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Planning model for Peruvian university system

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Abstract

This paper arises from observing the effect that the education policy has had on the European Higher Education Area that promotes the primary objective of this research: the preparation of a planning model that contributes, based on the European experience, the basic elements for the quality of higher education in Peru. To appraise the timeliness and usefulness of the aforementioned model, the scope of the Spanish model is selected and specifically adapted to the Peruvian model, which can be considered a testing laboratory due to their historical, cultural and social similarities and in which the model offers a response to the society's need for quality education.

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1. Background: Universities in Peru and around the world

The Peruvian university model was created as an extension of the Spanish model (Rodriguez, 1972), with a dominant model of social reform, in the 80s through University Act No. 23733, and State control, that is, the responsibility of the State for university matters, was delegated to the National Assembly of Rectors¹, granting more autonomy to universities.

¹ ANR (National Assembly of Rectors), public autonomous organization. Its functions include, among others: a) to study, coordinate and guide the activities of universities; b) to assess and render a favorable decision for the creation of graduate schools or divisions of the same nature; c) to inform, upon request of the Legislative Branch, in the cases of creation, merger and suppression of public or private universities.

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Peruvian universities have improved considerably during the last years, but the university system still has many shortcomings as a result of attributing to the ANR the responsibility for responding to the civil society's demand, not very committed and with no adequate resources to do it. The creation of the National Council for University Operation Authorization)² and Legislative Decree No. 882 have resulted in an expansion of the supply of universities (INEI, 2010, page 19) in response to the increase of the demand in the admission to universities for higher studies (ANR, 2011), and in some cases there have been defects in quality control and relevance of qualifications due to the endogamy of ANR and CONAFU.

Said expansion phenomenon has caused an imbalance in university quality systems (Rojas-Revoredo, 2007), as well as consistency problems with respect to the proliferation of careers with low labor demand (Yamada, 2007). Therefore, the explanations of this phenomenon have focused on the interplay of economic supply and demand, which is characteristic of the field of economics (Diaz, 2009); and on the preparation of legal rules and regulations, in the field of law, in addition to policies, which have been promoting the creation of new universities (Cuenca, 2014) (Fig. 1.).

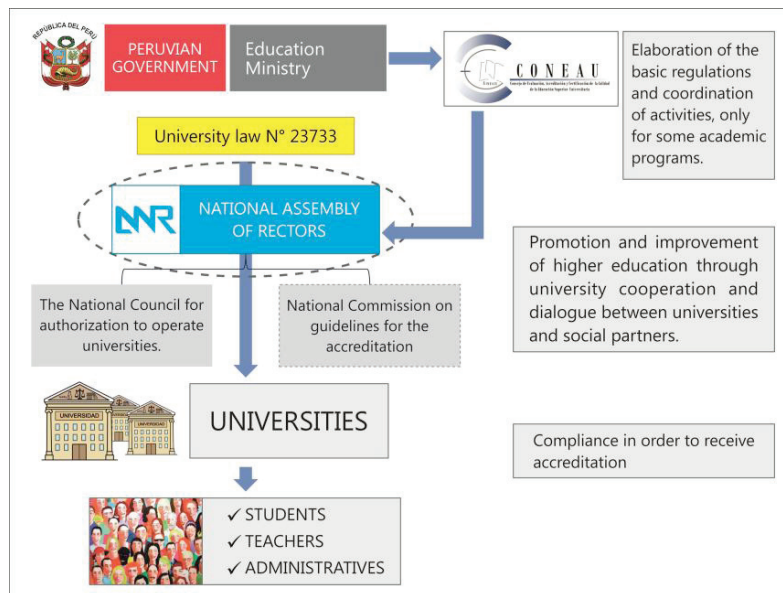


Fig. 1. Model of social reform of the Peruvian university

Undergraduate and graduate programs timidly introduce research projects as a requirement for graduation, when the global trend is toward research universities that give solutions to the real problems of society (Bleiklie & Kogan, 2007), with an intensified competition measured through rankings or other tools (Stensaker & Gortnitzka, 2009), for which it is required with more intensity to have professors who hold PhD degrees (Salmi, 2013).

² CONAFU was created in 1995 as an autonomous body of the National Assembly of Rectors in order to regulate the operation of new universities. The ANR is in charge of calling the process to elect its members among former rectors of universities. Act No. 26439 confers upon CONAFU powers to grant or deny the provision authorization for operation, among others. Furthermore, this institution assesses, on a permanent basis and for the time it deems appropriate, the operation of universities, and it authorizes or denies their definitive operation. The authorization for definitive operation cannot be granted before five years have elapsed, counted as from the date of the provisional authorization for operation.

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