

Study Abroad and Development

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Many students from developing countries travel abroad to study. Tony Fahey of the Development Education Support Centre, Dublin considers how such study is viewed by host countries and by developing countries, with particular emphasis on the extent and implications of such study in Ireland.

Introduction

The boom in education throughout the world in the past three decades occurred in higher education as much as primary and secondary education and has resulted in a continuous and expensive struggle in developing countries to create viable third-level education systems. In the early 1960s, UNESCO estimated the worldwide population of students in third-level education, excluding the USSR and mainland China, at 13.5 million. By 1983-84, this figure had risen to 48 million. While much of the growth occurred in the developed world, a significant share occurred in developing regions. In Asia third-level student numbers over this period increased from 3.5 million to 16.9 million. In Africa the corresponding increase was from a quarter of a million to 1.8 million and in South America from just over half a million to 5.9 million.

An important feature of the rush into third-level education in developing countries is the persistent reliance on foreign study as an adjunct to third-level provision at home. Developed countries have a particular bearing on this feature as it is to the developed world that most Third World countries look for foreign study. Worldwide, according to UNESCO statistics, the fraction of students studying abroad has remained relatively stable over the years at around 2 per cent of the total student population. But from the early 1960s to the early 1980s the absolute numbers of students involved increased more than 3.5 times from about 250,000 to over 900,000.

Throughout this period, Asia was the largest sending region, with an increase in the total of Asian students abroad over the two decades from 108,000 to 395,000. In relative terms, however, foreign study was most common in Africa. African students abroad increased from 35,000 in the early 1960s to 183,000 in the early

Table 1: Third-level students at home and abroad in major regions and in selected countries, 1964-65 and 1984-85.

	1964-65			1984-85		
	At home (a) <i>000s</i>	Abroad (b) <i>000s</i>	Ratio a/b	At home (a) <i>000s</i>	Abroad (b) <i>000s</i>	Ratio a/b
AFRICA	266	35	7.6/1	1846	183	10.1/1
Of which:						
Nigeria	7.9	3.8	2.1/1	182	23.3	7.9/1
Morocco	10.1	2.8	3.6/1	130	31.5	4.1/1
Algeria	5.9	1.7	3.5/1	111	13.6	8.1/1
ASIA	3559	108.9	33/1	16910	394.6	43/1
Of which:						
Iran	26	9.8	1.6/1	177	42.7	4.1/1
Malaysia	—	—	—	93	42.2	2.2/1
India	1310	10.8	121/1	5345	35.7	150/1
EUROPE	2945	61.2	48/1	9197	159.9	57/1
US	5526	13.8	400/1	12467	16.7	746/1
OTHER						
N. AMERICA	523	23.8	46/1	2985	56.3	53/1
S. AMERICA	586	8.8	67/1	4100	33.8	121/1
OCEANIA	172	2.4	72/1	465	7.3	64/1
WORLD*						
TOTALS	13500	254	53/1	47970	918.3	52/1

*Excluding USSR and mainland China

Source: UNESCO *Statistical Yearbooks 1966, 1986.*

1980s and this represented an increase in the African share of the total foreign student population from 14 percent to 20 percent. Higher education in Africa grew at a somewhat faster rate than study abroad, so that there was a reduction in the relative share of foreign study. Nevertheless, in the early 1980s there was approximately one third-level African student abroad for every ten at home, compared to a ratio of one abroad to 43 at home in Asia and a ratio of one abroad to 746 at home in the United States.

These statistics understate the reliance of African countries, and perhaps also of Asian countries, on foreign study at university level since much of the increased provision in third-level education at home in these regions occurred at the lower end of the third-level

range, that is, in non-university technological colleges and training colleges. Furthermore, many third-level institutions in these countries are so under-resourced as not to bear direct comparison with their counterparts in wealthier countries. Study abroad, on the other hand, is concentrated in the university sector in developed countries and then often in heavily-resourced technical departments or in postgraduate study. Moock (1984) suggests, in fact, that in sub-Saharan Africa in 1979, some 30 percent of students receiving higher education were in foreign institutions. This estimate of the level of dependency involved might be a more accurate reflection of the picture in the upper end of the higher education sector in Africa as a whole.

This paper reviews some of the issues and concerns which emerge from this situation, looking at the general viewpoints of both host countries and sending countries. It also looks at the patterns and implications of foreign study in Ireland, with particular reference to those issues which need to be examined more closely in framing future policy options. While the literature on foreign study is large (the 'select' bibliography by Lulat (1984) runs to 40 pages), much of it is concentrated on foreign study at the level of the individual student, where social-psychological problems of adjustment to foreign environments and individual-level learning problems are to the fore. Studies of the socio-economic impact of foreign study on either host or sending countries are much scarcer, as are studies on the effects on educational systems in either the developed or the developing world. As a result, while foreign study is an issue that has agitated many people in many countries, both in the developed and the developing world, there is a great deal of ignorance on many of the key aspects of the issue as well as how it works out in detail in individual countries. For present purposes, therefore, we will have to confine comments to fairly general features of foreign study and simply point to rather than answer the central questions which arise about it.

Host country viewpoints

The destinations of students going abroad are largely to be found in a small number of western countries, particularly the United States, France, West Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada, with the Lebanon a major non-western host country. In recent years, eastern block countries have also begun to play a role in this area, though precise statistics on the numbers and countries of origin of their foreign students are not readily available.

The United States alone provided places for over one-third of the total of foreign students worldwide in 1984-85. But in

proportionate terms, because of the vastness of its higher education system, foreign students were no more prominent there than they were in Ireland. In both cases, foreign students in 1984-85 amounted to less than 3 percent of the total student body. In France and Britain, by contrast, foreign students, many of them originating in the ex-colonies, typically exceed 10 percent of the total student body, the French higher education system in particular being heavily populated by students from North Africa. West Germany also has a high degree of internationalisation of its student body, with Turkish students forming the largest foreign student group and Greeks not far behind.

Not surprisingly, because of the large numbers involved, foreign students have become a matter of some concern to host countries, particularly since the rapid increases in numbers of the 1970s. The most common concern of recent years has been the cost to host countries which it is believed foreign students give rise to, particularly in the case of foreign students receiving education at below-cost fees in state-supported institutions. The hidden subsidy represented by below-cost fees became an issue especially in countries such as Britain and France where foreign students were in excess of 10 percent of the student body in state-funded universities. A related concern for some host countries was the possible increase in domestic competition for places in high demand courses represented by a large intake of foreign students.

On both these questions, the 1970s witnessed an increasingly negative attitude towards foreign students and a growing view of foreign students as an unwelcome burden on national resources. In response to such tendencies, many of the major host nations in the western world, with the partial but important exception of the United States, began to restrict foreign student access to their higher education systems in the late 1970s (Williams 1984, Smith et al 1981). Restrictive measures typically took the form either of administrative devices (such as course quotas, visa restrictions, tighter entry requirements) or of financial devices (of which the move towards full-cost fees in public institutions was the most important). The common objective was to reduce the amount of subsidy which foreign students obtained from the higher education budgets of the host countries, either by keeping foreign students out altogether or by attempting to recoup in fees the amount of subsidy involved.

These measures generally had the effect of slowing down the increases in foreign student numbers, though only in a few cases did the slowdown become an actual decline. One instance of decline occurred in Britain following the introduction of a full-cost fees policy for foreign students in 1980. The British measure met with much opposition within Britain itself, particularly from institutions

which had committed themselves heavily to education for Third World students. However, the impact of the measure was softened by the fall in value of the British pound against the dollar and by a substantial increase in the fellowships fund for Third World students. As a result, the full-cost fees policy did not have quite as severe an effect on Third World student numbers as was first anticipated (see Williams 1984 for an account of reactions to and outcomes of the full-cost fees policy in Britain).

Much of the debate which followed the full-cost fees policy in Britain centred on whether in fact overseas students represented a net cost to the British economy, even where below-cost fees were charged. In this debate, one side argued that, even under the system of below-cost fees, the real and hidden subsidies to foreign students were counterbalanced by real and hidden benefits to the British economy. In this view, substantial immediate benefits arose from foreign exchange earnings and the stimulation to local service industries provided by foreign students. In the long-term also, it was argued that substantial benefits accrued to British industry and trade from the goodwill and exposure to British products resulting from extended study in Britain, a particularly important factor in the case of students who would occupy influential positions in the future in their home countries. One much quoted study valued these benefits in such a way that they exceeded the costs associated with foreign students, thus implying that there was a real net benefit to Britain in purely economic terms in maintaining high numbers of foreign students at subsidised fee-levels (quoted in Blaug 1984).

Blaug (1984), however, questioned these estimates. While he accepted that the economic benefits of foreign students were as real as the economic costs, he considered that it was easy to overstate the former and understate the latter, even though there was no hard and fast basis of valuation which allowed one to determine unequivocally what the costs and benefits were. According to his own estimates, foreign students under the below-cost fee-system represented a net cost, though he could put no precise figure on what was involved since at every point the estimation procedure was fraught with uncertainty (thus, for example, in estimating the cost of educational services provided, one could consider average costs or marginal costs, or some combination of the two, and one could estimate costs course by course, department by department or institution by institution, with each approach or combination of approaches producing different results).

The main interest of the debate in Britain from the point of view of other host countries such as Ireland is that it shows how complex and difficult it is to measure the costs and benefits of foreign

students to host countries, even where attention is restricted to purely economic costs and benefits. When one moves to the non-economic benefits which are often said to arise, the matter becomes even more uncertain. Some commentators point to the gains in international peace and understanding which result from the mingling of students from different countries, while others consider that foreign students contribute substantially to the quality of the educational experience in their host institutions (see, e.g., Selvaratnam 1985, who mentions all these points). In the case of the major powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, provision of places for foreign students, like many other forms of aid, is frequently viewed as an extension of foreign policy and is structured and deployed in the light of the international political and cultural allegiances it can promote.

While concern for foreign study on the host country side has been dominated by cost-benefit issues, this is not to say that concern about the effect on foreign students or on their home countries has been entirely absent. But it does mean that these questions, which are the important ones from the developing countries' point of view, have been crowded into second place. Where interest in the developmental impact of foreign study on sending countries has occurred, it has concentrated on questions of how the educational experience offered to foreign students could be improved, rather than on whether it should be replaced by a different form of educational aid. It has also tended to be limited to courses and programmes connected in some way with development aid programmes, even though traditionally these account for a small minority of foreign students from developing countries. In the 1980s, the tendency to shift support for Third World students away from hidden subsidies in the education budget towards direct grants from the aid budget has raised the possibility that foreign student places might be coordinated and distributed as a matter for development aid policy. But only in a few cases (Belgium being one – see Smith et al. 1981) has this possibility been followed through with any thoroughness.

Developing country viewpoints

For developing countries, from which the majority of foreign students originate, the issue of foreign study is very much a matter of vital interest in that foreign study is a major part of higher education provision as a whole and thus links into key questions of national development. Thus for these countries, foreign study is part of the more general question of the role of higher education in development. The share of resources poured into higher education

in many developing countries indicates a strong implicit faith in it as part of the development mechanism. Many commentators, however, argue that such faith is misplaced and that the 'diploma disease' in all its forms has done as much harm as good to the development effort, even where development is defined narrowly in terms of GNP growth.

The criticisms applied to higher education in developing countries are well known. The most common are that it is an over-user of scarce national resources, that it is a colonial import which is maladjusted to the economic and cultural needs of developing countries, that it yields poor economic and social returns compared to primary and secondary education, that it exacerbates social inequalities, that it fails to educate and train its graduates to an adequate standard even in the fields on which it concentrates.

Many of the questions which these criticisms give rise to can be and frequently are extended to foreign study. Indeed responses to these questions can yield the backhanded compliment to foreign study that it is no worse for developing countries than its counterpart at home and that at least on the question of technical standards it may be less inefficient. Ayandele (1982), for example, in discussing the question of the relevance of higher education programmes to conditions in Africa, suggests that universities abroad are no more remote or foreign in cultural terms than universities in Africa:

Despite the efforts made by African universities to give their curricula an African cast, they remain for the most part centres for the diffusion of western culture . . . This is why the training of Africans outside the continent has in no visible way made them more western than their colleagues trained at home.

While foreign study looked at from the developing countries' viewpoint may thus be considered as a part of a rather shaky overall edifice, there is widespread acceptance among policy makers in developing countries that overseas study is likely to continue to be a major source of high level manpower training for the foreseeable future (Oxenham 1981). Of course, this is not equally true of all developing countries, as there is great variation in the level of foreign study across developing countries and in the domestic causes which lie behind it.

In the case of Malaysia, for example, which is one of the biggest senders of third-level students overseas, discrimination against Malaysians of Chinese stock results in large numbers of students from this ethnic group seeking their education abroad, particularly in the English speaking world. Reflecting entirely different circumstances, Iran in the 1970s sent by far the largest number of students overseas,

especially to the United States, largely as a result of the westernisation policies of the regime then in power. Since the Islamic revolution Iranian student numbers abroad have fallen off steadily and are now made up largely of refugees. North African countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria turn very much to France for higher education, reflecting their colonial past. In the Middle East much of the international movement of students is confined to neighbouring countries and the Lebanon in particular has drawn students in large numbers from Jordan, Syria, Egypt and the Palestinian refugee population. In sub-Saharan Africa, Nigerian students turn in large numbers towards the United States and account for a substantial share of the overseas students of sub-Saharan Africa. (For a preliminary attempt to statistically model and explain variations in overseas study in a number of Asian countries, see Cummings 1984.)

Despite the variety of national circumstances, there are a number of common concerns about the longterm drawbacks of dependence on foreign study in developing countries. In some cases, for example, foreign study may be acting as a brake on the development of training capacity at home in so far as local training institutions have to compete with foreign institutions for the resources devoted to higher education by their own governments, particularly where top students are creamed off by the authorities and sent abroad for further education. The question of cost-effectiveness – whether study abroad gives as good value for money as study at home – is also high on the list of concerns, as are questions of cultural dependency, the ‘brain drain’, the appropriateness of knowledge gained, and the pay-off in economic or social development (Moock 1984, Oxenham 1981). On all these questions, background doubts about the relative effectiveness of higher education institutions at home are complicating factors but these complications make it more rather than less important to understand the particular role of foreign study.

The striking feature of research on these questions from the developing countries’ viewpoint is its thinness and inadequacy. This is so partly because developing countries lack the capacity to carry out such research and partly because the questions involved are so complex that it would push any research capacity to its limits to handle them adequately. Furthermore, research on the impact of education in the developed world has shown the limited nature of available models and does not give great encouragement about the fruitfulness of research effort in this direction (see, e.g. Blaug 1985, Mace 1984, Simon 1985).

One of the few substantial pieces of work so far carried out in this area is by the East African Universities Research Project on the

impact of overseas study on developing countries. This study, which covered five countries (Kenya, Somalia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia), attempted to compare the benefits and development impact of higher education at home with higher education abroad, thus focussing on the central question posed by current patterns of foreign study in Africa. The method employed was a common one in evaluation studies: a sample survey of recipients of the programmes under assessment in order to elicit subjective evaluations of their effectiveness.

The two large published reports which emerged from this study contain a wealth of detailed information on how African graduates of a wide range of higher education programmes in Africa and overseas judged their merits and weaknesses (Maliyamkono et al. 1982a and 1982b). This information suggested, among other things, that on many key issues such as quality and relevance to subsequent professional work in Africa, foreign programmes were rated more highly than programmes at home, even though they did not seem to yield significantly greater gains in income following return to Africa. These findings seemed generally to point towards the conclusion that if study abroad is a flawed device, study at home is even more flawed and that the great urgency for African higher education is to improve the service it offers to its own students.

However, the study as a whole falls short of a convincing assessment of the developmental impact of foreign study and its limitations on this central question serve to re-emphasise how difficult it is to establish development impact in a 'scientific' way. The method of the study was one of its weaknesses: it is questionable whether one can validly deduce societal impact from individuals' evaluations of their personal experiences. Furthermore, it has frequently been pointed out that answers to questions about foreign programmes of study can be conditioned by all sorts of cultural responses, particularly where these questions can amount, as they sometimes do, to a request to respondents to look a gift horse in the mouth (Latta 1979, Hurst 1983). A second fault in the study was that it lacked a theoretical basis and made little use of previous theoretical discussions of how education affects development. On the other hand, the study had the positive feature that it was initiated and carried through by African rather than western research interests. Thus it made a small step towards the take-over of evaluation work in the development field by the developing countries themselves which is often called for but so far little put into practice (cf Berg 1984).

An alternative approach to the assessment of development impact of overseas study is presented by Fry (1984), who examined correlations between the extent of study abroad in the mid-1960s

and the GNP growth in the 1970s in 84 developing countries. Fry based his analysis on a multivariate model which attempted to control for factors likely to be associated with overseas study as a determinant of growth. He found a positive correlation between overseas study and growth, but because of the weakness of the available data and the lack of a well-tested model he was cautious about this finding and about the value of general modelling of this type. Fry's tentativeness reflects the difficulty in deriving generally valid cause-and-effect relationships in this area and emphasises again the underdevelopment of research effort on the issues involved.

Third World students in Ireland

Irish interest in the issues surrounding foreign study is still relatively limited as Irish involvement in the international flow of students, either as a host or a sending country, is small, both in absolute and relative terms. As in most western countries, the flow of students into Ireland is greater than the flow of Irish students outward, and the greater part of the inward flow originates in Asia and Africa. But there is little public sense of the foreign student body as a significant presence, either welcome or unwelcome. Nor is there much thought about education in Ireland for Third World nationals as an item to be considered and assessed under the heading of development assistance, or indeed under the heading of foreign political or trade relations where it has occupied a good deal of attention in other countries. Thus we have not yet experienced the controversies on this issue that have occurred in the United States, Britain, France, Germany and the other major host nations, and we are even less aware of the controversies on foreign study in developing countries, even in those developing countries that have been the origin of our largest numbers of foreign students.

As in most western countries, the 1970s were the years of greatest increase in Third World student numbers in Ireland. Between 1971-72 and 1981-82, according to statistics assembled by the Irish Council for Overseas Students, the number of students from developing countries in full-time higher education in Ireland just about doubled from 450 to 910.¹ The rate of increase in Third World student numbers slowed down perceptibly during the early 1980s and the total was still under the 1,000 mark in 1984-85. Again as in most western countries, foreign student flows into Ireland are not directed or coordinated under any policy heading but operate under a loose interplay of supply and demand. At present, the majority of Third World students in Ireland are 'private' as far as the Irish authorities are concerned, though an unknown proportion may be sponsored by their home governments or other

agencies. About 7 percent of students from developing countries in Ireland are connected with development assistance programmes and a similarly small minority are connected with the four African countries which have priority status in the Irish aid programme.² For the majority who make up the private flow of Third World students into Ireland, only the broadest details are known about origins and fields of study.

In the early 1970s, South African students of Asian ethnic background accounted for nearly one-third of the developing country students in Ireland. Since the early 1970s, the South African representation has dropped steadily, particularly in the last 3-4 years, and at present is less than 5 percent of the total. Over the same period, the number of Malaysians has increased dramatically and these, at 24 percent of the total, now form the largest block of Third World students in Ireland.

After Malaysia, Nigeria provides the second biggest number of Third World students in Ireland. The total of Nigerian students in Ireland reached over 100 for a number of years in the late 1970s and early 1980s but since then has gone into decline. Indeed the decline in Nigerian students in Ireland, following as it has on the earlier decline in South Africans, reflects a general decline in the African share in the total Third World student body in Ireland and a large increase in the Asian share. The increase in Asians has been principally due to the already noted increase in the number of Malaysians but it has also been due to increased numbers from Hong Kong, Singapore, the Philippines and the Middle East. The declining share of African students seems to be at odds with the general worldwide trend in foreign study noted above where the African share has been increasing. However, we have had no investigation into the patterns of foreign student entry into Ireland, so it is difficult to draw conclusions on why the patterns have evolved as they have done.

In the early 1970s, two-thirds of the Third World students in Ireland were concentrated in one institution – the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) – where the great majority of students took undergraduate medical courses. Since the early 1970s, the number of foreign students in the RCSI has remained relatively stable but it has increased steadily in the university colleges and more recently has begun to make a mark in the Regional Technical Colleges and the Dublin Institute of Technology. By 1984-85, the RCSI share of Third World students in Ireland had fallen to one-third, while Trinity College and University College Dublin accounted for another third between them. About 10-11 percent was accounted for by the VEC-funded colleges (Regional Technical Colleges and the colleges of the Dublin Institute of Technology)

while the remainder was spread over University College Cork, University College Galway, Maynooth College and the two NIHES.

The early heavy concentration of Third World students in the RCSI is still reflected in the preponderance of medicine as a field of study for foreign students, particularly at undergraduate level where they account for over half the foreign student population (see Figure 1). The statistics on fields of study among foreign

Figure 1: Undergraduate and postgraduate foreign students in Ireland by fields of study, 1984-85

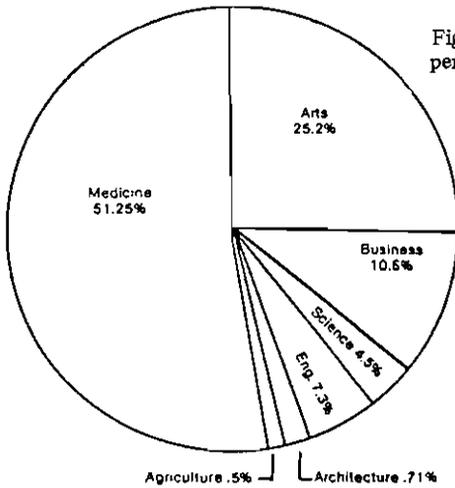


Fig. 1.A Pie Chart with undergraduate percentage in each subject group

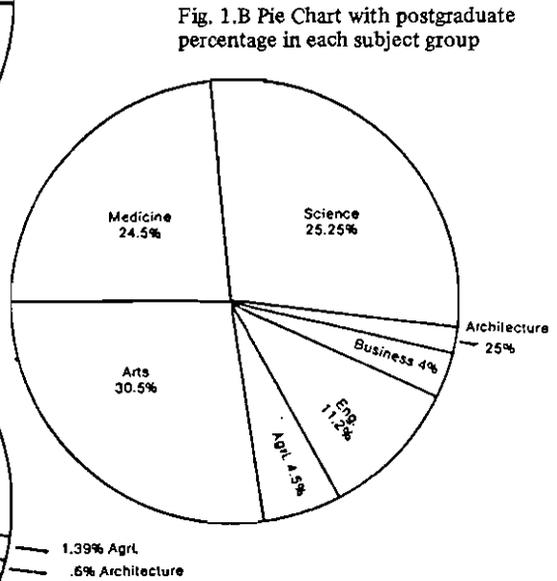


Fig. 1.B Pie Chart with postgraduate percentage in each subject group

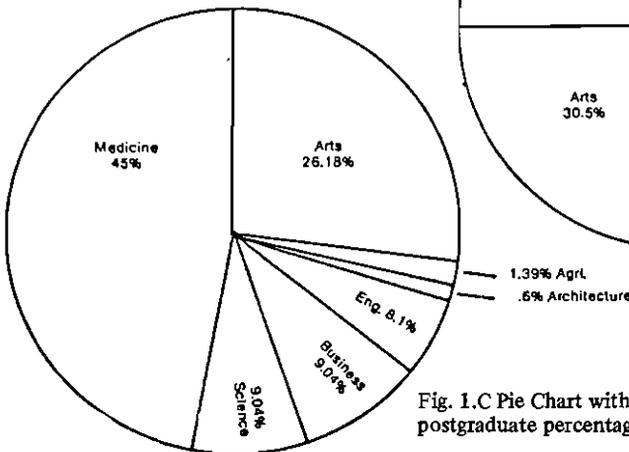


Fig. 1.C Pie Chart with undergraduate and postgraduate percentage in each group

Source: Reproduced from *Statistics of Overseas Students in Ireland 1984-85*, Irish Council for Overseas Students

students do not distinguish between those from developed and developing countries, so they are not fully informative on this issue. However, one would suspect that the emphasis on medicine holds for the Third World segment of the foreign student body and indeed may be even more marked than for students from developed countries.

The tendency for Third World students to concentrate in particular institutions in host countries, or even on particular departments within institutions, has been noted by Williams (1984) for Britain and often reflects deliberate decisions by those institutions to pursue the Third World student market. In Ireland, the RCSI is a case in point in that by charter it reserves two-thirds of its places for overseas students. However, the RCSI is also unique in Ireland in that while its degrees are fully recognised it receives no state subsidy and derives the bulk of its income from student fees. Its fee policy discriminates in favour of students from developing countries, in that fees for such students are generally about one-third lower than fees for students from developed countries (and among the latter the RCSI includes the oil-rich countries of the Middle East). Nevertheless, because its fees in aggregate are full-cost, the present fee for the pre-medical course ranges from £12,000 to £17,000 for foreign students (depending on country of origin). The corresponding fee in HEA-funded medical schools is in the region of £3,000-4,000 for non-EEC nationals and is under £1,500 for EEC nationals.

Questions and implications

Third World students are a relatively minor part of the higher education scene in Ireland and have attracted little attention in discussions of Irish development assistance. However, the numbers and the expenditure involved are significant and warrant greater attention. Because of increasing concerns with costs in higher education and with the financing of development assistance programmes, it seems likely that such attention may now emerge, though perhaps not in the spirit that one would wish. As in other countries, the key concerns now coming to the fore are, first of all, the question of the financial costs and benefits to the Irish higher education system represented by foreign students and, secondly (and perhaps very much as a lesser concern), the benefit to developing countries which may or may not arise from access for their students to Irish colleges and universities.

On the first issue, attitudes to foreign students on the part of the higher education authorities have changed over recent years, though without any of the public debate and controversy that has arisen in other countries. Since the early 1980s, publicly funded colleges in

Ireland have gradually increased fee surcharges for non-EEC nationals so that the element of hidden subsidy provided to foreign students has been steadily eroded. Indeed, there are signs that some colleges may soon look to foreign students as a source of additional revenue so that fees for those students in the future may be pitched above rather than below marginal costs (see, e.g., statement by the President of University College, Dublin, *The Irish Times*, July 10, 1987).

Surcharges already introduced seem to have contributed to a levelling off of the previously rising numbers of Third World students in Ireland and have added especially to the difficulties for poorer foreign students in gaining access to Irish higher education. In Ireland, in contrast with some other countries, the Bilateral Aid programme has not attempted to compensate for this trend by increasing the number of fellowships for Third World students wishing to study in Ireland, and this may be due partly to a lack of funds and partly to a lack of enthusiasm on policy grounds for using further development assistance funds in this way. Consequently, the loss of hidden subsidy amounts to a net loss to development assistance, even though it is rarely thought of in those terms.

It is a reflection of the lack of consideration of this issue in Ireland up to now that we have little idea of what the emerging trends are or what their consequences might be from a development point of view. There has been no analysis of what study in Ireland has meant for Third World students, what the economics of it have been from their point of view, what kind of students have come, why they have come, what benefits they have gained, what their career paths have been following graduation (in particular, how many have returned to work in their home countries) and what developmental impact, if any, their period of foreign study has yielded for their home countries. Neither have we any systematic information on the effects or role of foreign students in Irish colleges or on the economic costs and benefits, much less the educational costs and benefits, involved. Current changes in the approach to foreign students gives some urgency to the need for informed answers to these questions. Before we alter or dismantle what has been built up in the past we need to understand what is involved and base decisions not only on the financial needs of Irish higher education but on a broad policy approach which would take into account our commitment to development assistance for poorer countries.

Footnotes

1. These figures relate only to recognised degree- or diploma-awarding institutions, that is, the mainstream higher education institutions. They exclude institutions such as seminaries and houses of religious formation, and semi-state or other commercial organisations

which provide technical training on a commercial basis to developing country personnel. The figures presented here also exclude students from the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries who formed approximately one-third of the total of foreign students in Ireland in 1984-85 but who are outside the concern of the present paper (students from the United States are the largest single foreign student group in Ireland, with Malaysian students in second place).

2. In 1986, 7.5 percent of Ireland's Bilateral Aid expenditure was devoted to fellowships and courses for Third World students in Ireland, the greater part of it concentrated on a small number of specially designed programmes, such as the postgraduate programme in Engineering Hydrology in University College, Galway, and the Systems Development Programme in Trinity College, Dublin. Some of this support is also provided for short training courses run by semi-state commercial bodies such as Bord na Mona and Bord Baine.

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