

Social transformations and labour market entry

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Social Transformations and Labour Market Entry

An Investigation into University Systems in Emerging Economies

Giulia Rossello

1. Given the increasing number of qualified women and people of colour, the lack of social transformation in top positions is, in many cases, hard to explain without considering network mechanisms.
2. “In aggregate, referral networks help “*grease the wheels*” of a labor market that can be beset by a range of information problems. However, such networks can also be segmented along racial, ethnic, and socio-economic lines, which brings into question the effect they may have on inequality between and within different groups of workers.” (Schmutte 2016)
3. Network and individual level mechanisms are essential to successful entry into many knowledge-intensive occupations.
4. The mechanisms at the individual level that play a role in the entry process are the individual output, the social connections of the individuals, the training, the relation between the trainee and his/her advisor, and mobility.
5. Systemic mechanisms such as the level of homophily, Matthew effects and the connections between institutions of different status coupled with individual incentives produce inertia in the workplace. In particular, inertia arises from choice for association within and between individuals and institutions. The inertia acts at maintaining group and power relations unchanged, to the disadvantage of under-represented groups.
6. Inertia is not permanent and systems contain the seed for the social change. For example, the inertia of homophilious relations coupled with the subsequent generations of workers might produce an increasing aggregate level of homophily in the system creating tensions over resource allocation. This tension eventually can destabilise the status-quo and accelerate changes.
7. Moreover, at the individual level agents overcome the inertia of systemic mechanisms creating (or searching for) uncommon relations. In doing so, empirical results suggest that they perform at the highest levels underlining the aggregate gain of inclusion.
8. In order to meet the targets set by the UN-SDG 4 *Quality Education*, UN-SDG 5 *Gender Equality*, and UN-SDG 10 *Reduced Inequalities*, policy makers should adopt a holistic view of the entry process beyond labour market outcome considering both Systemic and Individual level mechanisms.