

**THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL  
TERTIARY EDUCATION POLICY ON  
SOCIAL CAPITAL IN UNIVERSITIES:  
A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF  
THREE STATE UNIVERSITIES IN  
MEXICO**

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of PhD in Education.**

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**January, 2007**

# Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to explain the incongruence between certain policy objectives of the tertiary education reform programme in Mexico, as well as some of its unexpected outcomes. Currently that incongruence is overlooked, whilst the disjuncture between national policy and local realities is explained in terms of a 'lack of motivation' which performance management strategies will resolve. Personal experience, suggests that, on the contrary, such strategies may, in some cases, aggravate underlying tensions.

Adopting an historical and anthropological perspective on the context in which the reforms take place, this thesis focuses on the underlying continuity in national tertiary education policy of the use of a clientelist strategy of social control through the distribution of resources, as well as the extent to which that strategy is embedded in the socio-political structure of Mexican society.

Developing Bourdieu's relational approach to social capital, this thesis firstly, differentiates the objectives and strategies of the World Bank and OECD approaches to tertiary education policy, which co-exist in the Mexican reform programme; secondly, it analyses the precise way in which they propose to transform, either directly or indirectly, the value of different capitals in the field of tertiary education policy; thirdly, on the basis of the comparative analysis of three case studies, it compares these potential areas of impact with their actual impact in particular contexts.

The data analysis reveals the distinct outcomes of policy in each university, thus undermining World Bank and OECD assumptions concerning homogenous social capital which can be centrally controlled by performance management. The key factors identified in the comparative analysis, suggest the importance of increasingly linking scientific capital to university capital in a context which favours levels of individual and institutional autonomy necessary for knowledge transfer.

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## List of Acronyms

ACRONYM	Spanish Version	English Version
ANUIES	Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Enseñanza Superior	National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions
CENEVAL	Centro Nacional de Universidades e instituciones de Enseñanza Superior	National Centre for Higher Education Assessment
CIEES	Comités Interinstitucionales para la Evaluación de la Educación Superior	Inter-institutional Committees for Higher Education Assessment
CONACyT	Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología	National Council for Science and Technology
CONPES	Consejo Nacional de la Plantación de la Educación Superior	National Council for Planning of Higher Education
COPAES	Consejo para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior	Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education
CUMEX	Consorcio de Universidades Mexicanas	Consortium of Mexican Universities
FOMES	Fondo Para la Modernización de la Educación Superior	Fund for the Modernization of Higher Education
IESALC	Instituto Internacional para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe	International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática	National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics
OECD	Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económico	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
NAFTA	Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte	North American Free Trade Agreement
NPM	Nuevo Gestión Público	New Public Management
PAN	Partido Acción Nacional	National Action Party
PIFI	Programa Integral de Fortalecimiento Institucional	Comprehensive Programme for Institutional Strengthening
PNES	Plan Nacional de Educación Superior	National Plan for Higher Education
PNP	Padron Nacional de Posgrados SEP-CONACyT	SEP-CONACyT National Registry of Graduate Programmes
PRD	Partido de la Revolución Democrática	Democratic Revolution Party
PRI	Partido Revolucionario Institucional	Institutional Revolutionary Party
PROADU	Programa de Apoyo del Desarrollo Universitario	University Development Support Programme
PROMEP	Programa de Mejoramiento del Profesorado	Faculty Enhancement Programme
PRONAD	Programa para la Normalización Administrativa	Programme for Administrative Normalization
SEDESOL	Secretaría de Desarrollo Social	Secretariat for Social Development
SEP	Secretaría de Educación Pública	Ministry of Public Education
SES	Subsecretaría de Educación Superior	Higher Education Under secretariat
SESC	Subsecretaría e Educación Superior e Investigación Científica	Higher Education and Scientific Research Under secretariat
SNI	Sistema Nacional de Investigadores	National System of Researchers
SiNaPPES	Sistema Nacional para la Planeación permanente de Educación Superior	The System for Permanent Planning of Higher Education
UAC	Universidad Autónoma de Campeche	Autonomous University of Campeche
UAM	Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana	Metropolitan Autonomous University
UNAM	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	National Autonomous University of Mexico

# **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank the following people who have contributed to this thesis:

The interviewees, for their disposition to share their knowledge and opinions.

The following supervisors at the Institute of Education for their guidance during the research process: Dr Steve Bramall, Professor Louise Morley, Professor Terrence McLaughlin, and Tony Green for his invaluable advice in the process of transforming that research into this thesis.

Dra Lorenza Villa Lever for her guidance on issues in Mexican higher education

The Institutions whose support made this study possible:

The Programme for the Advancement of University Teachers/Researchers (PROMEP), Secretary of Education, Mexico.

The Mexican Doctoral Programme, UAM Xochimilco, (Dr Charles Posner and Dr Luis Felipe Bojalil)

My Colleagues in the Doctoral Programme for their advice and their support, Ottoniel Bueno, Patricia Williams, Anabel Leon, and especially Mabel Encinas,.

Above all to my parents, my husband and my children, for their invaluable support, patience and numerous sacrifices.

# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **The Tertiary Education Reform Programme in Mexico**

### **The national and international Context**

Mexico is currently the 12th largest economy in the World<sup>1</sup>, the largest in Latin America (Hogenboom, 2004), and its business leaders are amongst the richest individuals in the World.<sup>2</sup> Mexico and Argentina were both considered in the 1990's models of the successful transition to neoliberal economic agendas in Latin America. Yet Argentina faced financial collapse in 1999, and is slowly rebuilding its economy. The Mexican government was rescued by US and IMF loans from financial collapse in 1984 and 1994 (Mariña, 2003) and continues to follow U.S. economic policy in the region at the cost of increasing internal opposition. The economic reforms provoked a peasant uprising in the State of Chiapas in 1994 (Olmedo, 2001) which has yet to reach a formal resolution, whilst in 1999 the attempt to increase student fees, provoked a 9 month student strike in the National University (UNAM).

The reforms, have nevertheless marched on relentlessly during three presidential periods (each of six years), as have the conflicts. The results of the 2006 presidential elections resulted in over one million protestors marching on the capital to protest against electoral fraud and in support of the left wing

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<sup>1</sup> International Monetary Fund (IMF). World Economic Outlook, September 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Carlos Slim, the owner of Mexican Telephones (TELMEX), is the third richest person according to Forbes lists and 9 other Mexicans are in the top 600.

candidate. A teacher's pay dispute which began in June 2006 in the State of Oaxaca has mushroomed into a 6 month old protest movement, with six dead and has extended to the capital with the planting of explosives in Mexico City in November 2006. Faced with the occupation of the Chamber of Deputies, the 'President Elect' required military support to enter the Chamber and complete the formal requirement of being sworn in as the President.

Nevertheless, as in the economy, the divisions are also beginning to be more visible in tertiary education. Tertiary education reforms followed fast on the heels of economic reforms in Mexico, with quality assurance measures being pushed through at various levels. National entrance and graduation exams, accreditation procedures for national undergraduate programmes, administrative accreditation procedures, academic performance schemes, research evaluation and funding schemes, infrastructure funding schemes, were all set up within a decade. Universities and academics were encouraged to submit to evaluation in return for financial rewards. Those universities which meet the requirement of having 75% of its undergraduates registered in accredited programmes are admitted into a recently created 'elite' club of quality universities called The Consortium of Mexican Universities (CUMEX), whilst those which do not meet the reform requirements face having complementary funding reduced or suspended. The reform policy is, then, based on a system of financial rewards to motivate all those outside the elite club to work harder to get on the inside. Yet do those on the outside merely lack sufficient motivation, which can be resolved, consequently, by financial incentives?

## **The local context**

My personal experiences at a local level lead me to doubt that the explanation for so many universities finding themselves 'on the outside' was solely a lack of sufficient motivation to change. My personal involvement during the 1990's in the implementation of the reform programme in the State University where I worked in the South-East of Mexico had lead me to question the coherence of some of the objectives of that programme and the efficacy of certain strategies used to implement them. I noted that whilst the 'Programme of Incentives for Teaching Performance' encouraged academic staff to focus upon individual

goals, the 'Faculty Enhancement Programme' (PROMEP) encouraged collaborative academic relations and the formation of research groups.

Yet I also observed that not only were these objectives potentially incongruent, but that the outcomes were not always those which had been expected. Instead of the incentives programme introducing objective standards of academic merit, many colleagues seemed to resort to all types of strategies to achieve personal advantages in this scheme, and on the other hand, the impartial evaluation procedures were not observed. As a result, the programme which was called 'carrera docente' became known as 'carrera indecente' ('indecent career', instead of 'teaching career'). The formation of research groups was also not without its problems. Firstly, the Directors of Faculties assigned the research groups as and when they could, and those researchers who exercise their right under the PROMEP programme to form their own group were viewed as an 'interest group' and a potential threat to established power structures.

Hence, from a local perspective, both the objectives of certain reform programme strategies appeared somewhat incongruent whilst the strategies themselves were apparently unsuitable in the particular context, resulting in unexpected, even negative, outcomes. Nevertheless, in the year 2000 the message from the National Association of Universities (ANUIES) in its strategic policy document (ANUIES, 2000) was that the application of performance management strategies would overcome *resistance to change sustained in inertia and tradition*. The reform policy, like the economic policy at a national level, appeared to be out of tune with the national context.

## **The social political context**

Education policy reforms in the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had marked a dramatic shift from the social objectives of the post-revolutionary settlement of the 1920's to the skills requirements of an open-market economy of the 1990's. Although free, non-religious primary schooling was constitutionally mandated since 1867, prior to the revolution in 1910 education services had largely remained under the auspices of the Catholic Church, and a first objective of the

post-revolutionary settlement had been to make free and secular basic education available to all. A second objective was a national curriculum to assist in the construction of a national identity to unify the various ethnic minorities of the population as well as the different social groups formed during the colonial period, (criollos, mestizos, Negroes and castas). The immediate challenge, then, in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was to make a national curriculum of primary education available to not only those in towns, but to rural populations not connected to the national road infrastructure. Primary attendance grew from 69,500 in 1950 to just over 4 million in 1990 (OECD, 1997). However, compulsory and free secondary education was not introduced until 1993. The principle of, if not free, then generally affordable, tertiary education had been established since the founding of the National University (UNAM) in 1910, with the overall registration in higher education increasing from almost 30,000 to one and a quarter million between 1950 and 1999. (OECD, 1997, p. 158)

The post-revolutionary settlement prevailed from the 1930's to the end of the 1980's, almost the same period as the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) established and maintained political control (1929 – 2000). Although, during the 1940's, there was a transition in economic policy from the exportation of raw materials to that of national industrialization protected by import controls, this had not affected the principal focus of education policy. Social integration and the construction of a national identity continued to be considered as an integral part of the preparation of citizens in the national project of industrial development, thus education policy was embedded in the socio-industrial vision of the nation. The neoliberal or open-market economic reforms introduced during the administration of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) marked an abrupt change in both economic, social and education policy. It severed, on the one hand, the connection between economic development and the national industrial project, and on the other hand, education and the socio-economic national project. Instead, tertiary education became linked to the priorities of a globalised market.

Carlos Salinas, a PH.D graduate in politics, economics and government from Harvard University, presided over the signing of the North American Free Trade

Agreement (NAFTA) between the United States of Mexico, the United States of America and Canada, the three countries which form the geographic area of North America. According to the economists Middlebrook and Zepeda (Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003), the rapid introduction of this economic policy, was made possible due to the authoritarian political and social structure in Mexico. Nevertheless, the exploitation of this structure to achieve the rapid introduction of a neoliberal economic policy lead to the creation of a business elite closely linked to a political elite (Hogenboom, 2004; Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003).

Some political and education commentators argued that economic liberalization should have a closer connection to social democratization, observing that those groups adversely affected by the lifting of trade barriers, particularly rural farmers, had limited access to democratic channels through which to voice their discontent. Writing in 1993, Eduardo Ibarra considered that according to the capacity or not of the government to resolve the problems resulting from the introduction of 'economic democracy' and not 'political democracy', would depend the viability or the failure of the government. (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 124). In December of 1994 the uprising in Chiapas apparently confirmed the pertinence of this warning.

President Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000), a PhD graduate in economics from Yale University, nevertheless continued with the neoliberal reforms introduced by his predecessor. Yet, Zedillo not only failed to resolve the Chiapas conflict but also, in the last year of his presidency, faced a strike by students in the National University. The students paralyzed the National University in Mexico for 9 months. The reasons for this strike and the way it developed are many and complex, yet aspects characteristic of the debate about this strike included, firstly, the extent to which the student position and their questioning of the neoliberal model of education reform was disqualified as extremist by some intellectuals (Silva-Herzog Márquez, 2000), and secondly, the extent to which the question of the increase in fees in the UNAM was considered a purely economic and administrative issue and the attempt to link this to wider social or political issues, as irrational. (Blanco, 2000; Muñoz, 2003; Trejo Delarbre, 2000).

The official response to this and other acts of resistance to the introduction of reforms, by both students and academics, was to dismiss them as “oppositions to change based upon inertia and traditions”. (ANUIES, 2000, p. 1) In short, the debate over the reasons for the strike was characterised by the absence of a discursive space in which these two positions, that of the priority of the social aims of education, or the economic utility of education, could be engaged in a constructive debate. Instead, the denigration or dismissal of either one or other of these positions was normal procedure. (Russell, 2005)

President Zedillo, however, introduced electoral reforms, creating the Federal Electoral Institution (IFE). In the year 2000 the PRI lost power for the first time in its 70 year history to the Party of National Action (PAN), whilst nevertheless, retaining the majority in the Congress.

At the turn of the century, then, Mexico faced the double challenge of adjusting to an economic policy based on open markets which was negatively affecting many, particularly the rural poor, and a reinvigorated yet fragile democratic political system, the protection of which required increased awareness of civil rights and responsibilities.

Yet on all fronts neoliberal policies continued to be pushed through with little regard for the delicate situation in which the country found itself. Despite the previous formal allocation of autonomous status to the IFE, government respect for the autonomy of electoral processes and institutions was not observed, with the 2006 elections taking place amid accusations of continuing electoral fraud. Economic policies continued to favour elite business groups and tertiary

education reform was relentlessly pursued with complementary funds cut off to those universities who did not meet the required evaluation indicators. The CUMEX group celebrated its expansion to 15 members<sup>3</sup>.

## **An alternative perspective**

The fact that a change in direction of national politics would need to take into account historically embedded social and political structures, if not clear to politicians, economists or educationalists, was clear to certain historians. The journal *Letras Libres* dedicated their December issue of the year 2000 to the question of whether the new government would continue to exploit the system of “caciques y cuadillos”, the political operators of the patron-client system in Mexico, or achieve the transition to a system based on the law and freely elected representatives (Editorial-Letras-Libres, 2000) Different articles pointed out the entrenched nature of the cacique system in Mexican society dating back to the beginning of the colonial period. Lorenzo Meyer argued that during moments of social transition such as the war of independence and the revolution, the vacuum in power allowed such practices to further entrench themselves and to constitute themselves as forces to be negotiated with by the emerging fledgling administrations.

In order to centralise fragmented power groups following the 1910 revolution, the Institutional Revolutionary Party was formed in 1929, and proceeded to include these groups within the party structure. They were co-opted using the traditional clientalist procedure in which, in return for loyalty, the control over the allocation of certain resources was conceded to the leader of each group to

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<sup>3</sup> The subsystem of public universities consists of 46 institutions (SEP, 2006), and the number who have entered the CUMex group doubled in September 2006 to 15 (U2000, 2006)

retain his or her control over those below them in the pyramid of power. In this way, teachers unions, peasants unions, workers unions, State Governors, the army, the police, all were incorporated into a clientalist political power structure in which the control over resources was employed to consolidate power.

Hence, at the beginning of a new millennium, with Mexico facing the challenges resulting from the adoption of a new economic system and the expectations of a fledgling new democratic order, we find two distinct perspectives on the path ahead. On the one hand, historians advising caution with respect to future possibilities, given the embedded nature of clientalist power structures in Mexican politics and society, centrally controlled through the distribution of resources. On the other hand, we find education specialists taking an autonomous approach to education policy, justifying the need to change the objectives of education towards issues of economic pertinence as well as suggesting that *opposition to change* (Academy, 2006) *sustained in inertia and tradition* which can be overcome by the application of performance management strategies which link funding to reform.

Given my personal experience with regard to the efficacy of the performance management strategies, I thus decided to explore the reasons for their unexpected results by exploring the wider social context of the reform programme from a historical perspective.

## **Research objective**

The objective of this research is thus to consider the apparently incongruent strategies and the unexpected results of the tertiary education reform programme in Mexico from a perspective which considers the wider historical social and political context of tertiary education. In particular, it remains to be determined whether deploying performance management procedures is an effective strategy to 'overcome inertia and tradition' and establish the assignation of resources on the basis of objective criteria, or whether such procedures ironically, in certain contexts, encourage 'traditional' practices.

## **Theoretical framework and Issues**

The potential relevance of contemporary analyses of social capital to this research objective was twofold. On the one hand, performance management approaches to education reform propose to achieve their policy objectives through the management of the performance at the institutional and individual level by linking performance to funding and incentives payments. This is a strategy based on certain assumptions concerning the type of social capital which exists in universities in Mexico, namely that academics will freely and fairly submit to an objective system of evaluation of their individual performance in return for a possible increase in their personal benefits.

On the other hand, my own experience in the institution where I am employed as a research professor suggested that performance management strategies were being adapted, most, if not all, of the time, to the patron-client model, a specific form of social capital in which benefits are distributed in return for the loyalty of the members of the group. For example, directors introduced the procedure of confirming the authenticity of all diplomas certifying the productivity of academics assigned to their faculty or centre, with the consequence that in some faculties, only those academics which 'proved' their loyalty to the director obtained the required signatures and thus achieved a positive review from the evaluation committee. Certain members of staff which had been, or were, of service to the state Governor, and were rarely seen in the university, were awarded the maximum level in the award system, an award which could more than double their salary. Consequently, the performance strategies, far from promoting competition based on merit, apparently were being used to reinforce traditional clientalist practices.

Furthermore, although this situation was routinely criticised by academics, and the teachers union, (if it resisted co-option by the clientalist structure)<sup>4</sup>, no concerted action was ever taken in this respect. There appeared to be, if not an acceptance of the situation, a general opinion that this situation involved factors which it was beyond either individual academics or the teachers union to challenge. The union, as a consequence, in general limited its actions to intervening in particular situations in response to the personal request of a member, but even in those situations, if a certain sector of the university management got to the plaintive first, the complaint might be withdrawn, leaving the union in the apparent role of fabricating problems. These experiences, and others, sustained an unspoken understanding that things would not and could not change and to attempt to do so would be a somewhat naïve self-sacrifice. Yet, I sense that the judgement of naivety was not in terms of a smaller power taking on a larger power, but in terms of not understanding the degree and nature of the embeddedness of the system one pretended to question.

These personal experiences lead me to reject the notion that there was a lack of motivation to change, indeed such a perspective implied a lack of respect to all those who daily resisted in various ways succumbing to the ‘logic of the system’. Instead I decided to attempt to make visible that unidentified system which maintained a level of control of the university. With this objective in mind

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<sup>4</sup> The support of the teacher's union depends on the level of independence it can or desires to maintain from the university authorities and local government. In 1997 the teachers elected a leader who claimed she would fight for teachers pay and conditions, yet instead the teachers union became co-opted by the government and used as an instrument to destabilise the university and weaken the position of Rector. Nevertheless, this strategy was undermined by the fact that the administration union resisted cooption, despite the personal threats they consequently faced. In 2001 the teacher's union leader failed to gain re-election, and a new leader was elected on the basis of a campaign which rejected the corruption of the previous administration. The same leader was re-elected in 2005.

I decided to explore the historical social cultural and political context of Mexico as well as contemporary theories of social capital in search of a framework of analysis which could help identify this context of the reform programme in Mexico.

## **Research Questions**

The questions this research consequently sets out to answer are the following:

- Why does the Mexican tertiary education reform programme include apparently incongruent objectives and strategies?
- Have the different performance management strategies achieved the construction of a merit based system of competitive academic relations in Mexican universities or, ironically, have 'traditional', non objective systems of relations been strengthened?
- In what way and to what extent are different forms of capital embedded in the social structure of Mexican society and is it feasible to attempt to introduce an objective system of evaluation linked to the distribution of resources in the tertiary education in Mexico without taking them into account?
- Does the impact of the performance management strategies vary between distinct institutional environments and, if so, what are the principal factors that account for these differences?
- In what way can a deeper knowledge of the context of the reform programme improve policy design?

## **Methodological issues**

My general research approach is exploratory. As mentioned above, my personal experience leads me to doubt the ANUIES justification of the reform programme strategies, and inclined me towards a historical and social perspective in the search for a more satisfactory account of the issues at stake. Nevertheless, I found no prior research which adopts this approach to the analysis of the outcomes of the reform programme. Furthermore, my objective involved the identification of a system which maintained a tacit rather than

objective existence. For this reason I adopted a methodological approach, which involved adopting an initial heuristic framework based on Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus*, fields and capital, and analysing the principal issues involved in the introduction of the reform programme in relation to this initial framework.

The empirical research consists of a comparative case-study analysis of the impact of performance management policy in universities in Mexico. I chose to undertake the case study analyses in the provincial university where I worked and in the two largest metropolitan universities in Mexico City. The basis for the selection of these universities are set out in chapter 6, but it is worth mentioning here that a key consideration in the selection of these universities was the possibility of the establishment of semi-open interview situations with academics based on situations of trust due to the political and hence sensitive nature of issues to be discussed. The factors involved in the construction of relations of trust and collaboration in Mexican universities were, consequently, not only the object of research; they were also taken into account in the research design.

## **Contribution to knowledge**

This thesis explores the extent to which a complex model of fields capital and *habitus* can identify key factors involved in replacing a 'traditional' with a 'performance' based system of funding. On this basis it hopes to offer a coherent explanation of the tensions resulting from the introduction of tertiary education reform in Mexico, as well as an explanation of the varying impact of the programme between institutions. This thesis draws attention to the importance of considering education systems as embedded in wider social practices, especially when new policies are to be introduced, in order to avoid not only the ineffective use of resources involved in policy implementation, but also the possibility of provoking unexpected negative results.

## **Chapter organisation**

Chapter one introduces the research problem the background to that problem and the related research questions.

Chapter two considers the methodological issues of the research project. The heuristic framework guiding the initial research is set out with regard to methodological issues in comparative and international research in education and comparative case study methods, as well as Bourdieu's approach to forms of capital and social fields. At the end of this chapter a diagram sets out the initial notion of the relation of the field of tertiary education to the fields of national and international policy, the field of global economics and the local and national fields of politics.

Chapter three explores the field of tertiary education in Mexico from the revolution to the current reform programme in order to determine the autonomy of that field in relation to the other fields considered in the initial heuristic framework, and the principle challenges which arose as a result of those relations. .

Chapter four explores the extent to which the type of relations which exist between the field of tertiary education and the other social fields mentioned are unique to that field or whether they are related to wider social issues. This question is related to the feasibility of approaching tertiary education reform as an autonomous field as distinct from a field embedded in the social structures of Mexican society.

In chapter five, I shall revise alternative approaches to the concept of social capital in order to, on the one hand, develop the initial heuristic framework based on Bourdieu's approach to forms of capital and social fields and, on the other hand, to identify the distinct models of social capital inherent in the international policy models of the OECD and the World Bank. .

Chapter six analyses the two principal international models of tertiary education reform contained within the Mexican reform programme in terms of their

objectives to transform the field of tertiary education and the assumptions concerning social capital inherent in each model. I shall also compare these international models of tertiary education reform in search for an explanation for the apparently incongruent objectives of the reform programme.

Chapter seven involves the development of three case studies of the impact of the reform programme in three universities in Mexico.

Chapter eight develops a comparative analysis of the three case studies and develops the initial heuristic framework in relation to those results.

In chapter nine I conclude by setting out my answers to my initial research questions and the possible implications for tertiary education policy at both the national and international level.

## **Chapter 2. Methodological issues**

In this chapter I will firstly reflect upon the place of the current research project within the field of comparative and international research in education. Secondly, I will explain why the research approach of comparative case studies was the most appropriate for this research project and also, the background theory which provided the initial perspective in this approach; thirdly, I will explain how the context in which the research was undertaken and issues of access to information were taken into account in the research design and also ethical issues which arose during the research; fourthly, I will describe the methods of data collection and data analysis.

## **Comparative and International Research in Education**

Given that the focus of this research is concerned with the impact of international policy on social capital in universities in Mexico, it is helpful to consider the place of this research within the body of comparative and international education approaches and methods. Firstly I will explore issues considered central to a comparative or international education research focus in order to subsequently explain how the comparative case study method most congruently addresses such issues.

A brief account of comparative and international education topics and issues reveals the extent to which the field has become progressively more focused due to the changing international context, whilst some of the original methodological concerns have become increasingly pertinent. Writing after the first World War, Kandel noted that although an extensive literature in comparative education existed at that time, nevertheless, there was "no unanimity about the methods of research" nor about "the topics to be studied" (Kandel, 1936, p. 400). Kandel himself argued against statistical comparisons and in favour of adopting a method of research in which "an analysis and interpretation of educational systems in the light of national traditions and the current political, social and economic setting may be applied" (Kandel, 1936, p.

404). In this sense he did not consider that comparative education involved standards of measurement and comparison, but rather understanding differences between national educational systems:

The purpose of comparative education, as of comparative law, comparative literature, or comparative anatomy, is to discover the differences in the forces and causes that produce differences in educational systems. This is all the more important today since most of the advanced nations are confronted with almost identical problems and yet the solutions are not universally identical. (Kandel, 1936, p. 406)

Kandel apparently considered the comparative element to involve the fact that different nations with different contexts were facing the same challenges, and of the importance to understand the distinct results and solutions in each society. Nevertheless, an alternative definition of comparative education suggests it involves the comparison of two or more societies on the basis of a particular relationship. Cowen suggests that:

Comparative education begins when some complex, coherent and theoretically stateable understanding of the relationship between at least two societies and their educational systems has been formed. (Cowen, 1996, p. 153)

Crossley and Broadfoot observe that given these distinct understandings of comparative education, in practice a distinction between 'comparative' and 'international' research is maintained. The objective of 'international' education is to "describe, analyse or make proposals for a particular aspect of education in one country other than the author's own country. The Comparative and International Education Society introduced the word 'international' in their title in order to cover these sorts of studies". (Postelwaite, 1989, p. xvii) (Crossley & Broadfoot, 1992, p. 101)

The issue of considering analysis within a wider context continued, however, to retain a high profile in both fields, particularly in the current context of globalisation. Beattie and Brock suggest that: "The health of policy-making in an interdependent world must depend in part on the health of comparative education research in the broadest sense" (Beattie & Brock, 1990, p. 4) (Crossley & Broadfoot, 1992).

Arnove writing in 1980 had already drawn attention to the increasing role of international policy agencies in education. Arguing that 90% of education budgets in the developing world, and often in the developed world, go on

salaries and running costs and only 10% on experimentation, he argued that the 10% provided by international agencies thus has a huge impact:

The programs and projects funded by the international network of donor agencies, in effect, establish an agenda for education activities. Priorities defined by the funding agencies determine where national funds will be committed for long periods. (Arnove, 1980, p. 52)

More recently, Welch has further sharpened the focus by considering the general adoption by international agencies of new-managerialist policies. His research concerns how the strategies of end-user financing contained within this approach affect the widening gaps between rich and poor and impact local democracy. (Welch, 2001)

Crossley and Broadfoot's article in 1992 was concerned with drawing attention to some of the outstanding problems, as well as the potential in international and comparative research. Their main concern echoes that of Kendal in 1936, namely that the current interest on the part of international funding agencies in financing comparative education research is leading to short term research projects dictated by the objectives of those funding bodies, with the risk that research will lack "cultural and contextual sensitivity", opening the door to the ethical question of cultural imperialism and potential bias (Crossley & Broadfoot, 1992).

So whilst there is greater unanimity concerning international and comparative research topics due to the increased profile of international agencies which adopt common managerial approaches, the question of research methods remains a key concern.

It can be noted at this point that the current research shares Arnove's focus on the increasing impact of the policies of international agencies on national policy design, and Welch's concern for the impact of the new-managerialist policies which those agencies have adopted. It can also be observed that whilst this research thus follows Beattie's and Brock's advice to consider the wider context of developments in education, it also follows Kandel's Crossley and Broadfoot's recommendation to analyse the impact of those policies with regard to the particular context. It combines both a broad and a context specific focus

through a comparative case study of the impact of international policy models in three state universities in Mexico.

## **Comparative case study methods**

In this section I will consider the methods of comparative case study analysis and the role of initial theoretical frameworks in guiding empirical research, and in the following section I will explain the theoretical framework which determined the general research design of this case study approach.

## **Some prior epistemological distinctions**

Robson observes that the *case study is not a flawed experimental design; it is a fundamentally different research strategy with its own designs* (Robson, 1993, p. 56). Amongst the reasons why it is distinct is the concern to take into account the particular context. Whereas the experimental design is based on a particular epistemological view which supposes that the analysis and interpretation of data can be divorced from its context, the case study approach is based on the philosophical position that understanding can only take place within a particular context.

In *Being and Time* Heidegger (Heidegger, 1980) argued that an incommensurable distinction exists between the universal ontological structure of human being, and the context specific and culturally grounded ways in which that structure is given meaning. This allowed his followers to claim that “the meaning of human action is not accessible to a scientific theory; to understand the significance of human action requires an interpretive approach” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1993, p. 37) Hermeneutic interpretation is thus a critique of metaphysics, and the metaphysical pretensions of scientific theory concerning the social world: “We call ‘metaphysical’ any such account that claims to know objectively what is to be a human being”. (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1993, p. 39) Hermeneutic interpretation does not pretend to be objective, instead to recognise our human finitude is to recognise that any understanding always takes place in a particular context against a background of shared practices.

The distinction between the rationalist epistemological approach and the phenomenological and hermeneutical philosophical approaches is one which underlies the distinction in social science methodologies between 'positivistic' and 'new paradigm research'. The latter term refers to such methodological approaches as 'post positivistic', 'ethnographic', 'phenomenological', 'hermeneutic', 'humanistic' and 'naturalistic' (Robson, 1993, p.59). The case study is, Robson suggests, well suited to the characteristics of 'naturalistic inquiry'.

The fact, then, that the case study is, as Robson suggests, a fundamentally different research strategy, is because it is based on a fundamentally distinct philosophical position concerning what is considered 'knowledge'. Nevertheless, one can still find within the discussion of aspects of case study research, positivistic concerns seeping back in. Such discussions can be found both at the level of the role of the theoretical framework, as well as at the level of data analysis.

## **Case studies and theoretical frameworks**

The difference between Yin's 'positivistic' approach to case study methods and Robson's 'naturalistic' approach, can be seen in Robson's description of case studies, not as a fundamentally distinct approach, but as a comprehensive research strategy which covers "the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis" (Yin, 2003, p. 14)). For this reason, whilst Robson considers appropriate the grounded theory approach characteristic of naturalistic enquiry, as best suited to case study methods, Yin underlines the "benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis" given that case study inquiry "relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion".

In comparative case study design, it could be argued that the need to set out the theoretical basis of comparison is as important as setting out the empirical basis of comparison. As Sylke Nissen observes in a discussion of the use of comparative case studies "Stringing up single cases without methodological

connection does not fulfil the demands of the comparative method" (Nissen, 1998, p. 410). Furthermore, it would be ingenuous to suppose that no theoretical framework guided the empirical research. Nevertheless, the differences of opinion concerning how developed the initial framework needs to be can be related back to the philosophical distinction concerning the nature of knowledge.

Evers and Wu also consider a prior theoretical position an important element to be able to generalise from case study analysis. On the one hand, they would seem to suggest a more hermeneutical conception of meaning as the basis of shared understanding by arguing that in all forms of research universal theories are present in the very language of description or analysis used in the research. They refer to Popper's argument concerning general terms or universals (Evers & Wu, 2006, p. 515) . Nevertheless, on the other hand, whilst accepting that a common language supports generalisations based on common terms or universals, they also observe that when it comes to comparative case studies, "the generalisations may be only as warranted as the background theory" (Evers, 2006, p516).

Consequently, it is not a question of avoiding theoretical bias, as they propose Glaser and Strauss do in developing the notion of grounded theory, but rather of avoiding confirmation bias as a result of seeking to confirm the theory regardless of the data. They set out a method in which theory is *feedforward* and compared with the *feedback* patterns of interpreted experiences or observations, with different variations of a theory eliminated until the most appropriate match is found. This approach would seem to assume that at least one of these a priori theoretical frameworks will in fact match, or perhaps one would need to go back to the drawing board if it didn't. Yet perhaps it is precisely when it would appear necessary to go back and revise the initial research design that confirmation bias in fact is at its most dangerous.

In this sense, grounded theory approach would seem a better option in that it includes Ever and Wu's *feedforward* and *feedback* strategy yet does not require a fully fledged a priori theoretical framework, with different variations to feed forward. Instead, it uses a skeleton framework to structure the overall

research interview design and an 'in-vivo' approach to data analysis. Kelle (Kelle, 1997) uses the term 'heuristic framework', to describe the general set of ideas which guide the empirical research, observing that to propose an 'open mind' approach to research is not to approach research with a blank mind' but rather to allow as far as possible, the data to 'speak for itself' within the heuristic framework. This approach may put the researcher in a position of discovering a variety of modalities, practices, etc. and possibly even phenomena which will be reviewed against the initially adopted framework for the specific analysis and theory to be developed. The problem of confirmation bias does not therefore arise for grounded theory, because theory is developed from the data analysis against the background of the initial guiding theoretical framework.

The approach adopted in the current research combined the use of an initial skeleton framework to structure the overall research design, whilst the specific concepts of analysis within that framework arose partly from the analysis of the background social political and economic context, and partly from the in vivo data analysis. In short, I suggest that if one is to take into account the advice of comparative educationalists regarding the need for attention to context, then it is not congruent to set out with a detailed methodological model against which to measure data analysis. Instead, it is important to have a clear idea of the general theoretical framework and use a comparative case study approach to fill in the details and thereby develop the analysis.

Yet the possibility of such an approach depends on the extent to which the background theory sustains it. Clearly if the methodological approach of the research is based on a phenomenological or hermeneutical philosophical position, then the theoretical framework should likewise share the same approach. It is in this sense that Bourdieu's theory of how the relative values of capital within fields vary according to the particular context is particularly congruent with the objectives of this hermeneutical approach.

## **Background theories guiding the initial research**

This research involves, on the one hand, an analysis of international policy models with regard to tertiary education, and on the other hand, an interpretive analysis of the type of relations which exist in universities in Mexico. The latter requires an understanding of the social, political and economic national context. Finally, by means of a comparative analysis of three case studies, the objective of this research is to determine the emergent properties of the ways in which the international policies and national contexts influence and are played out in the local configuration of relations in each particular university.

Although the particular terms of analysis of the local relations would not become clear until the analysis of the national objectives of the reform programme had been determined as well as the wider national context in which they took place, nevertheless, it is already clear from the objectives thus far adopted that the focus is upon relations not identities. Mary Henkel, for example, has published research on the impact of policy on the “classical” notion of academic identity, the paradoxical ideal of strong identities within a community of equals, and a move towards more “professional”, individualistic, competitive identities (Henkel, 2000)). The current research is concerned to determine, within the social, political and economic context of each university, the relation between academics as actors in the social field, not as ‘identities’ constructed by that field. To the extent to which international policies change the relative value of capitals in that field, they have an impact on the possible range of action of academics within that social field.

Bourdieu’s concept of the relative forms of capital which exist within the field of tertiary education is considered in detail in chapter five. The purpose at this moment is to consider how that approach might be applied in distinct ways to the field of higher education. Fortunately, a recent example of the application of this approach exists in Rajani Naidoo’s and Ian Jamieson’s consideration of the impact of neo-liberal and new managerialism principles to higher education (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005, p. 877).

Naidoo and Jamieson adopt the framework of Bourdieu's study of the field of higher education in France, where he argues that "The 'capital' invested with value in the field of higher education is termed 'academic capital' and consists in the first instance of intellectual or cultural, rather than economic or political assets" (Naidoo, 2005, p.877). Hence their concern is to consider the extent to which market influences in tertiary education are "likely to lead to the erosion of academic capital and the valorisation of economic capital" (Naidoo, 2005, p.878). They consider how this change in the relative values of capital in the field of higher education will affect particular aspects: the pedagogic relation, academic professionalism, trust and risk-taking and the structure of knowledge.

The current research project differs from that of Naidoo and Jamieson to the extent that in Mexico it cannot be assumed from the outset that the form of capital invested with the highest value in the field of higher education is that of academic capital. Indeed, on the basis of an analysis of the social, political and economic context of Mexico, the concern is to focus on precisely which forms of capital compete for value in the field of tertiary education in Mexico, without committing, at this moment, to whether that impact is principally in the form of consumerist influences, and whether this involves the erosion of academic or other forms of capital. It is in this sense, that Bourdieu's approach will be adopted in a 'heuristic' manner at this point: the identification of which forms of capital in the higher education field in Mexico have high value will be identified on the basis of a contextual analysis. How international policy proposes to change such values will be identified on the basis of a policy analysis. Finally, the actual values of capital within each field and the impact of policy on those values will be determined on the basis of case study analysis.

The comparative case study method of data collection, intends to determine whether the situation varies between universities as a result of the history of its own particular organisational structure and its local context. Naidoo and Jamieson also observe the need to treat each university, indeed each subject area, as a separate entity:

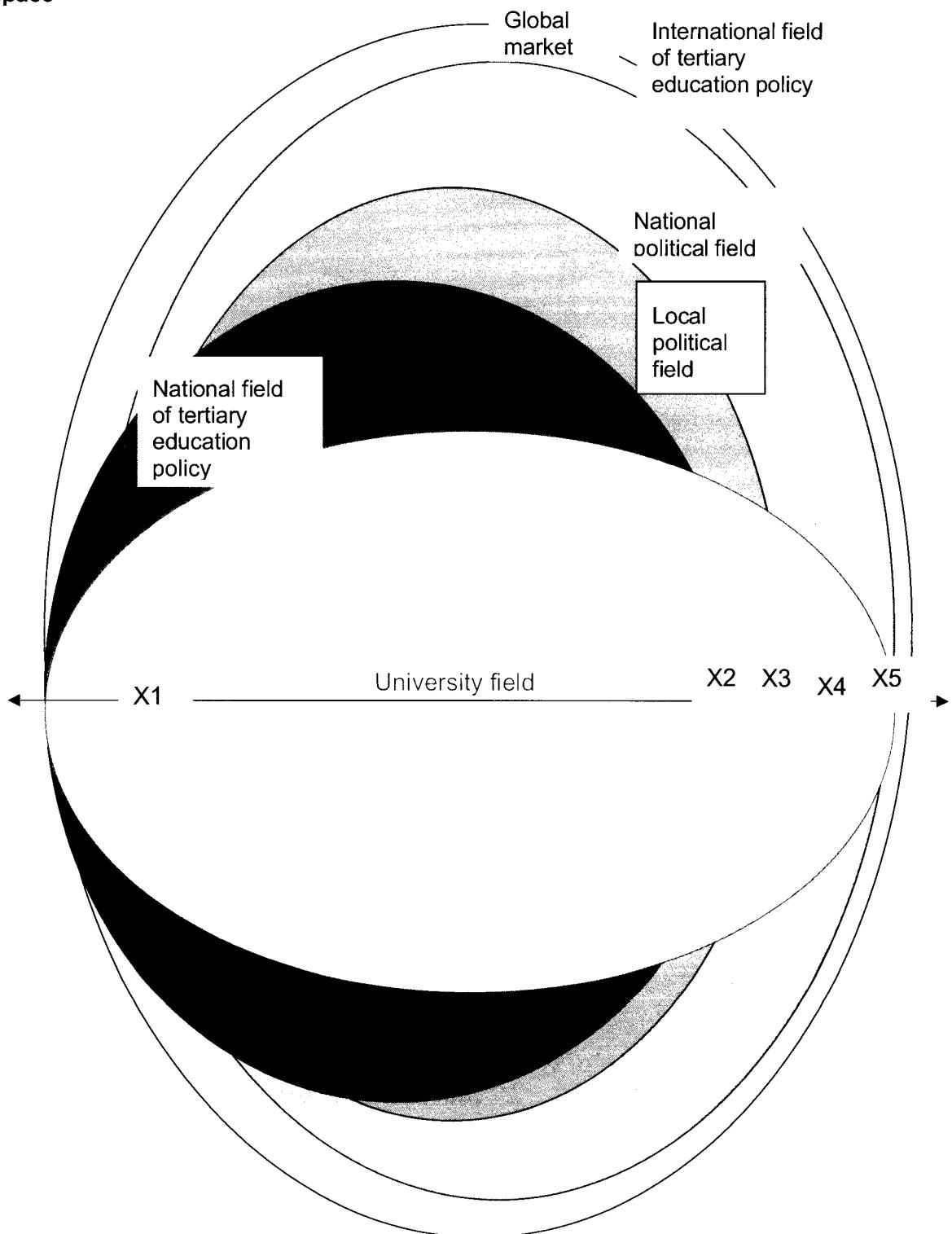
An enduring limitation in relation to the social theory of higher education is that researchers have tended to conceptualize institutions of higher education in an overly homogenous way. However, as shown above, the outcomes of forces for commodification may differ substantially across different types of universities and subject areas. In an era where both academic and economic forces exert

powerful structuring effects on universities, the field of higher education is likely to become the locus of power struggles over the legitimate capital required to attain dominance. An in-depth analysis of the impact of commodification on different types of universities may play an important role in contributing to sociological understanding of the impact of commodification on labour market destinations and social equity .

In short the conceptual basis of the comparison between the case studies will be in terms of the forms of capital in the university, and the different degrees of autonomy the university field maintains in relation to other fields which constitute the social space, including the fields of global markets, international and national tertiary education policy, and the field of political power. At this point, the relation between these fields can be represented as in figure 1.

This figure represents the different extents to which a university field may be intersected by other fields. To position a university at the left of the central field would be to suggest that it functions within the national field of tertiary education policy with the other fields of the local and national political context, the national economic context, the international economic context of globalisation, and the international context of education policy, providing the background to the field of national education. To position a university towards the right would indicate a more direct contact with other fields, as indicated in the diagram by X1, X2, X3, and X4. The closer the university is placed to the central axis, the more it is intersected by all the mentioned fields. The further the university is placed from that axis, indicates that one particular field is predominant..

**Figure 1 The inter-relation of the university field to other fields within the social space**



As mentioned above, Naidoo and Jamieson describe how the global market is impacting directly on relations within the university in England, and hence according to this account, universities in England could be generally located at point X5 (the intersection of the university field with the field of the global economic market), as the question of the closeness to the other fields is not discussed in that particular article.

With regard to this research, from a preliminary perspective, changes in the national field of tertiary education policy would appear to be influenced by the international field of education policy which in turn responds to the neo-liberal approach to global economics, whilst national and local politics apparently have a strong influence. So, in a loose hypothetical sense, Mexican Universities would be found close to the line between X3 and X4. The question this research seeks to address by means of distinct case studies is the degree to which the impact of those policies differs from one university to another.

From preliminary knowledge, the provincial university can be expected to be more influenced by the local political field, whilst the nature of the strikes in the national university indicated a strong relation to the national political field, yet the situation of the metropolitan university is entirely unknown. Furthermore, the impact of these political fields relative to that of the field of education policy at either a national or international level is also unknown. At this point in the research then, the differentiation of universities within the relational space of the university field is a loose notion which will be progressively developed in the following chapters.

## **The research context and access to information in Mexico**

Another sense in which the context of this research needs to be taken into account is in the extent to which it has an impact on the actual process of research.

The first issue is in relation to the accessibility of information in Mexico. There is a lack of critical research on the impact of education policy, especially its impact in universities in the provinces. The lack of empirical and critical analysis in education research in Mexico, is in part due to a culture which considers such research as dangerous because it may produce results that are politically compromising, so that “there is a tradition of concealing information that is controversial (Bensimon & Bauman, p. 15) Much of the research undertaken concerning the impact of the reform programme limits itself to a description of statistical data.

In recent years, these statistics on developments in tertiary education have been made available on the internet on the web page of the Secretary of Education ([www.sep.gob.mx](http://www.sep.gob.mx)). Even so, the information is presented in a fragmented and partial way so that it is difficult to obtain useful information (see chapter 3, last section: Outstanding issues with regard to the impact of the reform programme). Another web page is the Citizens Education Observatory (OCE) ([www.observatorio.org](http://www.observatorio.org)) which initially carried monthly debates on developments in education in Mexico, but has recently displayed little new input. A most welcome development is the links it hosts to its online journal, and the journals of the National Association of Universities (ANUIES) and the Journal of the Mexican Institute of Education Research (RMIE).

The OCDE CERI report on Research in Education in Mexico (CERI, 2004), noted that the number of researchers in relation to the number of teachers in the education system is 0.03 per cent , and only 4 doctoral programmes and 11 courses are recognised in the National Registry of Postgraduate studies of CONACYT. Furthermore, 58% of the researchers are concentrated in Mexico City, and there is a lack of institutional conditions to undertake research, (lack of reliable data, lack of access to data, etc.). (CERI, 2004, pp. 20 - 21) Furthermore, two distinct and often separate types of research groups exist: those dedicated to basic or academic investigation, and those dedicated to applied problem solving research. These groups are divided between those that work in knowledge areas (example maths teaching) and those that work on policy.

**Table 1: Types of Investigation in Mexico and its impact on Education Policy (CERI, 2004, p. 24)**

Relation with the systems needs and the policies	Orientation of education research	
	1. Basic and academic research	2. Applied and development research
Relatively independent of policy and focused on areas of knowledge	1.1. Centres of specialised universities, SNI researchers (excellent academic research)	2.1 Researchers, centres and associated foundations with teacher training and experience and/or particular agents or groups (adults, indigenous, women's and other groups) ('organic research')
Involved in policy and the solution of the systems problems	1.2 High level academic centres who advise and/or are involved in the design of policy (directed research)	2.2 Researchers, centres and NGO's who provide advice to education authorities and others on development models and technology to resolve problems. They respond to needs ("Instrumental research")

Access to information required for research is normally concealed given that it is considered that all information possibly conceals politically sensitive information. Access to university information, even the most basic, would require permission from the highest authority. This fact had a strong influence on the conduct of the investigation, including the research design, favouring a case study method where research data is built up in a complex fashion from a number of sources.

## **Ethical issues at stake in the research**

With respect to what Crossley and Broadfoot refer to as the need for 'cultural and contextual sensitivity', I have been living in Mexico for nearly 20 years, yet circumstances still occur daily to remind me of this issue, perhaps euphemistically put, of sensitivity. Indeed, this research is a clear example of the benefits of trying to understand instead of judging what may often seem unjustifiable actions. In addition, nevertheless, there is also the issue of my personal involvement in the events referred to in this research due to the fact that my husband was Rector of the Autonomous University of Campeche from 1995 to 1999 and his period coincided with the strong promotion by ANUIES and SESIC of the tertiary education reform programme both in terms of university accountability and the reorganization of Universities in relation to the objectives of the PROMEP programme. As explained in chapter two, neoliberal

reforms in Mexico were introduced top down, a process facilitated by the hierarchical structure of Mexican Society, nevertheless, that introduction, sometimes conceived as an imposition, sometimes as coercion, provoked reactions amongst different social groups. In Chiapas, it resulted in an indigenous uprising, as the inclusion of basic grains in the opening of commodity markets, was considered by indigenous communities as a threat to their way of life based on the cultivation of the maize crop; in the National University it resulted in a nine month strike by students who rejected the increase in tuition fees in so far as it undermined the principle of free tertiary education; in Campeche it resulted in sending in plain clothed police to take control of the university and impose a new Rector, as the State Governor perceived the traditional spheres of control- sources of young voters and extra funds for political campaigns- progressively challenged by a discourse of university autonomy and accountability.

Yet, reflection on the way my personal experience was concerned with the implementation of the reform programme, made me realise that even if I decided not to undertake a case study in Campeche, the events in Campeche were inseparable from those in the UNAM. For example, I had been witness to the personal report of a person present in the meeting of ANUIES in September 1999, in which the resignation of the Rector of the National University was announced and details of the events in the University of Campeche were given. The then Secretary of Education, Dr Limon, (1994-2000) instead of decrying such events, merely admonished those Rectors present, arguing that they needed to take into account local contexts and negotiate accordingly. This attempt to deflect criticism by laying the blame on those who are arguably the victims of the events, astonished many of those Rectors present, and such a response was considered, on the contrary, akin to sacrificing those in the front line when the going got tough. Not all of those present were aware of the context of events in Campeche, but all were well aware that Dr Barnes, the Rector of the UNAM, had merely followed the policy of the Secretary of Education in increasing tuition fees, yet the government had not publicly backed the Rector, and furthermore Dr Limon was now arguing that the negative reaction of the students was due to a lack of the personal negotiating skills of Dr Barnes.

This personal report bore an ironic relation to a conversation my husband had a few months before with the then Sub-Secretary of higher education, in which he had suggested that the speed in which the reform programme could be, pushed through needed to take into account the distinct conditions of each university. He observed that Dr Rescendes had not appeared to consider his argument favourably, and indeed, felt that the critical observation had created a certain distance in their relation. Relating this conversation to later events, it can be seen that Dr Limon argued that the distinct conditions of each university required not the adaptation of the reform programme according to institutional contexts, but the use of personal negotiating skills on behalf of each Rector. (This may be interpreted as an example of how neo-liberal policies centralise policy models but decentralise responsibility for outcomes, as discussed in chapter six).

This ‘insider’ perspective on events contrasts with the semi-official version of events diffused at the time, which on the one hand, laid the blame for the escalating strike on Dr Barnes’s personal skills of negotiation, and in Campeche, laid the blame on the lack of ‘political skills’ of the Rector to negotiate a compromise with the Governor. To remain silent on both accounts would inadvertently vindicate Dr Limon’s strategy to ‘decentralise’ responsibility for errors and at the same time defend a policy approach that one policy, (with the right leadership skills), could be fitted to all situations.

In short, it was neither morally, nor conceptually possible for me to consider the impact of the reform of tertiary education in Mexico without taking into account my personal experience of, and knowledge of, these events. This required me to consider whether, as a consequence, the credibility of my research was in question as the issue arose concerning whether the objectivity of my perspective was too compromised to consider the product of that research in terms of academic knowledge. Nevertheless, this in turn raised the question of the nature of an ‘objective perspective’ on those events, given that only those involved in those events were in a position to ‘know’ what was going on. Such information is not reported in Mexico, nor in many places I suspect, and would not be available for future ‘objective’ research. In this sense, I felt morally

obliged to find a way in which to present my personal knowledge of these events together with more objectively researched data in such a way as to present an alternative, and I argue, fuller and accurate, account of what happened in the UNAM and in the UAC. This account would attempt to explain these events as part of the implications of pushing through, regardless of national or local circumstances, the top down implementation of the reform programme. Whilst I did have a privileged insight into events, there was also a lot I didn't know about the wider context of those events. On the one hand, then, my own 'alternative account' could be considered as a 'valid' contribution to the extent to which my personal experience of events formed part of a coherent account which included the wider national and global context. On the other hand, if the combination of my personal 'insiders' perspective on events, together with different 'outsiders' perspectives on the impact of the reform programme, in this way achieved the construction of a 'more complete' understanding of events for the reader, then my research, instead of being compromised by my personal experience, will have been enriched. I have presented my personal perspective in squared brackets so that the reader can distinguish these insights from my analysis of the data gathered.

In short this research project had to be permanently attentive to the following issues:

- difficulty of access to information,
- personal involvement in events related to the research
- the use of personal connections
- questions of cultural sensitivity
- The political sensitivity of the theme of the research.

## **Research Methods**

To seek to understand the tensions arising from the introduction of tertiary education reforms in Mexico in relation to the national and local contexts within which those reforms were introduced, is not only a difficult project due to lack of published research on education in Mexico (see introduction), it is also made more difficult if one intends to take into account the extent to which hierarchical

social structures and political and social networks may have an influence in that situation. If this research aims to answer the question whether the reform model is incorporated in different ways and has different impacts according to the unique structure of the relation between academic networks, organizational issues and the local social and political context in each particular university, it was clear that research concerning each particular university context where the programme was introduced would contribute a valuable level of data to be in a position to answer my research questions. Nevertheless, this required considering the problem of gathering empirical information concerning a delicate issue, in a culture not always accustomed to critical self-reflection.

### **The question of what data to gather**

With regard to the question of what information to gather, I decided to focus on one aspect of the introduction of the reform programme, namely the impact of the different incentives programmes. The new-managerialist approach involved management strategies which raised a number of issues: firstly, certain assumptions concerning both personal motivation and social relations in the university; secondly, the incentives programme are a key strategy in introducing an 'objective' evaluative culture; thirdly, certain programmes aim to measure 'productivity' in terms of 'scientific output', whilst others are directed at the increased performance of research groups, and the role of such groups in the transferral of knowledge.

### **The question of where to gather data**

Given the difficulties of access to information mentioned above, as well as the fact that information was in general considered as politically sensitive, the possibility of access to interviewee's through relations established on the basis of confidence was the most important criteria for the selection of universities where the case studies were to be undertaken. For reasons which will be discussed in the following chapters, relations of trust in Mexico are based on personal relations, rarely professional relations. I had personal contacts in the national and the metropolitan university in Mexico City and in the provincial university, where I worked in the south of Mexico. Nevertheless, in the latter

case, a further issue was at stake. This was personal issue, and yet, at the same time, woven into the introduction of the reform programmes in Mexico.

### **The question of how to gather data**

The case study approach tends to use multiple methods of evidence or data collection to build the single case. (Robson, 1993, p. 52) Nevertheless, whilst the case study approach was determined by the object of this research, namely the field of relations in different universities in Mexico and the impact of the performance management strategies in those relations, the methods chosen to gather data concerning those relations needed to take into account the socially and politically sensitive nature of the information to be gathered.

Concerning background information to each case study, the sensitivity of the research subject, meant that there was a scarcity of research concerning the forms of social relations within each institution and between the institution and the government. Nevertheless, although the information was not abundant, I gathered data from various sources, including previous research on a number of related themes, such as the history of the university, the development of its organisational structure. From the web sites of each institution I sought regulations concerning hiring, promotion and staff evaluation procedures. I also referred to staff news letters.

In order to determine the particular configuration of relations amongst staff in the university and the impact of the reform programme, I needed to gather information from the academic staff themselves, and here the sensitivity of the information was a key issue. Taking this into account, it was clear that the in-depth interview format was a more appropriate form than a questionnaire to approach the problem of attempting to research socially and politically sensitive information, as it would provide a greater opportunity of attempting to establish trust. Nevertheless, the in-depth interview method raises several of its own questions.

As Clive Seale (Seale, 1998) points out, a 'depth' and 'unstructured' approach to the type of interaction in interviews , while redressing some of the

'exploitative' aspects of standardised questionnaire format (Seale, 1998, p. 205), still assumes the epistemological basis of that approach. Both the classical and depth approaches assume the notion that "The social world is assumed to have an existence that is independent of the language used to describe it" (Seale, 1998, p. 202) They differ in their approach to how accuracy is obtained. The 'classical' approach is to achieve accuracy by eliminating as far as possible personal bias through a standardized format. A 'depth' approach, instead of accuracy seeks 'authenticity' through 'trust' and 'intimacy' where 'private material' may be divulged. As Seale makes clear, both approaches continue to use the interview as a resource rather than a topic. (Seale, 1998)

To treat the interview as a topic is to take into account factors which irremediably reduce the 'accuracy' or 'authenticity' of the interview relation, such as micro-politics of the interview setting, issues of 'moral reputations and self-identity' (Seale, 1998, p. 213) and the 'linguistic repertoire' which refers to the "resources upon which people draw in constructing accounts". Nevertheless, as Seale points out, these are not mutually exclusive approaches and that by adopting both it is possible to avoid simplistic assumptions of interviews providing 'windows on reality', and at the same time consider which of the different constructions of reality are most plausible. As Seale concludes: "Examining how different versions of reality are deployed by interviewees should not blind us to the fact that only certain versions are likely to be plausible". (Seale, 1998, pp. 215-216)

I used the depth interview approach both to establish trust and intimacy so that private material might be divulged, but I also had to pre-establish certain relations of trust by using academic networks to establish each interview. (See section below on criteria for selection of sample) Nevertheless, in considering the interview as a topic, I had to be aware of the micro-politics of each interview situation, (discussed further in interview style below) for despite the 'personal recommendations' I had received to undertake the interviews, some of those interviewed still felt potentially compromised by the information they were giving me, and on occasions sought the repetition of my initial confirmation that I would protect their identity in my analysis of the interview data. At times, those

interviewed did give guarded replies, but did not sustain this attitude throughout the interview, partly because confidence was established as the interview went on, and partly because the desire to comment on the situation balanced the feeling of the need to be careful not to compromise them. This required me to compare the information given in different parts of the interview.<sup>56</sup>

In fact, the impression I acquired was that those interviewed were often glad to be able to talk about the issues I raised in the interviews; it was as if the interview gave them the opportunity to air their views, which they did not often have the opportunity to air. For example, the majority interviewed did not use the type of phrase "As I have said before in relation to this issue", except one person who has written on these issues extensively. With regard to most of the other academics interviewed I had the impression that bit by bit, as the interview progressed, the questions touched themes which they felt passionately about. In only a few cases a certain level of inarticulateness in their response suggested that they had not thought through the issues involved, whilst in other cases the articulations of the responses suggested that they had thought through the issues but they gave no hint of having discussed the issues widely, there were no phrases such as "as I have remarked to my colleagues", or anything similar. I perceived this when undertaking the interviews, but on reflection it is surprising and it would have been useful to have included a question concerning the extent to which such issues were discussed amongst faculty members.

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<sup>6</sup> An example of triangulation is included in appendix 2.

### **The interview 'sample'.**

The most important criteria in the selection of the 'sample' of academics to interview, concerned, then, levels of confidence and trust that could be established with those interviewed (see a more detailed explanation of this below in the section on implementation). . In this sense I used a form of purposive, not random or statistically representative, sampling, considering that it increased "the scope or range of data exposed and is more adaptable". (Robson, 1993, p. 61) I did not consider that my personal identity affected in any way my interviews of academics in Mexico City, events in the provinces go largely unperceived in Mexico City and when they are perceived they are given little relative importance. For example, the fact that power has been devolved to the provinces even when some State governors continued to consider themselves above the rule of the law, and where no independent judicial system exists, and relevant legislation has not been written, let alone passed, is a fact that appears to be overlooked by Federal government, although it is quite apparent to not only those living in the provinces but also to the evaluating team of the OECD (OECD, 1997) (see chapter three).

I did however; consider that my personal identity could affect the interviews in my own university, so I took steps to limit any possible impact. Nearly six years had passed since the autonomy of the university was physically violated. Since that time my husband had not been permitted to work in the university, and for the last three years had been on research assignments in Mexico City. Nevertheless, I clearly had to take into account that I continued to be identified as the partner of an ex-Rector. Some staff sought to avoid contact with me, considering any association would be politically unfavourable for them, whilst other surreptitiously greeted me and almost in a whisper asked after my husband. Consequently, I sought to interview academics that had been born, had lived, or had studied outside Campeche, who had either joined the university after these events or had a wider perspective on the issues involved and were thus less personally intimidated by any association to them. Furthermore, in the invitation to the interview, I made clear the theme of discussion which had no apparently direct connection with the events in which my husband had been involved.

A second important decision was to decide to undertake the interviews in the area of social sciences within the three universities. To undertake the study in the different knowledge areas of natural sciences, medical sciences and engineering would have made the study too large with regard to the time frame within which this research needed to be undertaken.<sup>7</sup> I consequently decided to opt for the strategy of the extreme case scenario. As explained in the OECD distinction between the use of either codified or tacit knowledge in different disciplinary environments (see chapter six), it is not unreasonable to suppose that the method of quantitative performance evaluation used in the incentives programmes is a procedure with which academics from the natural sciences, engineering, and perhaps also the medical sciences, would be more at home, whereas those in the social sciences might be expected to experience the most problems with this method of evaluation.

What's more, I considered that interviewing people from the social sciences would procure a sample of academics that due to their own formation might have, to some extent, reflected upon these issues and could consequently share with me their own opinions on these issues, and not limit themselves to answer only the questions I put to them. When those interviewed made evaluations concerning the university in general, this data was compared to the data researched concerning the background to the case study (previous research, official data, regulations, etc.) in order to decide upon the credibility of the data.

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<sup>7</sup> the PROMEP grant I received to undertake this research originally specified a three year grant with one year to write up, which at the end of the third year was extended to a 3 year grant, a four year limit with one year writing up, to respect the original agreement between PROMEP and the Institute of Education.

Nevertheless, as Naidoo and Jameson point out, it can be expected that the impact of the market pressures, and in this case performance management incentives, might have a distinct impact in different disciplines. In this sense, using interviews in the social sciences field as an extreme case example, serves only to the extent that this research is considered as exploratory in nature, seeking to develop an initial heuristic framework which can be applied and developed further in subsequent research.

My principal criterion for the selection of interviewees was based on that of the establishment of those interviews either personally or through contacts. I considered that, on this basis, I would be able to count on approximately 6 persons from the social sciences in the UNAM, and considered it possible to arrange through contacts personal introductions to a similar number of persons in the UAM. The reduced number of those interviewed would be balanced by the quality of the data collected in in-depth interview undertaken on the basis of initial relations of trust.

## **The interview design**

Yet even though I had decided that to gather information concerning the impact of the performance management strategies of the reform programme in different universities, by interviewing the staff themselves, I still had to decide what type of questions to ask in order to obtain the required data.

Yin considers that an essential part of constructing validity in case study research, depends firstly upon the source of evidence and secondly on the measure of that source. (Yin, 2003) The example Yin gives is that neighbourhood change can be measured by, amongst other things, the increase in crime. In its turn, the increase in crime may be measured by FBI crime reports, but the latter may not be considered a valid measure "given that large proportions of crimes are not reported to the police" (Yin, 2003, p. 35)

In this sense, whilst the question I sought to answer was the impact of the reform programme on the objective relations between agents within the social

space of the university field, and the structure of relation of capital which determined that field, nevertheless, I still had to decide how to outline those objective relations in the university and how to measure the impact of the performance management strategies on those relations. In Bourdieu's terms, I had to distinguish the distinct forms of capital at play in the field and decide upon the relative value of each form of capital. I was also aware that these forms of capital may be embedded in both formal procedures and tacit practices in the university. The design of the interview needed to take all this into account.

The interview consisted of three sections. The first section of the interview was, following the model Bourdieu uses in '*Homo Academicus*', designed to determine the demographic, economic, social, cultural, university power, scientific power and prestige and intellectual celebrity, of the interview sample. (See appendix 1 for details of this adoption and the interview question guideline). This information also provided information concerning the forms of capital in the different universities, particularly the existence of intellectual celebrity as a form of capital in the university.

The second section of the interview sought to determine the structure of relations between the different capitals. To determine how these relations were reproduced by formal procedures, it followed Bourdieu's model in seeking information concerning hiring and promotion systems in the university. Nevertheless, this section departed from Bourdieu's model by not only taking into account who undertakes the job interviews, but also in considering those procedures in terms of their levels of formal transparency. This section also sought information concerning less formal and tacit forms of relations between academics.

The third part of the interview sought to determine the impact of the incentives programmes on the objective relations between agents in the university field. It sought information about the impact of the performance management incentives schemes on research, institutional, academic, and individual practices. Information was also sought concerning the effect of the combination of

performance management strategies promoting or, on the one hand, competitive or, on the other hand, collaborative relations between academics.

## **The implementation of the research procedure**

I interviewed academics from the two largest public universities in Mexico City, and one provincial university in the south-east of Mexico. On average, the interviews lasted about two hours and the interviewees expressed their opinions at length about the issues involved.

### **Characteristics of the interviewees:**

16 academics,

6 people from UNAM, 3 from Faculty of Political Science and 3 from Institute of Social Sciences,

5 persons from UAM, 2 from Xochimilco and 3 from Iztapalapa.

5 persons from UAC.

The number of persons I interviewed was one less in the UAM and in Campeche than my theoretical sample, due to the fact that the sixth person in each case did not respond to my efforts to contact them, despite personal recommendations, and for this reason I decided it would not be ethical to insist unduly as their reluctance may indicate an uneasiness with the theme of the interview which I explained in my initial communication using electronic mail, and if there was mistrust concerning the theme of the interview, it would be difficult to establish trust in the interview and gather the data I sought.

Given the sensitive nature of the content of the interview, and that anonymity was given as a guarantee to those that participated in the interview, I shall only refer in general terms in this section to the profiles of those interviewed. Of the 6 persons from the UNAM, two had previously held high positions of university power, the other four had in the past acquired medium levels of university power; in the UAM one person currently held a high position of power, and two had previously held high positions of power, in the UAC only one person had held intermediary levels of power, reflecting the fact that in the provincial university intellectual capital was not associated with academic capital. Only one person had parents with high levels of cultural capital, in all

three universities the rest of those interviewed were the first generation university graduates in their family, reflecting the high level of social mobility following the revolution at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Mexico. Intellectual celebrity was a form of capital consistently present amongst the interview sample in Mexico City, but not in the UAC, given the fact that the UNAM and the IPN (National Polytechnic Institution) have their own television and radio stations which are popular in Mexico City but do not broadcast beyond that geographical locality.

### **Interview style and establishing communication**

The style of the interview was adapted according to the personality of the person interviewed. Some of those interviewed showed a preference to establish a monologue style of communication in the interview, and these were often the interviews which only loosely followed the interview guideline. In some interviews encouraging noises and facial expressions from the interviewer seemed sufficient to establish a positive interview situation. Others, on the contrary, seemed to expect a comment from the interviewer on what they said, preferring a conversation style to be established in the interview. Sometimes, the interview progressed through all these styles as a relation of confidence developed during the interview.

The fact that the interviewer spoke Spanish as a second language possibly had some effect at the beginning of the interviews which required a more conversational style, but given that those interviewed were academics, the question of a foreign accent did not appear to present a communication barrier.

### **Methods of data analysis**

The data was codified using Atlas ti software. The latter software was chosen on the basis of the type of conceptual networking it supports as well as its support for the coding of voice files. (Silverman, 2000, p. 170) I decided to use the coding of voice files as it would enable me to more quickly code the ideas expressed in each interview than it would be to attempt to transcribe the complete interview. Voice files were indexed as primary documents according

to the interview session. These voice files were then broken up into quotations. As the interview was only semi-guided by the questions in the interview questionnaire, and many interviewees digressed substantially from this format, the initial coding was only partially pre-established in relation to the questions included in the questionnaire.

Each of the four sections of the interview was given a coding, for example: section 2, capital in tacit coordination structures was coded as TN for tacit networks. This was preceded by the letter corresponding to the university, either N for national, M for metropolitan or C for Campeche. To this initial part of the code, 'in-vivo' coding was added, derived from a theme or concept developed by the interviewee, generally in answer to the question in the interview format. For example, an answer to a question about academic relations in the UAM was coded in terms of "MTN interest groups around financial resources", where the first letter indicated the university, the second two letters indicated the section of the interview and the final part the in-vivo code of the idea expressed by the person interviewed.

Secondly, following the codification of all the interviews, the coding list was reviewed. The in vivo codes were analysed to determine core categories whilst keeping in mind both the in-vivo codes and the theoretical framework of the research. In this way the core categories were constructed as bridges between the interview format based on the theoretical framework and the ideas of those interviewed.

For example, as mentioned above, the first section of the interview was based on ascertaining the procedures for hiring, promotion and evaluation of academics within each institution. The replies to these questions, in those interviewed in the UAM and the UNAM, were generally in terms of the degree of transparency that was considered to exist in these procedures, and the possible areas of manipulation of the process which still existed. In the provincial university the replies were in terms of the arbitrariness of the procedures, the extent to which they followed no regulations, but depended on political and personal favours of the rector. Consequently a core category was determined in terms of the degree of transparency or the arbitrariness of hiring and

promotion procedures. Other core categories determined in a similar way, were the quantitative or qualitative nature of the evaluation of academic performance, the discretionary or bureaucratic nature of evaluation procedures, the collegial or clientalist nature of academic networks, the effectiveness of the culture of evaluation in each university. The data from each university was analysed using these core categories and provided the basis of a description of the situation in each university according to the questions applied at the level of the analysis of the individual cases (See section on presentation of results below).

A third level of analysis concerned a first attempt to distinguish the distinct forms of capital at play in the field and the relative value of each form of capital, as well as the impact of the reform programme on those values.

This analysis was developed at a fourth level which involved comparing the results between the three institutions. During the interviews a dichotomy was repeatedly expressed between either increased transparency based on quantitative evaluation or qualitative but discretionary evaluation. This dichotomy was considered by those interviewed in one university as the inevitable result of formal evaluation procedures, but upon analysis I found that a matrix emerged between an arbitrary-transparency axis and a qualitative quantitative axis, and as the interviews proceeded I began to 'place evidence' within each category (Yin, 2003, p. 111) in order to determine the site on this matrix of each university. Both the coding and additional hand written notes were used to undertake this level of analysis.

The matrix expressed the dichotomy of either the transparency of quantitative evaluation, or discretionary qualitative evaluation, yet, as the interviews progressed, one factor, that of the prestige of the discretionary committees, emerged as central phenomenon (Creswell, 1998, p. 151). Nevertheless, this concept could not be expressed in the matrix thus far constructed. This problem was resolved with reference to the theoretical discussion Bourdieu's approach to forms of capital in social fields, which suggested the possible changing value of this factor from one context to another.

## **Establishing the trustworthiness of the data enquiry**

The inductive, explorative approach of this research, which moves from the particular to the general by adopting a case study approach to the gathering of empirical data, uses from the outset a combination of data sources. Nevertheless, to rely upon a notion of the coherency of the in-depth analysis based on the degree and coherency of the inter-connections which can be drawn between the different categories arising from the data analysis of the case study, as well as the socio-historical background material, could mean to fall prey to “the ‘holistic bias’ – where everything seems to fit into the picture; achieved by ignoring, or giving little weight to, the things that don’t” (Robson, 1993, p403). In short, the degree of overall coherency of the interpretive account could depend upon including only data that fits the account that seems most coherent to the researcher. For this reason it is important to follow methods which safeguard against such a bias.

Robson suggests the use of Lincoln and Guba’s four criteria of *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability* and *confirmability* to corroborate that the data analysis has been systematic (Robson, 1993, p.405). The latter two depend on a process of ‘enquiry audit’ undertaken by a third party. The first two, on the other hand, depend upon the enquirer addressing the related issues during the process of analysis. In what follows I explain how the data analysis was subject to a ‘credibility’ check by means of two distinct triangulation processes, and to ‘transferability’ on the basis of three different checks regarding support for the theoretical framework.

### **Credibility:**

#### **(a) *The triangulation of data within the interviewee reply***

As mentioned above, the selection of the sample was made on the basis of the need to establish trust, yet some of those interviewed were a little guarded in their replies at the beginning of the interview, with trust being established as the interview progressed (see section on interview style above). The interview was

limited to a particular length of time, and as noted above, often extended beyond two hours, allowing trust to be established. At the same time the interview was structured in such a way as to make possible the triangulation of the answers in sections two and three. So for example, answers to the question about the transparency of hiring and promotion procedures at the beginning of section two could be triangulated in relation to answers in the second half of section two, concerning academic networks in the university and the presence, or not, of interest groups and if so how they operated. As in general more trust had been established by section three of the interview, (although not all interviews followed the interview format, as explained above), when answers were not entirely congruent with those to section two, it was possible to go back and check previous responses. (See an example of this type of triangulation in appendix 2).

***(b) Triangulation of data between the interviewee replies***

Triangulation between the interviewee replies was a useful way to check information. For example, almost all interviewee's in the two universities in the Mexico City mentioned the question of the 'spoken portrait' in relation to hiring procedures, where job descriptions are written in accordance with the profile of the preferred candidate. Nevertheless, there was also opposing opinions concerning what constituted a 'transparent' and 'just' system of evaluation. Yet further analysis showed that the differences between accounts occurred between institutions not within, and that this distinction required reference back to the theoretical framework. This point was thus dealt with under the concept of transferability, (see below).

***(c) Triangulation with alternative sources of data***

As mentioned above, the case study was constructed using multiple sources of data, and the data from the interview was cross checked, where possible, with the background information to the case. For example, the formal rules for the procedures of hiring and promotion were checked, in the cases of the two universities in Mexico City, against the regulations posted on the universities'

Web pages, although this information was not available in the case of the provincial university<sup>8</sup>.

## **Transferability: Developing the theoretical framework**

### ***(a) as a result of the data analysis***

The data was analysed with regard to the relevance of the heuristic framework, to determine whether the data could be interpreted within and by developing that framework, or whether it required going beyond that same framework. On the basis of the comparative case study analysis, it was possible to determine the extent to which the heuristic framework could be developed in way which could explain both the differences and the similarities between the distinct case studies.

Although the intention of the interview was to relate capital and structures of university power in the university to the impact of the reform programme, as mentioned above, a number of the interviewees, mainly in the UAM, and in the UNAM, referred to the impact of the incentives programmes in terms of the problems of the transparency or discretionary nature of the evaluation process of the incentives programme, and related this to a academic argument about the benefits or quantitative or qualitative evaluation. (See section on data analysis above and related appendix) It seemed at first, that this data involved the introduction of a new proposition in the data analysis, distinct from issues concerning values of capital in the tertiary education field, yet upon reflection in relation to the heuristic theoretical framework, this difference in fact supported the relevance of a relational approach to the analysis of social capital over that

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<sup>8</sup> New national regulations were introduced at the end of 2006 determining what type of information public universities were required to display on their Web pages.

of a structural approach, as only the former provided a coherent theoretical framework to explain the differing value of discretionary evaluation in each field.

***(b) on the basis of particular data***

Certain data which arose from the interviews directly supported particular data from the contextual analysis which had been used to develop the theoretical focus of the research. For example, the observation arising from the analysis of international policy models, that the logic of the reform model follows that of New Public Management which combines centralised control combined with a periphery of quasi market environments, was supported by an interviewee from the UAM. S/he expressed an impression of the reform model which showed a clear perception of this logic when s/he observed that the model of the reform programme appeared to be one of a 'central planning model of neoliberalism', just as the communist countries implemented a 'central planning model of socialism'. This person also commented that the implementation of this model in Mexico, showed little reflection on the context of Mexico, indeed s/he described it as "a simplistic perspective... with poor cultural vision". The observations of this person supported the comparison of the reform programme to the New Public Management model. It also supported the initial heuristic approach concerning the importance of examining the question of the impact of the reform programme in a way that avoids a simplistic perspective, and attempts to improve the cultural vision involved in education policy, by taking into account the social historical and political history of Mexico, as well as the particular conditions in each university.

## **The presentation of the research findings**

In order to preserve the anonymity of those interviewed, I cite them according to the following codes: individuals M1-M5 are from the UAM, C1-C5 from the UAC, and NF1-NF3 from the UNAM Faculty of Political Science, and NI1-NI3 to the UNAM Institute of Social Research.

With regard to the decision concerning which compositional style to adopt in presenting the case study report, I decided to use a 'theory-building' style in presenting the individual case studies. I started with a general description of

macro organizational structures of each institution and then compared this to the micro relations existing amongst academics, and analysed the relation between the two sets of data, and the relation of this information to the impact of the reform programme.

To develop the comparative analysis, I sought to explain the data whose meaning apparently varied from one case study to another by developing the initial heuristic framework. This involved determining whether distinct forms of capital, or other factors, were involved or whether what were in question were the relative values of capital in the field, and whether this situation was able to explain apparently distinct outcomes.

## **Concluding remarks on methods of data collection and data analysis**

In conclusion, it can be argued that the comparative case study method combined with a grounded theory approach, is a research strategy which most congruently attends to the concerns considered above of comparative educationalists, for it is an approach which gives priority to:

1. The investigation of contemporary phenomenon within real-life contexts, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident
2. The importance of taking into account the wider social political and economic context in which the research takes place to avoid making incongruent comparisons
3. The need to be sensitive to distinct cultural frameworks in which observed practices are undertaken
4. The need to be clear about the initial theoretical framework which guides the research design
5. The need to consider this as a loose 'heuristic' framework so as to be able to take points 1 and 2 into account during the research process
6. The consideration in the data analysis given to emerging *in vivo* data categories

7. The importance of analysing these categories against the original theoretical framework and abandon, adjust or develop that framework as necessary.
8. The use of comparative analysis to maintain sensitivity both to distinct contextual conditions which distinguish each case and, at the same time, possible common characteristics between the cases.

## **Chapter 3. The field of tertiary education in Mexico**

This thesis is concerned to explain why the outcomes of a tertiary education reform programme in Mexico differed from its objectives, and why certain strategies to reach those objectives were incongruent. In this chapter I will analyse more closely the reform programme within the context of tertiary education policy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the objective of identifying possible factors which need to be included in any explanation of the incongruent strategies and the unexpected outcomes of the reform programme.

A first possible factor can be identified in the nature of the policy transition. It has been described as a transition from that of a “benevolent administration” model to a “evaluative state” model (Mendoza, 2002), from a policy where resources are nominally assigned with regard to the needs of each institution, to a policy where resources are assigned on the basis of the performance of each institution. The definition of each of these concepts is examined more fully below, but suffice to observe at this point that this transition would appear, from an initial perspective, to involve a radical change in policy in the 1980’s, replacing a culture of patronage with a culture of evaluation.

Nevertheless, from a more considered perspective, it appears that a trend can be identified in terms of central government continuing to mediate its relation to individual institutions on the basis of budget allocations. From this second perspective, rather than a radical policy change, it might be suggested that there was instead a strategy change with regard to the criteria of the distribution of resources, whilst the underlying relation between government and institutions based on the negotiation of resources was left undisturbed. Such a perspective questions the idea of a radical change introduced by the reform programme, and suggests that situation was more complex. In this chapter I will consider the development of tertiary education policy in Mexico in the twentieth century, in order to determine how significant this apparent trend was,

and whether it is a factor which contributes to the explanation of the unexpected impact of the reform programme.

## **1930 - 1970: The compromise on autonomy**

During the colonial period, the University of Mexico (1547) and the University of Guadalajara (1791) were created, as well as various colleges, and in 1910, two months before revolution broke out, the re-inauguration of the University of Mexico as the National University of Mexico marked the creation of the first secular institution of higher education.

Following the revolution, the way in which the debate concerning the autonomy of the National University was resolved, was indicative of the political path the country was to follow during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The government of Venustiano Carranza (1915 -1917) proposed that the National University be made autonomous, yet this was not accepted by the rector at that time, José Natividad Macías, who argued that "the decision represented a grave danger for the political life of the nation" (Robles, 1977, p. 127) This, explains Ramirez, was because the liberalist humanist form of education offered at the university was considered a potential site of resistance by the liberal professions to state control (Leonardo Ramirez, 1998, p. 138).

The autonomy finally granted to the National University in 1929 was a compromise. It conceded the university responsibility for determining the contents of its academic programmes, its teaching methods and the application of funds and resources, yet because no permanent criteria for calculating the university subsidy were determined, the central government retained ultimate control through the annual budget negotiations. As Robles notes, since its autonomy was granted in 1929 the U.N.A.M. "was subjected to a system of financing that was always inadequate" which undermined the nominal autonomy it had been officially granted, and consequently sustained a tense relation between the University and the Government. (Robles, 1977, p. 137) This tense relation was fertile ground for the manifestation of social unrest later in the century when the goals of the revolution failed to be met.

According to the National Census of 1930 the population of Mexico was 16,553,000 and in 1928 Mexico had, in addition to the National University, five state universities: the University of Puebla, the Autonomous University of the State of Michoacán, the National University of the Southeast, the University of Guadalajara, and the Scientific and Literary Institute of San Luis Potosí. Rapid growth in the population followed the revolution, with the consequence that in 40 years the population almost doubled, from 15 million in 1910 to 25.8 million in 1950. Income distribution also improved following the revolution with 49% receiving 52% of the total national income in 1950, with annual demographic growth at 6%.

Lázaro Cárdenas was the first President (1934-1940) to complete a six year period and he made the most of that time to apply the mandate of the 1917 revolutionary constitution. He created the organization of workers (CTM) and the organization of rural workers, (CNC). He recuperated land which was owned by foreigners and distributed it among the rural farmers. He also permitted the entry of thousands of political exiles from the civil war in Spain, who founded the university which is today known as 'El Colegio de México'. In 1938 he nationalized the oil industry in Mexico. The following President Avila Camacho (1940-1946) built upon this basis by overseeing the transition to an industrial society, and a 100% increase in export revenues between 1939 and 1945. He also created the National Institute of Social Security, providing medical attention, and later pensions to those incorporated into the formal employment sector. The following President Miguel Aleman (1946-1952) continued to promote the modernisation of agricultural and industrial production as well as tourism, but given the rate of increase of the population, the task of construction in the housing, health and education sectors was onerous. In 1950 there were 24 institutions of higher education (Robles, 1977, p. 205) and 29,892 students (OECD, 1997) which represented an absorption rate of 1.5% (Díaz, 2002, p. 167). During the 50's and 60's there was a close cooperation between government, private sector and higher education in the development project centred on economic growth and industrialization (Díaz, 2002).

Nevertheless, in less than 20 years this situation was put in reverse: in 1968 the population was nearly 48 million with annual growth at 3.7%, yet only 10% of

the population received 52% of the total income. During the presidency of Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958) the first post-revolutionary devaluation of the currency took place. Although Ruiz Cortines managed to put in place a stabilization pact which lead to the “Mexican miracle” of sustained national growth, based on low inflation, this involved the maintenance of low wages amongst the majority of Mexicans, at the same time that a new class of industrial entrepreneurs emerged. The university population had more than doubled by 1960 to 76, 269 and more than tripled by 1970 to 271, 275. Robles considers the reversal of what had been substantial advances towards a more equitable national income distribution, and the fact that financial restrictions had meant that the university had remained subject to the political control of the state, (Robles, 1977, pp. 205-207) as a partial explanation as to why, in 1968 students, workers and ethnic groups combined to confront the federal government (Robles, 1977, p. 207). This confrontation between the student movement and the government, in which an unknown number of students either died or disappeared, undermined the relation of cooperation between the state and the university that had prevailed in the previous decade.

## **1970 - 1982: Petro-dollars distract from the issue of autonomy**

Diaz Barriga explains that by means of the expansion and diversification of tertiary education, the government sought to re-establish a consensus. The reform programme tends to refer to this period of expansion wholly in terms of a series of mistakes which gave rise to the problems which had to be resolved by the current reform programme (Pallán, 1994). Alternative analyses, on the other hand, consider the expansion at the same time “an achievement and a problem” (Hanel del Valle & Taborga Torrica, 1993, p. 20; Mendoza, 2002, p. 71). There is a general consensus that there was a lack of planning during the expansion, with each institution setting its own objectives and negotiating its budget accordingly.

This situation was facilitated by the abundance of financial capital or “petro-dollars” on the international markets. Banks were unable to offload this financial

capital due to the recession in Europe and the United States and so were keen to make loans to developing countries which were oil producers. In the 70's large oil reserves had been discovered in Mexico. The 1976 balance of payments crisis in Mexico thus was quickly overcome, if not resolved by a rapid expansion of the economy based on borrowing (Mariña, 2003). The Mexican loans constituted 50% of the capital of nine principal banks of the United States (Valle, 2003, p. 117).

This temporary financial liquidity permitted the state to respond to the demands put forward in the 1968 uprising, particularly that the state comply with the promises of the revolution by providing social mobility through education. The state expanded and diversified the tertiary education system from 215,864 students in 1970 to 1,123,744 students in 1985, (a 520% increase). The absorption of the population between 20 and 24 years rose during this period from 5.8 to 12.6 per cent. (Mendoza, 2002, p. 72) The number of institutions rose from 118 in 1970 to 279 in 1984, whilst the number of academics rose out of proportion with the increase in students, as shown in the following table:

**Table 2: academic personal at undergraduate level, by category 1979 – 1985**

Category	1979		1985		Increase
	Professors	%	Professors	%	
Full time	10,752	18.5	19,998	20.9	85.9
Part-time	5,480	9.4	7,927	8.3	44.7
Hourly emplmnt.	45,059	72.1	67,864	70.8	61.4
Total	58,291	100.0	95,778	100.0	64.3
Student pop.	698,139		961,468		37.7

Source: ANUIES, calculated on the basis of statistics 1979- 1985. Taken from the Integral Programme for the development of higher education (the data for the student population of 1985 is revised) (Mendoza, 2002, p. 73)

Given the increase in the number of teachers in relation to that of students, the conditions existed, at least in this respect, for an increase in the quality of education. Nevertheless, the quality of the education system during this period

was considered to have diminished partly due to the fact that during this rapid expansion of the teaching body, the selection process did not follow strict evaluation procedures. Teachers were employed before obtaining their graduate title, "the academic body was improvised, with the consequences of inadequate formation and a lack of criteria for the development and evaluation of academic work" (Mendoza, 2002, p. 76)

Mendoza observes that there was also an increase in bureaucracy and with this the concentration of 'power groups' within the universities which had an important impact in their functioning and in the incongruency between operation costs and salary costs, and it also strengthened the inertia and conservatism at the centre of the universities. (Mendoza, 2002, pp. 73 - 76)

If institutional autonomy coupled with abundant resources had a less than positive effect in the hiring process, it also had a negative effect in terms of the concentration of the student population in a few regions and states: the metropolitan area concentrated a quarter of the population, the UNAM accounted for 29 per cent of the student population in 1970 and 75 per cent in 1985. Approximately three quarter of students were registered in two areas: 43.81% in social sciences and administration and 28.13% in engineering and technology. (Mendoza, 2002, p. 75) There was an unequal growth between institutions of higher education: six institutions had more than 50,000 students and the other 241 less than 5,000 of a total of 279 reported in 1985.

Although the abundance of petro-dollars had resulted in the relative autonomy of the universities during the period of expansion in the 1970's, this had been coupled with a lack of a framework for planning or accountability. Consequently, towards the end of the seventies, as the incongruencies in tertiary education became more evident, there was an increasing call for planning. In 1978 new legislation provided a legal base for the creation of a National System of Permanent Planning of Higher Education (SiNaPPES) (Martínez Romo, 1992; Mendoza, 2002, p. 51), yet the implementation of proposals was interrupted by the economic crisis in Mexico.

## **1982 – 1988: The lack of autonomy is exposed by the economic crisis**

When petrol prices fell in 1981 the balance of payments problems in the Mexican economy could no longer be ignored, and a severe economic crisis dominated the 1980's. Inflation rose from 40 to 100% and the public sector deficit rose above 15% of the PIB (Mendoza, 2002, p. 167). The devaluation of the national currency in 1983 resulted in the drastic reduction in the value of teacher's salaries, a reduction in grants for students, problems in maintenance of equipment, and the deterioration of library services etc. Furthermore, despite the continuing expansion of the student population there was a fall in the percentage of PIB of the resources destined for this sector. In 1977 0.74% of PIB was destined to education and 0.57% in 1984 (Mendoza, 2002, p. 82).

As a result, the call for an emphasis on planning in the 70's was replaced by a return to the emphasis on the criteria for budget allocations. Mendoza notes that as a result of the financial restrictions, the issue of the transparency and clarity of the criteria of the assignation of resources returned to first place in the agenda of the National Association of Universities (ANUIES). Not only was the fact that the budget negotiations for each university had become limited to a question of how to further reduce the size of the budget, more importantly, it was noted that the amount of the federal and state subsidy did not correspond to the university costs and programmes. Indeed these apparently "played no part in the process of determining the amount of the subsidy, whilst the criteria and policies which were employed to determine the amount each year was unknown" (ANUIES, 1983; Mendoza, 2002, p. 181). Thus, the financial crisis pointed to the fact that an objective mechanism of establishing the resources to finance the objectives of this education level had still not been determined.

The state universities had to negotiate not only at a federal level but also with the local governor. The Autonomous University of Sinaloa (UAS) in June 1983 financed a full page announcement in a daily national newspaper calling for a "just and opportune budget":

Year after year the academic and political calendar of the UAS includes as a recurring theme the struggle for the subsidy. This, which should be an

administrative procedure, a technical discussion and agreement between the federal power, the state and the university, as a result of delays, indefinition and indifference of the official mediators, is a chapter which consumes effort, resources and time which could be applied to academic activities. (Mendoza, 2002, p. 182)

Hence, whilst the abundance of petro-dollars which fuelled the expansion of tertiary education in the 70's exposed the lack of a national system of planning, the financial crisis of the eighties exposed the continuing lack of any agreed rational for the distribution of resources and hence the lack of real autonomy of the universities.

## **1982 - 1988: The transition to the state as evaluator**

In the event, the reform programme introduced during the 1980's linked funding criteria to evaluation of the implementation of central planning. Given that funding procedures continued to be exercise by central government, the move towards more objective criteria for the distribution of resources was coupled with a strengthening of centralised control. Nevertheless, the justification of the reforms was not made in terms of a move towards introducing objective criteria of funding; instead they justified strong central planning and the evaluation of results.

### **Justifying reform: from chaos to management**

The justification for the creation of central planning and evaluation bodies was made in terms of the problems created by the expansion and, hence, the urgent need for control. Carlos Pallán, Secretary General of ANUIES from 1993 to 1997 supported the idea of the need for central planning by describing the general problem facing higher education as that of a "giddy and uncoordinated growth" from the 1970s onward, which was a result of high demand (Pallán, 1994, p. 263). He considered that this "giddy and uncoordinated growth" was the cause of "high diversity, heterogeneity, synchronism, atomization, unequal development, multiple unnecessary repetitions of organizational structures, degrees, programmes and projects". Growth had resulted in "a lack of inter-institutional communication and communication with the general context" (Pallán, 1994) : 263).

Pallán backs up this description by statistics showing high growth from the 1970s to the 1990s of the student population in higher education, as well as the number of universities and the teaching staff:

**Table 3: Institutions of higher education:**

1970	100 approximately (sic)
1993	419

Undergraduate registration:

1970	211,826 students
1992	1,126,805

Postgraduate registration:

1980	25,503
1993	50,781

Teachers at undergraduate level

1980	69,214
1994	120,183

Source: Pallán (1994, p. 264).

Against this background of 'chaos', Pallán justified the introduction of order through "structural changes". In terms of central planning he referred to the creation of a National System for Education Planning (SINAPPES) to re-order and rationalize the system of higher education, the improvement of institutional normativity and administrative reorganization, the development of an information system based on "specific indicators" and the introduction of institutional evaluation. In terms of the market he referred to strategies of regionalization and decentralization, systematic relations with the private sector and flexible academic programs which can adapt to rapid changes in science and technology.

The important point to note about Pallán's discourse is that he does not analyse the challenge of dismantling existing procedures of the 'benevolent state', together with the hierarchical structure of clientelist relations through which resources were managed. Instead, he concentrates on the issue of the rapid expansion of the system and uses statistics to suggest that expansion had been "giddy", had got out of control, that the situation from the 70's to the 90's can thus be described as one of 'chaos', and hence the need to introduce organisation through a mixture of central planning and decentralised administration, the latter closely controlled by national indicators.

Morley has referred to this discursive strategy of *new managerialism* as one of 'regulating the chaos'. Not only can effective management 'regulate the chaos', but one model with standardised indicators will best do the job: "*Instead of recognizing diversity and pluralism*, there is an assumption that there is one best way of doing things and that this will work for all organizations, communities and individuals". (Morley & Rassool, 2000, p. 173) Standard indicators allow centralised control and the de-centralised management of the peripheries through a system of centralised evaluative regulation, but at the expense of diversity and pluralism. Hence it can be seen that the centralised bureaucracy was substituted by centralised planning coupled with decentralised administration.

Mendoza argues that the transition to a model of the *state as evaluator* involves the combination of a *market regulated* model of the United States, with the European model of *political administration*. In this model the processes and the results of the institutions and their programmes are evaluated (Mendoza, 2002, pp. 22 - 30). Neaves describes the main aspects of this model in terms of decentralisation and quality control: there is

a rationalization and a general redistribution of functions between the centre and the periphery, in such a way that the centre conserved the strategic global control, through political relations, to a reduced degree, and more precise, constituted by the assignment of missions, the definition of objectives of the system of operations in relation to the quality of the product" (Neave, 1990, p. 8) cited in (Mendoza, 2002, p. 29)

The *state as evaluator* model establishes a new relation of the centre to the peripheries, with decentralization allowing local government and institutions to respond to their local market needs. The system thus allows local variations in

terms of options employed, but the indicators to evaluate options are centrally defined.<sup>9</sup>

### **Confusing effective governance with accountability**

Yet, not only has this centrally controlled system limited possible responses to diversity, it has also included an implicit assumption that it would resolve all previous problems. By reducing the problems of tertiary education to one of a previous period of chaotic expansion, it is supposed the introduction of strong management will resolve the problems which consequently arose. José J. Brunner's defined the previous model as one in which the State "finances higher education through a formula which is at the same time paternal and benevolent, whose principal means is the increasing assignation of resources with no relation to any consideration of quality, equity or efficiency" (Brunner, 1993, p. 60) quoted in (Mendoza, 2002, p. 27) Mendoza considers that this type of relation between the State and the university characterized the systems in Latin America up to the eighties. Funds were nominally assigned on the basis of the student population, but as Mendoza Rojas observes, in Mexico political clientelism was the rationality which sustained this model:

The functioning of the model rests on the political relations between the government and the academic hierarchy and the corporative autonomy of the universities, with in a web of political clientelist networks which operate in the distinct levels of the system, from the institutional to the national. (Mendoza, 2002, p. 27)

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<sup>9</sup> This has resulted in the difficulty of the system responding to diversity in an integral manner. At the beginning of the new millennium, the controversial creation of the Intercultural Public University Subsystem, which inaugurated four new indigenous universities to attend the needs of ethnic groups (SEP, 2006, pp. 2.2.6, 70), showed that diversity is still responded to by special, segregated programmes.

Yet, although tertiary education scholars in Mexico were aware of the power relations inherent in the 'benevolent administration' model of education policy, they apparently nevertheless assume that it was the model itself which fostered such relations, and hence a change of model would erase them. Rollin Kent's evaluation was that "the government limited itself to use the cheque book, subjecting itself to the demands of the public institutions on the government, without effectively *governing* (Kent Serna, 1995, pp. 14 -15) cited in (Mendoza, 2002, p. 28) The insinuation is, hence, that by controlling the check book, 'government' will consequently be established.

Nevertheless, it is important not to confuse 'government' with 'accountability', for whilst there may have been a lack of evidence of the latter, to suggest that there was a lack of the former would be to fail to recognise the nature of clientalist systems. The distribution of resources is one of the key factors of control in clientalist systems (see following chapter) and hence the 'check book' is a key factor in this model of governance, not a sign of the lack of governance. It should not be ignored that it is a system of governance which sustained a single political party, the PRI, in power for more than 70 years. Consequently, the distinction needs to be maintained between, on the one hand, the negative effects of this type of system such as the lack of motivation for innovation, the lack of mechanisms for evaluating quality, the lack of social responsibility of the institutions, (Mendoza, 2002) and, on the other hand, the political effectiveness of the system, are important.

## **1988 - 2000: Linking evaluation to funding**

Mendoza Rojas observes that policies of planning and evaluation did not begin to show advances until the 1988-1994 evaluation results to access to public funds by the Salinas administration. The distribution of the basic university subsidy continued to depend upon the payroll, whilst all additional resources were to be paid via special projects. The Salinas government implemented the Plan for the Modernization of Education (PME) 1989-1994 at the same time that it pushed through neoliberal reforms for the transition to a export based economy, the signing of The North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the privatisation of the banks and other state owned industries.

From 1984 to 1990 additional funds were channelled through a number of 'special' programmes, yet these had no necessary relation one to another. It is particularly relevant to this research that the first strategic measures linking funding to performance and evaluation had been directed at the academic personnel through the introduction of incentive pay. The National System of Researchers (SNI) had been set up in 1984 following the devaluation of the currency. The objective was to stop the 'brain drain' by awarding financial incentives to the most productive researchers at a national level. The Salinas administration extended this model of funding. In 1990 the National Programme of Incentives for Academic Performance (el Programa Nacional de Estímulos al Desempeño Académico) was initiated. Only those academics who were evaluated as having achieved the highest level of performance would receive a financial compensation. About 30 per cent of full time academics participated receiving amounts which ranged from two and a half to nine minimum salaries. It was supplemented in 1992 by the Teaching Career programme for Academic Personal in each institution of higher education, with the intention of rewarding those who dedicated their time mainly to teaching. From 1993 an amount was assigned annually directly by the treasury to institutions to cover these rewards. (Mendoza, 2002, p. 245)

Perhaps the significance of this programme is missed unless one takes into account the fact that these rewards can count for over 50% of academics salary. As Estela Bensimon notes in her study of this programme, "only those academics who produce the most prized goods, e.g. publications in international journals and earn extra supplements receive a salary that is representative of a middle class standard of living" (Bensimon, 2004, p. 2) Teachers paid by the hour were not included in these programmes, although it needs to be added that in some provincial universities agreements were made with the local state government to destine part of the state contribution to the university to the inclusion of teachers in hourly pay schemes, and teachers in the sixth form colleges annexed to the universities in this programme. Eduardo Ibarra Colado, in an extensive study of the reform programme in the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM), shows that whilst the income of the lowest post of a fulltime academic, was constituted 100% by their salary, a

middle grade post would be 48% salary and 52% incentive payments, and the highest grade would be 32% salary and 68% incentives. (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 325)

The second type of special performance fund introduced was aimed at the transparency of the administration of resources. PRONAD is an accounting system directed towards clearly determining inputs and outputs, the distribution of resources, and cost per student, but only recently has been backed up by a national auditing system. The special funds projects, on the other hand, were subject to accountability and auditing practices from their outset.

A third type of fund concerned the modernization of infrastructure. In 1991 a special fund was set up called the Fund for the Modernization of Higher Education (FOMES) which canalized resources to particular projects. Although these projects were required to address the needs defined in the auto-evaluation of each institution, and were evaluated by Secretary of Education (SEP), in reality, the quality of the auto-evaluation varied greatly from one institution to the next. FOMES was the major source of extra finance for the Universities beyond that of the basic subsidy to cover salaries, but it was a competitive resource, the amount available each year was defined prior to the evaluation process and the universities competed for the largest proportions of this fund. FOMES signified the difference between subsistence and modernization for universities, and finances were forthcoming to the extent in which the modernization proposals agreed with the blue print for modernisation set out by the government. The use of funds had to be accounted for within the times stipulated by the Sub-secretary of Education (SESIC).

The fourth type of special programmes was funds for research from the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACyT). CONACyT also set up a National Registry of Excellence (Padron de excelencia) to evaluate post graduate programmes. Since the incorporation of CONACYT within the SES, this has become the National Registry of Graduate Programmes (Padron Nacional de Posgrado: PNP). Programmes in the league are full-time study programmes, and students of those programmes have access to grants for living expenses, but not fees. The problem is that to enter the league, a

programme has, amongst other things, to prove its efficiency in terms of graduation rates for two generations of students. This means that the university has to find the funds to subsidise the programme for four or more years to meet the quality indicators.

Most of the additional funds available for universities were channelled through these 'special' programmes, on the basis of the state evaluator model: projects were selected on the basis of prior evaluation by central committees, with funding flowing from the centre to the peripheries and evaluation of results flowing back to the centre, and in relation to which future funding was determined. This model did not encourage comprehensive planning at the peripheries, but rather planning only at the project level in response to programme strategies centrally determined each year. This situation changed with Mexico's membership of the OECD following the signing of NAFTA.

### **The inclusion of an alternative model of reform**

Criticisms of the reform programme in Mexico in terms of its relation to the neoliberal economic project, (González Casanova, 2001; Olmedo, 2001) tend to ignore the differences between the OECD and World Bank influences on the programme. Nevertheless, the difference between the objectives of these two models leads to the incongruencies of the reform programme which this research set out to explore.

Prior to the membership of Mexico in the OECD in 1995, the reform programme had followed the general model of tertiary education reform recommended by the World Bank (World\_Bank, 1994). This was centred on performance management strategies which rewarded individual productivity through financial incentives programmes. Following the elaboration in 1996 of the OECD report on the situation of education in Mexico (OECD, 1997), the PROMEP programme was introduced. This was the first programme which attempted to break with the vertical structure of funding and power. The introduction of this programme attempted to put the academic as researcher/teacher at the centre of the modernization programme. "There was then an awareness that the future of the system depended on the academics" (De Vries, 2000, p. 22)

The programme involved the evaluation in each institution of the academic base, a strategic plan for the development of that base, and the consolidation of the same. (ANUIES, 1998) The development of teaching programmes was to be congruent with the profiles of academic staff. It funded grants for teachers to undertake postgraduate studies, funds for creating and equipping office spaces for full time academics, and financial assistance for academics to attend national and international conferences. In contrast to the individualistic focus of the SNI and Teaching Career programme for Academic Personal, the PROMEP initiative encouraged the formation of 'academic bodies' and funds were made available to those bodies based on the evidence of their combined academic profile and their internal and external collaborative performance based on the formation and consolidation of academic networks.

For the researcher this programme offered both benefits and restrictions. The evaluation of this system continued to be based on indicators which were centrally controlled. For a full-time academic to receive the PROMEP profile, he or she would have to have achieved a masters level or preferably a doctoral level degree, performed the stipulated number of teaching hours per week, be included in the student tutorial programme, be a member of a registered 'research body', have published or diffused the results of research. (<http://sep.gob.promep.mx>) Researchers are required to maintain an up to date version of their curriculum vitae in the PROMEP web page, which is linked to the research group profile which the research group leader maintains up to date, and on the basis of which the researcher is evaluated.

Nevertheless, the PROMEP programme also offered the researcher a certain level of autonomy at an institutional level. By achieving the PROMEP profile an academic could later achieve tenure, funding for research, equipment and office infrastructure. In this sense, the individual academic could, for the first time 'by-pass' clientalist power structures in his/her local university, in which tenure options and resources had previously been embedded. PROMEP thus indirectly challenged the clientalist system by assigning funds directly to the individual academic, and local universities were supposedly obliged in the terms of the contract signed with PROMEP to provide support for the academic objectives of the individual. If the individual academic was able and willing to

achieve the evaluation indicators, he or she could achieve a certain degree of professional autonomy, independently of whether the particular institution was indeed prepared to consider their academic base as the point of departure of strategic institutional planning.

Nevertheless, the PROMEP programme was not readily accepted by all. The formation of research groups presented a problem, because within the clientalist interpretive scheme, the formation of a group obeyed political interests. Furthermore, faculty directors often considered the independence gained by individuals and the group as an affront to their power relations with the teaching-research staff. Initially, the local administrations attempted to intervene in the formation of research groups, imposing their own groups. The fact that these often had no congruent research base meant that they were rejected in the PROMEP evaluation process, due to the lack of congruence in the research profiles and projects of the integrants. In the year 2000, the director of PROMEP toured the provincial universities explaining to the researchers the basis of the programme and assuring them that they were 'free' to form academic groups according to their research interests. In this sense PROMEP not only indirectly but also directly challenged clientalist practices, and offered a lifeline to researchers in the provinces.

Nevertheless, PROMEP only funded scholarships for internationally recognised masters and doctoral programmes, applying strict time limits for completion. Many full-time academic staff could often not find the programme they wished to study in this international and national league table, or found the time restrictions too onerous, or were unable to consider studying away from their home towns for the required period, although some distance tutorial schemes were included. For this reason funds which were available in each university for grants often remained unused, especially during the first years of the programme. Universities were required to approve the applicants study request, which was a possible source of conflict of interest.

Funds originally available to all research groups became restricted to 'consolidated' research groups, or those 'in the process of consolidation'. Attendance to national and international congresses, often the only possibility of

those in the provinces to establish and maintain contacts in their research area, was subsequently cut. Only those research groups which from the outset were constituted by researchers at a Doctoral level could hope to reach the 'consolidated' level by 2004. The programme was initially designed to end in the year 2006, and its future hangs in the balance although its continuation has been recommended in the most recent OECD report (Brunner, Santiago, Garcia Guadilla, Gerlach, & Velho, 2006: item 344)

### **The unclear direction of the reform programme**

The reforms introduced during the 1990's clearly related additional resources to the acceptance of evaluation. Mendoza argues that there was a general agreement that the financial strategy of linking funding to reform achieved the introduction of changes in higher education (Mendoza, 2002, p. 242), but that also changes were as a consequence pushed through with little consultation (Mendoza, 2002, p. 238) (Díaz, 2002) with the result that the learning element was minimum (De Vries, 2000) (Bensimon & Bauman). The justification for the lack of consultation was that there was not enough time for consultation: "The logic of 'Mexico is in a hurry to make profound changes' continued to be imposed, and for this reason, the suggestions to proceed gradually, to analyse the implication of different measures, go beyond the short term vision, were interpreted as attitudes which strengthened immobility" (Mendoza, 2002, p. 238).

There was, in the 1990's no clear policy objective which related one programme to another. At the end of the 1990's in the UNESCO-IESALC report, De Vries observes that the situation is still that "no single coordinating body for evaluation policies exists" (De Vries, 2000, p. 20), instead different policies had been introduced by different government departments: the treasury controlled the performance incentives schemes for academic personal, FOMES and PROMEP were controlled by SESIC, institutional evaluation was channelled to the latter through CONAEVA, (National Commission of Evaluation) the peer evaluation committees depended on CONPES (National Planning Commission), another system of academic grants SUPERA was administered by ANUIES (National Association of Institutions of Higher Education), the CENEVAL (National Evaluation Centre) was responsible for the national examination system, and

postgraduate policies were controlled by CONACyT (National Council for Science and Technology) whilst the control of the Technological Universities was devolved to the states with Technological Institutes remaining nationally controlled.

De Vries also points to the fact that although the Institutions were rewarded financially if they achieved the different goals set them by the various evaluating bodies, nevertheless, they could continue functioning on their basic government subsidy, even if they did not. Similarly, the academic staff could participate in PROMEP, but if they chose not to they could still count on their basic wage, which meant that those that found it preferable to have a second job rather than undertake a postgraduate programme and produce research results, could do so.<sup>10</sup> The participation of the private tertiary education sector was also voluntary, and not linked to funding.

Although the different policy models of the World Bank and the OECD will be explored in chapter six, it can be observed at this point that the combination of these two models in the Mexican reform programme gives rise to an apparent incongruency in the performance management objectives of that programme. The individualistic tendencies of the national programme of the SNI and the university academic incentives programmes exist alongside the collegial focus of the PROMEP programme where funding promotes the formation of academic bodies around common research areas. Ball suggests that such incongruities are not unusual outcomes of the process of recontextualisation of theoretical models in local policy:

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<sup>10</sup> (The normal working and education day is split in most of Mexico into two shifts: 7a.m. to 3p.m. and 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. and it is common for Mexicans to supplement low wages by having two 'full-time' jobs).

National policy making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work. Most policies are reamshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and ultimatley, re.creation in contexts of practice. (Ball, 1998a, p. 126)

This research is concerned to explore the effects of the incongruous policies arising from the recontextualisation of two distinct policy models, in particular the effects of the incongruity between the 'faculty individualism' encouraged by, on the one hand, the academic incentives programmes on which a large percentage of an academics income is based, and, on the other, the collegial practices encouraged by the PROMEP programme.

### **Further problems arising from the reform programme**

The incongruity of the objectives of these two distinct programmes aimed at academic performance was perhaps not apparent due to the sheer number of programmes for complementary funding. Instead, what was clear in a context of financial restrictions was the need to participate in all possible programmes to increase the chances of obtaining additional resources. Consequently, the reforms did not always succeed in introducing a culture of planning and evaluation. De Vries has criticised this construction of a relation between evaluation and financial resources, arguing that "these rewards created a climate of evaluation characterized by simulation and highly bureaucratic exercises, based on formats, 'verification', and less on learning or accountability to third parties" (De Vries, 2000, p. 22)

This argument is backed up by the findings of a research project on organizational learning, particularly regarding the results of the evaluation procedures put in place during the 1990's, which shows that learning was not an evident result:

The responses from the participants provided very little indication that the research productivity reports are valuable to decision-makers. There were almost no instances in which the participants mentioned having learned something new or important about the state of research within their units. Overall the prevailing sentiment seemed to be that the research productivity reports exist for the sole purpose of determining the supplementary compensation of researchers. Moreover, our own review of the reports that

directors and their associates publish annually revealed that they are heavy on numbers and light on analysis. (Bensimon & Bauman, 2004, p. 11)

The absence of learning was also evident in the fact that although the amount of state funds channelled into each university was no longer determined by the student population, but by the number and value of academic contracts, nevertheless, the application of this policy continued to be undermined by the old system of political clientalist practices. Whilst the basic budget of each university was based on the number and value of academic contracts, additional funds for research, infrastructure, etc. were negotiated between the Rector and the SEP. De Vries observed that “in fact, the amounts for each university appear to obey particular histories of political negotiations” (De Vries, 2000, p. 5)

There have also been strong criticisms of the effects of the programmes which reward academic performance. Mendoza speaks of negative effects of these programmes in the academic context in that they encouraged “individual labour, the principle of differentiating work and its results, as against equal treatment” (Mendoza, 2002, p. 246) Bauman is somewhat stronger in her criticism, suggesting that these programmes convert the universities into “academic *maquiladores*” (the Mexican term for ‘sweat shops’), by focusing academics’ attention on what products to produce to maximise their points in the reward system. It also can represent wasted labour as short term projects are preferred over long term projects and “the production of knowledge that is unresponsive to the most urgent educational, social, and economic needs of the people of Mexico” (Bensimon, 2004, p. 20). Such programmes also undermine collegiality and favours “confrontations between academics. It also increases faculty individualism”, as well as unleashing “academic simulation, corruption and credentialsim”, (Bensimon, p. 23) a distinction between academic “Have’s and Have Not’s”, (Bensimon, p. 23), and “Bottom line Scholarship” (Bensimon, :24). In the case of the social sciences this means focusing on “publications that are not labour intensive and that do not require extended periods of data gathering” (Bensimon, p. 24). Indeed the programmes for academic rewards are the most criticised aspect of the reform programme.

## **2000 - 2006: Tightening up central control of the reform programme**

With the change of President in the year 2000 the Executive Secretary of ANUIES became the new Sub Secretary of Higher Education (SESC), and pushed forward the consolidation of the reform programme. Not only was evaluation to continue to be linked to funding but now also more closely to planning. The various 'special' programmes for obtaining additional funds, were combined under one, carefully designed, national programme: 'PIFI', (Programme for Institutional Strength) which has continued to be developed with the objective of ensuring that the various programmes were tightly coordinated to achieve the modernization objectives of each institution.

The PIFI has consequently strengthened the OECD model in the fact that institutional planning must take into account the academic base, with previous funding for infrastructure in the FOMES programme now being linked to the development of that base, as is funding for research programmes, and funding to support programmes to be accredited or enter in the national postgraduate league table (PNP). CONACyT was incorporated into a closer relation with SESC to support this policy focus, as well as the technological system, with SESC being renamed as SES (Sub-Secretary of higher education). The additional funds made available through the PIFI thus currently clearly aim to reinforce a coherent institutional planning process. Each year, public universities present their Institutional Programme for a centralised evaluation process designed to detect the coherency of their proposals. The process determines whether the institution is indeed soliciting funds for a coherent plan of institutional development, starting from the actualization of the academic profiles and the development of research lines, which in turn support academic programmes, student development, graduation efficiency, the meeting of local demands, constructing business partnerships, and so on. The Rector of each university is invited to the evaluation process to explain the PIFI presented by his or her institution.

Research funding has also been linked more closely to national and local needs. CONACyT changed its basis for research funding from research

funding for university based research projects, to two new forms of research awards. These are called 'mixed funds' awards and 'sectorial' funds. The objective of the first is for state and municipal governments to agree with universities and local businesses on the joint selection and funding of research to resolve local needs. The sector funds are made available by CONACyT and different federal government departments, to fund research to resolve national problems in areas such as agriculture, water, the environment, the fishing industry, etc. The 'mixed funds' projects, have so far had most success, all the states except three have participated; between 2002 and 2005 a total of 101 awards schemes were published, 3,508 projects were evaluated and 1,302 were approved. 991 million pesos (aprox. 99 million dollars) were solicited and 799 million pesos were approved. A total of 81% of the projects were in the area of applied science, 1% in basic science and 18% in technology development. ([http://www.conacyt.mx/fondos/f\\_mixtos.html](http://www.conacyt.mx/fondos/f_mixtos.html)) Overall, information on the results of joint CONACyT/sector research projects is not as yet available, but 14 sectors have announced awards schemes since 2002.

There is a clear objective for research to address local and sector problems, on the basis of a combined participation of the state, universities and local business and NGO's. This research strategy is akin to the OECD approach in focusing not only on formal research and its production of codified knowledge, but also on experience based knowledge production. It is an approach supported by the Mode 2 knowledge concept which argues that the transition to a knowledge society involves the emergence of bottom-up research patterns. (Gibbons, 1994; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001) The influence of this approach in the reform programme in Mexico can be seen in the fact that national and state legislation has been designed to meet this new modality for inter sector research funding.

## **Outstanding issues with regard to the impact of the reform programme**

Whilst statistics indicate that the PIFI model apparently works efficiently in some institutions, thus suggesting that they have developed a planning culture from

the academic base upwards, encouraged by an organizational structure and leadership which recognises the need for coherent planning and evaluation, the same statistics indicate that this is still not the case for many institutions.

Evidence of the uneven impact of the reform programme can be seen in the results of the Consejo para la Accreditation de la Educación Superior (COAPES) (Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education). Results published in the national newspaper 'Reforma' in May 2006 show the majority of accredited undergraduate programmes to be in the northern frontier States, in the Central States of Jalisco, Puebla and the State of Mexico. These 8 States each have between 40 and 60 programmes accredited. On the other hand there are 12 States with between 1 and 10 programmes accredited.

The amounts awarded annually under the PIFI programme to each public university from 2001 to 2005 are displayed in the Web page of the SES: (<http://ses4.sep.gob.mx/if/financiamiento/finan05/PIFI%20UPESb.htm>). From this statistical information it can be deduced that 11 of a total of 53 participant universities stopped receiving funds in the 2004 and 2005 annual reviews of their presentation of their PIFI proposals, although there is no indication as to why this was so. The amounts awarded also vary greatly, yet there is no indication of the ratio of the amount awarded relative to the size of the institution. Nevertheless, this information can be compared to another SES web page which gives details of the federal and state subsidies from 2001 to 2005 to 45 public institutions of higher education. This page does not indicate the relation of the budget to either the student ratio or the number of research centres in the university. Nevertheless, if one compares the 13 universities which in 2003 had a budget over 500,000,000 Mexican pesos, (approximately 50,000,000 U.S. dollars), with the amounts awarded as a result of the PIFI review, the universities of Coahuila, Sinaloa and Tamaulipas stand out as universities with a high federal and state subsidy, yet comparatively low PIFI results, whilst the Autonomous University of Zacatecas did not receive any funds in the 2005 evaluation.

This information may explain to a certain extent why, in the 2006 Pacific Circle Consortium Conference, an academic from Zacatecas asked why federal funds

for the Programme of Incentives for Teacher's Development, were awarded by the Rector of Zacatecas according to his personal discretion and not according to the objective indicators of teachers performance as established in the PIFI. The reply from Dr Zetina, Director of Planning and Evaluation of the SES, was that whilst the SES maintained a general guideline concerning the use of such funds, their assignation remained under the jurisdiction of the Rector of each institution. He offered to receive details of the complaint, yet the academic had already indicated that complaints had already been presented to SES, and there had been no reply.<sup>11</sup>

As a result of comparing data from these different sources, it can be deduced that the efforts to introduce an objective system of university funding linked to evaluation continues to run parallel to other, more 'traditional', forms of controlling access to federal resources. Purportedly the annual subsidy continues to depend on the pay-roll of the university, with new full-time contracts requiring approval by SES according to the PROMEP profile of the candidate, (all new contracts require minimum masters, and preferably doctoral degrees). Similarly, relatively strict evaluation procedures are followed with regard to the PIFI evaluation, yet the rewards for teacher productivity are still left to the discretion of individual rectors. Nevertheless, those universities which distribute those rewards in flagrant abuse of the PIFI objectives can probably

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<sup>11</sup> The local context of the University of Zacatecas is one of inequality and low levels of administrative efficiency. In an article on statistics recently released by the National Council for Population, (Conapo) concerning the distribution of wealth, the states of Oaxaca; Chiapas, Guerrero y Zacatecas had in 1995 the highest in levels of inequality, and in recent statistics Queretaro replace Zacatecas amongst the 4 states with the highest level of inequality. (Martinez, 2006). A recent article on the negative results of the decentralization of basic education, argued that only in those states where the consolidation of an education system had already begun, did decentralisation bring advantages, but in other states it just transferred problems without the means to resolve them, as can be seen in states such as Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacán y Zacatecas. (Poy Solano, 2006)

expect a less than favourable result in the PIFI evaluation, because such policies will most probably be negatively reflected in the overall level of productivity of academics in such institutions, as well as other related indicators.

The fact that the resources for academic productivity are not under direct government control would suggest that the SES does not count upon government support to close the flow of this type of discretionary resources which continue to support clientalist practices. The fact that the President did not count on a PAN majority in congress during his administration would have made such an objective difficult to achieve. Indeed, the fact that political negotiation has continued to affect the system can be seen in the congress decision to increase university budgets above the subsidy agreed by the current administration (2000 – 2006). The policies of the SES was thus undermined given the fact that institutions could appeal directly to congress to increase their budgets, and the Supreme Court has not yet passed verdict on the legality of this process. (Muñoz Garcia, 2006, p. 8)

Not only has the response of the provincial States varied with regard to adopting the more integrated management strategy of the PIFI, but also this attempt to integrate all aspects of the programme, may actually aggravate the problem of simulation. Given that the different indicators are all related to each other, there is more pressure to simulate one result in order to protect other related indicators. Sergio Guzman writing in the daily newspaper *La Jornada* in July 2006 questioned this policy approach with regard to the efficiency of postgraduate programmes. Efficiency indicators stipulate that graduation in masters programmes has to be within two years and in Doctoral programmes 3 years to meet the efficiency criteria of the PNP so that a programme can remain within the league table and hence have access to the resources that membership includes. Guzman argues that this policy has resulted in the formation of human resources which are not highly qualified, because all too often to achieve the indicators of graduation efficiency, the academic bodies are obliged “to sign off thesis as finished and publish articles which scarcely meet high standards of scientific quality”. The result is, in the opinion of Guzman, that:

The system has been deformed and practices of little ethical value are

occurring where researchers pursue high productivity at whatever cost, because if they do not have students, theses and published articles they forfeit subsidies, economic rewards, and face the loss of prestige within the community in which they are immersed. (Guzman del Prío, 2006)

So despite the fact that the PIFI exhorts a more congruent and integrated planning by universities, it still faces three principal problems: as a transition towards a more objective system of financing it is undermined by the continued existence of discretionary systems of financing; there continues to be a wide variance in the success of institutions in achieving the required indicators; the integration of all factors of the development of the university under one coherent model, puts pressure on academics to simulate some results in order to "save" others - either a particular programme, or the overall result - thus encouraging a culture of simulation alongside one of evaluation.

Another outstanding problem is that a more just basis for academic salaries has yet to be established and this is complicated by the lack of a stable system for financing pensions. Many institutions have found they are paying more in pensions to retired academic personnel than the pensions fund receives in contributions from the current academic base. Humberto Muñoz describes this situation as the "black hole" for public finances, which without a change in the current labour model can only get worse (Muñoz García, 2006, p. 9) Consequently, base salaries continue to be effectively frozen in order not to aggravate this problem. This short term response has the further knock on effect that many teachers cannot afford to retire because not only do they fear that the pension fund may go bankrupt, but also they cannot afford to do so as they would retire on only half of their present income. The SES has created a programme for the reform of the pensions system, and those universities which have together with the unions, applied the SES model of pension reform, have access to special funds to replenish their pension funds. The details of this fund can be found on the SES website: <http://ses4.sep.gob.mx>. The question remains whether the resolution of the pension issue will be followed by a resolution of the salaries issue. Meanwhile, the academic base gets older and younger researchers and teachers are not incorporated.

## **Concluding remarks**

The reform programme which includes international models of performance management based on standard or ‘objective’ indicators has not achieved uniform levels of introduction, it has lead to increasing levels of simulation and vested interests continue to function within the system.

One explanation which is offered for this disjuncture between the objectives and the results of the reform programme, concerns the fact that there is no apparent plan for what happens in those cases which do not achieve the required performance indicators beyond that of the hope that the lack of access to additional funds will ‘teach them’ the need for resolving ‘the breaches of quality’ in their organization (Porter, 2004). Meanwhile these public institutions, and all private institutions that are not evaluated, can continue to function. It is a policy of the carrot without the stick, that is, without secondary options (De Vries, 2000).

Another reason offered concerns the formation of the actors involved. The OECD in their report on the National Education Policies in Mexico, solicited by the government in 1995 as Mexico entered the OECD, cautioned against the wholesale application of neoliberal policies. They criticised the decentralization process, observing that “not all the states are equally prepared and often lack human resources to be competent interlocutors of the institutions of higher education” (OECD, 1997, p. 222). <sup>12</sup> Here the OECD was recognising that the

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<sup>12</sup> The criticism of the model of decentralization implemented in 1992 was reiterated by the Citizens Observatory on Education in their communication 7 in La Jornada 24/04/99 and also by the Governor the State of Zacatecas in September of 2006 who ‘returned’ the responsibility of education to the Federal Government, arguing that “in a supposedly federal model, in reality what was decentralized has been above all the responsibilities, but not the sufficient resources or the faculties” (La Jornada, 04/09/06). Luis Hernandez Navarro, writing in La Jornada

conditions in the provincial universities vary greatly, as do the level of autonomy those institutions enjoy in relation to local governments. In those states where the PRI is still in power, the university is considered as just another state dependency whilst the positions of rector, faculty directors, coordinators, etc., are often still considered as a post which the governor can assign to repay political favours, simulating a show of following the organic legislation of the university. The resulting rector is not, in the opinion of the OECD, necessarily the best candidate to lead the institution, yet, in many parts of Mexico it is still considered that a rector requires a political not an academic profile, to successfully manage the incessant intrigues between rival factions.

An alternative approach which has been explored in this chapter to explain the apparent disjuncture between the objectives of the reform programme and its results is to consider the way in which the reform programme apparently introduces changes at one level whilst reinforcing traditional structures at another. This is partly due to the fact that it was assumed that it was the 'benevolent state' model which encouraged clientalist practices in the university

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12/09/06 argues that decentralization has created a deficit calculated at 20 thousand million pesos, (2 thousand million dollars).

and a disregard for quality. Consequently, it was expected that an 'evaluative state' model would undermine the basis for clientalism and replace it with a culture of evaluation. Because, policy design did not take into account the extent to which clientalist practices in universities were embedded in a historical trend based on social control through the distribution of resources, this change of management strategy failed to address, and even possibly aggravated, the historical tension concerning university autonomy and government control in Mexico. Meanwhile, the positive effects of an alternative policy approach pursued in the PROMEP programme in undermining clientalist structures were not followed through as resources for this programme have been reduced.

Finally, the more integrated model of the PIFI policy has been undermined by its centralised conception, as clearly, one model does not fit all cases, whilst the flexibility in the model is limited. Consequently, this model encourages both an evaluation culture in some contexts and simulation in others, and often a mixture of the two. The replacement of traditional academic values by market values in the education system did not help in these circumstances. The situation was further weakened by the continuing existence of a parallel system of the discretionary allocation of resources.

In short the 'objectivity' of the indicators for the allocation of resources is, in practice, compromised, whilst the underlying tension between institutional autonomy and government control through the allocation of resources remains intact. Hence, the conditions for the practice of simulation are present at both levels: those that attempt to compete in the objective model find themselves pressured to simulate in some aspects to safeguard their overall achievements, whilst others continue to regard the process as *just another* strategy of governmental control, and hence view simulation as an efficient means to obtain resources.

Before exploring on the basis of empirical case studies the extent to which the impact of the reform programme varied between different universities, it is important to consider the wider social and political context of Mexican society, to determine whether the clientalist practices in the tertiary education system which the reform programme has confronted with only partial success, were

also embedded in the social structures of Mexican society at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and thus to begin to assess the potential magnitude of the challenge to introduce a system of objective indicators for university financing.

# **Chapter 4: The national context of the reform programme**

In the previous chapter, the assumption that it was the ‘benevolent state’ model which gave rise to clientalist practices and that by linking funding to evaluation these practices would be replaced by a culture of evaluation, was criticised. It was observed that such policies aggravated a historical tension concerning the mediation of university autonomy through the process of annual budget negotiations. The fact that the evaluation procedure tends to promote simulation rather than a transition to a culture of evaluation, can be partially explained in terms of the continuity in this underlying practice of political control. In this chapter, the objective is to determine the extent to which the use of this practice was confined to the tertiary education system, or embedded in wider structures of social and political practice. The purpose is to gauge whether the change to a culture of evaluation involves changes confined to the tertiary education system or wider social structures are involved.

Firstly, I will consider a historical account of the emergence of Mexican social structures, followed by an anthropological account regarding of the structures of Mexican Society toward the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Secondly I will consider the introduction of neoliberal policy in Mexico and the impact on the social structure of Mexican Society.

## **The history of clientalism in Mexico**

### **The Concept of Clientalism**

In the year 2000 the right of centre ‘Party of National Action’ (PAN) won the Presidential elections, after 70 years of rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). To consider the possible significance of this transition in Mexico to democratically elected government, the magazine *Letras Libres* dedicated their December issue of the year 2000 to the question whether the new government would maintain a system of “caciques y caudillos”, the political operators of clientalism in Mexico, or achieve the transition to a system based on the law

and freely elected representatives. The magazine editorial defines the cacique in the following way: "Rural, labour union, urban, impresario, academic, cultural, the cacique is our two faced *Jano*: community leader, provider, ultimate law, kindly oppressor, disposed to negotiation if his/her right to the last word is not discussed, and faithful instrument of the superior central presidential power" (Editorial-Letras-Libres, 2000).

In his contribution to this debate the British historian Alan Knight (Knight, 2000) considers *caciques* as the representatives of the clientalist system whilst *caudillos* operate at the cupola of the political system, and "On the top is the President" (Knight, 2000, p. 17). The *caciques* are intermediaries, recognised and rewarded by those above them in the structure to the extent that they exercise control over a local social group, passing some of those rewards on to those below in return for loyalty. The level of aggression used in these transactions varies, some *caciques* assuming the role of kindly oppressor of the social group under his/her control, yet that of aggressive assassin in relation to rival political groups. This issue also depends on the level of the *cacique* in the hierarchy. At the lower levels the *caciques* occupy positions which themselves confer authority: "they can be political administrators, judges, police officers, teachers (the teacher-cacique is a common phenomenon) or, 'the elder' in indigenous communities. Indeed, the parish priests can function as local *caciques*" (Knight, 2000, p. 19) Another strategy used by the *caciques* to maintain control is 'divide and rule', the *cacique* exercises power by provoking and mediating between conflicts: "Factionalism, the organization of political and social conflicts around clientalist networks of certain longevity – is also an old practice and occurs at many levels.. but the *caciques* also mediate between the factions " (Knight, 2000, p. 20).

The Mexican political historian, Lorenzo Meyer (Meyer, 2000), considers clientalism as of a tool of social control and considers the history of Mexico in terms of how the use of this particular tool became embedded in the national culture. Its origin can be located at the time of the Spanish colonisers and their response to the problem of the control of an indigenous population. In subsequent power vacuums, different political administrations fell back on the system put in place by the Spanish colonizers. In what follows I shall consider

the consolidation of a clientalist culture in social development from the pre-colonial period to the Mexican Revolution.

### **Historical view of clientalism in Mexican society**

1500 a.c. marks the beginning of the pre-classic period in the history of Mesoamerica with the population of the first villages by nomads thought to have crossed over to the American continent through the Bering Straights, arriving as far as Mesoamerica by 33,000 b.c. By the time the Spanish Colonisers arrived to Mexico at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Mesoamerican culture had developed during 3,000 years. It was a hierarchical and educated culture, headed by its priests and nobles. It was a culture which through its astrological studies had divided the solar year in 365 days, had arrived at the concept of zero and had developed various forms of writing. The education system reproduced the social structure. Children of both sexes were educated from an early age by their family, and children of nobles and priests went on to study at the *Calmécac* reading, writing, astrology and history, to form writers, doctors and engineers. The rest of the children went to a form of technical college called *Tepolchalli*, where they were taught religion, military techniques and other social posts. (Abud & Ramayo, 1990, p. 18; Kobayashi, 2002, p. 54; Zoreida Vázquez, Tanck de Estrada, Arce Gurza, & Staples, 1981)

Hernán Cortes arrived to Mexico in 1519, and in 1529 the Catholic Missionaries founded the first school for the indigenous population. The authority of the hereditary leaders of the indigenous populations in Mexico was recognised by the Spanish once they submitted to Spanish rule. The origin of the word *cacique*, as Lorenzo Meyer, points out is a “corruption of the word *kassequa*, an *arahuaco* word which denominated the indigenous leaders which Colon encountered in New Spain in 1492” (Meyer, 2000, p. 36).

The *caciques* were assigned the role of intermediaries between the indigenous population and the government of the viceroy. This status of intermediary was consolidated by the distinct education given to the indigenous leaders. Through the different Catholic orders such as the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Augustinians and the Jesuits the children of the indigenous population were inculcated in the Christian and Western system of values. Schools were

annexed to the monasteries in each town, yet the indigenous distinction of two systems of schooling for the children of nobles and for the rest of the children was maintained. The latter were taught the Christian doctrine and basic mathematical calculations of addition and subtraction, and certain professions. The children of indigenous leaders lived in the convents in a strict existence similar to the *Calmécac*, often disciplined with whips, and learnt reading, writing and song, (Zoreida Vázquez et al., 1981, pp. 18, 20)

In 1536 the first institution of higher education was founded in New Spain, the College of Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco. A project to send the sons of the indigenous leaders to the college for formal preparation was short-lived given the heated debate concerning the teaching of the 'sacred scriptures' to the indigenous population. Whilst this debate rumbled on, the offspring of colonisers and the indigenous population created a new ethnic group called mestizos (offspring of Spanish and Mexicans) (Robles, 1977, p. 15). Meanwhile, the leaders or *caciques* of indigenous communities continued to be expected to govern their own communities according to the Christian values they had been taught.

This system of *caciques* survived for over a century and could have been a successful method of government if the indigenous leaders had continued to be considered legitimate by the population they controlled and if the colonial power had continued to respect the status of the indigenous nobles within the colonial power structure. Nevertheless, in reality the system was marked by the abuse of power both on behalf of the indigenous leaders towards their people, and the Spanish leaders towards the indigenous leaders. Thus a functional system based on legitimate intermediaries was transformed through corrupt practices into a system of control through coercion.

Nevertheless, Meyer argues that the fact that this system was almost non-existent by the time of the War of Independence (1810 -1821) was not due to the corruption of the system, but instead to two other reasons: the death of the majority of the indigenous population (from disease and exploitation) and the suppression of the system of special education for the indigenous nobles, the

nobles were no longer considered, in many cases, of noble status either by the Spanish or by their communities.

In 1547 the University of Mexico was created according to the constitution of the University of Salamanca, for the education of Europeans and the sons of the Spanish colonizers born in Mexico, a group known as criollos. Students received an education which was renowned in Europe as vanguard in scientific, philosophical, literary, medical and linguistic areas(Robles, 1977, p. 16). The distinction between the colonisers and the colonised was gradually replaced by, on the one hand, the representatives of the Spanish crown, on the other, the criollos and the mestizos. The need for indigenous caciques to control the indigenous population was replaced by the need to control this new social division.

The fact that the clientalist system re-emerged was, according to Meyer, due to the virtual disappearance of the state following the War of Independence as the political elite was occupied by various struggles: "monarquists against republicans, masons against clerics, federalists against centralists, liberals against conservatives, etcetera". (Meyer, 2000, p. 38) In the space of this power vacuum certain indigenous caciques re-emerged, as well as a new type of cacique whose power was not hereditary but rather was based on personal capacity: "The leaders of local insurgents, the leaders of local criminal bands, the heads of the national army, etc. became the new wave of caciques, many of them mestizos and some criollos" (Meyer, 2000, p. 38).

Finally, following the successful expulsion of the French imposed emperor Maximilliano (1864 to 1866), the liberals achieved the introduction of a liberal constitution in 1857 which included the right of free and non-religious education for all. The liberal government also confiscated the extensive amounts of church land which was sold to the middle and upper classes, and raised a tax on their remaining properties. Given this confrontation with the church, the liberals did not attempt to confront the new class of caciques which had emerged during almost 50 years of a weak or not existent state. The result was that the liberal paradigm of a direct relation between citizen and authority was in practice constructed on the basis of intermediaries in the form of the caciques.

Indeed, the return to a period of conservative administration under Porfirio Diaz meant that the liberal education project was not fully implemented until the Constitution of 1917 following the revolution. During his presidency which extended over three decades (1877-1911 with a four year break 1880-1884) Porfirio Diaz managed to control both the liberal and church/conservative factions by giving back to the church some of their properties, relaxing the taxes, giving governmental positions to the liberals and exploiting the cacique system of political organization. He established a pyramid of power with the President at the pinnacle, followed by the state governors, then the municipal presidents, and finally to the local level made up of hacienda owners, business persons, money lenders, factory or mine owners and the remaining few indigenous leaders. Meyer claims that the cacique during this period exercised "almost total political, economical and social control, over a geographic area. It was for this reason that the cries for revolution in 1910 not only included those of "Land and liberty" and "Mexico for the Mexicans" but also "Death to the caciques" (Meyer, 2000, p. 39).

On the anniversary of 100 years of independence in September 1910, Porfirio Diaz surprised the country by permitting his Minister of Education, Justo Sierra, to officially found the National University based on liberal rational and non-religious educational values. The progress of this project was interrupted, however, 2 months later when in November 1910 the revolution began on the basis of liberal demands for freedom of elections (Francisco Madero). As the revolution progressed, other demands, particularly in relation to land, emerged (Emiliano Zapata). A new class of caciques emerged during the years of a non-existent or weakened state. These were from the lower strata of the social structure and included "criminal bands, teachers, miners, farmers, small traders, students, dependents and some marginal large property owners".(Meyer, 2000, p. 39)

The fact that the PRI controlled political power in Mexico for over 70 years was largely a result of the way they appropriated clientelism as a political strategy to meet the challenge of constructing a post revolutionary political consensus. With the armed stage of the revolution officially ended following the successful

accession to power of General Obregon in 1920, the institutional phase of the revolution began. That stage involved winning the recognition of foreign countries, particularly the U.S.A., the creation of institutions such as the Ministry of Education, integrating the multiplicity of small political parties in the hands of regional war lords, and weakening the power of the church. To achieve this, the main political party was constructed as a hierarchical structure, at the top of which the regional war lords could negotiate political power without recourse to armed struggle, becoming appointed governors and municipal presidents, senators and deputies. At the same time, workers, peasants and the military were represented through the different sections of the party and could win political positions through elections. Nevertheless, those who were to run for elections were appointed by the local political elite, the previous war lords who were now state governors. Political stability was thus achieved at the price of maintaining clientelist structures, and at the expense of political and social modernization. The liberal education project was reconfigured as a nation building project and at the same time it was integrated as another level in this traditional clientelist social and political structure.

The second generation of post-revolutionary *caciques* had less power and was more subject to the power of those above them in the hierarchy, than were their predecessors. Their role was to secure the votes of their 'clients' to maintain the political control of the PRI and making sure that the opposition could not get a foothold. The rural model of *caciquismo* was applied to urban industrialism, with syndicate leaders becoming the most 'famous' modern *caciques*, whilst colonial leaders and leaders of market sellers, mainly women, began to operate efficiently in this aggressive 'masculine' world (Monsiváis, 2000). Although the head of the oil union was jailed by President Salinas in 1988, the current leader of the teachers union survived and is currently one of the strongest syndicated leaders and women *caciques* at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, (Loyo, 1997; Rangel & Thorpe, 2004). In the 2006 presidential elections she split from the PRI and set up her own political party, allied to the rightwing PAN party. Indeed, given that the PAN candidate won the election by just over 1% of the vote, the support of her party for the PAN presidential candidate was a crucial factor in the election result, and her power is expected to be consolidated in the forthcoming government.

This party political system was also used as a means of social mobility, to work one's way up through the social and political structure. In the South-eastern State of Campeche, for example, Abelardo Carrillo Zavala worked himself up from a canteen singer through the Confederation of workers of Mexico (CTM), to be Federal Deputy of Congress and finally Governor of the State from 1985 – 91. Although his successor claimed he would rid the State of the influence of ex-governors who continued to control power as *caciques*, nevertheless Carrillo Zavala achieved the election of his protégé as the following governor. He had helped this person work his way up through the PRI party structure, yet he was considered an authoritarian and despotic governor, and by securing the placing of family members in the current administration, currently wields more influence than his mentor.

During the seven decades which the PRI maintained control of the electoral system in Mexico, clientalist practices permeated all aspects of the social structure with the consequence that virtually any social group could be organised around this model of power relations. Nevertheless, as Meyer observes, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this clientalist system had lost some of its control over the political system, maintaining extensive control over the syndicate system and the social system in rural areas. De la Peña explains that the reason for this decline in control was partly due to the increasing limitations of the PRI to redistribute economic benefits in rural areas through land reforms, and in urban areas as a result of the impact of the financial crisis in the eighties (De la Peña, 1992).

Jon Schefner from the University of Tennessee, links the decline of the patronal power of the PRI with the neoliberal reduction of the size of the state sector (Shefner, 2001). Nevertheless, his study of 'Coalitions and clientalism in Mexico' sustains Gay's (Gay, 1998) argument "that clientalism is an extremely flexible mode of political control, varying by time, locale, and political environment" (Shefner, 2001, p. 619). Schefner's study adds a subsequent chapter to Lorenzo Meyer's historical account of the changing forms of clientalism in Mexico. He notes that "The 1970's and 1980's were periods of exploding urbanization but decreasing urban service delivery... as austerity

politics or other pressures. diminished (the) patronage pool (Shefner, 2001, p. 601). The combination of the increasing local deception with lack of PRI delivery on its promises, and the conscious raising work of the Jesuit liberation theology movement in the area, led to a coalition between groups of urban poor which resisted clientalist co-option by local government officials. The coalition achieved the significant success of not only revealing the corruption of local officials of the federal Solidarity programme for building infrastructure in poor communities, but of finally achieving state compensation for the victims.

This coalition joined forces with a coalition of Mexican NGO's to form RAMAS (*Red de Apoyo Mutuo para la Accion Social* Network of Mutual Support of Social Action). This widening of the established coalition was the result of three particular events: the filtration of petrol from a local refinery into the sewer system of Guadalajara, and its explosion in 1992; the assassination of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo and several others at the Guadalajara airport in 1993; and the Chiapas uprising in 1994.

Despite an initially strong coalition, individual members of RAMAS did not resist political co-option for two related reasons. On the one hand, President Salinas' success in promoting Mexico as a nation entering the first world open-market economy, resulted in the cutting off of international funds to Mexican NGO's. On the other hand, SEDESOL (*Secretaria de Desarollo Social* Secretariat for Social Development), initiated the Fund for Social Co-Investment, which directed much needed funding to NGO's in return for support for the programme. The NGO's were partners in the sense that they had seats on the council, but they were unable to negotiate from a position of strength. Hence, it was considered that "SEDESOL continues deciding ... who has the money. They decide the people who participate, they selected who will be part of this committee, through all the manoeuvres they're used to" (Shefner, 2001, p. 617)

In this way, the neoliberal governments of Salinas and Zedillo introduced programmes which co-opted and silenced coalition movements working in favour of civil rights and against clientalism. The key to co-option continued to be the control of resources: impeding alternative sources and channelling state resources through one centrally controlled programme. Schefner's account of

these events suggests that clientalist structures were re-born at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> in the form of what Fox has described as “political entrepreneurs (which) can replace rigid, antiquated controls with new, more sophisticated clientelistic arrangements without necessarily moving towards democratic pluralism” (Fox, 1994; quoted in Shefner, 2001, p. 620)

The neoliberal version of clientalism is thus impersonalised, the *cacique* is replaced by the faceless political entrepreneur who designs policy to co-opt and control. Nevertheless, the mechanism of control remains the same: the distribution of resources. Hence the question historians posed in *Letras Libres* - whether the fact that the existence of a President from the opposition party would result in the further dismantling of the *cacique* system of political and social control - ignored the fact that clientalism had already been re-invented according to the neoliberal political economy.

## **The complex structures of social relations in Mexico**

The way in which hierarchical and clientalist structures in Mexico are embedded in a complex web of social relations has been documented by a Chilean anthropologist, Larissa Adler Lominitz, during the seventies and eighties in Mexico. Adler studied poor migrant urban communities, the relations that held together elite business families, the type of relations in the national university, the sector structure of Mexican society, and the ideological justification of the social system in the nationalism of the PRI.

Adler identified a combination of vertical and horizontal relations as typifying the structure of urban relations in Mexico City, and the structure of Mexican society in general. Various authors have described the vertical segmentation of the Mexican society between the public and the private sector, whilst Adler Lominitz refers to four sectors: the public or state sector; the private sector; the labour sector; and the informal sector. She describes these sectors as “four large pyramids”, referring to the vertical power relations which permeate all of these

sectors, although less so in the informal sector. Adler Lomnitz outlines four variables in the flow of resources between these 4 sectors:

- The type of resources (capital, power, work, informal, political loyalty)
- The level or quantity of the same
- The mode of articulation (formal or informal)
- The direction of the interchange of resources (that is, whether it is horizontal or vertical) (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 253)

The largest trade unions are to be found in the labour sector, they are still officially affiliated to the PRI and form part of the political and governmental structure.<sup>13</sup> The workers in the private sector organise themselves in general in what are called the “white” trade unions, which are controlled by the industrialists. Adler notes that trade union leaders who resist integrating into either one of these two systems have faced severe pressure, being “destituted, imprisoned or assassinated” with the movements dissolved or co-opted by new leaders (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 239).<sup>14</sup>

The informal sector includes under-employed, informally employed, autonomous occasional workers lacking social security<sup>15</sup>, a minimum salary, power of negotiation and organization at the national level (Adler Lomnitz, 1994,

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<sup>13</sup> This affiliation to the PRI has begun to be questioned following the fact the PRI dropped to being the third largest party following the July 2006 presidential elections. New trade union groups have recently emerged allied to the PAN administration.

<sup>14</sup> It is not uncommon to observe a smear campaign against a union leader in terms of the misuse of union funds, yet, it is difficult to know whether the accusations are based on facts or purely politically motivated.

<sup>15</sup> In Mexico, it is not the individual but the employer which registers a citizen in the social security system, and pays his or her contributions, the employee, above a certain income level, paying a percentage of the total amount. The total contribution is approximately 33% of an individual's salary and includes medical attention, pension, sickness and housing benefits, but not unemployment benefits, and upon losing employment the right to medical attention is withdrawn. Consequently, all those unemployed or informally employed have no access to these benefits.

p. 227). The importance of this sector is not only its size,<sup>16</sup> but also its marginality with regard to the other three sectors which are formally integrated into the state system and power structure:

Regarding the objectives of a sector categorization, the stability of employment (or security of economic roles in general) is more important than the nature of the work that the individuals undertake in the economic structure (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 250).<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, the more 'able' individuals in this sector construct their own clientalist structures by operating as intermediaries between formal employment structures and workers, forming "a sort of bourgeois of the "barrio" (ghetto) : a social level of transition between the formal and informal sectors" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 251) What is interchanged here is not only jobs, but also social benefits, in exchange for political support. Adler Lomnitz refers to the case study of labour hirer in the construction industry, named the "devil" who

had constructed a complex structure of lieutenants, sergeants and masters, without the existence of a single formal document, either between them, or between the "devil" and the construction company. In a particular construction, the "devil" earned more money than the engineer under whose orders he worked, with the difference that on concluding the construction, the engineer continued to receive a salary and the "devil" returned to his informal ghetto. (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 250)

Another type of intermediary are the 'líderes coloniales' (housing estate leaders), usually women, who construct a group under their control through gaining the recognition from the PRI as a community leader. As leaders they control of the canalization of state benefits such as 'dispensas' (basic food

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<sup>16</sup> Adler notes that in 1979 the informal labour sector was 40% of the urban workforce, in 2005 it was reported by INEGI to constitute 28.7%

<sup>17</sup> For this reason the practice of 'inheriting' one's 'plaza' (tenure) is a workers right in many unions, including the teachers union, and the health workers union, but is considered by parents as the most important inheritance they can pass on to their children when they retire, as it guarantees a life's income and health and pension benefits, amongst others. New graduates who do not have parents in the profession they trained for, have to save sufficient resources to 'buy' a tenure from the union. Nevertheless, some young professionals are beginning to reject co-option by the system involved in receiving such tenure.

parcels), basic housing construction materials (often roofing sheets), education grants for children for primary and secondary levels, and other benefits. In times of elections the beneficiaries of these resources are expected to accompany the 'leader' to political meetings and to the voting booth on voting day. At other times they may be required to participate as protest groups, or show their support in various different ways. Schefner's article on 'Coalitions and Clientalism in Mexico' describes a community attempt's to question the relation between the satisfaction of infrastructure requirements and loyalty to the PRI (Shefner, 2001).

Yet whilst Schefner concentrates on the clientalist relation between poor urban communities and the government, Adler notes that the inhabitants of the informal ghettos obtain a "minimum of security of survival" through the horizontal networks based on family members and neighbours". She thus rejects the traditional equation drawn between 'urbanization' and 'disorganization' by showing that amongst these groups "The extended family of the Mexican peasant, as well as the ritual links of *comadrazco*<sup>18</sup> were reinforced and extended" (De la Peña, 2001, p. 11).

Similar forms of reciprocal interchange also take place at all levels in the formal sectors. Indeed the strong relations uniting urban migrants are mirrored in family business elites, with the difference that the relations within the family are based on a hierarchical corporate structure, whilst horizontal reciprocal relations are employed via the extended family to secure preferential treatment for the family, whether it be in central government, local government, education, etc.

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<sup>18</sup> Comadrazo is based on the catholic term where god-fathers of a child become 'comadres' of the family, but is generally used as a term used to refer to relations of mutual help established between friends (De la Peña, 2001, p. 9)

where members of the extended family are employed or have contacts. Maria Alba Pastor traces this corporate structure of family relations back to the period between 1590 and 1630 in New Spain in which productive auto sufficiency in the colonies allowed a powerful oligarchy to “weave a solid and closed web of parental relations” (Pastor, 2000, p. 87) across the public, ecclesiastic and civil professions, manufacturing, commerce and transport.

Nevertheless, this form of horizontal reciprocal relations are social forms which have developed at all levels of society and “increase social mobility and the circulation of resources between equals” (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 252) Unlike the vertical interchange of resources based on formal groups, horizontal interchange takes place between “informal groups, without frontiers which are permanent or clearly defined” (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 255) These horizontal networks extend across sector divisions, so that, not only is it common practice for business persons to use family connections to resolve bureaucratic requirements or legal issues, but also public sector officials obtain benefits in the purchase of goods in the private sector on the basis of their position in the government and the services they can exchange.

Adler argues that both the private and public sector have interests in maintaining these horizontal networks, and this can be shown by the proliferation of these networks. As De la Peña observes, Adler confirmed the well known thesis of Eric Wolf (Wolf, 1966), that when formal political and economical relations are not capable of guaranteeing the security and wellbeing of the members of society, then they turn to networks of friendship, family and patronage to solve their problems. Yet in addition, she argued that “the same formality of society is that which produces informality... the greater the rigidity of the norms, the greater the necessity to seek a solution to the problems outside the system” (De la Peña, 2001, p. 15) What’s more, she argues, they are necessary in that they allow the system to work by introducing flexibility into the system “they lighten the pressure of hierarchical relations and provide flexibility” (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 264) In this sense, they also avoid the system transforming itself into a “cast society in perpetual rivalry. The flexibility and fluidity of the networks or reciprocal exchange, precisely by crossing the

hierarchical frontiers within sectors and between sectors, has a real importance for the system" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 257).<sup>19</sup>

For this reason, it is important to not confuse these relations with corruption. Adler suggests that although this is difficult, the factor of social distance can be taken into account, as horizontal reciprocity takes place between socially equals:

Occasionally it is difficult to determine where the reciprocal interchange of favours ends and corruption begins. To the extent that the social distance is augmented between the participants of an interchange, we see the reciprocity tends to be converted into a market interchange and the solidarity becomes complicity" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 259).

The introduction of anti-corruption campaigns as part of a government policy to introduce for transparency (<http://www.transparenciamexicana.or.mx/ENCBG/>), have had a limited impact due to this extensive practice of reciprocity, including at top government levels.

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<sup>19</sup> This is clear in any working environment in Mexico. A recent clear example can be found in a personal experience of organising a postgraduate research seminar in May 2006. To arrange a room for the seminar required 2 verbal and 4 written requests. Given that on the day prior to the event, the person organising the postgraduate seminar rooms had still not received the written request, I asked the office administrator to phone her to arrange a meeting. A walk to the other side of campus, a few mutual laments about the absurd levels of bureaucracy in the university, resulted in the arrangements for the room being verbally confirmed, with the understanding that the official request would arrive within the next week or so. Nevertheless, this way of 'getting things done' was put in jeopardy by the new office coordinator, a PRI activist, "imposed" on the university, (in the sense that the position was a recompense from the Governor for not receiving a political nomination in the party). In order to assert himself in his new position over those 'below' him, and be seen well in the eyes of those 'above' him, he insisted on observing vertical reporting structures. The result was the rate at which 'things got done', rapidly diminished, and the frequency of student complaints increased. In not understanding the particular way in which horizontal and vertical structures worked in the university, this person undermined the functionality of the office.

## **The reproduction of social structures in Mexico**

The reciprocal interchange of resources is considered a norm in Mexican family culture and between friends; hence the refusal to use one's position to help family or friends to obtain jobs, commercial contracts, university entrance, etc. is a violation of a social norm. In this sense, the question of 'loyalty to family and friends' legitimates the norm concerning the reciprocal exchange of resources. What's more, if one does not use one's position in government to advance oneself financially through reciprocal favours, and politically through the clientalist pyramid, one is not considered very 'clever' (*listo*). '*Listo*' is a term in Mexico ascribed to persons who know how to use their position to their advantage to scale the pyramid of the sector in which they find themselves. It is an interpretive scheme that allows individuals to lament corruption as a drain on the Mexican economy whilst admiring 'those who know how to get on in life by 'using their connections'.

The structure of Mexican society is thus reproduced not only through the vertical system of hierarchical patron-client relations, but also through the norms of reciprocal relations. Yet, whilst such relations permit the reproduction of the system, the domination of the system by certain groups was avoided, it was a presidential and fragmented, not a monolithic, system. Power was fragmented throughout the pyramid, and the fact that presidential elections take place every six years, (re-election is not legally permitted), means that horizontal relations were not consolidated into power groups, nor were alternative power groups formed.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the formation of interest groups at the pyramid of the political structure is an accusation which has been repeated many times during and following the presidential elections in July 2006. The presidential candidate was supported openly (and illegally according to current electoral law) by the current President, as well as by the copula of the business sector

In fact, each new president designates a new group in power. For this reason, the groups left out or discontented, do not form coalitions but prefer to wait their turn for power in a future sexenial change. (Adler Lomnitz, 1994)

So, on one extreme of the social spectrum, the change in President contributed to ensuring the reproduction, and not the domination of the system. At the other extreme, the socialisation processes required that the individual learned to a greater or lesser extent how to survive within the system:

Now, if the individual must manage the three types of interchange (market, redistribution and reciprocity), that implies that they participate simultaneously in three kinds of social relations: a relation of class, a hierarchy and one of confidence. In this way the economical, the political and the socio-cultural are three domains that are intertwined in the life of the individual, and their path constitutes the macro-social reality. Each type of interchange has its rules, that the individual learns to manage and (when they are contradictory) to conciliate in each particular situation. This process is rich in symbolic language; and consequently, the ability to manage symbols in its turn constitutes a resource (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 263).

The symbols of the nation are given an important place in social ceremonies in Mexico, and from the first day of school children swear allegiance to the flag,

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who financed a publicity campaign against the opposition candidate, was one of the factors the opposition cited in presenting its argument to the electoral authorities for the annulment of the election results.

and repeat the ceremony every Monday morning.<sup>21</sup> The President is the maximum figure of authority of the nation, and the family, religion and health its principle values. (Anguas Plata, 2005; Salinas Amescua, Garduño Estrada, & Barrienteos Lavín, 2005). This symbolic scheme legitimises the norms of the vertical power structure in Mexico. The combination of vertical and horizontal relations as well as the six year presidential cycle facilitates the fluidity of the system and its flexibility.

The other factor which Adler documented as key to the functioning of this complex system was the ideological aspect, "in abstract terms, this ideology was nationalist, in concrete terms, it is found in the legitimacy of the PRI, dominant in Mexico since it was created in 1929" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 275). Schefner argues that this legitimacy of the PRI as the official party of the Mexican revolution also meant that clientalist institutions and practices enjoyed a certain legitimacy (Shefner, 2001, p. 595). This legitimacy is confirmed every six years in the Presidential election campaign. Adler was concerned to answer the question why, if the decision concerning who will be the next president was made known in the same act in which the PRI candidate for president was named, did the PRI spend so much money and energy on the presidential campaign for its candidate. Adler found the answer by understanding the symbolism of the campaign: "the campaign is a ritual, where the national myths of social revolution, *mestizaje* and unity are recreated" (De la Peña, 2001, p. 17)

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<sup>21</sup> This ceremony of allegiance to the 'patriotic symbols of the nation' is a ceremony which involves the formation and training of the 'escolta': a group of children which each year will enact the ceremony of presenting the flag to child charged with this responsibility. Primary and secondary schools are encouraged to train these groups to practice their marching routines and enter in the section, municipal, state and national competitions for this activity. Parents are keen that their children are selected for this activity which is considered as an honour.

## **Parallel social structures**

Although the 1857 constitution was a liberal constitution, the liberal government in practice made use of the national network of caciques to achieve the recognition of the liberal government. Adler considers that although different studies have shown, following the revolution, the replacement of patron relations in agriculture in the 'haciendas', with capitalist industrial structures, and although some communities have become more heterogeneous, this has not resulted in the hegemony of a capitalist system, but instead the parallel existence of two systems: a pre-capitalist, symbolic structure based on "the old principles of trust, loyalty, friendship, family relations, etc.", and a market system based on 'objective' market values of supply and demand.

On the one hand we have, then, an individualist democratic ideology, which has not ceased to dominate the Mexican political ideals since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and which has been allied with the capitalist production of free competition (promoted in different moments in Mexico by different sectors in different moments). The tragedy of the democratic individualist system is that it has never been able to totally dominate. On the other hand, we have a system of social relations which undermine the free competition of the markets, equality before the law and democracy. The tragedy of this (second) system of social relations in Mexico is that only rarely has it found a political figure which gives it a legitimate place in the regime (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 299).

Adler found that the same parallel existence of different systems characterised the situation in the National University. Side by side with the scientific academic organisation of the university in faculties, research institutions, and administrative structures, a system of vertical relations existed between academics, and between researchers and students, with a notable lack of horizontal relations in the university. Hence it was a "university structure, apparently intelligible in terms of a formal rationality" yet it was accompanied by "a parallel rationality: that of clientelist groups and vertical political intervention" (De la Peña, 2001, p. 12).

The director is the intermediate between the higher authorities and the members of the institute he/she directs, and is responsible for acquiring the necessary resources from the authorities and deciding the form in which to distribute them, in such a way that on the basis of the results, the next year more resources can be obtained" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 179). Indeed, the highest acknowledgement given to a successful academic is an administrative

post as director of a faculty or institute: "As a consequence the researcher, up to then, dedicated and productive, finds him/herself, converted into the most powerful person in the institute, generally not possessing the experience of qualities needed for administration" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 178). There is very little participation by the other researchers in this decision making process. The role of the Director as intermediary repeats, then, the role of the *cacique* as socio-political intermediary, and his or her power is invested in the resources she or he controls.

In addition to the scientific and the vertical power structure, Adler described the social and political functions of the national university. Socially, the university was considered to play a key part in forming "the nationality and the conscience of Mexicans" based on values and symbols of Mexican identity. The university also played a political and social role as an "institution of opposition" and refuge for dissidents, as well as a vehicle of social mobility. Within this context, Adler identified four types of students: the academic, the professional, the political ideologues, and the political pragmatists. The third group are students which use the university as a political training ground to eventually enter in the government, whilst the fourth group form pressure groups (*grupos de choque*), "which can be used by diverse political groups both within and outside the university. Eventually, some are absorbed into the other groups whilst others gravitate towards occupations related to the world of crime (*delito*) (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, pp. 169-170).

It can be seen from this brief review of Alders work, that not only did she identify the corporate structure of clientelist structures in Mexican society both within the state system and the business family structure, but also that she identified the horizontal relations of reciprocity which sustained the functioning of this system at all levels. Furthermore, she identified that this complex, if traditional, system existed, within the university, side by side the rational structure of the university organization, and similarly, in society, parallel to the liberal individualist constitution of the state and the purportedly rational logic of the market. Finally, Adler identified the way in which the nationalist ideology of the PRI and its ritualistic practices had 'papered over' the inherent contradictions of this system. A very complex system thus emerges, in relation to which I shall consider, in the

following section, the impact of the transition to neoliberal government policies in Mexico.

## **From authoritarian liberalism to neoliberal clientalism**

Middlebrook and Zepeda consider that the political background explains the broad scope and rapidity in which neoliberal economic reforms were implemented in Mexico, in addition to some of the inconsistencies in the way they were introduced. They argue that the first reason for the rapidity of their introduction, needs to be traced back to the formulation of the post-revolutionary constitution in 1916-1917 which “placed pre-eminent authority in the presidency and limited the powers of the legislative and judicial branches of government”, as a result of the perceived need at the time of a strong executive to put an end to the rapid succession of governments and to implement the revolution’s social agenda.

With the formation in 1929 of an “official” political party there was a further acceleration of “the trend toward the centralization of political power”, and “The post revolutionary elites’ control over the state apparatus guaranteed to the “official” party the establishment of its electoral hegemony and the party’s assured electoral triumphs constituted an important basis for both political legitimacy and reliable legislative majorities”. (Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003, p. 11) The PRI established a network of state-society alliances “underpinning Mexico’s distinctive form of authoritarian rule” (Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003, p. 13), referred to by Lorenzo Meyer as ‘authoritarian liberalism’ (Meyer, 1995).

Middlebrook and Zepeda argue that the same authoritarian system accounts for the rapid implementation of neoliberal economic reforms as well as “for important inconsistencies or omissions in the reform agenda”. (Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003, p. 14) The first concerned the fact that the sale of banks to the private sector was not combined with financial sector liberalization. The banks remained in the hands of Mexican social and economic elite until the turn of the century when they were bought by foreign banks keen to make profits at the

expense of the FOBAPROA government programme which bought unpaid bank loans following the 1994 financial crisis.(Hogenboom, 2004, p. 213) The second concerned the deflation of the real value of wages, which although it can be considered as "a basis of international comparative advantage" meant that "government policy decisively tilted the industrial restructuring process in favour of business interests". (Hogenboom, 2004; Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003) (Ortiz 2003)

Middlebrook and Zepeda consider that the favours Salinas handed to the private sector were to be expected: "it is of little surprise that the sale of financial institutions occurred on terms favourable to Salinas's principal allies in the private sector." (Middlebrook & Zepeda, 2003, p. 15) Yet, in fact such a practice marked the end of the traditional rivalry between the government and private sectors. The argument Salinas employed to justify this lack of central government transparency was that economic liberalization should precede democratization; openness was required of the economic sector but not of the political system, or of the government.

Hence, the real change introduced by neoliberal reforms in Mexico, was the elimination of the *status quo* which Mexico's 'authoritarian democracy' had maintained on the basis of a " permanent confrontation" between the private and the public sector over "which sector should decide the economic and political affairs of the system" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 236). These two sectors were in turn based on two distinct dominant social classes in Mexico:

Currently, two dominant classes exist in Mexico: in the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, and the "new class" o the high levels of the state political and technological bureaucracy. The relation between both dominant classes is a complex mix of collaboration and competition. (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 224)

Basañez considers that the public sector maintained social hegemony up to the eighties (Basañez, 1981, p. 205) Yet, during the 1970's, the education of the sons of the political elite in Harvard business schools and the creation of a new generation of 'technocrats' who favoured neoliberal policies, meant that the 'permanent competition was gradually eroded during the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This explains Adler's observation in the 1980's that "the private sector is evolving more each time in the direction of a clientalism in relation with the public sector" (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 236). Hence, the

privatization process, was neoliberal in so far as it reduced the size of the state, but was not in terms of the market competition, instead it "resulted in state monopolies being replaced by corporate monopolies" (Hogenboom, 2004, p. 209). Indeed, as Shefner argues, clientalist practices were merely being adapted to neo-liberal economic strategies.

The last few months of President Fox's administration in 2006 witnessed a growing public criticism of the emergence of a political impresario elite, concentrating both power and wealth in the hands of a few. The repudiation of this new concentration of power and wealth and the growing polarisation between rich and poor in Mexico constitute the main issues of the opposition PRD campaign. Meanwhile, citing the World Bank report 'Redistribution of income between poor and rich: public transfer in Latin America and the Caribbean', Roberto Gonzalez writing in the *Jornada* 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006, notes that the report indicates that 50% of Mexicans live in poverty, whilst of the 9.8% of the PIB destined to social costs, only 3.5 per cent is destined directly to the poor. Furthermore, funds in agricultural projects such as "Procampo do not benefit the poorest, instead 43% of the resources benefited 20% of the population of high income, and only 12% benefited 20% of the population with the lowest income.<sup>22</sup>

The recent elections have resulted in a critical polarisation of society between the leftwing PRD alliance and the PAN, with the former repudiating the slight margin in the results in favour of the PAN, making accusations of electoral fraud, citing illegal public advertising by business groups and the Catholic

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<sup>22</sup> In a recent newspaper article concerning the increasing levels of inequality in Mexico, the National Council of Population (Conapo) links this data with increasing current mistrust in democratic institutions. (Martinez, 2006)

church against the opposition candidate<sup>23</sup>, and cybernetic fraud in the recounting of the votes<sup>24</sup>, as well as more traditional electoral fraud strategies involving the alteration of results. In response, the PAN has incessantly reiterated their call to respect the 'legal' procedures of the electoral institutions and has criticised as 'undemocratic' the street demonstrations. As a result, the relation between the legal and the just, the legal and the legitimate, has been questioned<sup>25</sup>.

## Conclusions

In the previous chapter, a disjuncture between policy and practice in tertiary education was explained to the extent to which neoliberal policy ignored the politically embedded practices around the distribution of resources, and proceeded to centralise the control of this distribution despite introducing 'objective' evaluation indicators. The purpose of this chapter was to determine whether the issue of the control of resources was a problem confined to the

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<sup>23</sup> The histori Lorenzo Meyer, writing an opinion column in the daily newspaper "Reforma", argued that the campaign by the PAN and certain business groups to discredit the PRD candidate Lopez Obrador, has meant that the electoral process, instead of extending the same electoral power to all and thereby resolving the division in society between the middle classes and the "dangerous poor" has instead again linked the poor to a leader who is "a danger for Mexico".

<sup>24</sup> The suspicions concerning the possibility of cybernetic fraud continued to increase following the presidential elections, with various mathematicians questioning the results in the edition of the daily newspaper "Jornada" 26<sup>th</sup> July

<sup>25</sup> Juan Enríquez Cabot argued, the following: "The problem at the bottom of all this does not appear to be the electoral fraud of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July. The problem is for many, perhaps the majority in the country, and especially for the poor, is that to say something is "legal" is a sign that you lost (ya te fregaste)... What is legal is not clearly synonymous with justice... What should be sought is what is legitimate rather than what is legal .. We have in our hands a country profoundly divided between the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the millions which feel profoundly offended by the modern, the legal, the open and the privatized. This is a battle fought daily in countries as different as Irán.. France... Argentina.. and in many the consequence of insisting in defending the legal above the legitimate ... is that they country itself fracture, divides, is lost.... Monday 24 of July 2006 the Reforma,

relation of the university system to the government, or was embedded in other forms of social relations and structures.

A review of research in this field has shown that clientalist relations have been used as a strategy of social control since the Spanish colonial period. This social structure of the *cacique* as intermediary was utilised during more than 500 years of Mexican history by different governments to maintain social control and became embedded in social practices at all levels. Horizontal practices of reciprocity developed to ameliorate the inflexibility of the hierarchical sectorial structures.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the PRI's adaptation of clientalism to their particular model of 'corporative authoritarian liberalism' allowed them to retain political control for seven decades. Clientalist systems of control were 'legitimated' by the ritual practices of symbolic nationalism and the PRI's appropriation of the symbols of the revolution and were considered legitimate in so far as they delivered the goals of the revolution in terms of land and wealth distribution. This complex symbolic system existed alongside a liberal constitution and an import protected market economy.

The 'legitimacy' of the bureaucratic model of clientalism was undermined during the 1960's and 1970's as a result of widespread abuse of the system by party officials who consequently failed to deliver on electoral promises, and this failure to deliver was further exacerbated during the 1980's as a result of the financial crisis. Nevertheless, the vertical corporative state structure was still able to facilitate a rapid transition to a neoliberal 'open' market economy and the

adaptation of clientalist practices from bureaucratic to neoliberal models of decentralization and ‘partnership’ with civil society.

This ‘new’ system can be considered to mirror clientalistpractices in so far as the government centralised its control over resources and used that power to co-opt the acquiescence of the relevant players in the system, undermining sites of ‘legitimate’ civic opposition. Furthermore, when funding is linked to reform in times of economic austerity, a relation of equity is clearly lacking<sup>26</sup>. The adoption of this strategy of linking funding to reforms to push through the tertiary education reform programme’s may also be considered as dangerously close to this new form of ‘neoliberal clientalism’ despite the fact that the reform programme was based on an ‘objective’ system of indicators designed to supersede the discretionality on which clientalism is based. Furthermore, given the embedded nature of clientalist social structures in Mexican society, to attempt to overcome this practice using a strategy based on an adaptation of the same clientalist practices one seeks to overcome, might explain the unexpected outcomes of the reform programme.

The disjunction between the aims and the outcomes of the reform programme thus involved the incongruity of the combination of local aims and global ideologies. On the one hand, the national aim to introduce an ‘objective’ and hence possibly ‘democratic’ system of indicators to determine university funding. On the other hand, the adoption of performance management strategies adopted from international policy models which too closely mirrored and were adapted to the practices the aim of which it was to replace.

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<sup>26</sup> Of course the same argument could be made against the notion of a ‘free’ market.

At this point, having analysed the national context of the reform programme, it is hence necessary to analyse the international policy models which were so unsuccessfully adopted to achieve that programmes aims. Nevertheless, before undertaking such an analysis, it is important to outline more fully the concept of social capital upon the basis of which those policy models are designed, as well as to analyse the extent to which this concept can explain the disjunction's between policy aims and outcomes.

# Chapter 5: Social Capital

The following exploration of the concept of social capital is, on the one hand, to consider the different interpretations of this term and its usage, and, on the other hand, to determine the extent to which it refers to factors crucial to understanding the disjuncture between policy aims and outcomes.

## **Different approaches to the concept of social capital**

Margarita Flores and Fernando Rello (Flores & Rello, 2003) consider the problem of defining the concept of social capital as one which depends on clarifying the different aspects involved in this term. The term is used to refer both to the sources of social capital and the collective action those sources permit, as well as the results of those actions. They produce a comparative table which I have translated in table 1 below.

**Table 4: Distinguishing different definitions of social capital**

	Sources and Infrastructure	Collective Action	Results
Coleman, 1990	Aspects of social structure	That facilitate certain common actions within the structure	
Bourdieu, 1985	Permanent networks and membership of a group		Assures to the members of a group of actual or potential resources
Putnam, 1993	Aspects of social organizations such as networks, norms and trust	Which permit action and cooperation	For mutual benefit (development and democracy)
Woolcock, 1998	Norms and networks	Which facilitate collective action	And the common benefit
Fukuyama, 1995	Moral resources, confidence and cultural mechanisms	Which strengthen social groups	
Neoweberians	Links and norms	Which link individuals within organizations	
World Bank, 1998	Institutions, relations, attitudes and values	That govern the interaction of people	And facilitate economic development and democracy.

Social capital, according to this table, involves both a source and infrastructure, which in turn permits collective action and results in the engendering of certain benefits or 'pay-offs'. Flores and Rello suggest that the confusion concerning the nature of social capital is a consequence of confusing these three aspects of social capital. They argue that many define social capital as networks of trust, thereby confusing social capital with the infrastructure which makes it possible, whilst others, such as Coleman, have a functional definition of social capital, defining it in terms of what it does, confusing it with the benefits it makes possible.

Flores and Rello propose that social capital should be considered as a capacity. This capacity can be individual, entrepreneurial, communitarian or public. An individual or a group (whether mercantile, communitarian or public) which possesses social capital has possibilities which an individual or isolated group does not have. "In effect, it represents the capacity to obtain benefits on the basis of social networks". (Flores & Rello, 2003, p. 206) The issue which they do not address is whether they use the term 'capacity' in a rationalist sense, a structural sense, or a cultural sense. It is not clear whether they are suggesting that certain social infrastructure exists in an objective sense and the individual takes a rational decision to use that infrastructure, acting in collaboration, in order to obtain social benefits, or whether the social infrastructure acts as a type of social norm which governs the actions of agents, and or, the perceptive framework in which decisions concerning actions are made.

Yet the different approaches to the issues of social capital also correspond, to some extent, to the different problematic that it is required to answer. These problematic include economic concerns regarding how forms of social governance may help or hinder economic development, social concerns regarding the apparent decline in social governance and policy concerns with regard to the effective introduction of development strategies. Within these broad categories there are also different approaches. In what follows I will outline some examples of these approaches in an attempt to find an approach to social capital which can explain disjuncture between the aims and outcomes of policy with regard to particular social contexts.

## **The OECD sociological approach**

The increasing importance with which the OECD regard the issue of social capital is reflected in their publication *The Well-being of Nations*, a publication devoted to defining the concept of social capital. In this text they refer to different concepts of social capital and determine their own definition of this term as “networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups.” (OECD, 2001, p. 41)

Trust is considered to be both a source and an outcome of social capital, and three types of trust are distinguished: Inter-personal trust among familiars (family, close work colleagues and neighbours); inter-personal trust among “strangers”; and trust in public and private institutions. Relations, situations and practices which engender social capital are considered to be: i) family; ii) schools; iii) local communities, iv) firms; v) civil society; public sector; vii) gender; and viii) ethnicity.

The OECD does recognize a two-way relation between local or national institutions of public governance and social capital:

Public governance based on commitment to public welfare, accountability and transparency provides a basis for trust and social inclusion, which in turn can strengthen social capital. The political, institutional and legal conditions prevailing in a country can underpin networks and norms for social co-operation. These two categories can complement and reinforce each other in promoting well-being. Hence, social capital not only produces better public governance and more effective political institutions, but the latter can complement rather than replace community-based networks and reinforce trust. (OECD, 2001, p. 47)

Nevertheless, they do not explore in detail the different dynamics of this two way relationship, and this is because they only briefly consider the down-sides of social capital. Although they examine the negative effects of ‘inward-seeking’ strongly bonded groups and ‘exclusive social bridging’, they consider this to be the exception rather than the rule, and so conclude that “The benefits from most types of social bonding and bridging generally greatly outweigh the negative consequences”. (OECD, 2001, p. 43) The lack of development of the issues of the possible negative forms of social capital and the relation between this situation and forms of public governance is related to the fact that the focus of

the OECD report is on changes in social capital in the U.S.A., Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Nevertheless, whilst the OECD downplays the occurrence of negative forms of social capital, they do provide a useful account of how these negative forms may occur. They argue that the failure of *bridging* with more distant friends may result in a strong social capital developing within a group that at the same time constructs negative social relations to all those external to that group. This situation may be compounded by the failure of *linking* to other social groups and social strata in a situation of hierarchical authoritarian governmental structures. So, for example, closely knit family or ethnic groups, may practice bonding, but not 'bridging' with more distant friends or 'linking' with different social groups in the social strata.

Furthermore, they do acknowledge that certain forms of social capital may be negative, including "highly bonded groups, such as drug cartels, illegal immigrant smuggler groups, mafia operations and terrorist groups (which) can embody high levels of internal trust and reciprocity" (OECD, 2001, p. 42) Similarly, "some forms of exclusive social bridging at the national or regional level may have socially destructive consequences" and these forms "include extreme or totalitarian ideologies" (OECD, 2001, p. 42). Yet, negative social capital is, according to the OECD account, *only found in these extreme criminal groups*; in general, social capital is positive and is characterised by relations based on trust.

Given that the OECD account of social capital considers all negative forms of social capital in terms of 'extreme criminal groups' or 'extreme totalitarian ideologies', it is an account which provides few elements for understanding the social context to policy reform in Mexico, or any country outside the English speaking Anglo-Saxon culture. Nevertheless, their concept of social capital does help to understand the OECD's approach to tertiary education reform, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

## **A development policy approach**

Bowles and Gintis are concerned with the effective introduction of development policy and determine those factors which are key to positive developments of social capital. They argue that the notion of social capital refers to certain comportment towards other members of one's community, involving trust, concern for one's associates, a willingness to live by the norms of one's community, and punish those who do not.

They observe that such practices were considered from Aristotle to Thomas Aquinas and Edmund Burke as "essential ingredients of good governance" (Bowles & Gintis, 2000, p. 2). However, this emphasis became replaced, since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by the notion of *homo economicus* together with a Lockean vision of competitive markets, well-defined property rights and efficient, well-intentioned states. Bowles and Gintis suggests that "good rules of the game thus came to displace good citizens as the *sine qua non* of good government." (Bowles & Gintis, 2000, p. 2: 2)

They argue that the current return to an interest in the notion of social capital is a recognition of the importance of community governance resulting from the failures during the 20<sup>th</sup> century of either the market or the state to govern the economic process. They thus describe the return to an interest in 'good citizens' as a result of a failure of the faith placed by the West in theories of social organization based on the state or the market. It is clearly a concept which has not arisen out of the failure of the authoritarian corporate state in Latin America, where neither the state nor the market have been considered as occupying any degree of autonomous development.

Bowles and Gintis consider that although social capital is a good idea it is not a good term because in their view the term 'capital' refers to things that can be owned whereas 'social capital' describes relations among people; they prefer the use of the term *community*. They consider that the community is an essential complement of the state and the market in solving problems, but that the way communities act in solving problems cannot be accounted for by self

interest. They prefer the notion of *strong reciprocity* where an individual's input is not dependent upon her/his expected personal benefit.

However, Bowles and Gintis also consider "community failures", such as the fact that groups tend to be homogenous, "thereby depriving people of valued forms of diversity" (Bowles & Gintis, 2000, p. 14), and the possibility of treating badly those that do not belong to the group. What's more, they consider that this is the rule not the exception: "The problem is endemic. Communities work because they are good at enforcing norms, and whether this is a good thing depends on what the norms are" (Bowles & Gintis, 2000, p. 14).

Bowles and Gintis' view suggests that the downsides of social capital are inherent in the nature of this form of capital. Inward looking tightly knit social groups are not only the result of the failure of *bridging* to more distant friends and *linking* to other social groups and social strata, but also the fact that groups tend to depend on a degree of homogeneity, reinforced by norms.

Whether the outcome is negative or positive depends both upon the norms that are reinforced, together with contextual factors. These include the need for "a legal and governmental environment favourable to their functioning" and a certain amount of social equality. Bowles and Gintis cite a paper by Bardhan and Johnson comparing irrigation organizations in India and Mexico which concludes that "farmer members of irrigation organizations .... Are more likely to cooperate in making efficient use (of the) water if status and class inequalities among them are limited." (Bowles & Gintis, 2000, p. 20)

In short, Bowles and Gintis delimit three general factors which have an impact on the positive development of social capital: the nature of the norms of the community; whether a legal and governmental environment exists which is favourable to their functioning and whether hierarchical division and economic inequality among community members is reduced to a minimum.<sup>27</sup> They suggest that all three factors are important in considering the possible effectiveness of community governance in Mexico. They also call attention to the risks of importing policies which depend on the management of social capital which include certain assumptions about the nature of the social capital to be managed.

Their account is congruent with the analysis of the complexity of Mexican society in the previous chapter. The issue of the norms of society is an important factor if the tacit as well as objective social practices are to be taken into account. The governmental and legal environment sustains those norms as seen in the example in the previous chapter of the “devil”. Hierarchical social structures also sustain such forms of clientalism. Nevertheless, whilst Bowles and Gintis’ account thus highlights crucial factors in determining social capital, unlike the OECD’s reliance on the measure of trust, the relation between those factors is not developed in their account.

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<sup>27</sup> The problem of marked social inequality is a factor which is not confined to developing economies. In his study of the negative impact of social inequality on public health, Richard Wilkinson considers it a social pollutant which occurs in both societies with high and low GDP's. (Wilkinson, 2005) Polly Tonybee noted that the UN development report of the first week of September 2005, shows that “extreme inequality within nations does great damage whatever a country's overall wealth” (Toynbee, 2005, p. 13). She draws the link between this observation and Sen's capabilities approach which emphasises the need to measure a nation's wealth not in terms of GDP but in terms of the distribution of wealth in a nation.

## **A structural account of social capital in development policy**

Woolcock takes a structuralist approach in attempting to define four factors of social organization and the relation between which can be guaranteed to secure a positive outcome for social development. The absence of any one of these factors will result in a negative outcome. The four factors are "embedded" and "autonomous" social ties at both the "micro" and "macro" social levels (Woolcock, 1998, p. 164).

The task of the developmentalist is to identify the actual relation which exists between those four factors in any particular context and adjust the introduction of new policy accordingly.

It is impossible to understand the prospects of development policies and projects without knowing the characteristics of social relations at both the micro and macro level, whether and how these levels articulate with one another, and how this degree of articulation has emerged historically..... Rather than trying to prove or refute assertions that social relations are always and everywhere the construction of "rational" "agents, or instead the result of primordial norms or "culture", a more fruitful approach invokes a social-structural explanation of economic life and seeks to identify the types and combinations of social relations involved, the institutional environments shaping them, and their historical emergence and continuity. The four ideal-typical forms of social relations identified in this article are a useful starting point for synthesizing such an analysis. (Woolcock, 1998, pp. 183,185)

The relation between embedded and autonomous relations at the macro and the micro level give rise to particular social forms. As can be seen in figure 2 below, at the micro level, *embeddedness* in the form of social *integration* results in strong social ties, but these need to be combined with *linkage* to other social groups for a certain level of autonomy in relation to those ties to be maintained. Yet this combination of embeddedness and autonomy at the micro level needs to be supported at the macro level by a combination of autonomy in the form of government *integrity*, combined with government or organizational embeddedness in the form of *synergy* with the macro level of society.

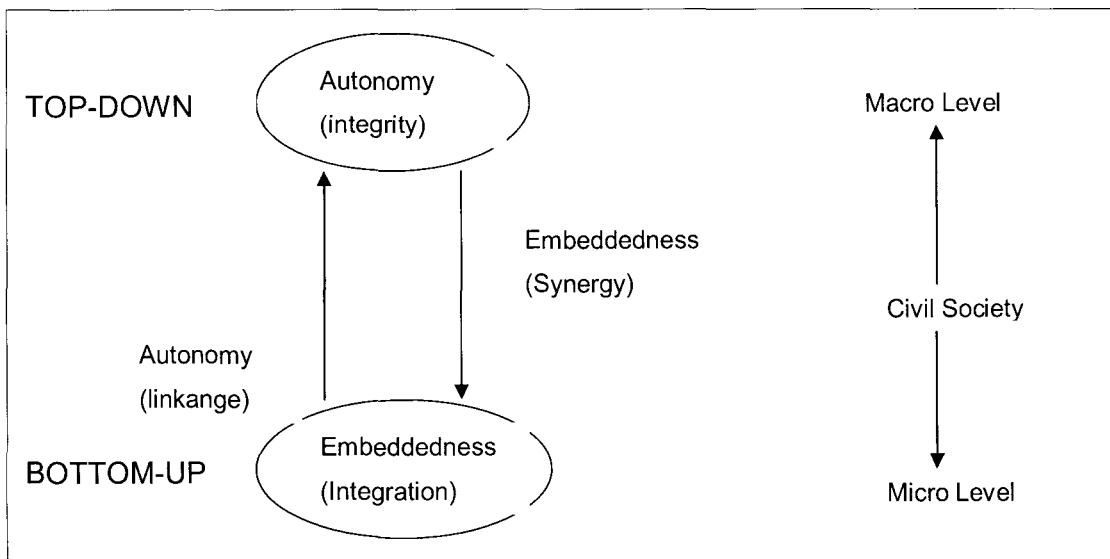


Figure 2 Woolcock's model of top-down and bottom up development and the forms of social capital

At both the macro level and the micro level there exists, as a consequence, four possible ideal types of social capital according to the particular combination of autonomy and embeddedness that exists. At the micro level, a low level of both these aspects results in *amoral individualism*, a sort of Hobbesian world which Margaret Mead evokes in her description of the Ik tribe in Uganda. On the other hand, *amoral familism* describes a context where intra-community ties are strong, but at the expense of extra-community networks, due to an "excess of community" built on "fierce ethnic loyalties and familial attachments (Woolcock, 1998, p. 171). Economic development cannot move beyond the level of the family, or the ethnic group. Woolcock cites studies on Russia which question, in this respect, the viability of neo-liberal economic policies based on privatisation, "since efforts to sell off collectively owned goods under these conditions may not only intensify existing social problems but actually create new ones" (Woolcock, 1998, p. 172). Similar comments were made about the sell off of state assets in Mexico when President Salinas introduced neo-liberal policies, and privatization was seen to benefit a chosen few.

*Anomie* is the situation Durkheim identified as the "hallmarks of modernization" (Woolcock, 1998, p. 173) where people in new urban settings may have the freedom of linkage but lack a community base to provide social norms and hence stability. *Social opportunity* describes a context where high levels of community integration and extra-community networks can be found. Woolcock

suggests that such a situation has been achieved in development programmes of rotating savings and credit association.

*Social opportunity* in this example, involves a social mechanism which Granovetter calls “coupling and decoupling” where members initially are supported by their immediate community but are *later encouraged* to establish ties with other communities to expand their enterprise. Nevertheless, it can be seen that this example in fact takes Woolcock’s analysis beyond the micro-level, in the sense that it is the *development programmes* which later encourage members to establish ties with other communities, and which promote this as an acceptable norm within the community. This example thus supports the argument of Bowles and Gintis, that it requires an appropriate governmental or institutional framework to establish *social opportunity* at the micro level.

Woolcock describes a similar set of equally interdependent relations at the macro-level, whether governmental or organizational. The level of coherent internal relationships within an organization characterises its organizational integrity, whilst the level of relationships between the organization and its members, or the State and its citizens is referred to as synergy. Low levels in both these aspects produces a state of *anarchy*, characteristic of a *collapsed state*, Woolcock gives the example of Somalia in 1998. On the other hand, a *rogue state* is one which lacks autonomy in terms of organizational integrity and is characterised by corruption, yet maintains a form of synergy as government officials use connections with industry to secure personal goods and the state monopoly of violence to crush dissent. African states such as Nigeria and Sudan are current examples of rogue states. *Weak states*, on the other hand, are high in integrity but low in synergy and tend to be characterised by good intentions which get lost in bureaucracy and inefficiency, resulting in ineffectiveness. Woolcock considers ex-communist and socialist states as examples of weak states. *Developmental states* are those which have high levels of organizational integrity as well as good state-society relations. Woolcock cites Japan, South Korea and Singapore as prime examples.

The four possible combinations at the macro level and four at the micro level, result in a total of 16 theoretical combinations. The best possible option is a

combination of strong social capital at the micro level and supportive public governance, that is, conditions where there is intra and extra community links, good state-society relations and strong corporate cohesion, which allow for the emergence of a situation of *beneficent autonomy*. The contrary position, where none of these factors is present, is *anarchic individualism*.

Clearly, Woolcock describes ideal types; a nation is a context which is generally too large to be homogenous. Japan, for example, may be a developmental state, but also has problems with organised crime, even though the Japanese mafias tend to play by the rules, indeed they even elect their leaders. Indeed Woolcock observes that "groups within societies also vary considerably" (Woolcock, 1998, p. 167). As mentioned at the beginning, Woolcock's interest in social capital is a result of his interest in determining the conditions for assuring positive results of policy interventions. His model thus shows that policy needs to work at both the macro and micro levels encouraging embeddedness and autonomy at both levels, to best ensure the beneficent outcome of policy for society as a whole.

Nevertheless, Woolcock's model does not account for the possibility of resistance to the implementation of development policy. It assumes that policy failures can be accounted for purely in terms of the consequence of an imbalance in policy strategies as a result of not taking both macro and micro levels, and autonomous and embeddedness factors into account. In short, it avoids all reference to power relations in social structures, and the manner in which these may be embedded in social practices and symbolic structures. Yet, in chapter two, it was seen that the linking in Mexico of funding to reform, reproduced traditional clientalist power structures. Woolcock's model does not anticipate how such power relations are embedded in existing social structures or practices, constituting a resistance to change, adapting new policy strategies to traditional objectives of social control.

This is because Woolcock considers the infrastructure of social capital in terms of objective structures; he does not consider a possible normative aspect to social capital. Thus, Woolcock assumes that if policy attends to the infrastructure of social capital in the four areas which he defines, then the

rational individual will consequently choose to change his or her previous way of acting and begin to act in a way that will produce benefits for society as a whole. Hence, Woolcock's explanation of the unexpected outcome of policy remains restricted to an account of the complexity of the social infrastructure required to secure beneficial results for development policy.

Robert Putnam, on the other hand, in his study of the north and south of Italy was aware that the same social infrastructure and policies had different results in each region in Italy, and consequently attempted to take into account an aspect of cultural resistance to policy innovation, a notion which he refers to in terms of 'path dependence'.

## **A social governance approach: Putnam's notion of 'path dependence'**

Putnam is perhaps best known for his theory relating the decline in social governance in the United States of America to the decline in social capital. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, his research on social capital in Italy is more relevant, for not only did he attempt to explain a form of 'cultural resistance' to policy innovation, but also he was concerned, like Bowles and Gintis, with the negative impact of hierarchical relations. He argues that vertical relations not only inhibit flows of information because "the subordinate husbands information as a hedge against exploitation" (Putnam, 1993, p. 174), but they also undermine the norms of the group because "sanctions that support norms of reciprocity against the threat of opportunism are less likely to be imposed upwards and less likely to be acceded to, if imposed", (Putnam, 1993, p. 174).

Putnam considers that the hierarchically ordered organizations in southern Italy "like the Mafia or the institutional Catholic Church should be negatively associated with good government" (Putnam, 1993, p. 175). He also suggests that patron-client relations and strong kinship ties also undermine good government. The former are reciprocal yet vertical and unequal relations which

“undermine the horizontal group organisation and solidarity of clients and patrons alike – but especially of the clients.” (Putnam, 1993, pp. 174-175).

Whilst, Putnam recognises that such hierarchical structures do serve a purpose in the early stages of society by establishing stability, he suggests that if not superseded they also limit social development. Putnam notes that as a consequence “civic equilibrium has shown remarkable stability … although its effects have been disrupted from time to time by exogenous forces like pestilence, war, and world trade shifts. The contrasting Hobbesian equilibrium in the South has been even more stable, though less fruitful.” (Putnam, 1993, p. 181). Similarly kinship ties are important in the early stages of commercial revolution, but in later social development, such ‘strong ties’ are less important than weak ties which “encompass broad segments of society and thus undergrid collaboration at the community level”, (Putnam, 1993, p. 175).

Thus Putnam shows that *“Social context and history profoundly condition the effectiveness of institutions.”* (Putnam, 1993, p. 182) (authors italics). Secondly, Putnam draws attention to the similarities in the north-south contrast of the social and historical contexts in Italy, with the relation between North and South America:

After independence, both the United States and the Latin republics shared constitutional forms, abundant resources, and similar international opportunities; but North Americans benefited from their decentralized, parliamentary English patrimony, whereas Latin Americans were cursed with centralized authoritarianism familism and clientalism that they inherited from late medieval Spain. In our language, the North Americans inherited civic traditions, whereas the Latin Americans were bequeathed traditions of vertical dependence and exploitation. The point is not that the preferences or predilections of individual North and South Americans differed, but that historically derived social contexts presented them with a different set of opportunities and incentives. The parallel between this North-South contrast

and our Italian case is striking. (Putnam, 1993, p. 179)<sup>28</sup>

Putnam refers to the prevalence of 'tradition', in southern Italy and in Latin America, in terms of 'path dependence', which not only includes the idea of cultural resistance to the introduction of external policy initiative, but also their transformation: "informal norms and culture change more slowly than formal rules, and tend to remould those formal rules, so that the external imposition of a common set of formal rules will lead to widely divergent outcomes." (Putnam, 1993, p. 180)

Putnam's reference to the possibility that the informal norms of culture might 'remould' the formal rules of policy sounds strikingly similar to with the way in which the attempt to introduce objective criteria for the assignation of funds to universities in Mexico based on evaluation results, was in many cases, 'remoulded' to a traditional exercise of obtaining resources, in which simulation is considered an expedient strategy. Nevertheless, Putnam does not attempt to explain why "informal norms and culture change more slowly than formal rules", in fact the notion of 'path dependence' almost sounds like an excuse why nothing can be done in contexts such as southern Italy and Latin America. For this reason, it is important to seek an account of social capital which takes informal norms into account.

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<sup>28</sup> Not only is there a parallel between Putnam's study of north and south Italy and the United States and Latin America, but also there is an emerging distinction in Mexico between the north and the south of the country, accelerated by the signing of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, between Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, in 1994.

## **A relational sociological approach**

Bourdieu's account of social capital involves the identification of both the structure of social capital of a given context, and also the way in which that structure is reproduced. He achieves this by distinguishing three notions: that of *habitus*, capital, and *field*. The former is the structure of tacit practices and norms, whilst the dominance of these 'implicit rules of the game' endows an individual with capital to use in different social fields. The *field* is a relational site in which different forms of capital compete for different positions in the power hierarchy of the *field*, so that the *field* is defined by the relation between forms of capital. Both the *habitus* and the *field* can be compared to a game, the capital possessed by an individual as a result of dominating the rules of a particular *habitus* provide him or her with 'trump cards to play in the economy of the *field*'. According to the *field* in which the individual plays, his or her 'trump card' has a different weight or value. The social universe is made up of different fields, " i.e. ,spaces of objective relations that are the site of a logic and a necessity that are *specific and irreducible* to those that regulate other fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 96).

It is perhaps this lack of specificity which makes Bourdieu's notion of social capital difficult at first to understand, yet the fact that it is a relational concept where the field is defined by the relations between capital in a particular context is that which makes Bourdieu's account particularly useful in contexts where social relations do not conform to more traditional accounts. In this way Bourdieu's account of different forms of capital can be defended against Ben Fine's rejection of the concept of social capital.

The main argument of Fine against social capital is that the aspects of social engagement referred to are not questions of capital. As a consequence Fine concludes "If social capital seeks to bring the social back in to enrich the understanding of capitalism, it does so only because it has impoverished the understanding of capital by taking it out of its social and historical context" (Fine, 1999, p. 39). Fine argues that we can only talk about capital because for more than 200 years we have lived in a capitalist society. The post-Washington consensus uses the notion of social capital as the non-market counterpart to

market imperfections and thus as variables to be calculated in the complex statistical analysis of market predictions when imperfections are taken into account. Fine considers that the growing popularity of such analysis has the “potential to swallow up development studies, and to marginalise alternatives genuinely based on class analysis and political economy” (Fine, 2001, p. 138)

Nevertheless, as Adler argues, it is not clear that a class analysis and an account of political economy are suitable to the analysis of the development context of Mexican society. In her analysis of social structures in Mexico, Adler argues that the emergence of an authoritarian State in Latin-American societies has tended “to superimpose a sectorial structure of power on top of the class structure based on relations of production” (Adler Lomnitz, 1994, p. 223)

Bourdieu’s account of social capital does not depend upon a class analysis. The differential power relations of the field can obey different economies of power. Indeed, Bourdieu argues that classes are but one form of the principle of differentiation of social spaces, and these forms vary from one historical moment to another and one culture to another:

Social science should construct not classes, but rather the social spaces in which classes can be demarcated, but which only exist on paper. In each case it should construct and discover... the principle of differentiation which permits one to re-engage theoretically the empirically observed social space.... But with the exception of the least differentiated societies (which still present differences in symbolic capital, which are more difficult to measure), all societies appear as social spaces, that is, as structures of differences that can only be understood by constructing the generative principle which objectively grounds those differences. This principle is none other than the structure of the distribution of the forms of power or the kinds of capital which are effective in the social universe under consideration and which vary according to the specific place and moment at hand. (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 32)

Bourdieu differentiates what he calls “three fundamental species” of capital, each with its own subtypes, “namely, economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital”, whilst symbolic capital “is the form that one or another of these species takes when it is grasped through categories of perceptions that recognize its specific logic, or if you prefer, misrecognize the arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation.” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119) Subtypes of capital include university capital (power over the reproduction of capital in the university field), intellectual capital (intellectual renown), scientific capital (generated by league tables, research societies, etc.), political

capital, (arising from forms of governance), (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 76, 96). Social capital is the result of the objective regularities of relationships of an individual in a *habitus*, which involve mutual acquaintance and recognition. Social capital may take different forms and assume distinct dynamics in different societies. In differentiated societies it may be 'patrimonialized' by political capital, such as in Mexico in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the form of peasant, teachers, workers unions which all have a particular role in the one (dominant) party system. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119)

In this sense the different capitals acquire value according to the economies in which they are situated. Bourdieu describes his intention as one of

a desire to wrest from economism (Marxist or Neomarginalist) precapitalist economies and entire sectors of so-called capitalist economies which do not function according to the law of interest seen as the search for the maximization of (monetary) profit. The economic universe is made up of several economic worlds endowed with specific "rationalities," at the same time assuming and demanding "reasonable" (more than rational) dispositions adjusted to the regularities inscribed in each of them, to the "practical reason" which characterizes them. (Bourdieu, 1998, p.98).

Bourdieu's approach to the question of social capital is, then, one which attempts to reach beyond a Eurocentric or Marxist account of social organization.

### **A field determined by an economy of symbolic exchange**

An example of the way in which a field is defined by a particular economy of relations of capital is to be found in Bourdieu's study of the Kabyle economy. This study enabled him to distinguish the principles of differentiation of a pre-capitalist economy and the extent to which that was based upon a domestic economy. In his essay 'The economy of symbolic goods' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 92) Bourdieu considers how in the transition from a pre-capitalist economy to a capitalist economy two systems can co-exist, such that the market economy only very gradually replaces the symbolic economy, and pockets of the former will nevertheless remain (e.g. artistic capital).

The symbolic economy Bourdieu describes is remarkably similar to the social structures and practices Adler distinguishes in Mexican society, particularly the observation that these practices exist alongside a market rationality.

Nevertheless, it would also appear that in Mexico the introduction of neoliberal policies, far from accelerating a transition to a market economy has resulted in a market economy being adapted to clientalist structures, at the expense of both a liberal market and a symbolic economy. For this reason it is important to consider carefully Bourdieu's description of a symbolic economy.

The first important point is that Bourdieu finds, in what appears to be a reciprocal exchange of gifts, an aggressive act which puts the receiver in a position of obligation to the giver, "it creates obligations, it is a way to possess, by creating people obliged to reciprocate. But this structural truth is collectively repressed." (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 94) Individual self-deception concerning the acts of domination and aggression that are present in an exchange of gifts are sustained in a "veritable *collective misrecognition* inscribed in objective structures (the logic of honour which governs all exchanges – of words, of women, of murders etc.) and in mental structures, excluding the possibility of thinking or acting otherwise." (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 95)

The impossibility of thinking or acting otherwise depends on various factors. One factor is the logic of honour; another is the social taboo of making things explicit (a taboo which still exists in market economies where it is considered bad taste to leave a price tag on a present). The important point Bourdieu makes is that these are not conscious decisions but depend upon "acquired dispositions" of the habitus in which an individual is 'educated'. A successful exchange of gifts requires both parties to "have identical categories of perception and appreciation" which are in turn "sustained by the entire social structure". They can be sustained in different ways "there must be rewards, symbolic profits, often convertible into material profit, people must be able to have an interest in disinterestedness, a man who treats his servant well should be rewarded, with people saying of him: "He is an honest man, an honourable man!" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 101) All members of a group thus enjoy the symbolic capital of that group and "all the profits of the market of symbolic goods". They also partake of the symbolic violence, given that the relations of submission involved in the symbolic exchange are not recognised as such.

The complex and extensive way in which this symbolic economy is sustained in the social structure means that the emergence of a market economy in which social agents can “tear themselves away from collective misrecognition” and admit to themselves and others that they intend to make and accumulate a profit on the basis of exploitation, is a very slow process. But it does not only involve recognition of the misrecognition but also the transformation of the objective social structures in which that misrecognition was embedded.

Bourdieu's account of an economy of symbolic goods has many similarities with the situation Adler describes in the vertical and horizontal relations of exchange in Mexican societies. The figure of the *caudillo* was based primarily on honour, and that element of honour still exists in the general perception of clientelist relations. The symbolic relation of honour obscures the relation of domination of the patron with the client, the former offering jobs, university entrance, the solution of a legal case, or general protection, in return for personal loyalty to the patron, or political party, or family business structure. It also means that to question that relationship in any way is considered an insult to the honour of the patron. The more recent neoliberal version of clientalism has replaced this disguise of patron client relations under questions of honour, for the disguise of quasi-market competition, with the intention to undermining the economy of symbolism, and replace a personalised form of social control with a more systematic form of social management controlled by central government.

The horizontal reciprocal relations which Adler describes in Mexican society are less disguised in gestures of honour given that the situation of domination is reduced, yet such exchanges still involve the sense of a debt to be paid, even if the form of repayment depends more on the future possibilities of the person

and less on a formal present obligation. They are forms of exchange embedded in the symbolic economy of society, in the family, in the church, in the vertical power structure, headed by the symbolic figure of the President, guardian of the national prestige.<sup>29</sup>

The importance for this research is Bourdieu's observation that because the economy of symbolic goods is based on belief, and involves a constant adjustment between mental and objective structures, it is a stable economy which is not easily replaced:

The rupture cannot result from a simple awakening of consciousness; the transformation of dispositions cannot occur without a prior or concomitant transformation of the objective structures of which they are the production and which they can survive. (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 122)

In Bourdieu's economy of symbolic goods, each element only makes sense in relation to another element. Similarly, in the Mexican social structure, the relations of reciprocity are a consequence of, and at the same time sustain, the vertical structures which are in turn sustained by the symbolism of the nation, and the teachings of submission and obedience in a religious population. In a symbolic economy the dominant capital within the economy is symbolic and the principal *habitus* where this capital is formed is the family. Bourdieu's concept of social capital thus explains the stability of the informal norms which Putnam refers to as 'path dependence'. It also makes explicit the degree of embeddedness of clientelist relations in Mexican society. Not only are they 'embedded' due to their historical trajectory and their insertion in a complex structure of Mexican social relations which Adler describes, but also, according to Bourdieu, due to their reproduction in the different *habitus* of Mexican society,

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<sup>29</sup> The way in which the symbols of the Catholic Church and those of the State are mutually appropriated is the subject of a paper (Rocher, 2006) for a forthcoming conference on identity and culture organised by the UNAM.

in the symbolic economy which sustains the clientalist system and the relative value of clientalist capital in the different *fields* of the Mexican social space. The fact that neoliberal forms of clientalism seek to substitute a quasi market economy for a symbolic economy may have an impact on the relative value of clientalist capital in different fields.

Bourdieu's description of an economy or *field* evokes something similar to the concept of an eco-system, where each element participates in maintaining the balance of that structure. It is distinct from Woolcock's model of four distinct factors which have to be maintained in a functional balance. This account of the dynamic of social relations is one which also explains that which Putnam referred to in terms of 'path dependence' and Woolcock as the 'unexpected results of policy strategies'. Given that at both the level of the *habitus* and the level of the field a tacit knowledge of the rules of the game are required, and the capital in the field is relational, policies have an impact on a relational structure and not on a 'rational' agent:

First, the external determinations that bear on agents situated in a given field (intellectuals, artists, politicians, or construction companies) never apply to them directly, but affect them only through specific mediation of the specific forms and forces of the field... (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 105)

Another concept which Bourdieu's account of capital explains is one which the OECD refers to as 'linking' or bridging, and Woolcock as linking at the micro level and 'synergy' at the macro level. These concepts Bourdieu explains in terms of both the personal skills in dominating the tacit rules of the game of a particular *habitus*, and a mixture of personal skills and relational power operating at the level of the field. To use a more concrete example, if one considers Adler's example of the labour contractor known as the "devil", it can be seen that she refers to an individual who excels in the rules of the game at the level of the *habitus* of his local community of urban migrants, using the community networks to form and control a team of workers. Yet this control is also dependent upon his ability to find work for that team in the construction economy which combines formal and informal work forces.

This individual is the modern *cacique* or 'intermediary' in Mexican society, using his capital in one economy of reciprocal relations of migrant workers community, and playing it in the construction economy. His trajectory of

success in moving between these two different economies means that his position in each is reinforced by his success in the other: his ability to control informal teams of workers raises the value of his capital in the construction economy, whilst his ability to procure employment raises his capital in the migrant workers community.

Yet, his success not only depends on his personal skills in 'playing the game', but also certain 'external determinations' such as government policy concerning both employment legislation and also its enforcement. Whilst that enforcement is lax in the construction field, the 'devil's' capital is high, although neoliberal reforms are aimed at the regularisation of the informal labour market (Cross, 1997). In this sense, Bourdieu's account of a relational economy of capital also explains the relative importance of that which Bowles and Gintis refer to as legal and governmental frameworks. Government legislation and its application can intervene in a field to transform the relational value of capital in that field.

### **Relative values of capital, school cultures and ethos**

The impact of government legislation is described by Grimmett and Crehan (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992) in their evaluation of the impact of current education policy in school cultures in England. In determining the concept of 'school cultures' they refer to a number of factors which they suggest are participant in the construction of school cultures: "School culture can be said to be influenced by teacher sub-cultures, framed by personal biographies, ontological perspectives, and career experiences and by the occupational culture of teaching which represents attributes of the teaching profession as a whole." (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992, p. 59) They suggest that cultures evolve over time and the "culture building is essentially the infusion of value into the regular enterprise" so that "the organization is changed from an expendable tool into a valued source of personal satisfaction". (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992: )

They consider this multifaceted nature of school cultures in relation to the performance management strategy of 'forced collegiality'. They observe that "The last decade has witnessed a significant trend towards the centralization of bureaucratic control" which is the response to crises of "legitimation, belief,

motivation and purpose", and "One consequence of this state of affairs is the 'peculiar paradox that teachers are apparently being urged to collaborate *more*, just at the time where there is less for them to collaborate *about*" (Hargreaves and Dawe, 1989:3, emphasis in original), (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992). They use the term 'contrived collegiality' to refer to situations when collegial practices are 'grafted onto' existing school practices "without nurturing the underlying beliefs, values and norms that make up the sustaining culture." They suggest that 'administratively imposed' collegiality will remain contrived, whilst 'organizationally induced' collegiality involves the "careful manipulation, not of teachers' practices and behaviours, *but of the environment within which teachers live and work and have their professional being*". (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992, p. 70) These conclusions of Grimmett and Crehan clearly have a direct bearing on the application of centrally designed performance management strategies across different institutional environments. Their findings suggest that instead of directing policy to individual's behaviour and practices, it would be more effectively directed to the environment in which teachers practice.

The notion of *the environment within which teachers live and work and have their professional being* having more impact than 'administratively imposed' collegiality, is similar to the importance Bourdieu ascribes to dispositions arising from *habitus* constituted by a web of social practices. Indeed Terence McLaughlin describes 'ethos' in terms very similar to those of Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*:

"At the most general level, an ethos can be regarded as the prevalent or characteristic tone, spirit or sentiment informing an identifiable entity involving human life and interaction (a 'human environment' in the broadest sense) such as a nation, a community, an age, a literature, an institution, an event and so forth... The influence of an ethos is seen in the shaping of human perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, disposition and the like in a distinctive way which is implicated in that which is (in some sense) established. (McLaughlin, 2005, p. 312)

That which Grimmit and Crehan, or McLaughlin, refer to as the 'ethos' of an institution, Bourdieu describes in terms of *habitus*, which is something which influences 'schemes of perception'. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53) This is not a set of objective rules an individual consciously follows, but instead 'regularities' which can be found in practices and upon which frameworks of perception are founded. These 'regularities' form the basis of the perceptual frameworks within which an agent acts and finds his or her acts meaningful. Such 'regularities'

constitute both the possibility of, as well as restrictions to, human agency, and in this sense they are objective. Lingard suggests that as a result of applying Bourdieu's approach of 'socioanalysis' individuals may be helped to become "reflexively aware of the structural determinants of their practice" (Lingard, 2006, p. 291).

Capital is derived from particular *habitus* but it can be deployed in various fields. Individuals or policy makers can seek to increase the value of a particular capital in the logic of a particular field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 99), for example administrative capital over scientific capital in the field of education. The distinction between the construction of capital and the relational value of capital is important in this thesis due to the issue of policy which seeks to transform performance. According to Bourdieu's approach to the concept of capital, capital itself arises from the regularities of practice which constitute a *habitus*. It is in this sense that Grimmit and Crehan observe that collegiality is constructed over time in an education institution and cannot be imposed by policy directives. Nevertheless, policy can undermine the regularities of practice upon which a *habitus* or 'ethos' was constructed.

On the other hand, policy can intervene to the extent that it works to change the relational value of one form of capital in relation to another in the logic of a field. As Grimmit and Crehan observe, the centralisation of programme design and the standardisation of evaluations has decreased the scientific capital of the teachers in schools in England, so that teachers are asked to collaborate more when there is less for them to collaborate about. Thus, policy fruitlessly attempted to regulate the construction of a *habitus* of collegiality in schools yet, at the same time, it devalued the scientific capital of teachers in the educational field.

The way in which current education policy in England is undermining teachers capital in the education field as well as the *habitus* where that capital is formed, can be contrasted to Bourdieu's account of the mechanisms of the preservation of capital and *habitus* in the French university system. Bourdieu's analysis of research data in *Homo Academicus* demonstrates how the reproduction of the *habitus* is also dependent on the power relations which configure the *field* and

how, in turn, the maintenance of those power relations depends upon certain procedures which determine the access to that field. Bourdieu argues that in the academic field those procedures are embedded in the practices of the committees of selection and promotion. The objectively orchestrated dispositions are constructed and maintained by the processes of selection, evaluation and promotion of both the student and academic community. The control of power by a dominant group in a *field* maintains the *habitus* (disposition) of that group, and its relation to other groups. This explains the homologous relation that exists between the discursive stances and the 'space of the positions' held by their authors. On the basis of this observation Bourdieu arrives at the following conclusion:

This means that it is not, as is usually thought, political stances which determine people's stances on things academic, but their positions in the academic field which inform the stances they adopt on political issues in general as well as on academic problems. (Bourdieu, 1988)

The positions taken by academics in relation to political events largely reflected their differential position in the academic field. The latter is determined by the means of reproduction of the hierarchies of that field, the way in which 'the capital of university power' is produced and reproduced through the committees of selection and promotion.

The relation between these terms of *field*, *capital* and *habitus* allows Bourdieu to develop his notion of finality, the idea that events occur not as a result of conscious decision taking, but due to objectively orchestrated dispositions. (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 149) In short, Bourdieu's explains the events of May 1968 as the result of no particular political decision but as the result of 'qualitative leaps where the continuous addition of ordinary events leads to a singular, extraordinary instant.' (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 161) Thus Bourdieu can explain how unexpected outcomes may occur as a result of orchestrated dispositions but not conscious intent. For this reason, the distinction between *habitus*, *capital* and *field*, appears to be a useful tool when considering the impact of policy in a particular context.

## Concluding remarks

Bourdieu's analysis of habitus and disposition provides a theoretical framework for explaining the way in which they are embedded in social practices. Symbolic economies co-exist with market economies and symbolic capital operates alongside social capital, with cultural capital and intellectual capital. Capital is, in this sense, something like the tacit understanding and practical dominance of the rules of the game which facilitates the successful participation of an individual in the relations of a social group. This practical dominance arises from the sharing of *habitus* which constructs a perceptual framework and a disposition. Capital is also something which acquires distinct values according to its positional relation in different economies of the 'fields' of the social universe. An individual can increase the value of his or her capital in a particular field according to the skills with which he or she plays that capital, but also the value of that capital can be affected by external structures such as governmental and legal frameworks, and changes of the relation of that field to others in the social universe.

Adler argues that the 'rules of the game' are at least four dimensional in Mexico: vertical, often clientalist relations, horizontal reciprocal relations, market relations and symbolic relations, embedded in a diverse set of social structures sustained by social practices. Adler argues that Mexicans need to learn these distinct rules of the game whereas Bourdieu would argue that they also need to learn the value of the consequent capital in different economies or fields.

Various scholars have sought to explain different issues by means of the concept of social capital. These include the decline in public governance, the role of social capital in economic success, the unexpected results of policy implementation, the relative importance of governmental and legal structures for capital to be successfully employed, the 'path dependence' of certain forms of capital, the role of linking between different social fields, and the notion of the ethos of an institution. Bourdieu's development of the concepts of *habitus*, capital and *field*, succeeds in constructing an account which coherently integrates all these factors. As such it is an approach which can be employed to explain the complex levels of relations which exist in Mexican society, as well

as the operation of the intermediary, or *cacique*, in the complex combination of economies which constitute the social universe of the Mexican society. It can also be employed to explain the impact of neoliberal policy and the new forms of neoliberal clientalism.

The above development of an account of Bourdieu's relative approach to forms of capital in the social field can be seen as relevant to the explanation of the social context of policy reform in Mexico. In the following chapter I will consider the extent to which it is relevant to the explanation of international policy models in tertiary education.

# Chapter 6. A global educational policy field

## Two distinct accounts of post-industrial society

In the previous chapter it was seen that Bourdieu's approach which considers social spaces relationally, instead of geographically, in terms of the relative values of capital within a field, can explain how government policy can alter the value of capital in a field, as in the example of the informal contract labourer, the "devil".

Education policy can similarly be considered in terms of its impact on the relative values of capital, either directly or indirectly, within the field of tertiary education. Bob Lingard argues in a recent article that Bourdieu:

..seems to be suggesting the way in which global neo-liberal politics have dented somewhat the relative autonomy of the logics of practice of many social fields, including I would argue that of the educational policy field, which has become more heteronomous as a sub-set of economic policy. (Lingard, 2006, p. 292)

Consequently, with the aim of explaining the disjuncture between policy objectives outcomes, the reform programme in Mexico can be analysed in terms of the precise way in which it proposes to transform, either directly or indirectly, the power relations in the field of tertiary education policy. These potential areas of impact can then be compared with their actual impact in particular contexts. In this chapter I will analyse the potential impact of the reform programme and in the chapters seven and eight I will analyse the actual impact of the reform programme in three universities in Mexico.

In chapter three it was observed that the reform programme in Mexico included both World Bank and OECD strategies of education reform, and furthermore, that the tension between these either competitive or collaborative strategies has not been resolved in the most recent tightening up of policy application in Mexico. I will firstly argue that the World Bank and the OECD tertiary education policies constitute two distinct models which can be distinguished on the basis of their distinct accounts of post-industrial society in terms of either a

'knowledge economy' or a 'knowledge society'. Secondly, I will consider how each account directly or indirectly proposes to transform the relative values of capital in the tertiary education field.

## **Neoliberalism and the 'knowledge economy'**

As mentioned in the introduction, the 1980's and 1990's were dominated by a paradigm of development referred to variously as the 'Washington consensus', 'market fundamentalism', 'free-market economics' or 'neoliberalism'. The use of the latter term predominated in Latin America. (Broad, 2004, p. 129) The Salinas Government (1988-1994) oversaw the transition of the Mexican economy from one of a protected internal market to a neoliberal open market, export lead, economy.

Nevertheless, in addition to the increasing tendency towards deregulation and 'open markets' as neoliberal economics came to dominate economic policy at international and national levels, there was increased economic competition at an international level arising from the globalisation of economic transactions. This was intensified by the steadily increasing competition from producers with low labour costs, such as south Asia, India and China. Given this intense global competition, there was an increased effort to determine strategies which would create alternative forms of economic advantage. During the eighties, Singapore, unable to compete in size with the 'Asian giants', had invested in education to produce a highly skilled work force and successfully attracted high-tech companies requiring skilled labour.

The advanced industrialised countries, unable to compete in the 'race to the bottom' in labour costs, yet unwilling to abandon completely 'free market' economics and support the International Labour Organisation's ([www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)) argument for a minimum world wage, opted for the 'Singaporean approach' of constructing 'market niches' in high-technology production where they considered they would be in a stronger position to compete. The race to the bottom is avoided, as is protectionism, by constructing this form of 'market niche' and then repositioning education policy in line with this economic strategy. They attempted to capitalise their 'advantages' in terms of an

educated workforce by considering them as knowledge workers in a knowledge economy. Tertiary education thus came to be considered as an integral part of economic policy in advanced industrial countries.

Nevertheless, this model has not been described in official discourses as an attempt to carve out a 'market niche', but instead as a need to keep up with a 'knowledge economy' described as a 'global phenomena'. The knowledge economy model has been adopted by the World Bank and the OECD as part of their international development models, which all countries, whether they have advanced or developing economies are encouraged to adopt. Brown and Lauder have pointed out that the developing economies of China, India and Malaysia are doing precisely this, thus undermining the "policy discourse of the knowledge economy" which "assumes that the competition for high-skilled employment would be fought out between the developed economies as low-skilled, low-waged work would migrate to less-developed economies" (Brown & Lauder, 2006) p323

There are a number of other related, explanations for this misrepresentation of this particular strategy in terms of a 'global phenomena'. One is the growing hegemony of a particular world view<sup>30</sup>; another is the desire of certain global

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<sup>30</sup> Peet considers that "the neoliberalism that now informs even conventional thinking about globalization has achieved the status of being taken for granted or, more than that, has achieved the supreme power of being widely taken as scientific and resulting in an optimal world. So resistance to neoliberal globalization is seen as resistance to globalization in general, a new kind of Luddite opposition to the technically and economically inevitable." (Peet, 2003, p. 4) Writing about the role of international policy institutions, he suggests that hegemony requires moving "the analysis from the ideological level – the socio political production of what people think – to the hegemonic level – the socio-cultural production of the way people think." (Peet, 2003, p. 16) Once a community of experts agree "more by convention or political persuasion than factual backing, to call a certain type of thinking and speaking 'rational'", they thereby transform a certain set of speech acts through their repetition into the regularities of a discursive formation. Alternative discourses with difficulty find openings, for all further

institutions to achieve a new model of economic imperialism, obliging other countries to play by a set of rules where they already have an established advantage; a third explanation is the interest of certain countries in opening up a private education market, supported by the World Trade Organisation pressing for the inclusion of education services as a sector to be opened up to international markets.

Hence, the seventies and the eighties saw the coincidence of the existence of a highly educated population in advanced industrial societies (Drucker, 1992, 1993), the demand by the financial markets for a reorganisation of production to provide a better return on investment (Duménil & Lévy, 2003), developments in communication and information technology (Castells, 2000, 2001; Clegg, Hudson, & Steel, 2003; Heap, 1995; Mackay, 1995; Thomas, 1995), and the successful attempt by Singapore to create a niche in the commodity market in

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discussion on this topic is regulated by this discursive formation, discussion tends to take place within the categories of the discourse and not in relation to the discourse itself: "That is, the depth of a hegemony resides in the ability of a discursive formation to specify the parameters of the practical, the realistic and the sensible among a group of theoreticians, political practitioners and policy-makers. A discourse operates negatively by producing and enforcing silences on disapproved topics, terms and approaches." (Peet, 2003, p. 17)

high technology production attracting investors with the supply of a highly skilled workforce(Bottery, 1992).

The combination of these factors, although coincidental, has been used to justify the concept of a 'globalised market lead knowledge economy' which has emerged as a consequence of the evolution of science and technology in the field of communications. Within this hegemonic discourse it is argued that education policy has no alternative but to reform to meet the new demands of the market. Nevertheless, in this policy discourse, education , has no role in the emergence of the knowledge economy, instead its role is to adapt to this new reality by supplying private enterprise with highly educated human resources and 'new' or 'frontier' knowledge.

## **The concept of a 'knowledge society'**

This account of the linear evolution of the knowledge economy from advances in communications technology to the globalisation of a knowledge economy has been criticised by many. Ducker's genealogical account of the emergence of the knowledge economy argues that it was not the capitalist promotion of scientific management that was the cause of the emergence of the new economy but rather the latter's contribution to the reduction of back breaking labour and the extending of the working life of the average worker. As a result the average labourer's child has been exposed to extended schooling and has now evolved into a knowledge worker.

By a circuitous and quite unplanned route, we are therefore arriving at the point at which Taylor aimed seventy-five years ago: we are beginning to apply knowledge to work itself. That the knowledge worker came first and knowledge work second – that indeed knowledge work is still largely to come- is a historical accident (Drucker, 1992, p. 283).

Concerning the role of advances in technology Ray Thomas argues that, technology is designed and developed according to social factors, for example, the binary code can be considered as pure science, but its applications are socially determined:

Binary code can be thought of as a piece of pure science which can be considered independently of the human minds which invented it. But the information society is an artefact which encompasses a range of applications of binary code which reflect the complexity and dominant interests of society

(Thomas, 1995, p. 12).

As early as 1979 Lyotard described the consequences for education systems if they continued to adopt a management position based on the linear development of technology and industry supplied by autonomous education systems. He warned this approach included administrative procedures which manipulated the aspirations of individuals to mirror those of the system: "Administrative procedures should make individual "want" what the system needs in order to perform well." (Lyotard, 1984, p. 62) Thus we find the World Bank recommending financial incentive schemes to motivate academic performance in accordance with strategic objectives, (World\_Bank, 1994).

Lyotard argues that these management approaches are based on the theory of thermodynamics and "the notion that the evolution of a system's performance can be predicated if all of the variables are known" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 55) He reminded us that the limits of this model was made clear by the advent of quantum mechanics and atomic physics and argues that the latter paradigm of knowledge "which favours a multiplicity of finite meta-arguments" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 66) can and should be applied to social systems.

More recently this challenge has been taken up by the application of the concept of 'complex systems' to social structures and learning environments. It is an approach which considers all systems as interrelated or embedded in the complex network of systems which constitute social reality, with the result that a change in one sub-system will invoke changes in other sub-systems. Jan Visser (Visser) develops a concept of 'complex systems' based on a notion of an ecosystem, where all the sub-systems and their sub-systems are interdependent and the system evolves as a whole. Nevertheless, there are accounts of complex systems which consider them in terms of an increased number of interdependent sub-systems which can, nevertheless, be classified in terms of their function, and thus brought under a single systematic approach (Axelrod & Cohen, 1999).

Visser's notion of the evolution of society in terms of interrelated sub-systems is one adopted by Manuel Castells in his account of the emergence of a

'knowledge society' or 'network society'. Castells argues that the role of technological developments in the emergence of the knowledge society was not a linear process. He suggests that, in this sense, there are lessons to be learnt from the history of the emergence of the Internet.

Firstly, concerning the argument for the reduction of state intervention he notes "all the key technological developments that led to the Internet were built around government institutions, major universities, and research centres. The Internet did not originate in the business world, It was too daring a technology, too expensive a project, and too risky an initiative to be assumed by profit-orientated organizations." (Castells, 2001, p. 22)

Secondly, although the research which led to the establishment of the Internet was financed by military spending, "The lucky part of the ARPANET story was that the Defence Department, in a rare instance of organization intelligence, set up ARPA as a funding and guidance research agency with considerable autonomy. ARPA went on to become one of the most innovative technology policy institutions in the world..." (Castells, 2001, p. 20) The autonomy of the project allowed the creators to realize their dream "to change the world through computer communication", designing an open protocol which lead to the self-evolution of the Internet in ways which nobody had planned. Nevertheless, this 'dream to change the world' was not fortuitous, but itself the product of a liberal university education system and a particular social and political context of California in the 1960's and 1970's.

This theme of the socially embedded character of scientific development is taken up by Nowotny et al in their discussion of the emergence of Mode 2 knowledge. They regret that in their first book in which they developed this concept, 'wider social transformations went largely unexplored' which permitted the traditional view that "The transformation of society is regarded as predominately shaped by scientific and technical change" (Nowotny et al., 2001, p. 3) , and instead they suggest that in understanding the 'knowledge Society' "The correspondence between the evolution of social and political contexts, on the one hand, and intellectual cultures on the other are too suggestive to have been merely accidental". (Nowotny et al., 2001, p. 9)

They observe that whilst “The search for control and predictability had guided the project of modernization from the beginning, the Clock, and later the Machine, had become the guiding metaphor and dominant iconography of the political order”, (Nowotny et al., 2001, p. 5). Similarly the enthusiastic reception of the development of chaos theory in the 1970’s was due to the fact that society was ready, even waiting for such a theory: “For this wider public, chaos theory was a powerful metaphor which vindicated its long-held belief that not everything was predictable – either in science or government or in daily life.” (Nowotny et al., 2001, p. 5) The receptivity of society for such a theory was, according to the authors, due to the changing nature of society: “Contemporary society is characterized – irreversibly – by pluralism and diversity and also, we argue volatility and transgressivity”. (Nowotny et al., 2001, p. 19) There is in this sense, a two way relation between science, technology and society, in the growing demand of local people for science to attend their particular concerns.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> An example of a situation in which this type of knowledge is generated was when the government in Mexico announced plans to build a nitrogen plant in the South East state of Campeche, not far from lagoons protected under environmental law. The local indigenous people demanded an inquiry into the impact of such a development in the area, and this required oceanologists, ecologists, anthropologists, sociologists, lawyers, local representatives and government representatives. The knowledge generated drew from both previous knowledge in each discipline and generated new interdisciplinary knowledge around the problem attended to in the particular context in which it arose. That new knowledge may be codified in the formal report of the resolution of the problem, or it may partly or wholly remain uncodified and tacit practical knowledge of those who were involved in the discussions and consultations. As Gibbons explains, this new knowledge, is not readily transferable in a decontextualised form, but it is transferred through individuals who participated in that project and who may draw upon the lessons learned in that experience in resolving other different problems. An important characteristic of this type of knowledge is that in addition to being trans-disciplinary, it is also tacit. (Gibbons, 1994, p. 17) There is also a sense in which people have, as a result of media reporting on events worldwide, become more aware and more suspicious of the uses to which science and technology are put, at the same time as having become more aware of their rights as citizens as well as their power as protest groups.

Ron Barnett likewise argues that universities have become more, not less, interconnected "in today's "shifting, fragile and uncertain world". And as such "Universities are caught in webs. The strands of the webs link universities variously to economies, states, other universities, epistemologies and professions"(Barnett, 2003, p. 6). Indeed, in such an interconnected world the neoliberal ideology which considers tertiary education as an autonomous sub-system, has little congruence with reality and will with difficulty achieve closure, for even in authoritarian states, the 'systems' dependence of the use of ICT's will enable the development of spaces external to the system,(Stambach & Malekela, 2006) .

This approach to social evolution is one which is referred to as a 'knowledge society' approach, and clearly considers society to be an integral part of the development of knowledge. Whereas in the 'knowledge economy' approach society is a passive beneficiary of developments in science and their application in industry, whilst education is considered as an autonomous sub-system at the service of the knowledge economy, supplying specialised human resources, in the 'knowledge society' approach tertiary education is one of the sources of change and innovation. The 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy' can thus be seen to present two different models concerning society, the economy, and the role of education.

These two different models of the knowledge economy sustain two distinct international models of tertiary education: the World Bank model based on that of a 'knowledge economy' and the OECD model, based on that of a 'knowledge society'.

## **Transforming the relative value of capital in the tertiary education field**

### **The World Bank model**

In this section I will proceed to analyse the way in which the World Bank policy seeks to transform the relative value of capital in the tertiary education field and

the concept of social capital which is presupposed. This transformation involves redefining 'suppliers' and 'clients' in that field, and who validates the production of that field.

### ***Membership of the field***

In World Bank tertiary education policy, the issue of the membership of the field of tertiary education is defined in terms of those institutions which are to be legally recognised as suppliers of tertiary education, as well as procedures controlling the access of potential 'clients'.

Current World Bank policy seeks to re-define membership of the field of 'tertiary education' by promoting the certification of private institutions. In the 1994 report, certifying private institutions as tertiary education suppliers was justified in terms of providing a means of expanding higher education without increasing government spending: "Government can encourage the development of private higher education to complement public institutions as a means of managing the cost of expanding higher education enrolments, increasing the diversity of training programs, and broadening social participation in higher education." (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 34) This is backed up by the WTO classification of education as a "commercially competitive activity" (Bottery, 2000, p. ix)

The certification of non-university institutions is also encouraged. (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 31) Both the 1994 report and the 2002 report emphasise the importance for governments to encourage greater differentiation of institutions, which means the "development of non-university institutions and the growth of private institutions" in order to "make higher education systems more responsive to changing labour market needs." (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 28) This

claim appears to be based on the argument that private institutions will respond more quickly to market demands for education.<sup>32</sup> This argument also implies a corresponding re-orientation of the demand for tertiary education from traditional areas such as law and accountancy to technology and science. It presupposes that potential students know which career programmes offer the best chance of increasing an individual's employability, and what's more, that on the basis of such considerations a potential student will choose his or her course of study.

The fact that higher education is referred to as 'training programmes', that non-university institutions should be able to offer such programmes and that private suppliers should be able to participate already indicates the way in which the reconfiguration of the membership of the field also reconfigures the 'product' of the field, namely that which is considered to be tertiary education, particularly university education.<sup>33</sup>

Access policies determine who will benefit from that knowledge and also join the "global market for advanced human capital". The World Bank in their 1994 policy document, mentions as a necessary area of reform the "control of access to public higher education on the basis of efficient and equitable selection criteria". (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 13) The justification for the "improving of selection processes" is made on the basis of its role in improving quality. The

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<sup>32</sup> Recent research on the pertinence of post-graduate programmes to business development in the South-East of Mexico has shown that private institutions only tended to offer programmes where student demand was high, and a low infrastructure cost was involved, even when the job market was saturated. Data analysis showed that, in general, only the public universities offered post graduate programmes in a wide selection of subjects related to areas of local economic development. (Rodriguez Montes, 2006 #347; Negrin Munoz, 2006 #346; Castillo Leon, 2006 #345)

<sup>33</sup> A discussion of the impact of this reconfiguration can be found in Ronald Barnett's discussion of the role of the university in today's complex society. (Barnett, 2000)

1994 report suggests that "Governments can help higher education institutions strengthen the quality of education in many ways. For example, they can assist institutions in selecting students by organizing and improving admission examinations." (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 61) The selection criteria should be based on national, regional or global evaluation systems. Access formulas should determine the intake of students to each institution and concern not only the quotas for each field of study but "the socio-economic levels and academic quality of students". (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 52)

Thus the World Bank's focus on quality control is used to justify the reconfiguration of who can produce knowledge, as well as who can have access to those institutions and benefit from that knowledge, thereby changing the membership of the field. This change in the membership of the field changes the relative value of the capital of each player in the field, whether institution or student (client). For example, public institutions potentially loose value in relation to private institutions in certain areas; the student as client potentially gains capital value in relation to the institution, private institutions potentially gain value in the student market, as institutions which are more orientated to vocational studies and labour markets.

### ***Accreditation bodies***

The World Bank has also recommended widening the certification bodies in tertiary education. The widening of the certification bodies is justified in terms of the discourse of accountability. If institutions of education were to be held accountable, they needed to be so not only in terms of the costs of their product, but also in terms of the quality of their product, and quality is measured in terms of outputs relative to inputs. (World\_Bank, 1994, p. 51)

Again, this measure seeks to procure the involvement of the private sector in accreditation processes, as it is recommended that colleges of professional bodies undertake the accreditation procedures. The participation of such bodies is justified in securing the pertinence of the programme contents to professional working practices and with providing benchmarking for the student as 'client' and for potential employers:

In many countries, professional associations fulfil important coordinating and planning functions to monitor, evaluate, certify, and accredit higher education

institutions. This is intended to promote standardization of programs and is useful in ensuring the equivalence of degrees, diplomas, and certificates awarded. (World Bank, 1994, p. 70)

In Mexico professional associations have been set up to undertake these procedures, yet it is a government induced procedure given that the principal, if not perhaps only, reason the universities seek accreditation is the impact of these results on performance indicators and hence funding quotas. As seen in chapter three, entrance into the elite CUMEX group of universities in Mexico depends on having 70% of the university undergraduate programmes accredited. Similarly, in England, Ron Barnett refers to the 'Pontius Pilate Syndrome', where the state having created a system where improvement is always based on comparison, in which universities are either 'celebrated' or 'exposed' in the mass media publication of league tables, will nevertheless disclaim responsibility for public opinion and its impact on university enrolment (Barnett, 2003, p. 77).

Yet this 'invisible hand' of performance indicators is set to become even more elusive as the World Bank suggests that its task now is to establish international standards in accreditation and qualifications:

In addition to the support through accreditation projects in individual countries, the World Bank will contribute toward the goal of establishing an international qualifications framework through consultations with partners in the donor community and specialized professional associations, as well as through grants from the Development grant Facility.

It can be seen that as a result of the purported interest in guaranteeing 'internationally recognised' standards of quality, the World Bank is increasing its relative capital in the field through the influence it will have in determining the indicators for the different quality assurance standards. It can also be described

as a clientalist strategy of cooption on the basis of its control over the distribution of resources.<sup>34</sup> By implementing a system of worldwide indicators of quality evaluation it will increase its control over the exchange of symbolic resources, and if a particular country attempted to resist such a strategy it could only do so on a basis of marked inequity.

Hence, it can be seen that the introduction of new players in terms of certification procedures has a potentially strong impact in terms of the relative power of the players in the field. The state loses its monopoly of power in this field as professional bodies are included as certifiers of programmes. Students gain capital as clients entitled to quality services, at the same time as losing capital in the sense that it is not the client but the accreditation bodies which decide what is to be considered as quality. Teachers stand to either gain or lose capital according to the performance of their students in the league tables, but lose capital in another form, as they no longer evaluate the quality of the student's acquisition of knowledge, nor design of the programme's content. Institutions stand to gain or lose capital according to their place in the national and international league tables. Finally the state and international policy agencies gain capital to the extent that they are involved in determining the indicators on the basis of which the different evaluations are made.

Finally, the widening of the 'authorities of delimitation'<sup>35</sup> at the same time as introducing centrally defined indicators for evaluation, and the production of league tables, is key to the NPM strategy of creating quasi-market conditions of

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<sup>34</sup> See discussion of Schefner in chapter 3.

<sup>35</sup> Foucault uses this concept in defining the conditions of emergence of a 'serious speech act' (Foucault, 1972)

competitiveness in the education sector whilst maintaining central government control.

### ***Human sources management and social capital***

The neoliberal vision of a 'knowledge economy' not only considers specialised human resources as an essential ingredient in the achievement of the knowledge niche of economic development, but also it is a model which assumes how such human resources will comport themselves in terms of social capital in response to particular performance management strategies. It is argued that individuals will competitively seek to enhance their advantages in the knowledge 'market', and are encouraged to do so by the a management model based on the competition for resources. The introduction of this performance management strategy and its effects has been comprehensively described by social analysts in Britain.

Clarke and Newman (Clarke & Newman, 1997) in describing the transition from the welfare state to the managerial state during the 1970's and 80's, refer to the fact that this model not only introduces change, but also justifies that change as the only possible alternative (Clarke & Newman, 1997, p. 36); they analyse the role of incentives schemes to create competitive quasi-market environments (Clarke & Newman, 1997, pp. 85 -86) and the reinventing the public as 'client' (Clarke & Newman, 1997, p. 123).

The 'managerial state' model marked a transition from a benevolent bureaucratic state model to the 'evaluative state' (Neave, 1990) model, one which requires efficiency and accountability in the use of public resources. The 'managerial state' model was further developed under New Labour, becoming what Hood (Hood, 1991quoted in Botttery (2000)) called New Public Management model (NPM). The NPM model adopts the managerial strategies of those used in the neoliberal market model, producing a model of strong centralised management with decentralised quasi-market peripheries.

Standard indicators allow centralised control and the de-centralised management of the peripheries through a system of centralised evaluative regulation. This also makes possible the creation of 'quasi-market' conditions at

the peripheries. Standardised indicators are thus a key strategy of New Public Management. Hierarchical, centrally controlled, systems are combined with competitive quasi markets at the periphery, where the individual either as human resource or client, takes a large part of the risks. In the education sector the introduction of the NPM approach involves institutions being encouraged to compete against other institutions, departments against departments and individuals against individuals for resources, and thereby to better 'perform' and meet the challenges of creating knowledge 'market niches'.

This competitive view of human agency is based on an 'individualistic' or 'economic approach' to the notion of social capital. It is one which presupposes that an individual will share his/her own capital in order to maximise that same capital:

The economic literature draws on the assumption that people will maximise their personal utility, deciding to interact with others and draw on social capital resources to conduct various types of group activities (Glaeser, 2001). In this approach, the focus is on the investment strategies of individuals faced with alternative uses of time. (OECD, 2001, p. 40)

Such a simplistic account of agency and social capital is, according to Clark and Newman, (Clarke & Newman, 1997) characteristic of 'public choice theory'. They observe that "public choice theory is rather limited in its capacity to explain processes of change and their uneven impact. It thus reflects the *under-socialised* model of the person, in which actions (outcomes) are seen as a direct response to motivational pressures (incentives) that dominate economic theory (Clarke & Newman, 1997, p. 86).

The above account indicates how neoliberalism, in the form of New Public Management, seeks to introduce the logic of the market not only into public

services, including education, but also into the lives of the practitioners within those services.<sup>36</sup>. The NPM approach combines a centralised hierarchical control of social organisation combined with the attempt to organise social practice in terms of decentralised quasi-market environments which construct agency competitively. Ball considers this 'hands off' approach as an essential attractive characteristic of these policy models for politicians: "It distances the reformer from the outcomes of the reform. Blame and responsibility are also devolved or contracted out. And yet, by use of target setting and performative techniques, 'steering at a distance' can be achieved" (Ball, 1998a, p. 125) The agent takes a large part of the risks in these competitive environments, with varying percentages of income depending upon performance related bonuses, and in some situations, the employment itself depends upon performance.

In chapter three, it was seen that performance related income can be more than 100% of an academic's salary in Mexico or 50% of his or her income, an amount which is lost in times of illness or retirement. Richard Sennet (Sennet, 1998) has described the levels of stress that this type of competitive environment creates, and the effects of this type of strategy on social capital in terms of a "corrosion of character", a "loss of life narratives", and consequently of social values and family disintegration. Even in those countries and environments where performance related income is not such a high percentage of salary, such as British universities, educationalists suggest that this type of environment nevertheless engenders a 'cult of selfishness':

What is achieved in the establishment of the market form in education, as in

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<sup>36</sup> This is an example of what Habermas would refer to as the colonisation of the *lifeworld* in modernity by instrumental rationality. Habermas' employed the metaphor of 'threshold' to identify the point of contact between governmental systems of social regulation, and the *lifeworld* understood as daily human practices coordinated according to tacit social norms and social networks. Habermas considered that threshold was transgressed, which attempted to 'colonise' the *lifeworld*. (Habermas, 1984, 1987)

other sectors of public provision, I want to suggests, is a new more environment for both consumers and producers. Thus, schools are being inducted into what Plant (1992 p. 87) calls a 'culture of self interest'.... Within the market form both consumers and producers are encouraged, by the rewards and punishments of 'market forces', and legitimated, by the values of personal standpoint, in their quest for positional advantage over others, what Kenway (1990 p.155) calls the 'cult of selfishness'. More generally this is part of what Bottery terms the 'pauperisation of moral concepts in the public sphere' (Bottery, 1992, p. 93) (Ball, 1998b, p. 30).

Incentives strategies to reward human resources according to short term performance rather than relative advances in relation to a general career path may, if effectively administered, increase the academic capital of staff who achieve high rewards internal to the institution, or scientific capital if they achieve high rewards in national research programmes, but at the cost of personal autonomy, of being trapped into the logic of the field. In this respect Stephen Ball refers to what he considers, as the 'deprofessionalisation' of teachers and their 'reprofessionalization' according to "the new vocabulary of performance" (Ball, 2003, p. 218). Teachers are dis-empowered in terms of education standards and goals and re-empowered according to performative criteria established in relation to new national and international standards and goals in education. Performance management has as its objective of the co-option of academic staff into a system of permanently seeking to maximise their capital according to 'objective indicators'. Those indicators are established by the World Bank in the tertiary education field.

### ***The control of capital values in the field of tertiary education***

In addition to the impact on the relative values of capital in the field of new rules of membership and accreditation, a *surplus value* is generated by the fact that these new rules sustain and promote each others role. Thus teachers, students, institutions, become enveloped in the logic of the field controlled by the strategic measures of the World Bank: Institutions are motivated to refer to the *independent* accreditation bodies in order to *validate* their mechanisms of quality control in view of the opportunity of being included in the national league tables. High league table ratings will increase student demand for their programmes, both because of their quality and because of the improved market value of their graduating students, as well as the consequent access of their students to national and international grant systems. And finally, the personal aspirations of education workers are aligned, via appraisal and rewards

systems, with the objectives of the particular institution which reflect the objectives of the state and international institutions.

Thus, in the neoliberal model of the tertiary education field, individual players in the field, whether academics, institutions or States, have little possibility of incrementing their overall capital given the control exercised by international agencies over the relations between the different capitals in the field. The justification is that the winner will be the market: institutions will produce better qualified human resources in areas where there is most market demand. All the players will respond to the logic of the market, at the cost of a loss of autonomy and with it the space for ethical decisions, as well as an increase in personal stress.

Hence the World Bank model of tertiary education is built, as mentioned above, upon the principle of systems theory where “the evolution of a system’s performance can be predicated if all of the variables are known” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 55) If this research concerns the apparent disjuncture between international policy and local realities, then, with regard to World Bank policy, disjuncture will most probably be explained either by the extent to which all the variables could not be known, and consequently centrally controlled, or one variable was misinterpreted. One such variable is that of the ‘rational agent’ which will always act ‘rationally’ to increase his or her own advantages.

## **The OECD model**

### ***The OECD focus on the transferral of knowledge***

The OECD CERI (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation) project on ‘Knowledge Management in the Learning Society’ notes that although economists consider knowledge as an input in terms of competences, and outputs in terms of innovation, nevertheless, non-economists and education experts are more concerned with “the issue of how knowledge – in terms of competences and innovation – is produced, mediated and used” (OECD, 2000, p. 13). In short, the focus is upon understanding the process, rather than evaluating the product.

They are interested in the transferral of knowledge because they believe that it is essential to the performance of a 'knowledge economy' in a 'learning society'. Nevertheless, they observe that our understanding of this process "remains partial, superficial and partitioned in various scientific disciplines" (OECD, 2000, p. 11) Furthermore, the issue of the transferral of knowledge also raises a question of ownership:

Is knowledge public or private? Can it or can it not be transferred? Is the consent of the producer needed for the mediation to be successful or can knowledge be copied against the will of the producer? How difficult is it to transfer knowledge and what are the transfer mechanisms? Is it possible to change the form of knowledge so that it is easier (more difficult) to mediate? How important is the broader socio-cultural context for the transferability of knowledge? (OECD, 2000, p. 14)

Their comparison of the experience of knowledge transfer in different sectors leads them to differentiate four sectors, producing a matrix based on two principal variables: whether knowledge is tacit or codified and whether the sector is competitive or non-competitive (table 5 below). An example of the use of tacit knowledge in a competitive environment is that of consulting activity, and in a non-competitive environment, teaching is a prime example. The use of codified knowledge in a competitive environment is the field of biotechnology and in a non-competitive environment, that of public library management.

**Table 5: Comparison of knowledge base**

<b>Environment:</b>	<b>Competitive</b>	<b>Non-competitive</b>
Knowledge is poorly		
Articulated (tacit)	Consulting activity	Education (teacher)
Knowledge is highly (codified)	Biotechnology	Higher Education Library management

The CERI project also adopts four modern categories of knowledge which they compare to Aristotle's distinction of *episteme*, *techné* and *phronesis*. Nevertheless, it can be seen that the modern categories do not capture the ancient distinction between *phronesis* and *techné*:<sup>37</sup> The modern taxonomy, does not take into account the normative and context specific aspect of knowledge which *phronesis* takes into account, instead the concept of 'know how' combines aspects of *techné* and *phronesis* by including 'experience-based' and 'common sense' forms of knowledge. The category of 'know-who' absorbs a version of the social aspects of *phronesis* in the form of social skills like 'co-operability', 'sociability', 'communication skills', but again these skills, whilst they may be learned from experience, are also considered as personal skills which are transferable from one context to another, rather than culturally specific as in the concept of *phronesis* (Dunne, 1993; MacIntyre, 1981). In the interests of the transferability of knowledge, *phronesis* is substituted for 'know-how' and 'know who'.

**Table 6: Comparing modern and ancient taxonomies of knowledge**

Modern Taxonomy of knowledge		Aristotle's Taxonomy of knowledge	
Know-what	Knowledge about facts		
Know-why	Knowledge about principles and laws of motion in nature, in the human mind and in society	Episteme	Knowledge that is universal and theoretical
Know-how	Skills, the ability to do something, intuition, experience-based learning	Techné	Knowledge that is instrumental, context-specific and practice-related
Know-who	Information about who knows what, social ability to co-operate and communicate with different kinds of people and experts		
		Phronesis	Knowledge that is normative, experience-based, context specific, common sense: practical wisdom

<sup>37</sup> This is a failure which Habermas claims is at the heart of the problems of modern knowledge (Habermas, 1984)

### ***The codification of tacit knowledge***

Despite recognising that different forms of knowledge are intrinsic to different fields of knowledge, the focus of the CERI project on the importance of the transferral of knowledge in a 'learning society', explains their interest in the possibility of the codification of tacit knowledge. They are conscious of the fact that such a process involves both advantages and disadvantages: it allows for the massive reproduction and diffusion of knowledge as information, codification can stimulate new classifications and arrangements of knowledge, yet in some cases only practical experience will suffice (such as in the case of aircraft pilots, surgeons, etc.), and in all cases something is lost in codification (a teacher's expertise is reduced to a learning programme).

The impact of the process of the codification of knowledge thus, on the one hand, continues to deprofessionalize the teacher and increase the role of central programme designers. On the other hand, in the search for the most successful teaching methods, the 'successful' teacher is increasingly an object of study, in an attempt to decipher and codify his or hers practical knowledge. The value of the capital of professional experience is thus repositioned in relation to other forms of capital in the field of tertiary education. Tacit knowledge of the *habitus* is repositioned as strategic capital of the field, thus transforming the *habitus*.

### ***The concept of social capital presupposed by the CERI project***

Hargreaves considers the problem of the transferral of teacher's practical pedagogical knowledge to be one of creating the right conditions for the communication of a private knowledge: "Teachers often take pride in the fact that their knowledge is intensely personal, carved slowly over the years out of private (not collective) experience" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 229). Taking this description of the teachers perception as definitive of the problem, and thus clearly ignoring Wittgenstein's critique of this common sense view, (Wittgenstein, 1999), Hargreaves concludes "There is massive, innovative activity and potential locked up in the "tinkering" of teachers in their classrooms. We need to investigate and codify when and why this innovative activity does (or does not) work (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 231).

The problem then, for Hargreaves, is one of unlocking and disseminating this 'personal knowledge': "All this would entail a significant re-conceptualisation of what is seen as the dissemination process which has conventionally been portrayed as a linear, centre-to-periphery process from research in universities out to teachers in schools" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 232) Hargreaves suggests an 'inside-out' approach where schools are "developed as centres of initial teacher training and research" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 232), and this can be encouraged by giving research funds to schools not universities, thus *motivating* teachers to share their individual knowledge: "people are motivated to disseminate knowledge that they themselves created; and there are natural, but under-used, channels for easy dissemination" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 232) Hargreaves views the problem of disseminating private knowledge as one that can be solved by the appropriate management of funds to 'motivate' dissemination.

Hargreaves' apparently revolutionary concepts, turning things 'inside-out' may seem to make a lot of sense to many in the teaching profession, if one does not stop to reflect that he is in fact repeating a much questioned epistemological paradigm: "This reification of the disengaged first-person, singular self is already evident in the founding figures of the modern epistemological tradition. For instance, Descartes and Locke" (Taylor, 1993, p. 49). It is an epistemological position in which the human agent is considered primarily as a subject in terms of an 'inner space' or 'mind' capable of processing representations. It engendered such philosophical problems as how do we know 'other minds' actually exist, and how do we know whether what I mean by 'green' is the same as that which my interlocutor means by 'green'. Taylor regrets that "It is this striped-down view of the subject what has made deep inroads into social science... It stands in the way of a richer, more adequate understanding of what the human sense of self is really like..."(Taylor, 1993, p. 49)

These inroads have been made despite, according to Taylor, the work of Heidegger (1927), Merleau-Ponty (1945), Wittgenstein (1953) and more recently Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus'. Bourdieu considers tacit knowledge to be embodied in social practices. The individual's socialization within a context

involves the appropriation of dispositions, which at the same time allow the individual to navigate that context without recourse to conscious representations of that context:

The theory of action that I propose (with the notion of habitus) amounts to saying that most human actions have as a basis some thing quite different from intention, that is, acquired dispositions which make it so that an action can and should be interpreted as orientated toward one objective or another without anyone being able to claim that that objective was a conscious design (it is here that the “everything occurs as if” is very important). (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 97-98)

On this view, a teacher's personal tacit knowledge can only be understood within a context of shared practices of the 'habitus', and any attempt to make that tacit knowledge explicit and codified must take into account those shared practices. Accordingly, collaborative social capital is not a prerequisite of the successful dissemination of tacit knowledge; it is an essential part of its construction as well as its dissemination.

Because the CERI project does not take into account the extent to which tacit knowledge is constructed and transferred in particular socio-cultural and political contexts, it has a tendency to consider social relations such as 'trust' and 'collaboration' as an important *precondition* of transferability rather than a factor involved in the construction and reproduction of tacit knowledge, and that, consequently, social capital is a prerequisite, rather than an evolving factor, of a learning society: "The relations among people involved in interactive learning are crucial for what is learnt. Mutual respect and trust are important prerequisites for this kind of learning" (OECD, 2000, p. 30) They warn that certain aspects of the knowledge economy, such as rapid change, rapid learning, and unequal opportunities, tend to undermine social cohesion, and "the result will be growing polarisation". They repeat categorically that "for sustainable reproduction of intellectual capital, there is a need to secure the reproduction of social capital" (OECD, 2000, p. 30).

The OECD's adoption of this model of 'private' tacit knowledge which can gainfully be codified and disseminated through networks of trust in the scientific community, goes hand in hand with their promotion of ICT's as one of the four 'innovation pumps' of a knowledge economy. ICT's affect the amount of information that can be created, the virtual nature of its creation, it connects

different actors in the process of knowledge creation, it permits decentralisation of that process and allows for the “creation and expansion of virtual communities” (OECD, 2004, p. 56) A recent article by Stambach and Malekela on the incorporation of ICT’s in Tanzania, concerns the extent to which instead of technology improving life in Tanzania, it instead reinforces regional hierarchies (Stambach & Malekela, 2006) In the context of this research, this article underlines the argument that policy needs to take into account local social capital to resolve possible disjuncture between policy objectives and local realities.

The OECD’s approach to a ‘knowledge society’ means, then, that they are less concerned with the market value of the product of tertiary education and more concerned with improving the transfer of knowledge within and across sectors, as well as the codification of tacit knowledge. Yet, these objectives, assume as a prerequisite a concept of social capital based on networks of trust and mutual support. The strategies designed to achieve those objectives also have a potential impact on the relative values of capital in the tertiary education field.

### ***The impact on Capital Values in the global field of education***

#### *The transfer of knowledge within the education sector*

The importance in the OECD approach to the knowledge economy of the transfer of knowledge means that institutions are encouraged to participate in programmes for student and staff mobility, as, for example, in the Bologna agreement in Europe , (Rector's & (CRE), 1999) and the various agreements signed by Mexico with Canada, the United States, Germany, Spain, ((Didout-Aupetit, 2000: 65). Such programs are seen to depend on the prior condition of the harmonisation of qualifications, made possible by ‘recognised’ accreditation bodies. Thus the emphasis on mobility enhances the premium of standardized evaluation procedures. This in turn has the effect of increasing with time the transfer of standardised knowledge between standardized peer groups. As such, the strategic importance of knowledge transferral is undermined.

#### *Encouraging the evolution of research communities*

The encouragement by the Mexican PROMEP programme of the formation of research groups both within universities and at national and international levels, responds to the OECD's promotion of the "knowledge-based communities as agents of economic change" (OECD, 2004, p. 20). Specialists or practitioners who share a common technical language, are disposed to share their knowledge and comment upon others, make knowledge communities efficient in the transferral and enhancement of knowledge. Whilst business-to-business communities do exist, sharing some aspects of research, in general such groups are public or semi-public spaces where private ownership is excluded. Hence, in this and other respects, economic capital competes with intellectual capital in the tertiary education field.

### ***The transfer of knowledge from the end-user to the producer***

The OECD's emphasis on knowledge transfer includes an interest in the extent to which the sites of emergence of knowledge are changing, and the way in which the 'end-user' is involved in the development of knowledge. This model of bottom-up knowledge generation was developed in the 1990's by Gibbons et al (Gibbons, 1994), and argued for a reconsideration of the role of the university as the site of the production of knowledge, and in a later work (Nowotny et al., 2001), argued that this involved a change in the epistemological approach to the nature of 'knowledge'.

The "problem-focused, trans-disciplinary, heterogeneous, hybrid, demand-driven, entrepreneurial, accountability-tested, embedded in networks" (Hargreaves, 2000: 235) characteristics of Mode 2 knowledge, puts different demands on the traditional university structure. Nevertheless, those demands are not new, and neither are they dissociated from the same development of the university. Like Drucker, Gibbons et al draw attention to the fact that it was the massification of the university, and the growth of an educated professional class which lead to the increased development of research outside the university, creating networks of relations "between people located in different institutions, and typically include business people, patent lawyers, production engineers and others located outside the university" (Gibbons, 1994, p. 70) Gibbons et all focus on the extent to which the university is becoming one element in

knowledge networks which extend across different sectors, and the way in which the university needs to reorganize to respond to problem-based demand for research and construct liaison programmes to respond to this new reality.

A combination of factors such as the massification of the university, the evolution of extra-university networks, the increased social demands on knowledge, all have increased the participation of the end-user in the generation of knowledge. This relative value of different capital in the field of tertiary education has consequently been transformed. The capital of the university as the principal site of research has lost value in relation to other research sites; the intellectual capital of the faculty has been diminished as research has moved into centres linked to external projects, at the same time, within the university, the value of research in relation to teaching activities has increased. Market demands on education have opened the door to market models in management, yet the centralisation of management control enters in conflict with the tendency to decenter knowledge generation; and society demands a higher profile of moral leadership in issues arising from scientific developments (different aspects of genetic research, for example) at the same time that there is an increasing move towards a business training school ethic.

The OECD, like the World Bank, promotes moves towards the standardization of knowledge in order to increase mobility and hence the transfer of knowledge. The OECD approach also involves individual experience loosing value as capital in the education field, as a result of the effort to codify and distribute such tacit knowledge, whilst the wider social community stands to gain from the increased distribution of knowledge. The university also looses capital in the knowledge field in relation to other sights of production of research, whilst knowledge communities, geographical or virtual, gain in capital. Public knowledge maintains a difficult relation to private knowledge.

In general, the OECD approach to the tertiary education field is one which recognises difference, and for that reason proposes modular forms of management. In this sense it is quite distinct from the World Bank model which proposes to define and centrally control all the variables of an autonomous field. Nevertheless, both the World Bank and the OECD approaches make certain

assumptions concerning the nature of social capital in the tertiary education field. The World Bank proposals concerning the effectiveness of linking funding to reform as well as the use of incentives schemes are based on assumptions concerning the existence of an individualistic competitive social capital in the field of tertiary education. The OECD's proposals concerning knowledge transfer are based on assumptions concerning the existence of a collaborative form of social capital in the field of tertiary education.

## **Concluding remarks**

Tertiary education policy in Mexico, has, since the late 1980's, been closely linked to the transition to the neoliberal economic approach. As noted in chapter three, tertiary education policy in Mexico initially followed a World Bank vertical approach based on competitive reward induced performance management. In the mid 1990's the horizontal collaborative performance management approach of the OECD was introduced through the PROMEP programme. These different strategies correspond to two different models of post-industrial society: the World Bank approach involves a model of tertiary education as an autonomous sub-system supplying qualified human resources for the productive sector, whilst the OECD considers tertiary education as a key link in the transfer of knowledge in society.

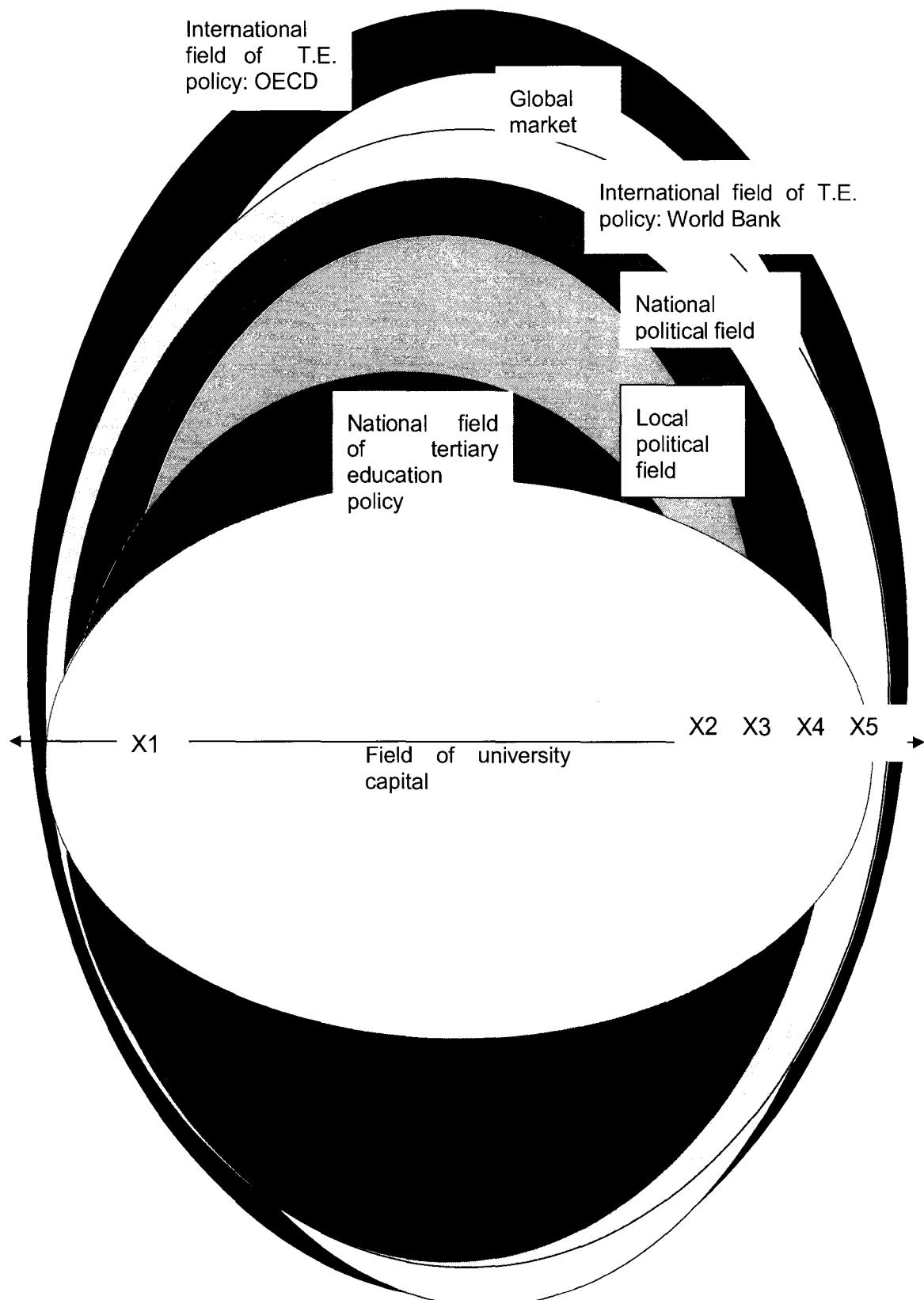
Nevertheless, some of the strategies are similar although with different objectives: the World Bank seeks to standardize inputs and outputs according to international indicators to produce a product exchangeable on the international market, the OECD seek to codify knowledge and qualifications to increase mobility. The difference lies in the different concepts of knowledge which underlie these strategies. The World Bank considers knowledge functions more efficiently as a private commodity to be bought and sold, the OECD considers that knowledge increases its value the more it is transferred, and hence functions better as a public product.

Both models make assumptions concerning social capital in the field of tertiary education which support their particular viewpoints concerning society and the economy. The World Bank assumes that social capital in this field is made up of rational agents seeking to maximise their personal benefit whilst the OECD

consider agents in this field as principally collaborative, disposed to share their knowledge and experience.

Both policy models have a potential impact on both the field of tertiary education and the habitus of particular institutions. The standardization of knowledge in relation to international indicators increases the value of the capital of international policy agencies as well as national government through centralised systems of evaluation at the expense of institutions and teachers. The latter can, nevertheless, build up a different form of capital if they accept to compete against other institutions and teachers in league tables and incentives programmes.

**Figure 3: The inter-relation of the university field to other fields within the social space: including two distinct models of international policy**



In relation to the original heuristic framework represented in figure 1, it can be observed that the market is indeed impinging on the field of international policy and this on national policy and on universities. Nevertheless, the argument for increasing the sphere of public knowledge is still being fought. For this reason two distinct fields of international policy have been introduced in the heuristic framework. Whether universities will become *habitus* which are in general characterised by individualistic competitive individuals or by collaborative horizontal academic communities will depend partly on the outcome of this public private debate concerning the role of knowledge in post-industrial societies.

In Mexico, the linking of funding to the introduction of such reforms and income to performance is another factor which affects the values of capital in the tertiary education field, and also has an impact of the *habitus* at the institutional level.

Hence, this framework outlines the potential impact of the reform model in Mexican public institutions. In the following two chapters, I shall describe and analyse the actual impact of the reform programme in particular institutional contexts.

# **Chapter 7: Three case studies of the impact of performance management strategies in universities in Mexico.**

In this chapter I shall first provide an analysis of each case study and my conclusions about the impact of the tertiary education reform programme in each institution. In the second part of this chapter I will undertake a comparative analysis of the impact of the reform programme in these three different contexts.

## **Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM)**

### **The creation of the UAM and its organizational structure**

The Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM) is a relatively young institution, created in the 1974, occupying three different campuses in different parts of Mexico City, with a fourth campus opened in 2005. The UAM was designed according to a model of decentralization both functionally and administratively, each university has a rector, with a fifth General Rector in separate premises. Each university is organized in a departmental structure, 3 in each campus, and from the beginning the university was organized according to knowledge areas to offer new vocational degrees. The UAM Azcapotzalco included the departments of Basic sciences and Engineering, Social Sciences and Humanities, and Sciences of Arts of Design; the UAM Iztapalapa offers Basic Sciences and Engineering, Biology and Health Sciences, and Social Sciences and Humanities; the UAM Xochimilco includes Biological Sciences and Health, Social Sciences and Health, and Sciences of Art of Design; and the UAM Cuajimalpa offering Communications and Design Sciences, Natural Sciences and Engineering, and Social Sciences and Humanities.  
[\(http://www.uam.mx/index.shtml\)](http://www.uam.mx/index.shtml)

## **The relative value of different capitals prior to the reform programme**

The UAM broke with the tradition of the faculty structure in Mexico, where each faculty has its own director, reporting directly either to the General Secretary or the Rector, and sitting on the university council. The UAM design instead sought to promote academic interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as horizontal power structures, in an attempt to establish a more effective system of communication and relations between the powers in the UAM than those which existed in the UNAM and which had failed to prevent the confrontation of 1968.

The design of the UAM thus attempted to avoid conflict in the universities by breaking with vertical organizational structures in favour of more horizontal and structures and the avoidance of the formation of group identities in distinct faculties. This was to be achieved in part by the balance of the relative capital of the different players in the social field of the university. However, the principal players were considered to be management and full-time academics, part-time academics, students, the cleaning, maintenance and administrative staff were not represented. So in the original organic law of the UAM the power between its collegial organs, one strategic, the other academic, was balanced (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 269). The strategic organ consisted of the council of directors and the *patronato* (a voluntary council with honorary members to raise and administer funds) where membership was restricted. The academic organ consisted of the academic college, academic councils and divisional councils, all open to the ample participation of the full-time academic community. (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 267)

The lack of formal institutional representation for various sectors of the social space of the university may have been one of the reasons why the UAM also broke with the tradition of separate unions for workers and academics, forming a single union. The second was that the 1968 UNAM strike had seen an alliance between students, academics and workers concerning social injustice in Mexico, and many academics in the UAM were graduates from the UNAM. The first long UAM strike in 1976 resulted in the union negotiating an advantageous agreement for its members. Nevertheless, the union overplayed its hand in its attempts to capitalise on its increase in relative capital in the

university by initiating a number of successive conflicts. It lost credibility amongst academics as a result of its "incapacity to negotiate in new contexts" (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 279). Finally, in 1981, the Federal Commission of arbitration withdrew certain academic clauses, including hiring, promotion and academic stability, from the collective contract between the union and the university. (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 279) The same year saw the academic collegial organs loose power to the strategic organs as a result of changes to the organic law. Numerous commissions were created as a strategy "of mechanisms of exhaustion" designed to neutralize those sectors of the university which could not participate in the collegial organs open only to full-time academics.

This displacement of the vital zones of the decision process has permitted the consolidation of power of the strategic organs subordinating, many times through clientelist agreements, important sectors of the community, resulting in the establishment of control of the strategic organs within the collegial organs (Ibarra Colado, 1993, p. 269).

### **Hiring procedures and academic networks**

A second set back to the original organizational design of the UAM to promote horizontal collaborative relations was the fact that the creation of the UAM coincided with a period of expansion of higher education at a national level. The result was that few formal procedures were followed in hiring academics, "at the beginning (hiring procedures) were completely fraudulent" ("Interview M1," 2005). In the absence of formal institutional regulations, traditional social practices pertained and academics proceeded to include their friends and form power groups: "From the beginning interest groups existed to include friends with tenure, and form power quotas" ("Interview M1," 2005); "At the beginning hiring was an uncontrolled process, it re-created the old clientelist systems, and these have not disappeared, although it has slowly got better" ("Interview M4," 2005).

Possible reasons why things "slowly got better" may include the first devaluation of the currency in 1984 meant that the creation of new tenures became much rarer. Another factor is the departmental structure of the UAM which encourages academic collaboration: "Different interest groups exist, at the beginning their presence was very strong, but there was a process of

institutionalization, there is an intense collegial life and academics are represented in the governing bodies (of the university)" ("Interview M1," 2005). So the restrictions on new tenure and the departmental structure of the university allowed a gradual increase in the value of academic capital in relation to the social capital based on personal networks.

Nevertheless, whilst a gradual progress towards more horizontal collegial relations increased the value of a more objective academic capital, at the management level things developed differently. Interest groups continue to have an impact at different management levels. There are groups which are internal to each of the three divisions or university campus, and other groups which are internal to each of the 3 departments in each division.

Things haven't changed much from the beginning, at the division level in Xochimilco the biologists and medics have dominated the university for a long time, the Rector has come from this group the last 3 times; in Iztapalapa the physicists dominate, the last 5 Rectors have come from this group and the last 3 or 4 General Rectors also. ("Interview M3," 2005)

The interest groups at the divisional level intervene in the decisions concerning which departments get new tenures, and at the department level interest groups influence the profile of the tenure which is to be advertised. This is called a 'retrato hablado' (spoken portrait), where the job profile is written to fit the curriculum of a particular person whom the director, or those above him, wants to get the job.

Of course there are interest groups. They are basically internal within the divisions and each department. First the interest groups at the division level determine to which areas they give the tenures, that are the distribution of the tenures, and at the second departmental level the interest groups decide the profile of the tenure. ("Interview M3," 2005)

In addition to the distribution of tenures, through their control of resources, department heads and managers control interest groups among academics who attempt to procure resources for their department or research project, "interest groups originate within the academic departments to defend interests created around budgets" ("Interview M2," 2005); "half of the resources continue to be handled by the rectors and the directors, there is no accountability, ... groups jostle to try to get on the good side of the department head... there is no relation between academic achievement and the application of resources... it is a market of exchanges of favours" ("Interview M5," 2005).

It would appear, then, that at a management level the formation and consolidation of certain groups has predominated over the formation of horizontal relations of collegial collaboration. This has also served to increase management capital in relation to other forms of capital in the university, given that the perpetuation of management capital in the hands of a particular group acts as an intimidatory factor to any form of new proposals which might be seen as a questioning of the power of the dominant group. The relations between those internal power groups and external groups, is also strong. One of the General Rectors of the UAM went onto lead the National Association of Universities (ANUIES), and from there went on to occupy the post of Undersecretariat of higher education.

### **The impact of incentives schemes**

The reform programme increased the value of management and administrative capital in relation to academic capital, primarily because it is based on a model in which management control the performance of their institution through the lever of financial incentives.

There are three incentives schemes in which full-time academics in the UAM can participate apart from the National System of Researchers:,

Name of programme	Year	Period of evaluation	Levels of evaluation	Basic elements evaluated
Annual incentives for productivity	89	Every year	A-C	Research and teaching, diffusion,
Grants for antiquity	90	Every five years	Corresponds to tenure status: 7 categories: associate A, B, C, D; y titular A, B y C.	Teaching (with a limit of 1050 points per year), research, diffusion. It is orientated towards rewarding the publication of results of research
Grants in recognition of teaching careers	92	Every year	Categories A,B,C,D	Teaching, production of didactic materials, tutorials and thesis supervision

Two of the programmes promote research and teaching and one is dedicated to teaching:

There is no difference between the Annual incentive for productivity and the Grant for Antiquity. Both are based on the same criteria; evaluate the same activities, etc. The key is that the productivity incentive was created first and was seen to have deficiencies in terms of securing stability in the incomes of the professors. As it is an annual incentive, it's difficult that a research teacher

can maintain the same rhythm of publications and obtain a similar level of stimulus year upon year. It is this inconvenience which the grant for antiquity was supposed to resolve because it was given for longer periods and permitted the professor plan her activities without experiencing the situation of seeing her income reduced. This grant does achieve the objectives of supporting research and diffusion. However, the initial scheme has not been withdrawn due to the opposition of some professors. It's considered as a "plus" which one can benefit from in the years one publishes a lot. The authorities have tried to withdraw it but have been unable to and currently the amount given, which varies from one year to the next, is much reduced, and for this reason it is not attractive. But there are professors that insist in maintaining it and to avoid major conflicts they have maintained it. Nevertheless, it is destined to disappear. ("Interview M1," 2005)

Clearly despite the introduction of a reform programme based on performance management, strategic manoeuvres such as that of leaving the first scheme in place but reducing the value of the incentives, continue to be used alongside the new more 'objective' strategies.

This multiplication of administrative procedures is also resented by academics, along with the perceived authoritarian message:

The perspective of imposing a system from outside is very simplistic, the idea that the professors need to be controlled is authoritarian and the creation of so many committees only reproduces the clientelist system. The cultural vision of those who are imposing reform is very poor, whilst the vision of the engineers is very strong, and those sociologists who participate follow the 'old' model. ("Interview M4," 2005)

This increase in management and administrative power in relation to academic capital results in the deprofessionalisation of academics at the same time that the reform programme is supposed to 'enhance' performance

Since last year (2004) there has been a strong attempt to regularize many activities in terms of evaluation "with its consequences of rewards and punishments". The new regulations for the rewards programmes means that "one has to elaborate didactic material obligatorily, participate in courses of teacher training, independently if one is a prestigious researcher, this appears to me to be ridiculous, they are going to introduce the same in the other programmes, it's a generalized tendency. Here it makes people very annoyed because the professors have practiced with a lot of liberty and informality and this has given good results, now they try to change the concept, it's the concept that the professor is naturally lazy and its necessary to watch him all the time, it is necessary to regularize all the time because if not, s/he is not going to work. It is an old concept of the end of the century of Frederick Taylor...." ("Interview M4," 2005)

The exchange of professional capital in return for increased financial capital is also apparent to academics, as well as an increase in government control and centralisation:

This policy came directly from the Secretary of Education which imposes the programmes, it has imposed a lot of programmes, and they give prizes, if one participates one is given prizes, but one accepts to be supervised, the forms are immense, it's a bureaucracy, the type of people that design this and evaluate the forms are office employees, not academics, and finally they evaluate the people, the programmes, the research groups. It is a centrally planned neoliberalism, that is, to be ironic, it is similar to centrally planned state socialism, one reports more to the SEP than one does to the university. The people were accustomed to another type of work, which propitiated more creativity, now the people tend to rationalize to meet the number of points they need. (M4 ref my translation and résumé)

Nevertheless, the same academic expressed the opinion that, in relation to other universities in Mexico, the "system in the UAM is the best"; s/he even boasted that the UAM invented the incentives programmes and undertook the pilot scheme. And although s/he acknowledged that the evaluation in the UAM was more quantitative than in other universities, s/he still defended the scheme on the basis that "in the clientelist culture the qualitative is not always the most just, instead a small elite receive a lot" Hence the loss of academic capital is not only accepted in return for financial capital but quantitative evaluation is also perceived as the only option to avoid rampant clientelism, even though it creates its own forms of clientelism:

Everything that one does in life is represented by points, there is a minimum and a maximum, if I send a book they have to at least give me the minimum, if I am the friend of someone in the commission, the maximum; in the UNAM there is a commission which can give the book very high rewards or nothing, the dilemma is that discretionality can permit quality but also abuse. ("Interview M3," 2005)

It is also considered to have an impact on the type of research produced. The fact that academic work becomes organised according to a points system means that the quality of the research produced becomes affected in different ways. "Both (the national and internal incentives schemes) increase productivity but at the cost of repetition, of doing things in a hurry (al vapour), numbers are increased but not quality", ("Interview M4," 2005); "everything is very quantitative... it undermines any incentive of quality.." ("Interview M3," 2005). Academic capital is again undermined by the focus of quantitative systems on quantity over quality.

This undermining of the purpose of evaluation to improve the quality of academic work means that the evaluation process loses respect amongst academics and so prestigious academics refuse to participate in the evaluation process resulting in respect for the process being further undermined:

....the very composition of the commissions, there is not sufficient distance, the academics are mediocre, they are not peers, that is what most worries me, the best academics do not participate, because it is a process of bureaucratic certification, in the UNAM it is different, in the UNAM what is important is the substantive of each case, here the best loses and the most wily wins, the best do not want to evaluate in this way, before the reforms I participated in the commission... ("Interview M5," 2005)

Quantitative evaluation also affects social capital within the academic community. The points system of evaluation based on quantity of output, has encouraged an individualistic approach to research focused on short term projects, because on the basis of this type of research the required points for the 3 different schemes that award research can be more securely obtained:

The more important of the incentives are the individual; they have helped the individual more than the group.. an individual article is worth more.. (the incentives schemes have affected personal relations, those that are in this logic do not lose their time in personal relations, reading groups, seminars which have no points for participating... ("Interview M4," 2005).

Nevertheless, the university has attempted to rescue the original collaborative focus of academic work by introducing more incentives schemes, this time focused on collaborative research, and it has worked in some instances:

In my area we are obliged to work collectively, although one can work individually, the UAM incentives promote work in academic areas, there is a prize for research areas where there is collective publications, the organization of events, and this is to counterbalance the effects of the SNI which can be individualistic. ("Interview M1," 2005)

From another perspective, it is considered as a bureaucratic imposition by the "authorities" to form research groups in the academic areas "which do not work" ("Interview M4," 2005); collaboration is considered as something which cannot be imposed, "it destroys research groups, it favours short term research, individual work, I can do more short term research alone, there is no comprehension of academic work, it is not standardized work, it requires another model.." ("Interview M5," 2005). The attempt to introduce collaboration through rewards schemes is considered as a lack of comprehension of the way in which academic collaboration evolves.

The current model is considered to improve the capital of certain forms of academic capital over others. The evaluation programme is considered to have been designed by physicists, and works only for the natural sciences "In physics it works very well, the problem is to apply the model in general, in the social sciences it is more important to publish a book than an article in a journal.." ("Interview M5," 2005)<sup>38</sup>

Concerning the issue of whether performance management strategies of evaluation require a culture of evaluation or create a culture of evaluation, data supports the former argument as evaluation processes are appropriated for clientalist aims, and only gradually does an evaluation culture emerge:

The culture of evaluation is new in Mexico, it a cultural change, it gives way to arbitrariness, helping friends, taking revenge on enemies, ... the cultural problem has improved, evaluation has been extended to many aspects.. ("Interview M4," 2005)

Yet, not only does performance management require a culture of evaluation and only slowly helps to create it, it would also appear, at the same time, undermine the conditions for such a culture, given that the new system repeats the same basic structure as the old in that it is a system based on rewards:

but there is still much to do, everything is in terms of rewards, it's a clientalist system, it hasn't disappeared, although it has slowly improved... ("Interview M4," 2005)

The fact that performance management is based on a system of rewards means that it sustains the existing culture of clientalism based on rewards which is embedded in the history of the institution as well as in the wider social practices. In this context, the strategy of obtaining increased performance

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<sup>38</sup> This comment is a reference to the fact that the scheme was introduced in Itztapalapa where the physicists have controlled the Rectoria for the previous five periods (each of four years), and the three have gone on to be the General Rector and one General Rector went on to be the Executive of ANUIES and is the current Sub-Secretary of Higher Education.

based on self-evaluation by means of a reward system, is only partly successful, often the product is a new version of the old clientalist practices.

The only advantages the incentives schemes are considered to have achieved is the “resolution of an adequate income” (“Interview M5,” 2005) for academics, but it is an increase in the academic income achieved without negotiation with the union, and so it has left the academic “unprotected, for if one falls ill, ones income can be reduced by a third” (“Interview M3,” 2005) It is considered to be, on the one hand, a policy of the Secretary of Finances to not increase salaries of government employees, and on the other hand it is considered to be a means of increasing academics incomes without having to negotiate the problem of pensions with the unions. At the moment pensions are salary linked, if the salary increases the pensions increase, but the contributions to the pension fund have not increased sufficiently to pay the numbers now pensioned, both because quotas have not increased and because the working base has not increased at the same pace as the retired base. Some universities pension’s funds are bankrupt as their payouts in pensions are more than they receive in contributions. SES is pressing universities to resolve this problem, to reach an agreement with their unions on different ways to increase contributions to the pension’s fund, but in the UAM no significant advances have been made. As a result, the question of academics incomes is only superficially resolved by the incentives schemes, which create as many problems as they resolve:

The incentives schemes resolved the problem of academics income, even to the levels of 74, but under perverse conditions, this distortion has generated a very strong distortion, and a system which does not evaluate, which only generates paper, certificates, almost everyone has some... it is destroying the social and ethical meaning of the institution. (“Interview M5,” 2005)

## **Conclusions to the UAM study**

An account emerges in which academics in the UAM prefer the quantitative evaluation system to qualitative systems, as the latter are equated with the reopening of the door to rampant clientalism experienced in an initial “uncontrolled” phase of university expansion. Nevertheless, it has also become apparent that there are various ‘costs’ this quantitative shield against clientalism. These include the loss of value of academic capital in various ways such as the imposition of constant evaluation measures, the increased value of

quantity over quality of academic work, the increase in simulation. Personal self-value is also reduced as individuals are pressured to focus constantly on obtaining points. Social capital is also diminished by an increase in individualistic strategic thinking and decreasing participation in discussion groups etc. Schemes including incentives for collaborative work are only partially successful. Quantitative evaluation undermines the legitimacy of the evaluation procedures because prestigious academics refuse to participate in them. The more they refuse to participate the more evaluation committees are considered to be in the hands of middle management academics and other academics do not consider themselves to be evaluated by their peers and so they feel further de-professionalized. The situation seems to have generated its own dynamic of a downward spiral and in this sense the UAM is perceived as "heading towards a crisis". ("Interview M5," 2005)

On the other hand, the existence of interest groups around resources and budgets both at the top and intermediate levels of management has not been affected by the schemes. Instead management capital has increased at the expense of intellectual capital as the schemes have been duplicated due to their use by management as new tools of manipulation *vis a vis* the union. This has undermined any positive effect the schemes may have had in terms of introducing a culture of evaluation. But whilst the reform programme continues to strengthen administrative hierarchical relations at the expense of horizontal collaborative relations, the conditions for such a learning process are also undermined. (See Bensimon's research with regard to problems of institutional learning in Mexico, chapter 2) Any learning process can only consequently be very slow, and whilst a situation of crisis may possibly be avoided in the UAM in general, the situation in the social sciences does not look at all promising. The introduction of a culture of evaluation has also been undermined by the quantification of the evaluation procedures which further reduces intellectual capital, but it is argued that this is the price to pay for avoiding the return of clientalist relations.

In Woolcock's terms of structural analysis, the programmes the institution has developed to improve academic transparency shows high levels of administrative coherence and capacity and low levels of comprehension of the

academic culture. The impact of the reform programme has decreased synergy between macro and micro levels of the organization and reduced social capital to a level of individualistic fragmentation typical of anomie, which Woolcock describes as a form of social capital where individuals' linking to other social groups is high, whilst the ties of their own social group are weak or non-existent.

From Bourdieu's approach of relational analysis, the reform programme has changed the economy of capital in the institutional field. It has increased the value of certain forms of capital, particularly bureaucratic capital, in relation to intellectual and social capital. But perhaps the more serious underlying impact of the reform programme is to be found in terms of the affect on the *habitus* where that capital is formed. In this respect my analysis of the data showed that recently horizontal collaborative relations amongst researchers had begun to replace clientalist relations as a result of a gradual process of "institutionalization" ("Interview M1," 2005). Nevertheless, the impact of numerous evaluation procedures was having a negative effect on social capital formation by reducing time available for participation in department seminars and was promoting individualistic goals amongst academics. At the same time the strategic attempt to introduce collaboration had only a partial success. The quantitative nature of the evaluation procedures was also undermining academic motivation in that they perceived themselves as no longer evaluated by their peers, at the same time that peers participated less in such procedures and also spent less time in the university.

The impact of the reform programme can thus be seen to occur at two levels, that of the field and that of the habitus. Strategic policies at the level of the field designed to improve the value of collaborative capital were undermined at the level of habitus as the social spaces of collaboration were reduced. Similarly, at the field level, strategies sought to replace discretionary criteria of evaluation with objective criteria, but at the level of the habitus the practice of control through rewards distributed from above strengthened clientalist frameworks of perception and practice which continued to undermine the development of a culture of evaluation.

Hence it can be seen that performance strategies based on a quantitatively designed rewards system obtained increased production at the price of simulation, and at the same time the reward system reinforced a clientalist framework of perception and practices. Indeed, it could be concluded that the reinforcement of the clientalist framework of perception explains the simulated products.

## **The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)**

### **The prestigious history of the UNAM**

The University of Mexico was created in 1547 on the basis of the model of the University of Salamanca, although alternative sources cite 1551 as the date of its foundation by Royal decree, and 1553 as the date of opening, making it the second oldest university in Latin America after the Autonomous University of Santa Domingo. It was reconstituted in 1910 as the National Autonomous University of Mexico, (UNAM) by Justo Sierra in 1910. It is the largest university in Latin America with 269,000 students, and considered in a study by Beijing university study to be the most important in the Spanish speaking world. It has also produced a significant number of Nobel Laureates: Alfonso García Robles (Peace), Octavio Paz (Literature), and Mario Molina (Chemistry).

It occupies an extensive campus in Mexico City, the size of a small town, as well as having a number of schools and colleges dispersed around Mexico City. It is based on a faculty organizational structure, with separate research institutes and research centres. (<http://www.unam.mx/acerca/index.html>) As mentioned in chapter two, it has been criticised in the past for its vertical internal structure at the cost of horizontal relations of collaboration between equals which was considered to slow down scientific creativity and productivity, (Adler Lomnitz, 1994). Due to the semi-autonomous level of administration of each Faculty, Institute, Centre, and School, combined with a hierarchical structure, there had been little overall coordination of objectives in the UNAM. Each Faculty or centre was a small kingdom where the director maintained a high level of discretionary power. This situation affected many aspects of institutional practices. One was the fact that by the eighties the UNAM was offering 320

post-graduate programmes, many constituting virtual repetitions of the same programme but offered by different parts of the institution. Attempts to achieve a more rational system based on institutional collaboration finally achieved success in 1996 post-graduate programmes were organized under one "University System of Postgraduate studies" offering 47 programmes in four different areas of knowledge. Faculties, research institutes, research centres and external research centres participated in each programme.

The university has also played an important role in social mobility, the forming of a national identity and the creation of values, shared amongst a majority of political leaders during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century who were graduates from the UNAM<sup>39</sup>, whereas in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century that percentage was reduced. The UNAM was also a space for freedom of expression and social conscience. It has also been the site of a number of strikes, that of 1968 and 1999 being the most politically significant. The UNAM has recovered rapidly from the crisis of 1999: in 2004 it reached the position of 195 in *The Times Higher* 'The Top 200 World University Rankings'; in 2005 it had climbed to 95; in 2006 it had climbed a further 29 places to 66. Yet, more than internal collaboration, it was external links with the political field which played an important part in the strike and its aftermath.

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<sup>39</sup> Presidents who have graduated from the UNAM include Carlos Salinas de Gortari (President of Mexico 1988–1994), Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado (President of Mexico 1982–1988), José López Portillo y Pacheco (President of Mexico 1976–1982), Luis Echeverría Álvarez (President of Mexico 1970–1976), Miguel Alemán Valdés (President of Mexico 1946–1952), Abel Pacheco de la Espriella (President of Costa Rica 2002–2006), Alfonso Portillo (President of Guatemala 2000–2004) [http://www.bookrags.com/wiki/National\\_Autonomous\\_University\\_of\\_Mexico](http://www.bookrags.com/wiki/National_Autonomous_University_of_Mexico)

## **The UNAM and Mexican Society**

The high level of links between the UNAM and national politics were considered an important factor in the prolongation of the strike (Trejo Delarbre, 2000, p. 267), yet they were also an explanation for the end, rather than solution, to the strike. Dr Barnes Rector found himself in a situation in which he was unable to negotiate a solution to the problem, given the degree of political parties' participation in the strike and the lack of willingness of the government to intervene. At this time the following Rector, Dr Juan Ramón de la Fuente, was Secretary of State for Health, and when he took over from Dr Barnes he convinced the President to send in the army to break up the strike, and succeeded in repossessing the university installations. But since then he has set up different negotiating forums to discuss the problems considered to have contributed to the strike (Mendoza, Latapí Sarre, & Rodriguez, 2001; Russell, 2005). But these links between the university and the government are not new; they are formally embedded in the structure of the organization in determining the election of Rector:

Both the internal council of each area and the 'junta de Gobierno' which elects Directors and Rectors, are constituted by representatives of each discipline, and within each discipline there are power groups, occupying a hierarchical relation within the discipline. The relative power of each discipline depends upon the power of representation of that discipline. The latter depends either on the relative power of an individual within that group or the importance of the discipline within the country. The latter is an international phenomenon, for example, in the 1980's the strength of the economists in the University of Chicago was high due to the influence of their ideas on the national economy, similarly today the strength of the economists in the UNAM is low, nowadays it is the ITAM (Autonomous Mexican Institute of Technology) which produces Secretaries of State, etc. A discipline can also have linking with the exterior through a particular person. For example Jorge Carpizo, (Rector of the UNAM from 1985 to 1989), was The General Procurator of the Republic (89-90), the founder of the National Commission for Human Rights (90-93), the Secretary of the Interior (93-94) although he was not a member of the PRI, he is also the first authority on the initiation of Democracy in Mexico. When Carpizo was Secretary of the Interior, the Research Institute of Jurisprudence had a relatively high weight in the strength of the university. The more internal/external links which exist, the more power a disciplinary group wields. The leader of a group although internal to the university, is the one that wields more power externally. Although a group may try to consolidate their power, the periods are limited and the 'junta del Gobierno' secures that there is no continuity between one group and another. There are 15 members of the junta and care is taken that no one group or political party acquires hegemony. The profile of the members is both political and academic; it cannot be only the first. The members change every 15 years or at 70 years of age, each year one member changes and the Rector proposes candidates to the 'consejo universitaria' who elect a new member. It is a structure which functions better than direct election. ("Interview N16," 2005)

The above data demonstrates in Woolcock's structural terms the synergy between the university and society. In terms of Bourdieu's relational analysis, it shows that the forms of capital present in the UNAM field consist of more than intellectual prestige, celebrity and university capital. Formal and tacit regulations in the governing council of the university attempt to assure that no one disciplinary group permanently increases the value of its capital in that field.

In the Social Sciences Research Institute, the data showed that academic networks were generally considered to be collegial with the situation transforming in times of crisis.

In the Institute the researchers work above all according to affinity of perspective, but in critical situations they respond to other types of interests, according to different conceptions of what the university should be and external interests. There are different types of groups, one is the 'claustros academicos' which include all the academic personnel and in some the Director also. There are 'Academic Colleges' in other parts, which are somewhat corporative in character and do not permit the opinion of individuals, and these divide academics in both their opinions and how they should group themselves. Some of these groups have their origin external to the university but the origin of the activation of a group is internal, there is no permanent external pressure on academic life. The leaders of the groups are internal and part of their prestige is academic, relations are vertical and corporative, whilst in other groups there are no leaders and the relations are horizontal and dynamic. These groups seek to extend their power but in normal situations what prevails is academic activity. ("Interview N14," 2005)

Whilst different data sources confirmed the existence of two different political groups in times of crisis, it showed a divergence of perspectives concerning the extent to which in 'normal situations' these political differences remain latent, and whether they are based on social differences:

Informal power groups exist, some more powerful than others. In the Institute a 'college' exists, more aligned to the PRD, and also a less formal group based on trust networks, not necessarily thematic affinity, but rather political and ideological affinity and a shared lifestyle. These groups were not so well defined before the strike but they are more so now, nevertheless these groups do not disappear between moments of crisis but instead continue latent, there is a type of resentment towards our group, we are accused of being more privileged, even though members of the other group can be earning twice as much. And in fact we are more critical, the other group would not consider, for example, criticising the union. ("Interview N15," 2005)

The Institute would seemed to have limited links to external political interests, whilst the data gathered from the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, showed the extent to which its members perceived at close hand the

intervention of political parties during the strike and spoke of a more political perspective on the question of academic networks. One person interviewed was of the opinion that interest groups in the university "represent the interests of political parties which are the most protagonist, the left of the left." ("Interview NF18," 2005) Another academic also considered that the interest groups in the Faculty represent the interests of political parties, but that these "are associated with different attitudes to forms of government, attitudes to academic work as a vocation which implies excellence and quality, and others that view it as salaried work which brings certain benefits" ("Interview N15," 2005) But the political nature of the interest groups also reflect "the history of how they (interest groups) acted in the past, and the people continue to identify with that past (1968 university demonstrations). What's more, the Faculty concentrates many of the contradictions of the country, it is very heterogeneous" ("Interview N15," 2005).

So where as the university in general has links with society through the profiles of its disciplines and different individuals within those disciplines, the links of the Faculty with society are much more related to political transitions at a national level. For this reason, the changes of the situation in the Faculty also reflect changes in national politics. The PRI maintained a very hierarchical paternalistic political system in power for more than seventy years (see chapter 3). The events of '68 however, politicised the student population, and as the political and academic fathers of that student generation gradually retired, a highly politicised group remained, many of which are now academics. During the late 70's and early eighties this politicisation finally leads to the formation of a breakaway group from the PRI, and the formation of the PRD:

The first I knew of political groups was when Carpizo (Rector from 1985 to 1989) announced consultations. The change was from a paternal university to a political university, before the 70's everything was very paternalist, the academic leaders had much more weight and all the rest were young. Students were politicised and later their leaders retired and those that were left were more politicised and we politicised the university.... The origin of the groups is internal, and also later the political parties entered, before the PRI controlled everything, but political parties began to emerge, the idea of a community was lost, the right in the university continue to use the idea of a community, the unions also entered the scene...("Interview NF19," 2005)

The PRD has recently moved further to a left populist stance, and its leader was, at the end of 2005, the favourite candidate to win Presidential elections in

2006. This context of national politics was considered by academics to colour their predictions of the development of the situation in the UNAM, although less so in the Institute than from the Faculty. There was also a view that the situation was very unpredictable because it involved what happened in the country, the city and the university. "When Cardenas won, there was not more control within the university because (his supporters) went to work with him, its very difficult to foresee" ("Interview N15," 2005) Nevertheless, the precedent of negotiation with the PRD was set when the 'Junta de Gobierno' , had had to negotiate with the PRD during and following the 1999 strike, and the wife of a prominent PRD member and famous scientist, was given a seat on the council, but "the council makes sure that no group and no political party is hegemonic" ("Interview N16," 2005)

In the Faculty, there was a definite sense that the PRD has a high profile, "the presence of politics is more direct in the Faculty, through one political voice: the PRD" ("Interview NF18," 2005). There was also the view that this high presence of politics was cyclical: "now the major problem of the university is national politics... some academics leave to enter into national politics, they are less interested in internal politics..." ("Interview NF19," 2005) There was also the opinion that in times of crisis or elections the interest groups "tended to identify themselves" .. But that slowly there was a "greater differentiation of academic work, and more importance was given to academic work than political positions, but the progress is very slow... the UNAM grew massively in the 70's and hired people of distinct levels, it takes time to reach a balance again, it wasn't until the 80's the tendency to professionalisation was introduced" ("Interview NF17," 2005)

Data thus reveals that the field of university power in the UNAM not only extends well beyond the institution but also it is inter-related with other fields of power such as the political field. Nevertheless, the level of inter-relation varies from Institutes to Faculties and between disciplines, the Faculty of Political and Social Science is considered as one of the most politicised faculties. This level of inter-relation of the field of university power and the national field of political power permeates all levels of the university including the university council, and

results in internal conflicts being extended due to external interests, but also the resolution of conflicts if the government has the political will to intervene.

Faculties and Institutes and have their own formal and tacit regulations for hiring and promotion which in turn affects the relative value of their capital in the field of university power.

### **Formal hiring and promotion procedures**

There are two procedures for hiring full-time academic staff in the UNAM. The first is for a 3 year contract based on a specific project under article 51; the second is by 'public' announcements (*concursos abiertas*) for tenure, the positions being announced in the internal magazine of the UNAM. In the Faculties '*concursos abiertos*' also exist for teachers paid by the hour for teaching particular academic subjects, to apply to be *titular* of the subject. Hiring under article 51 is a faculty of the director. For a position of tenure, the internal councils (*consejo interno*) of each faculty or institute make a proposal to the decision making committee (*comisión dictaminadora*) who decide the level and category of the position and it is ratified by the technical councils (*consejos técnicos*), it is then announced, and the *comisión dictaminadora* chooses the best applicant.

The internal council of each area which elects Directors is constituted by representatives of each discipline. The 'decision making committee' is formed by two researchers from the same faculty or institute, and two external. They are assigned on the basis of an election process. There are also two representatives of the internal council and the director. The 'technical council' includes representatives of the directors of all the institutes of social sciences and humanities.

The degree of horizontal and collaborative relations currently practiced in the Research Institute of Social Sciences, is shown by the fact that the academics there voted that all the members of the decision making committee for the Institute are external and the director agreed not to be present in the committee.

In the Institute, there was a certain level of anticipation that the current talks will bring much needed internal reforms. Nevertheless, there was also awareness that the advances achieved in terms of horizontal relations were based on informal agreements with the discretionary power of the Director still formally present. Although the current Director chose not to use that discretionary power, there was no guarantee that the following Director would do the same: "if a new Director enters, they have the faculty to put all previous agreements into reverse, there is a margin of discretionality that can be used negatively" ("Interview N14," 2005)

### **Tacit hiring procedures**

The opinions on the transparency of the hiring process vary greatly between the Institute and the Faculty. In the Institute the view taken is that although the job profile is written by the internal council to fit the professional profile of someone who has already been hired by the Director on a 3 year contract under article 51. It is the role of the 'comisión dictaminadora' to make sure that the job profile is appropriate for the position offered, and that the person that is actually chosen is the applicant with the best curriculum. Nevertheless, because the Statute for Academic Personnel was created in the 1930's and was reformed in 1973, the regulations are not equivalent to the requirements demanded by the 'technical council'. The regulations require only an undergraduate degree to enter the Institute, whilst the technical council requires a doctorate, so whilst the process is considered impartial, it is agreed that it is not transparent. The current reform of the statutes as a result of the conflicts of 1999 should resolve this discrepancy:

It is considered that there are 'retratos hablados' (verbal portraits) on the basis of which the job descriptions are drawn up with a particular person in mind, normally someone who has been hired on the basis of a 3 year contract for a special project. The Director who has the power to hire people for specific projects also has the responsibility for writing the job descriptions. The 'Comisiones dictaminadores' have a structure which guarantees transparency in that they make sure that those who apply fulfil the requirements, and there have been cases where someone loses the 'concurso'. There is impartiality but not transparency because the requirements are not very clear. An appeal process exists in which different commissions are involved and this has functioned successfully. ("Interview N14," 2005)

It can be seen that the hiring process is initially a discretionary process and gradually assumes a more objective institutional process. Social capital is initially important, as well as intellectual capital given that those that enter under article 51 often do so because they have personal contacts with the director, but, even so, they have to have the required academic profile. Whilst the tenure announcement may be written to mirror the particular area of research of the person the director wishes to promote, that person has a better chance of being selected if he or she has high intellectual capital, not only a doctorate degree but a research history and membership of the SNI. In the final stages of selection, then, intellectual capital has a higher premium than social capital, although it is still limited by the fact that the public announcement is only made in the internal university magazine. Nevertheless, academic networks in Mexico City assure a wider diffusion of the announcement, although certainly not at a national level. Nevertheless, it is sufficient for the process to be considered "impartial" and to not lead to the formation of clientalist groups:

In the hiring process the academic level is important, but also networks, job profiles are written for specific people who have contacts to promote them with the Director. Nevertheless, systems of appeal do function and the network system functions for someone to enter the Institute but not to remain loyal to a particular group that helped him or her to enter. ("Interview N15," 2005)

The situation is different in the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences. In the Faculty the relation between article 51 and tenure was also considered a "double process where one entered under article 51 and ones position was regularized through a 'concurso'". ("Interview NF17," 2005) Nevertheless, this "double process" has been affected in the last 10 years since it has become an open competition (concurso abierto), because things have become complicated and politicized for a number of reasons:

It is a very long process and it is delayed a lot because of impugnation, it is a very complicated process due to personal reasons and internal politics. The problem is not the transparency but the long and tortuous process. The technical council of the Faculty writes the profile. There are so few tenures that before a tenure is opened the profile is determined in relation to themes that are required, and this creates more pressure. ("Interview NF17," 2005)

Not only has the 'transparency' measure of open competitions for tenure made things more complicated and politicised in the Faculty of Political Science, it has also made the role of the three different committees involved in the hiring procedures, a target of political manoeuvrings:

There were years in which no 'concursos' were opened, from 1975 to 1985 practically no 'concursos' were opened. During this time people entered under article 51, that was very arbitrary... in 1985 concursos were opened and the demand was saturated and political problems started. There were even some cases which took years to resolve, as they went from committee to committee... from that moment on things became vitiated, as they were the first 'concursos', from that moment we began to realise that it was important to be a member of the commission, and be in the technical council, or the internal council, one cannot be in all three... ("Interview NF17," 2005)

The situation seems to have been aggravated due to the freezing of tenures for a long period and then the opening of too few tenures for the number of people who had entered under article 51 during that period. The situation of the tenures is another aspect which distinguished the Institute from the Faculty. In the Institute there are now only two ways to enter, through article 51 with a three year full-time contract, or through full time tenure. Associate tenures, often given to students finishing their PhD, were eliminated by the Rector Saruhan in the 1970's, "to change the tendency for people to study and work in the same institution all their life" ("Interview N15," 2005) after which a PhD was the minimum (informal) requirement to enter the Institute. The situation in the Faculty is otherwise, there the policy is to offer contracts for teaching particular subjects, and teachers have different levels of qualifications. At the moment the situation is calm, because many of the teachers are receiving financial assistance to finish their masters or PhD's, but the situation is set to come to a head as they all finally graduate:

The policy is to gradually reduce full time tenures, to give contracts only per academic subject, the wages are lower in that way, there are some which have a subject contract for 20 years, tenure is never offered to them, and few tenures are offered. The Director is not worried that as a result there are not many doing research, most are doing their master or doctorate thesis and receive a grant for that, and they receive incentives from 'PAPIME' (incentives programme for teaching) but later this is going to have to be rethought.... ("Interview NF19," 2005)

Another aspect of this problem has already been encountered in the Institute where nearly all members now have titular status. There are 3 levels of associate status and 3 levels of titular status, and a PhD is required for the latter. Yet the differentiation between salaries is minimal, "incomes are very similar" ("Interview N14," 2005), regulations for promotions are also out of date so that what is required for promotion from level 1 of titular to level 2 or 3 is not clear, "the requirements are very low, and so it is not very clear" ("Interview N14," 2005). The result is the lack of a career path: "it feels as if its arbitrary,

there is no career process in itself, the clearest distinction is between associates and titular, you need to have a titular level to be responsible for a research project, but practically all those in the institutes have titular level. ("Interview N14," 2005), "there is not much differentiation between levels and not much competition" ("Interview N16," 2005) It was thus considered that the incentives programme has in this sense introduced competition and differentiation that no longer existed due to lack of a career structure after the doctoral level.

### **The impact of the incentives schemes**

The UNAM introduced the programme PRIDE in 1990 (Programa de Primas al Desempeño del Personal Académico de Tiempo Completo, Reward Programme for performance of full time academic personnel), which was designed for the benefit of full time teachers/researchers who undertake both teaching and research. A second programme 'The Programme for the promotion of teaching' (Programa de Fomento a la Docencia para Profesores e Investigadores de Carrera) was opened in 1993 and was designed to also reward full time academic personal who dedicated time to teaching. There is a similar programme of incentives for teachers with contracts per academic subject, as well as programmes for incentives to initiate research, and to incorporate full-time personnel (whilst they build up productivity to enter in the other programmes). There are also various programmes for grants for academic development and to support research, and for this reason the UNAM is not in the PROMEP programme, research and staff development is paid from its own budget, not by SES. It is the only public university in Mexico which currently has this level of financial autonomy in its research programmes. Researchers from the UNAM do however compete for funds from CONACYT, and have joint research programmes with industry.

The impact of performance management in terms of the incentives schemes was considered by those in the Institute to have some positive impacts." it's more a question of strategic thinking... what is best for me in this moment..." ("Interview N15," 2005) "It allows you to submerge oneself in a intense level of productivity and to acquire a sense of the pragmatic" ("Interview N16," 2005); "it

increases productivity, and professionalisation: one learns to determine specific objectives and time limits etc." ("Interview N14," 2005). The SNI incentives scheme was considered to be more focused on research, whilst in the case of the internal incentives programme: "The PRIDE is more integrated, its point of departure is that you are working for the institution, it takes you into account in a more integrated way, what different things you did, it even permits you to give value to yourself. It takes into account diffusion... it gives more importance to research, but is not so pressurizing...." ("Interview N15," 2005). PRIDE was considered in the Institute to have achieved its goal of introducing a culture of evaluation in certain respects: "it has created a culture of evaluation, although with many defects but it is a culture of being accountable" ("Interview N14," 2005).

Although, as mentioned above, the PROMEP programme which promoted collaborative research groups was not introduced in the UNAM, both funding UNAM and CONACyT funding sources promote collaborative research. It was noted that it was "easier to receive funds when one is in a group, there is no funding for individual projects and few which are internal to the Institute" ("Interview N14," 2005). Data revealed that there were no fixed research groups, but whilst many group research projects are simulated to meet funding requirements, producing a collection of individual articles, others are forming due to the interdisciplinary development of knowledge areas, but it depends on the disciplinary area. In some areas the same "development of the sciences is going that way ...my research area is taking me towards a more interdisciplinary focus" ("Interview N15," 2005) Data also revealed that this interdisciplinary focus of knowledge is generating more group research:

Collaborative research "has increased more due to the complexity of the research problems than due to incentives programmes, due to the self-same dynamic of how knowledge is created, Before, we were the only collaborative research group, but currently there is more group research than individual research. ("Interview N14," 2005)

In general the SNI incentives programme was criticised more than the internal programme. It was considered less transparent, "the top levels are very closed" ("Interview N16," 2005); the top levels were determined at the beginning of the programme in 1984 and "there are people that have published little, that got to be there in an opportune moment.. it creates inter-institutional conflicts

because one institution controls this level and promotes their own people..". ("Interview N15," 2005) The issue is that to be an evaluator in SNI, level 3 is required, and at this level "sometimes there are very clientalist groups, who let only some enter, and stay there for 20 years without doing anything.." ("Interview N14," 2005). Other negative effects involved the fact that it leads to the "abandoning of teaching, academics only continue supervising postgraduate theses... SNI is very individualistic, it affects collaborative work" ("Interview N14," 2005), "it privileges research over teaching. .. it creates conflict with the Faculty and other Institutes because everyone needs to supervise theses.." ("Interview N15," 2005) "it creates a culture of paper... the need to design strategies of publication above those of production, quality is medium or low, it leads to short term research" ("Interview N16," 2005).

The internal incentives programme creates discontent in the Institute in so far as it is perceived to be a "salary compensation" ("Interview N14," 2005); "its unjust that it is not incorporated in pensions, and so people do not retire..." ("Interview N15," 2005); and it seems to create more problems than the benefits of the salary compensation it provides, considering "how many hours it costs the institution, it would cost less to raise salaries, and its difficult to lower a person from one level to another... it creates enemies, if you don't evaluate someone well it brings a lot of enemies.. if there is impugnation then someone from the evaluation committee has to defend the evaluation in the technical council of humanities..." ("Interview N15," 2005). The fact that it is perceived as a salary compensation more than a performance management strategy is underlined by the fact that it is awarded despite its objectives not being met: "It was never understood that for the incentive one has to do research and teaching and in the institute there is no teaching but they are still given the incentive, but not vice versa in the Faculty and this creates discontent..." ("Interview N14," 2005)

The strongest negative issue was the impact of both internal and external evaluation schemes on the individual, both in terms of the impact of the evaluation process on ones perception of oneself: "its very wearing, one lives with a lot of stress, if they lower your level it's a devaluation of your work, your prestige, your income..." ("Interview N15," 2005); as well as in terms of the

impact on ones relation to ones work: "ones work loses meaning, one does not know why one is working, it's a work dynamic which has little reflection, research has periods of reflection, learning, the programmes put a lot of pressure, the repetition of work with the objective of incrementing the number of publications, following the same research line..." ("Interview N14," 2005); "every year one has to be thinking in what evaluation year one is in each programme, and that is going to determine what one is going to do..." ("Interview N16," 2005).

In the Faculty the benefits of the SNI were few as people "have never had good conditions, the space is reduced, time is shared with giving classes, there are few materials and there are not computers for each professor... so the incorporation in SNI was slow, although now there are quite a few, ... at the beginning it was considered a very closed process, it has changed, now it is more of an open process.." ("Interview NF17," 2005). Whilst the SNI was considered to have little impact up until recently, the internal programme: PRIDE, was considered unjust because it did not take into account the conditions of the Faculty, indeed it was even considered as an external programme in the sense that it was designed for the institutes:

The criteria are just in general, but the problem with external evaluations is that they tend to use their own criteria relative to their own conditions and between the faculties and the institutes there is an enormous difference... in the institutes they go to seminars, present their research, whilst in the faculty we don't go to conferences etc., some are given help others not... to go and present a paper costs more than 5,000 pesos, (aprox. 500 dollars) and in the Institute they are paid to go and with those criteria they judge the professors in the faculty, they don't take into account the time we dedicate to teaching..." ("Interview NF19," 2005)

Nevertheless it also has advantages in forcing one to be more disciplined about covering all areas of academic performance "because one undertakes an auto-evaluation, and one try's to make an effort to diffuse ones work although one wants to dedicate oneself to research" ("Interview NF19," 2005). Finally, despite all these political and policy pressures the data provided no evidence of a sense of an institution in crisis, instead, procedures were considered lengthy but just, evaluation could result in reprisals but appeal procedures existed, political differences existed at times of crisis but academic objectives prevailed in between crises, external political interests influenced the governing body but were controlled and had the benefit of maintaining the institution closely

connected to the pulse of the nation. A sense of institutional ethos emerges from the data: "the Faculty and the University is a very noble institution, it gives a lot of liberty to its professors, there is always a way of doing things, one can open spaces ....." ("Interview NF19," 2005)

### **Conclusions concerning the UNAM**

The UNAM is an institution whose field of capital is linked to the political field at a national level, as well as academic fields at the national and international levels. Public prestige is a capital which is as important as political capital. The organization of the Institution is such that it can go through moments of crisis and survives; improve rapidly in terms of moving up in international league tables. The institution is slowly changing from a highly hierarchical institution to a more horizontal institution, especially at the level of postgraduate studies and in the research institutes. Nevertheless, in the case of the research institutes, any progress in this sense is based on informal agreements and the fact that power remains discretionary, concentrated in the person of the director, means that the shadow of the possible reversal of achievements hangs over the staff. The possible eruption of new crises in the university fuelled by external events also hangs over the university. The lack of resources and tenures in the Faculty would appear to have done nothing to help the politicisation of the situation. The abrupt transformation of the *habitus* of its community in the massification of the seventies, and to a lesser extent in the strike of the late nineties has meant that the situation is still very heterogeneous, especially in the faculties.

A significant aspect of the study of the UNAM is that there seems a lot of trust in the Institution, it has its own ethos: in the Institute the hiring process is considered impartial, even though it is acknowledged that it doesn't begin impartially and that it is not transparent, nevertheless it is considered that justice will prevail finally; the Faculty and the University are considered noble, even though conditions are considered unfavourable for research in the faculties, academics are not supported, and the environment is heavily politicised, nevertheless, there is a view that academics have a lot of liberty and can find ways of getting things done.

The impact of the incentives performance management strategies was considered positive in terms of introducing a culture of accountability and negative in terms of lowering the quality of research activity. On balance the impact is considered positive in the Institute where conditions are more homogenous and a certain level of horizontal collaborative relations had been established. The impact in the Faculty has been lower. In both areas the evaluation process is considered qualitative and undertaken by peers, the problem in the Faculty is not the evaluation process but the criteria of evaluation, even the UNAM's own incentive scheme is considered an 'external' system. The cost for the individual of such performance management strategies in introducing a culture of evaluation is considered high, and unnecessary if an adequate career programme was set out with a system of continual evaluation.

The reform programme has attempted to manage the social capital of that community without taking into account these differences and the impact of the programme seems to have consequently been accommodated with different levels of success in the Institute and in the Faculty. The highest immediate price appears to have been paid at the level of the personal lives of the academics, whilst the overall consequences of the increase in short term research remain to be seen.

The impact of the incentives schemes does not appear to have changed the relative value of bureaucratic in relation to intellectual capital in the UNAM, its impact is more at the level of social capital, promoting individualistic behaviour, and causing personal stress.

## **The Autonomous University of Campeche**

### **A history of political intervention**

The Autonomous University of Campeche has its origins in 1714 in the Jesuits College of San Jose, which following liberal reforms, passed to State control in 1859 and was renamed as the Institute of Campeche. The institute imparted secondary and tertiary levels of education. In 1958 the then Governor or

Campeche, founded the University of Campeche, within the Institute, but in 1965, the following governor of Campeche, an ex-military general, resituated the university in its current installations next to the military cartel, and himself claimed to found the university, renaming it "The University of the Southeast". In 1989 the University returned to its original name, assuming, in principal, the status of autonomy from the State, and is now known as the "Autonomous University of Campeche".

Nevertheless, the university has continued to live a rather unstable history. In 1965 the Governor named Javier Cu as Rector, but he was removed in 1967 when the new Governor, Sansores imposed his own candidate from 1967-1969, until he showed a propensity for defending the university interests above those of the political interests of the governor, and he was replaced by Ermilo Sandoval, a lawyer, who was Director of the Campeche Institute, and ran both institutions of higher education for 10 years. Perhaps because of the fate of his predecessors, Sandoval exploited the tradition of university 'porros' or vandals, to arm his own private guard, choosing sports players and rewarding them with student grants. He sent them out into the streets to burn buses and generally make a nuisance of themselves in order to pressure the Governor to give the university what they or the Rector wanted. The following Governor, by paying these same 'porros' to also work for him, finally managed to replace this rector, impose his own candidate, Umberto Lanz and introduce university legislation to determine a fixed 4 year term, with a maximum of one re-election. Umberto Lanz was Rector for 8 years followed by Tirso de la Gala in 1987, who oversaw the transition of the university from a state university to a national university, receiving funds directly from the Federal government. De la Gala did not finish his period, passing instead to be leader of the local congress in the team of the new governor, who put forward his own candidate as Rector interino and who was reinstated by formal elections at the beginning of the next four year period by the university council. The election of José Abud Flores followed in 1995 with the Governor's support for his candidature depending upon his demonstrating majority support in the university council. Having served 5 years on that council first as a teacher's representative and subsequently as Director of the Faculty of Humanities, he was able to confirm a majority in support for his candidature.

From 1995 to 1997 Abud Flores was able to work without local government interference, presiding over the introductions of the national tertiary education reform programme, promoted by SESIC and ANUIES. Not all aspects of the reform programmes were received with enthusiasm due to the local interest groups embedded in the university administration and academic management, (a fact argued by Abud Flores with the then head of SESIC, to no avail). From the beginning of his administration, he introduced the 'Integral System for University Administration', a national programme for transparent accounting in universities, yet following continued delays in its implementation, made use of the first legal opportunity to change the president of the Patronato of the University. (The removed president resumed his control of the patronato in 1999 after the new Governor had imposed his own candidate in rectoria). Abud Flores also oversaw the introduction of the PROMEP programme in the university, and the Director of ANUIES took the opportunity of his invitation to the Rector's final yearly report to praise the achievements of the university in relation to the high percentage of academics who had initiated post-graduate studies.

Nevertheless, with the initiation of State elections, the Rector not only faced opposition from vested interests within the university but also from without. Signs of tension between the Rector and the Governor elect for the PRI emerged in 1997 when the Rector denied access to all political parties to canvas on the campus, resolving the issue by permitting the presence of the official candidates in a formal event where each candidate was invited to present a conference on their proposals for higher education. These tensions increased during the next two years as the Rector resisted the imposition of the new Governor's candidates for Faculty Directors and Research Centre Directors, on the basis that the curriculum of those proposed did not satisfy the universities objectives of seeking academic excellence.

The new found status of autonomy of the university was violated in September 1999, a month before the possible re-election of Abud Flores, when the Governor sent in the PRI youth league and plain clothed policemen, who broke into rectoria where the Governor's candidate called a press conference in the

middle of the night to declare himself the new Rector. The individual who took this task upon himself was the same person that earlier that day had been dismissed by the Rector from his post as Secretary General for his involvement in creating an atmosphere of instability in the university by inciting unrest and marches among teachers in one of the high school colleges belonging to the university. The PRI youth league and plain clothed police remained on campus for a number of weeks. The legitimacy of the imposed Rector was never recognised by the Secretary of Education at a national level, and the Governor convened a meeting of the university council 4 months later to vote in a new candidate as Rector, the head of the local base ball club and son of the previous Rector Cu Espejo who had been removed after a two year period by a previous Governor.

The university did not see many changes subsequent to the violation of the university's autonomy in 1999, until the election of a new Governor in 2002, a candidate put forward by the outgoing Governor. The same year saw the election of a new Rectora, niece of Ermilo Sandoval who had been Rector from 1969 – 1979, and Director of the Faculty of Accountancy. In 2003 the new Rectora continued pushing forward the national reform programme when she announced her plans to introduce new undergraduate programmes in all the disciplines, which would be based on a flexible credit system. The introduction of this new system has not been without set-backs and the initiation of the new programme has been postponed from September 2005 to September 2006. Nevertheless, this modernisation of the curriculum has been matched with a centralisation of all administrative procedures.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> For example, a recent attempt to reserve a room for post-graduate classes in the coordination of postgraduate studies in the Humanities faculty required six written requests: from the teacher to the office administrator, to the office post-graduate coordinator, to the Faculty Director, to the

## **The Organizational Structure of the University**

Like most provincial universities, the University of Campeche was based on the UNAM's faculty organizational structure. It has 9 Faculties: Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Chemistry and Biology, Engineering, Law, Accountancy, Social Sciences and in 1989 the Faculty of Humanities was created which included the undergraduate programmes of Literature, History, Psychology and the postgraduate programmes of Higher education and Psychology of Education. It has various centres of research studying tropical diseases, corrosion in materials, sustainable development and environmental problems, oceanography, social sciences, particularly archaeology, anthropology, and law.

(<http://www.uacam.mx/Uacam.nsf?Opendatabase>)

The first master's programme was not opened until 1992 in Higher Education, and inscription was mainly from the same university staff. In 1996 no theses

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General Director of post-graduate studies to Director of Distance learning department, to the administrator of the seminar rooms. Clearly the written request arrived long after the course took place, which was finally agreed by a personal visit by the teacher to the administrator

had completed for examination. The university has currently 4 active master's programmes and 1 doctoral programme, with the current Director of Postgraduate Studies and Research insisting that programmes meet the minimum requirements of the PNP to remain active. The university also has two preparatory schools, one on campus and one off campus, and it can be seen that the administrative procedures of the preparatory school also prevail at the undergraduate level, with teachers required to report 2 monthly exam results each semester as well as end of semester exam results, and with students who fail end of semester exams being able to sit two other forms of examination in case of failure. Furthermore, undergraduate students have between 35 and 40 hours of classes per week, with programmes extending to 9 or 10 semesters. Hence a paternalistic, teacher orientated university culture still exists despite the fact that national policy calls for the shift towards self-learning research orientated programmes, as well as the introduction of distance learning programmes.

The Director of each Faculty or preparatory school sits on the University council, along with a teacher's representative of each Faculty, the Directors of administrative areas and a student's representative. Nevertheless, it is the Directors which have most say in the council as the teacher's and student's representative are usually the Director's candidate. Consequently, the Rector normally tries to maintain the support of the Directors. For example, attempts to organize postgraduate studies under the general direction of Post-graduate studies, was rejected by the Directors as it was seen to diminish their status. On the other hand, the request by directors that they be required to give written approval to each document submitted by teachers/researchers to sustain their submissions to the incentives programme was approved. This increased the capital of Directors in the field of university power. Nevertheless, it continues to be the Governor who indicates his or her approval for the candidate for Rector, and the Directors are expected to vote accordingly. The capital of the Directors has increased in the field of university power in terms of internal administrative decisions, at the same time that their capital has diminished in terms of wider political decisions concerning the choice of a new Rector.

## **The introduction of incentives schemes**

The incentives scheme was introduced in 1990 for full-time teachers and researchers, and initially for hourly paid teachers, and a single scheme has been maintained, rewarding both research, diffusion, teaching and academic administration. Nevertheless, it is not necessary to have products in all areas to enter the scheme, so that a teacher who does no research may enter and aspire to the lowest grades of financial incentives, and may even achieve the highest grades through participating in various academic and administrative committees. On the other hand, researchers who do no teaching cannot enter the scheme. In *September* 2006 new regulations(Campeche, 2006) valid from *January* 2006, were distributed, redefining which activities will be accepted for productivity rewards in the evaluation process in 2007. In the new regulations research publications account for a maximum of 30% and only those undertaken with students. Given that post-graduate programmes are limited to a few areas, and only one doctorate programme exists, this means that Doctors will be required to publish with undergraduate students to receive incentives in the research area. The regulations manifest a return to an emphasis on the value of teaching over research. This shift is another example of the ascendance in the UAC of the more traditional vision of the university as a teaching institution, thus reversing the impact of the national reform programme's emphasis on full-time academics in Faculties participating in research.

## **Procedures for hiring and promotion**

The analysis of data gathered from the interviews showed that academics were, in general, unaware of formal regulations concerning the procedures for hiring and promotion, it considered that in practice it depended on recommendations of the Director to the Rector, and the person "could have the academic profile or not.. but principally it was through clientelist networks" ("Interview C9," 2005) In the last year public competitions (concursos de oposición) have been opened, but not for full-time tenures, only for tenures in particular subjects, (normally a contract for 4 hours a week)

... it is not by open competition, it depends on one's antiquity as an hourly paid teacher in a particular subject, and personal recommendations, and the decision belongs to the Rector... (tenures given for individual subjects) is a process subject to political and union interests, the union requests quotas and

they are given to those who have helped (the union) ("Interview C8," 2005)

Procedures for promotion are just as arbitrary, it was either "imagined that one (a regulations document) must exist" ("Interview C12," 2005), or it was known that regulations existed but that they were nevertheless "arbitrarily applied... for the average person, yes, there are regulations..." ("Interview C11," 2005); and for that average person, following those regulations based on "antiquity and academic grade" involves entering into a "battle of official letters", the result of which is finally decided by an evaluation committee appointed by the university council, which includes the Director of Academic Development, and the Director of Postgraduate studies.

Nevertheless, as a result of the national PROMEP programme, those full-time staff which have been awarded the PROMEP profile (on the basis of academic profile, research and publication) are also awarded life tenure on instructions from the Secretary of Education in Mexico City. On the other hand, all new full-time appointments, whilst they should be made on the basis of the PROMEP guidelines and be approved by the SEP which grant the budget for new tenures, do not always follow such guidelines.

## **Academic networks**

This 'arbitrariness' of the application of hiring and promotion procedures and the influence of personal relations or clientelist networks, reflected the situation of academic relations in the university. There are "academic groups and interest groups created around access to resources" ("Interview C11," 2005); one perspective of the situation was that in general the type of relations that exist in the university involve "a bit of everything, relations are based on shared work experiences, on power and on friendships" ("Interview C12," 2005); whilst another more critical perspective was that "relations are based on economics and power" ("Interview C10," 2005). These perspectives on the type of relations that pertained in the university, were mirrored in the consideration of the type of groups which exist,: "there are networks based on academic interests, networks which seek to control the institution, individuals who know how to move themselves to obtain more resources, there are power groups more than academic groups .. amongst academics they are internal, amongst

directors they seek to make links with the higher levels of the state bureaucracy, the leaders of the groups are internal, they are based on controlling resources, even academic programmes..", ("Interview C8," 2005);

Yet, it was more than a question of different groups or networks, it was also suggested that the individual outlook to things in general was one of "egoism... an attitude of protecting oneself... it is the culture of Campeche and of Mexico also, a result of paternalism... there is someone who is going to solve my problems.. the one in control of my life is the one with power... my boss, the governor... there is no structure which permits me to protect myself from this type of arbitrariness... there is no security that someone cannot take away what I have, there is no security of employment, health insurance is limited.. life is precarious... until recently the university was the only employer at the level of higher education... tenure is considered a property... tenures are obtained through power quotas..." ("Interview C8," 2005).

This perspective was supported to different extents by the other academics interviewed. It was suggested that there is a focus in seeking "self-protection, protection of ones work, protection from the rest of the people, for the development of ones own interests and not of the academia in general..." ("Interview C10," 2005); and this was because on the one hand, "where the rules are not clear there is an atmosphere of taking care of oneself, being careful with whom one has contacts...I try not to fall in this psychology..." ("Interview C12," 2005); and on the other hand, it was because "the UAC is too near to the government, its subject to the power of the government in turn, and for this reason the ambience is defensive..." ("Interview C11," 2005)

Another person took a slightly different perspective, considering that "more than anything it's a mentality of a mixture of complexes: insecurity, a culture of my rights, of no responsibilities, a culture of little solidarity more than egoism, one of paternalism and no professionalism, a lack of a state of law, clientelism is everywhere, but in Campeche there is less solidarity..." ("Interview C9," 2005)

It was considered that 'egoism' thrives in a hierarchical power structure, "each one feeds the other" and together increase the precarious nature of the situation. The paternalistic nature of the hierarchical structures means that the individual assumes the "position of the victim" with no personal responsibility for events.

### **The impact of the incentives schemes**

Given that social networks are constructed upon this 'egotistical' basis of personal motivation, the 'meaning' of other social interactions become transfigured. For example competitiveness becomes a "competitiveness of obstacles", each one seeks to put obstacles in the path of the 'others' advancement, because "positive competitiveness is a menace to the established system", given that rewards based on merits threaten established power quotas. ("Interview C8," 2005) In this sense, the introduction of a competitive incentives programme, on the one hand increases personal rivalry, "competitive relations are very destructive, they don't care walking over whoever...it's an animals in the jungle situation.." ("Interview C12," 2005), and on the other hand, is seen as a menace to the established structure of incentives based on power quotas. Yet competitive incentive schemes also become adapted to the established structure, so that they "don't promote academic competitiveness, but instead political and economic competitiveness" ("Interview C10," 2005).

The process and outcomes of the evaluation of the competitive incentives schemes are also considered to have little to do with the purported objectives of the incentives scheme. The fact that the documents to be handed in to the evaluation committee have to be first signed by ones immediate Director, results in the procedure being used as an instrument of control: "it functions to put a break on conflicts" ("Interview C8," 2005). In fact, a pun that is used to refer disrespectively to this scheme plays on the words "teaching career", which in Spanish is "carrera docente", which is transformed into "carrera indecente" (indecent career). Indeed, receiving a high level in the evaluation process is considered as a rather dubious achievement ("Interview C11," 2005); another perspective was that "the results were incomprehensible, the process is not considered trustworthy... it would have to be an external (process).. ." ("Interview

C12," 2005); and similarly "the evaluation committee is considered arbitrary... (and if seeking a better solution) any internal committee would be disqualified..." ("Interview C9," 2005).

Collaborative incentives schemes, on the other hand, are not transfigured into a more extreme form, instead they are "simply not understood, its an external model, there is no comprehension, although there is the ingenuity to protect forms, and produce artificial research groups, products of the Director's decision" ("Interview C9," 2005). They can also, therefore, be adapted to more traditional power structures: "they are not understood, the Director wants to control, the reaction of the professors is varied, there are those who seek the protection of the Director because they are not accomplishing the academic requirements, others try to follow the proposal, others simulate having a research group which is really a protection group, the same interest group forms a research group... it (the reform programme) is putting them in a situation which they do not know how to do it, so they collect together to protect themselves..." ("Interview C12," 2005) The impact of the collaborative research model is thus very limited because "the system resists change.. precariousness is an absolute, to be below is precarious, to be above is precarious, also the system is precarious..." ("Interview C8," 2005). The result is that there "are two parallel models which do not make contact... the university is one section more of the government... the collective union contract is just more bureaucratic merits, due to a necessity for resources (the university) has taken on the neoliberal model which it does not understand, there are two systems or models..." ("Interview C9," 2005). Finally, the collaborative schemes can make the situation worse in some aspects because by entering in one research group one is immediately identified with that group as if it were a clientalist interest group "one belongs to one group and therefore one is confronted by others..." ("Interview C9," 2005)

As a result there is not much hope for the future, even for a slow learning process, "I don't believe there is any future, the immediate future is that they are going to continue adapting themselves, in 2006 if there is no results, it (the university) will become a State university" ("Interview C8," 2005); there will be no results and so we will "end up as a State university, the parallel system will

not be allowed (by SESIC) to continue.." ("Interview C9," 2005). Another perspective is a little more hopeful in that the reform model has set up an alternative against which the old system is compared and this creates uneasiness: "there is no change but now things are uneasy, they are criticisms , this is a step on the way to change.." ("Interview C10," 2005); as well as the fact that the PROMEP programme offers a new dimension in which to develop for the few who want to make the most of an alternative option "with the research groups there is the possibility to move oneself outside (the university in links with academics in other universities), .. this could be a light of hope..." ("Interview C12," 2005). This model "has brought in external people, and those that have been formed outside" follow the new model and the rest the old, "the local State context is also archaic, so its very difficult for the new model to have an impact.." ("Interview C9," 2005)

### **The results of external evaluations in 2006**

As a result of the most recent violation of university autonomy (1999), the university corridors are periodically buzzing with rumours that the Governor is about to replace the Rector, and speculation about who will be imposed. This further increases the power of the Directors as the Rector seeks their overt support. It also potentially increases the power of whatever group in the university who are discontented, although it is difficult that such a group (students, teachers etc.) could achieve their goals without external support.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> In June 2006 medical students organized a march to complain against the possibility of having the programme reduced from graduate to technical status for not having basic infrastructure such as operating rooms, and thus not meeting accreditation requirements. Nevertheless, it was also widely commented that support for the students march was given by the aspiring candidate to the position of Rector, the current local leader of the PRI and "close" friend of the Governor.

A new resource the Rector has at hand is the use of performance statistics in relation to national data. In her third year report the Rector made a lot of use of reference to statistics. Statistics on research included the number of research groups and lines of research, the number and type of scientific publications, the percentage of full time teachers-researchers, and the increase in staff with post-graduate degrees and with SNI profiles. The increase in evaluated and accredited undergraduate programmes, numbers of computers and numbers of bibliographic material. At the end of her report, she observed the need for increased resources and thanked the Governor who was present for his respect for university autonomy. Given the context of rumours at that time concerning her imminent removal, two things are noteworthy, the insistence on positive performance of the university during her administration, using comparisons with national indicators, and the reference to autonomy.

Similarly, when shortly following her third year report, two of the three programmes in Humanities received first class recognition from the CIEES evaluating body, it was observed that the Rectora firstly visited the governor to report the news personally, and then sent a report to the local newspapers to be printed in the weekend press. It was the following week when the teachers of the two accredited programmes were informed by the Faculty Director that their programme had achieved level one in the evaluation process. On the other hand, the academy of the programme which was not given level one, and perhaps not incidentally, was the academy which had criticised the internal organization of the UAC during the CIEES interviews, were not officially informed until 10 days later that the report explaining the result was pending. Meanwhile, the academy was subject to vicious rumours and hostile treatment, to which they decided to respond with a written statement to the Director and Rector. The president of the academy refused to sign the statement and claimed that it was thus not a statement of the academy, to which the members pointed out that the academy, was a collegial body and if the majority signed it was an academy document. (Academy, 2006)

This recent series of events reveals important data. Firstly, the Rector is keen to use national indicators to defend her personal performance but not to improve internal transparency. The indicators are thus used to simulate reform,

not to undertake reform. Statistics are used as capital to gain advantage in the field of university power. Secondly, whilst the national institutional evaluation process (PIFI) did not accept this simulation, with the annual amount assigned to the UAC for special programmes falling for the third consecutive year, the national accreditation process would appear to have been prepared to sustain such a simulation of the reform programme, given that only the programme which was not given level one was also the only one of the three programmes which has the highest level of academic profiles, two SNI members, and the only research production at national and international level. This suggests that not all the national programmes maintain the same strict standards in evaluation, a fact the 2006 OECD report alludes to.<sup>42</sup> Thirdly, the academy which spoke out and criticised the entire process was one which in the last few years the majority of its members have returned from doctoral studies in Mexico City and abroad<sup>43</sup>. This indicates that the results of the PROMEP programme are having an impact which was perhaps unforeseen by many, namely that they return with expectations in terms of undertaking research in conditions which are not met by the university, still organized according to arbitrary hierarchies of power.

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<sup>42</sup> In the recommendations section the report suggests in relation to external quality assurance: "It is important to ensure the good preparation of the staff concerned. Often, some of the reasons for the weakness of a quality assurance system are the lack of mechanisms of analysis of the information gathered during the external review, inadequacies of the selection process of and the training offered to evaluators and the lack of effectiveness of evaluation committees" (Brunner et al., 2006)

<sup>43</sup> In the CIEES external evaluation of three career programmes in the Humanities Faculty, only the history academy are known to have criticised the arbitrary character of procedures in the university, and of the 12 members present, 7 either have recently completed or are concluding doctoral studies either in Mexico City or abroad, 4 have masters and 2 are graduates. In the other two academies where no critical remarks were made only one person in each academy was undertaking or concluding doctoral studies abroad, although a significant proportion of teachers had full-time tenures.

In the UAC the only collegially based organ provided for in the university legislature are the teacher's academies for each undergraduate programme, and this is the only organ where researchers can express their discontent. The teachers of each undergraduate programme (full time and subject) have the right to form an academy and elect the President and Secretary of the Council. The academies are supposed to revise the curriculum, make necessary revisions, and assign thesis supervision. In practice their performance differs from one faculty or preparatory school to the next, with the Director for the most part deciding each semester who will teach each subject. In those academies where the majority of teachers are on short term contracts paid by the hour there is little opposition to the directors decision. The academies thus acquire more potential capital as their full-time members increase or subject teachers acquire tenure for that subject. Yet the use of those rights to increase the capital of the academy would seem to largely depend upon the academic profile of the members and whether they studied locally or in Mexico City or abroad.

Hence although the UAC signed agreements to adopt the PROMEP programme, and then the PIFI guidelines, which recommended universities to adopt a departmental structure, introduce more horizontal academic structures based on the research groups, the possibility of the university council deciding in favour of a candidate who would push through organizational reforms required by the PIFI guidelines are consequently very limited. On the contrary the ascendancy of the power of the Governor in the field of university power has reduced the power of the Rector and increased the power of the directors, although only in terms of internal strategic decision making. This has had the effect of accentuating traditional hierarchical clientalist structures where the Director is the cacique, maintaining a servile position in relation to those above him or her in return for power over those below him or her in the ladder of power. On the other hand, the effects of the PROMEP programme are beginning to be felt from the bottom up, with academics returning from post-graduate studies in Mexico City or abroad less disposed to accept traditional forms of university organization. PROMEP has had less impact in the UAC at the level of university legislature, and more in terms of changing cultural and social capital. As intellectual capital is increased, social networks are affected.

## **Conclusions concerning the situation in Campeche**

Arbitrary and precarious, the need to look out for oneself, are the descriptions of the situation that kept cropping up in the analysis of the data gathered in the UAC. This context resulted in the introduction of competitive incentives making the situation worse in terms of personal rivalries, whilst the objectives of collaborative incentives were simply not understood by the majority and research groups were simulated. Nevertheless, there are a few academics who find a line of support in the PROMEP programme, now incorporated in the university planning exercise, the PIFI, evaluated by SES each year.

The context of the UAC has meant that neither the individual or collaborative incentive schemes have had the expected impact. This is because competitiveness in the UAC is interpreted as putting obstacles in the path of the other due to the culture of 'looking out for oneself', and as a result rivalries have got worse. This rivalry extends to rivalry between groups, so that forming a research group on academic grounds can result in one being identified by others as 'belonging' to that group on more than just academic grounds, and be subject to the having more obstacles put in your path as a consequence. At the same time Directors have violated the principles of both the individual incentives scheme by requiring all documentation to be signed by them, and attempted to influence the formation of research groups to secure the inclusion of one of their '*unconditionals*' within the group. With regard to the latter objective, they have not always been successful as the research groups are evaluated and approved in Mexico City.

It is thus clear that to introduce either of these schemes of performance management in the UAC, certain preliminary measures to reduce the hierarchical and arbitrary nature of the practices in the university were required thus relieving the precariousness of the situation of academics within the UAC, and providing the minimum basis on which relations of trust and collaboration could be constructed. Hence reforms needed to be introduced much more slowly after securing certain preliminary conditions; nevertheless, despite these difficult beginnings it would appear that things are changing as a result of academics returning from external post-graduate programmes as well as academics being hired from other institutions.

The modernisation of the UAC, in the sense of a gradual break with local clientalist structures and the adoption of academic principles of practice, was initiated by Tirso de la Gala in 1989 when the university achieved autonomous status, but was halted in 1999 when that incipient autonomy was violated by the State. In 2006 clientalist forms of organization are again in ascendancy, but at the same time the increased intellectual capital of the academic base as a result of the PROMEP programme is affecting social capital and the field of university power. Meanwhile modernisation continues to be simulated in terms of performance in relation to national indicators. The situation will possibly become more volatile as more post-graduates return. The question remains to be answered as to whether this increased demand from the academic base for less authoritarian forms of organization will lead to reforms or whether the restoration of university autonomy will have to await the election of a more enlightened State Governor.

## **Chapter 8. A comparative analysis of the three case studies**

The objective of the reform programme was to introduce the principle of funding linked to performance determined by evaluation in relation to 'objective' indicators. This required a move away from a *habitus* based on discretionary decisions which often obeyed the as much clientalist as academic interests, towards a culture of objective evaluation. To understand the *habitat*, or 'culture of a university', involves, according to Bourdieu, recognising the regularities of relations and the forms of capital they give rise to. Determining the predominant factors at play in the cultures of the universities studied, is thus a first step in understanding how those cultures were transformed, or not, by the policies of 'external' fields. The intention of this chapter is to outline those predominant factors by means of a comparative analysis of the common factors that can be identified between the studies.

This comparative analysis will be developed in four stages: firstly, on the basis of a descriptive appreciation of extent to which a culture of evaluation succeeded in being introduced in each university, either on the basis of the World Bank or the OECD model; secondly; with regard to aspects which distinguished the university 'cultures' or *habitus* and the impact of the reform programme; thirdly, in terms of the principal underlying factors common to each case; and fourthly in terms of the development of the initial heuristic framework.

### **The impact of international policy models in local contexts**

In chapter six it was seen that both the World Bank and OECD models made certain assumptions concerning social capital. The national tertiary education reform programme's introduction of incentives schemes in Mexico followed the World Bank policy approach, whilst the PROMEP policies which promote the formation of research groups followed the OECD approach focusing on

knowledge transfer. The data reveals that these schemes had distinct impacts in each institutional context.

The most positive impact achieved by the reform programme was in the UNAM Institute of Social Sciences where the incentives schemes were considered to be slowly introducing a culture of evaluation, as well as something approaching a career profile, a factor lacking in the current promotion options. Nevertheless, the schemes were also considered to result in high levels of personal stress and income insecurity which could be avoided if a coherent career promotion programme was designed. On the other hand, strategies to promote collaborative research tended to encourage simulated responses, unless it was already taking place, was due to the changing nature of the research projects, in which case such strategies were supportive.

In the UNAM Faculty, the impact of the incentives schemes was low, even full-time staff did not count on office space, access to computers, or financial support for conferences, so their research output was often low, although their time dedicated to teaching was high. Thus, it was considered that the incentives schemes were made for the institutes and had little to offer those in the Faculty as they rewarded mainly research and undervalued teaching.

In the UAM the reform programme was considered to be imposed from above by administrators with little understanding of professional academic life, and was considered to deprofessionalize academic staff. The incentives schemes were considered a bureaucratic and financial exercise which was undermining the incipient evolution towards a collegial ambience in the department. The linking of funding to collaborative projects was also considered as just another facet of this imposition of policy from above.

In the UAC the reform programme was considered parallel to the local reality based on hierarchical clientalist structures. Particular strategies of the reform programme such as the incentives schemes had been adapted to the economy of this local reality further increasing aggressive competition for resources based on clientalist practices. Attempts to adapt the PROMEP programme had been less successful due to the centralisation of evaluation procedures.

Nevertheless, the mere decision to collaborate in a research group on academic grounds rather than the preferences of the director was considered as a questioning of authority and also as identification with an 'interest group'.

Hence, at an initial descriptive level, it would seem that strategies to encourage the evolution towards a culture of objective evaluation were most successful in the UNAM Institute where contractual conditions were homogenous, relations were horizontal and collegial and a relative level of autonomy within the university was enjoyed by the Institute. Whilst the UAM shared the same level of homogenous contractual conditions amongst full-time staff, the other conditions were not enjoyed, and the UAC benefited from none of these conditions. Furthermore, the UNAM also practiced qualitative evaluation procedures, yet these were highly criticised by the UAM, whilst in the UAC the issue was irrelevant because all procedures were considered a simulation. This last factor suggests a qualitative leap exists between the cultures of the UNAM, UAM and UAC, and it is thus necessary to understand the nature of this breach.

### **Distinguishing factors with regard to policy impact**

The impact of the World Bank model of competitive market management styles at the level of institutional cultures can be interpreted in relation to the issue which arose concerning the benefit of transparent versus discretionary forms of evaluation. In the UAM a model of transparent evaluation was defended by academic staff in comparison to what they considered as discretionary, verging on 'obscure', evaluation procedures in the UNAM. Nevertheless, they were also aware that this transparency was achieved at a cost: quantitative evaluation procedures.

At first this appears to be a zero-sum situation, either there is qualitative evaluation and the risk of obscure discretionary decisions or there is quantitative evaluation and transparent procedures. Nevertheless, in addition to the issue of 'transparency' a question of 'legitimacy' arose. Firstly, there is the 'transparency' of the evaluation methods, which in the UAM was based on quantitative analysis. Secondly, there is the legitimacy of the decision making committee (comisión dictaminadora).

The guarantee of impartiality of the committee in the UAM is based upon the fact that its members come from the three different universities which make up the UAM (recently four), yet, it was still perceived as necessary in the UAM to defend a quantitative method of evaluation to ensure that clientelism did not infiltrate the process. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of the results 'produced by that committee were still questioned due to the fact that the members of that committee are not considered to be peers. The increasingly quantitative nature of evaluation procedures in the UAM had resulted in the reduced participation of the most prestigious academics of the institution.

In the UNAM, evaluation of the incentives schemes is based on qualitative criteria, and academics of the highest prestige participate in the evaluation committees. There is an initial trust in the 'fairness' rather than the 'transparency' of the procedures, because the impartiality of the discretionary bodies is generally beyond doubt due to the scientific prestige of its members. Also there is a 'fair', if not 'efficient', system of appeal in those situations where it is claimed that undue external pressures were exerted. The system is not considered transparent in the case of promotion, due to the lack of a table of clear criteria yet there is a general confidence in the procedures because the committees are made up of prestigious members of staff and thus considered 'legitimate'. The criticism by faculty members of the incentives schemes was not related to the process of evaluation, but the criteria of evaluation which favoured research over teaching.

As a result, the evolution of the university culture towards a 'culture of evaluation' was considered to be advancing in the UNAM Institute, more slowly in the UNAM Faculty, whereas in the UAM a number of those interviewed considered the situation to be degenerating. In the UAC, on the other hand, the evaluation procedures were considered arbitrary, the results not trustworthy, and the whole process not just demeaning but "indecent".

## **Common factors with regard to policy impact**

The trust in the impartiality of the discretionary decisions of the evaluation committee in the UNAM, and hence its legitimacy, depended upon the scientific prestige of the members of the committee. In the UAM scientific prestige was being undermined by the ascendancy of the discourse of transparency as a result of external pressure from the SES. In the UAC, social and political prestige was more influential than scientific prestige with the result that discretionary decisions had no legitimacy

A key relation which can be uncovered here is that between scientific prestige and university power. As seen in chapter three, in the UNAM, during the previous century, the path for promotion of prestigious researchers had been university managerial posts; scientific prestige had become linked to university capital in the UNAM. Membership of hiring, promotion or evaluation committees is also an acknowledgement of prestige in the UNAM. As mentioned in chapter five, such committees are considered by Bourdieu to play a key part in maintaining the *status quo* by reproducing the university *habitus* through their decisions of selection and promotion.

The University council also plays a similar function in seeking to maintain equilibrium between disciplinary groups in the election of the Rector. Curiously, by linking in the election of a Rector scientific prestige to political capital, university autonomy was protected. The tacit assumption that the Rector would use his or her political capital to protect the university, and thus his or her prestige within the university, had been upheld by the results.

In the UAM, the control of the Rector's position was considered to be in the hands of a distinct disciplinary group in each campus, creating a clientalist scientific capital. The controlling scientific group of one campus was also dominant in the SES and the national field of tertiary education policy. This was clearly not the case in the UAC where the Rector was *de facto* elected by the local governor, and scientific prestige was considered a possible debilitating factor. The result was that the university was permeated by the local political field, and the low percentage of tenure amongst academics meant they were prey to the clientalist relations of the current group in power.

In short, the success of the reform programme in terms of the introduction of a culture of evaluation based on 'objective' criteria depended upon the linking of scientific and university capital and the evolution of a university culture which sustained the legitimacy of discretionary peer evaluation.

Thus, although the situation in each university was distinct, nevertheless, these arise from distinct combinations of a limited number of factors: university capital, scientific capital, individual autonomy (tenure) and university autonomy. Where scientific capital and also personal and university autonomy was high, then scientific capital tended to be linked to university capital and horizontal collaborative relations were predominant. Where scientific capital was high yet university autonomy was low, then university capital tended to be linked to the capital of other fields, that is to say, that other fields were inter-connected with the capital of the university field. This university field was almost a virtual field in the situation where scientific capital was also low.

## **The development of the initial heuristic framework**

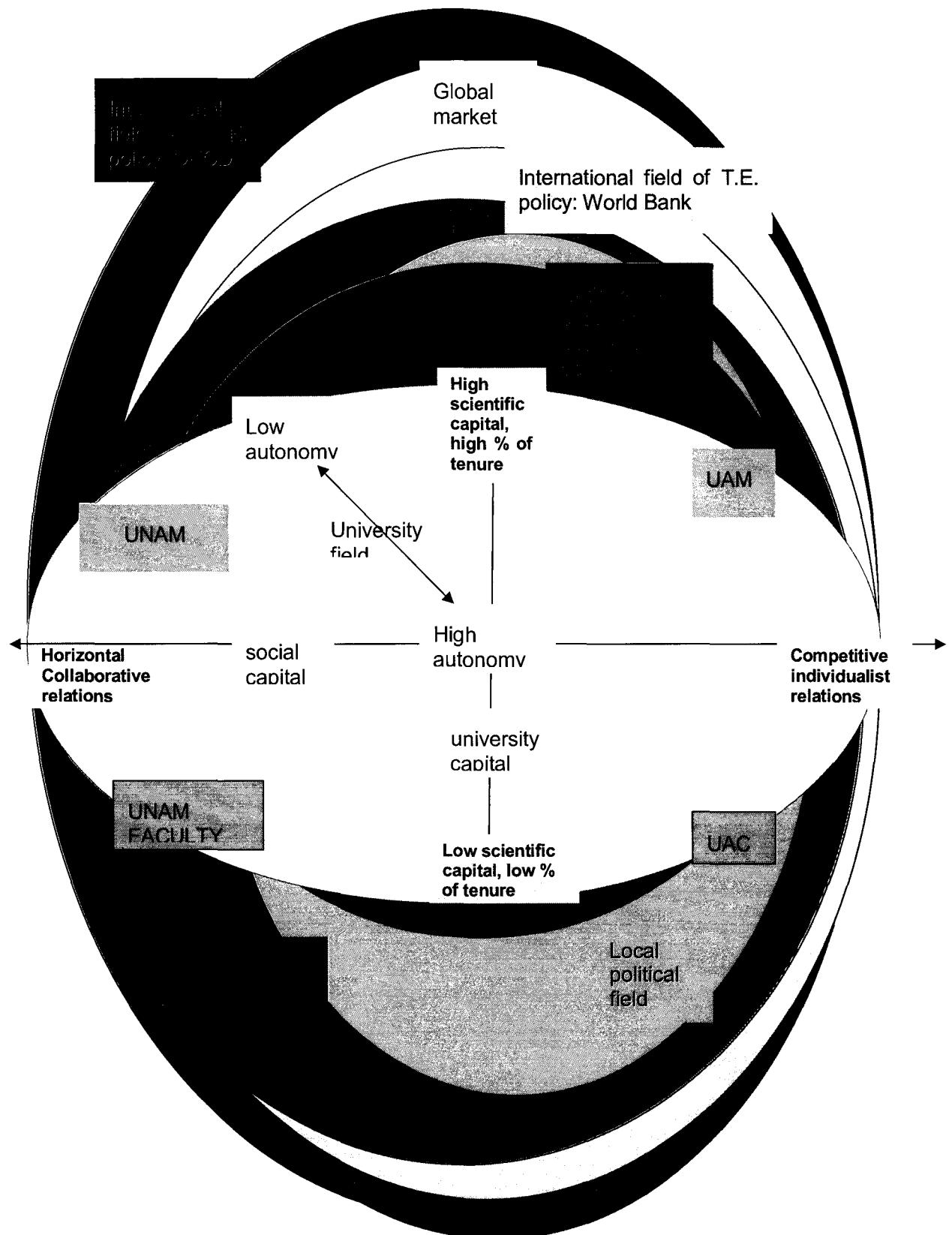
These distinct outcomes and the principal factors involved are represented in figure 4 below. The university field is traversed by two axis: one indicating the type of relations which predominate: collaborative or competitive individualist relations; the other is the axis of university capital, either linked to high or low scientific capital. The location of a university close to the center of the field indicates high autonomy and towards the edge of the field low university autonomy. The right hand side of the university field is more closely related to an OECD model of the knowledge society involving public universities promoting knowledge transfer, and the left hand side of the university field is more related to the World Bank model of the knowledge economy and the competitive market exchange of knowledge as a commodity. The right hand side is also more closely related to the national political field, and the left hand side to the local political field.

It can be seen: the lack of autonomy of the UAM from the national field of tertiary education policy meant that high scientific capital and individual autonomy (tenure) in the UAM failed to become related to university capital. Instead university capital was linked to bureaucratic capital which was continuous with the bureaucratic field of national tertiary education policy. (represented in figure 4 by its location at the edge of the university field, at the right of this field where it is traversed by the field of national policy)

On the other hand, in the UNAM Institute, high scientific capital and individual autonomy was combined with university capital resulting in horizontal collaborative relations. (for this reason the UNAM Institute is located firmly within the university field yet still linked to the field of national politics and also the field of the knowledge society). In the UNAM faculty, low scientific capital and low individual autonomy resulted in the low autonomy of the Faculty in relation to the field of national politics.

The peculiar autonomy the UAC enjoyed from the policies of the SES, in the sense that the reform programme remained parallel to the local agenda, was a result of its complete lack of autonomy from the local clientalist forms of capital, facilitated by the low overall level of scientific capital and individual autonomy in the university (for this reason the UAC is represented as situated more in the field of local politics than in the university field).

Figure 4: Relational value of capitals in distinct institutional fields



## **Concluding remarks**

The changing meaning acquired by the concepts of 'transparent' and 'discretionary' decisions depends on a complex relation of factors which Bourdieu's account of *habitus, capital and field* is able to uncover. Sufficient levels of individual and university autonomy permit the linking of scientific capital to university capital and the development of a culture of horizontal collaborative relations which sustains the legitimacy of discretionary peer evaluation.

The situation of the UNAM would also seem to sustain Woolcock's point concerning the importance of synergy at the macro level with the national context. As noted, the effectiveness of tacit assumption of the University Council in the selection of the Rector of the UNAM, that the candidate combine political and scientific capital is based on this combination of synergy with the national context and institutional integrity. In Bourdieu's terms, it involves choosing a person who has capital in both the particular field and related fields of the social space.

The importance observed by Bowles and Gintis of a legal environment and the nature of the community norms is also seen to be relevant to the data analysis. In the UNAM, both the tacit norms and the legal framework of the governing council sustains a relative yet crucial autonomy of the university in relation to other fields. In this way the norms of the community develop into an institutional 'ethos' which in turn reinforces university autonomy from other social fields, protecting the institution from the direct impact of policy changes at the national and international level. Instead, the university acquires a certain liberty to adopt and adapt national and international policy according to the needs of the university.

# Chapter 9. Conclusions

## In answer to the Research Questions

In order to understand why the Mexican tertiary education reform programme includes apparently incongruent objectives and strategies, as well as to explain the disjuncture between the policy objectives and outcomes, this research set out to answer the following questions:

- Why does the Mexican tertiary education reform programme include apparently incongruent objectives and strategies?
- Have the different performance management strategies achieved the 'development of a culture of evaluation based on objective criteria or, ironically, has a traditional', non objective systems of relations been strengthened?
- In what way and to what extent are different forms of capital embedded in the social structure of Mexican society and is it feasible to attempt to introduce an objective system of evaluation linked to the distribution of resources in the tertiary education in Mexico without taking them into account?
- Does the impact of the performance management strategies vary between distinct institutional environments and, if so, what are the principal factors that account for these differences?
- In what way can a deeper knowledge of the context of the reform programme improve policy design

Personal experience in a provincial university lead me to doubt the 'lack of motivation' explanation for the uneven results of the programme, as well as the argument that more stringent linking of funding to reforms would resolve the problem. Instead, this research adopted an initial 'heuristic' framework that considered the extent to which the field of tertiary education in Mexico is able to maintain a degree of autonomy in relation to international, national and local

either political, economic or education policy fields, in order to explain the disjuncture between objectives and results in the reform programme.

I began to develop this initial heuristic framework firstly with regard to the national fields of education policy and economic and political development. In the review of the development of the reform programme the answer to the first research question concerning the apparently incongruent objectives of the reform programme began to be developed. It was clear that the reform programme initially followed performance management strategies which promoted individual motivation and departmental and institutional competition for resources, whilst the PROMEP programme marked a shift to the promotion of collaborative research.

The explanation for the objectives behind these distinct performance management strategies became clear and are reported in chapter six in the analysis of the extent to which the World Bank and the OECD policies intend to transform the relative value of capital within the tertiary education field, either directly or indirectly through different strategies of performance management. It was seen that each of the policy models have a potential impact on both the field of tertiary education and the habitus of particular institutions. Both models promote the standardization of knowledge in relation to international indicators and this increases the value of the capital of international policy agencies as well as national government through centralised systems of evaluation at the expense of institutions and teachers. The World Bank policy model also attempts to redefine the 'suppliers' and 'clients' of the field, sustaining this model on the basis of assumptions of an individualistic competitive form of social capital in tertiary education. The OECD, on the other hand sustains its model of knowledge transfer by assuming a collegial form of social capital based on systems of trust.

The Mexican tertiary education reform programme combined both these models with the aim of introducing a culture of 'objective' evaluation of performance, the results of which would determine funding levels. This was described in terms of the transition from a 'benevolent' to an 'evaluative' model of state control of tertiary education. Nevertheless, pursuing a historical analysis of the tertiary

education reforms during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it became apparent that whilst the reform programme involved a *change of strategy* in the funding procedures from discretionary to an 'objective' framework for funding criteria, at the same time, *continuity* had been established through the unremitting use of the distribution of resources as a means of co-option and the maintenance of centralised control. Hence, in relation to my second research question concerning the achievement of the development of a culture of evaluation based on objective criteria, the initial contextual analysis suggested that this was undermined by the accompanying strategy of linking evaluation to funding. This development of the initial heuristic framework was supported in chapter three by scholarly reports pointing to the continuing recourse to simulation, as well as the analysis of data which showed the uneven results of the programme at a national level.

The unevenness of the results of the reform programme was supported by the comparative analysis of the case studies. In the UNAM, the reform programme achieved a partial success in promoting the evolution of an objective culture of evaluation in the Institute, but not in the Faculty. In the UAM, on the other hand, the reform programme succeeded in undermining the incipient development of a culture of 'objective' evaluation. In the UAC the reform programme remained parallel to functioning of the university, being adopted only in those situations in which it could be adapted to reinforce local clientalist relations. So in reply to the question whether the different performance management strategies had in fact strengthened 'traditional' non-objective relations, the data analysis clearly showed that in the UAC, the linking of reform to the distribution of resources resulted in not only the adoption of those aspects of the reform programme which could be adapted to 'traditional' clientalist practices, but that in fact the reform programme was thus used to strengthen those practices.

The third question concerned the degree of embeddedness in Mexico of different forms of capital in the social structure of Mexican society and the feasibility of introducing an objective system of evaluation linked to the distribution of resources without taking them into account. An exploration of social history indicated the complex co-existence of hierarchical clientalist relations and horizontal relations of reciprocity in Mexican society, and the

extent to which the clientalist strategy of using the distribution of resources to maintain social control is a practice embedded in the social structure.

Bourdieu explains such clientalist forms of capital as part of a symbolic economy for the exchange of resources which exists alongside a market economy. In Mexico this co-existence had been underpinned until the end of the century, by a post-revolutionary national symbolism. Nevertheless, a new form of neoliberal clientalism was seen to have emerged at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more impersonal, no longer symbolic, but also pursuing social control through the quasi-market competition for resources... The comparative analysis of the case studies supported this interpretation given that the situation in the UAC can be considered as an example of the predominance of the more traditional symbolic economy, whilst in the case of the UAM, the more recent neo-liberal market economy was predominant. The situation was distinct in the case of the UNAM, as became clear in the answers to the remaining research questions.

Hence the exploration of both the history of tertiary education and national socio-political structures suggested that the replacement of a complex symbolic social political system for one based on 'objective' criteria for the distribution of resources, was an issue which went far beyond that of a 'lack of motivation' to implement reforms due to a 'resistance to change' as the ANUIES report had suggested. Nevertheless, the comparative analysis of the case studies suggested that relations within each university were affected in distinct ways by national and local political and policy fields.

In the UNAM the first mediator of the university interests' with the wider political structure is the rector, yet the university is also a symbol of social mobility, the values of the nation, and the social and political heterogeneity of the Mexican society. And even in the Institute of Social Sciences where a tentative degree of autonomy had been achieved, this did not survive moments of political crisis. The UAM enjoyed less autonomy given that it was permeated by power and interest groups from the upper echelons of the administrative and academic structure to the lowest, although not in such an undisguised manner as in the UAC. The field of the latter was virtually co-extensive with the local political

field. Thus the analysis of data from the case studies revealed that distinct forms of capital embedded in national hierarchical and horizontal social structures also assumed distinct forms at a local level according to the field analysed and its degree of autonomy from other fields.

It was this analysis of the extent to which each university maintained autonomy from the various political, economic and education fields which provided the basis for the development of the answer to the fourth question concerning whether the impact of the performance management strategies varies between distinct institutional environments, and if so, the principal factors which account for these differences. The analysis of the data from each case study showed that the impact of the reform programme not only varied between each university but also, in the case of the UNAM between the Faculty and the Institute. Only in the latter was the reform programme considered to have a partially positive impact. In the Faculty, the impact was virtually insignificant, whilst in the UAM and in the UAC the results were distinct but both negative.

The comparative analysis of the case studies determined that the main factor for these differences was based on the principle of autonomy. Each university achieved the maintenance of different levels of autonomy from the various fields in different ways according to the particular factors involved in the historical development of each university. Yet, it also became clear in the analysis of the quantitative – qualitative issue over evaluation procedures, that what varied in each case was the same factor: *levels of individual and institutional autonomy*. Hence it was possible to conclude, at a general level, that sufficient levels of individual autonomy as well as the autonomy of the university field in relation to other fields, encourages the linking of scientific capital to university capital and the development of a *habitus* of horizontal collaborative relations which sustains the 'legitimacy' of discretionary peer evaluation.

So to return to the aim of this research, namely to understand why the Mexican tertiary education reform programme includes apparently incongruent objectives and strategies, as well as to explain the disjuncture between the policy aims and outcomes, it can be concluded that this was the result of the inclusion of incongruent international policy models which were in turn unsuitable with

regard to the local context. Hence the national aim to introduce an 'objective' and hence possibly 'democratic' system of indicators to determine university funding was undermined by the adoption of unsuitable performance management strategies from international policy models. Both models presupposed forms of social capital which did not reflect the local reality, yet on the other hand, and somewhat ironically, the World Bank model involved performance management strategies which too closely mirrored the clientalist relations which it was the aim of the reform programme to replace.

## **Policy Implications**

The reason for this unfortunate combination was due to the lack of sensitivity to the local context when designing the strategies to introduce an 'objective' culture of evaluation. Hence the explanation of the disjuncture of policy aims and outcomes leads on to the last question concerning the way in which a deeper knowledge of the context of the reform programme can improve policy design.

The lack of sensitivity to, or comprehension of, the local context on behalf of policy designers, was also related to the international 'hegemony' of the policy models, particularly the World Bank model which was also linked to funding. This global hegemonic discourse relies on concepts such 'transparency', 'accountability', and 'legality'. In this comparative study, only the university culture of the UNAM, the oldest and most prestigious university in Mexico, has thus far been able to withstand the hegemony of this discourse.

The 'lack of sensitivity' was also based on the *collective misrecognition* of the fact that this model closely mirrored the clientalist practices it was supposed to replace. As noted in chapter five, when analysing a symbolic economy, Bourdieu explains how individual self-deception concerning the acts of domination and aggression that are present in an exchange of gifts are sustained in a "veritable *collective misrecognition* inscribed in objective structures (the logic of honour which governs all exchanges – of words, of women, of murders etc.) and in mental structures, excluding the possibility of thinking or acting otherwise." (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 95). The fact that a national

reform programme can adopt strategies of implementation which closely mirror the practices the reform programme aims to overcome, can only be understood in terms of this concept of *collective misrecognition*.

Indeed, it can consequently be anticipated that the argument employed in the ANUIES 2000 report, namely that any problems related to the implementation of the reform programme involve ‘a lack of motivation’ resulting from ‘inertia and tradition’, will be continued to be employed in rejection of the conclusions of this study. However, to the extent to which this study performs what Lingard refers to as ‘socioanalysis’, and helps individuals become “reflexively aware of the structural determinants of their practice” (Lingard, 2006, p. 291), it will have opened a space for questioning the ‘objectivity’ of the neoliberal model.

## **Nacional Policy Implications**

The comparative analysis of the impact of the incentives programmes in three distinct contexts has shown the significance of the extent to which the linking of scientific capital to university capital is related to the degree of autonomy of the university field in relation to other fields. Where scientific capital is linked to university capital, evaluation procedures tended to be less hierarchical, more qualitative, and were more likely to be considered legitimate. Where scientific capital was divorced from university capital, discretionary decisions were not considered legitimate and the discourse of transparency based on quantitative evaluation was adopted, with the negative consequences of undermining the academic *habitus*. Where scientific capital was low and university field was continuous with the field of local politics, not even quantitative evaluation procedures were considered transparent, they were merely considered a simulation of transparency, a mask behind which the reality of discretionary decisions based on clientelist interests continued as the normal procedure.

In this sense, the findings of this research support the recommendations of the 2006 OECD report (Brunner et al., 2006: item 306) to extend and strengthen the PROMEP programme, not only in the provision of grants to academic staff, but also in the provision of financial resources and impartial systems of career development support for returning post-graduates, all measures which increase

scientific capital. Given the extent to which the PROMEP programme allows researchers and research groups to develop independently of local power groups, there is clearly a need to extend financial support for fledgling and not only consolidated research groups. The research findings also suggest that increasing scientific capital strengthens collegial practices, although tenure is also an important factor in this respect.

These findings suggest that the OECD's proposal of modular systems of knowledge management (OECD, 2004) supports more horizontal collegial practices where scientific capital is high and contractual conditions homogenous, and in such conditions it enhances horizontal collegial practices. The level of heterogeneity both within and between institutions in Mexico provides the basis for a strong rejection of a policy approach where one model, under central control, fits all.

## **International Policy Implications**

This research contributes to a growing interest to explain the unexpected results of policy reforms, the disjuncture between policy objectives and policy outcomes, the disjuncture between policy assumptions and local realities. (Bowles & Gintis, 2000; Grimmett & Crehan, 1992; Halse, Kennedy, & Cogan, 2006, p. 593; Stambach & Malekela, 2006; Woolcock, 1998). Its contribution to this growing body of literature lies in having shown that different international models of tertiary education reform make distinct assumptions concerning social capital which are not only incongruent amongst themselves, but also potentially incongruent with the context in which they are applied.

This research has shown that the adoption of Bourdieu's approach of social fields constituted by relative values of capital is a coherent and congruent methodological approach for this type of analysis of the impact of international policies in local contexts. As noted in chapter two a similar approach has been adopted by Naidoo and Jamieson in terms of the impact of market values on university capital.

This approach permits, on the one hand, the analysis of the extent to which international policy proposes to change the relative values of capital in the field of tertiary education, and on the other hand, to analyse the particular university fields and the extent to which their autonomy is limited in relation to other fields. Analysis at both these levels permits an understanding of the particular disjuncture of policy and outcomes, as well as the comparative identification of factors involved in each case.

Furthermore, this approach has permitted the development of an understanding of Mexican social and political structures in terms of a complex relation of symbolic and market economies. A historical approach to this analysis has thrown light on the transformation of the forms of clientalist practices, up to the current 'neoliberal' form of clientalist practices where co-option is justified by the discourse of quasi-market performance management strategies. As a result, it can be seen that World Bank performance management strategies closely resemble clientalist practices and consequently are most unsuitable in those contexts where such practices are firmly embedded. Indeed this research has shown that in such contexts, instead of encouraging reform, at the least they undermine fragile collegial *habitus* and, in the most symbolic economies, they reinforce traditional clientalist practices.

Hence despite the specificity of the Mexican context in which these international policy models were introduced, this research has developed a heuristic framework which is applicable in those contexts where similar economies can be identified. Furthermore, even in established market economies, the results of the current research are also particularly relevant due to recent proposals to changes in the funding of university research to allocation on the basis of metrics. In the case of the United Kingdom the Times Higher Education Supplement concentrates on the threat this proposal presents in terms of issues of diversity, (Lipsett, 2006), yet the current research suggests that the threat is much more serious with regard to, on the one hand, university cultures, particularly in the case of the newer, less prestigious universities, and, on the other hand, individual levels of stress and self-esteem.

# **Appendix 1. Notes on section one of the interview guideline, and the guideline**

The following categories were used to determine the types of capital of the interview sample:

Demographic, economic and social capital:

Age  
Birthplace  
Number of children  
Place of residence  
Profession of father, mother and grandparents  
Children's professions

These categories are the same used by Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 227) except for the last two indicators which were added to register the degree of social mobility, which during the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Mexico, following the revolution, was often high. The profession of the children was added to determine whether a trend of upward mobility continues.

## Cultural capital

Academic success

Bourdieu defined academic success amongst French academics in terms of success in the 'concours general'. (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 231) In this research I will define it in terms of academic qualifications, including periods of post-doctoral studies.

## **Capital of university power**

University selection and promotion committees  
Department heads

Bourdieu defined this indicator in terms of belonging or not the university selection and promotion committee. (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 223) Here I used the same indicators initially, but these findings were compared with the results from questions on the power of clientalist groups within the university in the second section.

### Capital of scientific power and prestige

Grades acquired in the National system of researchers (SNI)

A similar indicator to that used by Bourdieu: the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS).

### **Intellectual celebrity**

Publications in national newspapers

Mass market publications

Participation in television or radio

Here I have used the same indicators as Bourdieu, adding only radio participation, which is a popular form of communication in Mexico. The participation of academics in these medium is relatively high, and in addition, the UNAM and the National Polytechnic (IPN) have their own television and radio channels.

### Political or economic power

% of income based on incentives programmes

Political posts

Here I have used neither of the indicators of Bourdieu, neither the holding of public posts nor the indicator of extra teaching undertaken at a prestige institute. Academics do realise extra teaching in other institutes, but they are not government posts as in France, and so giving extra classes has less to do with political or economic power and more to do with relations through academic networks. Furthermore, during the eighties, following the devaluation of the currency, giving extra classes, or holding public posts, was often undertaken to supplement incomes.

Nevertheless an important factor that effects the economic power, (by which I understand the relative value of their incomes in the national economy); of individual academics in Mexico is the proportion of academics salaries which now depend on incentives programmes. The high percentage of their income which these payments represent reduces the power of academics to reject these procedures, and the model of tertiary education reform of which they are part. (See research of Bensimon referred to in chapter two)

Also, academics in Mexico, particularly academics from the social sciences, tend to assume political posts, either in an advisory role or in popular representation, and so I have included this category in the interview structure.

#### Interview guideline

Interview no.:	INSTITUTION:
DEMOGRAPHIC CAPITAL	
How old are you	
Where were you born	
Do you have children and if so how many	
ECONOMIC CAPITAL	
Where do you live	
SOCIAL CAPITAL	
Where did you undertake your basic education	
What was your fathers level of education and profession	
What was your mothers level of education and profession	
What were your grandfathers level of education and professions	
What were your grandmothers professions	
What are your children's professions	
CULTURAL CAPITAL	
Where did you undertake your first degree, date, name	
Where did you undertake your masters, date, name	
Where did you undertake your PhD, date, name	
have you undertaken, and where and when, post-doctoral studies research visits	
Current Academic position	
how long have you had that position	
Which year did you first hold full-time university position	
do you give classes in any other institute	

UNIVERSITY POWER
have you held positions of an administrative capacity
have you held positions in staff selection or promotion committees, or incentives evaluation committees
have you held positions in CONACYT evaluation committee
have you held positions in any other type of committees
SCIENTIFIC POWER AND PRESTIGE
Are you in the SNI, if so: since when and at what levels
Do you participate in the UAM's programme of academic incentives.
- estímulos anuales a la productividad 1989 (Annual productivity incentives)
- becas a la permanencia, 1990 (grants for antiquity)
- Becas al reconocimiento a la carrera docente, 1992 (Grants for the recognition of teaching career)
What is its level of consolidation according to PROMEP criteria

<b>INTELLECTUAL CELEBRITY</b>
<i>Have you published in a national newspaper</i>
<i>Have you published in mass market publications</i>
<i>Have you participated in television or radio</i>
<b>POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC POWER</b>
<i>Have you held public posts</i>
<i>WHAT percentage of your income is based on incentives programmes</i>

<b>TYPES OF CAPITAL OF UNIVERSITY POWER IN THE UNIVERSITY</b>
<i>how often are tenures opened in your department/faculty/investigation centre</i>
<i>Is this a completely transparent process or do other factors influence this process?</i>
<i>Is the promotions procedure considered a completely transparent process or do other factors influence this process?</i>
<i>Is the evaluation procedures for the incentives programmes considered a completely transparent process or do other factors influence this process?</i>
<b>ACADEMIC NETWORKS</b>
<i>Are relations in the university generally based on collegial values or do other types of relations exist?</i>
<i>If different interest groups exist, do they originate in the university or are they part of larger interests groups in the academic community at large, or political interests at a national level?</i>
<i>Is there a leader of the interest group within the university, or is the leader external to the university</i>
<i>If there is a leader, is his/her position based on academic power or on the power of intellectual prestige, or another type of power</i>
<i>How do these different interests groups seek to extend their influence?</i>
<i>Since when have these types of relations existed</i>
<i>Have they changed over time?</i>
<i>How do you foresee the situation developing?</i>
<i>If transparency has improved, what makes it possible for the process to suffer a setback... finally how transparent can procedures be?</i>
<b>ACADEMIC NETWORKS (CHANGES ONLY FOR UAC INTERVIEWS)</b>
<i>Are relations in the university based on collegial values or on other types of interests?</i>
<i>What is your opinion of the view of a colleague that within the academic community there is a culture of 'Looking out for oneself' (Egoismo), resulting from a psychology of the oppressed, of not being in control of one's destiny, of precariousness</i>
<i>If such a culture exists:</i>
<i>How does such a culture affect competitive relations?</i>
<i>As a consequence, would it be better to reduce or accentuate competitive relations?</i>
<i>Are vertical relations prominent in the university?</i>
<i>How does such a culture of egoismo work within a vertical structure?</i>
<i>Does a vertical structure reduce or accentuate sensation of precariousness, of not being in control?</i>
<i>Does it compensate in terms of paternalism?</i>
<i>How does this culture impact efforts to promote horizontal relations, such as collaborative research groups?</i>
<i>do different interest groups exist in the university? What is the dynamic of the relation between these interest groups and the culture of egosimo?...</i>
<i>Do these different interest groups originate in the university or are they part of larger interests groups in the academic community at large, or political interests at a national level?</i>
<i>Is there a leader of the interest group within the university, or is the leader external to the university</i>
<i>If there is a leader, is his/her position based on academic power or on the power of intellectual prestige, or another type of power</i>
<i>How do these different interests groups seek to extend their influence?</i>
<i>Since when have these types of relations existed</i>
<i>Have they changed over time? Do they change in moments of crisis, and if so what are the criteria for the new set of relations?</i>
<i>How do you foresee the situation developing?</i>
<i>If transparency has improved, what makes it possible for the process to suffer a setback...?</i>

Sistema Nacional de investigadores (SNI.) what was the level and type of academic activity/production prior to the introduction of SNI in 1984
Did different interest groups in the university have an impact in that production
What was the impact of the SNI system of individual rewards based on performance on : research productivity
the type of research productivity
the type of academic activity
relations in academic community
Does it create discontent
It is not considered a transparent procedure
The criteria are not considered just
what proportion of an academics salary do the internal incentives progs. represent
how do they differ from the SNI
Does it create discontent ?
is it considered a transparent procedure?
Are the criteria considered just?
Is the creation of competitive rewards beneficial for : The individual
The institution
The establishment and consolidation of research groups
The academic community in general
How would you compare the transparency and effectiveness of the system with other institutions?
Is it considered fair to financially reward staff for their productivity instead of a decent salary ?.
Do you think it is useful to have two systems of rewards: both the institutional and the national system? If so why?

What are the sources of finance for research in the university.
Has collaborative research practice increased or decreased in recent years?
What has been the impact of criterias of finance in the level of group research?
What has been the impact of incentives programmes in research collaboration?
Have other factors influenced this process, such as type of research, complexity, interdisciplinary etc.
If you are you a member of a research group , then when was it formed
What was the process of forming it
Has its collaborators changed?
In the formation of a research group which of the following factors have an influence in forming the group:
Research interests
Previous contacts in department or faculty
Personal friendships
Hierarchical relations within department or faculty
Interest groups within the university
What are the difficulties encountered working in research groups?
Personal commitment of members
Time factors
Distances
Financial support
Interest groups within the university
Pressures of a competitive environment

## **Appendix 2. Examples of approaches to issues of trust involved in validation of data gathering and analysis and triangulation of interviewees comments**

In an interview in the UAM the interviewee said that s/he considered the hiring and promotion procedures in the UAM to be transparent, and in the UNAM closed and discretionary, but when I continued with questions about whether different interest groups exist in the university the answer was immediately “por supuesto que hay” (of course there are) and went on explain how different groups controlled each campus, the biologists (including medicine) controlled Xochimilco and the Physicists controlled Itztapalapa, a situation which this person considered should change but was unlikely to in the short term. So at this point I considered it ‘natural’ to ask whether the existence of such interest groups affected the transparency of the hiring and promotion processes, and at this point the person interviewed was more disposed to explain that although they are transparent at one level, there are different levels in which influence can be applied. The question of in which department a tenure will be opened for ‘concurso’ depends on the interest groups as well as deciding the profile required for the tenure. The profile can be written to fit a particular person ‘un retrato hablado’ (literally a ‘spoken portrait’), and give that person an initial advantage in the ‘concurso’.

What becomes apparent from this example, is that the questions concerning the type of networks which exist among academics raised a set of issues which related back to the transparency of the hiring of promotion procedures, such that, in this case, I could arrive at the conclusion that the procedures were not as transparent as the interviewee initially claimed. Furthermore, because I personally undertook each interview, and because the introductions through recommendations established a minimal level of confidence from the beginning of the interview, which, using interpersonal skills, I was able to build upon during

the interview, in such situations, I was able to push certain points without offending the person interviewed. So in this example, I was able to pose a question in the form of a reflection arising from the interview contents, whether the procedures mentioned affected or not the transparency of the 'concurso'.

To this question the person replied

there are always the possibility that someone else would win the 'concurso' because the determining committee is transparent., that was what I meant by referring to the process as 'transparent', influence can be applied in the first stages, but the 'concurso' is transparent, the committee can decide in favour of an external candidate which unbeknown to the particular interest group, had submitted his or her papers and which better fitted the profile of the position.

This is an example of how, through establishing trust as the interview proceeded, I was able to ask a question of clarification, which although it appeared to contradict a previous reply of the interviewee, nevertheless the interviewee was prepared to clarify his/her previous answer. It is then, also, an example of how establishing trust made possible triangulation during the data gathering process.

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