

**Higher Education Corruption in the World Media:
Prevalence, Patterns, and Forms ***

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Corruption in higher education is a newly emerging topic in the field of education research. There is a phenomenal growth in the number of media reports on corruption in higher education over the last decade. However, the rigorous systematic research on education corruption is virtually nonexistent. This paper considers corruption in higher education as reflected in the world media, including such aspects of corruption as its prevalence, patterns, and dominating forms. It follows publications in the specialized and the non-specialized media outlets in the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Russian Federation. The publications are grouped depending on the particular problem they address. This criterion has been chosen as best addressing the issue of corruption internationally. Socio-economic context of educational reforms and changes in each country leaves its print on major forms of corruption in higher education. The findings help to determine which aspects of corruption in higher education should be given more consideration in the future research and which ones might be prioritized, as well as how the national systems of higher education can be improved.

Key words: corruption, higher education, media

Introduction

Corruption in higher education is a newly emerging topic in the field of education research. Some aspects of corruption in education have been addressed in recent works by Martin Anderson (1992), Melissa Anderson (1999, 2001), Max Eckstein (2003), Jacques Hallak and Muriel Poisson (2002, 2007), Stephen Heyneman (2004), Harold Noah and Max Eckstein (2001), Lydia Segal (2004), and Jennifer Washburn (2005). Scholarly work on corruption in higher education is lacking while the problem itself is significant. The presence of corruption in higher education throughout the world is a growing concern for the industry as it influences its effectiveness and efficiency. The negative impact of higher-education corruption on economic development and social cohesion is also disturbing. With the rapid internationalization of higher education and the growing volume of trade in educational services, matters of educational credentials--and credibility in general--become ever more important.

The three major issues in higher education are access, quality, and equity. These issues are universal and at stake in every nation. Corruption affects all three of these issues. It has a negative impact on the quality of higher education and other services; it increases inequality in access to higher education, and causes inequities. Every nation solves problems of access, quality, and equity differently. Thus, also corruption in higher education is part of the news in every country, ways in which the national media reflects on corruption in higher education differ.

This paper considers corruption in higher education as reflected in the world media, including such aspects of corruption as its prevalence, patterns, and dominating forms. It addresses the differences in forms of corruption across the nations pointing to how exactly they differ and why. This paper considers the media reports and the prevalent forms of corruption in higher education in each of the nations in the context of major socio-economic changes and

educational reforms. The findings help to determine which aspects of corruption should be given more consideration in future research and which ones might be prioritized.

Research methodology

The definition of corruption may be found in economics and political sciences (Nye, 1967; Johnston 1996; Osborne 1997; Krueger 1974; Klitgaard 1986; White 1996; McChesney 1997; Wilson 1975; Weber 1978; Treisman 2000). Transparency International uses a clear and focused operational definition of corruption as the misuse of entrusted power for private gain (Transparency International, 2007). Economics experiences difficulties in testing the models due to the lack of large and reliable datasets (Rose-Ackerman 1978; Tirole 1992; Bardhan 1997). Seumas Miller, Peter Roberts, and Edward Spence (2005) point to the relativity of the term corruption and apply it to academia. The definition of education corruption includes abuse of authority for material gain (Anechiarico and Jacobs, 1996). Heyneman adds to this definition by arguing the following: “But because education is an important public good, its professional standards include more than just material goods; hence the definition of education corruption includes the abuse of authority for personal as well as material gain.” (Heyneman 2004, 638)

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) offers defining corruption in education as a “misuse of public office for private gain that influences access, quality, and equity in education.” (IIEP, 2007) Taleh Sayed and David Bruce (1998) and Duncan Waite and David Allen (2003) present a broad social approach to define corruption. This article adheres to Georgy Petrov and Paul Temple’s (2004) approach to corruption and applies narrow definition of corruption that regards corruption as such only if it implies illegality. It uses operational definition of corruption in higher education as a system of informal relations established to

regulate unsanctioned access to material and nonmaterial assets through abuse of the office of public or corporate trust.

The research of corruption in higher education does not face the lack of methodological approaches, as they may be borrowed from other disciplines, including political sciences and economics. At the same time methodological approaches, borrowed from other disciplines and applied to corruption, have certain limitations. Petrov and Temple (2004) say that methodology of studying corruption in education may be no different from qualitative research. However, some problems are encountered by the researchers. For instance, faculty members know of each other's corrupt activities but do not discuss them. As a result, major difficulties arise when collecting information due to specifics of the topic—corrupt practices remain illegal. The authors describe this problem in higher education systems in the Russian Federation by noting the following: “Our own experiences in our region of study suggest that even the most carefully phrased enquiry to university members of staff about the existence of corruption in their institution can be taken as a personal insult. This naturally limits the scope of data collection. Students and former university staff members have no difficulty generally in discussing the matter, however.” (Petrov and Temple, 2004, p. 87)

Another problem that researchers may face is the low level of reliability of the information obtained from surveys and interviews. Not only media reflects perceptions, problems, and trends, but it also shapes perceptions about corruption. Hence, media is important in researching corruption not only as a reflector from which people collect information, but as an instrument of shaping and facilitating corrupt behavior as well. Moreover, it is noticed by several authors that perceptions of the public about corruption lead to an increase in the number of incidences of corruption and the total volume of benefits obtained through corrupt ways

(Cabelkova and Hanousek, 2004; Tumennasan, 2005; Olken, 2006). An increase in public perceptions about corruption in higher education facilitates a further increase in corruption as well as the total amount of corrupt benefits accumulated by the college instructors and administration. This underlines importance of the media as a signaling agency that informs the general public about corrupt practices, customs, and norms. Democratic changes and processes of openness and transparency increase the role of the media in the society.

The research question can be formulated as follows: How is corruption in higher education reflected in the world media, and what particular aspects of corruption receive more of the media's attention? Specifically, this paper analyses selected publications in two major international languages, English and Russian, for the period of 1998-2007, devoted to corruption in higher education. This recent period has been selected because all of the sources are available on-line and consequently have much broader outreach than they had before.

The publications are grouped depending on the particular problem they address. This criterion has been chosen as best addressing the issue of corruption internationally. The groups are as follows: corruption in access to higher education, including violations in national and international educational tests, violations in entry examinations, and bribery; corruption in research and research grants, including violations of the rules of conduct, presentation of results known to be incorrect, fraud, plagiarism, and corruption in obtaining grants; corruption in academic process, including low quality of instruction, unearned diplomas, degrees, and educational certificates, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, diploma fraud, production, distribution, sale, and usage of fraudulent certificates, diploma mills, term papers for sale, including those exchanged through the internet; corruption in auxiliary activities, including intercollegiate athletics; industry-specific corruption in higher education management and administration,

including fraud, embezzlement, and provision of false information; corruption in auxiliary branches, including academic publishing, development and provision of educational software, and supply of educational services and goods.

Different aspects of corruption in higher education are reflected in just about every news source or edition. This paper uses media sources that provide the most comprehensive reflection on both nationwide and international problems, including the entire spectrum of the problems associated with higher education corruption. These sources consider significant cases of corruption, broadly discussed in the society. They present stories built of information obtained from reliable sources and have a high level of credibility.

This research identifies one source that specializes in higher education and one major news source for each of the regions, including North America (the US), Europe (the UK), and the former Soviet Union (the RF) with populations of approximately 300, 60, and 150 million, respectively. These countries represent different models of higher education organization, including such key aspects as governance, management, funding, and admission policies. The selected on-line non-scholarly publications in the US and the UK can be accessed only for a fee, while publications in the Russian Federation are accessible for free. All of the publications are not limited to the national borders, instead having a much broader outreach.

In the US, the focus is on The Chronicle of Higher Education, a specialized edition, and The New York Times, a non-specialized edition; In the UK, this research reports on corruption in higher education in The Times Higher Education Supplement, a specialized edition, and The Guardian, as a non-specialized edition; in the RF, this paper investigates on-line editions of Gazeta.ru, a non-specialized edition that has a substantial regular section on higher education, and Newsru.com, a non-specialized edition. All of the media sources presented above address to

a certain extent both domestic and international issues in higher education.

The proposed categorization of corruption in higher education for this study includes means, forms and phenomena, spheres where it exists, and areas of interaction where it is found. The means are: bribes, kickbacks, kinship, personal connections, reciprocity (exchange of favors), and fraud. The forms and phenomena include: bribery, nepotism, favoritism, fraud, embezzlement, cheating, plagiarism, ethics misconduct, and breach of contract. The spheres are: access to higher education, academic process, graduation, credentials, licensing and accreditation, faculty hiring and promotion, research, grants, medical services. The interactions include: state-university, business-university, faculty-students, faculty-administration, students-administration, and state-students relations.

The research carries some limitations. The areas left unattended in categorization of corruption include gross waste and misallocation of resources. Gross waste and misallocation of resources constitute so-called grey area of corruption in education, especially when personal or material gains are not pursued. Even though gross waste and misallocation of resources is detrimental to higher education, in most of the instances it does not constitute an illegal act, unless personal benefit is pursued. For instance, investments in university presidents' residences and renovations, addressed only in US media, are considered by some as misallocation of the university resources. While the merit of such investment may be arguable, the legality of it stays intact. The same is true for mismanagement in higher education institutions. While systemic mismanagement has a negative impact on the health of academia, it is not considered as an act of corruption as long as it does not include embezzlement, fraud, or other illegal activities.

The key words used in the search within the identified sources include: accreditation, admissions, bribe, bribery, cheating, college, corruption, degrees, diploma mills, education,

embezzlement, examinations, fake, favoritism, fraud, higher education, higher education institution (HEI), misconduct, nepotism, plagiarism, research, tests, university, as well as cross-references of all of the above. Each media report on corruption-related issue in higher education is read, analyzed, and assigned a place according to the developed classification. The classification itself is being enriched in the process of analyzing the news on corruption in academia.

The results

The media points to the presence of the phenomenon of corruption in the three national systems of higher education. This phenomenon manifests itself in bribery of all types and forms, including offering and accepting money. Bribery is most common in the RF with bribes paid in cash, including in national and foreign currency and through personal account transfers (Lemutkina, 2004; *Newsru*, June 24, 2004; *Gazeta.ru*, June 10, 2006). Bribes are also offered in form of commodities, including durable goods and non-durable goods, services, and sex. Forms of corruption are not limited to bribery in cash and goods and services. Phenomenon of corruption also includes exchange of favors based on the principle of reciprocity as well as nepotism, including preferential treatment based on kinship. Another form of corruption discussed in the media is favoritism. This includes preferential treatment, based on personal favors.

Fraud as a phenomenon of corruption is known to have few forms. First, there is research fraud that takes place in research universities, where generation of new knowledge is one of the major functions along with teaching and learning. Research fraud occurs when research procedures are adjusted or misused to meet the interest of involved parties, and results are

misreported to meet certain expectations (Brainard, 2000; Guterman, 2004; Jacobson, 2005). A well-known form of research fraud in the US and to a lesser extent in the UK is the biasness of pharmaceutical research conducted in universities and funded by pharmaceutical companies (Eichenwald and Kolata, 1999; Bernstein, 1998; Boseley, 1999). Data manipulations in medical research may eventually lead to serious consequences for patients.

Second, there is healthcare fraud that takes place in university hospitals, medical centers, and other medical facilities that operate under the auspices of higher education institutions. Healthcare fraud occurs when patients and/or insurance companies are overcharged for the services performed, charged for services not performed, or services are not rendered appropriately according to the set procedures. This type of fraud is not related to academic process per se, unless medical treatment is a part of training for medical students.

Third, fraud in higher education can mean a concealed non-compliance, when federal and state laws are broken for personal and/or institutional benefit. Such cases may be prosecuted under the False Claims Act. For instance, this law was applied to the University of Phoenix in 2007. This private for-profit institution of higher education that operates in multiple locations in the US and enrolls over fifty thousand students was accused in using enrollment practices and pay-for-performance scales for its admissions officers that would go in contradiction with the federal laws. The non-compliance with the law makes vulnerable those university revenues that come from the federal student financial aid packages. If the lawsuit is lost, the non-compliance can cost the university billions of dollars (Van Der Werf, 2006).

Fourth, fraud exists in the form of managed and biased information flow, including having preferred educational loan providers list, as is the case in many colleges throughout the US. Financial aid officers and college administrators in several states were accused of conflict of

interest in expectation of personal and/or institutional benefits, such as possible kickbacks, and profit-sharing in exchange for cooperation with private lenders (Field and Keller, 2007). Transgressing rules and procedures may be a commonplace yet not addressed practice, until it amounts to a large-scale problem with a clearly visible negative impact on certain groups of stakeholders and the society in general.

Embezzlement as a phenomenon of corruption in higher education works in two major directions: embezzlement from the university, committed by university employees, and embezzlement by the university, including misappropriation of research grants from the government. Both of these forms may qualify for white collar crime (Lemutkina, 2006, 2007). The media reports over eight thousand economic crimes in education in Russia for the period of 2000 to 2005. Only in 2005 there were more than three thousand crimes committed, including 849 cases of bribery and 361 cases of embezzlement, gross waste, and misallocation of the resources that come from the central budget (*Gazeta.ru*, June 10, 2006). Most of these crimes were committed by the heads of colleges and schools, members of the admissions committees, students, and high school graduates.

Cheating is yet another phenomenon of corruption, reflected equally in the media in the US, the UK, and the RF. Cheating is committed by students in tests and examinations and by prospective students in entry examinations and national tests regarded as entry examinations (Desruisseaux, 1999; Wilgoren, 2000; Baty, 2004; Henry, 2001; Reznik, 2004). Cheating should not be considered as a relatively innocent or less explicit form of corruption, as compared to bribery. Buying a term paper on-line often replaces the need to pay a bribe. In this case the faculty member is not involved in corruption, but the student achieves the same goal of receiving unearned grade or admission to a college.

Plagiarism is committed both by students in writing academic papers and by faculty in scholarly writing and research. Reports on plagiarism may be found in media sources in the RF, the US, and the UK. It appears, however, that while the widespread plagiarism in the US and the UK is taken seriously especially among professors and becomes an issue of public debate, in the RF plagiarism is regarded as a normal way of writing papers.

Ethics misconduct, including sexual misconduct, is not related directly to academic process and is not confined to higher education institutions only, but can be found in other organizations as well. The issue of sexual misconduct in academia is not paid much attention in the media, except The Chronicle of Higher Education in the US.

Another phenomenon that can hardly be found in any reports by the selected media sources is an abuse of public property, despite the fact that many public higher education institutions in the US, the UK, and the RF own and manage large academic facilities, numerous other premises, and land. There is only one report in Newsru that presents a gloom picture of spaces in student dormitories being leased to private businesses, immigrants, and even illegal aliens, while out-of-town students, entitled to free housing, are denied accommodations in these dormitories for the lack of space. Money received from businesses is perceived to be filling pockets of college administrators, including those responsible for student housing. The situation may be typical for state higher education institutions in Russia, located in large cities, where cost of renting is increasingly high and demand on square footage is growing.

Breach of contract is a more serious phenomenon of corruption than is normally considered. The number of students in the class, lecture time, faculty-to-student ratio, quality of libraries, laboratories, and other facilities and equipment, and accessibility of faculty are all points over which fraud may occur. Unclear rules and conditions of educational contract leave

enough room for abuse and allow for corruption in academia. This aspect of the academic process is either left unattended or is not referred to as corruption by the media. Some reports on quality of education and scandals around it may be found in the Russian media, including the conflict between students and the Department of Sociology in Moscow State University (*Gazeta.ru*, 2007). The media cares about credentials, when individuals buy fake degrees, but it cares little for breach of contract, when universities supply educational services below the announced quality.

Means used in corrupt activities to achieve certain goals include bribes, kinship, personal connections, reciprocity, and fraud. Bribes can be monetary and non-monetary, including durable goods and non-durable goods, services, and sex. Kickbacks as a form of delayed bribes can include direct payments, tuition waivers, registration fees, trips, vacations, services, gifts, office supplies and equipment. Often kickbacks are calculated as a percentage of the total contract value. Kinship includes relatives' discretion, access, and ability to influence decisions. Personal connections are good relations with people who are in a position of discretion, access, or ability to influence decisions. Reciprocity means exchange of favors. Means of fraud are fraudulent documents, including IDs, bank statements, and fraudulent claims.

Locus or areas and processes in higher education that become corrupted or are susceptible to corruption include access to higher education, academic process, graduation, credentials, licensing and accreditation, funding, faculty hiring and promotion, research, grants, and healthcare. Student housing and management of university property are also vulnerable to corruption. University administrators commit abuse of public property.

Corruption in access to higher education occurs or is connected to: standardized tests, regarded in lieu of the entry examinations; admission decisions, made by the members of

admission committees and/or admissions offices; entry examinations, administered by the universities; sponsorship, donations, gifts, and contributions, including anonymous ones. In the US, donations are not reported as possible bribes in exchange for admissions to prestigious universities, simply because this is “the way the system works.” Fundraising, a recent trend in some British universities, is now discussed in the media, but is not associated with possible corruption in admissions. The same is characteristic of Russian higher education institutions. The Rector of Moscow State University (MGU) Victor Sadovnichy reports that some new buildings on the University’s campus were built thanks to generous donations of corporate sponsors. Sadovnichy also prides himself for managing to triple faculty’s salaries thanks to external sources of income (*Gazeta.ru*, May 6, 2007).

The standardized computer-graded test in the RF, somewhat similar to SAT in the US, is introduced to reduce corruption in admissions. The media reports in this regard are quite contradictory. Some report success stories, while others point to outright corruption in the test itself. The Head of the All-Russian Education Fund Komkov blames not only the test (EGE), but the companies that benefit from organizing the test: “The most outrageous cases are being reported in the regions where the EGE is administered based on the system, offered by the company KROK-Incorporated. This year the system is used in 21 regions. All the KIMs (control and measurement materials) with the correct answers arrive to these regions in advance. All of them are named: they specify not only full name of the test-taker, but even the place where he will be seated. As I found out, these materials are sent not to the local education departments, but to the postal addresses of individuals! Can you imagine how it looks in reality?! What can prevent these individuals from distributing already filled out test forms to the ‘right’ guys? Nothing! 90-100 points are guaranteed to those who paid. Needless to say, the waiting line is

created by those who want to pay a bribe in exchange for the necessary grade.” (Lemutkina, 2006)

Corruption in the academic process occurs with unfair or biased assignment of positive and negative grades; unequal initial conditions for students, including additional time for test for ADD students, whose special needs are based on false or incorrect medical diagnoses; time spent on a student as a client or consumer of educational services, including office hours and consultations not held by professors.

The Rector of MGU refers to the Criminal Code and comments on the problem of corruption as follows: “Bribe is based on a mutual agreement. The risk is taken by the one who pays and the one who accepts the bribe. That is why every year in the Events Hall of MGU I ask in front of three thousand students and their parents that if you know of such cases, please inform me confidentially, and I will help to prepare your child for the entry examinations for free. I lead the admissions for about twenty years and yet I did not face a single case when someone came to me and said that he faced a request to pay a bribe. There were no such cases. Moreover, if there were such gossips, I was creating a special commission to check on this. And never such gossips were proven or confirmed. So you can judge for yourself. Of course, I know number of cases, I was informed by the students, when a faculty member makes a hint in a certain form ‘If you will buy me a cell-phone or a computer, it would be easier for you to pass the test.’ I always investigated such cases, and when they were proven, I fired these instructors. But there were no single straight-forward direct bribe proven in MGU for all these years.” (*Gazeta.ru*, May 6, 2007)

Forms of corruption in graduation include gifts, graduation by petitioning, and organization of banquets by matriculating students for their professors. As follows from works of

Rait (1931), Rashdall (1936) and Thelin (1982), these forms of corruption come from medieval universities and remain largely unchanged. They are considered quite innocent and are not paid much attention by the media.

Corruption linked to academic credentials includes provision of educational credentials, diplomas, transcripts, certificates, and other related documents by diploma mills; transfer of educational credits from a lower-quality institution or a diploma mill to a higher-quality or higher-ranked institution; production, sale, and usage of fake diplomas that reproduce diplomas and other educational documents of accredited and commonly recognized universities. Diploma mills were known to exist in the decentralized and loosely coordinated US higher education for decades (Bartlett and Smallwood, 2004). In the RF, diploma mills are almost non-existent even now. However, quality of educational programs in some private colleges is below the standards set by the government. Also, fake diplomas are reported to be sold on the streets (MacWilliams, 1999).

Licensing and accreditation are procedures of quality control that are vulnerable to corruption. Provision of services below established standards makes higher education institutions pay bribes to state or regional accreditation agencies in order to gain or maintain accreditation and continue to stay in the educational business. This is typical for the RF, where colleges with poor quality of instruction have one year to improve or to be closed (Holdsworth, 2004). The growing private sector in higher education shifts the media's attention from corruption in faculty-student relations to state-university relations. On the other hand, in the US, the government turns to the False Claims Act to encourage colleges to adhere to the proper teaching practices and provide quality educational services (Van Der Werf, 2006).

Similar to Russia, diploma mills in the US pay bribes in order to gain accreditation

(Bartlett, 2006). The government attempts to fight diploma mills while diploma mills defend their rights in the court of law (Carnevale, 2004; Foster, 2003). The Chronicle reports that “An unaccredited institution based in Wyoming is going to federal court to challenge an Oregon law that prohibits using a diploma-mill degree to get a job. Kennedy-Western University argued in a complaint filed in July in U.S. District Court in Portland, Ore., that the law violates the First Amendment rights of its alumni by not allowing them to claim their degrees on their resumes.” (*The Chronicle*, September 3, 2006, p. A14) This self-proclaimed university is afraid of losing its clientele due to the restrictions on using its worthless degrees. Problems of diploma mills and accreditation may also collide (Bartlett, 2004).

The issues of diploma mills, false credentials, prestige, associated with academic degrees, and faculty hiring and promotions are linked with reports on acquiring doctoral degrees without facing academic hardship, i.e. the issue of dissertations for sale. The media reports that there is a growing concern within the academic community that dissertations are bought by people who do not belong to scholarship. According to some estimates, 20 to 30 percent of all the defended dissertations are those written for money by specialists for the clients (*Newsru.com*, March 27, 2006). High demand on the scholarly degrees in social sciences and humanities, including economics, jurisprudence, finance, political sciences, history, and sociology lead to the emergence of the business of preparation of dissertations for money. By now this is a well-developed business. The Head of the Highest Attestation Commission of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation (VAK) Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Mikhail Kirpichnikov called in 2006 for criminal responsibility for those participating in this business. Specifically, he wanted to prosecute people who write dissertations for others.

The media is eager to present estimates of costs associated with illegal purchase of doctoral degrees from legitimate accredited doctoral programs. Price of the papers necessary for publication before the defense is \$150. Full bibliography for the dissertation will cost around \$300. The cost of experimental or analytical part varies from \$300 to \$1000, depending on the level of complexity (*Newsru.com*, March 24, 2006). The prices are presented as of 2006 and appear to be quite affordable.

Corruption in faculty hiring and promotion includes lack of objectivity in recruitment, bribes, nepotism, exchange of favors, pass-over, and discrimination. This topic is one of the least discussed. For instance, practices of employing ghost instructors in order to appropriate their publicly funded salaries are not described in the media. Some materials may be found in The Times Higher Education Supplement, pointing to low transparency and outdated procedures in faculty hiring and promotion in Italy, Spain, and the UK.

Corruption in research includes research fraud. Research fraud is discussed by the US and UK media sources, with the focus on the links of university researchers and medical and pharmaceutical industry. The discussion is bound around conflict of interest, misreporting or not reporting unfavorable results, and biasness of interpretations (Mangan, 2003). Russian media does not report on research fraud, perhaps because corruption in HEIs is rampant and faculty members are focused on increasing their earnings through teaching and not research. Another reason might be that the bulk of fundamental and applied research is done by Research & Science Institutes that are under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences.

Corruption in grants that includes embezzlement does not draw the attention of the media. This may be explained in part by the fact that most of the grants in higher education are research grants and because of the nature of research activities it is difficult to calculate the precise cost of

the work performed and time spent on the grant. This is characteristic of US and UK systems. In the RF, the government is just starting to allocate research grants to few leading universities, after a significant break during the transition. Research institutes exist separately from higher education institutions, and hence, possible embezzlement in research grants is not related to higher education.

Corruption in healthcare and medical services provided by university hospitals include reduced time to a patient, i.e. client or consumer of medical services, as well as billing for medical services not rendered to patients. In the RF such kind of corruption in higher education is non-existent since higher education institutions do not offer medical services. In the US in many higher education institutions medical centers produce over half of the institution's revenue and the potential for abuse is significant. However, the media does not report on this aspect of corruption in higher education.

According to the media reports, interactions where corruption occurs include relations between state and university, business and university, faculty and students, faculty and administration, students and administration, and students and state. Corruption in state-university interactions includes misdeeds in funding, student financial aid, appropriation of federal and state grants, granting non-profit status, and taxation. Corruption in business-university relations includes research with intentionally biased results, provision of private educational loans on doubtful grounds, and healthcare fraud. Corrupt activities between faculty members and students include all kinds of bribes, misconduct, as well as underpaid and free services that come from students. Corruption in faculty-administration relations finds its expressions in unfair treatment, promotions, and dismissals. The major form of corruption in students-administration relations is breach of contract, when the university administration fails to deliver quality educational

services as abided by the contract. Finally, corruption in relations of state and students include financial aid fraud, when students defraud the government on their ability to pay, and legal status, when students use educational programs to gain and maintain their alien status in the country.

Rarely do media sources comment on such potentially corruptible practices as honoraria for invited speakers, who may also be key figures in allocating state funding and grants, making appointments to public offices, and having discretionary power over other important decisions. Here honoraria may play a role of a perfectly legal bribe. Such practices may constitute conflict of interest. Conflict of interest is highlighted, for instance, in the investigation of student loans in the US, where financial aid officers encourage students to borrow from certain preferred lenders, or in the discussions over potentially corrupt private tutoring services in the RF, where faculty members who sit on the admissions committees are also employed as private tutors for prospective students. At the same time the term of white collar crime is not used or applied in considering corruption in academia.

Conclusion

Corruption in higher education receives good coverage in the media. The level of transparency is high enough to highlight the issue, its significance, scale and scope, and variety of forms in which it manifests itself, and inform the general public of its prevalence, patterns, and forms. However, the positive effect of such a high level of transparency and open discussion in the media on the level of corruption in higher education has yet to be seen.

Corruption in higher education, and the way it is reflected in the media, appears to be consistent with trajectory and pace of reforms that take place in higher education industry in the US, the UK, and the RF. Introduction of college fees in the UK, reduction of governmentally

funded places in the RF, and the growing significance of private educational loans in the US, all lead to an increase of corruption in access to higher education.

The continuing massification of higher education with increasing enrollment rates in all three countries, as well as the emergence of for-profit sector, necessitate more control and coordination on the side of the government, educational institutions, and the public. Growing concerns over the quality of educational services lead to an increase in reporting bribery, fraud, cheating, plagiarism, diploma mills, breach of contract, and other forms of misconduct. The processes of internationalization and globalization of higher education put an emphasis on such aspects of corruption as credentials fraud and research fraud.

Socio-economic context of educational reforms and changes in each country leaves its print on major forms of corruption in higher education. For instance, in the RF, economic transition and sharp decline in salaries of college faculty lead to an increase in bribery and nepotism. In the US, growing competition between higher education institutions leads to an increase in fraud associated with student financial aid.

Lastly, growing levels of transparency and information flow lead to a better understanding of different forms of corruption and its scope and scale. The media plays a primary role in highlighting the issue. However, media reports are focused on corruption per se, and often on its causes, but do not offer solutions or ways in which the public can resist corruption.

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