GLOBALIZATION OF UNIVERSITIES AS ORGANIZATIONAL ACTORS?

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to ascertain whether and to what degree universities are becoming organizational actors globally. Utilizing an original dataset of a sample of 500 globally oriented universities, we explore how universities have increasingly become organizational actors as is the case of American universities. We consider the following indicators of university transformation into organization actors: development or institutional advancement, diversity or inclusion, legalization, and internationalization goals and structures. We find that these globally oriented universities have created international, development, and legal offices. Surprisingly, nearly half of the universities in our sample also have diversity offices. These "getting organized" indicators are somewhat similar to what holds for American universities, suggesting that there is globalization of organizational actorhood among universities. At the same time, however, we find that there are pronounced regional differences, especially when it comes to organizing around diversity and legal affairs.

Keywords: Universities; organizational actor; globalization; institutional advancement; diversity; legalization; internationalization

INTRODUCTION

Much of the literature on organizational developments in academia presupposes the ascendancy of universities as organizational actors (Krücken & Meier, 2006;

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Ramirez, 2010; Ramirez & Christensen, 2013). Throughout much of their history, universities were associations of professors and students linked in a guild-like fashion with little by way of a distinctive and differentiated organizational backbone (Clark, 2006). With the advent of the age of nationalism, universities were increasingly linked to national cultures and imagined to be the primary vehicles through which these cultures were conserved and transmitted (Readings, 1996). Universities and academic systems were also increasingly compared, typically highlighting differences – from Flexner (1930) to Ben-David and Zlockzower (1962). However, these differences were mostly discussed in terms of institutional or systemic differences in orientations, for example, states versus markets (Clark, 1983), with less focus on whether and to what extent universities were becoming organizational actors.

Much of the earlier literature emphasized the primacy of historical legacies and their enduring influence on universities circumscribed by national boundaries. More recent studies, however, recognize transnational influences on universities. At times, they celebrate transnational influences as blueprints for upgrading universities (Clark, 1998). Other times, they critique these external pressures on universities and the demise of valued distinctiveness (Mazza et al., 2008). What is evident is that universities, in varying degrees, are subjected to transnational standards in addition to their historical legacies. In organizational parlance, university routes are influenced by both their organizational roots and the changing rules of the game in the organizational fields within which they are situated. For many universities, the templates of excellence to which they are attuned are generated by epistemic communities without borders, from European Commissions to the American-based Council for Advancement and Support of Education (Ramirez, 2020, 2021). Not surprisingly, many studies now examine national and global influences in higher education (Marginson, 2006; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

The more limited aim of this paper is to ascertain whether and to what degree universities are becoming organizational actors, that is, goal-oriented entities that are choosing their own actions and can thus be held responsible for what they do (Krücken & Meier, 2006). First, we explore the ways in which universities in the United States have increasingly become organizational actors based on previous studies that examine the rise and professionalization of diversity, development, and legal offices in relation to broader sociocultural changes such as the increasing inclusion of people (Furuta & Ramirez, 2019; Gavrila et al., 2022; Kwak et al., 2019; Skinner, 2019; Skinner & Ramirez, 2019). Next, we examine the same indicators of organizational actorhood with an also original, international sample of what we are calling more globally oriented universities. We discuss similarities and differences in organizational actorhood between the American and the global samples. More specifically, we assert that universities worldwide undergo elaboration and expansion of formal technical structures in the direction of greater isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). We further examine the expansion of organizational actorhood of universities as it relates to institutional management and leadership, for example, not only in the creation of offices but also in the appointment of senior administrative leadership positions. We then discuss the implications of organizational actorhood, which involve new categories of professionals

and academic management positions, on vertical and horizontal collegiality, that is, governance and conduct norms (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86; van Schalkwyk & Cloete, 2023, Vol. 86). Lastly, we sketch some research directions designed to better understand why some universities are more likely to present themselves earlier as organizational actors.

AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES AS ORGANIZATIONAL ACTORS

We start from the premise that global organizational expansion has become a significant dynamic in our world (Bromley & Meyer, 2015; Meyer & Bromley, 2013). What this means is that all sorts of problems are imagined as requiring solutions that involve a lot of "getting organized." What this further means is that all sorts of entities are imagined as having expanded capacities to organize successfully. The latter has been analyzed as the social construction of agency (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000). What fuels global organizational expansion is a set of interrelated cultural beliefs that favor an activist and optimistic worldview in search of progress. These beliefs are at the heart of diverse self-improvement projects earnestly pursued by entities that vary from couples seeking to have better relationships to corporations engaged in how to become more socially responsible exercises to states organizing and re-organizing in pursuit of sustainable development goals. A more passive reliance on received wisdom in interpersonal, business, and political realms is undercut by the activist thrust of these cultural beliefs. A once reasonable "good enough" or "do not rock the boat" outlook looks quaint or even reactionary in light of the overwhelming optimism in the agentic capacities of a range of entities.

Taken together, these cultural beliefs have facilitated the rise of goal-oriented entities with strategies for attaining these goals and differentiated structures to facilitate their attainment, that is, organizational actors. Not surprisingly, mission statements have become ubiquitous presentations of the self on organizational web pages, often crafted with the aid of consultants (Powell et al., 2016). In earlier eras, it would have been unimaginable, even laughable, for universities to have mission statements. However, mission statements are now quite common (see Oertel & Soll, 2017, for the case of Germany; see Morphew & Hartley, 2006, for the USA; see also the chapters in Engwall, 2020). Mission statements, we contend, are but one manifestation of the transformation of universities into organizational actors, as Krücken and Meier (2006) and Kosmützky and Krücken (2015) convincingly demonstrate.

Universities vary in when and to what degree they moved toward becoming organizational actors, that is, an entity endowed with its sovereignty, purposes, and identity while simultaneously accountable to others in the environment (Bromley & Meyer, 2015; Krücken & Meier, 2006). Absent the steering authority and influence of a national ministry, a national professoriate, or a coalition of these forces, American higher education institutions struggled for recognition and legitimacy, resources, and survival (Labaree, 2017). This was a complex

struggle because there were multiple grounds for legitimacy as well as multiple revenue sources. Reputation management involved both embracing the category university but also finding a niche of one's own (Christensen et al., 2019). The land grant universities, for example, benefited from the legitimacy inherent in conforming to the category university but also operated within a niche that involved direct ties with agriculture and industry (Gelber, 2011). For example, the University of California at Berkeley was established to provide instruction in a broad range of domains, including industrial pursuits. In the American context, there was no sharp line between what really constituted a university and university-appropriate fields of study and other forms of education. More specialized colleges evolved to become universities, and some did not even need the label to be recognized as universities, for example, the Massachusetts and California Institutes of Technology. Of course, studies related to industrial pursuits could also be undertaken within some elite universities, in engineering and business, for instance. What has been called the "practical arts" have begun to dominate the American educational landscape (Brint et al., 2005). A similar evolution is taking place in Europe, as technical universities command greater attention, though drawing critical reactions (Geschwind et al., 2020; Karseth, 2006).

Universities have never been as unchaining as some of both their critics and apologists have claimed. However, the rate of change may be greater among entities imagined to be organizational actors. Organizational actors, we contend, are more likely to emerge in a cultural milieu that facilitates an activist and optimistic orientation. The peculiar character of American higher education has been much discussed, with much attention given to its earlier expansion driven by competitive dynamics facilitated by political and educational decentralization (Collins, 1979, 2000; Rubinson, 1986). However, what has been insufficiently emphasized is that the competitive dynamics presupposed universities as goal-oriented organizational actors bolstered by activist and optimistic cultural beliefs. Earlier, American universities indulged in setting goals and developing strategies to attain these goals (see Lowen, 1997, for the case of Stanford). Nowhere is this proclivity clearer than in the history of university-initiated fundraising in American higher education (Skinner, 2019). There is really no comparable historical development in other parts of the world, but as we shall later see, organizational expansion is indeed globalized.

Working with a national probability sample of American universities, Skinner and Ramirez (2019) find that virtually all of these have a development or institutional advancement office by 2020. The organizational commitment to seek resources from multiple sources is now a taken-for-granted feature of American higher education. They also find that almost 80% of these universities have an office that signals a commitment to diversity or inclusiveness (Gavrila et al., 2022). These offices are at the center of all kinds of pressing issues today. Perhaps not surprisingly, the legalization of the university is reflected in the fact that six out of 10 universities have their own distinctive legal offices. In addition to these organizational developments, more universities are engaged in crafting and recrafting mission statements (Morphew & Hartley, 2006) as well as in enhancing their international profiles (Buckner, 2019).

All these developments reflect the intensification and normalization of the status of organizational actorhood of American universities. These ongoing elaboration and expansion of organizational structure reflect the ways in which universities act strategically, respond to broader sociocultural changes, and position themselves with regard to their competitors. The establishment of development, diversity, and internationalization offices is an expansion of the organizational actorhood character of modern universities, as these offices perform a variety of tasks that were previously not regarded as part of the university's responsibility (Krücken & Meier, 2006). At issue, however, is whether any of these developments has global traction or all are distinctively American. We contend that universities worldwide come to look more like idealized American universities, as American universities dominated global rankings in the late twentieth century. Our aim is neither to suggest that the American university model is one that universities should be aspiring to nor that the organizational actorhood of American universities leads universities around the world to become "more American." Rather, we posit that the dominance of American universities in the global rankings results in the idealized American research university becoming a globally favored template of excellence (Ramirez, 2010; Ramirez & Tiplic, 2014). The pressures to learn and follow organizational policies and practices of more highly regarded American universities, then, leads universities worldwide to enact features of American universities theorized to lead to their success, resulting in universities being increasingly transformed into organizational actors in the direction of isomorphism.

In what follows, we briefly consider the following indicators of university transformation into organization actors: development or institutional advancement, diversity or inclusive, legalization, and internationalization goals and structures. We look at these four offices as indicators of organizational actorhood in order to build on previous studies that observe the rise and expansion of these offices in American universities as organizational actors (see, e.g., Gavrila et al., 2022; Skinner, 2019; Skinner & Ramirez, 2019) and consider the extent to which these indicators of organizational actorhood have globalized. These four indicators of university organizational actorhood are of interest to us because they have become almost taken-for-granted features of American universities. Furthermore, the issues of fundraising, diversity and inclusion, internationalization, and the subsequent need for legal counsel are increasingly discussed within an increasingly globalized higher education market (Wedlin, 2020). Hence, examination of a global sample of universities from comparative perspectives provides insights into the extent to which universities worldwide adopt and emulate features of the idealized American university in response to global pressures to become organizational actors.

DATA

To identify a globally representative sample of higher education institutions, we conduct a simple random sample of 500 universities from the population of universities that participate in the 2020 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. This sampling design implies that each observed university

in the THE World University Rankings has an equal probability of being drawn, meaning that the sample will perfectly represent the 2020 THE population. In other words, the sample of universities in this analysis is neither world-regionally representative nor nationally representative, as the representativeness of the THE population is at the individual university level, not at aggregate levels. Nonetheless, THE states that the response rate of universities as represented in its rankings is "statistically representative of the global academy's geographical and subject mix" (Times Higher Education, 2019, p. 9), suggesting that universities with missing data on the reputational survey measures are effectively random, introducing \no bias into these universities that remain in the population of globally ranked universities.

An alternative way to sample universities would have been to implement stratified sampling and ensure that all countries present in the THE population were also present in the sample. Initially, stratified sampling was a desirable design feature. However, given that the median number of universities per country is 6 in the population of THE universities, we found that there would not be enough universities per country to have a sufficiently powered research design that could observe differences between any two countries, on average. Thus, we proceeded with a simple random sampling of 500 universities, which represents a random sample of universities that participate in the global higher education landscape via rankings. We assume that the universities in our sample are globally oriented universities, that is, universities that view themselves as participating in a global arena. Our rationale for examining a sample of globally oriented universities, as opposed to national samples of universities, is this: globally oriented universities are more likely to be attuned to templates of excellence, observing, and imitating processes and trends of "role models," that is, highly ranked, world-class universities. In other words, if we do not observe evidence of organizational actorhood in this sample, then we likely will not observe such patterns in other universities.

The resulting distribution of universities in our sample by region is as follows (Table 1):

Once we drew our sample of 500 universities, we then collected data about the organizational structures of the universities directly from the universities'

Table 1. Number of Universities in the Sample, by Region.

	No. of Universities
USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand[a]	126
Western Europe (excluding the UK)	72
Central and Eastern Europe	37
Latin America & Caribbean	23
East and Southeast Asia	106
South, West, and Central Asia	27
Sub-Saharan Africa	8
Middle East and North Africa	26

[a]We group the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand given their similarities as liberal welfare, "Anglo" states compared to other Western European states that are more social democratic or conservative corporatist regimes.

websites, allowing for navigation to secondary or tertiary levels of the website hierarchy to obtain the necessary data. Data collected include whether the universities had development, diversity, legal, or international offices, the names of the office, and contextual information on these offices for all sampled universities.

We identified development offices as those charged with responsibilities generally encompassing or managing annual giving, corporate giving, foundation relations, planned giving, major gifts, and campaign fundraising, in addition to incorporating other advancement activities outside of fundraising, such as alumni relations, public relations, and government relations (Skinner & Ramirez, 2019; Thelin & Trollinger, 2014; Worth, 2002). We collected data for whether or not a university has established a diversity office by using terms such as "diversity," "multicultural," "equity," "equal opportunities," or "inclusion" to reach the correct web page based on relevant literature and previous studies (Kwak et al., 2019). Legal offices, that is, offices that formally provide generalized legal services for university-specific matters and sit internally within the university (Furuta & Ramirez, 2019), were identified using similar approaches for other offices. We identified international offices as those engaged in a broad array of activities such as internationalization, international collaboration, international student support, and oversight of global programs for students and faculty. Since the kinds of activities that fall under "international" are varied and different, with some being more associated with public relations and advancement and others more with student services, it was not uncommon for us to find multiple international offices within a single university. In this paper, we use a binary code for whether or not the university in our sample has an established office that engages in any international activity.

In considering how these offices were identified and coded, it is important to note that we focused on the function of the offices and not merely the names of the offices. In other words, we did not simply search for "development" or "diversity" offices but rather looked at organizational charts and structures of the universities to identify offices that are tasked with carrying out organizational goals around development, diversity, internationalization, and legal affairs. Illustrative examples of the names of different offices fulfilling functions carried out by development, diversity, legal, and internationalization offices can be found in the Appendix.

This suite of data was collected between 2020 and 2021 and required concerted efforts from the authors of the study, research assistants, and volunteer coders. When possible, we drew data from university websites in their primary language of instruction, coded by individuals who were proficient in the language. For university websites for which we do not have a proficient reader of the language, we relied on a combination of English websites and computerized translation services to code the data.

DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

In what follows, we attempt to ascertain *to what extent have development, diversity, international, and legal offices been institutionalized in universities worldwide*? Tables 2 and 3 depict the proportion of universities that have established

Table 2. The Proportion of Universities With Established Offices, by Region.

	Development Office	Diversity Office	International Office	Legal Office
USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand	0.937	0.825	0.952	0.802
Western Europe (excluding UK)	0.417	0.625	0.944	0.639
Central and Eastern Europe	0.351	0.027	1.000	0.649
Latin America & Caribbean	0.304	0.435	0.957	0.696
East and Southeast Asia	0.764	0.255	0.858	0.340
South, West, and Central Asia	0.593	0.259	0.556	0.185
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.875	0.250	0.875	0.429
Middle East and North Africa	0.360	0.040	0.560	0.280
USA	1.000	0.952	0.952	0.905
Global Average (excluding USA)	0.606	0.381	0.872	0.503
Global Average	0.663	0.465	0.882	0.563

Table 3. The Proportion of Universities With Senior-level Administrative Staff in Respective Office Areas, by Region.

	Sr. Development Officer	Sr. Diversity Officer	Sr. Int'l Officer	Sr. Legal Officer
USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand	0.740	0.516	0.532	0.484
Western Europe (excluding UK)	0.278	0.352	0.722	0.208
Central and Eastern Europe	0.405	0.000	0.595	0.432
Latin America & Caribbean	0.130	0.174	0.565	0.609
East and Southeast Asia	0.217	0.075	0.260	0.066
South, West, and Central Asia	0.519	0.148	0.296	0.148
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.125	0.000	0.250	0.250
Middle East and North Africa	0.375	0.000	0.080	0.000
USA	1.000	0.778	0.619	0.762
Global average (excluding USA)	0.319	0.161	0.432	0.201
Global average	0.419	0.251	0.457	0.281

development, diversity, international, and legal offices and administrative staff from these offices at the senior leadership level, respectively, across regions. In our analysis, we separate universities in the United States from those in other Western countries because we postulate from the literature that an American model of higher education is most expansive in terms of organizational form and is one that diffuses to universities organization in other countries. Within the West, we further distinguish between universities from an "Anglo" background from other Western universities to see whether organizational developments in these "Anglo" universities are more similar to those that characterize American universities. Overall, we find that development, diversity, international, and legal offices are present in an overwhelming majority (>90%) of the American universities in our sample.[1] This suggests that the presence of these offices is taken-for-granted in globally oriented American universities. Furthermore, across the world, we find that the most prevalent office is the international office, followed by development, legal, and diversity offices. The same trends are observed for senior administrators.

When we observe these trends by region, we find that international offices are most prevalent in the Americas and Europe, with over 90% of universities in the West, Latin America & the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe having established international offices. Over 80% of universities from East Asia and the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa in our sample have established international offices, and over 50% of universities in South, West, and Central Asia and Middle East and North Africa have established international offices.

The high proportion of universities in our sample with international offices is unsurprising, especially given how universities throughout the world increasingly strive to be "world-class" and "internationally competitive" (Buckner, 2019). Moreover, international offices usually encompass various functions, from overseeing internationalization efforts and international scholarly and institutional collaborations to facilitating international student services and study exchange programs. In fact, we find that there is variation in the extensiveness of university international offices, as one university's international office may only focus on international academic collaborations with other institutions, whereas another's international office may be primarily dedicated to supporting international students. The wide variety of international and internationalization efforts pursued by universities worldwide likely contribute to the high prevalence of international offices globally (see the chapters in Oh et al., 2016).

Unlike that of international offices, we find greater variation in presence of diversity, development, and legal offices across regions. Consistent with previous studies that examined the prevalence of these offices in American universities (De Wit, 2002), we find that the highest percentage of development, diversity, and legal offices are found in "Anglo" universities. In fact, we observe that the proportion of these offices is significantly higher in the "Anglo" universities compared to all other regions.

American universities have been more entrepreneurial, and for a much longer span of time (Etzkowitz & Zhou, 2008; Skinner, 2019), so it is unsurprising that high proportions of development offices are found in "Anglo" universities that include American universities. The relatively high presence of development offices in East Asian (76.4%) and sub-Saharan African (87.5%) universities that participate in THE rankings can be explained by how these universities often follow and are influenced by the American higher education model, which has been viewed as a "model of excellence" (Clark, 1998). Lower proportions of development offices in Continental, Western Europe (41.7%), Central, Eastern Europe (35.1%), Middle East (36.0%), and Latin America & the Caribbean (30.4%) may be explained by how the majority of universities in our sample are public institutions that are mostly, if not solely, funded by the state. The public status of American universities has not impeded them from creating development offices because the distinction between the public and private sectors is weaker in the United States, with many American public higher education institutions engaging in entrepreneurial fundraising activities (Skinner & Ramirez, 2019).

When it comes to diversity offices, we find that it is only in the West that a majority of universities have established a diversity office, with 82.5% of "Anglo" universities and 62.5% of Western European universities (excluding UK universities)

having diversity offices. The significant difference between Continental, Western European universities and Anglo universities (i.e., those in the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) suggests that the presence of a diversity office is more likely in countries that have experienced social movements that have generated efforts to be more inclusive of minorities, and indigenous, and historically marginalized populations. The high prevalence of diversity offices in American universities (95.2%) compared to that rest of the world is unsurprising, as universities in the United States have responded to the civil rights movements of the 1960s to establish dedicated diversity-related offices on their campuses (Gavrila et al., 2022). The relatively high prevalence of diversity offices in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealander universities is also unsurprising given the history of the Aboriginal civil rights movement and subsequent efforts to respect and be more inclusive of aboriginal/first nations populations. Global norms around diversity, equity, and inclusion have influenced universities, especially those in the West, to establish such offices on university campuses. However, the influence of global norms on the organizational actorhood of universities is indeed uneven (Pineda, 2023, Vol. 86; Pineda & Mishra, 2022).

This is in contrast to other regions of the world that may be either more ethnoracially homogeneous (e.g., East Asia) or where social movements centered on equity, diversity, and inclusion have not had much societal influence (e.g., MENA region) to pressure organizations to respond. In fact, we find that the establishment of diversity offices is even less prevalent in non-Western parts of the world, with 43.5% of universities from Latin America and the Caribbean having diversity offices, and less than 30% of universities in East Asia, South, West, and Central Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa having diversity offices. Furthermore, we find that less than 1% of universities in the Middle East and North Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe regions have established diversity offices.

Globally, we find that about half of the universities in our sample have established legal offices. As is the case for development and diversity offices, we find that the greatest presence of legal offices is in the "Anglo" universities (80.2%), where extensive linkages between society and universities and the rise of empowered individuals in universities who are conscious of their rights as individuals (Furuta & Ramirez, 2019). We, in fact, find that the highest proportion of legal offices within the "Anglo" states are in the United States (90.5%), possibly suggesting that universities in other Anglo states are following the American model and transforming into organizational actors compared to universities in other parts of the world. We also find low proportions of universities with established legal offices in regions where universities may not be as deeply embedded in society or as influenced by global and national norms around individual rights (42.9% in sub-Saharan Africa, 28% in the Middle East, and 18.5% in South, West, and Central Asia). This suggests that country/societal contexts may influence the extent to which universities transform into organizational actors, reflecting the impact of historical legacies or the greater capacities of university professors to reaffirm alternative communal university models (see Jandrić et al., 2023, Vol. 87).

The presence of a senior administrator in university leadership whose roles and responsibilities are dedicated to development, diversity, international, or

legal matters provides further insights into the extent to which universities place importance on these issues. Having dedicated senior administrators in these areas, as opposed to simply establishing an office or department, displays greater commitment and prioritization to matters of internationalization, development, diversity, and legal affairs. Next, we examine the extent to which universities that see themselves as participating in a global arena have appointed senior administrators in these four areas.

Consistent with the above findings, we observe that the highest presence of senior administrators for development, diversity, and legal affairs is in "Anglo" universities, with the highest proportion being in American universities. The contrast between Anglo universities and other universities, especially when it comes to development and diversity officers is stark. We find that whereas 74% of "Anglo" universities in our sample have a senior development officer, senior development officers are clearly less in place in other parts of the world. The difference is even more evident when comparing the prevalence of senior development and diversity officers in US universities with global averages that exclude the United States. This is consistent with our previous findings. If it is the case that many of the universities outside the United States are public institutions, then it may be that public universities do not see as much of a need to appoint senior development officers compared to private universities that face greater pressures to fundraise. Indeed, another related study finds that there is great commonality across public and private universities when it comes to engaging in any form of fundraising but that there is much variety with respect to having a centrally coordinated, administrative role dedicated to fundraising activities, such as the senior development officer (Skinner et al., 2023).

Likewise, we find that there is a significant gap between the proportion of senior diversity officers in American universities compared to that in non-American universities. Whereas 77.8% of American universities in our sample have senior diversity officers, there is a low presence of senior diversity officers outside the United States. What is perhaps surprising is the relatively low presence of senior diversity officers in the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (51.6%), considering the high presence of diversity offices in these universities. Nonetheless, we find that the prevalence of senior diversity officers in the Anglo states is almost double that in Western Europe, further affirming how universities in these countries are more similar to those in the United States compared to the rest of the world. We also do not find presence of senior diversity officers in universities in Central and Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa. Given that the diversity office is a relatively new organizational feature of the university, and its founding was tied to social movements, historical developments, and social structures in the United States, it is unsurprising to find the low presence of senior university leadership for these offices in other parts of the world.

Consistent with earlier findings where we found that international offices had the highest prevalence globally, we find that the senior administrator for international affairs is the most commonly found senior officer of the four offices, suggesting that international affairs have become a more institutionalized organizational feature of the university globally than other offices. Unlike patterns for

other senior officer positions, however, we find the highest presence of senior internationalization officers in Continental, Western Europe (72.2%), suggesting that universities in these countries may most actively engage in internationalization. Given that our sample is comprised of globally oriented universities that participate in the THE rankings, it may be that our findings are biased, as one may expect universities that have a more global orientation to have not only devoted offices but also senior administrators to oversee international affairs.

With regard to senior legal officers, we find a high presence of senior legal officers in American universities (76.2%) like that for other senior administrator offices and in Latin America and the Caribbean (60.9%). We do not observe a high presence of senior legal officers in universities in other parts of the world. Surprisingly, we find that only 20.8% of universities in Continental, Western Europe have a senior legal officer. The low presence of senior legal officers in Europe may be due to universities outsourcing legal matters or due to senior legal officers being seen as a direct threat to the autonomous self-regulating university template much revered in Western Europe.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the twenty-first century, universities increasingly look like organizational actors. They have goals and plans to attain these goals. They advertise who they are through mission statements, and they increasingly establish differentiated and specialized structures in the pursuit of goals. These developments emerged earlier in the United States, and much of the literature emphasizes the hypercompetitive decentralized environment within which American universities operated. This paper adds to this literature by pointing to the cultural milieu that informed the competitive dynamics, that is, the cultural beliefs that favored an active and optimistic orientation. The earlier and more extensive expansion of higher education in the United States was not just due to a lack of central checks on agreed-upon standards on what is a university but also driven by the presence of cultural beliefs that fostered bottom-up "getting organized." These cultural beliefs have intensified and normalized American universities as organizational actors.

The core question this paper asks is whether there is evidence that universities globally are becoming organizational actors. We address this question by looking at a random sample of universities that participate in the THE world rankings. We assume that their participation indicates that these universities are more attuned to global templates of excellence and international influences than the vast numbers of universities that have not been involved in these rankings. If what were once more distinctively American cultural beliefs have increasingly globalized, these universities are more likely to be favorable receptor sites.

Our findings support globalization but also the persistence of the differences hypotheses. By 2020, most universities have created international, development, and legal offices. Surprisingly, nearly half of the universities in our sample also have diversity offices. These "getting organized" indicators are somewhat similar to what holds for American universities. However, there are pronounced regional differences in our study. To cite but one example, an organizational focus on

diversity is evident in the North American region but not in other regions. In our study, globalization is most pronounced as regards international and development offices. This suggests low levels of insularity and high levels of concern regarding resources characterize these universities. The international office may simply be the formalization of the often-cosmopolitan outlook of universities and not at all an American-inspired innovation. The development office, though, appears to be much more an imported innovation with American roots.

Protestations about too much administration notwithstanding, American universities typically focus on horizontal collegiality issues. A hypercompetitive environment raises concerns about faculty recruitment and retention. The notion, "we are a congenial group" is an attractive card to play, and what it means is that we get along and maybe even support one another. What it does not mean is that we are a self-governing faculty. All hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions are ultimately subject to review by a more central body in what is clearly a hierarchy. To be sure, many universities give professors de facto authority on academic decisions while leaving fiduciary and related matters in the hands of differentiated administrators (Ramirez, 2021). Vertical collegiality issues appear to be of greater concern in universities with guild-like roots, though the growth of the administrative strata and a corresponding managerial logic may reach a tipping point that generates vertical collegiality concerns in American universities as well (Gerber, 2014).

Nonetheless, it is presumable that the expansion of organizational actorhood in universities would influence both horizontal and vertical collegiality. For example, the rise of diversity offices and greater pressures to recruit more diverse faculty could lead such offices and senior diversity officers to influence faculty recruitment and hiring decisions. Diversity, equity, and inclusion training by the diversity office to encourage more diverse faculty hires, for example, could influence both horizontal and vertical organizational governance collegiality and even contribute to tensions between or focus on particular forms of collegiality. State-engineered resistance to these offices and to the curriculum may undercut both faculty governance norms as well as shared norms of faculty conduct, and more broadly, academic freedom (Lerch et al., 2023; Schofer et al., 2022). Likewise, increased internationalization and the rise of the international office that promotes international collaborations could encourage horizontal collegiality that transcends borders. More broadly, the theoretical question is whether becoming an organizational actor leads universities to concentrate on horizontal rather than vertical collegiality, that is, on conduct rather than governance norms. This paper suggests one way of measuring university organizational actorhood via identifying differentiated offices and leadership positions. Further research is needed to gauge levels of vertical and horizontal collegiality.

We conclude with two caveats. First, this study and some of the studies referred to are cross-sectional in their design. They cannot tell us through what processes these universities ended up with the offices they now display. One way of tackling this issue is to identify the start dates (origins) of these offices and employ event history models to identify which variables influence the adoption rates of each office. This study can be undertaken with universities as units of analysis within a nation. This is precisely what has been undertaken with the adoption of diversity

offices for American universities as the dependent variable of interest (Gavrila et al., 2022). Parallel studies in other countries would reveal whether similar or different influences are at work. We find that elite universities are early adopters of diversity offices in the United States. But would this be true in other countries?

A second caveat is that this study only shows that universities have or do not have these offices but not what these offices actually do. We know there is much variation in what international offices entail (Buckner & Stein, 2020). This is also likely the case with respect to diversity offices, with some driven by gender (see Oertel, 2018, for the case of Germany) and others by race-based equity issues (as was the case in the United States). More fine-grained longitudinal studies of these organizational developments are much needed, as in the ethnographic study of decision-making in an admissions office in an American college (Stevens, 2009).

Though different in their use of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis, studies focused on changes over time are much needed. These studies will enable us to draw more nuanced inferences on the impact of globalization on higher education worldwide. Despite its limitations, this study suggests which university organizational developments are more similar and which continue to display distinctiveness across various regions of the world. The globalization of universities as organizational actors is more evident in some domains and some regions.

NOTE

1. The percentage of development, diversity, international, and legal offices for American universities in our sample is higher than that found by Gavrila et al. (2022) in their sample of American universities. This can be explained by the different sampling of American universities. Whereas Gavrila et al. draw from a national probability sample, we in this paper focus on a global sample of universities that participate in the Times Higher Education rankings. Therefore, it can be presumed that the American universities in our sample are, on average, more globally oriented and elite compared to those that appear in the national probabilistic sample of American universities examined by Gavrila et al. (2022).

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APPENDIX

An illustrative list of development office names

Office of Development
Office of Development and Alumni Relations
Office of University Advancement
Office of Institutional Advancement
Office of Fundraising and Community Relations
Alumni and Donor Relations
Department of Development and Planning
Division for External Relations and Development
University Foundation

An illustrative list of diversity office names

Office of Equity, Diversity, and Disability
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Compliance
Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities
Equal Opportunities Department
Gender Equity Unit
Office of Multicultural Programs

An illustrative list of international office names

International Affairs Office
International Office
International Strategy and Partnerships
International Programs
International Relations Office
Office of Global Affairs
Office of International Cooperation
International Student Services
Office of International Affairs and Collaborations
Global Initiatives
Internationalization

An illustrative list of legal office names

Legal Office
Office of Legal Affairs
Office of Legal Services
Office of the General Counsel
Office of Legal Advice
Office of the Attorney General
University Counsel