

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Hull</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: D32: Philosophy</p>
<p>Title of case study: Widening Participation in Latin American Universities</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Innovative interdisciplinary research undertaken in the areas of intersectionality, diversity, and widening participation at the University of Hull contributed first to the development of a project funded by the European Union, the EU-ALFA III funded project ‘Development of Policies to Promote Widening Participation and Equal Opportunities in Higher Education Institutions in Latin America’ (MISEAL). This project involves a consortium of 16 international institutions (4 EU universities and 12 universities in Latin America). Second, within MISEAL, research undertaken at Hull has led to the development and use of intersectional statistical tools for the measurement of inequality in the 12 Latin American partner HE institutions, of protocols for the analysis of their regulations regarding widening participation and equal opportunities and of guidelines for the organization of workshops (for staff and students) to raise awareness about inequality. MISEAL has also organised a number of reach-out activities, promoted collaboration with governmental organisation and created a network of experts in this area. The relevant impact has been primarily on public services and policy making (especially in the areas of widening participation and equal opportunities) and on education (at an international level and especially in the area of curriculum development and knowledge transfer). The primary beneficiaries have been policy makers including legal professionals and managers who are involved with the development of legal frameworks for widening participation and equal opportunities in Latin American HE institutions as well as academics and students internationally and groups concerned with curriculum development in HE institutions in Latin America.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The interdisciplinary research into diversity, widening participation and equal opportunities was undertaken at the University of Hull from 2002 and is ongoing. It was facilitated by the Centre for Gender Studies, founded in 1996 and later also by the Centre into Research into Embodied Subjectivity founded in 2007. The key researchers include Stella González Arnal (Lecturer, 2002 to present), Rachel Alsop (Lecturer, 1996 to present) and Kathleen Lennon (Senior Lecturer, 1979 to 2007; Professor, 2008 to 2014).</p> <p>The relevant research had two main strands. The first combined empirical research on implemented policies of widening participation in tertiary education with philosophical analysis of their theoretical underpinnings (primarily the model of rationality they presupposed). González Arnal and Alsop (see item 1 in references) explored ways of improving the recruitment and retention of students from under-represented groups (mature students, students with disabilities, part-time students and students from ethnic minorities) in HE in the UK and proposed specific policies that would improve the university experience of these students. The research was further expanded to address issues created by the change in policies on university funding in the UK that expected students to pay fees. It was argued (see items 2 and 3 in references) that the model of student which underpinned the new policy was that of a traditional student, without caring responsibilities, who took decisions about education by calculating its rates of economic return. Non-traditional students, however, with caring responsibilities seemed to follow a different model of decision making within tertiary education which focuses on the needs of their dependants. The recognition of different models of rationality at play here rested on research into the nature of rationality undertaken by González Arnal (item 4 in references) and the work of Lennon et al. (see item 5 in references) on issues of difference and diversity.</p> <p>The second research strand focused on intersectionality which explores the ways in which different categories (such as gender, class, race, age, sexual orientation etc) combine to produce different types of inequalities in different social contexts and different identities. This concept is currently a major focus in feminist theory, particularly in transnational contexts. Relevant research was already ongoing within the context of the Centre of Gender Studies but it was further prompted by critical reflexion on the methodology of MISEAL and its application in the context of Latin America. The use of an intersectional methodology is a core characteristic of MISEAL, but Latin</p>

American thinkers have argued that the use of intersectional analysis furthers colonial oppression. They believe that intersectionality imposes a colonial ‘logic of purity’ on identity categories which shapes the sense of self of those who have been colonized. González Arnal (item 6 in references) explored, via philosophical analysis, some of the political and ethical consequences of using intersectionality in the Latin-American context and argued that it is possible to use it in a reflective manner that is non-oppressive and that furthers equality.

Dissemination

The relevant research on widening participation and equal opportunities in tertiary education was disseminated at a preliminary meeting of the consortium which applied for the EU grant, when González Arnal delivered the paper ‘Políticas de inclusión de grupos minoritarios y su relación con el género: las experiencias de los estudiantes’ (the paper is published in a volume with the title *Incluyendo sin Excluir. Género y Movilidad en la educación superior* edited by Martha Zapata Galindo et al. Verlag Walter Frey, Berlin, 2013). The relevant research on intersectionality was disseminated at the first MISEAL international congress, in the Freie Universität Berlin, November 2012, where item 6 was first presented.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Stella González Arnal and Rachel Alsop ‘The Recruitment and Retention of “Widening Participation” Students in Higher Education: a Gendered Perspective’ in *The Fourth European Conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education*, Oxford: Oxford Brookes University, 2005 (published in CD format).
2. Stella González Arnal and Majella Kilkey ‘Contextualizing Rationality: Mature student carers and higher education in England’, in *Feminist Economics* 15, 2009, pp 85-111. (Peer reviewed journal) DOI: 10.1080/13545700802528323
3. Stella González Arnal, Rachel Alsop and Majella Kilkey ‘The Widening Participation Agenda: The Marginal Place of Care’, in *Gender and Education* 20, 2008, pp 623-637. (Peer reviewed journal) DOI: 10.1080/09540250802215
4. Stella González Arnal, ‘Rationality, Normativity and Practices. Towards a More Inclusive Concept of Reason’ *Women. A Cultural Review* 14, 2003, pp.171-181. (Peer reviewed journal) DOI: 10.1080/09574040310100
5. Rachel Alsop, Annette Fitzsimons and Kathleen Lennon *Theorizing Gender*, Oxford: Polity, 2002.
6. Stella González Arnal, ‘Interseccionalidad y diversidad: en defensa de un modelo de análisis categorial no opresivo que respeta la diferencia’ in *La interseccionalidad en debate. Actas del Congreso Internacional "Indicadores Interseccionales y Medidas de Inclusión Social en Instituciones de Educación Superior*, edited by Martha Zapata Galindo, Sabina García Peter, Jennifer Chan de Avila. Berlin 2013.
http://miseal.org/images/pdf/resultados/Actas_del_Congreso_Internacional_Indicadores_Interseccionales_y_Medidas_de_Inclusi%C3%B3n_Social_en_Instituciones_de_Educaci%C3%B3n_Superior.pdf

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research detailed in Section 2 influenced the development of MISEAL. The project involves the following institutions: Freie Universität Berlin (Leader-main co-ordinator), Universidad de Buenos Aires (Argentina), Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Brazil), Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Universidad Nacional (Costa Rica), Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales Sede Chile, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales Sede Ecuador, Universidad de El Salvador, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales Sede Guatemala, University of Hull, Uniwersytet Łódzki (University of Lodz), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Universidad Centroamericana (Nicaragua), Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (Uruguay). **Period of the grant:** 1st January 2012 to the 31st of December 2014. **Value of the grant:** €3.103.830.

The impact has been primarily generated by applying through MISEAL findings of research undertaken at Hull about (a) factors which can limit access to HE for ‘non-traditional’ students; (b) good practice which can be brought to bear to overcome those barriers; and (c) the use of intersectionality as a tool for the analysis of equal opportunities and widening participation in the context of HE institutions in Latin America. MISEAL has already had direct impact on the

development of the policies and practices of the Latin American participant institutions. It has brought about improvement in widening participation and it has helped the development of policies and practices which will improve equal opportunities in these HE institutions. It also had an impact on curricula development in these countries.

More specifically, through MISEAL the research at Hull has fed into: (1) the construction of intersectional indicators (which measure levels of exclusion, discrimination and inequality) and principles of the process of standardization of these indicators across HE institutions in Latin America; (2) the design of a tool for the application of the standardized intersectional indicators (which allows for comparative analysis); (3) the guide and guidelines for workshops that aim at increasing awareness of social inequality and exclusion in HE institutions in Latin America; and (4) the strategy for analysis of the regulations and policies of HE institutions in Latin America which aim at increasing widening participation and equal opportunities. (The documents describing (1)-(4) are already published on the MISEAL website.)

(1) and (2) have already been applied to the collection of statistical data, regarding the student and staff populations in the participant Latin American institutions - following an intersectional model- concerning age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic background and race. (Detailed information is provided in the MISEAL website.) Some of these statistical data were never collected before (not even by international bodies or NGOs). (3) has been informed by pilot workshops in 4 Latin American HE institutions. The workshops provided training for students and members of staff (both academic and administrative) in widening participation and equal opportunities issues within an intersectional approach. The participants used training materials written by the consortium. The pilot workshops took place in Colombia, Uruguay, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. (4) has been used for the collection and analysis of relevant university regulations and policies.

Furthermore, the realisation of the importance of the collection of relevant statistical data and of having a framework of protocols and policies about widening participation and equal opportunities has led some of the participant HE institutions to establish administrative and research units to collect relevant statistical data and introduce relevant regulations. For example: the Nicaraguan partner university has created a university committee (Comite Institucional de Genero (CIG)) which has overseen the creation of policies for gender equality in the university; the Peruvian partner university has established an academic unit on gender research (DIVERGEN) and a centre (VIDICP) which aims at making disability visible; Ecuador in collaboration with the national degree accreditation council CEAACES (Consejo de evaluacion, acreditacion y aseguramiento de la calidad de la education superior) has established gender equality as an area of research (including the provision of funding for PhD students).

MISEAL has also supported the collaboration between participant HE institutions in Latin America and governmental and non-governmental bodies in a number of projects to improve widening participation and equal opportunities. For example, the participant HE institution in El Salvador, under the auspices of MISEAL, has collaborated with the Department of Social Inclusion of the Presidency of the Republic of Salvador to develop a 'Policy to promote inclusion and participation of disabled people in HE'. They also developed a university diploma to promote inclusion of disabled people in the university. The Peruvian partner university has collaborated with the National Council for the Integration of Disabled People (CONADIS) for the creation of an observatory which promotes and monitors the integration of disabled people in society.

The HE institutions in Latin America under the auspices of MISEAL have organized and participated in a large number of events (15 recorded events in the first 7 months of the project- details available on the MISEAL website) that have brought together students, members of staff, representatives of governments and of groups of people who are vulnerable or non-represented in universities. In these meetings the results (statistical analyses and analyses of regulations) obtained by MISEAL have been shared. For example: The Uruguayan partner HE institution organised an event promoting the goals of MISEAL in which 1000 non-academic potential beneficiaries participated. The Nicaraguan partner university organized the event 'Foro sobre ejes de desigualdad en la education superior: propuestas de inclusion desde la unviersidad centroamericana' the participants of which were students, staff (administrators, senior staff) and representatives of NGOs and civil society from marginalized groups (30 participants). The Universities from Colombia and Ecuador also organized similar events and they invited representatives of Afro-descendants collectives, LGBT groups and indigenous groups.

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Finally, MISEAL has created a network of experts on intersectionality, widening participation and equal opportunities. These experts have participated in the production and exchange of knowledge in these areas. Relevant outputs include a number of reports available on the MISEAL website. Furthermore, the members of the consortium have participated in two international conferences in Berlin (2010) and in Brazil (2012) (the papers from which will be published) and many other international meetings and conferences which involved external participants (see MISEAL webpage for information about the events).

The beneficiaries of the project outside UK HE include:

- (a) The EU and Latin American HE participant institutions.
- (b) Students in the target groups – indigenous Latin American populations, students of African origin, women, students with disabilities, mature students, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.
- (c) Academic and administrative staff at the Latin American HE institutions who benefit from enhanced awareness of widening participation and are able to participate in the network established to share good practice. They have also benefited from the changes in policies that will promote equal opportunities in the work place.
- (d) Governmental bodies and NGOs in LA and Europe.
- (e) Other HEs in the region that have become associated with the participant HE institutions.

The impact described has taken place during the first 18 months of the project. The consortium is continuing its work for the attainment of further objectives, such as the creation of a transnational observatory for the monitoring and promotion of equality politics in the participating institutions (and beyond) located in Uruguay and Brazil and the development of an international collaborative PhD in the area of equality. The project will finish in December 2014.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

(All available on request)

- The webpage for the project: www.Miseal.org.in (it contains summary reports on the impact activities of the project described in section 4- more detailed reports are included in the two subsequent sources 'Informe descriptivo intermedio 2012' and 'Informe descriptivo Intermedio 2013')
- 'Informe descriptivo intermedio 2012' (Descriptive intermediate report for year 2012) sent by the scientific co-ordinator of MISEAL (Professor at the Institute for Latin America, Freie Universität Berlin) on December 31, 2012 to the Alfa III EU coordinators as part of the monitoring of the project (it contains detailed reports of the impact activities which have taken place during 2012 and are mentioned in section 4).
- 'Informe descriptivo Intermedio 2013' (Descriptive intermediate report for the first six months of the project in 2013) sent by the scientific co-ordinator of MISEAL (Professor at the Institute for Latin America, Freie Universität Berlin) on September 31, 2013 to the Alfa III EU coordinators as part of the monitoring of the project (it contains detailed reports of the impact activities which have taken place during January 1 to July 31, 2013 and are mentioned in section 4).
- Monthly reports sent by the HE institutions to the coordinator of the project detailing the activities that have taken place in their institutions during the assessed period.
- Testimonial from the scientific co-ordinator of MISEAL (Professor at the Institute for Latin America, Freie Universität Berlin) describing the impact research at Hull had on the development of MISEAL.