

Marketization of Higher Education in the UK and Its Impacts on Teaching Practitioners

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Abstract : Academic institutions, esp. universities, have been known as cradles of learning and teaching great thinkers while creating the type of knowledge that is supposed to be bereft of utilitarian motives. Nonetheless, it seems that such intellectual centers have entered into a competition with each other for attracting the attention of potential clients. The traditional values of (higher) education such as nurturing criticality and fostering intellectuality in students have been replaced with strategic planning, quality assurance, performance assessment, and academic audits. Not being immune from the whims and wishes of marketization, the system of higher education in the UK has been recalibrated by policy makers to address the demand and supply of student education, academic research and other university activities on the basis of monetary factors. As an immediate example in this vein, the Russell Group in the UK, which is comprised of 24 leading UK research universities, has explicitly expressed its policy on its official website as follows: 'Russell Group universities are global businesses competing for staff, students and funding with the best in the world'. Furthermore, certain attempts have been made to corporatize the system of HE which have been manifested in remodeling of university governing bodies on corporate lines and developing measurement scales for indicating the performance of teaching practitioners. Nevertheless, it seems that such structural changes in policies toward the system of HE have bearing on the practices of practitioners and educators as well as the identity of students who are the customers of educational services. The effects of marketization have been examined mainly in terms of students' perceptions and motivation, institutional policies and university management. However, the teaching practitioner side seems to be an under-studied area with regard to any changes in its expectations, satisfaction and perception of professional identity in the aftermath of introducing market-wise values into HE of the UK. As a result, this research aims to investigate the possible outcomes of market-driven values on the practitioner side of HE in the UK and finally seeks to address the following research questions: 1-How is the change in the mission of HE in the UK reflected in institutional documents? 1-A-How is the change of mission represented in job adverts? 1-B- How is the change of mission represented in university prospectuses? 2-How are teaching practitioners represented regarding their roles and obligations in the prospectuses and job ads published by UK HE institutions? In order to address these questions, the researcher will analyze 30 prospectuses and job ads published by Russell Group universities by taking Critical Discourse Analysis as his point of departure and the analytical methods of genre analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics to probe into the generic features and representation of participants, in this case teaching practitioners, in the selected corpus.

Keywords : higher education, job advertisements, marketization of higher education, prospectuses

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