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The Implications of Competition for the Future of European Higher Education (I)

Guest Editors:

Jean-Emile Charlier

Catholic University of Mons and

Catholic University of Louvain

and

Sarah Croché

Catholic University of Mons

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HAMIDOU NACUZON SALL AND BAYE DARAW NDJAYE

Higher Education in Africa

Between Perspectives Opened by the Bologna Process and the Commodification of Education

This paper analyzes in sociological and historical perspective the changes involved in the Bologna process and the commodification of higher education in Africa. The resulting innovations lead to the internationalization of higher education and the provision of online courses, the development of joint programs, and the creation of franchised universities.

Reforms are under way in almost all countries on the African continent. All universities and higher education institutions feel compelled to adopt the Bologna process, especially the conversion to two-semester academic years, three-cycle studies known as LMD (License, Master's, Doctoral degrees) as well as the division of curricula into credits.

In addition to these reforms, an increasing number of countries welcome North American (United States and Canada) and European private higher education institutions. These new entities and public universities also offer joint programs most often with northern institutions or within the framework of international cooperation networks such as the academic agency of French-speaking countries (AUF).

The competition among these public or franchised universities is reflected

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Hamidou Nacuzon Sall is a professor at the Faculty of Science and Technology of Education and Training (FASTEF) of the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar (UCAD), Senegal, and at the UNESCO Chair in educational sciences (CUSE). His research interests focus on teacher training, computer use in education, and educational system evaluation. Baye Daraw Ndjaye is a lecturer at the UNESCO Chair in educational sciences (CUSE) at the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar.

through their determination to meet the Berlin or Shanghai ranking criteria.

The first part of the article traces the adoption of the international higher education system by African universities and focuses in particular on the historical foundations behind the current reforms toward the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree scheme. It also considers new criteria to ease comparison among African universities. The second part deals with the globalization and commodification of education and their effects on higher education in Africa.

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