

Peer Review

Review of: "Prestige Matters: How Global Rankings Reshape Public Universities: National, Organisational, and Individual Dynamics in France"

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The article is strong as a pilot study, which is what it declares to be. Its forté is the focus on French academia and its adaptation to the realities of ‘academic capitalism’, especially in the context of rankings. A relative weakness is that, due to its limited length (being a single article), it presents the findings in a summative way, only quoting short excerpts of the (otherwise rich) data, without any deeper engagement with the discursive side (which might be expected of a qualitative study). Several findings presented in the conclusions could be developed in more depth and grounded in data, e.g., the observation regarding the rise of “academic manager” as a profession or stratification between disciplines.

The paper presented some interesting background on regulations regarding universities in France, like LRU and PRES. I would have also appreciated more information on the academic profession in France. I found the remarks on the traditional dominance of disciplinary identity (vs. the growing identification with institutional affiliation) interesting, novel, and worth developing in more detail. Also, the theme of competition between universities and Grandes écoles and its relation to rankings would be worthy of more commentary (especially for those not familiar with the system). In its current form, the findings on institutional and individual responses to the rise of rankings are rather general and not entirely surprising (rather in line with the existing literature).

I wish the authors success in deepening and developing this promising line of enquiry!

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.