Student diversity and equity: Prospects for institutions and academic rankings

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It is now increasingly recognized that higher education, in addition to improving human capital, has the potential for building inclusive societies and developing the capacity of citizens to live and act in diverse socio-cultural world. Such forms of public good nature of higher education provide us with a holistic picture on the third (civic) mission of higher education and multiple ways of interactions and contributions of the universities to the society. UNESCO's World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century (1998) underlined the mission of Higher Education as training young people in the values which form the basis of democratic citizenship (Article 1e). Similarly, UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, 2009, maintained that 'Higher Education must not only give solid skills for the present and future world but must also contribute to the education of ethical citizens committed to the construction of peace, the defence of human rights and the values of democracy'(UNESCO, 2009, pp 2-3).

More recently, in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aims to end poverty and hunger, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all, higher education is seen as a route for preparing global citizens, equipped with knowledge and skills to build a better world. Among the 17 SDGs is the SDG 4 - ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning. And the transformative expectation from education is reflected in the target 4.7 which specifies education for global citizenship: *By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.* Life-long learning model promoted by international bodies like UNESCO, World Trade Organisation and European Union in essence supports role of higher education institutions in fostering capacity of students to learn, work and live in diverse democracy.

In India, the foundation for higher education in India to be a carrier of civic values and democratic ideals was first highlighted in the first University Education Commission, 1948-49, under the leadership of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the second president of independent India. The commission foregrounded principles of democracy – social justice, equality, liberty and fraternity - as the force for driving India higher education's transformation. It stated that higher education must 'cultivate the art of human relationship, the ability to live and work together overcoming the dividing force of the time.' The Indian State also views higher education as a long-term social investment for the promotion of economic growth, cultural development, equity and social justice (MHRD, 2013). Colleges and universities are increasingly being called upon to play a pivotal role in learning and refining of civic values (MHRD, 2014).

Over the last 20 years, enrolment in higher education has experienced explosive growth across Asia (UNESCO, 2017). The expansion of the sector is a result of high birth rates, strengthening of school system and increase in school participation rates, increasing social demand for higher education and public policies supporting the expansion of the system to meet the demands of the knowledge economy. For example, India is now in the stage of

massification of higher education with Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of around 25.0 percent (MHRD, 2017). This paper argues that as large share of age cohorts undergo higher education in a massified era, equity and inclusiveness becomes a part of the social responsibility of higher education institutions and views diversity on college campuses as a transformative agent of social change. Inclusiveness in teaching-learning process and equity in academic outcomes are viewed as important societal contributions of higher education institutions to reduce social inequalities and promote inclusive growth. In a way achieving diversity (in numerical strengths and in academic outcomes) with acts of inclusion becomes an integral part of the 'service' mission of the university.

In terms of contributing to democratisation of society, campuses can become potential sites within which students can develop knowledge and skills of criticality and empathy to participate in a multicultural society, understand social injustices and challenge discrimination, and be able to engage in a point of view different to their own. Varghese (2018) defines criticality as 'the ability to question current theories and practices in any sector to make them more receptive to social realities' and empathy as 'the ability to identify with what someone else is thinking or feeling.' (p1). This paper specifically focuses on diversity on college campuses as a resource that can contribute to cultivation of values of democracy, equity and social justice – a precondition for envisaging just society, strengthen the capacity of higher education institutions to be socially responsible and be agents of inclusive growth.

The central thesis of our work is viewing student diversity in higher education as transformational for the institution as well as for the society. In this presentation, we will lay out the theoretical and empirical rationale for linking student diversity with the third mission of higher education, highlight the educational and democratic benefits of diversity by way of preparing the next generation of citizens for a multicultural society, and how diversity/equity related indicators are conspicuously absent from discussions on quality evaluation frameworks, such as university rankings. By way of reviewing for equity related indicators in the methodology of some of the academic rankings, we show that equity-related indicators are rare among world and national academic rankings, even though the need for close observation of equity and inclusion issues in the field of higher education has been accepted at a global level. As such, we are extending the concept of quality beyond the notion of academic quality, and propose that diversity on college campuses to be included as a quality indicator.

In the next section along with the theoretical rationale for considering diversity in higher education campuses as an indicator of quality, we will present an analytical framework detailing the different elements which facilitate positive learning outcomes and democratic outcomes from diversity. These elements relate to transmission of transformative knowledge that challenges meta-narratives and promote students awareness in the knowledge construction process, pedagogies that cultivate democratic skills and community engagement exercises that encourages collective action. Reflective teachers that create critical consciousness and pro-active commitment of administration and empathetic educational leadership are important components of the diversity-quality equation.

Student diversity and its link to civic contribution: theoretical and empirical rationale

Theories of cognitive development and social psychology provide the foundations for valuing student diversity as a resource for civic learning and social change. Erikson's (1946; 1956) theory of social identity formation in the late adolescence/early adulthood (first year of college) and Allport's (1954) theory of interpersonal contact with diverse peers are important

theoretical perspectives that provide support for educational benefits of diversity in student composition on college campuses. Erikson's (1946; 1956; Arnet 2000) theory of social identity formation in the late adolescence/early adulthood explains that early adulthood constitutes a critical stage in terms of identity explorations in which people form their social and personal identities. Research has also shown links between inter-group contact and reduction in prejudice and positive attitudes towards the relevant 'out-group' (Pettigrew&Tropp, 2006, 2008; Tropp&Pettigre, 2005). Colleges with diversity in student composition create opportunities for civic learning that includes development of civic attitudes and democratic values.

It is on college campuses that young people (entering early adulthood) come together from different backgrounds and experience classroom and social relationships that are in variance from the students' home environments. Classroom diversity also creates capacity to create an internal self that openly engages, challenges one's views and beliefs and considers social identities (like race, class, gender) in a global and national context. It is argued that universities that are diverse offer a climate that produces active engagement, requiring students to think in deeper, more complex ways. Such an environment is new and unfamiliar, discrepant from their pre-college social experience, a source of multiple and different perspectives and likely to produce contradictory expectation. It creates capacity to engage in meaningful, inter-dependent relationships with diverse others that are grounded in an understanding and appreciation of human differences; understanding of ways individual and community practices which affect social systems and willingness to work for the rights of others (Marcia & Mogolda, 2005). All of these features are what research has determined will foster active, conscious, effortful thinking—the kind of thinking needed for learning in institutions of higher education (Gurin 1999).

Student diversity results in a more affirmative campus environment by creating conditions under which the majority students can interact with and learn about people who are different from themselves. The US Supreme Court, in fact, supported student diversity in higher education as a compelling state interest at the time when affirmative action policies in college admissions were being challenged. The US Supreme Court upheld the affirmative action in admission policy of University of Michigan by providing justification from the benefits of student diversity on promoting an atmosphere essential for quality higher education. Acknowledging the benefits of diversity, the decision stated that 'diversity promotes learning outcomes, provides skills for a global market place, create a diverse officer corps vital to national security, and serves as a path to diverse leadership' (*Grutter v. Bollinger* 539 U.S. 306, 2003).

College campuses are thus viewed as a laboratory for such interactions and numerical diversity is regarded as a resource for promoting a positive campus climate, inter-group relations, positive learning outcomes as well as democracy outcomes. Empirical studies indicate that diversity of experiences has an impact on active thinking and intellectual engagement and on the orientations and sentiments that students will need, to become leaders in a diverse democracy. Learning outcomes include active thinking skills, intellectual engagement and motivation, and a variety of academic skills. Democracy outcomes include perspective-taking, citizenship engagement, racial and cultural understanding, and judgment of the compatibility among different groups in a democracy.

For example, Gurin et al (2002) provided empirical results on the positive impact of social diversity in cognitive growth of young adults who enter colleges and its effect on their learning outcomes as well as democratic outcomes. They tested their theory using two

longitudinal data bases – University of Michigan and from Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) data. The CIRP data base was a multi-institutional analysis which included 11,383 students from 184 institutions. These students were surveyed upon entering college in 1985 and again four years later. Both data bases had racially diverse student body. The authors controlled for student demographic characteristics and institutional characteristics (private-public, a university or a four-year college) that could influence involvement in diversity experiences and the learning outcomes and democracy outcomes. The results of their study showed that effects of diversity experiences on student's learning outcomes included self-rated aspirations for post-graduate education, the drive to achieve, intellectual self-confidence, importance placed on original writing, creating artistic work, self-rated confidence on their academic ability and writing ability, analytic and problem-solving skills, the motivation to understand human behaviour, preference for complex rather than simple explanations, and the tendency to think about underlying processes involved in causal analysis.

The democratic outcomes included civic engagement, racial and cultural understanding, perspective-taking and understanding about the compatibility of difference and democracy. Civic engagement was a measure of the students' motivation to participate in activities that affect society and the importance given to influencing the political structure. Perspective-taking referred to the importance of considering other people's points of view; racial and cultural engagement was measured by asking students how much they had learned during college about the contributions of various racial/ethnic groups to American society; understanding on compatibility about difference and democracy included students' belief that diversity is non-divisive and commonality in the values in life between their own racial/ethnic group and other groups.

More recently, Mijs 2017 in his study of a nationally representative sample of 14,000 students across 99 US colleges on beliefs of people about inequality, found that in colleges where students interacted with those from a different social group were more concerned with racial and income inequality and understood inequalities in structural terms. While students from homogeneous college campuses believed in the meritocratic views wherein level of intellect and effort were the more dominant factors explaining inequalities than the structural factors of social background. Even when students in higher education institutions belong to diverse socio-economic backgrounds as found in a large scale study by Sabharwal and Malish (2018) in India, diversity is accompanied by tensions in social relations and viewed as a liability. Their study shows that the changes in higher education in India, not only include the increase in student number but also participation by different group identities. To expand access of the socially excluded groups (lower castes and indigenous groups) and achieve social diversity on higher education campuses, acts of inclusion and affirmative action relate to reservation of seats, relaxation in admission criteria and financial support. This also means that along with their diverse group identities, students come to campuses with varying socio-economic and cultural background, pre-college credentials and competency levels. The existing nature of social diversity becomes a source of tension and its forms manifesting as inequalities in retention and academic success and non-inclusive campuses. In other words while social diversity in the demographic composition of students, faculty and staff is a necessary condition for accruing benefits of diversity, but by itself is not sufficient.
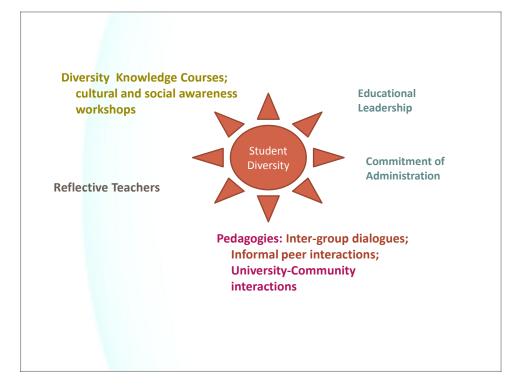
Curricular interventions for civic learning, that is, learning about diverse peers (content knowledge), frequency and quality of inter-group interactions, reflective teachers and empathetic administration and educational leadership are important elements for realizing full

potential of diversity on campuses in terms of fostering elements of criticality, empathy and promoting positive inter-group relations, learning outcomes and democracy outcomes (Allport 1954, Smith, 1997, Antonio, 1998; Chang 1996; Hurtado et al., 1999; Milem & Hakuta, 2000; Orfield, 2001, Gurin etal, 2002; Kurlaender & Orfield, 2006; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005; Thorat and Sabharwal, 2013; Varghese 2018). These elements will be discussed in the next section.

Elements that support positive effects of diversity

The elements which support positive effects of diversity are namely: knowledge which make students firmly believe in positive values, sensitize them to the problems of society, imbibe the value of care, respect and civility; pedagogies which improve skills and competencies for respectful inter-group relation with diverse peers and induce motivation for collective actions to address public problems. Furthermore, reflective teachers and pro-active empathetic administration and educational leadership can significantly play a role by purposefully becoming agents of change. We will discuss each of these elements in this section that are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1: Elements which support positive effects of diversity on campuses

Source: Prepared by authors

Knowledge: Taking the knowledge component first, diversity courses become important. These courses introduces students with the content that deal with diversity, inequalities, poverty and discrimination based on group identities; use of examples to incorporate the experiences and perspectives of wide range of groups from a variety of cultures within a pluralistic society. Aim of such courses is to develop critical thinking among students by challenging them to think more deeply about their assumptions concerning group identities such as caste, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation or physical disabilities. Empirical studies find that prejudice was lower in students who completed such course, specifically

addressing race and gender issues (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; Bowman, 2010). Diversity courses in higher education were effective in improving students' inter-group tolerance. Another study (Mallot, 2005) used the Modern Racism Scale (McConahay, 1986) to assess the impact of education and personality variables on 315 college students' prejudicial attitudes toward African Americans. This research demonstrated that while completion of a course in race and gender issues increased students' awareness that racism continued to be a social problem. It had only a transient effect on reducing antipathy toward government programs designed to help African Americans achieve social and economic equity. The results underscored the importance of implementing teaching practices in diversity courses that produce durable changes in all facets of modern racial prejudice.

Pedagogies to develop democratic skills: The second component is to develop individual capabilities and skills among the students to deal with diversities and disparities. Democratic skills involve ability to identify and openly, in a non-violent manner discuss cultural differences and issues (Banks 2007). Therefore, skills that develop students capabilities to clarify their thinking logically, consider the extreme of two actions, defend their moral choices within the context of democratic ideals, and base their actions on rational assessment of a situation will prepare just and humane citizens (Banks, with Clegg, 1990*)*. Such skills will help to interrupt one's own prejudicial thoughts about likely discriminatory behaviour against stigmatized groups, induce fraternity and desire for care, develop commitment to personal, social and civic action and develop multi-cultural competences/skill.

Developing such skills require *new pedagogical methods and teaching strategies* that help students from diverse, racial, ethnic and cultural groups to attain skills and attitudes needed to function effectively within and to help create a just, humane, and democratic society. New pedagogical methods include inter-group dialogue and mixed-peer group, where students from diverse groups come together and interact and learn to understand and respect differences. Activities like ethnic clubs, cultural affairs and social events promote harmony and help in eliminating prejudice and superstition. Through new knowledge and skills, students unlearn many things that they learn in family and society and also develop skills and capacities to deal with diversity and differences democratically. The knowledge, skill and value of care is expected to enhance the 'civic capital' among the youth for enhanced citizenship. Empirical studies find that these pedagogical methods promote multi-cultural friendship, inter-group communication and mutual interaction, support openness to confront one's own beliefs and prejudices, and, promote academic and social growth among students. (Antonio, 2001, Chang, 2002 Gurin et al., 2002, King & Mogolda, 2005, Chang et al, 2006, Denson, 2009).

University-community engagement for civic action: The third component is to motivate the students for civic action. The three elements, namely knowledge, and new values including that of value of care and skill is expected to inform actions, induce students for community engagement and collective action for public good**.** Community engagement occurs through teaching, research, or service that is done *in and with the community.* The new pedagogical ways necessarily include community-service projects and internships or assignments such as engagement with deprived groups and minorities which will motivate them to engage in communities and groups. Civic engagement activities can also involve faculty-community partnerships for research and leadership development in economic, social and civil spheres. Being involved in community engagement assignments is also known to help in the practice of working in a pluralistic society. Such initiatives aim to nurture the abilities to engage with a diverse social world among the student population.

The knowledge, skill and value of care enhances civic capital which includes inter-cultural understanding, knowledge of different social groups, and an ability to relate to people of different cultures (Zlotkowski, 1995, Parker-Gwin, 1996, Myers-Lipton, 1996, Eyler et al., 1997, Astin and Sax, 1998, Astin, Sax, and Avalos, 1999, Levine, 2013). More recently in India, interaction between higher education institutions and society is being encouraged through initiatives which focus on rural development. Termed as *Unnat Bharat* Mission (transformational change in rural development process for inclusive India), it involves participation of higher education institutions in rural development activities through provision of knowledge and practices for improved livelihood and quality of village life (MHRD, 2017).

Reflective Teachers

To function effectively in diverse classrooms and help students from different cultures and groups to construct clarified identifications, teachers require attributes of criticality, empathy and reflexivity. The attributes of reflective teachers are those that a) critically analyse and rethink their notions of race, culture and ethnicity, b) view themselves as cultural and racial beings, c) reconstruct race, culture and ethnicity in ways that are inclusive, and d) are better able to reveal the ways in which these concepts are related to the social, economic and political structures, e) are less likely to be victimized by knowledge that protects hegemony and inequality (Nieto; 1999), and promote students awareness on the knowledge construction process.

Students' awareness in the knowledge construction process describes the ways in which teachers help students to understand how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives and biases within a discipline influence the way in which knowledge is constructed. Knowledge construction process is the understanding of students' on how knowledge is created and how it is influenced by the racial, ethnic and social-class positions of individuals and groups. With this understanding in knowledge construction, students get equipped to challenge the mainstream academic meta-narrative and construct liberatory and transformative ways of conceptualizing the knowledge (Bank, 2007).

Studies have found that diversity in social identity of faculty members have important role to play in improving student learning. Diverse faculty members are more likely to use active pedagogical techniques known to improve student learning such as encourage students to interact with peers from different backgrounds, engage in service-related activities and orient their work to service ideals, produce scholarship that addresses issues of race, ethnicity, and gender (Knowles and Harleston, 1997; Antonio, 2002, 2003). Several scholars have also found that racially diverse faculty is closely tied to successful recruitment and retention of both racially diverse students and junior faculty by being mentors, role models and offering a sense of connection which under-represented students and junior faculty may lack, and, fostering positive views about diversity amongst staff and faculty (Blackwell, 1981; Cheatham and Phelps, 1995; Reyes and Halcon, 1991; Mayhew etal, 2006).

Empathetic Administrative and Educational Leadership

Empathetic administrative and educational leadership is one which is oriented towards principles of equity and social justice Colleges and universities have to be adaptive in such a manner that they will respond to the students they serve: their diversity, enrolment patterns, preparation, aspirations, assign resources to support increased faculty attention to student learning, accept responsibility for improved teacher education, promote collaborative

leadership among the faculty, administrators, and other key stakeholders, join with state and business leaders to align college with society's needs and moreover, value themselves as learning communities whose mission is to improve student achievement. Enlightened public policies have an important role to play linked to concerted action. Therefore, well-planned institutional strategies are required to support and value diversity so that it can play its transformative role.

In summary, this section highlighted that a diverse student body on campuses provides an opportunity to interact with peers who are different from themselves - it becomes an intellectual resource for fostering positive inter-group social relations, a necessary condition for academic and civic learning. Diversity on campuses thus support higher education institutions contributions to the society in multiple ways – by positively impacting the ability of young people to acquire relevant skills for the labour market, enhancing the opportunity for inter-generational mobility and promoting social equality in the society and, help in preparing youth with intercultural and social skills to live and work in diverse society and a globalised labour market. As we will present in the following section unfortunately, diversity/equity related indicators is not a part of quality evaluation. In what follows we will take a closer look at what university rankings measure and its implications on objectives of higher education and its social responsibility, from the perspective of equity, inclusion and diversity. We will discuss whether the methodology of some of the most widely known world academic rankings - those listed in the IREG Inventory of International Academic Rankings - have adopted any equity related indicators. We will also provide some examples of equity-related metrics, including those from academic rankings outside the IREG Inventory, and, on the basis of that, to suggest equity approaches for academic ranking compilers.

Do existing global/national academic rankings use any diversity/equity-related metrics?

Since university rankings have become a major power reshaping higher education and research practices worldwide, they have come under considerable criticism by academics, media, and various higher education stakeholders. For instance, it has been pointed out that rankings generally do not evaluate those aspects of universities' performance, which are of highest interest for prospective students and employers (ICEF Monitor 2014, 2017). Academics call for a more cautious use of rankings with full understanding of their limitations (Waltman, 2017) and provide evidence that rankings are a generally insufficient tool for research performance assessment (Vernon, Balas & Momani, 2018), even though research indicators are generally the most widely used in rankings. It is argued (Pathak, 2018) that in case of universities located in the 'south', the pursuit of global ranking requirements makes such universities less suited for answering the needs of its local community. Harsh critics of academic rankings (The Guardian, 2010) can be found even among the management of those universities which excel in global tables.

This sort of criticism culminated in a comprehensive review paper by Amsler (2013) published two years later. In the paper she stated that university rankings have not "helped to narrow educational inequalities or celebrate creative variety in intellectual work, strengthened relationships between research and teaching in any particular context, illuminated the field of non-exchange relationships between academic and social life, clarified the new politics of knowledge, or advanced complex understandings of higher education itself", concluding that those factors made academic rankings a phenomenon of "symbolic violence". In this section we will first review whether the methodology of world academic rankings - those listed in the IREG Inventory of International Academic Rankings - adopt any equity related indicators.

The IREG Inventory of International Academic Rankings lists only global rankings, which had been published twice by the time of submission to be included in the list. A total of 17 global academic rankings included in the have been analysed. On the basis of the data and indicators the rankings are based on, we characterise 5 of these rankings as broad, 3 as focused, and 9 as narrow (see table 1).

Table 1 - Rankings listed in the IREG Inventory

(Name, focus, total indicators)

No.	Ranking	Focus	Total Indicators
1	CWTS Leiden Ranking	Narrow: science metrics	7
2	CWUR World University Rankings	Broad	7
3	Emerging/Trendence Global University Employability Ranking	Narrow: Reputation among employers.	-
4	Nature Index	Narrow: science metrics	2
5	NTU Ranking	Narrow: science metrics	8
6	QS World University Rankings	Broad	6
7	Ranking Web of Universities (Webometrics)	Narrow: Web presence	4
8	Reuters Top 100: The World's Most Innovative Universities	Narrow: Bibliometrics (patents & articles)	10
9	RUR Round University Ranking	Broad	20
10	SCImago Institutions Ranking	Broad	13
11	Shanghai Ranking (Academic	Focused: Research	6

	Ranking of World Universities - ARWU)		
12	THE World University Rankings	Broad	12
13	U-Multirank	Broad	125
14	UI GreenMetric Ranking of World Universities	Focused: Sustainability	53
15	uniRank University Ranking™	Narrow: Web metrics	5
16	URAP University Ranking by Academic Performance	Narrow: Bibliometrics	6
17	US News Best Global Universities Rankings	Narrow: research	13

Source: Prepared by authors

We have considered the latest rankings methodologies available as of June 2018 with a purpose to point out all the equity-related indicators, and compared them in this respect with the methodologies used by the same rankings 5 years before, or of the closest to that date available. For the purpose of this listing we considered as equity-related metrics those which attempt to evaluate a university's performance in ensuring equal opportunities to faculty staff and students.

The results were as follows: No rankings were observed to adopt or exclude any equity metrics during the 5-year period. Of the 17 rankings listed in the IREG Inventory considered, the methodology of 2 contains metrics that in our view can be referred to as equity related: US News Best Global Universities Rankings, and U-Multirank, the latter having the greatest number of both equity-related and total indicators. Table 2 presents a list of equity-related indicators.

Table 2 - Equity-related metrics

(rankings, indicator name, definition)

No.	Indicator	Details	Rankings
1	Female students bachelor	The number of female students enrolled in bachelor programmes as a percentage of total	U-Multirank

		enrolment in bachelor programmes	
2	Female students master	The number of female students enrolled in master programmes as a percentage of total enrolment in master programmes	-//-
3	Female academic staff	The number of female academic staff as a percentage of total number of academic staff	-//-
4	Female professors	The number of female professors as a percentage of total number of professors	-//-
5	Overall learning experience -	An assessment of the quality of the overall learning experience, based on a survey of the students.	-//-
6	Quality of courses & teaching	An assessment of the quality of teaching provision, based on a student satisfaction survey.	-//-
7	Opportunities to study abroad	An assessment of the opportunities for studying abroad, based on a survey of the students.	-//-
8	Foreign language MA programs	The percentage of masters programmes that are offered in a foreign language.	-//-
9	New entrants from the region	Number of first year bachelor students from the	-//-

		region as a percentage of total number of first year bachelor students	
10	Regional research reputation	This indicator reflects the aggregation of the most recent five years of results of the Academic Reputation Survey for the best universities for research in the region; regions were determined based on the United Nations definition.	US News Best Global Universities Rankings

Source: Prepared by authors

Furthermore a few examples of equity related metrics and practices of rankings outside the Inventory and different from those above have been found. For example, the national university ranking of India NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) provides for an entire group of indicators named Outreach and Inclusivity. It includes four metrics addressing the respective issues: Region Diversity (percentage of students from other states/countries), Women Diversity (percentage of women among students), percentage of Economically and Socially Challenged Students, and availability of Facilities for Physically Challenged Students on campus.

Moscow International University Ranking (MosIUR) expands on the approach of measuring institutional contribution to the country's academic research found in the US News Best Global Universities Rankings methodology. MosIUR's ranking model includes such equity-related research indicators as country-level citation impact (two metrics are calculated independently using Web of Science and Scopus data) and university's publications share in total academic publications produced by its country's higher education institutions.

Another example of equity related measurement we wish to mention is of field-specific nature and tackles the issue of imbalance of human resources distribution in medicine. Proceeding from the presupposition that "the basic purpose of medical schools is to educate physicians to care for the national population". The Social Mission Score (Mullan et al. 2010) attempts to evaluate the impact of medical schools in this respect. It measures the percentage of graduates who practice primary care, work in health professional shortage areas, and are underrepresented minorities, the three metrics comprising the compound social mission score.

Our analysis thus indicate that the practice of developing metrics for equity, inclusion, societal impact and social mission issues, is diverse, showing neither a clear trend towards some particular methodological approaches, nor having a commonly shared idea of what such approaches could be like. Speaking of the most basic ideas that metric developers might want to consider, is understanding that exclusion and competition (as opposed to inclusion and equity) are an inseparable part of academia, and not all such practices should be viewed negatively. It is above all those examples of "prestige-driven behaviour", which "at both

institutional and individual levels <...> protects vested interest or excludes people of ability", and which help gain unmerited advantage (Blackmore 2010).

Proceeding from this, equity issue can be measured not only by directly looking at underrepresented groups (percentage of X among academic staff), underfinanced fields (as in the earlier mentioned Social Mission Score), not only by evaluating institutional efforts to balance unfair inequality out (e.g. NIRF's metric of campus facilities for people with disabilities), but also by metrics largely resulting from merit rather than institutional prestige or financial resources. This could among other things pay tribute to those institutions, particularly in developing countries, which make certain achievement despite comparably lower resources than that of the first world ones, and thus balance a ranking model.

It would be hard to enumerate all the opportunities for developing such metrics or name those present ranking indicators which already have this merit-based component. The idea behind that can be illustrated by an example from the Moscow International University Ranking methodology. In it the use of prestigious academic awards indicator, is somehow balanced out by the student competition awards. The former is strongly correlated with a university's financial resources (U.S. institutions excelling in both), whereas the latter demonstrates a wider diversity of universities from both developed and developing countries.

In summary, the analysis in this section showed that equity-related metrics are rare among world and national academic rankings. It has been just a few years since first attempts to include such metrics into academic rankings have been consistently taken. We believe, one of the reason for the lack of development of equity-related metrics is that societal impact, including (if not especially) contribution to equity and inclusion, is generally the most difficult mission of universities to measure. Moreover, equity issues are very diverse. It is difficult to think of many equity related metrics which would be applicable to and meaningful across regions, countries, subject field, types of universities - one of the few exceptions is the NIRF's facilities for people with disabilities availability metric.

Another reason is in the essence of modern academic rankings per se, which, as stated in the Berlin Principles, "provide a market-based perspective that can complement the work of government, accrediting authorities, and independent review agencies". Actually tackling equity and inclusion issues maintaining high educational standards is supposedly a more difficult activity to market than those lying in the area of research and teaching. Metrics directly evaluating percentage of, for instance, underrepresented groups among students and academic staff are hardly suitable for ranking purposes, because any benchmark adopted would be highly questionable - and therefore it is U-Multirank, which is essentially a benchmarking tool, is the only rankings of the IREG Inventory of Global Rankings to contain metrics like that. Finally, the diversity of equity issues also raises a question regarding the sources of data, which would ensure applicability of some new equity metric globally.

Conclusions

Among the multiple goals of higher education, there is a growing acceptance that higher education, in addition to developing human capital for economy, can develop capacity to live and act respectfully in diverse socio-cultural world. The goal of preparing responsible citizens that are more sensitive to social issues and have abilities to resolve conflicts peacefully has been now increasingly recognised as necessary. It is being acknowledged that education has a great potential to cultivate democratic norms of behaviour and responsible citizens. Education is a social route through which most of the children go through with a

sizable portion of them also accessing higher education institutions. Late adolescence and early adulthood, that is, the college age (17 years), are unique times when the sense of personal and social identity is formed. Colleges can be the space that supports young adults through this identity development stage. Colleges can help students to acquire knowledge, abilities, skills and 'habits of mind' to cultivate multicultural competencies and abilities to work with people who represent diverse cultures and perspectives.

Research indicates that student diversity in higher education campuses can be channeled for improving democratic outcomes and learning outcomes. This paper presented the perspective on the potential of social diversity on campuses to provide students the opportunity to learn about and from each other, resulting in cognitive growth and citizenship. There is thus an acknowledgment in the literature on a positive relationship between student diversity and learning outcomes. However, diversity and equity related indicators are not a part of quality evaluations. Through the review of methodologies of university rankings we showed that equity metrics are not quite common among global and national university rankings. Only 2 out of 17 of the world rankings listed in the IREG Inventory of Global Rankings use metrics, which we viewed as equity-related. There are objective reasons for this. The most significant ones is perhaps general difficulty of such measurements as compared with teaching performance, not to mention research. The advance of equity metrics also comes into contradiction with the nature of university rankings, which present a market view of higher education.

There is a need for valuing and honouring student diversity, as it is a resource that helps higher education to perform its social function. Diversity in student composition promotes social equality and inclusive growth by equalizing educational opportunities and presents an opportunity for an enriched educational experience that includes interactions with diverse peers. Valuing student diversity includes ensuring academic success of students from diverse backgrounds taking into account all the differences and recognising equity as being an important indicator of quality. Such re-orientation in quality assessment frameworks will help formulate education programmes which are equitable and inclusive, are relevant and responsive to learning needs or demands of diverse groups of learners, are capable of ensuring achievement by all students of expected learning outcomes and achieving inclusive excellence along with contributing to the democratic outcomes for the country.

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