

---

*International Forum*  
*Vol. 16, No. 1*  
*April 2013*  
*pp. 62-78*

**FEATURE**

**A SWOT Analysis of Globalization  
in Adventist Higher Education**

***Pablo J. Rios***

**Abstract.** *This paper presents a SWOT analysis of globalization on the Adventist network of higher education. Samples from each world region were selected for guided interviews to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of globalization to the development and identity that exist within the network of Adventist institutions of higher education. It discusses opportunities such as language, culture, technology and threats to identity and development, and juxtaposes them against the strengths of the world network of Adventist universities and the challenges of growth and cooperation across institutions, in order to reveal a clear vision of the potential of Adventist higher education. This SWOT analysis conceptualizes the unrecognized potential that internationalization and globalization present for the Adventist network of higher education. These potential networking opportunities could affect the church's ability to play a leading role in education, to fortify its identity, and to generate development in all its institutions.*

**Keywords:** Globalization, university, SWOT, Adventist education, educational network, internationalization

The Seventh-day Adventist (Adventist) Church operates the second largest educational network in the world, which includes 7,800 educational institutions and over 87, 000 teachers (General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, 2010). In addition to primary, secondary and training institutions, the Adventist Church also operates over 111 institutions of higher education with over 126 campuses in 43 different countries around the world. Despite their geographic, demographic and cultural differences, all these institutions share the same mission and purpose: redemption through education.

In spite of this common purpose, the General Conference Commission on Higher Education, in a comprehensive study between 2001 and 2005, found significant threats and weaknesses in relation to the operation of these institutions and the accomplishment of their mission. The results of this current study revealed substantial similarities in weaknesses and threats in the Adventist network of educational institutions in 2012. Institutional growth and the influx of primarily non-Adventist students continue to be a challenge for the operation and educational vision of Adventist higher education.

The difficulties of an expanding and demanding market are not the only problem. In recent years higher education has evolved dramatically (Simmons, 2009, 2010), forcing educational institutions to capitalize on the global trends through collaborations and agreements between regional and international institutions (Eldik, 2011). Globalization and internationalization are shaping the educational landscape. This requires institutions of higher education to take precise and rapid steps into international collaboration for the benefit of students and the enhancement of their course offerings.

The question about the effects of globalization on the identity and organizational development of the Adventist network of higher education has been widely debated, however, publications on the topic have not adequately addressed the issue. Often the writers have failed to analyze the global presence of Adventist higher education and simply focus on a specific institution. These studies have generally focused on aspects such as academic quality or the threat of secularization in the operations of their institution.

This paper explores the most prominent strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that globalization presents in Adventist institutions of higher education. It examines many factors such as institutional strategy, market positioning, competitiveness and leadership focus to present the big picture of globalization in the Adventist global network of higher education.

### **Review of the Literature**

To understand Adventist higher education, it is important to clarify that Adventist colleges and universities do not operate as a *system* of education, following the definition of the General Conference Commission on Higher Education (2005, October) that “a system is one where units function, plan, work together, and support one another as cohesive units to accomplish the Church’s mission” (p. 12). Adventist institutions look more like a network of institutions (Greenleaf, 2008) that operate “mostly as independent and periodically interdependent units” (General Conference Commission on Higher Education, 2005 p. 12). As a result, Dulan (2008) notes that they often fail to take advantage of the church’s combined resources, causing many institutions to struggle for survival, or jeopardize their Adventist philosophy. One can conclude that

Adventist education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century seems to be struggling to define its identity much as it did in the beginning (Knight, 1986, pp. 15-16). The pressures of a market that is dominated by institutions that cement their dominance through brand awareness, innovation, luxury and secularization challenges the Adventist Church to embrace globalization (Anderson, 2009). For this reason, it is important to study and understand it better.

The terms *globalization* and *internationalization* are broadly and loosely defined in a variety of fields. It is difficult to arrive at an all-encompassing, working definition for each of these terms (Hirst, Thompson, & Bromley, 2009, p. 17), but they can be understood by the ideas behind them. In the field of higher education, the two terms are often used interchangeably, even though one is not necessarily encapsulated within the other (see Eldik, 2011).

One definition of globalization holds that “it is the acceptance of a set of economic rules [or educational practices] for the entire world designed to maximize profits [education] and productivity by universalizing markets and production” (Globalization, n.d., para. 3). A common example is the adoption of the English language as the language of instruction in non-English speaking countries. This opens institutions to a wider market and prepares their students for a globalized world.

On the other hand, the ideology behind *internationalization* may be explained as the mere exposure to an external object such as culture, language, education or educational practices. This exposure does not require melting-pot-like acculturation, but it is oftentimes a hidden guide for agendas, and fuels debate and policy change. An example of this is the adoption of foreign languages as part of the curriculum. An institution may choose to introduce a foreign language as a subject or offer specific programs in a language that will interest a desired population. The major practical difference in the use of these terms in the field of education is the role they play: while globalization dictates change, internationalization proposes. Because of this close relation in administrative challenges as agents of change, globalization and internationalization are often used interchangeably. For the purpose of this study, *globalization* is operationally defined as the combined concepts of globalization and internationalization.

With a clear understanding of globalization one can appreciate its significance in education. Nevertheless, it is important to make a clear distinction between the globalization of higher education, and the globalization of educational institutions. On the one hand, the globalization of educational institutions refers to the structural, administrative and academic operations of the organization, which can be clearly identified as globalized in the Adventist educational network; hence all institutions operate under a similar administrative and academic structure. The globalization of higher education, on the other hand, includes the practice of collaboration between educational institutions, whether in terms

of curriculum, student and faculty mobility, or research (Denman, 2002). This is the focus of this current study, which is a SWOT analysis of globalization in Adventist higher education, that is, their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The General Conference Commission on Higher Education conducted a SWOT analysis of Adventist institutions of higher education between 2001 and 2005 (Dulan, 2002, p.2). The analysis conducted observed particular institutions for their individual SWOT. The research report highlights trends within the participating institutions. The most significant data collected was the secularization of Adventist institutions, due to the increase in non-Adventist students and faculty (General Conference Commission on Higher Education 2005, p. 4).

Related studies by Chinnammai (2005) and Eldik (2011) have focused on the analysis of globalization as an agent of change and have discussed the challenges and the impact of globalization on higher education. It is important to note that “the current globalization of higher education creates both challenges and opportunities” for institutions (Chinnammai, 2005, Impact of Globalization in Higher Education section, para. 13). Similar vocabulary is used to describe the challenges of growth in Adventist institutions of higher education (Dulan, 2008). This suggests that Adventist institutions may be underestimating the complexity of globalization based on the challenges of their looming growth. It is important to understand that “the current traditional perception of the internationalization process of higher education seems no longer sufficient to address a far more complex and changing reality” (Eldik, 2011, Introduction section, para. 3). Adventist institutions should recognize the complexity of the educational market and begin working toward creating new and more appropriate practices.

In the completion of this study, using the SWOT matrix, I have sought to highlight significant effects of globalization on the Adventist network of higher education. For the completion of this paper, aspects such as operating funds, competition among universities and commercial tensions, as presented by Chinnammai (2005), were compared to the results of the General Conference Commission on Higher education, thus, arriving at a comprehensive SWOT analysis of globalization in Adventist higher education.

### **Methodology**

This study is based on the SWOT analysis matrix and design. Through the organization of the data collected this paper seeks to encompass a globalized view of Adventist higher education. In this analysis, *Strengths* are the qualities possessed by Adventist institutions of higher education in relation to globalization. *Weaknesses* are the factors that fall short of the desired standards for Adventist institutions of higher education, and the internal factors that prevent

them from achieving their potential. *Opportunities* are environmental factors that the organization can benefit from when planning and executing strategies relating to globalization. *Threats* are external factors that jeopardize the operation of Adventist institutions within a globalized context.

### **Research Design**

The paper has been designed following the SWOT matrix; the analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) constitutes one of the main tools in determining a path of action for an organization (General Conference Department of Education, 2005, p. 23). It is recognized in the business community as one of the most common tools for analysis of overall strategic and environmental positions for businesses.

One of the main advantages and the reason for the use of the SWOT analysis design for this paper was the familiarity that the majority of church and institutional administrators have with its process of inquiry. This is because the General Conference International Board of Education (1995) considers the SWOT analysis an integral part of institutional evaluation and part of the strategic planning process; so it is practiced in many Adventist educational institutions.

The SWOT analysis design was chosen in order to give this study the ability to encompass the worldview of globalization among Adventist organizations and present practical results for possible implementation without requiring a large sample. The SWOT matrix also aids in presenting a clear view of the subject and is a well-documented process and known as a strong tool in business analysis for the homogeneity it introduced to a diversified and globalized problem.

The SWOT analysis is not free from limitations; the categorization of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is subjective, although in this study they were previously benchmarked against related studies. Furthermore, the external factors of the SWOT matrix are subject to fluctuations and the uncertainty of the market. The study is also limited to big-picture concerns that go beyond cultural differences. Given the small sample size used, more detailed interpretation would not be appropriate.

### **Participants, Sampling and Setting**

Purposive sampling was used to approach key individuals with a significant level of academic and professional experience to discuss and analyze the different aspects of globalization within Adventist institutions of higher education. Some individuals were selected specifically for their work in a certain geographic location; others because of their administrative position or their experience in various parts of the world or in different administrative positions within the Adventist organization.

The sample used in this particular study is quite small, but it is made up of individuals carefully selected for their experience and vision. The selection of the sample was guided by categorizing the number of cases necessary to obtain a balanced view of globalization in Adventist higher education. The sample group was made up of 3 policy-makers, 5 presidents of Adventist institutions of higher education, 2 General Conference leaders, 2 academic personnel, 1 research director, 1 marketing director from Adventist universities, and an external non-educational church leader. No more than two individuals from the same institution were selected as part of the sample. The combined background and experience of all the respondents extends to 12 of the 13 world divisions of the Adventist Church.

Each individual was contacted via telephone or Skype for a guided interview lasting between 15 and 45 minutes. Each interview was recorded and transcribed to facilitate data analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of the data was conducted following the SWOT analysis design, and the data derived from the interviews was divided into Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The categories from the report of the General Conference Commission on Higher Education (2005) as well as those from Eldik (2011) and Chinnammai (2005) are used in this study as benchmarks for categorizing the collected data into sub-categories such as human resources, competition, commitment of employees, and identity, among others. Only the most common answers are discussed in this paper. In order to analyze the results and discuss the effects of globalization on the Adventist network of higher education, the results are juxtaposed with recent literature and discussed in relation to the report of the General Conference Commission on Higher Education presented in 2005 and other related Adventist literature.

### **Strengths**

The Adventist network of higher education possesses significant strengths in relation to a globalized market. Its presence around the world and governance structure are unparalleled in the higher education market. Some of the most prominent strengths are discussed in this section.

**Brand and identity of Adventist institutions of higher education.** All the respondents mentioned that the Adventist trademark is made stronger in light of the global presence of the church and its institutions. The Adventist integration of faith and values in learning is recognized worldwide and contributes to the strengthening of the Adventist name as a strong educational brand. Adventist organizations are identified as providing high moral, ethical, spiritual

and educational experiences. In one of the interviews, one General Conference leader added, “In a number of countries Adventist higher education institutions are recognized among the top universities in the country.”

**Academic, administrative and organizational structure.** All the respondents felt that the Adventist educational network operates with a solid structure (locally, regionally, and globally). The majority of the respondents alluded to the idea that organizations at different levels of church governance offer educational institutions consultancy services that contribute to the high quality of their educational offerings. All of the church administrators felt that through the International Board of Education, the local Boards of Education and the Adventist Accrediting Association, Adventist institutions of higher education enjoy a standardized quality measurement, generalized programs and curriculum structures as well as important accreditation credentials.

**Diversity and resources.** The respondents suggested that considering joined resources, experience and best practices of Adventist institutions of education, the church enjoys a formidable pool of resources such as research facilities, online libraries, and academic programs. The diversity of Adventist institutions in terms of languages, experience and research gives the church a clear advantage when operating in a globalized world. One General Conference leader added that some institutions are benefiting from shared resources. Such is the case with the Adventist college in Poland, which receives students and resources from other Adventist institutions through a cultural exchange program.

**Missionary workers.** Church administrators felt that the system of mobility within church organizations is a well-established practice through missionary workers. Inter-Division Employment (IDE) as well as other mobility schemes facilitate the transfer of loyal faculty and administrators from different parts of the world. One university president added that IDEs are an integral part of the competitiveness of Adventist higher education in the market.

The strengths of the Adventist network of institutions are atypical in the global educational arena and represent the potential of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to make a significant contribution to the world (Dulan, 2008). Furthermore, the administrative structure and the diversity of its resources, referenced in the data collected, are important and desired qualities needed in the internationalization of higher education in general (Morris, 2009).

### **Weaknesses**

This section dominated the majority of the interviews and fueled many discussions. This is not necessarily because Adventist education has more weaknesses than strengths, but perhaps because we are familiar with the strengths,

and the weaknesses are on the minds of the educational leaders. For the purpose of this study, some areas were combined for clarity and data reduction purposes.

**An unclear global vision for Adventist higher education.** Nearly all the respondents, with the notable exception of the university presidents, agreed that although Adventist educational institutions operate under one guiding principle, a clear vision for the collective future of Adventist higher education has not been clearly defined. Some university presidents felt that leadership practices within the educational structure of the church have created a tendency for short-term goals, which has resulted in problems such as limited accountability, lack of commitment to programs, limited training, and poor follow-up structures. All respondents mentioned that in general, the church has traditionally not been very good at holding people accountable for what they should accomplish. The respondents agreed that uncertain long-term goals have led to short administrative terms, thus losing out on possible advantages of continuity, expanding relationships, fomenting cooperation and generating confidence. Some respondents mentioned that many institutions follow student and faculty recruitment practices that are not ideal for educational institutions.

**Human resources.** All the respondents alluded to the idea that the Adventist Church's reliance on the dedication of missionary workers is a weakness. They felt that the human resource structure in Adventist educational institutions along with the remuneration packages used limits their ability to attract and retain highly qualified faculty. Some presidents and other respondents added that it also hinders the institution's ability to keep valuable members motivated to perform at top level. It was also mentioned that these limitations often reflect on the lack of motivation to conduct research, implement partnerships or cooperate with other institutions. In some cases organizations are forced to recruit non-Adventist members into their faculty, who are unaware of the resources of the church, its operations and spiritual ethos, and therefore do not generally contribute to the long-term development of the organization.

Respondents with educational administration backgrounds agreed that not having the necessary human resources, qualified Adventist faculty and staff, is a challenge to the institution's ability to capitalize on the resources of the church. Institutions need to gradually develop and train individuals that can strengthen the linkages within institutions; they should be able to transcend the work of the local organization and support the global mission of the church.

**Institutional independence.** All respondents except those in administrative positions at Adventist institutions of higher education agreed that the hierarchical organization of the church has been duplicated in the Adventist higher education network of institutions. Most institutions are operated from the local union; hence their directives, obligations and influence come from the local administration. In most cases, the Division Board of Education and the General Conference



Department of Education, along with their attached entities, serve only as consultants and advisers to the local institution. Almost all respondents agreed that this kind of institutional independence often creates a culture of self-improvement where each institution is often seen as the pride for the local field, their accomplishment in academic offerings, local accreditation, student population, faculty prestige, or infrastructure often creates tension within institutions, and this discourages cooperation. The university presidents discussed at length, and agreed, that many local institutions are struggling, as appropriations of church resources from the local fields are not sufficient to secure their operations. As a result, the institutions depend heavily on tuition income to survive, which limits the work that the institution can accomplish on its own. Furthermore, as independent institutions, each organization is obliged to fulfill local accreditation requirements. This can limit the ability of the institution to implement cooperation agreements due to local accreditation restrictions, and mandated course offerings. Many of the educational administrators mentioned that in some cases, these restrictions are what compel institutions to take advantage of the church educational network and partner with other institutions to offer programs and share resources.

The overall picture of the weaknesses of Adventist education gathered as part of this current study represents some of the biggest challenges to the church's educational network (Dulan, 2008). Although the lack of commitment of qualified human resources is not unique to the Adventist Church, but is a challenge in every educational institution (Oberholster, 2005), it is a growing concern in Adventist higher education today. On the other hand, the independence of Adventist colleges and universities and the consequent competition among Adventist institutions seems to be more prominent in the case of the Adventist educational network than in other established university networks (Eldik, 2011).

### **Opportunities**

**Growing market.** All respondents alluded to the idea that the higher education market is expanding rapidly, and demand has increased globally. Some respondents added that Adventist institutions may take a more prominent role in higher education by developing opportunities to share resources and learn from the best practices as a collective unit.

**Competitive advantage.** All respondents mentioned that by virtue of the geographical locations of each Adventist institution and their available resources, institutions may become more effective, affordable, and relevant and be able to deliver an enriched academic experience to captivate the higher education market. In the interview, one former General Conference director of education added that Adventist institutions have a significant opportunity to contribute to the fulfillment of the church's mission, especially in the 10/40 window.

In another interview, another university leader said, “through cooperation, institutions may generate resources to expand research, while enriching and enhancing the offerings of every institution.”

**Quality of graduates.** All respondents strongly agreed that graduates from Adventist institutions are uniquely prepared to tackle the problems of the world. The majority also commented that integration and cooperation can contribute to a better overall experience for students as well as to preparing more successful graduates, thus opening opportunities for alumni involvement in the creation of endowments and scholarships.

**Contribution to the mission of the church.** In the interview, one General Conference leader emphasized that by embracing globalization in higher education, institutions may be better suited to identify needs in different regions of the world, and colleges and universities can contribute resources and efforts to develop programs and establish institutions that serve the needs of the church and its members. Many of the respondents also mentioned similar ideas.

**Financial growth.** Most respondents alluded to the idea that cooperation and the systematic sharing of institutional resources could help institutions maintain financial liquidity, thus allowing them to invest in technology and expanded resources. The coordinated cooperation of institutions could also facilitate access to high demand services such as online libraries, databases, journals and other services that may be more affordable and accessible if acquired as a group or educational system.

The Adventist network of institutions of higher education offers opportunities that expand beyond their marketable product into eternal and spiritual gains (Pawluk, Drumm, & Pawluk, 2007). Nevertheless, the possibilities for financial growth, expansion of the market and competitive advantages are desirable opportunities for Adventist and secular educational institutions alike (Denman, 2002), but they have been at the reach of the Adventist educational network for quite some time (Dulan, 2008). The combination of these factors challenges us to take action and reassess our global vision for Adventist institutions and their administration (Pawluk et al., 2007).

### **Threats**

**Loss of identity.** All respondents pointed to a loss of Adventist identity as the biggest threat of globalization. It was mentioned that globalization demands change and adapting to the demands of a secularized environment. In one interview, one General Conference leader suggested that change itself is not necessarily a threat; rather, the concern is the secularization of our campuses and deviating from the vision and mission of the church.

**Competition.** All respondents felt that Adventist institutions of higher education are experiencing a threat from a very competitive market; institutions are struggling to keep tuition prices low as well as to offer student adequate facilities, infrastructures and services that compare to those of their secular competitors. Respondents from the higher levels of church administration suggested that Adventist institutions may also become a threat to each other by selfishly seeking independent benefits and disregarding the resources and offerings of other Adventist institutions. These practices instigate competition and develop pride within each organization, which in itself jeopardizes unity and challenges the identity of the institution.

**Increase in cost of education.** University administrators suggested that affiliation fees, travel expenses, language training courses, and other collaboration expenses might increase the overall cost of education. One respondent proposed that institutions might work against this threat by securing efficient operation within the institution and converting the savings or a percentage of the growth into endowment funds and scholarships. These could help offset the cost of education and aid students in completing their programs. Implementation of scholarships and endowments would also secure the continuity and success of the program.

The threats presented are not only consistent with those presented by the General Conference Commission on Higher Education in 2005; they are also similar to those presented by Chinnammai (2005) in relation to the threats of globalization on secular educational institutions in general. Furthermore, based on the data collected, one can recognize threats to Adventist higher education that have been present since its establishment in the 1800s (Greenleaf, 2008).

### Discussion

The data presented above agree with the concept brought forward by the General Conference Commission on Higher Education in 2005 that argue that a key challenge faced by the department of education of the General Conference, the International Board of Education, regional education departments and institutional boards is their limitation in influencing institutional leaders and their priorities for inter-institutional cooperation. It is argued that often this lack of a globalized vision impairs the institution's ability to see the important role that cooperation could play in the fulfillment of the mission of Adventist higher education. This is also consistent with challenges in secular institutions as presented by Marmolejo (2011).

The task of administrators is often that of juggling numerous priorities, deadlines, and the implementation of ideas and plans. "Campus administrators usually express their frustration about the lack of understanding both on and off campus regarding the extremely difficult challenges associated with

the management of complex institutions” (Marmolejo, 2011, para. 1). Perhaps because of this, the globalization agenda, which includes cooperation, is often left aside because of lack of time, limited budgets and inadequate resources.

Administrators that embrace globalization as a vision for Adventist higher education often encounter organizational challenges. The General Conference Commission on Higher Education (2005) concluded that higher education institutions operate within a church structure that by its nature limits the church’s ability to resolve some long-term threats to the stability and effective operation of those institutions. This is particularly evidenced in areas such as finance, duplication of programs and insufficient qualified Adventist faculty.

Clearly, the educational leaders have recognized that the church organizational structure itself seems to cause a structural problem in Adventist higher education. These conclusions correspond to the data presented in this study. Church governance, combined with the busy schedules of presidents and board members, are threatening the development and limiting the potential of Adventist institutions of higher education.

Based on the findings, this current study concludes that the similarities in weaknesses revealed in this study and those presented by the General Conference Commission on Higher education in 2005 show that the Adventist network of higher education has regressed rather than advanced towards a higher level of cooperation. The results of this paper concur with the prior General Conference study that

church organizational structure militates against the development of a global plan for higher education. Most tertiary institutions are under the governance structure of a union conference and union conferences are not willing to grant authority to other Church entities for governing their institutions. Local control is strongly preferred (General Conference Commission on Higher Education 2005, p. 7).

It can be argued that the Adventist Church needs to re-evaluate its educational organization and develop a governance structure that can lead the Adventist network of educational institutions in plans for higher education that go beyond the local or regional level and can implement strategies that addressed some of the findings of this study and their implications.

Based on the findings of this study, one can say that globalization possesses some strong threats to the identity, secularization and financial resources in Adventist educational institutions. Nevertheless, it is safe to conclude that the independence of Adventist institutions of higher education and the Adventist Church structure of governance are two of the biggest threats to the efficiency of Adventist higher education.

Based on the responses from institutional administrators, this current study concludes that the majority of them do not consider Adventist institutions as competitors, but at the same time, there is limited cooperation or communication among them, which results in indirect competition that is a substantial threat to accomplishing a system-like operation within the Adventist network of higher education. The findings of this current study identify institutional independence as a weakness and competition as a threat. This diverges from the study presented by the General Conference Commission on Higher Education in 2005, which identified independence as a passive problem and failed to recognize competition as a threat. Institutional independence, however, often carries hidden results such as individualism, nationalism, and pride, which in turn hinder cooperation and create competition. We need to undertake important changes in the operation of Adventist institutions to guard against these destructive effects.

Given the weaknesses presented, it is clear that Adventist higher education may be following the trend identified by Denman (2002) where institutions tend to collaborate only to compete, and not necessarily to enrich the experience of the student or society. Furthermore, the data agrees with the ideas presented by Anderson (2009), Dulan (2008), and the General Conference Commission on Higher Education (2005) that as long as the operations of Adventist higher education institutions are influenced only at a local level and/or are operated as independent organizations, a coordinated global vision of Adventist higher education will not be prioritized. It is apparent that only through some form of centralized financing or incentive funding will there be sufficient impetus to change from the current practices (General Conference Commission on Higher Education, 2005, p. 7).

The findings show a lack of global vision for Adventist higher education. It seems logical to suggest that the Adventist Church needs to define a systematic and collaborative vision for its higher education network. The concerns uncovered in this study suggest that Adventist institutions must overcome their weaknesses by training their faculty and staff in the areas of inter-institutional cooperation. Institutions need to capitalize on the strength of their organizational structure to follow up and make themselves accountable in order to achieve a system-like operation or at least a higher level of inter-institutional cooperation and integration. In order for this to happen, a centralized system where shared resources can be utilized would need to be implemented. This could foster the creation of endowment funds and scholarship programs that will secure student enrollment and continuity at every Adventist educational institution.

There are numerous success stories in globalization of higher education. Some institutions such as the University of London, the University of Cambridge, New York University, and Manipal opted for international operations

by organizing their institutions into local and international campuses (School of Advanced Study, 2012). Another example is the creation of consortia with specific areas of cooperation such as the Worldwide University Network, a consortium of 19 institutions specialized in scientific research (“About WUN,” n.d.). A more idealistic example can be found in the University of Massachusetts System with five campuses (“The UMass System,” n.d.).

Within the Adventist Church, a number of divisions are working arduously to implement incentives and programs to promote cooperation and integration among institutions. In the North-American Division, the creation of the Association of Adventist Colleges and Universities seeks to conglomerate the 15 institutions in North America in a collaborative effort for student recruitment. Other initiatives such as [www.MyAdventistUniversity.com](http://www.MyAdventistUniversity.com), an independent service which promotes internationalization and inter-institutional cooperation, can aid in establishing a platform for change.

Education is one of the most important tasks delegated by God to mankind. The Adventist network of higher education is reaching a crossroads, where the continuity and survival of its colleges and universities depend on their ability to embrace the present and envision the future. Institutions are challenged to implement strategies that can boost enrollment, secure financial resources, enhance research and publications, and increase mobility in order to prepare an army of young people that stand ready to change the world and restore the image of God in mankind.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Studies show that the market for higher education will continue to grow (see for example UNESCO, 2007). This will demand expansion and innovation from institutions around the world, especially in regions like Asia, South America and Africa. Based on the data presented, church and institutional administrators seem to agree that the Adventist network of higher education must change in order to fulfill its potential and take advantage of the opportunities for market growth. Given the interview data, it seems logical to highlight the strength in diversity and the combined resources of Adventist institutions in contrast to the substantial weaknesses found in human resources with the independence of each organization. The opportunities created by globalization, such as a better contribution to the mission of the church, are worth considering in light of the limited and always present threats to identity and mission. Furthermore, administrators agree that change in the Adventist network of higher education is inevitable, and they recognize that change, if not forthcoming, will eventually be forced through attrition. Institutions must cooperate in order to survive.

In conclusion, it is imperative for Adventist institutions of higher education to embrace change. Change is the primary effect of globalization, especially

in promoting cooperation and development. The success and even the relevance of Adventist institutions hinges upon their ability to embrace and capitalize on the opportunities created by the confluence of these factors.

There is need for further research to analyze the vision of the church in regards to higher education and a global system of colleges and universities. There is also a need for the church leadership to evaluate and determine the outcome that the church wants to see accomplished in Adventist institutions of higher education, and to share that vision with the world church.

### References

- About WUN. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.wun.ac.uk/about>
- Anderson, S. (2009). *How to kill Adventist education and how to give it a fighting chance*. Hagerstown, MA: Review & Herald.
- Chinnammai, S. (2005). *Effects of globalization on education and culture*. Paper presented at the ICDE International Conference, November 19-23, 2005, University of Madras, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. Retrieved from <http://www.readbag.com/openpraxis-files-article-252>
- Denman, B. (2002). Globalization and its impact on international university cooperation. *Globalization Journal*, 2(1). Retrieved from [http://globalization.icaap.org/content/v2.1/04\\_denman.html](http://globalization.icaap.org/content/v2.1/04_denman.html)
- Dulan, G. (2002). All about the church's new commission on higher education. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 65(1), 17-21.
- Dulan, G. (2008). The challenge of growth: Managing the expansion of Adventist education around the world. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 70(4), 10-14.
- Eldik, K. (2011). *Challenges in the internationalization of higher education*. Retrieved from [http://heic.info/assets/templates/heic2011/papers/13-Kamal\\_Eldik.pdf](http://heic.info/assets/templates/heic2011/papers/13-Kamal_Eldik.pdf)
- General Conference Department of Education (2005). Strategic planning in higher education. *Higher Education Management Series, 1*. Silver Spring, MA. Retrieved from <http://education.gc.adventist.org/documents/Strategic%20Planning.pdf>
- General Conference International Board of Education. (1995). *Handbook for the approval of new degree programs and institutional upgrading in Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities*. Silver Spring, MA. Retrieved from <http://education.gc.adventist.org/documents/HANDBOOK.pdf>

- General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics. (2010). *Seventh-Day Adventist world church statistics—2010*. Silver Spring, MA. Retrieved from <http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/Stats/SDAWorldChurchStatistics2010.PDF>
- General Conference Commission on Higher Education. (2005, October). *Final report of the General Conference Commission on Higher Education*. Silver Spring, MD, pp.1-15.
- Greenleaf, F. (2008). Who's in charge? Observations on governance in Seventh-day Adventist higher education. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 70(4), 29-36.
- Globalization. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/globalisation/>
- Hirst, P. Q., Thompson, G., & Bromley, S. (2009). *Globalization in question* (3rd ed). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Knight, R. G. (1986). A system in search of identity. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 48(4),15-37.
- Marmolejo, F. (2011, April 27). Aligning international work with institutional priorities. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/blogs/worldwise/internationalization-and-institutional-priorities/28132>
- Morris, J. B. (2009). Internationalizing the university: Theory, practice, organization and execution. *Journal of Emerging Knowledge on Emerging Markets*, 1(1), 143-151. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/jekem/vol1/iss1/12>
- Oberholster, R. F. (2005). Faculty commitment in higher education: Implications for strategic leadership. *International Forum*, 8(1&2), 15-24.
- Pawluk, S., Drumm, R., & Pawluk, K. (2007). Taking off the training wheels. *Journal of Adventist Education*, 69(4),11-16.
- Simmons, S. E. (2009, July). Aiming higher: What makes Adventist higher education "Adventist"? *Adventist World*, 10-12.
- Simmons, S. E. (2010, June). Getting down to business: Thinking strategy about Adventist education. *Adventist World Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.adventistworld.com/article/789/resources/english/issue-2010-1006/getting-down-to-business>
- School of Advanced Study. (2012, July 6). *Internationalisation in higher education*. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2oyXdyv1Og>
- The UMass System. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.massachusetts.edu/system/about.html>



UNESCO. (2007). *Trends in global higher education: Tracking an academic revolution*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001831/183168e.pdf>

*Pablo Rios, M.A Student  
Adventist University of the Philippines, Philippines  
President, Universal University Network Limited  
Trinidad and Tobago, W. L.  
riosp@uunl.org*