programs
In Latin American and in Ecuadorian Universities

Cluster One Highly Qualified Participants		
Attributes	**Actions**	**Positive Outcomes**
Highly Qualified Faculty	• University authorities develop hiring polices to attract professors with advanced degrees (from first-rate universities). • University authorities develop a reward structure that recognizes the achievements of faculty.	• Students become more creative, honest, and confident professionals and leaders because they learn from excellent professors. • Students become more committed to their professions as well as more inspired and confident professionals because they learn from highly qualified faculty.
Highly Qualified Students	• Faculty and administrators establish admissions policies based on their institutional mission and on preestablished quality standards to attract fulltime students who will invest in their learning.	• Students learn how to motivate one another to invest their best efforts to achieve high-academic standards.

Highly Qualified Students	• University authorities through the higher education system introduce a national admission test to ensure high admission standards.	• Students learn to encourage one another to become more fully devoted to their professions.

Cluster Two Learning-Centered Cultures		
Attributes	**Actions**	**Positive Outcomes**
Shared Program Direction Focused on Learning	• Faculty and administrative leaders invite stakeholders to join them in developing shared program direction. • University authorities invite faculty, students, alumni, and employers to participate in assessment efforts in which they study the fit between their program's teaching and learning activities and its overall direction.	• Students develop more well-defined professional identities • Shared program direction focused on learning helps students to develop a clearer sense of professional direction and a better consciousness of where and how they wish to invest their professional energies upon graduation.
Real-World Learning Experiences	• Introduce more realistic curricular design with focus on the development of learning skills through case analysis to enrich the learning process. • Provide experiential learning through the development of real project for the productive sector and industries.	• Students acquire connected learning experiences, as well as develop the necessary skills to face real-world challenging experiences
Reading-Centered Culture	• Administrators and faculty introduce policies to promote a "reading-centered culture."	• Students read more and develop more creative thinking; in turn, they are better able to contribute with new ideas grounded in knowledge.

Supportive and Risk-Taking Environment	• Faculty and administrators develop a supportive learning environment in which students feel confident to take risks by questioning paradigms and confronting knowledge.	• Students who engage in risk-taking activities develop their critical thinking ability and learn to confront what is already known with the unknown. • Students become more empowered professionals.

Cluster Three **Interactive Teaching and Learning**		
Attributes	**Actions**	**Positive Outcomes**
Integrative learning: Theory with Practice, Self with Subject	• Faculty, administrators, and students develop hands-on learning experiences through team-work activities that connect theory with practice.	• Students who participate in integrative learning activities develop an enhanced practical and logical problem-solving ability. • Students become more adept at communicating theoretical and technical knowledge to others, especially by enhancing their interpersonal skills.
Exclusive Tutoring and Mentoring	• Professors provide personalized education within the context of an interactive professor-students relationship. • Professors meet regularly with students to provide feedback on their professional and personal development. • Leader, administrators, and faculty develop supportive environments for tutoring and mentoring students.	• Students gain self-confidence and selfesteem. • Students become aware of their weaknesses and engage in continuous selfimprovement.

Cluster Four Connected Program Requirements		
Attributes	**Actions**	**Positive Outcomes**
Planned Breadth and Depth Course Work	• Faculty and administrators develop core and specialized course work requirements.	• Students become deeper thinkers with wider visions. They develop a more holistic understanding of knowledge and practice that enhances their personal and professional lives.
Tangible Products	• Faculty and administrators design tangible products to complete their programs. • Faculty and administrators support students throughout this culmination activity, providing guidance and feedback as needed.	• Students become confident and independent professionals by assuming major responsibility for their projects. • Students become more analytical thinkers with wider perspective on their professions.

Cluster Five Adequate Resources		
Attributes	**Actions**	**Positive Outcomes**
Support for Students	• Faculty and administrators support students with funds for scholarships, grants, loans, and funds for study-abroad, including agreements with the private sector in order to provide students with job openings and internships opportunities. • Faculty, administrators and employers develop agreements and alliance for student internships and job opportunities after graduation.	• Since students do not have to worry about economic resources, they invest their energies in learning. • Since students have opportunities to study abroad and to transfer their credits to international universities, they become more competitive and confident about their competence.

Support for Faculty	• University authorities allocate monetary resources for faculty remuneration and reward structures based on faculty quality and achievements. • University authorities support faculty publications by allocating monetary resources and sabbaticals.	• When professors invest their time in student teaching and learning, students feel more satisfied with their educational experiences and become better professionals. • When students benefit from faculty's quality preparation and publications, they become more qualified professionals
Support for Campus Infrastructure	• University authorities allocate monetary resources to update laboratories, libraries (virtual libraries), research stations, computer labs, and necessary equipment and supplies. • University authorities invest in campus maintenance, innovation, and aesthetics.	• Students become more technically skilled to perform their jobs. • Students who study on campuses with considerable resources develop a sense of belonging with their universities.

• Discussion

In this concluding part of the study, I devote one section to examining the literature that supports my theory and another to examining the contributions that my work makes to our theoretical understanding of high-quality programs. In the final section, I discuss the implications of my study for advancing and maintaining high-quality programs in developing countries.

Support for the Theory in the Literature

My theory finds strong support in Haworth and Conrad's (1997) "Engagement Theory." My theory also finds partial support in UNESCO's (2000 – 2002) "Proposals and Recommendations." The first cluster of attributes—highly qualified participants—is closely connected to cluster one—"diverse and engaged participants"—of Haworth and Conrad's "Engagement Theory". The second, third, and fourth clusters of

attributes of my theory—learning-centered cultures, interactive teaching and learning, and connected program requirements—are very similar to Haworth and Conrad's "participatory cultures," "interactive teaching and learning," and "connected programs." In addition, clusters two and three of my theory, particularly two attributes— "shared-program direction focused on learning" and "interactive learning"—are closely connected to UNESCO's (2000 – 2002) "Proposals and Recommendations." To illustrate, UNESCO emphasizes "engaging faculty, students, administrators, and leaders of the community by investing in shared program direction and active teaching and learning."

Finally, the fifth cluster—adequate resources—is likewise closely connected to Haworth and Conrad's fifth cluster of attributes, as well as several of UNESCO's (2000 – 2002) "Proposals and Recommendations."Both emphasize the importance of developing a reward structure that recognizes and motivates faculty to invest their quality time in teaching and learning that, in turn, enriches the quality of students' learning.

Contributions of the Theory of High-Quality Programst

While I used grounded theory, my study was guided by Haworth and Conrad's (1997) "Engagement Theory of High-Quality Programs." In so doing, I identified 13 attributes of high-quality programs. Eleven of these are closely connected to Haworth and Conrad's theory and the other two attributes—real-world learning experiences and a reading-centered culture—make the signature theoretical contributions of my study. Real-world learning experiences encourage the active involvement of stakeholders— faculty, administrators, students, alumni, and employers—in designing curricula with real-world learning experiences that result in positive student outcomes. The second attribute—a reading-centered culture—has never before been identified in the literature. In Latin American countries, such as Ecuador, students must read more to advance their learning. After all, the primary purpose of higher learning is to provide students "with new insights" and "enriching learning experiences that have positive effects on their development."[30]

[30] Haworth and Conrad (1997: 213)

In order to connect my theory with the future of high-quality programs in Latin American and Ecuadorian universities, I believe the that if all stakeholders (university authorities, faculty, administrators, students, alumni, and employers) along with state governors engage in the pursuit of "enriching learning experiences that have positive effects on students development" as the rule of life and not as the exception—in concert with the program attributes I have identified—high-quality programs will become the most important component of Latin American universities, particularly Ecuadorian universities.

High-Quality Programs in Latin American Universities: Key Differences in Mission of the Universities and the Attributes of Quality Programs

While the theory finds much in common with Haworth and Conrad's theory on program quality in developing countries, it is important to highlight the key difference in the mission of universities that, in turn, is linked to differences in what high-quality means in developing countries. Significantly, most Latin American universities are focused mainly on teaching, whereas universities in the United States focus on teaching, research, and service.

There are several major differences between Haworth and Conrad's theory and the theory developed in this study. In my theory, I found that four key attributes are even more important in Ecuador and, possibly, other developing countries: highly-qualified faculty, highly-qualified students, reading-centered cultures, and real-world learning experiences. These differences are significant, and they have implications as discussed in the recommendations that follow.

Cluster One: Highly Qualified Participants

Both highly qualified professors and highly qualified students are critical in universities in developing countries. To this end, university authorities need to:

- Hire and retain professors with doctoral degrees. To attract and retain highly qualified faculty, universities should adopt actions such as: (1) crafting hiring policies to attract highly qualified faculty with first-rate graduate educations; (2) clarifying general tenure standards;

(3) reallocating funds to develop reward structures to recognize faculty achievement as well as to pay professors competitive salaries; and (4) adopt a comprehensive evaluation system.

- Establish detailed rules about what constitutes highly qualified faculty. Universities should establish their standards based on educational level (graduate degrees); teaching experience, including quality and effectiveness of teaching; research (academic publications); and service. Define general tenure standards based on evidence of scholarly ability in one's areas of academic expertise.

- Promote alliances with international universities in order to prepare more professors with Ph.D. degrees. To that end, organize teams of researchers across Ecuadorian universities who will contribute new ideas to advance research, science, technology, and program quality in particular.

- Ensure productive faculty by attracting professors who have scientific knowledge in the teaching area, a passion to teach, contribute to tangible learning products such as publications, advance science and technology through research, participate in community service, and contribute to the development of a learning community.[31] As Amacher and Meiners (2004) emphasize:

  The problem is to get faculty interested in teaching better and politicking less or, in a few cases, in teaching better and doing a little less research. From the perspective of the institution, the most destructive faculty is the one who does not teach well, does little or no

[31] Clark Kerr (1960s) defines the learning community as the "triumph of the Multipurpose University." The learning community model draws primarily from three strains of history: from the British tradition of high quality training for a select group of undergraduates; from the German tradition of research; and third, from the American genius for service to many. All these traditions have influenced the learning communities' model.

Haworth and Conrad (1997: 75) state that learning communities enrich students' growth and development in two major ways. First, the collegial interaction that students had with one another and with faculty strengthened their communication and teamwork skills; second, students developed a greater appreciation of and respect for the value of collaborative approaches to inquiry, problem solving, and leadership.

research, but spends significant time on committees and campus politics. These faculty are administrators‘ nightmares.

- Review admission policies and tests to attract students who are more qualified. Higher education should be more selective in terms of academic quality. “Selective” means qualified, not elitist.

- Universities must define admission standards to engage high-quality students. A national test is one of the actions to identify students‘ strengths and weaknesses.

Cluster Two: Learning-Centered Cultures

The attributes nested within cluster two—”learning-centered cultures”—are a shared program direction focused on learning, real-world learning experiences, a readingcentered culture, and a risk-taking environment. When students are exposed to a shared program direction focused on learning and real-world learning experiences, they can attain a better education, develop greater respect for diversity, and find the courage to confront corruption that many developing countries are facing. Learning-centered cultures will give students a wider vision of the world and a distinctive perspective of their own cultures.

Regarding “learning-centered cultures”:

- In order to serve all cultures, Latin American universities must formulate educational policies that support shared program direction focused on learning as well as a more diversified curricula.

- Engage students in a reading-centered culture. In such a culture, students can become critical thinkers when they read more; they participate in discussions; and they can develop a more intellectually curious attitude. Stipends for books as part of the tuition would be a good action to take in order to improve a reading-centered culture among Latin American

professors, administrators, and students. Repeatedly, one of the most significant findings of my study was the urgent need to promote meaningful reading. University authorities ought to select the readings that help students to develop a wider vision of the world and a deeper knowledge of their professions.

- Provide supportive and safe environments where students feel confident to take risks and engage in critical dialogues. Professors in developing countries must be better prepared to lead critical discussions because this action requires indepth and in-breadth learning, knowledge, and practice. Most interviewees believed that a risk-taking environment in which students felt confident to take risks helped students' learning, development, and growth. The students that I interviewed told me that they felt much more confident when administrators and professors treated them with respect and trust.

- Promote faculty committees to determine shared program direction focused on learning and reward faculty for their contributions to that shared program direction.

- Define core curricula carefully. University authorities, faculty, and administrators need to ensure that students have the ability to choose among a broad course offering.

Cluster Three: Interactive Teaching and Learning

Both teaching and learning are a collaborative process; the responsibility to advance learning becomes shared by faculty, administrators, and students. The attributes within cluster three are: "interactive learning: theory with practice, self with subject" and exclusive tutoring and mentoring.

To advance these attributes include:

- Undergraduate programs need to engage everyone in the pursuit of attributes of high quality through teamwork. Small teams work well in order to attain handson learning.

Students organized in teamwork activities will develop a shared vision. “A unifying, guiding, and distinctive vision is the foundation on which a ‘house of quality‘ is built,” according to Seymour (1992: 60).

- Latin American universities very much need devoted professors: professors who engage in tutoring and mentoring activities. Universities need to introduce tutoring and mentoring as part of professors‘ responsibilities when they are hired. Faculty salaries should also include a percentage for tutoring and mentoring.

- During my research, I found that students needed to receive more tutoring and mentoring from their professors. Therefore, professors must devote more quality and quantity time to students to assure their positive learning outcomes, development, and growth.

Cluster Four: Connected Program Requirements

“Connected program requirements” encompass “planned breadth and depth course work” and “tangible products.” In order to advance these attributes, my recommendations are:

- Introduce planned breadth and depth curricula. In this way, students will develop a more integrated education. Quality programs should define pre-planned and coherent course succession because in the learning process everything needs to be connected.

- Tangible products are important because students become better professionals when they have the opportunity to culminate their studies with products that could guide them as to how to develop projects in their future professions.

  Therefore, faculty and administrators should promote tangible products under their guidance.

Cluster Five: Adequate Resources

Adequate Resources, is an important component of a high-quality program. University authorities, faculty, and administrators should make their best effort to provide support for students, support for faculty, and support for campus infrastructure. My recommendations are as follows:

- Allocate monetary resources for more scholarships and grants to students who genuinely deserve and need them.

- Provide students with more internships and job opportunities. Students sometimes feel isolated when they need to find jobs; they also lack experience because they have received a predominately theoretical education. There should be strong connections between theory and practice.

- Allocate monetary resources for faculty salaries. This is another major issue facing developing countries. Latin American countries, in particular Ecuador did not provide faculty members either with competitive salaries or with reward structures that recognize their good practices. Professors too often lose their motivation without supportive resource structures, and that resulted in a genuine threat to the advancement of high-quality programs.

- Support for campus infrastructure seems to be advancing in some Latin American countries, but libraries and laboratories are still very limited compared to libraries and laboratories in developed countries. If Latin American universities implement my recommendations, particularly in Ecuadorian universities, I envision a better future for our universities. That is, Latin American universities will become accountable to society by guaranteeing their students high-quality programs, which will assure more sustainable development within each country. In brief, I believe that these discussions would revolutionize Latin America‘s current higher education system in a positive way by encouraging Latin American universities to compete with universities in developed countries.

Referencias bibliográficas

Albornoz, O. (1991). Autonomy and Accountability in Higher Education. Prospects 21: 204-213.

Albornoz, O. (1993). Education and Society in Latin America. London: MacMillan

Amacher, R., et al. (2004). Faculty towers: Tenure and the structure of higher education. Oakland, CA: The Independent Institute.

Amaury, N., & Cabrera, A. (1993). The construct validity of institutional commitment: A confirmation factor analysis. Research in Higher Education, 34 (2) 243-257.

Angell, A., & Graham, C. (1995). Can social reform make adjustment sustainable and equitable? Lessons from Chile and Venezuela. Journal of Latin American Studies 27 (Part 1).

Arellano, E. (Eds.). (1994). Una nueva universidad para una nueva sociedad: Alternativas frente a las propuestas oficiales. [A university for a new society: Alternatives to the official proposals]. In Universidad, Estado y Sociedad. Quito, Ecuador: Corporación Editora Nacional.

Arellano, R. (2003). Proposal for Latin American concept. Paper presented at the Latin American Council of Management School – CLADEA. Lima, Peru. Retrieved January 23, 2005, from http://www.cladea.org/cladea_ing/pensamiento_latinoamericano.htm

Arthur, J., & Shapiro, A. (1995). Campus wars: Multiculturalism and the politics of difference. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Attributes of Program Quality in Australia. Retrieved October 20, 2004, from http://www.detya.gov.au/archive/highered/pubs/quality/overview.htm

Ayala, E. (Eds.). (1994). Partidos políticos y universidad. [Political parties and the university]. In Universidad, Estado y Sociedad. [Universtiy, State, & Society]. Quito, Ecuador: Corporación Editora Nacional.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (Eds.). (1995). Connected teaching. In Revisioning Curriculum in Higher Education, 469-478.

Berk, R., & Rossi, P. (1990). Thinking about program evaluation. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

Boatringht, K. (1995). University of Wisconsin's System Accountability. New Directions for Higher Education. 91, 51-64.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1992). Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theory and methods. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (1977). Missions of the college curriculum. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Carvajal, I. (1996) Criterios e indicadores para los procesos de evaluación de la calidad de las instituciones de educación superior. [Criteria & indicators for higher education quality evaluation]. Quito, Ecuador: CONUEP.

CONESUP. Informe de actividades 2003 – 2004. [Report 2003 – 2004]. [Brochure]. Quito, Ecuador.

Conrad, C. (1978). The undergraduate curriculum: A guide to innovation and reform. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Conrad, C. (1982). Grounded theory: An alternative approach to research in higher education. Review of Higher Education. 5(4), 259-269.

Conrad, C. (2001). Ideas of the University: past, present, and future. University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Conrad, C., Haworth, J., & Millar, S. (1993). A silent success-master's education in the United States. Baltimore, MA: Johns Hopkins Press.

Conrad, C., & Pratt, A. (1983). Making decisions about the curriculum: From metaphor to model. Journal of Higher Education. 54(1), 16-30.

Conrad, C., & Wilson, R. (1985). Academic program review: Institutional approaches, expectations, and controversies. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No 5.

Contemporary Higher Education Reform in Ecuador: Implications for Faculty Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention. M. Amanda Johnson College of William & Mary. Volume 25 Number 68 July 3, 2017 ISSN 1068-2341. Retrieve from: https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/2750/275050047110.pdf. March 23, 2021.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, cannons, and evaluative criteria. Qualitative Sociology. 13(1), 3-21.

Cornesky, R., & McCool, S. (1992). Total quality improvement guide for institutions of higher education. Madison, WI: Magna Publications, Inc.

Craft, A. (1991). Quality assurance in higher education. International conference in Hong Kong.

Duderstadt, J. (2000). A university for the 21st century. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Eddy, J., & Murphy, S. (2000). International higher education systems. Boston: University Press.

Fraser, B. (1998). Ecuador's new president gives academics hope for a brighter future. The Chronicle of Higher Education. 1998, 51-52.

Ford, P., et al. (1996). Managing change in higher education: A learning environment architecture. Buckingham, Great Britain: Open University Press.

Gaither, G., Nedwek, B., & Neal, J. (1994). Measuring up: The promises and pitfalls of performance indicators in higher education. Washington, DC: Jonathan D. File.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.

Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). Becoming qualitative researchers. White Plains, New York: Longman.

Graig, C. (2000). A grounded theory of the attributes of a caring pedagogy that contribute to student learning. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin – Madison, 2000).

Haworth, J., & Conrad, C. (1997). Emblems of quality in higher education: Developing and sustaining high-quality programs. Boston: Allen & Bacon.

Heiber, D. (1996). Defining and building academic self-concept. (Doctoral dissertation proposal, University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1996).

Huba, M., & Freed, J. (2000). Learner-centered assessment on college campuses: Shifting the focus from teaching to learning. Boston: Allen & Bacon.

Hurtado, O. (1992). Crisis y reforma de la Universidad Ecuatoriana. [Crisis & reform of the Ecuadorian University]. Quito, Ecuador: Fundación Ecuatoriana de Estudios Sociales.

Inter-American Development Bank. (1994). A la Búsqueda del Siglo XXI: Nuevos caminos de desarrollo en Costa Rica. [Searching for 21st. Century: New developmental venues in Costa Rica]. Group. Washington, DC, Pilot Mission Report of the Social Agenda.

Inter-American Development Bank. (1995). Ex-Post Evaluation on Social Fund. El Salvador, Evaluation Office. Washington, DC.

Jameson, K. (1997). Higher Education in a Vacuum: Stress and Reform in Ecuador. Paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association Meetings, Guadalajara, Mexico. Retrieved September 4, 2004, from http://136.142.158.105/LASA97/jameson.pdf

Jaramillo, M., et al. (Eds.). (2003). Universidad-verdad. [University – Truth]. Revista de la Universidad del Azuay. 30 (May 2003). Cuenca, Ecuador: Gráficas Hernández. Retrieved November 21, 2004, from http://www.uazuay.edu.ec/publicaciones/revista30.pdf

Jensen, J. (1998). Developing a grounded theory of best practices of university legal services from the faculty-client perspective. (Doctoral dissertation proposal, University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1998).

Kells, H. (1995). Self-study processes: A guide to self-evaluation in higher education. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.

Laine, M. (2000). Fieldwork, participation and practice: Ethics and dilemmas in qualitative research. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

Marquis, C. (1994). Evaluación y acreditación universitaria. [University evaluation and accreditation]. Quito, Ecuador: CONUEP.

Morgan, J. (1999). Developing high-quality 'general education' learning outcomes. Baccalaureate Graduate International Journal. Retrieved from http://www.llanes.panam.edu/journal/library/Vol1No4/morgan.html

Ortega & Gasset, J. (1946). Mission of university. London: Trubner.

Palmer, P. (1993). To know as we are known. New York: Harper Collins.

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. [Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador]. [Brochure]. (2002). Ecuador.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 7th edition. Washington, DC: APA.

Rodriguez, N. (1993). Universidad y desarrollo. [University and development]. Quito, Ecuador: Fundación Hernán Malo.

Rojas, C., et al. (1994). El factor humano en las universidades y escuelas politécnicas. [The human factor in universities & polytechnic schools]. Quito, Ecuador: CONUEP.

Shapiro, N., & Levine, J. (1999). Creating learning communities. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Simmons, H. (1996). Report on review of the Ecuadorian National Council for Higher Education: Project for the development of an evaluation and accreditation process for Ecuadorian universities and polytechnic schools. USIA, Washington, DC –USIA, Quito, Ecuador.

Srikanthan, G., & Dalrymple, J. (2002). Developing a holistic model for quality in higher education. Retrieved from http://www.cmqr.rmit.edu.au/publications/gsjdicit02.pdf

Stecher, B., & Kirby, S. (2004). Organizational improvement and accountability: Lessons for education from other sectors. Santa Mónica, CA: RAND.

Strauss, A. (1987). Qualitative analysis for social scientists. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1997). Grounded theory in practice. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Tierney, B. (1998). Responsive University: Restructuring for High Performance. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

The Internet and Higher Education: Identifying needs for learning analytics adoption in Latin American universities: A mixed-methods approach. Elsevier, vol 45, April 2020. ISSN: 1096-7516. Edited by Dragan Gasevic, Yi-Shan Tsai, Hendrik Drachsler. Retrieved on March 23, 2021, from https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/the-internet-and-highereducation/vol/45/suppl/C. Retrieve on: March 23, 2021.

Twombly, S. (1995). Accreditation and evaluation in Ecuadorian higher education: Obstacles and opportunities. Fulbright Commission, Quito, Ecuador.

Twombly, S., & Urigüen, M. (1996, October 30). Desperately seeking quality in Ecuadorian higher education: What is it and how should it be measured? Paper presented at the International Pre-conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Retrieved from http://www.highered.org/international/1996.htm

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2001, June 15). The values/attitudinal dimension in quality education. Paper read at the International Forum on Quality Education, Beijing, People's Republic of China. Retrieved November 2005, from http://www.unescobkk.org/ips/ebooks/documents/apnieve2/APNIEVECh5value.pdf

Universidad San Francisco de Quito. [Brochure]. (2002). Ecuador.

Urigüen, M. (2017). Papel del estudiante en el proceso de aprendizaje. Editorial Académica Española. ISBN:978-3-330-09635-6.

Urigüen, M. (1997). Development of an institutional self-evaluation process for the Ecuadorian higher education system: A comparative perspective. (Master's project, University of Kansas, 1997).

World Bank. (2000). Task Force on Higher Education and Society. (2000). Higher education in developing countries: Peril and promise. Washington, DC: Author.

Revista científica educativa

2º edición

Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa

República del Ecuador

Gobierno del Encuentro

Juntos lo logramos