

Education Staff and Students under Neoliberal Pressure: a British–German Comparison

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This paper aims to compare the way in which neo-liberal trends are impacting upon the attitudes and values of staff and students in the United Kingdom and Germany. The research is based upon qualitative and quantitative data from a dozen university institutions in each country, where individual interviews were conducted with staff, and questionnaires were completed both by them and by their students. In both countries many current trends are not deeply accepted or internalised by staff. There are startling differences in student satisfaction, with the British students expressing much more positive attitudes than the Germans. However, the German staff care profoundly about teaching and about their human relationship with their students (though the students themselves are often unaware of this). The British academics feel much more hard-worked, underpaid and downwardly mobile in social terms than their German counterparts. Though in many respects the same kind of re-structuring is taking place in each system, there is only partial convergence in attitudes and values between the German and British respondents in this study. It is concluded that the supposed effects of academic capitalism may have been over-estimated and are mitigated by specific historical traditions, and by the varieties of capitalism that pertain in each system.

1 Problem Formulation

The restructuring of higher education systems according to market force principles has become an almost universal trend in Western countries. The aim of the present paper is to investigate whether attitudes and values among British and German staff and students are changing in response to financial stringency and neoliberal influences in higher education. Implementation of neo-liberal concepts brings about deregulation of markets, the loosening or lifting of cross-border controls and the removal of government-imposed restrictions in order to create an open borderless world economy leading to international economic integration (see *Bauman 1998, p. 15–16*). In a higher education system strongly characterised by neo-liberalism, institutions are disciplined by competition, resulting in choice and institutional differentiation. Funding that had once been a social respon-

sibility assumed by the state becomes increasingly privatised. This paradigm is increasingly being transferred to sectors of public life, including schools and universities, where the educational *status quo* of traditional values is being influenced by the marketized regime of massification, evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance, all taking place within the context of falling state funding for higher education. Germany (FRG) and the United Kingdom (UK) could be regarded as positioning themselves at different points along a developmental continuum from 'more marketized' (UK) to 'less marketized' (FRG).

The role attributed to the state in a neo-liberal climate is particularly important for a study in comparative higher education. Indeed *Slaughter and Leslie (1997, p. 24 and p. 61)* in their study of academic capitalism note that 'system effects' can be so powerful that higher education policies in access, curriculum and research autonomy converge. They state that the public universities of most Westernised countries are moving towards academic capitalism, 'pushed and pulled by the same global forces at work in the English speaking countries'. In this case, the historical product of a national education system would effectively cease to have a function in the new order. *Scholte (2000)* believes that the traditional model of the sovereign state as answering to no higher authority is outmoded, and that it will become 'post-sovereign'. If he is correct, this would imply a convergence in educational structures and cultures, and a move towards greater homogeneity.

By contrast, scholars such as *Beck (2000, p. 104 and p. 108)* and *Fisher and Rubenson (1998, p. 79)* claim that the state is indispensable not just for geopolitical reasons but also to guarantee basic rights, and give political shape to the process of globalization by helping to regulate it internationally. They believe that a strong state is needed if for no other reason than to shift resources away from welfare and free the market. Neither does *Green (1997)* support the notion of convergence. He believes that there is a double movement of cultural particularisms and dominant cultures in the West which 'produces an international veneer of cultural homogenisation but ... an infinity of cultural hybrids and mixes'. He argues that globalization hinges on the present and future role of the nation state as a political entity, and that '[n]ation states are the very building blocks of international governance' (*Green 1997, p. 163 and p. 165*).

The present paper is based on the assumption that the implementation of market forces within universities has certain predictable effects within a system, such as movement towards privatisation, quality assurance and executive leadership. It will examine to what

extent academics accept these developments; it will also explore staff-student relationships, their attitudes towards the pursuit of knowledge within the present context, and their experience of institutional culture. If the values are converging, then similar attitudes will be expressed in each system; if this is not the case, then it will be necessary to account for why differences have arisen. This may involve weighing up the relative importance of neo-liberalism and the nation state. The domains to be studied in the present paper will be as follows: human relationships (the unity of teachers and learners), unity of research and teaching, liberal education and materialism, satisfaction levels for both students and staff, executive power and entrepreneurialism.

2 Approach and Methodology

The research upon which this paper is based was both quantitative and qualitative. The author conducted interviews with staff in twelve higher education institutions in the UK and twelve in the Federal Republic of Germany, and during the course of these interviews, also asked the staff to fill in questionnaires. Students too were given questionnaires, normally distributed by the researcher personally during or at the end of class so as to minimise non-response. Pilot studies indicated that approaching them individually with envelopes for them to return the questionnaires gave such poor results as to be unviable. The personal approach was also important for staff, as it enabled the researcher to select a sample, contact the people and set up appointments with them. This was a labour-intensive mode of work, but proceeding in this way did minimise non-response rates. These can be very considerable in academe, as the Carnegie study of the academic profession (see *Enders/Teichler 1996*) demonstrated, in which the German response rate was 28 %. In the present study, there were 87 staff in the UK sample, and 82 staff in the German sample together with 1,489 students in the UK and 986 in Germany; the gender balance among the students was three quarters female and just under one quarter male in each country (some students did not state their gender). No member of staff who was requested to give an interview refused to do so, but they did sometimes refuse to fill in the associated questionnaire. Since a sample of 90 was targeted in each country, the response rates were 96 % in the UK and 91 % in the FRG for those who both underwent interview and completed the questionnaire.

The research was basically targeted on staff and students in Schools or Faculties of Education. Three quarters of the students in each country were doing programmes relating to teaching, and one quarter were doing Education-related degrees for a variety of other career outlets (e.g. administration, community work or in Germany the profession

of 'social pedagogy'). The background of the staff was varied: there were many high-status academics with international reputations in their fields. The questionnaires consisted mostly of statements that were analysed by calculating frequencies and percentages; the categories of strongly agree/agree and disagree/strongly disagree have usually been collapsed for ease of reporting in the present paper. They contained a number of 'mirror questions' with similar or equivalent wording to discover staff and students' perceptions of each other or of a common phenomenon; the two parties were considered as part of a role set (*Biddle/Thomas 1966*). The fact that the project was conducted in Schools or Faculties of Education needs to be kept in mind when interpreting the results. Disciplines like Physics or Business Studies might have a different profile.

3 The Unity of Teachers and Learners

An ideology for universities was consciously articulated both in nineteenth century Britain and Germany, when new institutions such as the Catholic University of Ireland (later to become University College Dublin) were founded by Paul Cullen and John Henry Newman; and the University of Berlin by Wilhelm von Humboldt and his colleagues (*see Anrich 1956*). The idea of a community of scholars occurs in both Britain and Germany though in different ways. In the former, it arises from the collegial, originally monastic, traditions at the most prestigious universities (e.g. Oxford and Cambridge), and has become generalised as an ideal extending beyond these higher education institutions (*Rothblatt 1968*). Within the Humboldtian ethos, professors and students were to be regarded as equal vis-à-vis knowledge, because it can never be 'possessed' and no-one has a monopoly of it ('Beide sind für die Wissenschaft da.'). This is an essentially democratic concept, and a manifestation of the concept of the 'unity of teachers and learners' that underlies the traditional German university ethos (*see Schelsky 1963*). *Trow (1974, p. 57)* claims that the massification of higher education entails '...a loss of a close apprenticeship relationship between faculty members and students'. The following questions were therefore posed:

To what extent are human relationships important to students and staff within their higher education institutions?

How is academic engagement embedded within the human framework?

3.1 Human relationships in academia

Table 1 shows that the relationship is more important to the staff than to the students themselves, and the British students feel much more strongly than their German counterparts that their lecturers make an effort in human terms. Whereas high percentages of staff in both countries claim that the students consult them about personal problems, over half the German students actually deny that they *do* so. It is clear that the German academics do care about their students: 86 % of them regard the relationship as 'very important'.¹ Yet almost half of the students disagree that the staff 'try to achieve a good relationship' with them. The goodwill of the teachers is not being effectively communicated to the learners in Germany.

Table 1: *Unity of Teachers and Learners*

Statement	Country	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Chi-square
Students: A good interpersonal relationship with my lecturers is very important to me	UK	67.1	27.0	5.9	P = .000
	FRG	37.2	34.8	28.0	
Staff: The human side of the relationship is very important to me	UK	97.7	1.1	1.1	P = .020
	FRG	86.3	10.0	3.8	
Students: Most lecturers try to achieve a good interpersonal relationship with students	UK	68.8	23.8	7.4	P = .000
	FRG	19.6	33.2	47.2	
Students: I would never consult lecturers about personal problems	UK	36.0	29.2	34.8	P = .000
	FRG	57.0	19.6	23.4	
Staff: My students sometimes tell me their personal problems	UK	92.0	3.4	4.6	P = .003
	FRG	71.6	12.3	16.0	

3.2 Academic Engagement within the Human Framework

Table 2 further explores staff and student perceptions of their role relationship. Surprisingly, it is the British students who agree more strongly than the Germans that they and

¹ For ease of communication within the prose report and discussion, the numbers in the tables have been rounded up or down when greater or less than 0.5 per cent.

their lecturers are 'joint seekers after knowledge', although this typically Humboldtian item might have been expected to appeal more to Humboldt's compatriots. Somewhat more of the German students disagree that they have sufficient access to their teachers when they need it academically, and just over half, compared with three quarters of the British students endorse the statement that the university is a good place to get to know people academically like themselves. This item was intended to tap perceptions of the university as a community.

Table 2: Academic Engagement within the Human Framework

Statement	Country	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Chi-square
I have ready access to my university teachers when I want to discuss my academic work	UK	64.4	26.6	9.0	P = .011
	FRG	60.6	26.5	12.8	
Lecturers and students are joint seekers after knowledge	UK	57.0	34.1	8.9	P = .000
	FRG	21.0	37.3	41.7	
The University is a good place to get to know people who are similar to me	UK	75.1	19.3	5.6	P = .000
	FRG	51.1	30.8	18.1	

4 Unity of Research and Teaching

Germany featured the research university long before it was widely accepted in the UK, and part of the Humboldtian ideology is the 'unity of research and teaching' under which there is an expectation that the professors will use the results of their research directly for teaching purposes. *Gellert (1993, p. 10)* points out that German first degree students are expected to master their subjects fully, 'and in the end to be qualified to engage in research', so the traditional programme is intended to include an induction into research. Professors are traditionally very concerned to ensure the reproduction of the academic profession ('wissenschaftlicher Nachwuchs') by stimulating research so that there will be sufficient younger staff to replace them when the time comes. Across the channel in the British Isles, *Newman (1852, p. VII)* actually began by disregarding research as a core task of the university, but later saw that no hard and fast demarcation line could be drawn between research and teaching.

In a more marketized world, it may no longer be possible to induct students into the principles and ethos of research. Although not all students in the present study were

aiming at Qualified Teacher Status, those who were had to follow statutory curricula according to which most of their time had to be spent in school experience rather than at university. In fact, *Wilkin (1996, p. 146)* states that '...for the [UK] Thatcher government, theory within [teacher] training creates inefficiency': she argues that for the neo-liberal reformer, the theorist interrupts the market relationship between the teacher who actually produces teaching and the consumer (student). This anti-theoretical bias reduces the opportunity for higher education institutions to influence teacher trainees, and may well direct British students' attention away from any interest in research and in the more theoretical aspects of their subjects. In view of these considerations, the question was therefore posed:

How positive are the students' attitudes towards research?

Because the German university was originally the 'research university', it may come as something of a surprise to find from table 3 that significantly higher percentages of the UK than of the German students believe that their course gives them an induction into research, would like to go on to some form of higher study and would be attracted by the academic profession themselves. High proportions in both countries are very interested in their subject. Over 60 % of the German students (but only 11 % of the British) believe that their lecturers are more interested in their research than in their teaching, though this does not chime with the reality: more *British* staff actually agree that research is more important to them than teaching (perhaps encouraged in this priority by the state-sponsored Research Assessment Exercise), but this is just in comparison with their German counterparts. The majority of the staff *rejected* the idea that research takes precedence over teaching, and this was especially true in Germany. Yet there are reservations on the part of the British staff about the academic balance of their course programmes. When they were posed a country-specific statement (not tabulated), 'Sometimes I think that our students are not being sufficiently challenged intellectually', almost 54 % agreed, and 45 % agreed that there was '[T]oo little academic input in British teacher training course'.

Table 3: Attitudes towards Research

Statement	Country	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Chi-square
Students: My course provides me with an induction to research	UK	43.4	33.4	23.2	P = .004
	FRG	39.9	30.9	29.2	
Students: Later on, I would like to do a doctorate or some form of research	UK	31.0	24.9	44.0	P = .000
	FRG	22.9	24.6	52.5	
Students: My lecturers are more interested in their research than in their teaching	UK	11.3	27.1	61.6	P = .000
	FRG	61.9	30.4	7.7	
Staff: Research is more important to me than teaching	UK	23.0	6.9	70.1	P = .000
	FRG	16.3	32.5	51.3	
Students: I would like to become a University lecturer myself	UK	21.5	22.1	56.4	P = .000
	FRG	9.6	16.7	73.7	
Students: I am very interested in my subject	UK	86.5	11.8	1.7	P = .000
	FRG	80.1	16.0	3.9	

5 Liberal Education and Instrumentalism

In the traditional approach to higher education, both the Germans and the British have had reservations about utilitarianism as the exclusive aim of higher education. *Newman (1852, p. 93)* stated: 'knowledge is a state or condition of mind; ... there is a knowledge which is desirable though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labour'. *Gellert (1993, p. 35)* claims that in England the intellectual function of learning 'always remained embedded in the broader function of improving a person's personality'. The German university was more concerned with the intellectual, and the University of Berlin was the first in the world where research and not just instruction was regarded as a primary duty of its professors (*Liedmann 1993*). Yet the intellectual orientation was mitigated by a German concern for 'Bildung'. This implies the forming of the inner person by the cultural and educational environment in which 'the true aim of man ... is the highest and best proportional development of all his capacities in order to form a wholeness of himself' (*Cowan 1963, p. 142*).

However, in a higher education system subject to the influence of market forces, the primary purpose may shift from the promotion of knowledge to that of serving the economy. The university is expected to become an engine of wealth generation rather than a means of searching for 'truth'. In the post-modern concept truth value is regarded as contestable and may be superseded by the criterion of social usefulness (Henkel 1999, p. 13; Välimaa 1999, p. 24). Lyotard (1984) has claimed that the status of knowledge changes as universities enter the post-industrial world: knowledge is no longer an indispensable element for training the mind, and is being subordinated to the principle of performativity, with the result that whole systems become dedicated to performative behaviour (Cowen 1996). Under these concepts, one could expect student attitudes to be instrumentalised, and career expectations to become more materialistic. Teacher education is particularly susceptible to change in this direction because of necessity it involves *doing* (performance) as well as *knowing*. In the light of these considerations, questions may be posed as follows:

What is the relative importance attributed by students and staff to intellectual and holistic personal development?

In what measure do students manifest a materialistic attitude towards their course?

5.1 Intellectual and personal education

Table 4 shows that greater proportions of both the British staff and students agree that the predominant purpose of the university is to develop them intellectually. A significantly higher percentage of the UK than of the German students find their course stimulating and challenging. Greater proportions of both German staff and students expect *above all* that it should promote their human development. So there is evidence in this question cluster that while personal development is important to the majority of students, especially in the FRG, it is the British (both staff and students) who have a more intellectual orientation (though this begs the question of what is meant by the concept of 'knowledge' – to be discussed later).

Table 4: Attitudes towards Personal and Intellectual Development

Statement	Country	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Chi-square
Students: University exists predominantly in order to develop me intellectually rather than emotionally	UK	39.5	32.3	28.1	P = .000
	FRG	23.5	28.9	47.7	
Staff: The university exists to develop the students intellectually, rather than emotionally or personally	UK	35.6	8.0	56.3	P = .224
	FRG	26.3	15.0	58.8	
Students: What I expect above all from the university is that it should promote my human development	UK	50.7	38.6	10.7	P = .000
	FRG	58.2	27.9	13.8	
Staff: What I expect of the university above all is that it should promote the personal development of the students	UK	17.4	15.1	67.4	P = .000
	FRG	48.1	30.9	21.0	
Students: I find my course intellectually stimulating and challenging	UK	77.4	16.8	5.9	P = .000
	FRG	55.5	29.9	14.6	

5.2 Materialist values

In the present survey (table 5), the British students are more materialistically oriented than their continental counterparts: they are much keener to earn substantial salaries when they start work, and 43 % are anxious to quit the university and start earning. The Germans, on the other hand, manifest a greater endorsement of socially useful work: 80 % of them, compared with 74 % of the British respondents rate it as important or very important.

Table 5: Instrumental Orientation of Students

Statement	Country	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Chi-square
It is very important to me to earn a substantial salary later on when I get a job	UK	49.4	32.3	18.3	P = .000
	FRG	34.5	38.8	26.8	
It is important to me, when I get a job, to do work which will be useful to the community	UK	73.9	20.7	5.3	P = .001
	FRG	80.4	15.8	3.8	
I can't wait to leave university and earn money	UK	43.4	32.6	24.0	P = .000
	FRG	30.1	24.7	45.2	

6 Satisfaction Levels in Staff and Students

In a system subject to market forces, students are seen as clients who are allowed to choose their institutions, informed and attracted by league tables assessing quality of teaching and research. *Barnes (1999, p. 188)* suggests that in a market system, students may find that their needs are taken far more seriously. In the United States of America which often acts as a model for European reforms, much attention and money goes into making universities pleasant places to live and work, and ensuring that the quality of life is agreeable. A positive experience validates the higher education institutions' claim to *alumni* support after the students have left, and further strengthens the market model by helping to collect money from private sources and thus reduce dependency on the state when hard money goes soft (*Clark 2004, p. 67*). Satisfaction levels with their higher education institution will obviously be important in coaxing them to make donations to their *alma mater*, once they are launched upon their careers. In view of these considerations, the following question may be posed:

How satisfied are the students with their courses?

6.1 Student satisfaction with course

As table 6 shows, students in UK are much more satisfied with their higher education than those in Germany. Almost 92% of them rate their course 'Good' to 'Very Good' compared with 62% of the Germans. It looks as if the more client-centred system is providing more satisfaction to its stakeholders.

Table 6: Summative Judgement of Student Satisfaction

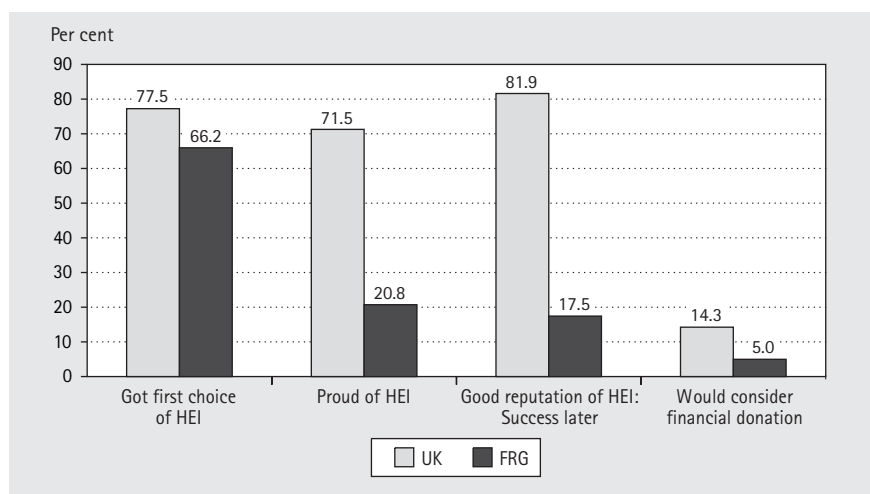
How would you rate your course?	UK	FRG
Very good	41.4	2.5
Good	50.2	59.8
Moderate	7.4	33.0
Not very good	0.6	2.6
Unsatisfactory	0.4	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0

On open-ended questions, the German students felt that there was an enormous deficit of practice in their programme, and wanted better relationships with the schools:

- Practice, practice, practice; not every student is an academic *in spe*.
- Lecturers should enjoy more practice in the schools and do six months teaching there every few years.
- There should be closer cooperation between the university and the schools.

In figure 1 below, it is clear that more British than German students were able to access their first choice of university, were proud of it and thought that its good name would help them to build success later in life. Despite this high British figure, only 14 % of the UK students would be prepared to make a donation to their *alma mater*. It is clear that in the UK, let alone in Germany, much remains to be done to associate institutional loyalty with a culture of giving on the American model.

Figure 1: Students' Enthusiasm for their Universities



6.2 Staff Satisfaction

Market forces impact upon staff as well as students, and it is appropriate to enquire into staff levels of satisfaction too. The question may be posed:

Is there an inverse relationship between student and staff satisfaction?

Figure 2 below shows that the British academics are much more discontented with their salaries and status than the Germans. They have a stronger conviction that they deserve high status, but that they are underpaid for the work that they do.

Figure 2: Perceptions of Status among the Academics

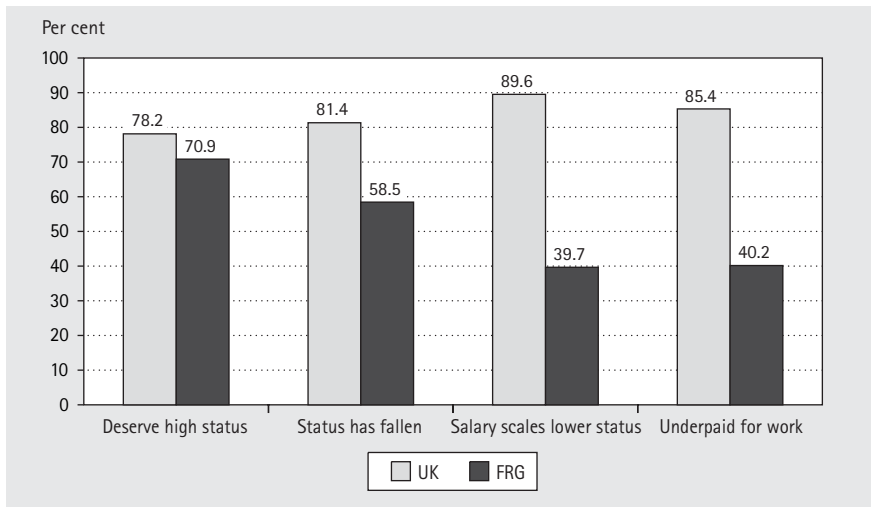


Figure 3 shows that the British feel more hard-worked, more stressed and more burdened by the demands of quality assurance (QA) and their administration than their German counterparts.

Figure 3: Feelings about Work

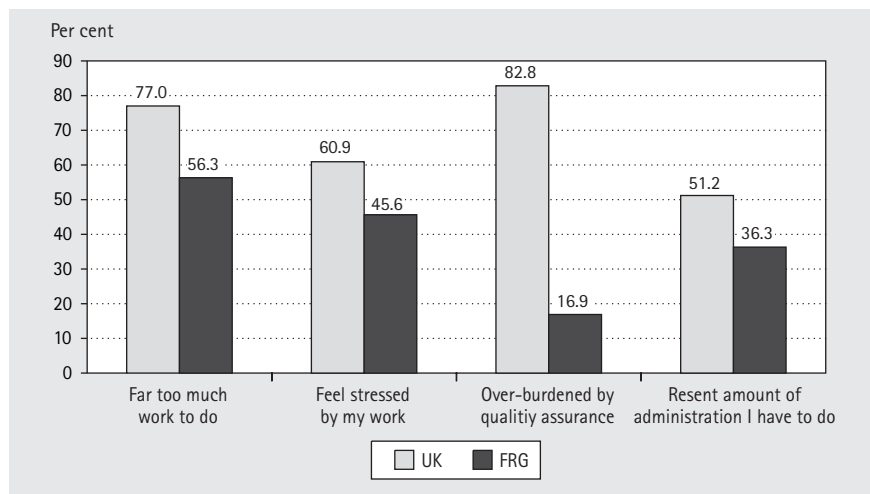
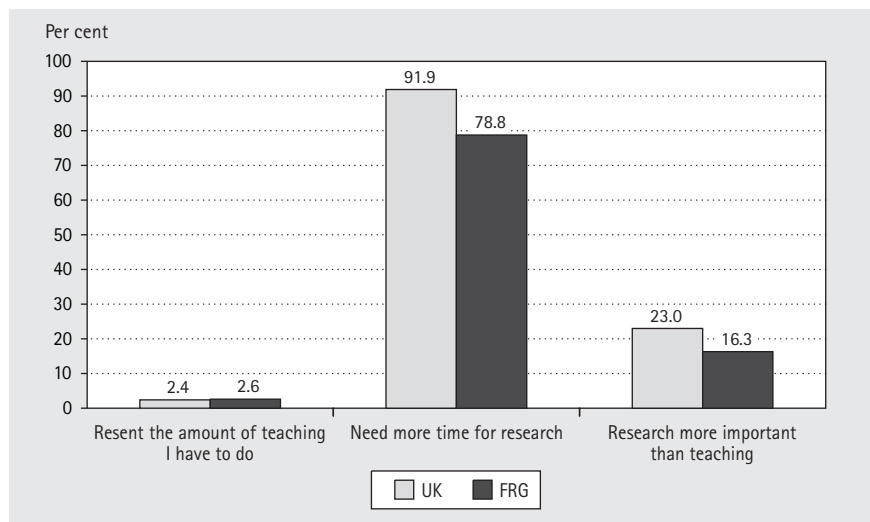


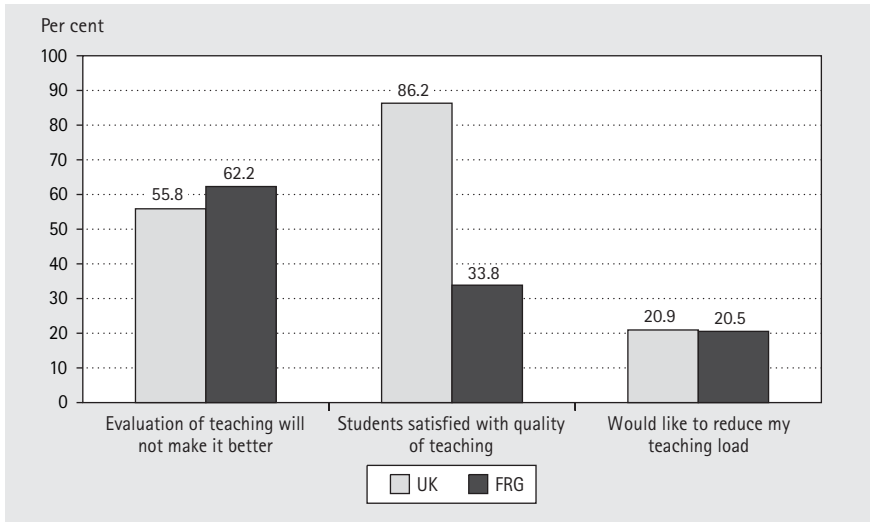
Figure 4 shows that very few academics in either system actually resent teaching, but the British feel that they need more time for research, and to a slightly greater extent than the Germans in the sample, they claim that research is more important to them than teaching.

Figure 4: Attitudes towards Core Academic Tasks



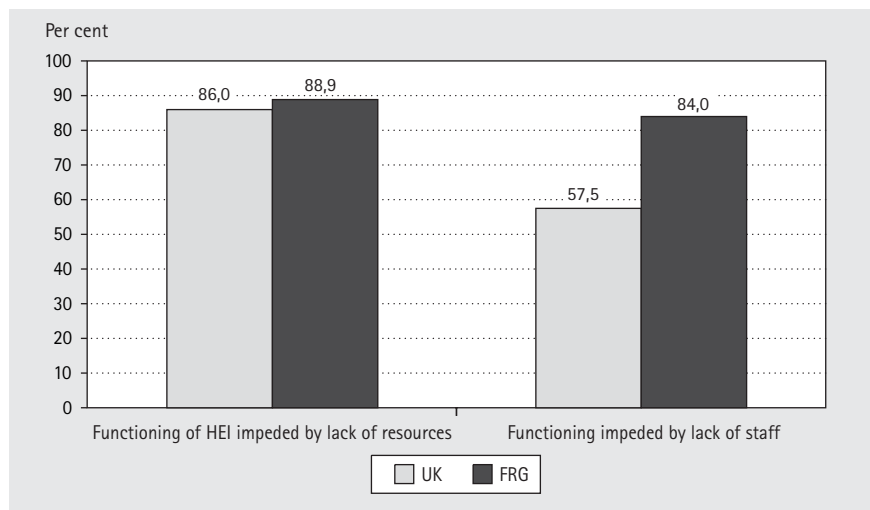
There is a strong commitment to teaching in both systems: only one fifth in each country would wish to do any less of it. However, the British are more deeply convinced than their continental counterparts that their students are satisfied with teaching quality. Especially on the German side there is scepticism about the evaluation of teaching as a means of improvement (figure 5).

Figure 5: Attitudes towards Teaching



Academics in both countries (> 86 %) believe that the good functioning of their higher education institutions is impeded by lack of financial resources, and particularly in Germany, there is felt to be a lack of sufficient academic staff.

Figure 6: Staff Perception of Resource Deprivation



In summary then, the answer to the last question seems to be as follows: the British students are in many respects more satisfied than their German counterparts, but the opposite is the case with the British staff. In respect of status, salary, overwork, stress and QA overload plus administrative burden, the British university teachers are much less satisfied than the Germans. The conclusion may be drawn that in the more marketized system, there is indeed an inverse relationship between staff and student satisfaction. Reasons why this might be so will be discussed in the conclusion.

7 Executive Power and Entrepreneurialism

Even in a system such as the British which is supposed to rely less on state funding, there is still an overwhelming perception of lack of resources. *Clark (1998, p. 37)* is well aware that 'central government in Britain has become an undependable university patron, often a hostile one', and waiting for the government to come up with increased resources is seen as an option 'only by those who [do] not face reality'. How to cope with this situation? In the face of external threat, managers need to be able to act swiftly: according to *Clark (1998, p. 5)* 'They need to become quicker, more flexible and especially more focused in reaction to expanding and changing demands. ... A strengthened steering core becomes a necessity'. Clark is a true believer in the concept of academic entrepreneurialism, and is convinced that this approach need not necessarily involve the sacrifice of

core academic values. But he emphasises that ideas need to acquire a social base of behaviour: culture is real when it is embodied (Clark 2004, p. 90). In Education-type disciplines, it may be difficult to activate such strategies, but because entrepreneurial values are important in market terms, it is necessary to investigate the attitudes of the staff in our sample towards them. The question may be posed:

How do the academics in this present sample rate entrepreneurial activity and executive power in relation to their job?

As table 7 shows, more Germans than British felt that the good functioning of the higher education institution was impeded by excessive state-sponsored interference (UK 69% : FRG 89%), and a greater proportion of German academics too were prepared to concede that their higher education institution should act more commercially and more like an enterprise (UK 14% : FRG 27%). The German staff more than the British felt that there was too much state-sponsored interference in higher education, and were more prepared to move towards entrepreneurial values. In fact, 70% of the British expressed dismay at further attempts to privatise universities, whereas the Germans were more sanguine about it. Over 60% of British academics believed that their higher education institutions needed to stand up to the government more than at present. In Germany, there was more support than in the UK for the exercise of executive power in terms of increased influence of university President and Deans vis-à-vis academic colleagues. The general trend emerging from these questions is that a moderate percentage of German staff in the sample are prepared to envisage a more executive and entrepreneurial style in the finance and running of universities whereas many of the British feel that this has already gone far enough. However, the majority in both countries do *not* want their higher education institutions to become more entrepreneurial. In the end, a clear majority of people in both systems disagree with making universities more entrepreneurial, the British even more intensely than the Germans. This may be because the UK respondents have more experience of what it is like, and also because of the acrimonious relationship that prevailed between academe and government, especially under the Thatcher regime. Entrepreneurial values and approval of executive power are not deeply embedded in their outlook.

Table 7: UK and FRG Academics' Perceptions of the State's Role in Higher Education

Statement	Country	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Chi-square
The good functioning of our higher education institution is impeded by excessive state-sponsored interference	UK	69.0	12.6	18.4	P = .003
	FRG	88.9	7.4	3.7	
My higher education institution should act much more commercially and more like an enterprise	UK	13.8	8.0	78.2	P = .042
	FRG	27.2	12.3	60.5	
The whole concept of privatising universities fills me with dismay	UK	70.1	11.5	18.4	P = .008
	FRG	21.8	20.5	57.7	
Our institution needs to stand up to the government more than it does at present	UK	60.9	19.5	19.5	P = .008
	FRG	41.6	16.9	41.6	
Our Vice-Chancellor/President needs more power vis-à-vis the academic colleagues	UK	5.7	20.7	73.7	P = .004
	FRG	23.5	13.6	63.0	
Our Deans need more power vis-à-vis the academic colleagues	UK	8.1	22.1	69.8	P = .001
	FRG	32.1	14.8	53.1	

8 Conclusion

In the introduction to this paper, there was a discussion of whether neo-liberal forces had made the nation state *passé*. Now we need to consider the relative importance of national and global factors in the present project. The research results show many cross-national differences between student groups and between university teachers. It is clear that the notion of *convergence* in the direction of market forces cannot be sustained from the data, though there are some underlying developments that may promote it in the medium term. Examples would be the Bologna Process associated with the European Union, and the fact that there are new salary scales and conditions of service in Germany that may eventually depress academics' status. There is a certain existing convergence in the fact that many British staff in the present study wanted to wind back privatisation and executive power, whereas the German staff were prepared to move some distance towards them.

8.1 Attitudes of German students

In many respects, the German students manifested more negative attitudes than their British counterparts. One national factor that certainly contributes to this is class size, but the high staff-student ratios are not necessarily due to neo-liberalism in higher education. The reasons for class size in Germany are predominantly associated with country-specific factors: a constitutional guarantee in Article 12 of the Basic Law that all Germans have the right to free choice of career, place of work and *place of education*; and also the admissions regulations due to a legal judgement of the 1970s by which the institutions have to exhaust their existing capacity before they can impose admissions restrictions (*numerus clausus*).

The FRG students' sense of institutional loyalty and enjoyment of personal relations with their teachers is very weakly developed, and there are a number of reasons why it would be desirable to develop it. First, it would be good to know that they felt happy and well-taught within their universities; and it would be good for university teachers' morale too if more of them could honestly believe that the students were satisfied with teaching. Secondly, if *Clark (1998 and 2004)* is right about the need to plug the growing hole in state funding, then there is also a need to develop closer relationships with students in order to make them donating alumni. Some observers might seek to use the fact that German students are on average older than British students as a way of explaining their more distant attitudes towards their academic staff, but it must not be forgotten that *alumni* bodies consist of people of all ages, and that wealth often goes with advancing age, so the age of the student body is not in itself a sufficient or satisfactory explanation for indifference towards an higher education institution. The Seventh Amendment to the Federal Framework Act now makes it possible for institutions to select up to 60 % of their intake, and it is hoped by the Federal Ministry that higher education institutions will use this to create a stronger identification between students and their institutions.

The third reason why it would be desirable to improve the relationship between FRG students and their universities relates to democracy. *Ahier et al. (2003)* found in their British-based study, 'Graduate Citizens?', a strong sense of engagement between students and lecturers which they term 'sociality', and regard as important for democratic citizenship. A common mode of sociality structures the collegiate space of the university, and leads to a mutuality influenced by principles of fairness, responsibility, respect and altruism (*Ahier et al. 2003, pp. 137*). They warn that this is endangered by the enterprise culture and privatised calculation in which the education system is being re-shaped to

reinforce individualistic instrumentalism and the dismantling of social citizenship (Ahier *et al.* 2003, pp. 165). In the present study it should be recalled that the British students were more materialistic and less idealistic than the German students so Ahier's warning applies to them also. In a more marketized country like the UK, it may be more difficult to reconcile entrepreneurialism with what Clark (2004) calls 'core academic values'. However, the fact that the attitudes of the German staff were so positive towards teaching and towards the students as human beings constitutes a good basis for the increase of sociality, the cultivation of democratic citizenship and the achievement of student satisfaction – if organisation and financial conditions could be improved.

8.2 Attitudes to knowledge

British students in the present study seem to be keener on research, on further study and on becoming academics themselves. The attitudes of the students towards further study and research need to be considered in the light of possible epistemological differences in the course programmes. A comparison of the syllabuses, examinations and structures in the two countries leads one to speculate that perhaps the British students are being exposed to a Mode 2 (applied/experiential) rather than a Mode 1 (theoretical/scientific) type of knowledge (Gibbons *et al.* 1994). This too is an aspect of marketization. Knowledge has to be marketable, and Mode 2 is characterised by quality control which emphasises context- and use-dependence, resulting from the parallel expansion of knowledge producers in society. This more practical orientation may be the reason why attitudes towards study and research do not necessarily become more negative in a more marketized system. Mode 2 is less theoretical but may also be more motivational to students, and when the German system moves to a BA/MA structure it may also undergo some epistemological changes that will bring it closer to Mode 2. National curricular tradition thus seems to be important in supporting the *type* of knowledge mediated within the higher education system, and that mode of knowledge can be conceptually linked with marketization. But there will be a medium-term convergence between the British and the German situations through the influence of the EU Bologna Convention and its successors.

8.3 Negativity of British staff

There is no gainsaying the fact that in some respects, the British academics in the present study seem to be suffering more than their German counterparts, partly as the result of living in a system where pay is low, stress is high, and much energy is consumed in coping with an onerous quality assurance regime and unsatisfactory administrative workings

within the higher education institutions. The most recent quality assurance [teaching] inspections cost £ 250 million, and involved 2,904 review visits, during which the inspectors found only 16 cases (0.5 %) where departments were not meeting their own criteria (Baty 2004). These judgements were not used to cut or add funding, though they did inform prestige judgements and league tables. Clark (2004, p. 181) castigates the British approach for its 'dirigiste tendency' and the 'bitter adversarial relationship' that it has created between government and universities, in which 'the HEIs seek to "game" the [research] assessment to get high scores, and funding bodies reciprocate by announcing belatedly that they will not pay for all that grade inflation and change the rules after the game is played'. He asserts that state-established blockages involve efforts to steer all universities by enforced performance budgeting in which 'no good deed goes unpunished', and incentives turn into punishments for three out of four institutions (Clark 2004, p. 173). This too is a national factor, and contrasts with Germany where quality assurance is done in a much less centralised way.

8.4 Why are German academics less disaffected than British counterparts?

In academe the German response to the market force 'imperative' has been slower than the British, less acrimonious and less centralist in implementation. The German system has many defences against centralism of the type which has made the relationship between academe and government so bitter in the UK. Whereas the British government from Thatcher onwards moved sharply from consensus towards conviction politics, the German government was slower to abandon the social democratic market model which was established in the post-Second World War period under Ludwig Erhard, and which aimed to 'combine prosperity with entrepreneurial opportunity' in a system that 'could not be exploited by centralist political forces' (Lewis 2001, p. 119). A system of checks and balances exists, based upon federalism, and the rule of law enshrines a commitment to freedom in the Basic Law: Article 5 (3) explicitly protects academic freedom and teaching. Whereas Germany maintained a broad continuity, the UK under Thatcherism actually experienced a *break* with post-Second World War consensus making it more prone to full-blown neo-liberalism. The stability and longevity of the German model provided the basis for resistance to a purely neo-liberal strategy and made a break along neo-liberal lines unlikely. There was no 'Kohlism' to equate to Thatcherism, thus no disruption of German regulation and continuity. By contrast, the Thatcherite 'revolution', faced with a long-term structural decline and the need to respond to the crisis of the 1970s, broke with the post-Second World War settlement and socialism to create a popular capitalist basis for a neo-liberal accumulation strategy (Jessop 2001, p. 134).

There was a vacuum into which authoritarian politics could enter and be exploited by a dominant leader. This was manifested in all domains of public life, including education, which became more centralized through a national curriculum and quality assurance measures (Jessop 2001, p. 129).

Prange (2003), in a review of Science and Technology policies in Germany, argues persuasively that, notwithstanding globalizing trends, European and national factors come *first*, and *domestic* institutions determine the depth and direction of national policy. Vaira (2004) too believes that the way organizations translate the institutional patterns gives rise to unique combinations. The nation state therefore remains important in communicating imperatives to staff and students within the higher education institutions under its jurisdiction, and has a very direct, immediate influence upon them. Although policy *directionality* may be shared to some extent between European nations, countries hybridise policy in their own ways, thereby ensuring that the nation is still of central importance in theorizing the global market. The post-sovereign world of higher education has not yet arrived.

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