Demographic transition and retirement pensions in the academy body of the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico

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Introduction

A couple of decades ago the phrase “ageing of society” conveyed the idea of decadence; the gradual decadence of some societies, the most industrialized. Likewise, it used to refer the loss of the faculties of the individuals, a loss that prevented them from fully developing all their productive potential. More so: it stressed the idea that people older than 60 years, as they lose some vital health faculties and productive capacity, became highly vulnerable before the current socioeconomic dynamic, so they would somewhat turn into a social and family burden.
This very author underscores that population aging should be related to the command of science, for the individuals live longer because they have notably increased their integral wellbeing. Indeed, all societies to a higher or lower degree experience a demographic transition, so when one talks of demographic aging, it will be more appropriate to refer to a democratization of societies instead of mistakenly refer to their apparent decadence.

The topic of population aging has acquired a fundamental importance in the context of the ongoing globalization and because of the effects it unleashes in labor markets and pension funding, which generates particular echoes on the academic development of universities; besides, it is causing exceptional and utterly accelerated changes in fields such as savings, consumption, family income, financial services, insurances and more visibly in health, food, communication, transport, housing, healthcare and medical services and leisure.

Demographic transition virtually appears in every society in the world; its study (ONU, 2002) warns that this demographic event is no longer a phenomenon and has nowadays turned into a defined process which all the world societies undergo.

This way, as for pensions it is said that “few things have marked so deeply a change in the life of men as the appearance and spreading, as from the early XX century, of the pension systems” (Consejo de Europa, 1987); for Gary S. Becker (2002), precursor of the human capital theory, “the most beneficial advancement (of the XX century) for common man was the prolongation of life expectancy”; while Manuel Castells (Guillemard, 1992) underlines:

The phenomenon of population aging currently taking place in the most advanced (and non-developed) societies of the world is undoubtedly the most important social transformation produced by the end of the century.

It is plain to see that the increase of life expectancy of population carries utterly extraordinary events, such as the significant economic challenges and new social demands. Its evolution is increasingly felt in fields such as economics, politics, culture, lifestyles and the family.

This work supports the ideas that population aging brings along the reinforcement of citizenship rights and that old age is a stage as important in the vital cycle on individuals. Demographic aging makes labor markets flexible and part of this is to insistently propose the diminution of the shift of the elderly, at the same time favor the entrance of youths, who will financially support the pension systems and all social benefits. Hence, the
pension systems inevitably tend to punish early retirements and favor their
delay. Separately, fiscal benefits have also had effects among the elderly,
as it occurs in the different pension plans, in saving funds, consumption,
transport, health and medicine; these as well as other facts arise to different
 extents in virtually all the countries: we live the civilization of the retirees
(Péne, 1999).

In the sphere of university teaching there are also critical changes
that deserve attention: higher education institutions and their academic
bodies also age, therefore they need specific labor, financial and academic
treatment. In the face of this, it is worth wondering: what do we know
about the demographic transition of the academic body of the Autonomous
University of the State of Mexico? What do we know and how do we face
the contingences derived from the growing number of retired academicians?
What do we know about the ages of teachers and professors, their human
capital and seniority? Or, which academic bodies or fields will witness
successive retirements of their staff? The following data and statistical
indicators show the demographic transition the Autonomous University of
the State of Mexico (UAEM) currently undergoes.

The academic bodies of Mexican public universities experiences a
relative aging that becomes a growing demand for pensions.

In the current decade, the public universities of the country have
distinguished the growing demand for retirements and pensions from
their academic bodies and administrative employees, which gradually
but constantly age, such a fact has propitiated that university authority
instrument a national campaign with state and federal authorities in charge
of this to face as a whole the funding of these benefits, as it is established
by the labor collective contracts of the institutions.

As for the laborers, by means of their respective unions they have
demonstrated in local marches and even national ones before their university
authorities and state and federal governments in views of validate their
respective contracts, particularly in respect to the clauses that establish
the right to a severance package, pensions and other similar benefits.
Different mechanisms that have been used to strengthen and disseminate
information on this subject are the national forums that every year are held
in state universities on retirements and pensions. They are forums in which
the particular vision and struggle of university unions on each of the most
pressing and recurring needs of the university laborers is expressed, such
as retirement and pensions.
From an actuarial study presented by the National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES) (Reforma, 2002), rectors of state public universities of Oaxaca, Guanajuato, Colima, San Luis Potosi, Jalisco, Puebla, Queretaro, Yucatan and State of Mexico expressed the labor and financial pressures they face, particularly the large budgets they need to afford the growing demand from pensions. They added, besides, that in decades to come these budgets will have to increase considerably, to the extent to which the number of professors and administrative staff reach retirement age, which will be stressed; there were even comments that certain state universities were experiencing this problem as from the last decade.

The rectors of these universities agreed that retirements and pensions of university docents shall be responded as it is established by the labor collective contracts, the legal dispositions of the Federal Law of Labor, other regulations by IMSS and ISSSTE*(TN) and, according to the case, those of the social security institutions of the states. However they also insisted that their solution depended on the cooperation of docents and their unions; and of course, on the state and federal funding. About this we distinguish two facts that have marked the vision and policies on this topic among all the public universities of the country: in the first place, university authorities have been in charge of disseminating the idea that one of the mechanisms that will allow guaranteeing docents a pension has to do with the fact that unions decrease their demands, for instance, by means of the implementation of an individual capitalization pension system or one of assignation or the combination of both; such a pension system will fund pensions via the contributions of both docents and university authorities, this measure will be accompanied by increments in retirement age, rates and years of contributions. We can say that various universities, such as those of Guadalajara, Nuevo Leon and Aguascalientes instrumented their retirement and pension systems heeding these and other recommendations; secondly, the federal government, from claims and pressures by ANUIES and the National Confederation of University Laborers (Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Universitarios, Contu), instrumented the Fund of Extraordinary Support to Public State Universities (save those in Mexico City), destined for funding the passives of state universities in this respect. This way, between 2002 and 2006, 2 774 million MXN were destined for affording said passives, while the very universities produce their respective programs or reforms to their pension systems. Of this total budget the
University of Guadalajara received 354 million MXN (13 percent); that of Nuevo Leon 305 million MXN (11 percent); and the University of Aguascalientes 117 million MXN (4.2 percent). Due to reasons proper to the Fund, UAEM scarcely received 12 million MXN.

In the satisfactory solution of this problem also determinant are the cooperation of the institutions of social security, such as IMSS and ISSSTE as well as the state institutes of social security. This is to say, in order to successfully face the rights of retirements and pensions of university docents, all the bodies related to this must take part in a coordinated manner, because of the precariousness of budgets, the diversity of the funding systems, because a number of them do not have a retirement system and pensions and because several universities bypassed this obligation.

The 54 state public universities estimated in over 125 million MXN the sum of retirement pensions; 30 of them only accumulated 77 billion MXN, other 30 universities reached a ratio of 8609 laborers close to retirement, contrasted to 7913 who were already pensioned; it was distinguishable that in these universities there were 11 active laborers per one retiree, a still considerable ratio, in comparison with those exhibited by IMSS and ISSSTE. Additionally, life expectancy of university laborers changed from 49 to 75 years of age between 1940 and 2000; while pensions averaged between 1100 and 11850. These contingencies have to be added to the fact that the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Metropolitan Autonomous University and National Polytechnic Institute account for more than 50 percent of the national budget.

Unions, on their own, state that the need to deepen into the measures that lead in the short and mid term to successfully solve the funding of pensions. Likewise, these organizations recognize that the amount of pensions have been on the increase, even though without the alarming risks that certain university authorities and functionaries intend to show. Particularly, Contu has spoken in favor that each union and its respective university find viable solutions, democratic, solid, and equitable to amply afford this established in collective contracts and the respective laws of social security: it is finding (and maintain) the balance the reflects the rights of university laborers and the obligation of the universities to extend, under the established regulation, the agreed pensions and retirements.

Pensions and retirements are a hot topic among the university authorities and unionized laborers, but also with the federal and state governments. A survey by Contu demonstrated that seven of the consulted universities did not have a specific retirement fund; 80 percent of the consulted
unions recognized possible acute financial problems between the 2005 and 2012 years derived from the lack of specific pension and retirement programs; five unions warned that their collective contracts did not have clauses relative to pensions and retirements; whilst more than a half of the interviewed unions pointed out with concern the difficulties to pay for the pensions derived from the complex and diverse funding sources between universities, state and federal governments, IMSS or ISSSTE; eight of them stated that their respective universities did not give any benefit to their laborers at the moment of the payment at concluding the contract; however, most of them declared that university laborers received benefits from concluding their contracts.

As it is noticed, the topic of retirements and pensions of university laborers is indeed a hot, complex and delicate one in its labor, budgetary and academic perspectives: as it would be expected, university authorities, federal and state governments, and also IMSS and ISSSTE incriminate the unions and their collective contracts by the “generosity” of benefits they demand from retirements and pensions; while unionized university workers resort to their social rights, established by the Federal Law of Labor and recognized in their collective contracts, which bye the way the former admitted and institutionally committed to fulfill them, back in the day.

The particular situation of UAEM in this field is as follows. The academic body of UAEM has social security as they enroll in the Institute of Social Security of the State of Mexico and Municipalities (Instituto de Seguridad Social del Estado de México y Municipios, ISSEMYM), a decentralized organism that is charge of the social security of public servants in the State of Mexico: more than 274000 affiliates and more than seven thousand university laborers. Their social security covers pensions, health services and other benefits. Independently from their social security rights, docents have other benefits in their collective contract, such as labor severance package and other insurances by UAEM, which cover them with charge to the university budget.

It is important to stress that neither UAEM nor its academic body have the same pressure on pensions and retirements experienced by other state universities, however, the same state and federal support to fund the severance packages of its docents that year by year increase in cost. Fresh and growing resources are needed, as other state universities are supported.
Demographic transition of the academic body of UAEM

The Federation of Autonomous Associations of Academic Personnel of UAEM (Federación de Asociaciones Autónomas del Personal Académico de la UAEM, FAAPAUAEM) reports up to March 2006, a total of 3952 people enrolled, of which 2242 are men (57 percent) and 1710 women (43 percent). The universe of unionized docents comprises 42 associations, one per academic organism; unionized docents perform their activities in high schools, faculties, university centers, research centers and in central administration. It is worth mentioning that only Tenancingo University Center at present lacks an association; however some of the docents there belong to other associations of FAAPAUAEM.

The database indicates that UAEM docents are on average 44.58 years; men 46.69 and women 41.78 years of age. It can be inferred that by the end of the current administration the average age of docents will be close to 48 years of age. In like manner, it shows that men on average are older than women; however they will average an age close to 45 year of age in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>AGE AND SEX OF THE DOCENTS ENROLLED IN FAAPAUAEM (YEARS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total docents</strong></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAEM</td>
<td>3 952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median age</strong></td>
<td>General UAEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.58</td>
<td>46.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard deviation</strong></td>
<td>UAEM general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.955</td>
<td>10.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPAUAEM.

Age average by levels

A review of how docents are distributed by teaching level allows learning on the one side the number of docents that carry out different activities virtually all the State of Mexico, and on the other it shows the teaching levels that concentrate the most docents. This way, we have that 52 percent works in faculties, followed by university centers (UC) with 22 percent, and high schools with 9 percent. These data are proof that UAEM
is predominantly an institution of higher education, since 74 percent of their academic personnel works in organisms of higher education and postgraduate studies.

They indicate as well that a part of the academic body, even in small numbers, has been carrying out activities inherent to high-school education, administrative managements and research. By the way, UAEM offers high-school education in four municipalities of the State of Mexico far from the capital city. On their own, university centers, which are 10, are also located outside the capital city, in the same number of municipalities of the state. This is important, for further in the text it will be dealt with, the average age of docents in the different teaching levels as well as between organisms varies, in some cases dramatically.

**GRAPH 1**
**DISTRIBUTION OF DOCENTS BY ACADEMIC SPACE**

Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPAUAEAM.

The research centers have the fewest docents and average the oldest age, 46.57 years; those of faculties reach an average life of 45.64 years of age; those of high schools 45.62b years; while university centers 41.38 years. From the obtained data, and seeking to avoid false scenarios of old ages, retirements and pensions, we can propose the following argumentation:
Out of the docents in the four teaching levels offered by UAEM, those of high schools and university centers average the ages farthest from 50 years and older, while those in research centers and faculties averaged the ages closest to 50 years and older; therefore, an higher emptying of docents in the latter during the ongoing decade.

**GRAPH 2**  
MEAN AGE OF UAEM DOCENTS BY FIELDS OF KNOWLEDGE

Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPUAEM.

*Mean age by field of knowledge and faculty*

Producing indicators for the docents and their mean ages by fields of knowledge allows learning in detail in which of them and in which faculties they work; it also offers greater accuracy in the variations they present, thereby better identify the docent groups who are closer to retirement.

Data indicate that docents groped in the six fields of knowledge exhibit mean ages from 42.7 to 49.16 years; the docents in three of them with average age over 45 years. We might infer that older docents on commonly
work in the oldest field of knowledge in UAEM. Likewise, we can verify that the areas of knowledge we refer to are also those with most numerous enrolment of students in UAEM.

Our database also allows obtaining the number of docents and their mean ages by faculty; these data allows identifying in which faculties the docents, whose average ages are older or younger then the mean, work. From these indicators we can foresee in which of them the docents are likely, according to their age and seniority, to retire sooner.

Hence, we find that those of the Faculty of Medicine are the most representative mean age, 50.54 years; those of Agricultural Sciences, 48.77 years; Dentistry, 48.17 years; Humanities, 48.12; and Law, 48.08. It is distinguishable the fact that faculties such as Nursing, Behavioral Sciences, Tourism and Languages, which mostly comprise female docents, present ages than on average range from 38.30 to 46.96 years of age. Comparatively, docents in Medicine reach on average years that are higher in twelve years in relation to those of Languages, who average the youngest age in the sector.

When measuring the age structure of docents by faculty, we notice the following scenario:

Virtually, docents in six UAEM faculties average ages equal or older than 48, who are those that may experience pressures from retirements in years to come. The possible validity of this scenario might then take us to take, as of now, specific measures to program the replacements with docents whose human capital enables supporting the academic development of these faculties.

Mean age by gender

Performing a gender study is fundamental because of two weighty reasons: it allows learning the structure and composition of the ages of the academic staff, and also the labor and academic environment of the female docents and finding information on the possible pressures that the feminine sector can propitiate as retirement increase. It is important to remember that the teaching sector is one of the labor markets with an important presence of women in virtually all the fields of knowledge and academic levels. Their numbers have increased in UAEM academic body, as well as those of retired women.
 граф 3

MEAN AGE OF DOCENTS IN HIGH SCHOOLS AND FACULTIES

Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPAUAEM.
A review of the academic body by gender shows that female docents represent 43 percent; this is to say, their numbers represents 76 percent of men. We can point out that the breach between men and women who work for the institution has decreased year by year, and their proportion seems to be balanced.

As for female docents by teaching level, we have that their numbers are noticeably higher in faculties, with 834; in high schools, 361; university centers, 324; and in research centers, 27. Data indicate, however, that the proportion of female docents in relation to men is more significant at high school level, 95 percent; followed by research centers, with 79 percent; in the faculties, 66 percent; and in university centers, 60 percent.

It has to be said that female docents, whose labor stability, income from the two sources operated by UAEM, human capital and university projection they have, still prevails immensely so far in the faculties and research centers. At the other two levels their conditions are less stable, and somehow they are more restricted to develop than their peers in faculties.

If we analyze the mean age of women by field of knowledge we find that women in health sciences reach an age of 44.48 years, the highest in the sector; they are followed by women in agricultural sciences, 43.46 years; women in social and administrative sciences, 41.03 years of age; while women in engineering and technology, natural and exact sciences and education and humanities, average ages under 40 years.

Comparing the mean age of women with that of men, we have that the one for women health sciences is delayed 6.22 years in relation to that of men; whereas, that for education and humanities is delayed by 2.79 years in relation to men.

As for the feminine sector that works in the different academic spaces, we also have that women also hold the oldest mean age in research centers, 45 years of age, and 46.5 for men. The docents with the youngest mean age are those in university centers 38.6 years of age, as it is the case of men, with the youngest mean age, 42.03. Then it can be said that there is similitude between the means for women and men, as in both cases they reach the oldest and youngest ages both on fields of knowledge and academic spaces.

Other important gender indicators to mention demonstrate that female docents surpass the men in numbers in the following high schools “Adolfo López Mateos”, “Ignacio Ramírez” and “Cuauhtémoc”; whilst in “Garibay Quintana” their numbers are the same.
Graph 4

Mean age and sex of docents by field of knowledge

Source: own elaboration based on data from FAAPAUAEM.
In university centers, male teachers surpass women and only in Ecatepec their numbers are the same.

In faculties we have that men prevail over women, and as we know, this sector holds the largest number of professors in UAEM; it must be said that the proportion of female professors in relation to men is circa 50 percent, i.e., the feminine sector equals the masculine.

Among research centers, on the contrary, there are some in which there are some female researchers than men, namely: the Center of Research on Medical Sciences and the Center of Research on Social and Humanistic Sciences.

The Center of Language Teaching holds a number of female teachers that amply surpasses men; three offices in UAEM Central Building are largely managed by women.

As for female docents by field of knowledge in UAEM, we have that circa 300 are in social and administrative sciences, the most numerous feminine sector; in health sciences there are 195 women and in engineering and technology there are 181. It must be said that in education and humanities their numbers are larger than those for men.

**Quinquennial groups**

Presenting the ages of docents by quinquennial groups allows us to learn the age structure of the docents, as well as their absolute numbers. In this sense, data are as follows:

Docents with ages over 50 years represent 31.05 percent of the whole university academic body; this is to say, one in three docents is already 50 years or older. It is distinguishable that 299 docents were older than 60 years, which amount to 7.6 percent. The empirical evidence of retirements and pensions from ISSEMYM shows that people older than 50 years of age with a labor trajectory longer than 20 years usually access the right to retirement pension, even if it is proportional.

In such sense, UAEM has a group of docents which will surely access some sort of pension in the years to come; they are mostly docents that built UAEM and currently work in every academic space and at every teaching level, mainly in the Valley of Toluca.

A review of the docents who are older than 60 years and their teaching level indicate us that in faculties there are 192 docents who are older than 60 years; in high schools, 50; in central administration, 29; in university centers, 25 and only three in the research centers.
GRAPH 5
MEAN AGE AND SEX OF DOCENTS BY KNOWLEDGE LEVEL

Source: own elaboration based on data from FAAPAUAE.
Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPAUAEM.
Docents aged between 50 and 59 years mainly work in faculties, 495; in high schools 229; and in university centers, 129. While professors aged between 40 and 49 work in faculties, 670; in university centers, 308; and in high schools, 262.

Age structure

The research also offers demographic information utterly representative and updated, as it incorporates data organized by quinquennia on information the age structure of UAEM academic staff. The structure shows that the gross of feminine population concentrates in the ranges from 30 to 40 years of age; while men concentrate in the range from 40 to 50.

By and large, we found a tendency that broadens in the ranges between 40 and 50 years, which according to the demographic structure has an increasing growth of docents with mean ages over 50 years of age along time and the relative incorporation of a segment of docents with average ages under 35.

It is also seen that in the oldest age ranges the peak of the graph has a number of docents older than 60 years of age, a number significantly higher than the base, which ranges from 23 to 30.

GRAPH 7
AGE OF UAEM DOCENTS BY QUINQUENNIAL GROUPS

Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPAUAEM.
Discussion

Bearing in mind the theoretical discussion and the international empirical evidence, as well as the demographic, academic, and labor indicators here presented, it is possible to state several scenarios for UAEM in the following years.

The academic body of UAEM gradually ages

The mean age of the academic body is 44.56; men present a mean age of 46.69 years of age, and women of 41.68 years. It can be inferred that in 2009 the mean age of docents will be close to 48. Likewise, it shows that men are older than women, however this sector will average an age close to 45 years of age when the incumbent administration concludes.

The total docents older than 50 years of age are 1215, who represent 31 percent: one in three docents is older than 50 years of age.

Close to retirement

Docents who average ages over 50 years are also, on average, those with greater human capital, longer seniority and labor stability; they largely teach in undergraduate and postgraduate courses and research.

In such as sense, the academicians in research centers are those with the oldest mean age: 46.57 years; while professors in faculties average 45.64 years; being docents in university centers those with the youngest average age: 41.38 years.

At the level of faculty, we know that medicine professors reach a mean age in the group from 50 to 54 years of age, the oldest in the sector; while, female professors agricultural sciences, dentistry, humanities and law are older than 48 years on average.
Graph 8

Age Structure and Sex of Docents

Source: own elaboration with data from FAAPA/UAEM.
The future of the academic body: feminine

Nowadays, UAEM has an important number of female docents who participate in all the university functions in all the academic organisms and at all teaching levels; their human capital, wages and seniority grow year by year.

This way, we have that in high school there are 361 female docents, 324 in university centers, 785 female professors in faculties and 27 female academicians in research centers. Their mean age, as we already pointed out, is younger than that of men, however female docents that retire grow faster than men. This is, female docents usually exercise their right to retire to a higher degree than men, so in the following lustrums the number of female retirees might increase.

Regressive age structure

In general, the composition by ages of the docents tends to increase in ranges over 50 years of age, mainly in men, and to a lesser extent in women.

The specific characteristics of the labor market of university teaching demands professionals older than 23 years, so UAEM has a number of docents with mean ages under 40 years, who will be those supporting the academic and labor development in the years to come; so the graph of ages registers a relatively dense base in these ranges.

In spite of this labor and demographic condition, data indicate that one in three docents is already older than 50 years and their number increases every year. It may be the case that docents with greater human capital and longer seniority are those with full labor stability; so it is definitive that their number constantly grows, as well as their age averages. It may also be the case that docents younger than 40 years, with little human capital and shorter seniority might present a more dynamical mobility index (semestral hiring contracts and internships) then the previous academic group.

Effects on labor

The labor effects of the aging of UAEM academic body are:
1. Financial pressures for severance package, whose sum increases by the year.
2. Retirement of generations of docents who build and consolidated UAEM, main active of higher education the State of Mexico has.
3. Growing retirement of docents in the oldest academic organisms; which besides have the most numerous teaching staff and enrolled students.
Impact on academic development

Certain fields of knowledge and academic spaces will experience problems if their most qualified and longest serving staff exercises their right to a pension.

Increase of the budget and benefits destined for training and specialize new human capital, which will become part of the academic base of UAEM in the following decades.

Middle and long term university planning

1. Producing an integral program that successfully faces the challenges posed by retirements and pensions: actuarial, labor, financial, academic development of teaching and administrative staff, by gender, academic organism and field of knowledge;
2. Producing together with ISSEMYM, FAAPAUAEM and SUTESUAEM studies on retirement and pensions of public servants, emphasizing university staff: retirement age, sort of pension, amount of pension, gender, life expectancy, saving level, lifestyles and health;
3. Designing and instrumenting continual surveys that indicate the labor and academic effects from retirements and pensions. This will lead us to a successful planning, at the time that it will enable the performance of our retired human capital, which will be the information source for active docents to make decisions on their retirements and pensions

Labor proposals

1. Instrumenting a trust that funds the severance packages of UAEM docents; so far, the budget for this entry has been sufficient, however this expense will increase dramatically in the years to come.
2. Negotiate with competent state and federal authorities fresh and constant financial resources for these events, such as most public universities in the country do.
3. Financial shielding for the contractual benefits most demanded by docents, mainly those whose frequency of occurrence is inherent to teaching functions.
Academic proposals

1. Strengthen the programs to train new human capital that secures the viability of the academic organisms and fields of knowledge in the long term;
2. Hiring docents with ideal profiles for the university functions to replace the retired docents;
3. Promote interim or new-admission human capital more trained beforehand;

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