

**Conference on private higher education in international perspective**

**ACREDITATION OF HIGER EDUCATION  
IN CHILE AND LATIN AMERICA**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

From the very beginning Spaniards conquerors were concerned with the preparation of the human resources to govern the State and the Catholic Church which, at that time were one unified and hegemonic institution in Latin America<sup>1</sup>

This conditions have a twofold consequence for the Spanish colonies. On the one hand, the first universities were created very early on the Region, that is, at the beginning of the XXVI century<sup>2</sup>. On the other, the universities had a very peculiar role in Latin America, different from the rest of the world. In addition to post secondary teaching and research, they have assumed several social responsibilities such as to prepare political leaders, to be the place for ideological discussion, to promote social change, to keep traditions, to catch and spread the local culture, and so forth.

The academic model of the Latin American University is derived from the European one and specifically from the University of Paris which has a strong influence in the Region, and it is still alive in more of the traditional institutions. On this model the curricula are organized by professional programs. Under this model the universities in Latin America have strong linkages with the State, and despite of the academic autonomy, the state provide the funds and it has an indirect control over the institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> These introductory paragraphs are more oriented to those countries which has been Spanish colonies ( Argentina Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Republica Dominicana and Venezuela.) Brazil, in spite to be a Portuguese colony , started later but had followed the same model . The Cuban case because of the State centralized planning model has a different evolution.

<sup>2</sup> The first Latin American university was created in 1538 only 45 years after the Columbus arrival. It was created on Santo Domingo the island where the Spanish conquered were organized. Soon all the “Virreinos” (sub kingdoms) has their own university. Mexico (1540), San Marcos , Peru (1551) Cordoba Argentina (1613) This was totally different from others colonies such as Portuguese, The first Brazilian University, Lavras, was created in 1908 García Guadilla Carmen Situación y Principales

More of the private universities and post secondary institutions in Latin America were created after the second half of the XX century with the exception of a very few institutions(14 universities in 1950) most of them Catholics universities<sup>3</sup>. However a dramatic increase took place in the sixties and later. For instance, in the eighties, more private universities were created than previously and in the middles nineties 34,5% of the total university enrollment was at private institutions

### Private Universities in Latin America by decade of creation

Decade	Before 50's	50's	60's	70's	80's	90's	Accumulative total
# of universities by decade of creation	14	25	59	50	148	197(*)	493

(\*)Note: In the 90's was estimated by two times those creates before 1995  
Source García Guadilla op cit page 46 and 264 The total is estimated to 1995.

The increasing number of Latin American universities on the last part of this century has at least two possible explanations. First the awareness of the governments about the difficulties to satisfy the increasing demands for higher education with the current state institutions, because of organizational reasons and because it was very hard for the State to finance all of them with public funds. Second, the influence of neoliberal policies in the Region derived on a reduction of public funding and in the transfer to the private sector to those activities that could be financed by it. At that time the level of development of most of the countries of the Region implies that there were economic capabilities for the middle class families to finance the post secondary studies.

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Dinámicas de Transformación de la Educación Superior en América Latina, Caracas, CRESAL/UNESCO 1996

<sup>3</sup> For instance the first private university in Argentina was created in 1958, in Bolovia in 1984 in Costa Rica in 1975, in Ecuador in 1946, in Paraguay in 1960. The main exceptions are the Javeriana in Colombia (incited in 1622 but re-opened 1930) Ribeirano Preto in Brazil ( 1928) Pontificia Católica de Chile (1898) and Pontificia Católica del Peru (1917) García Guadilla Op cit and CINDA Catálogo de Universidades del Sistema CINDA Santiago CINDA 1996

The newly created institutions were very heterogeneous in terms of quality, resources, and objectives. Practically all of them are only teaching oriented. Moreover on the post secondary level a great amount of non universities institutions were create in the last two decades. Some of those institutions used to be only concentrate training programs before deriving on formal post secondary institutions.

In the middles nineties the distribution of post secondary institutions in Latin America was the following:

#### Post secondary institutions in Latin America

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Universities</b>			<b>Non Universities Institutions</b>			<b>Total</b>		
	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	total
Number	319	493	812	2196	2430	4626	2515	2923	5438

Source: García Guadilla Carmen op cit page 264

That means that the 85,1% of post secondary institutions in the Region are non university institutions and half of them (52%) are private institutions.

All the above described reality implies that the traditional model of higher education derived from the Spanish influence and with a close relationship between the university and the state, which was predominant over almost four hundred years, but it has been changed during the past two decades. It is possible to say that the higher education in the Region has transformed from the Spanish model to a new one more close to the North American scheme.

The increasing of private institutions the diversity of quality among them, the new concept of accountability for the state funds introduced by neo liberals governments in the Region and the influence of the North American scheme for higher

education leads to incorporate the evaluation and the accreditation of post secondary institutions in Latin America.

Most of the Governments of the Region have incorporated in the nineties, norms and structures in order to face the new reality, to guarantee a minimal standards for newly created institutions, to promote a better use of state funds.

## 2. NEW TENDENCIES ON ACCREDITATION IN LATIN AMERICA

On the following pages is presented a brief summary of changes in legislation about accreditation for different countries of the Region

### **Argentina**

The Argentinean higher educational system is composed by national, provincial and private universities, by state-owned or private recognized university institutes and by non-university higher educational institutions that grant professional degrees in different areas such as liberal arts, pedagogy, vocational courses or fine arts. They all make up the Sistema Nacional Universitario (*National Higher Education System*).<sup>4</sup>

Since 1993, the Ministry of Culture and Education and national and private universities have agreed to carry out institutional self-evaluation processes and external evaluations. Many of them have been brought to an end and have been published. In 1995, they agreed to evaluate and accredit Masters and Ph.D. programs that voluntarily decided it. From 500 courses, 60% appear to be evaluated and 177 were accredited.

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<sup>4</sup> Ley de Educación Superior, N° 24.521, August 1995

From 1995 on, the *Higher Education Act* made compulsory the evaluation and accreditation and create the Comisión Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria (*National Commission of University Evaluation and Accreditation*) (CONEAU).

University institutions must guarantee the functioning of internal institutional evaluations. Self-evaluation must be completed by external evaluations every six years on a minimum basis. The *National Commission of University Evaluation and Accreditation* or private agencies constituted specially for that purpose are the bodies in charge of those external evaluations, so both of them must contribute with the participation of recognized and outstanding professors.

The CONEAU is a decentralized body that depends on the Ministry of Culture and Education and which functions are: to coordinate and implement the external evaluation, to accredit the degree and post degrees programs, to qualify the viability of the institutional project, so that the Ministry give authorization to begin the activities in a new national university or the recognition of a provincial institution and finally to prepare reports necessary to the provisional authorization and the definitive recognition of private university institutions, as well as of those that will be the reference base to evaluate the provisional functioning period of these institutions.

## **Bolivia**

In Bolivia, public university institutions coordinate their activities through a central agency (which is stated in the Constitution, Art. 385-387), called Comité Ejecutivo de la Universidad Boliviana (*Executive Committee of the Bolivian University*)

(*CEUB*), although the Universidad Católica Boliviana (*Bolivian Catholic University*) and the Escuela Militar de Ingeniería (*Military School of Engineering*) are also part of the CEUB, that has established the need to carry out regularly an internal analysis of the overall activities. In 1987, two academic institutional diagnosis were executed and they allowed to elaborate a general project, that was discussed afterwards with each university involved. It was then implemented from 1987 on with much difficulties. The VII Congress of Universities, that took place in 1989, agreed to continue working on the academic diagnosis together with the socioeconomic and regional diagnosis and then they prepared a proposal for a Self-improvement University, Methodology and Conceptual Decisions Program.

In 1994, the VIII University Congress established, among other things, that universities should carry out an accreditation process by themselves, in opposition to what is established by the law 1565 and to what is proposed by the government.

Some Bolivian universities, such as the Universidad Mayor de San Simón have already carried out a complete institutional evaluation process.<sup>5</sup>

More recently, in 1995, the Consejo Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación (*National Council of Evaluation and Accreditation*) was established in Bolivia and in May 1996, an agreement was signed with UNESCO to impel those activities (although this agreement has not been officially recognized, the government is observing its viability). Even though the Agencia Externa de Acreditación (*External Agency for Accreditation*) considered SINAMED, by law 1565 of July the 7th of 1994 should be

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<sup>5</sup> Report on the evaluation of the Universidad Mayor de San Simón, González, Luis Eduardo et al., Cochabamba, Bolivia, 1995.

working, but it is not since the official regulatory process is not ready. Still, this has not been an obstacle for several universities, such as the Universidad Privada de Santa Cruz (UPSA), to develop a systematic process of self-evaluation with the cooperation of foreign institutions.

### **Brazil**

In Brazil, there has been a preoccupation for higher education matters and their relations with the national development since the 1930 decade, but only since the 70' some proposals and new concepts on evaluation from different points of view have been presented, considering this a basis for accreditation and for the recognition of new institutions and programs. This is also an adjustment mechanism for the expansion of the system as well as a follow-up and an examination to the institution and a social tool for the revision and the quality control of teaching and researching.

In the case of higher education, autonomy is considered an important factor, so follow-up and external evaluation are indirect. Private institutions are subjected to the supervision of the *Federal Council for Education*; Federal States, that can have their own universities since five years ago, are competent to supervise the other institutions (state ones and municipal ones) in their jurisdiction; And finally research and post-graduate programs are subjected to the accreditation and evaluation of an autonomous agency of the Ministry of Education, the *Coordenação do Perfeicoamento de Pessoal de Nivel Superior (Upgrading Personnel for Higher Level Coordination Office) (CAPES)*

The higher education system of Brazil depends on the Ministry of Education that exercise the tuition through the *Federal Council of Education (CFE)*. Undergraduate



programs must be recognized once the first promotion concludes and they are renewable every five years.

The difficulties that have been encountered in carrying out the accreditation according to the plans and duties of the CFE are due to the high diversity of programs that make almost impossible the functioning of such a centralized body. Consequently, it is clear that there is no follow-up or evaluation well-established institutional system as there is in the postgraduate field. It is necessary to standardize available indicators and to make use of more specialized personnel in the various institutions so to design, organize, execute and analyze a true self-evaluating system, since voluntary and methodical experiences in that field are still scarce. The effort made in relation to accreditation of undergraduate studies is basically oriented to the fixing of criteria to assign resources and to determine some control indicators, such as the relationship between the teacher and the student or the cost of teaching, among other factors.

In relation to evaluation and accreditation of postgraduate programs, Brazil has a consolidated system based on CAPES, an institution that has some 30 years of experience and that was created to administer the First National Plan of Postgraduate Studies, which main objective was the qualification of teachers from higher education institutions. The evaluation is carried out through rotating evaluation commissions constituted by teachers from the academic Brazilian *milieu* and research members of masters and Ph.D. programs. Their work is based on information gathered annually through standard survey and through reports of the Evaluating Commissions that visit periodically the universities. These programs are evaluated every two years, in an alternate basis so that every year 50% of them are evaluated.

## **Colombia**

In Colombia, the regulation has been in charge of the Instituto Colombiano de Fomento de la Educación (ICFES)- *Colombian Institute for the Promotion of Higher Education*, created in 1968 as a dependant body of the Ministry of Education to supervise the quality of higher education and to provide technical, economical and administrative assistance to the institutions of that level.

The Act 30 of 1993, framed on the principles and dispositions of the Political Constitution approved in 1991, create the Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior (*National Council of Higher Education*), as a planning and coordinating body which is commanded with the implementation of the Sistema Nacional de Acreditación (*National Accreditation System*) and the definition of functions and members of the Consejo Nacional de Acreditación (*National Council of Accreditation*), mentioned on the Act 30. At the same time, the Sistema Nacional de Información sobre la Educación Superior (*National Information System on Public Education*) was created as a support for the accreditation process.

One of the main objectives of the accreditation process, considered integrally, is the improvement of the academic quality. It should be a mechanism for giving accounts to the society and to the State about the education services that the higher education institutions offer; It should promote a permanent self-examination so that the institutions ratify the accomplishment of their mission according to their own regulations; It should certify the quality of the institutions and programs of higher education; And it should give reliable information to the users of the higher education services.

The basic parts of the accreditation program are self-evaluation, carried out according to guidelines and quality criteria prepared on a participatory basis by the CNA; The external evaluation, made by fellow academicians named by the CNA concluded with a final report and recommendations on the part of the members of the Council, after it has been informed of eventual observations from the evaluated institutions, that it submit to the Ministry of Education together with a recommendation on the accreditation itself.

The system is been established, at the moment, and the CNA has published recently a detailed manual with the outstanding features of accreditation.<sup>6</sup>

### **Costa Rica**

Since 1978 in Costa Rica, the Consejo Nacional de Rectores (*National Council of Rectors*) (CONARE) has been in charge of the authorization and evaluation of university studies and programs that created the four public universities there are; Thus, during the last ten years, the evaluating team of the Oficina de Planificación de Educación Superior (*Office of Planning for Higher Education*) (OPES) has evaluated 42 studying programs: 10 of them of associate degree (titles), 9 were university degrees (bachelors or master's degree), 8 programs for professional specialization and 15 master's programs.

In relation to accreditation, CONARE expects that 1997 could be the starting point for the self-evaluating and accreditation process of university studies and programs. Then an inter institutional commission made up of experts from the four public universities and OPES, as an assignment of CONARE, elaborated a document

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<sup>6</sup> Lineamientos para la acreditación, Consejo Nacional de Acreditación (CNA), Santafé de Bogotá, 1996.

entitled “Lineamientos para la acreditación de carreras y programas de la educación superior” (Guidelines of the accreditation university studies and programs of the higher education) that is being presently analyzed by CONARE to be approved and then disseminated.

## **Cuba**

The Cuban evaluating pattern consider, as a fundamental part of its purposes, the improvement of quality and the preparation of professionals according to the conditions of the development of the national economy and of the requirements established by the State for that level of education.

The evaluation, as an external way of State control, can be total or partial. It is oriented fundamentally to check the accomplishment of the goals on the part of the higher education institution and to ratify the direction that has been chosen so to be sure it corresponds to the objectives established and that must be reached in the process of professional training, the technical and scientific activity, the postgraduate education and extension activities.

Among the aspects that are controlled, it is important to determine whether the work undertaken is in conditions to guarantee the accomplishment of the objectives defined for the previous process.

The principles considered in the design elaborated are: to guide the evaluation so to value the results of the work, to qualify the different aspects that are being the object of control in a qualitative and integrating manner, even if there are excluding elements

that determine each level of qualification, to constitute evaluating commissions made up of high-level pedagogical and scientific experts in universities, research centers and productive institutions of the country.

This form of control has turned out to be effective, since it has allowed to know qualitative transformations that took place in the higher education, besides it has contributed, as a process of feedback to improve the quality of the work that university institutions develop, to count on the criteria of future users in relation to the quality of different products of the university and to negotiate and establish programs of cooperation with the industrial sector and with services as well as with other universities to improve the process of evaluation.

### **Dominican Republic**

In the Dominican Republic, different events contributed to carry out serious examinations of the activities and of the results of universities. The competitive spirit of the institutions must be mentioned, as it is a kind of need to differentiate themselves and it was particularly useful for the improvement of the higher education system quality. This led to the creation in 1981 of the Asociación Dominicana de Rectores de Universidades (*Dominican Association of University Rectors*) (ADRU).

The main purpose of ADRU is the coordination for the permanent improvement of higher education in the Dominican Republic. One of its most outstanding initiatives has been the creation of the Asociación Dominicana para el Autoestudio y la Acreditación (ADAA) (*Dominican Association for Self studying and Accreditation*) which main purpose is to promote the conservation and the improvement of higher

education in the country, through the incorporation of self studying and accreditation in its member institutions. It was possible to count on the support the Middle State Association of Colleges and Schools of the United States.

One of the first initiatives of ADAA was the preparation of a guide for self studying and a guide for excellence criteria, also qualitative standards, that have been used as a conceptual framework for the elaboration of institutional self studying and as a base for the first step of the accreditation process of the members that have already accomplished their self evaluation.

ADAA seems to be an adequate answer to many education problems in Santo Domingo and its positive effects are beginning to be noticed in the Dominican university environment. Several universities that are members of the Association are already finishing their self-evaluating process, such as the Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (INTEC), the Universidad Acción Pro-Educación y Cultura (UNAPEC) and the Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña and the Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE).

The Decree 517-96 on Higher Education in the Dominican Republic put into force on October 1994 constitute an adequate framework for the promotion of the *National System of Accreditation*

## **Ecuador**

The Ecuadorian Constitution guarantee the autonomy of universities and the law of universities and vocational training centers establishes the Consejo de Universidades y Escuelas Politécnicas (CONUEP) (Council of Universities and Vocational Training

Schools) as a body that coordinates and orientates the activities of public and private officially recognized universities.

CONUEP established in 1995 a special commission that had to organize a proposal to create and implement the Sistema Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria de el Ecuador (*National System of Evaluation and University Accreditation of Ecuador*) based on the document “Misión de la Universidad Ecuatoriana para el Siglo XXI” (The mission of Ecuadorian universities for the XXI century). The System should function as an independent agency led by a council of former rectors of universities. At the moment this project is being discussed.

### **Mexico**

According to the Comisión Nacional de la Planeación de la Educación Superior (CONPES) (*National Planning Commission for Higher Education*) in Mexico they created in 1989 the Comisión Nacional de Evaluación de la Educación Superior (CONAEVA) (National Evaluating Commission of Higher Education) with the purpose of articulating the evaluation at that level of education all through the country and give continuity to the process of evaluation as well as suggest criteria and indicators of quality for the functions and duties of higher education institutions.

A notorious effort has been made in relation to accreditation of titles and degrees (certificates and ratification of titles and degrees) and its presence in chapter 16 of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the work of associations, colleges and federations of professionals for the recognition of titles and degrees based on the accreditation of programs and institutions and its incorporation to the *National System of Evaluation and Accreditation*.

The certification process is left to the associations of professionals, but it will be within the general system, as a reference.

In May 1990, CONEVA made the first document concerning the processes of evaluation that were partially adopted, but presently the works of that council are suspended. Once the Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES) (*National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions*) analyzed the processes undertaken, they started the first step of institutional self-evaluation on the basis of documents prepared by CONEVA and they continued to the second step, that consisted on the visit of commissions of external expert fellows in education, that passed through some difficulties inherent to the installation of an evaluating system. In 1993, the National Assembly of ANUIES agreed to create the Centro Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación Superior (CENEVAL) (*National Center for the Evaluation of Higher Education*) so to complete the project of evaluation, focussed on the evaluation of results through the application of national examinations to secondary students, bachelor students and Master's degree students.

Since 1996 the document "Propuesta inicial para el establecimiento del Sistema Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Superior" (Initial proposal for the establishment of a National System of Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education) is being analyzed and revised by ANUIES.

This proposal started from the believe that considering the political, social and economical circumstances of the country, the corresponding institutions should look for the means to improve the quality of higher education, achieve a better social credibility



and some equivalence with educational systems of other countries. Then, evaluation and accreditation is not seen as a goal in itself , but rather as a mean to improve higher education.

The reference points of that project are the experiences of Mexico and of other countries, but always trying to keep on mind the values that inspired it and that must be conserved.

It is considered that the efforts made in the country, specially during the last five years, have had a formal character, that means that they are not sufficient to articulate the whole project, and higher education institutions as well as the federal government have suggested an integral policy on that matter.

The project of evaluation and accreditation of ANUIES has been focussed to contribute to state an integral policy of accreditation that implies, among other things, the creation of a new step, the reorganization of the existing ones and the articulation of the efforts made at that time.

It was decided to propose a new system of evaluation and accreditation since it was the best alternative, due to the development of the actual process. Besides some efforts have been made to take advantage of the critical mass that exists in the country. And to use it even more profitably some effective ways of intercommunication have been established among governmental, academic and private institutions with evaluating and accreditation processes, whether they are institutional, as academic programs, or not and they will be allowed to be part of the system.

## **Trinidad and Tobago**

In Trinidad and Tobago, from 1979 on, the Committee on the Recognition of Degrees (CORD) has been the body in charge of the recognition of foreign titles and of counseling the government in relation to accreditation. Now, CORD is not only concerned with the recognition of titles, but also with the quality of higher education in the country. Thus, it started with the regulation of Community Colleges, thanks to the establishment of an accreditation mechanism for those institutions whether they are public or private.

## **Venezuela**

Venezuela carries out evaluation methods that are applicable in the postgraduate level as well as in the undergraduate level through the Consejo Nacional de Universidades (*National Council of Universities*), a state body created by law, with authority to grant the necessary permission to new institutions of higher education and to follow them up until the first promotion has finished the program. Then, accumulative evaluations are made and the institutions concerned must be registered every five years. They keep a condition of experimental institution until they are considered competent enough to be completely autonomous. Academic level is taken into account, but they also pay attention to the curricula, the staff of professors, their contractual situation and the general level of education.

## **Other Relevant Experiences in the Region**

In relation to sub Regions, it is important to notice the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) developments. There, the Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for Education in the Caribbean Community started a research in 1988 so as to determine the equivalence academic credentials of the sub region. Thus it was possible to infer that

there were some inherent difficulties to that kind of equivalencies in these countries, since they had to face tremendous challenges in relation to basic education first. So, the Standing Committee of Ministers recommended that in 1990 every country enhance the education strategy through the development of articulation processes and through the accreditation of its institutions and programs of education as a priority for the planning period of 1991-1992. Among the items included in the priority list were the regulation and the strengthening of institutions and higher education programs and the establishment of equivalencies among them.

It is no less important to notice that the Central American sub Region thanks to the Consejo Superior Universitario Centroamericano (*Central American University Council*) (CSUCA) has created a system to promote and implement evaluation and accreditation processes in the sub Region (SICEVAES), and they have carried them out seriously by self evaluation methods as in Costa Rica<sup>7</sup> and Panama .

### 3. THE CHILEAN CASE

#### **Description of the Chilean post secondary educational system**

The Chilean model of post secondary education had followed the same Latin American evolution. The Universidad de San Felipe, the first in the country, was created by a Royal Decree in 1738 under the Spanish Kingdom and later in 1828 a few years after the Independence in the current Universidad de Chile.

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<sup>7</sup> Gurdían, Alicia (de.), Proyecto de la Universidad para el siglo XXI, Universidad de Costa Rica, San José de Costa Rica, 1994.

In 1980 there were only eight universities in the country. Two national state institutions and six private ones. Among the private ones there were three Catholics, two organized by local community and one was initially a private foundation but later was assumed by the academic staff. All those institutions are research universities

To understand the evolution of the Chilean post secondary education on the later decades it is necessary to have an over all picture of the political changes in the country associated with different economic and educational policies .

In the middle sixties the Christian Democrat party, which gave a deep importance to education, come to the power (1964- 1970) As a consequence the national educational reform was introduced. Among other changes it came to finance private universities in order to generate an enlargement of enrolments.

Later the socialist government (1970- 1973) introduce the idea of free post secondary education for all sectors. For that reason all universities, whether private or public become totally financed by the State. At that time, a lot of informal private post secondary vocational programs were developed outside from the university system. The data indicates that most of them become later within the formal educational sector.

The military government (1973-1990) introduced the neo liberal economy model. Under this model the state has a subsidiary role, and all public and private institutions<sup>8</sup> were evaluated under an economic efficiency criteria. The state funds were drastically reduced to the universities, about 50% of total institutional budget should

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<sup>8</sup> Under the military government all institutions was controlled by armed forces and official was appointed as rectors.

become self financed. All of the eight existing universities, no matter whether they were public or private, had the same treatment and public support. As a consequence the enrollments come down from 147.049 students in 1975 to 118.984 students in 1980<sup>9</sup>

In 1980<sup>10</sup> a new Law modified the post secondary education system. The two national state universities were broken down and local branches were merged. As a consequence sixteen independent local universities were created, one on each province and four in the capital. Later, at the end of the eighties, the main Catholic University was also divided and its three branches become also independent institutions.

Moreover the law of 1980 established three kind of institutions. The universities conceived as research universities, the Institutos profesionales ( professional Institutes)conceived as professional oriented colleges( four years careers programs) and the Centros de Formación Técnica (Post secondary vocational centers), with two years careers program).

In addition the 1980 law allowed the creation of new private institutions, in a very simple way, without an specific law for each one as it was before.

In 1990, one day before the end of the military government a Constitutional Educational Law redefined some elements but consolidated the 1980 normative. To

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<sup>9</sup> González Luis Eduardo. Evolución de la Educación Superior en Chile. Santiago PIIE 1997

<sup>10</sup> Decreto Ley 3.541 December 1980

modify this kind of law it required an agreement of to 2/3 of National Congress. (deputies and senators) which is almost impossible to get.

All this legal and financing modifications results on the current post secondary educational system. Today there are 256 institutions. There are 25 traditional research universities derived form the eight original at 1980, among them 16 state universities and 9 privates There are also 42 new private universities all of them teaching oriented. In addition there are 69 professionals institutes all privates and 120 post secondary vocational centers also all privates. That means that in the higher education in Chile today there are 16 state owned institutions and 240 privates.

On the other hand, the 72.9% of the enrollments are registered in private institutions, distributed as follows:

### **Post secondary enrollments in Chile**

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Privates</b>	<b>Total</b>
Traditional Universities	95,493	66,276	161,769
New universities		77,212	77,212
Professional Institutes		52,170	52,170
Post secondary Vocational Centers		61,418	61,418
Total	95,493	257,076	352,569
%	27.1	72.9	100.00

Sources: Informe Sobre la Educación Superior en Chile Santiago CPU 1997 and Ministerio de Educación. El Sistema de Educación Superior en Cifras Santiago 1997.

However among the private universities it necessary to make the difference between the traditional institutions which receives states funds in similar way that the state universities, and the new ones totally self financed.

The two last democratic governments has been constituted by a coalition of different political parties including the Christian Democracy and the socialist. As economic policies they keep the free market orientation but the introduced more concern about equity. Under this conditions planning and higher educational policies are conceived as orientations, keeping autonomy, and entrepreneurial competition among institutions, but providing focalized funds according to national priorities and providing data to improve the institutional and students decisions.

As a result of all this changes, today there is a combined distribution of the state funds which only has an historical justification. 78.6% is for traditional universities and 21.4 is open for the new institutions, but almost all is got only by new private universities.

#### **Percent Distribution of state budget in Higher Education**

ITEM	Traditional universities(state owned and privates)	Other institutions	Total
State grant(to be distributed with plenty autonomy by the institutions)	45.1		45.1
Student loans and fellowships	17.6	0.7	18.3
Prize to the 25% better students on the national admission test		9.3	9.3
Competitive research grants and other competitive programs	15.9	11.4	27.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Total budget 410,635 thousand dollars of 1997

Source: Ministry of Education budget 1997.

It is important to note that almost the half of total state funds for post secondary education (45.1%) is provide to the traditional universities with any kind of evaluation or state control. But also is important to remark that those autonomous funds represents about the 20% of the total budget of each traditional university.

### **The current Chilean accreditation process**

In Chile there is not an accreditation system, except the licensing of the new institutions created after 1980. However for the traditional universities there is not any kind of evaluation. In spite of that a lot of traditional institutions and their programs had done some experiences by themselves or with an international support

There are several difficulties to introduce generalized accreditation in Chile and also with the current process of licensing. Among them it is possible to identify the following

- There is a confusing terminology including official norms an documentation. For instance, the word “accreditation” is used for three different things: First, the official authorization for a new institution to operate as an autonomous one, after from six to eleven years of follow up. Second also is call accreditation one of the process to follow up. Third is frequently used as synonymous of whole process of evaluation an accreditation.
- To introduce formally accreditation for autonomous institutions requires to modify the current law, and it is very hard to get approbation in the National Congress for this. There had been at least four intends to renew the normative but was no feasible to get the minimal votes required for this.
- Several academic staff are afraid about evaluation. There is not a culture of evaluation among academics of traditional universities who see all these procedures how an attempt to their “libertad de Cátedra” (teaching freedom) and university autonomy.
- The university authorities become aware that the accreditation process derives on an increment of expenses to improve quality ,which could be critical on self financing institutions
- There are not consensus about the accreditation indicators and standards for traditional universities and their programs
- There are various institutions which participate on the evaluation and accreditation system and there are different kind of procedures for the same objectives.



For the new institutions created after 1980 all of them private there are several mechanisms for evaluation depending on the kind of institutions and the year of creation.

The new universities and professional institutes should present a project which evaluate in terms of the resources, academic consistence, and economic viability. After the institutional project and its careers is approved it becomes authorized to receive students by the Ministry of Education.

For the second step there are two options Those institutions create before 1989 has the alternative to examine their students for approximately ten years by a traditional university or to have a follow up by the Consejo Superior de Educación (National Council of Education)<sup>11</sup>. The first procedure is call “examination” mode (there are 45 institutions under this mode) and the second is call the “accreditation” mode (55 institutions are under this mode).

This procedure, wrong called accreditation, includes self study done by the institution under some specifications provide by the Council, visit of verification by academic pairs and final report and recommendations for the next two years. In case of serious discrepancy with the project , or not fulfillment of the recommendations the Council could apply sanctions for a period and in case of being reiterative it could to suggest the Ministry to close the institution. Since 1990 four new universities was closed by this mechanism. Also four was sanctioned impeded to accept new students or with a generalized examination of their students. To play all these functions The Council has the support of a technical permanent staff

For the new universities or professional institutes created after 1989 only the accreditation procedure is allowed.

The vocational post secondary centers has a different procedure. They are evaluated by the Ministry of Education and also there are two modes. The first called “supervision” mode only available for centers created before 1989 which implies an external visit to evaluate resources and the fulfilling of norms. The other, call “accreditation”, is totally similar to the accreditation procedures done by the National Council of Education for the institutes and universities.

All this licensing procedures end with autonomy that means the institution is totally independent and there is any options for public control except the market regulation. Until today six new universities, five professional institutes and one post secondary vocational center got their autonomy by this way.

Both the National Council of Education and the Ministry of Education had developed manuals and materials to support their work but they do not have the same criteria to evaluate

The market regulation assumes that people who takes decisions have all the information necessary. However in Chile there is not enough official public information about the quality of services provide by the institutions. Therefore the applicants to post secondary education are influenced by the publicity. On the area of education the

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<sup>11</sup> The National Council is an autonomous organization constituted by a group of 17 people representatives of the academic an scientific community and other national institutions. The chair person is the Ministry of Education It also deals with the national goals for education.

market regulation works very slow and with a delay of several years. That means the good institutions or those which has introduced changes to improve their teaching, should wait a lot of time before they become recognized. Moreover the small good institutions which do not have enough money for publicity could become damage for the large and no so good ones that invest large amount of money on promotion.

Other difficult is the lack of capacity for students claims. In spite of the good disposition of officials from the Ministry of Education they do not have de minimal conditions to receive and to verify the claims and to take public actions if necessary.

### **Proposed modification to the current Chilean accreditation system**

Based on the Chilean experience and in order to overcome some of the difficulties mentioned it is possible to suggest a different structure and organization for evaluation and accreditation in higher education.

It is important to clarify terminology<sup>12</sup> and to define concepts. The hole process could be define as “regulation”. The regulation could be understood as the collaborative action between the State and the higher education institutions so to reach an harmonic development of the system and to optimize the use of resources in order to improve the quality and to provide a better public service. That implies necessary to make compatible public interests, institutional financing, national goals and state funds accountability. This collaborative regulation could overcome the discussion about

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<sup>12</sup> Some of difficulties on terminology results for the direct translation of some words that in Spanish have different meaning.

autonomy versus intervention and the dichotomy between free market and centralized planning.

Within the regulation it is possible to differentiate four functions

- Evaluation that is to formulate informed judgements to support decision making. That implies to collect, systematize and analyze data and make judgements about it. Within the evaluation the self evaluation should be incorporate, the impartial pairs report and a council decision.
- Superintendence taht is the state role to assure the accomplishing of norms, to investigate the claims, and to apply the regulations according to law.
- Certification That implies to make an official and public recognition of the results of the evaluation
- Public information that is to spread out indicators and other results of the evaluation.

Considering the regulation process it is possible to identify three steps on the trajectory of one institution.

- The Foundational step. This goes from the preparation of the institutional and careers project until the official authorization to operate
- Accompanied functioning step. This correspond to the time pased between the initiation of the institution and its autonomy
- Plenty autonomy functioning This step correspond to a normal functioning of an institution after to getting the autonomy.

In Chile is expected that a few more institutions will present new projects each year. Currently there are 219 institutions on the accompanied functioning step, most of them should become autonomous or close in the next decade. At present, there are only 37 institutions on the autonomous step; but in a short term, most of the institutions should be reach it.

In order to organize a regulation system in Chile to face the requirements of post secondary institutions it could be possible to think of a structure based on the four functions and the three steps summarized in the following paragraphs.

<p><b>Foundational step</b> (previous to operate). All the process should be compulsory for all the starting institutions, it could last approximately six months. Some of the actions described are already working today</p>	
Evaluation	It is focussed on the analysis of the project. Usual project evaluation tools could be used. The participation of external specialists and academic pairs is necessary to evaluate the curricula
Superintendence	It Corresponds to the analysis of legal and normative elements of the projects
Certification	If the project is approved it is the official authorization for operating
Public information	Inclusion in all the bulletins as instate recognized institution. Information in local newspapers.
<p><b>Accompanied functioning step</b>(since the operating institution get the autonomy. This should be compulsory for all new institutions and should last ten years. Various of the actions described are currently operating</p>	
Evaluation	It should be considered as a formative evaluation. Evaluation is focussed on the accomplishing of the project, both institutional and programs. It includes three actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self study done by the institution using standardized forms and previous evaluation.</li> <li>• External evaluation done by academic pairs and experts on academic administration .</li> <li>• Technical report prepared by a National Agency using all previous information</li> </ul> Those actions are cyclical each other year with a yearly follow up. Moreover all the evaluation process should include all the activities incorporated on the project. That means teaching research and cultural activities
Superintendence	It refers to the accomplishing of the regulations and the attendance of the claims. On extreme case of reiterate fails The National Agency could apply sanctions
Certification	The step culminates with the formalization of the autonomy
Public information	All the results of the evaluation should be wide diffused if they are of public interest. It is suggested to have a national bulletin to spread out the results of all the institutions according some quality indicators.

<p><b>Plenty autonomy functioning step</b> The process should be voluntary but associate with the access to some state funds( for instance all competitive funds(these procedures are not working yet in Chile)</p>	
Evaluation	It is oriented to improve quality of autonomous institutions. The three actions of self evaluation, evaluations for pairs and a judgment by the national Evaluation Agency should be considered. The evaluation process should be cyclical every five years with a two yearly follow up for programs and ten years for an institutional evaluation

Superintendence	It refers to the accomplishing of the regulations and the attendance of the claims. On extreme case of reiterate fails from the part of the institutions The National Agency could be apply sanctions
Certification	In this case it is a synonymous of accreditation. Those institutions or programs which have passed positively the minimal standards and which have overcome the problems previously evaluated will be accredited, in spite of recommendations to improve some aspects.
Public information	Those institutions and programs being accredited should have public recognition and wide diffusion.

It is important to have some general criteria structures and instruments to pass from the current situation in Chile to a well organized national regulation system which includes the functions and actions described before. Among them it is possible to point out the following:

- To promote a culture of evaluation on the traditional institutions
- To create a unified national agency for evaluation and accreditation. This one should be representative of different sectors involved on higher education. Because of historical reasons it is better to have a state agency, but it should be autonomous from the government
- To abolish all different procedures for various kinds of institutions existing today and to create a homogenous process.
- To organize a consolidate data base and information system to support evaluation procedures.
- To generate a public information system to spread out information quality standards of the institutions.

What is clear from this proposition is that regulation is more complex than evaluation, and this is a wider concept than accreditation. Other actions, such as final examinations for different professions, labor market studies or surveys to understand professionals labor trajectories and incomes could also be introduced as part of the regulation system.

#### **4. SOME FINAL COMMENTS**

The experience on evaluating and accrediting on higher education is relatively new in Latin America and it is associated to a change on the traditional model of university. This is associate with the enlarging of the demand, the increasing of

heterogeneity, the increasing consciousness about accountability of the state funds, the internationalization of professional standards, and the incorporation of private institutions.

Most of the governments and academic authorities in Latin America agree on the importance of evaluation to reinforce quality and assure a better use of public funds. But there is a risk to transform the evaluative process in a bureaucratic activity if the academic people do not have a commitment to improve themselves.

Today, despite of the recent legislation about evaluation and accreditation introduced on most of the countries of the Region, there is not a culture of evaluation on bigger and more traditional universities. Therefore, to incorporate evaluation procedures is very hard.

Most of the countries have developed new structures for evaluation and accreditation. The most frequent organization is a national council or agency such as CONEAU in Argentina, CNEA in Bolivia, the CFE and CAPES for graduate students in Brazil, the CSE in Chile, CNA in Colombia, the CONAEVA in Mexico, the ADRU in the Dominican Republic and so forth. All of these structures are linked with state, but they are autonomous. In addition they organize technical secretaries to support the decisions.

The state initiative to introduce evaluation in higher education is derived from the traditional links between the state and the higher education institution and it will be difficult to create private independent organizations as accreditation agencies.

The increasing incorporation of the countries to multinational markets agreements will require necessarily to introduce regional quality standards in order to

make easier the international professional work. The experience on the NAFTA, MERCOSUR that incorporated some criteria for professional interchange, indicates the future tendencies and the compulsory requirement for quality standards and accreditation procedures. However it will be necessary to work a lot during some years before accreditation will be generalized in the Region.