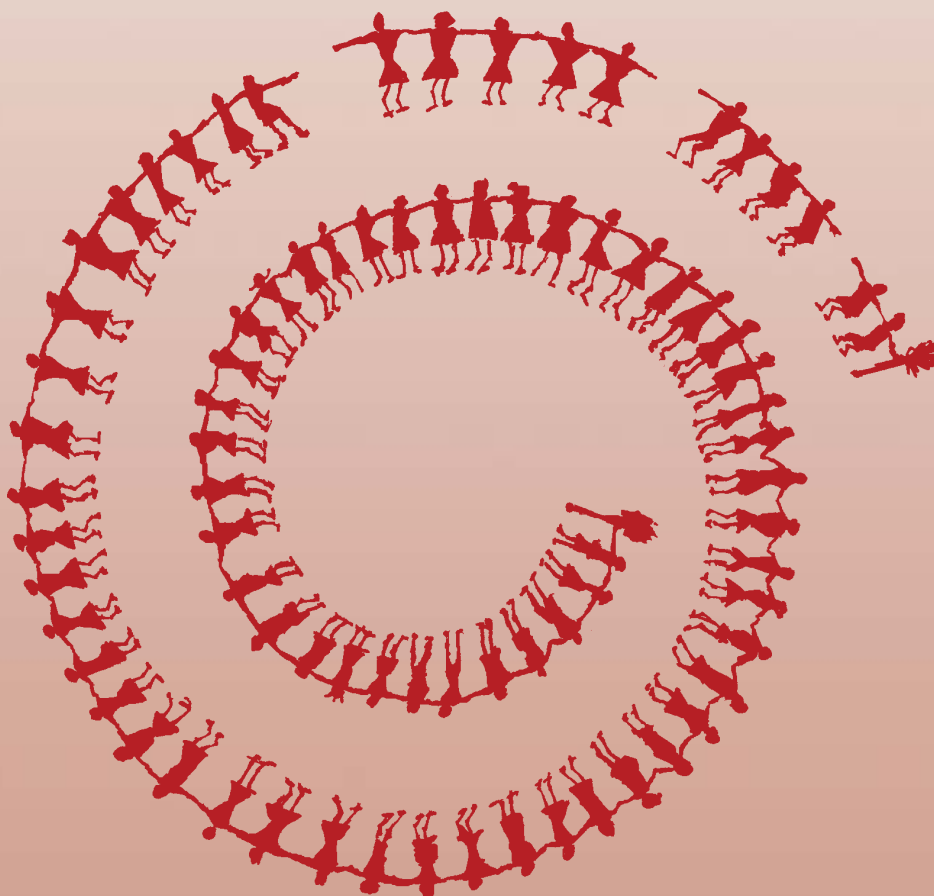


Report No. 47

## South Asia Human Development Sector

# Affiliated Colleges in South Asia: Is Quality Expansion Possible?

October 2011



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**Discussion Paper Series**

*Edited by Leonie Siok Yoong Lee*

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

UOL	University of London
UGC	University Grants Commission
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
MOE	Ministry of Education
BNU	Bangladesh National University
AQAC	Academic Quality Advisory Committee
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
TU	Tribhuvan University
NPE	National Policy on Education
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
SHEP	Second Higher Education Project
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation
USDE	US Department of Education
TEQSA	Tertiary Education and Standards Agency
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations

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## **Affiliated Colleges in South Asia: Is Quality Expansion Possible?**

Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan 2011

### **Executive Summary**

1. South Asia is at the cusp of change. Aside from being blessed with abundant natural resources, it is one of the world's most densely-populated regions, being home to over 1.6 billion people. Most importantly, it had experienced rapid population growth and is now home to a talented young population. At the same time, South Asia's economy is booming.

2. The South Asian countries share many similar characteristics - in their political, societal and cultural 'DNAs'. One common feature is that these countries experienced a rapid expansion of their higher education sector in recent decades. This is not surprising, given the increasing quality, access and affordability of primary and secondary education. This is matched concurrently by the region's strong economic growth resulting in higher demand for skilled labor.

### **The Affiliated Colleges – The 'Weakest Link' in South Asia's Higher Education**

3. How the South Asian countries - in particular Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan – responded to this 'demand explosion' is unique to the region. They fostered the growth of an affiliating colleges system whereby many affiliated colleges were allowed to be established and expand to cater to this demand. Today, the affiliated colleges in all four countries enroll a significant proportion of students pursuing tertiary education.

4. The affiliation model is not a new concept – it was adopted from the British system. However, the colleges in the South Asian countries expanded rapidly without planning, proper regulations and supervisory capacity in place. First, many of these colleges do not meet the basic requirements of adequate infrastructure and minimum teacher qualifications, and most do not have academic autonomy. Second, the majority of these colleges are privately-owned with many having complicated governance structures comprising diverse stakeholders. Third, it is not uncommon to find a large number of colleges (in some cases, more than a several hundred) affiliated to one university as compared to less than 50 of such institutions each found in the UOL, Oxford, and Cambridge (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Examples of the Number of Affiliated Colleges per University

	<b>BNU (Bangladesh)</b>	<b>Osmania Uni (India)</b>	<b>TU (Nepal)</b>	<b>Uni. Of Punjab (Pakistan)</b>	<b>UOL</b>	<b>Oxford Uni.</b>	<b>Cambridg e Uni.</b>
<b>No. of Colleges</b>	>1,220	>600	>600	>340	19	44*	31

\*Includes 6 Permanent Private Halls Source: Individual universities websites.

5. Coupled with weak supervisory and monitoring capabilities in the affiliating universities and government authorities, it is hence not surprising that the affiliated model is widely regarded as the “weakest link” in the higher education sector.<sup>1</sup> The combination of these factors has resulted in a downward quality spiral. Although, there is limited national and cross-country comparisons on the quality of the colleges and their graduates. All evidence suggest that quality is sub-standard. For example, a study undertaken by India’s University Grants Commission (UGC) found in 2008 that only 36% of the colleges receiving UGC grants met the minimum standards. This reportedly low quality will affect the productivity of the labor force, and economic growth and development of these countries moving forward. Other studies and evaluations show that: graduate unemployment is a problem, there is little quality assurance and accreditation, qualifications of teachers in affiliated colleges are below that of universities, curriculum and exams encourage students to learn by memory and not build critical problem-solving skills.

### Can Quality Expansion be achieved with the current Affiliation Model?

6. No, it is no longer sustainable or wise to continue the current way these colleges are operated and managed. While all four countries are working to improve the quality of their higher education sector, these efforts are so far inadequate. Significant attention, focus and resources must be invested into the affiliated colleges sector; careful reforms and restructuring of the sector, where relevant, should be undertaken to uplift the overall quality and capabilities of these institutions. The recommendations below aim to serve as a guide and should be customized to each country. In the long run, we recommend a phasing out the affiliated colleges system, at least in its current form. Given the complexity, our recommendations are shaped around four pillars:

- I. Colleges: Foster growth and capacity building of the existing colleges and “graduate” ready institutions to academically autonomous institutions.
  - a. Growth of the existing colleges is needed to raise quality and relevance of the education. This implies a growth in size of the individual colleges, possibly through stimulating the growth of existing colleges, merging of colleges, clustering of colleges, and closing-down poor performing colleges.
  - b. Build capacity in the existing colleges by enhancing the capacity of the colleges to design curricula and conduct assessments, developing strong leadership teams in the colleges, and improving the quality of teachers.
  - c. Graduating” affiliated colleges to become more academically autonomous via giving full autonomy to better performing colleges as they demonstrate the required capacity, and experimenting with partial academic autonomy to colleges.
  
- II. Affiliating Universities: Strengthen the effective quality monitoring of affiliating Universities and their services to the colleges. It will take at least a decade to phase out the affiliation system. Strengthening the “affiliation” role and capacity of the universities is therefore desirable. This could be done by strengthening the focus on this role, invest in their capacity, and reduce the importance of affiliation licensing revenue for the universities.

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<sup>1</sup> Privatization and Internationalization of Higher Education in the Countries of South Asia: An Empirical Analysis by Pawan Argawal, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)



- III. Government: Reform and increase capacity of the regulatory and quality assurance agencies: Better enforcement of minimum standards for new and existing colleges, Considering mandating or incentivizing accreditation, and build capacity in the regulatory and accrediting bodies.
- IV. All: Enhance Transparency to increase information disclosures to increase accountability. This could be achieved by establishing and enforcing required basic information disclosures from each institution, increased disclosure of accreditation information and examinations results.

## **Key Features and Common Challenges faced by the Affiliated Colleges in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan**

7. The affiliated colleges sector in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan share many common features and challenges. A large proportion of students (i.e. more than 45%) pursuing tertiary education in each country is enrolled in an affiliated college. However, there are strong concerns that the quality of education provided by these colleges is sub-standard. If reforms are not undertaken urgently, this will clearly impede the countries' economic growth and development.

8. This report aims to provide a broad overview of the common features and challenges found in the affiliated colleges system in these four countries; and also suggests possible reform measures. This report also aims to complement the country-specific studies that will be undertaken to provide a deeper understanding and more refined policy-recommendations customized to suit each country's context.

### **Key Features**

9. For this study, affiliated colleges are broadly defined as degree-level colleges that offer and teach the programs of the university that they are affiliated to.<sup>2</sup> The curriculum and assessment frameworks are provided by the university, exams are conducted centrally based on pre-defined curricula, and college students graduate with the degree of the affiliating university. In return, the universities receive affiliation and examination fees.

10. Some of the common key features of the affiliated colleges system in these countries are :-

#### *i. Rapid expansion in tertiary education when government resources were scarce*

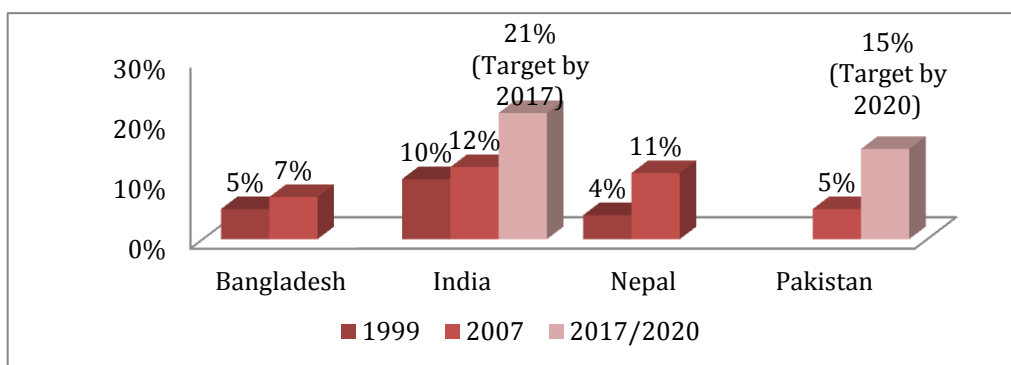
11. All four countries experienced rapid expansion in tertiary education in recent decades. This happened when their economies were experiencing strong growth and enrolments in primary and secondary schools were increasing, resulting in a surge in demand for higher education. At the same time, the publicly-funded higher education sector faced growth constraints due to competition for government resources<sup>3</sup>. [Figure 4](#) below shows the gross enrolment rate (GER) of these countries in 1999 and 2007. India and Pakistan have ambitions to grow their GER to 21% and 15% by 2017 and 2020 respectively. Bangladesh and Nepal have not officially stated their growth targets.

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<sup>2</sup> There are affiliated colleges in these countries that award other forms of certification (i.e. grades 11 and 12). These colleges are not covered under this study. Colleges that are managed by the universities (i.e. constituent colleges) are not considered as affiliated colleges as they are akin to university departments/ faculties. In Nepal, the colleges are called campuses. Reform is also critical for the constituent colleges to improve governance and quality, and for efficient use of public funding. For example, in Nepal, 42 out of 60 TU constituent campuses have been decentralized since 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Privatization and Internationalization of Higher Education in the Countries of South Asia: An Empirical Analysis by Pawan Argawal, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)

Figure 1: Tertiary Education Gross Enrolment Ratios (1999 to 2007)<sup>4</sup>



12. The increased demand in these countries was largely met by the affiliated colleges. The number of new colleges established between 1980/1990s to 2007/2008 grew exponentially in Pakistan and Nepal<sup>5</sup>. India and Bangladesh similarly experienced rapid growth with at least three-times the number of new colleges established during this timeframe. (See Table 2).

Table 2: Exponential Growth in the Number of Affiliated Colleges (1990-2007/2008)<sup>6</sup>

	1990	2007/2008	x Increase
<b>Bangladesh</b>	520	1,782	3.5X
<b>India</b>	7,346	20,677	2.8X
<b>Nepal</b>	55 (*1986 data)	673	12X
<b>Pakistan</b>	154	1,202	7.8X

\*Includes general degree, professional education as well as teacher-training colleges

*ii. A significant proportion of students pursuing tertiary education are in the affiliated colleges*

13. The affiliated colleges in all four countries enroll a significant proportion of students pursuing tertiary education.<sup>7</sup> (See Figure 2 below). In particular, in India and Bangladesh, more than 80% of the students in tertiary education are in these colleges<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> UNESCO Global Education Digest, 2009; 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (India); National Education Policy 2009 (Pakistan).

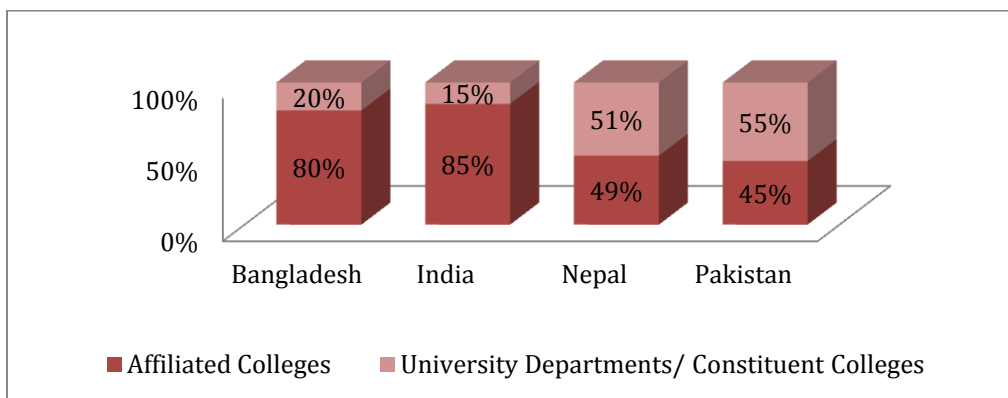
<sup>5</sup>The total higher education enrollment in Nepal did not increase proportionally to the increase in colleges.

<sup>6</sup>Higher Education in India : Issues related to Expansion, Inclusiveness, Quality and Finance UGC 2008; Pakistan Education Statistics, MOE 2007- 2008; National Education Survey (Post Primary) 2005 BANBEIS & BANBEIS 2008; UGC Report on Higher Education 2007/08 (Nepal) & Development of Higher Education in Nepal, Sharada Singh

<sup>7</sup> Tertiary education refers to degree-level programs offered by the universities and degree colleges. This excludes distance learning programs, as well as technical and vocational institutions.

<sup>8</sup>In Nepal, this is in part due to the increasing contribution of the community colleges (which take in about 30% of total higher education enrolment) with affordable fees and increased out-reach in the remote and rural areas.

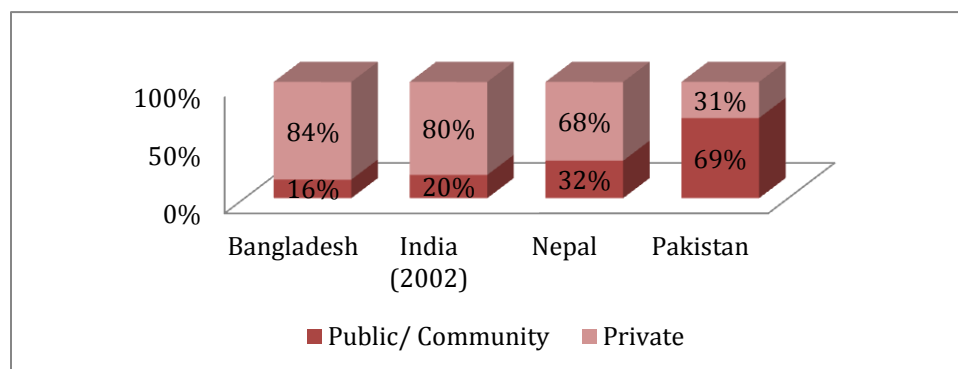
**Figure 2: Proportion of Total Tertiary Enrolment (2007/2008)**<sup>9</sup>



**iii. Majority are private colleges**

14. The majority of the colleges found in these countries (except for Pakistan) are private, i.e. owned and managed by foundations, trusts, individuals or business entities. In the case of Nepal, some are also owned by communities (See [Figure 3](#)). The private and community colleges are only subject to the academic norms and standards set by the affiliating university and most have full financial and administrative autonomy.

**Figure 3: Types of Affiliated Colleges (2007/2008)**



15. Interestingly, some of these private colleges continue to receive public funding. In India, about two-thirds of the colleges (including private ones) are grant-in-aid colleges that receive more than 95% of their operational and development funding from the state governments<sup>10</sup>. In Bangladesh, the Ministry of Education provides teachers’ salaries to two teachers in each private college under the Bangladesh National University (BNU) offering bachelor and honors programs. In Nepal, there is increasing public support to the community campuses with each typically receiving public funding of 5-10% of recurring costs.

<sup>9</sup> University Grants Commission 2008 (India); Pakistan Education Statistics 2007- 2008; National Education Survey (Post-Primary), 2005 BANBEIS; UGC Report on Higher Education 2007/08 (Nepal), Nepal’s data excludes the B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences and the National Academy of Medical Sciences.

<sup>10</sup> External quality assurance in Indian higher education institutions: Case Study of the National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) by Anthony Stella 2002; UNESCO IIEP Publication

*iv. Multiple stakeholders involved in governance and ownership structures*

16. The governance and ownership structures of the affiliated colleges are complex with multiple stakeholders having different objectives. In India and Pakistan, while the federal government is responsible for setting the overall policy directions and strategies for higher education, the affiliated colleges are under the purview of and receive most of their funding from the state/ provincial governments. The affiliating university provides the teaching and assessment materials and is supposed to monitor and ensure the academic quality of the colleges. Another key and influential player in these colleges, particularly the private ones, is the promoter(s) who has control over the financial and resource management of the colleges. The public colleges, on the other hand, have very little autonomy in the running of the colleges. For example, in Bangladesh and some states of India, teachers in the public colleges are recruited by the Public Service Commission with the BNU having little say in the selection process and service conditions.

17. Although the colleges are supposed to have governing bodies, with participation of independent members to provide oversight and guidance in their operations and management, in countries such as Bangladesh, many of the public colleges' governing bodies have not been established or are not meeting regularly. Where these boards have been established as seen in some private colleges, the Chairman is in instances, a political personality. There are also cases with the governing body have little decision power, since the Trust/management take all decisions.

*v. Mainly undergraduate programs in general and professional specializations*

18. Except for Pakistan, the affiliated colleges offer 3 to 4 years Bachelor degree programs in a wide range of offerings covering both general education (i.e. Arts, Science and Commerce) as well as professional (i.e. Law, Engineering, Information Technology etc) specializations. Pakistan is the exception in that most of their affiliated colleges offer a 2-year Bachelor (Pass) general program in the Arts, Science and Commerce. Some colleges also offer Masters and Phd programs and few undertake research activities.

**What are the Common Challenges faced?**

19. Only a handful of studies have tried to analyze the affiliated colleges and their associated challenges. A common feedback is the *poor quality of education* provided by these colleges. Bearing in mind that the majority of tertiary education students are enrolled in these colleges, it is imperative that Governments pay urgent attention and devote adequate resources to reform and revamp this sector.

20. The seriousness of this problem is perhaps best captured in a speech by the Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, in 2007. He criticized the serious qualitative deficiencies in Indian higher education while at the same time announced plans for a major expansion of the higher education sector. In particular, reflecting on the findings of a report by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), he expressed his concern that two thirds (68%) of the country's universities and **90% of its colleges are "of middling or poor quality" and that well over half of the faculty in India's colleges do not have the appropriate degree qualifications.**

21. The key common challenges faced by the affiliating colleges can be categorized as follows: -

- a. Quality Concerns; and
- b. Structural and Governance Complexities

### **Quality Concerns**

#### ***i. Loose regulatory system governing the licensing and registration of new colleges***

22. In all these countries (with the possible exception of India only recently), there appears to be a loose regulatory system governing the licensing and registration of new affiliated colleges.<sup>11</sup> Reportedly, the quality of the proposed colleges and labour market demands are not taken into consideration and/or are not enforced or supervised meaningfully.

23. To establish an affiliated college, in most cases, the promoters have to first obtain approval from the government (or the affiliating university in the case of Nepal).<sup>12</sup> This approval is usually not withheld given that governments are aware that they do not have the funds to meet the student demand. However, once the approval is obtained, the affiliating university finds it very difficult to refuse affiliation (even if the basic quality standards are not met). As a result, although some universities (such as the University of Punjab in Pakistan, and the Bangladesh National University (BNU)) have put in place affiliation rules; this ‘control’ is **at best a formality as disaffiliation or the ‘refusal to grant’ affiliation is very seldom.** This compounds the problem as many of the affiliating universities do not have the capacity or resources to monitor the quality of the existing colleges.

24. Related to this is that in some countries such as India and Bangladesh, the **private colleges are de-jure not-for-profit institutions although many exhibit similar characteristics as private for-profit institutions found around the world.** Together with the weak accreditation and quality monitoring mechanisms, this creates a “loophole” in the system – it is hence not surprising that a common feedback is that many private stakeholders are reaping significant profits from these enterprises.

#### ***ii. Lack of both External and Internal Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) frameworks for existing colleges***

25. India and Nepal have established external QAA frameworks for the affiliated colleges although participation is voluntary. Poor supervision and implementation as well as structural challenges are the key impediments to quality improvement in India.<sup>13</sup> Nepal’s QAA Committee, on the other hand, was only established in 2008/9 and their coverage has been limited so far. Pakistan’s Quality Assurance Agency only covers the universities and degree-awarding institutions. There is no evidence of a national QAA system being planned in Bangladesh at present. **The lack of a robust and effective QAA framework has contributed to the deterioration of quality in the colleges.** In addition, most universities have not established an internal QA framework to monitor the academic quality of the colleges. If such a framework was in place, supervision is minimal or intermittent in reality as most universities do not have adequate resources or capacity to do so.

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<sup>11</sup> Higher Education in India : Seizing the Opportunity; Sanat Kaul, ICRIER 2008,

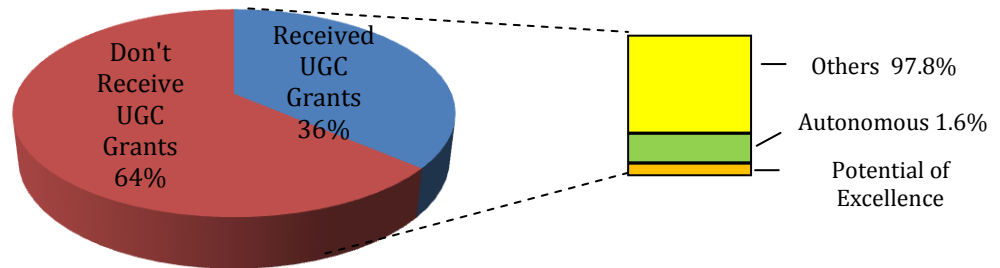
<sup>12</sup> Report of the UGC Committee Towards New Educational Management, 1990, India

<sup>13</sup> India : A Crisis of Confidence in Higher Education; Rahul Choudaha, University World News July 2011

26. India has published a comprehensive report in 2008 on the quality of education provided in the affiliated colleges and the results point to poor quality in the majority of institutions.<sup>14</sup> The key findings were:

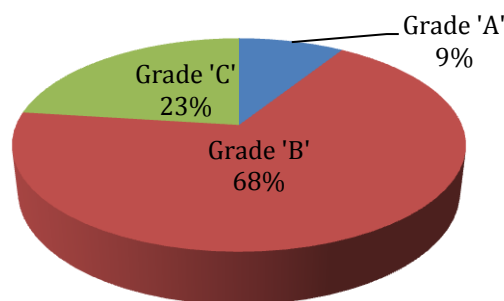
- a. About 16,000 (or 80%) of the colleges came under the UGC’s purview. Of these, **only 5,813 (or 36%) colleges received UGC grants as they met the minimum standards.** The UGC had only recognized 100 colleges (or 0.6%) with potential of excellence, and 250 colleges (or 1.6%)<sup>15</sup> as autonomous colleges. (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4: Colleges under UGC’s Purview (2008)



- b. Of the 3,492 colleges (or 17% of total colleges) under UGC’s purview that were accredited by the NAAC, **less than 10% of these colleges were graded ‘A’.**<sup>16</sup> (See Figure 5). A further analysis reviewed that deficiencies in the availability of adequate and qualified faculty (for example, the student-teacher ratio by permanent teachers is 29.8 in ‘A’-grade colleges, and this goes up to 38 in the colleges graded ‘B’), physical and other infrastructural facilities were the main reasons for the gaps between the ‘A’ and the ‘C’ graders.

Figure 5: Grades of Colleges under UGC’s purview that were



<sup>14</sup> Higher Education in India: Issues related to Expansion, Inclusiveness, Quality and Finance, UGC November 2008. The various studies were commissioned by the UGC to help in shaping their 11<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan.

<sup>15</sup> This has since increased to 246 colleges with potential of excellence and 364 autonomous colleges as at end 2010 (MHRD Annual Report 2010/2011).

<sup>16</sup> ‘A’ is defined as a “high level of academic accomplishment as expected of an institution”. ‘B’ is defined as “level of academic accomplishment above the minimum level expected of an institution”. ‘C’ is defined as “minimum level of academic accomplishment expected of an institution”.

27. Another indication of the quality of education can be observed based on the country modules published by the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (Nuffic)<sup>17</sup>. Nuffic found that an Honors Bachelor's degree obtained with first class distinction from a leading Indian institution (i.e. defined as rated 'A' by the NAAC) is equivalent to a Dutch "WO"<sup>18</sup> Bachelor. **Other Honors Bachelor's degrees were evaluated to be comparable to only two years of university education in the Netherlands.** The same set of equivalence studies was done for Pakistan and it was found that a Bachelor (Pass) degree in the Arts, Science or Commerce is only comparable to a Dutch VWO<sup>19</sup> diploma and a Bachelor (Honours) degree in Pakistan in general is comparable to only 1 year of university education (WO) in the Netherlands.

*iii. High graduate unemployment rates corroborate feedback on college curriculum*

28. College-specific unemployment rates are not available in these four countries. However, given that a large number of graduates are from the colleges, the graduate unemployment rate can be used as an indicator of the relevance of the college curriculum to industry. In Pakistan, the graduate unemployment rate in 2005/06 at 7% was higher than the overall unemployment rate at 6%.<sup>20</sup> Drilling deeper, the youth unemployment rate in Pakistan in 2007/8 for those holding a degree was about 16.2% and is the highest compared with the rest of the educational levels.<sup>21</sup>

29. In addition, anecdotal feedback reveals that emphasis is placed on rote learning rather than imparting more practical skills like critical thinking, problem-solving and communications. This problem is compounded by an assessment framework which focuses on knowledge and theory rather than higher order thinking skills. It is not clear how often the affiliating university (if at all) revises and updates the colleges' curriculum and assessment frameworks. In India, a common feedback is that the process for changing curricula in the universities is painfully slow. Rigid academic structure and cumbersome processes are often cited as the key obstacles.<sup>22</sup> This is an indication that the **curriculum of the colleges is outdated, inflexible and not in touch with real-world needs.**

*iv. Lack of qualified teachers; Insufficient permanent teachers*

30. In all four countries, the college teaching force is plagued by two main problems: - first, the lack of permanent teachers has resulted in a **high dependence on part-time teachers and positions that are simply left vacant.** The UGC in India found that about 41% and 18% of the positions at the Lecturer and Reader levels respectively are vacant based on a sample of colleges. In addition, out of 100 lecturers, 38 are part-timers. Second, **the qualifications of the teachers are insufficient - a large proportion do not have PhD or M.Phil qualifications** (see [Table 3](#)). In the case of the community colleges in Tribhuvan University (TU) in Nepal, Professors and Associate Professors/ Readers only form 4% of the total teaching force.

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<sup>17</sup> This set of studies was done by the International Recognition Department, NUFFIC. NUFFIC states that the evaluation statements included in their country modules are based on decades of experience with foreign credentials, their own research and discussions with colleagues, both domestic and foreign, in the field.

<sup>18</sup> "WO" or *wetenschappelijk onderwijs*, literally means "scientific education". The WO degree programs are only taught at the universities and is oriented towards higher learning in the arts or sciences.

<sup>19</sup> The VWO (*voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs*, literally means "preparatory scientific education") aims to prepare students for universities, in particular to the research universities (WO).

<sup>20</sup> Labor Market Information and Analysis Unit, MOLM, Pakistan.

<sup>21</sup> Pakistan Employment Trends (Youth), Ministry of Labor & Manpower

<sup>22</sup> Report of the Working Group on Undergraduate Commission (India), National Knowledge Commission, 2006



Table 3: Profile of the Colleges' Teaching Force<sup>23</sup>

	Bangladesh	India	Nepal*	Pakistan
<b>Student-Teacher Ratio (All teachers)</b>	279	25.0	13.1 (TU)	16.8
<b>Student-Teacher Ratio (Permanent teachers)</b>	-	33.5	-	-
<b>% Teachers without M.Phil or PhD</b>	96%	57%	55% (TU)***	98% (without PhD)**

\*Only for community colleges in Nepal, includes instructors as well as PLC teachers. Statistics for the private colleges are not available. \*\*Based on 2001 statistics. \*\*\* Proportion of the teaching force that are Assistant Lecturers and instructors.

31. This can be attributed to the poor service conditions of the college teachers and a low production of PhDs in the countries. In particular, salaries are not competitive. Also in some cases, teachers are not paid regularly or their pay is inconsistent with the prescribed rates.<sup>24</sup> Their career paths are not always consistent with performance including research publications, student pass rates etc. Teachers are rarely given opportunities for pre-service training or further professional development. In some countries, the lengthy recruitment procedure is an important impediment. For example, in Bangladesh, it was reported that 3,677 teacher positions are vacant in the country's 253 public colleges because of the long and tedious recruitment process.<sup>25</sup> As a result, many of the public colleges only have one subject teacher and this situation is worse in the rural colleges.

*v. Poor and inadequate infrastructure and facilities*

32. A common feedback is that there is substantial deviation from the universities' or the regulatory agency's prescribed standards and norms and this has resulted in **deficiencies in the availability and quality of facilities** such as libraries, journals, computers, laboratories and common rooms in the colleges.<sup>26</sup> This has an impact on the quality of education.

### Structural and Governance Complexities

*vi. Complex governance structure; Multiple controls with unclear stakeholder relationships*

33. The complex stakeholders' structure and multiple controls amongst the various government agencies (both federal and state) have resulted in **confusion and policies 'falling through the crack' and also placed constraints on the affiliated colleges.**<sup>27</sup> Policies or rules (whether at the national or state/ provincial level) are unclear and lack a proper supervision and sanction mechanism. For example, in Bangladesh, the roles of the MOE, BNU and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education

<sup>23</sup> Higher Education in India UGC 2008; Higher Education in Pakistan: A Historical - Futuristic Perspective by Prof. Usman Ali Isani, The National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad; Pakistan Education Statistics 2007-2008; UGC Report on Higher Education 2007/08 (Nepal); World Bank Survey Findings (Bangladesh College Study 2011) based on a sample of 301 colleges.

<sup>24</sup> Reports of the UGC Pay Review Committee; Jharkhand-World Bank Higher Education Workshop June 2011

<sup>25</sup> "Public Colleges lack Teachers – Tardy recruitment system keeps 3,677 teacher posts vacant in 253 public colleges." The Daily Star (Bangladesh) March 2011

<sup>26</sup> Higher Education in India : Issues related to Expansion, Inclusiveness, Quality and Finance, UGC 2008

<sup>27</sup> Higher Education in India : Seizing the Opportunity; Sanat Kaul, ICRIER 2008,

(DSHE) are unclear and coordination is weak particularly when faced with the challenges of the mushrooming of private colleges.<sup>28</sup> Another common lament heard from the colleges is that there is ambiguity in areas such as fee-setting and admissions policies, quota systems etc. In India, the state governments are the main funders of the affiliated colleges, while the affiliating universities have authority over all academic matters. In addition, some colleges also are under the purview of the UGC/AICTE as well as the NAAC.

34. The relationship between the affiliating university and the colleges is perhaps one of the most complex and can be likened to a “university franchise” model except that the franchiser (i.e. the university in this case) was most likely reluctant to enter into the relationship. In a typical franchise, the franchiser provides the educational materials, monitors quality and also provides support (capacity building and academic support) to its franchisee. This is however, not the case for the affiliated colleges. The universities are unable to adequately supervise the large number of colleges.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the affiliation was often not by their choice. **This has resulted in a very tenuous relationship which has been worsened by an unclear / one-sided “contract” between both parties.** And yet, some universities want to continue this relationship because the affiliation and examination fees that they collect from the colleges are an important external source of revenue in this tight fiscal climate.<sup>30</sup> In the case of Pakistan, these fees are estimated to contribute to about 12% of the total revenue of the universities. The colleges on the other hand, are keen to gain autonomy but many are unable to do so due to their weak academic capabilities. This has resulted in a vicious cycle driving a downward quality spiral.

*vii. Unsustainable organizational structures: Large number of colleges affiliated to one university and High average student enrolment per college*

35. In all four countries, it is common to find a **large number of colleges affiliated to one university**. Reportedly, in 2004, Osmania University and Dr Hari Singh Gour University in India had 607 and 890 affiliated colleges respectively.<sup>31</sup> The BNU affiliates more than 1,200 colleges. In addition to 60 constituent campuses, TU affiliates more than 600 community and private campuses (2008/9). In comparison, the UOL, Oxford, and Cambridge universities have much fewer affiliated colleges. Given this, one of the reasons for the poor quality of education provided in the South Asian colleges could perhaps be due to this unwieldy organizational structure which hampers the ability of the affiliating university to govern and carry out their supervisory functions adequately. The large numbers of colleges affiliated to each university also distracts the parent university from their other teaching and research functions. This is not sustainable in the long run without changes.

36. The problem is compounded by the small enrolments and specialized offerings found in these colleges. A smaller average size of institution has implications on the governance and regulation of higher education systems; it is also not financially sustainable as economies of scales are not reaped. Table 5 below shows the average student enrolment in an affiliated college as compared to the US, Europe and China.

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<sup>28</sup> Feedback on Colleges Stakeholders Discussion organised by the World Bank, Bangladesh 2011

<sup>29</sup> Privatization and Internationalization of Higher Education in the Countries of South Asia: An Empirical Analysis by Pawan Argawal, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)

<sup>30</sup> “Varsities making money by affiliating colleges, says Sibal”, Indiaedunews, 2010

<sup>31</sup> Higher Education in India – Strategies and Schemes during the Eleventh Plan Period; UGC January 2011.

Table 4: Comparison of the Average Student Enrolment per College/ Institution (2007/2008)

	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	China	Europe*	US*
<b>Average enrolment/ institution</b>	886	477	178	293	9,200	≈4,000	3,754

\*Average enrolment per higher education institution

*viii. Market forces distorted by lack of information and government policies; Weak capacity to monitor and enforce rules*

37. A combination of poor information disclosure and restrictive government policies has impeded the workings of market forces. First, the colleges are not required to monitor or publish information on graduate outcomes. As such, students, parents and society are uninformed about the quality of the colleges. Second, demand for higher education in these countries has grown rapidly, and supply has not yet caught up with the demand increase, and therefore demand outstrips supply. The combination of these factors attenuates the market forces and as a result, many poor performing institutions are not weeded out naturally.

38. Weak capacity and a lack of tools to monitor and enforce rules have contributed to the poor quality of the colleges sector. This is evident in countries such as India and Bangladesh whereby although reform had been initiated several times, insufficient investment in developing the necessary expertise and supervision skills is one of the reasons for the poor implementation and outcomes.

*ix. Role of the Political Economy*

39. Reportedly, there are varying levels of political influence in the management and ownership of the colleges. Many new colleges have commonly received political patronage of local political leaders and members of parliament with formal or informal links with the administrating trust.<sup>32</sup> However, lack of information makes it difficult to ascertain the importance that political patronage plays for setting up new colleges. In Bangladesh, it is reported that affiliation is typically granted by the Government considering the political allegiance/ linkages of the proposer. In some colleges, the Chairmen of the governing boards are the local leaders.<sup>33</sup>

**Recent Government Initiatives**

40. All four countries have tried to introduce reforms to improve the quality of the affiliated colleges. Some of these reforms are very recent, and hence, it is premature to comment on their successes. Others have faced strong resistance, and reforms have hence stalled.

<sup>32</sup>The Role of Transnational, Private, and For-Profit Provision in Meeting Global Demand for Tertiary Education: Mapping, Regulation and Impact – Case Study (Bangladesh). Professors Robin Middlehurst and Steve Woodfield. Mortgaging the Future of Higher Education. Kapur and Mehta; Brookings-NCAER India Policy Forum 2007

<sup>33</sup> World Bank Bangladesh College Study Preliminary Reports 2011

## *Bangladesh*

41. Approval was obtained recently under Bangladesh's National Education Policy 2010 to restructure and decentralize the BNU into six regional centres at the divisional level.<sup>34</sup> The objective is to reduce the number of affiliated colleges under each affiliating unit and thus increase effective oversight. The report acknowledged that the BNU was so heavily focused on administrative and examinations matters, with little resources and time left to monitor the quality of education in the colleges. It is envisaged that some of these regional centres could eventually be converted into universities with the colleges in its jurisdiction affiliated to it. However, to date, there has been less progress on this initiative.

## *India*

42. India has the longest history of trying to reform its college sector. For example, the concept of autonomous colleges was introduced in 1986 to improve the affiliating system. This scheme however has faced strong resistance and although the National Policy on Education (NPE) -1986 had envisaged at least 500 autonomous colleges, only 250 colleges are autonomous. More recently, under the 10<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, the "Colleges with Potential for Excellence" scheme was introduced but only about 100 colleges have been inducted under this scheme.

43. Under its most recent 11<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2007-2012), India introduced a wide-range of reforms for the higher education sector (including the affiliated colleges). These include : -

- a. Enhancing Quality. A recent Accreditation bill presented in Parliament proposes to make accreditation compulsory for all institutions of higher education. Further, a National Accreditation Regulatory Authority shall license agencies for accrediting institutions. Universities are also required to set up an in-house Quality Assessment Cell to monitor the quality status in the university and colleges and this has to be in place prior to accreditation.
- b. Reform of the College Affiliation System. All *new* colleges have to comply with basic infrastructure and faculty requirements in order to obtain university affiliation under the new UGC (Affiliation of Colleges by Universities) Regulation 2009.<sup>35</sup> These colleges will first get temporary affiliations, renewable annually for at least five years, after which they can be considered for permanent affiliation by a university. Permanent affiliation will enable colleges to get UGC assistance.
- c. Academic Reforms. The universities and colleges have been directed to undertake academic reforms including the introduction of semester, grading and choice-based credit-systems, regular curriculum development, reform of examinations system etc.
- d. Teacher Salary and Service Conditions Reforms; Strengthening Infrastructure. The 6<sup>th</sup> Pay Review Committee has substantially improved the emoluments of faculty.

44. Upgrade colleges to autonomous colleges as has been promoted under the Technical Education Quality Improvement Projects (Phase I and II) of Government of India with World Bank co-financing.

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<sup>34</sup> [http://www.thedailystar.net/pf\\_story.php?id=104080](http://www.thedailystar.net/pf_story.php?id=104080)

<sup>35</sup> "Affiliation only if new colleges adhere to UGC norms on infrastructure, faculty". The Hindu, 19 May 2010

Well performing colleges have received funding to strengthen institutional capacity and uplift the quality of education and as a consequence qualify for academic autonomy.<sup>36</sup> A wide-range of initiatives have been introduced under the two phases including initiatives to enhance teachers qualifications, revamp curriculum, improve the employability of graduates to increasing postgraduate enrolment, as well as building research capacities.

45. Creation of specialized State Technical Universities in several of India's States. These universities will affiliate by law all the technical institutions in the state. This seeks to increase the focus on affiliation and build capacity in these universities.

46. Overhaul of the licensing procedures by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). It recently introduced a new set of norms for the establishment of new engineering colleges in January 2011.

47. Restructuring of colleges into 'clusters' has been proposed by a commission set up by the state of Kerala. Each cluster would be a voluntary association of partnering colleges with an overall shared vision.<sup>37</sup> The colleges would be granted some autonomy and independence, and would have dual roles both as an independent college and a partnering college. The affiliating university would continue to regulate the colleges in the conduct of their individual programs, but the clusters will be free to design their own programs. The proposal has not been implemented yet.

### *Nepal*

48. Reforms in Nepal's have focused primarily on the decentralization and autonomy of TU's constituent campuses. TU passed the decentralization rule in 1998 and the autonomy rule in 2006. The World Bank-supported "Second Higher Education Project (SHEP)" is further supporting the government initiative to give greater financial autonomy to the campuses and the aim is to eventually grant three of these constituent campuses autonomy.<sup>38</sup> In addition to this, the SHEP is also providing support on the reforms of: (i) small universities by establishing formula-based funding, and (ii) community colleges to improve quality and outreach. Nepal also just established a QAA framework comprising both self-assessment and peer review based on a set of common guidelines. Accreditation is voluntary.<sup>39</sup>

### *Pakistan*

49. Pakistan has undertaken a few steps to reform their college sector over the past few years. A key concern of the Pakistani system is the 2 year Bachelor (Pass) general degree programs and in which the majority of the students in the colleges are enrolled. While there is general acknowledgement in Pakistan

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<sup>36</sup> 127 institutions were selected under TEQIP-I and 170 institutions so far for TEQIP-II. See [www.npiu.nic.in](http://www.npiu.nic.in)

<sup>37</sup> [http://kshec.kerala.gov.in/downloads/TSCC\\_II.pdf](http://kshec.kerala.gov.in/downloads/TSCC_II.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> Given the slow progress, the target was reduced from six to three campuses.

<sup>39</sup> In Nepal, the community campuses contribute more than 30% of higher education enrollment. Some campuses have a total enrollment of about 4,000 students. These campuses can be developed in the status of "Deemed University" with autonomy, and public funding could be linked to performance including accreditation, inclusion, geography, quality etc. The top-performing campuses could claim larger public funding. There are also community campuses including in remote regions which cannot function independently. A national regulatory framework is critical to address both these issues. Consultations are underway including the establishment of "Nepal Public University" as a possible solution. The increased support under SHEP to the community campuses has been instrumental in this regard.

that these programs do not have the breadth or depth required for a university degree, efforts to reform the programs including have unfortunately been met with resistance from the students and teachers.

50. The Punjab provincial government had in 2010 decided to grant autonomous status to 26 colleges which will offer 4 year Bachelors (Honours) degree programs.<sup>40</sup> These colleges will be managed by a Board of Governors who will have autonomy in financial and personnel matters. These colleges are not degree-awarding and hence, the affiliating university – University of Punjab, will act as a certifying body for the autonomous colleges and awards their degrees. The provincial government will provide funds to these colleges to upgrade their facilities and quality. This scheme has however faced resistance on the ground – the teachers are worried about their job security and the students are worried of higher tuition fees.

51. More recently, as part of the World Bank supported “Tertiary Education Support Project” for Pakistan, one of the key components is to provide affiliated colleges with quality assurance support by the universities in order to enhance college graduates’ academic performance.

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<sup>40</sup> [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C22%5Cstory\\_22-9-2010\\_pg13\\_2;](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C22%5Cstory_22-9-2010_pg13_2;)  
<http://www.dawn.com/2010/12/10/teachers-students-protest-against-bogs.html>

## **Reforming the Affiliated Colleges Sector**

52. The affiliated colleges play a very important role in South Asia's higher education systems. They have contributed to a much larger segment of the population now having access to tertiary education. Although the evidence base is limited, all indications suggest that the affiliated colleges generally provide sub-standard education due to the growth of a system not designed for such massive expansion. The challenges range from poor regulatory structures, unwieldy organizational structures, multiple stakeholders, low investments, and reduced information disclosure and low accountability.

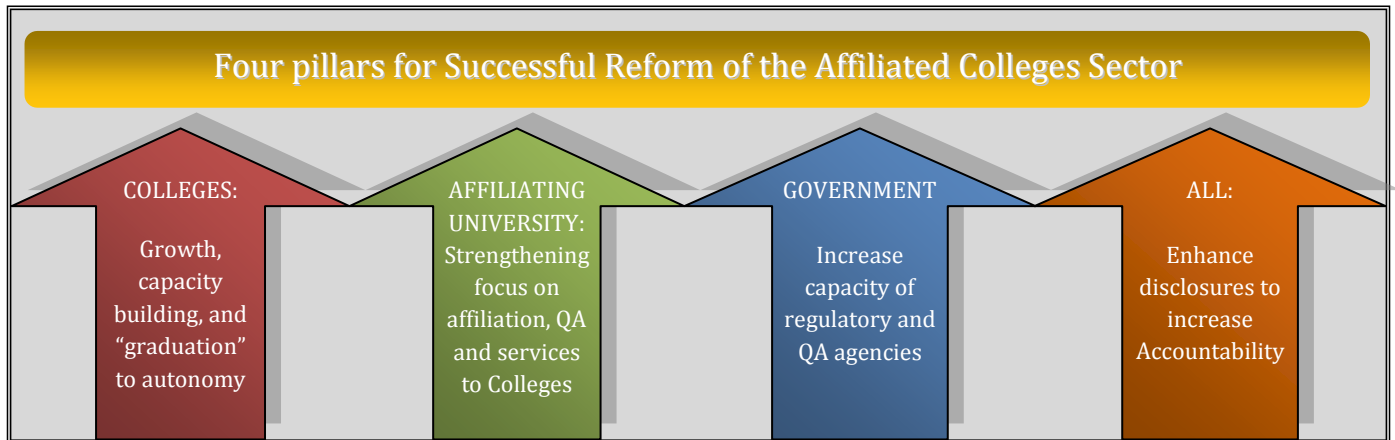
53. These challenges are not insurmountable; and with a reform plan, leadership from the Government and cooperation from the stakeholders, the affiliated colleges can be successfully reformed and contribute to a high-quality higher education sector in South Asia.

54. The recommendations below aim to serve as a guide. Not all the recommendations will be applicable to each country and governments should always customize their policies to suit the local context. For Bangladesh and Nepal, it is recommended that the reform of the affiliated colleges sector be focused on BNU and TU respectively, given that the colleges in these two universities enroll the majority of the students. Some recommendations are potentially contentious and will require a mindset change. Lastly, adequate consultations and communication as well as piloting of the initiatives are highly recommendable.

55. In the long run, we recommend a phasing out the affiliated colleges system, at least in its current form. The large scale separation of the curriculum and assessment setting from the teaching process combined with infrequent curricula updates and standardized examinations cannot lead to acceptable learning outcomes. Positive elements of the affiliation model could continue, such as a limited role of common exams across institutions, and efficiency gains from clusters of colleges focusing exclusively on teaching, but it should be in a new form that ensures quality graduates. Given the complexity, our recommendations are shaped around four pillars:

- I. Foster growth and capacity building of the existing colleges and "graduate" ready institutions to academically autonomous institutions.
- II. Strengthen the effective quality monitoring of affiliating Universities and their services to the colleges.
- III. Reform and increase capacity of the regulatory and quality assurance agencies
- IV. Enhance Transparency to increase accountability

Figure 6: Pillars for Successful Reform of Affiliated Colleges



I. Foster growth and capacity building of the existing colleges, and “graduate” the colleges to academically autonomous institutions

56. **Growth of the existing colleges is needed to raise quality and relevance of education.** This implies a growth in size of the individual colleges, which will make it viable and efficient to increase capacity. This will gradually prepare the colleges to take over more responsibilities for the education process currently performed by the affiliating universities (curriculum and assessments). Over time, the number of affiliated colleges should be reduced. This consolidation process can take place in various and non-exclusive ways:

- a. Stimulate the growth of existing colleges/institutions. A review of the policies to sanction seats of existing institutions could be undertaken to ensure that quality institutions are allowed to expand.
- b. Mergers and Acquisitions of Colleges. There are several advantages: first, economies of scales can be achieved. As seen from Norway’s experience (see [Box 5](#) in Annex B), the centralisation of administrative functions freed up teaching resources that were previously dedicated to this function and could now be used for teaching and research. This also boosts the efficiency of infrastructure and resources in the colleges. A good learning point is to allow flexibility during negotiations for local adjustments. Success is also more likely if the colleges themselves find their own partners to merge/ cluster. This could remedy the reluctance from the “owners” of the private colleges to merge. Incentives could be provided by the government to encourage mergers and acquisitions.
- c. Clustering of Colleges. Colleges could partner into clusters of colleges via a loosely federated structure akin to that of the UOL and The Claremont Consortium (see [Boxes 1 & 6](#) in Annex B). For example, a central shared services unit could be created, while each college still awards the degree of the affiliating university. The advantages are that each college can still retain its key distinctiveness including stakeholder representation, but will have a wider access to facilities and resources. Some economies of scale and improvements in quality would be achieved.



- d. Close-down Poor Performing Colleges. Colleges that do not meet the regulatory requirements should be shut down after due consideration and ample notice has been given to the colleges to improve their performance.

57. **Build capacity in the existing colleges:**

- a. Enhance the capacity of the colleges to design curricula and conduct assessments. This requires capacity building of, and investments into curriculum committees, research on market demands, pedagogical training, assessment frameworks and possibly more individualized course-based assessments, as well as grievance redressal mechanisms to ensure fairness to the students. Specifically, colleges must increasingly possess capacity to design and implement their own learning and assessment process.
- b. Develop strong leadership teams in the colleges. This leadership would steer the college to assume more responsibilities, produce better graduates and eventually achieve autonomy. More training opportunities for academic leaders are required.
- c. Improve the Quality of Teachers. Teacher qualifications in most of the countries are sub-standard. Governments should pay urgent attention to this and design a roadmap to improve teacher quality. For example, a minimum standard could be required as part of the revamped regulatory requirements, say colleges must ensure that at least half of their teachers must have at least M.Phil qualifications to be licensed and accredited respectively. Massive scaling up of new M.Phil and PhD programs could be explored to meet the supply crunch, possibly using distance-learning programs for remote areas. More high-quality and regular training to teachers for their professional development are also required. Governments also should review the service conditions including career progression and streamline recruitment processes to increase the attractiveness of a career in the colleges.

58. **“Graduating” affiliated colleges to more comprehensive institutions would be a sensible approach.** This could be done through:

- a. Giving full autonomy to better performing colleges as they demonstrate the required capacity. Autonomy enables colleges to be more nimble and responsive to market needs; and also spurs innovation resulting in improvements in the academic quality of the institution. This also embeds greater ownership amongst the stakeholders. The prospect of autonomy also provides a motivation for investment into quality education for private institutions. India, Nepal and Pakistan have already awarded some colleges various forms of autonomy and more should be encouraged. In fact, there currently exist some colleges (mainly in India) that are well-regarded, are operating better than university departments and are in high demand. These colleges could be universities in their own right.
- b. Experiment with partial academic autonomy. For example, affiliating universities could offer colleges authority to shape the teaching-learning process of parts of the education program as it sees fit. This would require colleges to build capacity.

## II. Strengthen the effective quality monitoring of affiliating Universities and their services to the colleges

59. **The second pillar of recommendations centers on the affiliating universities.** This is important for two reasons: first, to achieve the above pillar, affiliating universities have to change their regulations for affiliation and incentives given to colleges. Second, it will take at least a decade to phase out the affiliation system. In the medium term, affiliating universities would continue to play an important role in foster quality of education in the colleges. Strengthening this “affiliation” role and their capacity is desirable.

60. **Strengthen the focus of affiliating university on their affiliation role.** Currently, the affiliation responsibility is a secondary role in large universities, where the education and research of the university departments take primary importance. The regulatory agencies and/or the government could measure the performance of the universities in their affiliation role, notably the quality of the graduates in its affiliating colleges, capacity building efforts (number of colleges awarded academic autonomy), quality assurance, and curriculum updates. Further, the governments could consider establishing universities which primary role is to affiliate (as in the case of BNU and some State Technological universities in India). Furthermore, the affiliating universities should review their internal structures to focus their role on the affiliated colleges. This could include a large participatory role of the colleges in the oversight of affiliation matters (See Boxes 1 and 6 in Annex B for the UOL and TCC examples). Lastly, affiliating universities should frequently review the courses offered with an eye to align learning outcomes with society and market needs.

61. **Raise the capacity of the affiliating universities to quality assure effectively.** This could imply investments into better ICT systems, streamline procedures, and/or hire more staff for support to colleges. Affiliating universities could develop a robust internal quality assurance framework between the affiliating university and its colleges. India and Pakistan have in recent years established Quality Assurance Cells in some universities to oversee the academic quality of the colleges, amongst others. This is a good step forward. Importantly, this internal quality assurance must be consistent with the accreditation process. Alternatively, the number of affiliating colleges per university could be reduced (voluntarily or by regulation) in order to match capacity with needs. However, it is not certain that this latter option is efficient given there may be economies of scale in affiliation and quality assurance.

62. **The importance of the affiliation fee to the revenue of the university could be reduced.** This financing provides an unfortunate incentive to the universities to affiliate more, and never de-affiliate or award autonomy.

## III. Reform and enhance capacity of the regulatory and quality assurance agencies

63. **The third pillar centers on the role of the governments. Governments should enhance the capacity of the regulatory agencies to ensure that only colleges that have met the minimum standards are licensed.** The regulatory and licensing frameworks in the four countries appear to be weak and poorly-enforced. New colleges are allowed to be established even though they do not meet the requisite minimum standards. Existing colleges are not inspected regularly to ensure that they continue

to meet the minimum standards. Existing colleges should be required to meet these requirements and be given a reasonable timeframe (say 18 to 36 months) to achieve these; failing which they would not be re-issued a license.

64. **Countries could mandate that accreditation is compulsory or put in place financial incentives to encourage colleges to be accredited.** This would also require a substantial expansion in the capacity of the accreditation agencies to accredit a large number of colleges. The QAA framework should include a part for the affiliated colleges.

65. **Building capacity and “steering” abilities in higher education bodies.** A shortcoming in the higher education sectors in these countries is the lack of capacity and “steering” abilities of the various government agencies, such as the UGCs. For example, the ability to implement policies and rules, supervise and monitor activities of the colleges by the regulatory bodies is low. This is an area that requires significant government investment.

#### IV. Enhance Transparency to increase accountability

66. **The last pillar is cross-cutting and pertains to all partners: governments, universities and colleges must jointly enhance transparency to increase accountability.** To better inform student choice and to improve public accountability, it is proposed that the colleges should mandatorily disclose basic information regarding structures, qualifications and performance of its operations and faculty. This could include an annual graduate employment survey that is published. This survey can be coordinated by the state government or by the affiliating universities to enable some comparability. Second, state or federal government (or even NGOs) may wish to review and facilitate comparisons of institutional information. Third, summaries of the results of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation process. Not only the list of accredited programs and institutions, but possibly also other information, for example, the findings of the external evaluation panel could be published. Fourth, examination results at the college level could be disclosed. Together, these measures will enable students, parents and society (including employers) to make better choices, and thereby spur increased accountability and competition amongst the colleges and encourage them to improve their quality and offerings.

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## **Annexes**

Annex A: Gap Analysis for Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

Annex B: International examples of Accreditation Frameworks and Collaboration between Colleges

Annex C: Table of Comparisons for Key Responsibilities- Affiliated Colleges Model, University of London (“Federation) Model and The Claremont Colleges (“Consortium”) Model.

## GAP ANALYSIS FOR BANGLADESH, INDIA, NEPAL AND PAKSITAN

	External QAA Framework for Colleges	Internal QA Framework between Universities and Colleges	Teacher-Training Policies; Regular Curriculum Updates	Revamp of Institutional Structures
<b>BANGLADESH</b>	None in place	Yes, but poor implementation, monitoring and supervision in practice.	Weak teacher-training culture. BNU has facilities but participation is low with few courses. Public colleges review their curriculum once every four year; Unclear for private colleges.	Decentralization of BNU into 6 regional campuses has been approved but not implemented.
<b>INDIA</b>	Accreditation is voluntary although there are proposed reforms to make this compulsory.	Poor monitoring and supervision. As part of the 11 <sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, some universities are supposed to establish Internal Quality Assurance Cells.	Differs across states; Generally, teachers' professional development is neglected with irregular curriculum updates.	'Cluster' approach has been proposed in the State of Kerala but discussions are stalled.
<b>NEPAL</b>	Accreditation was only introduced recently. It is voluntary and must be renewed every 5 years.	Unclear	Weak teacher-training culture partly due to insufficient resources. Irregular curriculum updates.	Current reform efforts are focused on the constituent campuses, small universities and community campuses.
<b>PAKISTAN</b>	None in place	Some universities are supposed to establish internal Quality Assurance Cells.	Unclear	Minimal discussions

	<b>Presence of Colleges that have Autonomy</b>	<b>Information Disclosure Initiatives</b>	<b>Capacity-Building Initiatives for Government and Institutions</b>	<b>Incentivized Funding from Government</b>
<b>BANGLADESH</b>	No (for public colleges)  Partial (for private colleges as some have operational and financial autonomy)	No requirement for colleges to conduct graduate employment surveys.	Unclear	Unclear
<b>INDIA</b>	Yes (a few private colleges have full autonomy, i.e. finance, operational/ personnel and academic)	No requirement for colleges to conduct graduate employment surveys or publish QAA results.	Minimal	UGC has a few schemes to incentivize colleges under its purview but few meet the minimum standards. Funding for the colleges is primarily via state governments.
<b>NEPAL</b>	No (for public campuses) Partial (for community and private campuses as some have operational and financial autonomy)	No requirement for colleges to conduct graduate employment surveys or publish QAA results. QAA criteria include adequacy of disclosure and accuracy of public information.	Minimal	Unclear
<b>PAKISTAN</b>	In progress for the public colleges	No requirement for colleges to conduct graduate employment surveys.	Unclear	Unclear



### **Box 1: University of London (UOL)**

The University of London is a ‘loosely-structured’ federal university comprising 29 affiliates: 19 self-governing Colleges and 10 Research Institutes/ Central Academic Bodies. The UOL initially comprised just the University College London and King’s College; but has since grown to include many world-class institutions including the London School of Economics and Political Science. The Colleges are considered universities in their own right: they set their own entrance criteria, curriculum and examinations. The degree is awarded by the UOL.

#### Brief History

The UOL was initially established as an examining body for its Colleges. Towards the end of the 19th century, the University expanded its mandate and became a federal ‘Teaching University’. From the 1980s, the University went through a period of institutional amalgamation resulting in the formation of large multi-faculty colleges. In the 1990s, many of the University’s central responsibilities including academic and financial power were devolved to the Colleges.

#### Governance and Ensuring Academic Quality in the Colleges

The **Board of Trustees** is the University’s governing body and is supported by the Collegiate Council and various committees. The **Collegiate Council** advises the Board on the strategic direction of the University, and has ultimate responsibility for all academic affairs. The **Academic Quality Advisory Committee (AQAC)** which comprises representatives from all the Colleges, advises the Collegiate Council on matters of academic quality and submits an annual University Quality Overview Report. The University and Colleges are all funded directly by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and each college is subject to audit by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

#### Relationship between the Colleges and UOL

All the Colleges are autonomous, have independence in running the day-to-day affairs of their institutions and have their own independent governance structures. They have the legal authority to examine students and have the University award them degrees. In return, the Colleges contribute to the cost of the running of the University through the payment of an annual subscription. With this, the Colleges are also able to subscribe to certain centrally-organized services such as the Senate House Library, the UOL Student Housing Services as well as The Careers Group. Some Colleges (such as King’s College and UCL) had recently obtained the power to award their own degrees.

*Source: <http://www.london.ac.uk>; <http://www.ucl.ac.uk>*

### **Box 2: Overview of the Accreditation Framework in the United States**

The higher education enterprise in the US is extremely complex and decentralized - comprising a wide range of public and private, for-profit and non-profit institutions. The US accreditation framework mirrors this complexity. US accreditors review colleges and universities in 50 states and over 90 countries in a wide range of professions and specialties including medicine, business, law and the arts.

#### Accreditation and Recognition

There are two key components in the overall US quality assurance and accreditation framework:

- i) **Accreditation** in the US is about quality assurance and improvement of higher educational institutions and programs. Accreditation is a *non-governmental* activity carried out by about 80 private, non-profit accrediting organizations, located all around the country, established and designed specifically for this purpose. They are funded primarily by annual dues from the accredited institutions as well as fees from accreditation reviews. Accreditation is ongoing –the initial earning of accreditation is subject to periodic review.
- ii) **Recognition** is about scrutinizing the quality and effectiveness of accrediting organizations. This is done by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, a national coordinating body for institutional and programmatic accreditation) and the US Department of Education (USDE). The goals of CHEA and USDE are different. CHEA aims to assure the public that accrediting organizations continue to maintain and improve academic quality; whereas the USDE aims to assure that accrediting organizations contribute to maintaining the soundness of institutions that receive federal funds. CHEA is funded by annual fees from its members whereas the USDA obtains its budget from Congress.

#### Importance of Accreditation

Accreditation is important for the following reasons:

- i) **Assuring Quality**. Accreditation is the primary means by which institutions and programs assure and signal quality to students and the public.
- ii) **Access to Public Funds**. Both the federal and state governments provide funds (including student aid) only to institutions that are accredited. In addition, states often require that individuals who sit for state licensure are graduates of accredited institutions/ programs.
- iii) **Engendering Private Sector Confidence**. Employers rely on the accreditation status of institutions or programs in personnel decisions. Companies, individual and foundations also look for evidence of accreditation when making decisions about private giving.
- iv) **Easing Student Transfers**. Accreditation is necessary for a smooth transfer of courses and programs amongst colleges and universities.

*Source: An Overview of US Accreditation, Judith S. Eaton, CHEA, Revised May 2009*

### **Box 3: Overview of Quality Assurance in the United Kingdom (UK)**

In the UK, universities and colleges of higher education are private institutions, but publicly-funded via the higher education funding councils. The primary responsibility for academic standards and quality in higher education rests with individual universities and colleges, each of which is autonomous. These institutions confer officially recognized UK degrees and each has its own internal quality assurance procedures.

#### *QAA for Publicly-Funded Institutions*

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education was established in 1997 as an independent body. The QAA is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It is funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges and through contracts with the funding councils. Technically the QAA is 'owned' by the universities, specifically the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. Its responsibilities includes checking how well the institutions meet their responsibilities, identifies good practice, and makes recommendations for improvement. The QAA safeguards the public interest in sound standards of higher education.

In the UK, degree awarding powers is regulated by law. The QAA is not an accrediting body and does not hold a list of recognized universities or colleges. This is held currently by the UK Government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The QAA however, provides confidential advice to the Government on the merits of applications for degree awarding powers or university title.

Achievement of satisfactory outcomes from QAA reviews is expected of all institutions in receipt of teaching grants from the funding councils. In addition, the councils have a legal obligation to ensure that a proper system of quality assurance is in place and must approve any changes that QAA may wish to make. Third, to increase transparency, all institutions are required to publish information about their quality and standards.

#### *Other Private Providers*

There are also many private providers of programs and awards in the UK that do not have degree awarding powers. The British Accreditation Council, which is independent of Government, is the national accrediting body for further and higher education outside the state sector.

*Source: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>; <http://www.bis.gov.uk>*

**Box 4: Australia: Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency**

A higher education provider in Australia is established or recognised under the law of the Australian Government, a State or Territory. A higher education provider can be a university (which is self-accrediting), a self-accrediting provider or non self-accrediting provider. The provider has to be approved by the Australian Government before it can receive grants or its students can receive public financial assistance. Providers are subject to quality and accountability requirements.

*Overview of TEQSA*

The Australian Government is establishing a new national regulatory and quality agency for higher education - the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). TEQSA will be an independent body with powers to register and regulate university and non-university higher education providers, monitor quality and set standards. Its primary objective is to ensure that students receive a high quality education. TEQSA will combine the regulatory activities currently undertaken in the states and territories with that undertaken by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). This will reduce the number of federal, state and territory regulatory and quality assurance bodies from nine to one.

*Key Features of TEQSA Proposed Approach*

TEQSA's approach to regulation will be proportionate and risk-based. Under the new arrangements, registration and re-registration will be granted for periods up to seven years. Similarly, accreditation and re-accreditation will also have a maximum seven year cycle for the non-self accrediting higher education providers. TEQSA will also conduct thematic reviews to focus on a specific area of risk.

All providers must meet certain threshold standards in order to enter and remain within Australia's higher education system. TEQSA is also in the process of drawing up new standards which will be used for assessment once approved. All institutions will be assessed against a risk framework which could include financial risk, governance risk, or risk associated with the student or qualification profile of a provider. This will enable TEQSA to determine the timetable for re-registration as well as to intervene when a risk is identified either in a single provider or in an activity across the whole sector.

*Source: <http://www.deewr.gov.au>*

### **Box 5: Merger of State (“University) Colleges in Norway in 1994**

Higher education in Norway comprises four main types of institutions namely: universities, specialized university institutions, university colleges, and art academies. A key difference between a university and a university college is that a university offers at least four doctorate programs. University colleges also focus primarily on bachelor degree courses that have a strong professional orientation such as education, engineering, nursing etc and most do not have a research focus. Research, if any, are typically of a project nature between the college and local or regional firms.

#### 1994 Merger of University Colleges

The 1994 merger of 98 vocationally-oriented colleges into 26 state colleges (now known as university colleges) in Norway, is widely regarded as a successful reform. The reform aimed to give each county its own university college; and at the same time ensure a more resource effective teaching structure. In particular, through the centralization of administrative functions, teaching resources that were previously dedicated to this function could now be freed up and used for teaching and research. The colleges vary in size; from the smallest, with 170 students, to the largest, with 8,050 students. In 2003, around 98,315 students (or about 47% of all students in higher education) attend these colleges; with about 9,030 staff supporting them.

#### Reform Implementation Process

The reform implementation process can be broadly categorized into two main stages: i) the merger process conducted by the Ministry of Education, and ii) processes taking place in the colleges after the mergers in order to achieve the reform’s full objectives.

In the first stage, a set of organizational changes were undertaken to achieve the various goals. First, the number of colleges was reduced to one fourth. Next, the internal organization of each of the new university colleges was decided by forming faculties and departments as well as by the establishment of new administrative structures. Finally, a university-like management system was introduced. It should be highlighted that a key issue, during this phase, was to come to an agreement on which institutions were to be merged within the various regions. The regional boards were the driving force in this process and were clearly supportive of the idea. Not unexpectedly, the various colleges were less enthusiastic, but accepted somewhat reluctantly that this reform had to pull through. Still, some colleges worked actively to avoid the amalgamation for various reasons: some argued that the distance to the administrative centre of the new university college would be too far, while others feared that their ambitions to be granted university status would be effectively curtailed. Although the Ministry directed the merger processes, flexibility was also allowed during negotiations between the regional boards and their affiliated colleges for local adjustments.

In the second stage, the individual colleges were then responsible for implementing the measures necessary to fulfill the academic, administrative and economic objectives of the reform.

*Source: Thematic Review of Higher Education, OECD; The Merger of Non-University Colleges in Norway, Kyvik*

### **Box 6: The Claremont University Consortium**

The Claremont University Consortium (CUC) is a free-standing educational support institution of The Claremont Colleges (TCC). Its responsibilities include providing support services to the students and institutions in areas such as campus security, financial and human resource services etc. The Consortium is also responsible for group planning and holds lands for future expansion of the group.

There are seven educational institutions constituting the Claremont Colleges. Five are undergraduate colleges offering a liberal arts education including Pomona College and Harvey Mudd College; and the remaining two are graduate institutions. The Claremont Colleges enroll more than 6,300 full-time students. The combined faculty consists of nearly 700 Professors, with approximately 1,600 staff. Presently, more than 2,000 courses are offered to students attending the colleges.

#### *CUC Governance Framework and Intercollegiate Cooperation*

The Consortium is governed by a Board of Overseers comprising the President and Chairs of the Boards of Trustees of all the Claremont Colleges, the CEO of CUC, and 7 to 11 members. To work out specific intercollegiate cooperation issues, the consortium maintains an extensive network of intercollegiate committees ranging from a broad policy council to the functional staff and faculty committees.

#### *Shared Facilities, Programs and Resources*

Each Claremont College is independent in that students receive their degrees from the college that they are enrolled in. Each College also designs its own curriculum and teaching methodology to be adopted, hires its own faculty and has its own administration and admissions departments.

The Consortium however, helps to bring together large or expensive facilities and programs to be shared amongst the various Colleges. This not only results in cost savings, but also enables “the whole to be greater than the sum of the parts.” For example, there are various shared academic departments and programs such as the Intercollegiate Women's Studies Center and the European Union Center of California. The shared facilities include the Colleges’ libraries, the Student Services Center, dining and sports facilities.

The Colleges also coordinate budgets and course schedules to allow for cross-registration of courses - opening up more options and an extensive array of program offerings to their students typically found in large comprehensive universities. Each year, students take roughly 6,000 courses (about 16 % of the total courses offered) at a campus other than their home campus. Cross-registration is also possible in the consortium. In addition, three of the Claremont Colleges pooled their resources to create the Joint Science Department where students share and utilize various laboratories including an 86-acre natural area for the conduct of their research and experiments.

*Source: <http://www.cuc.claremont.edu>*

**TABLE OF COMPARISONS OF KEY RESPONSIBILITIES/ TYPES OF AUTONOMY:  
SAR AFFILIATED COLLEGES MODEL, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON (UOL) AND THE CLAREMONT  
COLLEGES CONSORTIUM (TCC)**

	<b>SAR Affiliated Colleges Model</b>	<b>UOL - “Federation Model”</b>	<b>TCC – “ Consortium Model”</b>
<b>Administration</b>	Some colleges (particularly the private ones) have autonomy in managing the day-to-day affairs of the colleges.	Institutions have full administrative autonomy except for the identified shared services under the Federation (e.g. Central Library, The Careers Group etc)	Colleges have full administrative autonomy except for the identified shared services under the Consortium (e.g. facilities and programs).
<b>Finance</b>	Private colleges have a fair level of flexibility in managing their finances; including sourcing and being able to keep external revenues etc. The government bodies adopt a light-touch approach in regulation. The College BoG has the final say in financing matters.  Public colleges have minimal financial autonomy and have to comply with government rules and regulations.	Institutions are fully independent and are funded directly by the Higher Education Funding Councils. Financing decisions are taken by each institution’s Court/ Senate.	Colleges have full financial autonomy. Financing decisions are taken by each college’s BoG.
<b>Personnel Management</b>	Private colleges have some level of flexibility in the selection, appointment and service conditions of teachers (except for those that are funded by the Government.)  Public / Government colleges have minimal autonomy and have to comply with government rules and regulations on the selection and appointment procedures as well as service conditions.	Institutions have full autonomy in personnel management matters.	Colleges have full autonomy in personnel management matters.
<b>Academic</b>	Most of the colleges (except the fully autonomous ones) do not have academic autonomy. The affiliating university determines the curriculum and assessment framework. The colleges function as “teaching units”.  The colleges also do not have their own internal Quality Assurance units. The affiliating university is supposed to build up and regulate the quality of the colleges.	Institutions have full academic autonomy (i.e. designs their own curriculum, assessment framework etc); all the institutions are members in the UOL’s Collegiate Council (i.e. the main body overseeing academic affairs).  Each institution has its own Quality Assurance units which reports independently to the UK’s Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) as well as to the UOL’s Academic Quality Advisory Committee (AQAC).	Colleges have full academic autonomy (i.e. designs their own curriculum, assessment framework etc). Collaborations for joint academic programs is done under the umbrella of the Consortium.  Each college obtains accreditation independently from the relevant accreditation bodies such as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.