

REGULAR REVIEWS

Julian L. Garritzmann: *The Political Economy of Higher Education Finance. The Politics of Tuition Fees and Subsidies in OECD Countries, 1945–2015*

Basingstoke 2017: Palgrave Macmillan, 319 pp.

This book tackles an important aspect of higher education: the political economy of higher-education finance and its change over seventy years across the advanced democracies. It poses three main questions. (1) How do tuition-subsidy systems differ across the advanced democracies? (2) How can we explain the historical origin of the Four Worlds of Student Finance? (3) Why is it the case that countries do not change their tuition-subsidy systems anymore? The questions are answered using a meta-theoretical combination of rational choice and historical institutionalism, with arguments from party politics, welfare state analysis, political economy, and public opinion research. The author refines the theory of comparative politics and proposes a Time Sensitive Partisan theory which posits that time and timing of parties in office matter for higher-education finance dynamics. This theory results in a number of well-defined hypotheses which are tested using multi-level analysis based on a variety of qualitative and quantitative data. The data include a plethora of datasets from the OECD and the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) as well as expert survey results on party positions across Europe and genuine data on party positions in England.

At the outset, the author depicts the reasons and paths of development of different types of student financing regimes, called the Four Worlds of Student Finance, based on the analysis of 70 characteristics of tuition-subsidy systems in 33 advanced

democracies. The Four Worlds are: a low-tuition-low-subsidy cluster, a low-tuition-high-subsidy cluster, a high-tuition-low-subsidy cluster and a high-tuition-low-subsidy cluster. The Time-Sensitive-Partisan Theory is then tested in Chapters 3–6. First, Garritzmann starts with four country case studies using systematic process analysis: Finland, Japan, Germany, and the United States. The case studies show strong support for the Time-Sensitive Partisan Theory as not only the partisan composition of government but especially the sequence and duration of parties in office play an important role in the development of countries' tuition subsidy systems. Further, large-n quantitative analyses are carried out. In Chapter 4, parties' positions on higher-education finance are used to first ascertain if parties hold distinct positions on higher-education finance and if they vary along ideological lines, as well as whether parties change their positions over time due to positive feedback effects. This chapter shows that higher-education finance is a relevant policy area for political parties. The data come from an expert survey on party positions and from a dataset on party manifestations in the UK over four decades.

Further, using all publicly available data on tuition-subsidy systems, cross-sectional and time-series-cross-sectional regressions test the Time-Sensitive Partisan Theory in large-n settings over time. The quantitative analysis of the impact of political parties on the developments of the tuition-subsidy systems in 21 advanced democracies also support the Time-Sensitive Partisan Theory. Finally, Chapter 6 applies multi-level regressions to public opinion survey data for 22 countries over two decades to probe the arguments regarding positive feedback-effects. It is argued that

the existing tuition-subsidy regimes feed back on individual preferences, making the systems increasingly immune to radical policy change. The findings show that respondents in countries with generous subsidy systems are more supportive of expanding these subsidies further. Voters of left-wing and right-wing parties hold different preferences on higher-education policies, and positive feedback-effects seem to be at work. All hypothesised micro-level relationships receive empirical support. Students are strong supporters of subsidies, higher education increases the likelihood of supporting student support and those paying for the services oppose subsidies. Respondents who appreciate redistribution and public education spending in general are much more in favour of subsidies. Respondents' politico-ideological position matters greatly, as support for subsidies is much higher among left-wing voters. Thus, rigorously controlling for a variety of micro-level determinants, we have evidence for positive feedback-effects at the macro-level. Garritzmann concludes that positive feedback-effects make radical departure from the respective regime paths increasingly costly for political parties, which explains the recent stability of the student finance regimes across the Four Worlds of Student Finance.

The book is well organised and is very thoroughly argued. I find it especially rich in the usage of multiple-methods and data sources, while at the same time the complexity of higher-education finance dynamics across a number of countries is presented in a manageable and readable way. Garritzmann makes a number of contributions to the field of higher-education research and political science. This is one of the first attempts to get a clearer and bigger picture of the dynamics of change of higher-education finance—why systems of HE finances are as they are, and how and why they have changed since World War II.

The book brings together literature

and data on tuition fees and higher-education subsidies from the economics of education, higher-education research and various data sources and systematically orders 33 countries into four regimes of students' finance. The author creatively combines a variety of data sets on party positions, parties' times in office with the data on tuition fees and higher-education subsidies. Due to the lack of reliable cross-national and longitudinal data on political parties' positions on higher-education finance on the one hand and higher-education subsidies and fees on the other, this combination of datasets and methods is particularly valuable. I especially applaud the usage of longitudinal data and authors' engagement in multi-level analyses. Thus, even though the available data is scarce and far from perfect (and the author addresses well the weaknesses of the data), the overall pattern emerging from different types of analyses supports the theory in a credible manner.

The main takeaway from this book is that in order to understand why and how a specific higher-education finance system functions, one has to take the history of governmental changes seriously, especially the timing, sequencing, and party positions towards student financing, as well as the feedback effects from the overall public. The findings of this study show that political parties and their positions, time, and path-dependency in political economy of higher-education finance matter. These findings are relevant not only for scholars but also to policy-makers in higher education and public financing. It allows us to better understand the path-dependencies of the different student finance systems as well as their linkages to political preferences as well as feedback mechanisms in terms of popular attitudes and preferences towards public education funding.

As the findings are highly relevant for policymaking, I would have liked to see some policy advice towards the end of the book. What would the author advise a par-

ty that wants to change the dominant student finance regime but does not want to jeopardise its credibility in front of the electorate? Is there a way out of the lock-in in which the Four Worlds of Student Finance find themselves today? Further, given the example of the UK, which is an exception to the dynamics observed in other studied countries, I wonder if there are other important factors to consider, such as parties reinventing themselves over time and changing their left or right positions towards student finance?

Finally, even though I am impressed with the compilation of various data sets across time and the rigorous testing of the Time Sensitive Partisan Theory from advanced democracies, it is difficult not to notice that some data were approximations rather than direct indicators of higher-education spending. Given that there are more holes than cheese when it comes to comparative large-scale reliable higher-education finance and political preferences data, I hope that in the future this motivates scholars and policymakers alike to rigorously pursue relevant comparative data compilation on such important aspects of higher-education policy as student finance without ignoring its politics. I also wonder how much the proposed theory holds for emerging democracies—for example, in South Africa. Do feedback effects work similarly in such student finance regimes where parties, students, and politics have traditionally been strongly intertwined? Further empirical work on different types of democracies would make it possible to check the generalisability of the proposed theory.

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Maria Do Mar Pereira: *Power, Knowledge and Feminist Scholarship: An Ethnography of Academia*

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How do scholars in countries such as Portugal, the US, the UK, or Scandinavia situate feminist scholarship in the current academia? How is the claim to scientificity in women's, gender, and feminist studies (WGFS) produced and negotiated? And what happens to these emerging fields, and the individuals inhabiting them, under the accelerated corporatisation of higher education? This book provides insightful and novel answers to these questions and anticipates future directions of research on the institutionalisation of feminist scholarship.

The book is based on ethnographic research of academia mainly in Portugal. During the years of 2008–2009 and 2015–2016, Pereira interviewed 36 WGFS and non-WGFS academics and conducted participatory observations at national and international conferences, WGFS associations' meetings, lectures, and PhD vivas also in Sweden, the UK, and the US. In her feminist discursive analysis, she focuses on the question of 'how academics demarcate the boundaries of "proper" knowledge, and how WGFS scholarship gets positioned in relation to those boundaries' (p. 2).

As outlined in chapter two, this examination builds on the premise that the epistemic status of feminist scholarship is not only constructed and situated within particular geopolitical, socio-cultural and linguistic contexts, but is also inherently and irreducibly paradoxical. The concept of 'paradox', as explained further in the book, is particularly useful for the research of WGFS' epistemic status because it 'renders visible the ways in which seemingly contradictory practices might not just coexist, but be mutually constitutive' (p. 86). This conceptualisation stems from Pereira's produc-