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On Student Access and Equity in a Reforming University: Makerere in the 1990s and Beyond

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Abstract

This paper examines issues of access and equity in the context of the far-ranging reforms that have been taking place at Makerere University and in the Ugandan higher education system generally since the early 1990s. The analysis attempts to map out the contours of student access over time, outlining the major fault lines in student diversities which include, among others, location, class and gender, as well as the state (university) response to these diversities in the context of market based reforms. We argue that key to the reform programme was a reduction in the state's financial commitment in higher education and the implementation of alternative financial strategies especially relating to the introduction of the private sponsorship programme in 1992. Private sponsorship greatly expanded the intake of fee-paying students, and the total number of students in higher education in Uganda has expanded enormously. However, these apparent gains in terms of access to higher education have been offset by lack of necessary investment in facilities, with resulting problems of over-crowding, excessive teaching loads, large classes and falling standards. The analysis also interrogates the ways in which government/private dynamic plays out in the context of a highly fractured education system, dominated by urban-based schools, particularly located in the south of the country, and how the various affirmative actions measures have in a way, reproduced social and class privilege.

Résumé

L'article analyse les questions d'accès et d'équité dans un contexte de profondes réformes, à l'Université de Makerere, en particulier, et dans le système de l'enseignement supérieur ougandais, en générale, depuis les années 90. Cette ana-

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lyse essaie de définir l'évolution de l'accès des étudiants dans le temps, en établissant les éventuelles failles au niveau de la diversité de condition des étudiants, incluant les éléments suivants : l'emplacement, la classe, le genre. L'étude essaie également de définir la réponse de l'État (université) face à cette diversité, dans le contexte de réformes basées sur le marché. Le cœur de ce programme de réforme est la réduction de l'engagement financier de l'État envers l'enseignement supérieur et la mise en œuvre de stratégies financières alternatives, notamment celles liées à l'introduction du programme de sponsorat privé en 1992. Le système du sponsorat privé a considérablement augmenté l'admission d'étudiants payant leurs frais d'étude, et le nombre total d'étudiants dans l'enseignement supérieur ougandais s'est donc considérablement accrû. Cependant, ces acquis apparents en termes d'accès à l'enseignement supérieur ont été obscurcis par le faible niveau d'investissements utiles au niveau des infrastructures, provoquant ainsi des problèmes de sureffectifs, de charges d'enseignement excessives, de salles de cours démesurées et de faible niveau général. L'étude examine également la façon dont la dynamique gouvernementale/privée intervient dans le contexte d'un système d'éducation extrêmement fragile, dominé par des écoles urbaines, particulièrement celles du sud du pays ; elle vise également à montrer comment les différentes mesures de discrimination positive ont dans un certain sens reproduit les privilèges sociaux et ceux de classe.

Introduction

There is a changing face of Makerere University brought about by a reform process that led to an overwhelming explosion in student numbers, characterised as a 'flood of humanity' (GMD 2004). Key to the reform was the implementation of alternative financial strategies relating to reduced state commitment in higher education. Market orientation was the envisaged alternative, and the key to this orientation was the introduction of the private sponsorship programme in 1992, which greatly expanded the intake of fee-paying students. By 1999 Makerere had moved from a situation where none of its students paid fees to one where 80 per cent paid fees, accounting for more than half of the university's total revenue (Musisi and Muwanga 2003: 22). According to Obong (2004) overall student enrolment rose by 340 per cent between 1993 and 2000. Where once only day programmes had hitherto existed, three types of students – day, afternoon and evening – now existed. From under 10,000 in the early 1990s, the student population increased to just over 40,000 by 2004.

This enormous expansion was predicated on a far-reaching change in the higher education sector beginning from the late 1980s when it was argued, as according to the World Bank, investment returns from higher education were lower than those from basic education. The argument underlying the reforms was that higher education was not cost-effective, as it diverted national re-

sources to serve individual students. These resources, it was argued, should benefit a larger stratum at the lower levels of the education system. Student allowances such as for transport, books and living expenses were the first obvious target, but soon the privatisation logic was to go beyond student cost-sharing. It went as far as requiring tertiary institutions to contribute towards their own upkeep, and this is the one clear genesis for the introduction of privately sponsored student programmes (PSSP).

Makerere, as a pioneer of PSSP in the East African region, leads the way in making fee-paying students a major source of income. Presented as a model of institutional reform, Makerere University is noted as having 'more than doubled enrolment … introduced a semester system and established new courses, degrees, departments and faculties … despite declining financial support from government' (World Bank 2001: 53). The underlying factor here is that, as Makerere opens its doors wider and wider each year, the state barely keeps its own doors ajar, clearly demonstrated by the actual numbers of applicants each year, the numbers admitted on state funding and those unable to attain admission. Government-sponsored students at the public institutions only doubled from 2,000 in the year 2001. Because of the three additional public universities the increase to 4,000 government-sponsored students made no difference in the case of Makerere University, as its own share remained around the original 2,000 students. In the academic year 2000–01 the state funded only 8.8 per cent of those eligible to enter Makerere University (Kwesiga 2000).

Increased access has thus been framed in such way as to free the state from substantial investment in the higher education sector. The state has been tacitly excused from funding higher education, and in the case of Makerere state funding has not only decreased but also more often than not is irregularly dispensed. From time to time the university has had to appeal to higher authorities or make frequent delegations to those in charge in order for this money to be released.[1] To amplify this further, in the 1997–98 financial year 60 billion Uganda shillings was approved but only 20 billion was actually provided. The university raised 10 billion from its own sources to survive the year. For the 1997–98 academic years, the wage bill alone fell short by 1.26 billion shillings. As a result the university had to raise an extra 125 million shillings a month to meet staff salaries (Kwesiga 2002).

The massive expansion of Makerere University at a time of declining state funding makes a compelling case for analysing the question of student numbers and access. Indeed what *is* the access question in this paradoxical human explosion? What is the nature and implication of this expansion? This paper deals with the question of access in the context of the above reforms through a

critical appraisal of the sloughing process that Makerere University has undergone in the recent past.

The analysis is divided into three main parts. First is an overview of access factors in Uganda's higher education system and the issue of inequality in terms of gaining entry into Makerere University. Clearly demonstrated is the fact that Makerere, as the historically premier university in the country, has over the years assumed a specific character, with glaring regional, religious, gender and rural-urban disparities. The second part maps out the different responses to diversity, ranging from allowances for needy students to quotas and affirmative action interventions to tackle disadvantage or offer incentives for the different categories of students. The efficacy and contradictions of this response are equally analysed. The last part of the paper deals with the question of access outcomes in the contemporary period, particularly addressing the issue of student numbers in relation to the university's mandate and its social relevance in the context of reforms. The impetus for this analysis revolves around the implications of reforms for equity and access. What type of access has been pursued and with what implications? To what extent is the university able to fulfil its mandate in the context of policies that increasingly diminish the role of the state in the tertiary sector? And finally how do the different interventions to deal with disadvantage interface with changes brought about by the liberalist reforms in which Makerere University is clearly engrossed?

Access Patterns in Uganda's Higher Education System

Educational access has been a subject of debate worldwide since the 1960s, and the debate has revolved mainly around questions of exclusion and discrimination in relation to educational opportunities. Article 1 of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1962) defined discrimination as any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth that impairs equality of treatment in education. Access therefore refers to three main areas. The first relates to entry. As the beginning point, entry is an important benchmark reflecting the level of openness of the institution in question. For higher education, entry as a quantitative indicator demonstrates how narrow or how wide the sector is, compared to existing diversity in the country. The second aspect of access is the equal opportunity to take part or share in the system. In other words, what does the system offer and to whom? The third area is the output/outcome of entry and participation, pertaining to equality of educational results or gains. In effect

we are talking here about issues of numerical representation as well as about the outcomes of inclusion (Ramsay et al. 1998).

Fundamental to access and equity in higher education is the extent to which the system responds effectively to full diversity as a key indicator of its quality. Underlying this is the fact that inequalities are a result of social, educational and economic factors rather than levels of ability and potential. This means that the system has the obligation to redress the impact of educational disadvantage as a matter of social justice and national vitality (Ramsay et al. 1998: 20). In general, therefore, educational access denotes the existence of specific structures of discrimination within the institution, the broader environment or both. With regard to Makerere University the most apparent access question has been that of entry. From its inception Makerere was a special institution seen as the ultimate goal of academic achievement in Uganda. Established in 1922, Makerere remained the only university in Uganda until the early 1990s. Three other public universities only came onto the scene after 2000: Mbarara University of Science and Technology (1989), Kyambogo University (2002) and Gulu University of Agricultural and Environmental Science (2003). A host of private universities have also been established.[2] In addition there are ten National Teacher Colleges, five Uganda Technical Colleges and other varied colleges in the fields of health, forestry, agriculture, wildlife and tourism.

Nevertheless the higher education sector in Uganda still lags far behind the lower levels. There exists a steep educational pyramid in which less than one percent of students who began school in 1980 had made it to university by 1993. Although private programmes in public universities and the establishment of private universities have indeed widened the tertiary sector this pyramid in many ways still pertains. Two things explain the pyramid. One is the colonial legacy. Historically it is a well-known fact that in the colonial period higher education for the colonised was not a priority. What was seen as essential was the production of assistants for technicians and senior colonial administrators. The 1980s World Bank philosophy, with its emphasis on basic education for the developing world, only seems to be a reincarnation of this legacy. The second factor is that post-colonial changes in the education system have disproportionately expanded primary and secondary school enrolment. In the 1980s, for example, the government expanded secondary schools, a move which enabled rural-based communities to access those levels of education, although it was not accompanied by adequate infrastructure development. Since then the government has further opened up educational access through the establishment of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy in 1997. The number of private providers has also soared at the primary and secondary levels of the education system.

The establishment of many private schools, along with the relative increase in enrolment at primary and secondary levels, greatly increased the number of eligible candidates for university admission, yet actual admissions at university level remained static. For example, in 1995 and 1996, enrolment in all primary schools was 2,636,409 and 3,068,625 respectively, an increase rate of 16 per cent. In the secondary sector a transition rate of about 45 percent of primary sector enrolment has been realised (UNICEF 2003). This means that the higher education sector should be prepared for not less than 100,000 students. Yet even with the introduction of 'open up' reforms, Makerere barely satisfies 30 per cent of the demand for higher education.

Although the establishment of new public and private universities widened access to higher education, demand still outstrips supply by far. Moreover Makerere remains the key institution. The increase in the number of public and private universities has predominantly created a stratification rather than wide choice. In the stratified higher education sector Makerere clearly remains the number one choice for the majority of students. Most students apply to Makerere as their first choice; other public universities come second, while private universities constitute the third choice. Hence Makerere remains the premier university due to its historical and infrastructural landscape.[3] Entry into Makerere remains a national and very political issue.

A mapping of Makerere's 80 or so years points to clear consistencies on who could easily access entry. Over time a steep differentiation developed, mainly rotating around class, region, gender, the urban-rural divide and religion, what Kasozi (2003) refers to as the major fault lines along which resources have been unjustly distributed. Makerere catered for a male-dominated population, largely from the south, urban-based and predominantly Christian. The humanities, rather than science-based programmes, attracted the majority of students. With the introduction of private sponsorship programmes, the well-to-do have easily accessed government sponsorship while the disadvantaged have been either concentrated in private programmes or kept out of higher education altogether. Furthermore, those from disadvantaged positions generally stick to the humanities in order to maximise their chances, leaving science-based courses to those from 'good' schools. Hence access to higher education has been filtered through a complex web of class.

Within this web, regional and gender differences have generally tended to stand out as critical points of access. Historically the region in which one is located has had a decisive influence on whether he or she will enter Makerere or not. A few districts take the lion's share of places. The pattern is most evident among those who receive government funding, as this is based on how

well one performs at secondary level. For example, apart from highly urbanised districts in the disadvantaged regions of the north and the east, most parts of those regions are at a disadvantage. The war in the north that has raged on for close to two decades has meant even further marginalisation, making an already bad situation for social services (particularly education) worse. Makerere admission lists for government sponsorship clearly point to region as destiny. An overall mapping of regional disparities for government sponsorship over a selected period clearly depicts critical regional disparities (see Table 1).

Table 1: Makerere University, Government Admission by Region over a Selected Period

		1993/1994		1994/1995		2002/2003		2004/2005	
Region	District	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Adjumani	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Apac	2	0	2	0	3	2	1	0
	Arua	70	5	45	6	24	1	9	0
	Gulu	5		12	3	19	1	10	2
	Kitgum	0	0	1		0	9	0	0
Northern	Lira	21	1	12	4	4	0	3	0
	Moroto	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Moyo	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Nebbi	7	0	7	1	0	0	1	0
	Total	**109**	**6**	**80**	**14**	**51**	**13**	**24**	**3**
	Bugiri	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
	Busia	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
	Iganga	18	0	22	6	8	29	15	11
	Jinja	130	18	91	8	156	22	79	5
	Kamuli	14	10	9	3	0	3	2	0
	Kapchorwa	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Eastern	Katakwi	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Kumi	3	0	7	2	4	9	3	6
	Mbale	34	19	53	20	34	17	12	7
	Pallisa	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0
	Soroti	9	0	6	0	24	0	11	0
	Tororo	50	28	40	14	35	28	15	2
	Total	**263**	**75**	**231**	**53**	**264**	**111**	**144**	**31**

Table 1: Makerere University, Government Admission by Region (contd.)

		1993–1994		1994–1995		2002–2003		2004–2005	
Region	District	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Bushenyi	37	13	22	23	49	47	41	40
	Hoima	4	0	9	3	2	2	5	0
	Kabale	34	3	44	14	37	9	35	17
	Kabarole	19	8	31	10	5	3	9	2
	Kamwenge	7	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
	Kanungu	4	0	2	0	6	1	1	0
	Kasese	12	0	1	3	5	8	2	7
Western	Masindi	7	0	4	0	10	1	10	0
	Kibaale	1	0	11	2	2	0	0	1
	Kisoro	4	4	5	0	1	0	1	0
	Mbarara	59	25	56	24	80	24	63	19
	Ntungmo	6	0	19	0	12	0	14	0
	Rukungiri	25	15	11	40	3	10	13	10
	Total	**219**	**68**	**218**	**119**	**212**	**105**	**194**	**96**
	Kalangala	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Kampala	291	157	2		388	335	402	327
	Kayunga	8	0	15	11	0	0	2	7
	Kiboga	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	Luweero	16	8	31	14	99	47	72	51
	Masaka	55	5	40	9	75	9	50	10
Central	Mpigi	141	143	122	112	29	23	54	38
	Mubende	9	0	6	3	17	2	20	1
	Mukono	78	76	58	70	95	85	98	89
	Nakasongola	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
	Rakai	0	14	5	6	1	2	0	1
	Wakiso*					292	260	304	348
	Total	**598**	**403**	**279**	**225**	**998**	**764**	**1003**	**873**

Source: Makerere University, Office of the Academic Registrar, Admissions.
Key: *New district created in 2002, principally around Kampala City, curved out of Mpigi District. This also explains the sudden drop of Mpigi share in 2002.

As demonstrated by Table 1, regional imbalances in Makerere's government sponsorships have widened from bad to worse. If we take the northern region versus the western, for example, the difference in favour of the west was 72 slots in 1993 but 263 in 2004. In the case of northern versus central, the disadvantage for the north was 886 slots in 1993 and went up to 1,876 in 2004. Overall Table 1 clearly brings out the educational advantage of the central region, closely followed by the western region. Kwesiga (2002) notes that, between 1928 and 1937, about 70 per cent of students at Makerere came from Buganda. By the early 1990s the picture was so clear that the south in general, and the central in particular, principally concentrated among 25 to 30 schools out of the 800 with advanced level countrywide, scooped the majority of places (see Table 2). In the 2004–2005 intake, 25 schools, 90 per cent of them from the central region, took 1,336 positions out of the total of 2,694. In the 2005–2006 (government sponsorship) intakes the first twenty-five schools were all from the south, and twenty-one of these were from Buganda alone. The first northern school was 109 out of 265, with three candidates in total. For the 2006–2007 intake the first twenty schools took 1,098 out of the 1,614 slots for direct entry merit sponsorship. In total the central region took the lion's share of 41.8 per cent, followed by the western region with 27.4 per cent, while the eastern and northern regions had 21.2 per cent and 9.6 per cent respectively.

Table 2: Admission of Direct Entrants from Top Twenty-five Best-Performing Schools and Other Schools for Selected Years

	Number of Students Admitted*			
	1993–1994	1994–1995	2002–2003	2004–2005
First Ten	561(32)	537(30)	760(30)	830(35)
Second Ten	330(19)	265(15)	464(18)	336(14)
First Twenty-five	996(57)	893(50)	1370(54)	1256(53)
Other Schools	750(43)	888(50)	1148(46)	1115(47)
Direct Entry Admissions Total	**1746**	**1781**	**2518**	**2371**

Source: Makerere University, Admission records.
Key: *The percentage (in brackets) refers to the proportion of slots to the total government sponsorship for each intake.

The regional disparity question does not necessarily talk to issues of individual disadvantage, since a person hailing from one region could study in schools

based in another region. Rather, what is at stake here is the structural disadvantage in terms of schools and their location within Uganda's education landscape. It is well documented that the process of establishing formal education in Uganda was uneven (Wandira 1972). The first schools established by the colonial administration were all in Buganda, starting with Mengo in Kampala (1898) and followed by others such as Namilyango, Kisubi, Budo for boys and Gayaza for girls. The roll-out of government education investment was slow and dire for the northern and eastern regions. Tracing the expansion of this service throughout the country shows that the initial imbalance has persisted to date, with most leading schools still located in the south. Consequently entry opportunities are much more diverse in the south than in the north.

The question of equality or merit amongst unequals builds on the numerical imbalances in educational institutions. Old schools were established with comprehensive learning infrastructure such as laboratories, educational materials and appropriate teaching accommodation. Whereas the 1980s, for example, saw a rapid expansion of schools in all regions of the country,[4] this expansion only created a larger pool of schools with poor learning infrastructure principally, leaving the old schools as an island of (southern) privilege. The majority of schools operate on a bare minimum with no laboratories, insufficient classroom space and poor teacher accommodation. A consideration of school facilities across the regions lays bare the regional differentiation with regard to learning infrastructure (see Table 3). Since both well-equipped and poorly equipped schools sit one examination, it is not hard to imagine the reproduction of privilege into higher education.

Educational infrastructure indeed says a lot about access outcomes. Table 3 shows critical consistencies with the patterns of accessing higher education. The pattern of the privileged south shows in the number of schools as well as in relation to facilities that directly feed into academic excellence such as classrooms, libraries and laboratories and in relation to other 'cushioning' infrastructure such as dormitories. In numerical terms the eastern region (excluding what has been termed the Far East, which takes in the districts in Karamoja) shows a relatively better performance in terms of facilities than in access outcomes with regard to higher education.[5] However the dominant pattern of central and west still remains in terms of facilities for academic excellence. A related factor is the inflation of pass marks over time. The 'triple A' phenomenon has changed the conception of passing, because it is total. Where a triple D was sufficient to bring one to a Bachelors Degree in Social Sciences in 1987, a triple B score in three principal subjects was 'risky' by the year 2000. In many schools students were even forced to offer four principals as opposed to the standard three. This however served to increase the load and further

Table 3: School Facilities by Region

	Government Schools	Private Schools	Class Rooms	Dormitories	Incinerators	Kitchens	Laboratories	Latrine Blocks	Libraries	Offices	Staff Rooms	Store Rooms	Teacher's Houses	Workshops
Central	195	516	5797	1782	170	661	816	2033	403	1883	669	978	2429	175
East	179	315	3482	531	38	372	415	1460	213	1047	387	583	1137	6183
Far East	10	2	80	48	0	11	24	69	9	24	10	18	75	380
West	248	259	3756	1701	56	456	511	2018	271	1096	459	807	1775	13413
North	132	107	1624	458	16	187	270	1034	113	423	181	311	1006	5862

Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (2004), Statistical Abstract for Secondary Schools Facilities, Department of Educational Planning.

distort the learning process, specifically further weighing down on those in rural schools with no adequate facilities. In some (not uncommon) cases, rural schools are not even able to offer particular subjects due to shortage of teachers and space.

The question of region and location is closely tied with the urban-rural divide which then brings in the differentiation within the four regions, which are not homogeneous as well. For example, the central region includes the capital city Kampala and its environs, as well as such districts as Kalangala, Rakai, Sembabule and to some extent Masaka. Though geographically located in the central region, the latter districts sit rather uncomfortably in the region when it comes to schools and related (urban) amenities. These districts largely fall in the countryside of the central region. The same applies to the other regions too, where it is principally in the urbanised/dominant districts where 'good' schools are located. As a newspaper education pull-out (*New Vision,* 17 January 2005) put it: 'A candidate must be in an urban setting in order to join a good school. Those who sit in rural schools…continue to be doomed'. In effect, therefore, we are talking about a few dominant (urban) schools largely located in the south in general, but particularly in the central region.

The issue of regional imbalance has been debated over time. In the 1970s the military regime initiated the idea of allocating regional quotas for admission to Makerere. This was not successful due to lack of a clear policy instrument to institutionalise the concern and to determine the varying needs. From the 1990s the question became even sharper as government funding for higher education dwindled while the number of eligible students increased exponentially. At a more general level regional imbalance and the concerns that surround it led to demands for the establishment of public universities in all regions, i.e., away from the central region. Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) in the west and Gulu University in the north were an apparent response to this demand. In the pipeline is a public university in the east, to be established in either Soroti or Tororo to fulfil the need to share the national cake more equitably. However, Makerere remains at the centre of public focus. Admissions tend to dominate the headlines in the press despite the existence of the two other public universities, with inequality of access often the major concern. *The Monitor* newspaper, for instance, carried a report on the 1994–95 intake to the effect that only ten schools had 'swept' the Makerere intake: 'The district distribution shows imbalances, with Kampala, Mpigi, Iganga Masaka and Mbarara taking the lion's share, while some remote districts like Kotido and Bundibugyo send a few or none at all' (*The Monitor,* 6 January 1996).

The report went on to note that a further analysis of the few students coming from remote districts showed a pattern. Most of them had studied in Kampala schools, which meant that for some years no high school in those remote districts sent any student to Makerere. In a letter to the Commissioner for Higher Education, Dent Ocaya-Lakidi of Makerere University suggested four interventions to address the problem of regional inequality (Kasozi 2003: 138). The first was that the merit system should be abandoned and admissions be based on national need in critical areas of national development. Second was that admission should be subjected to a quota system per district. The third related to government sponsorship and recommended that a loan system be established and sponsorship decentralised to districts. When the letter was tabled at the Forum of Vice-Chancellors, the view was that such positive discrimination would eliminate one injustice but create another, since better-qualified students would be denied entry in favour of the less-qualified. The general public debate highlighted the concern about whether or not positive discrimination would not compromise standards. The vice-chancellors suggested remedial classes for potentially good students instead of positive discrimination. The vice-chancellors seemed to emphasise merit. The fact that merit was contextual was pushed aside.

In 2003 Makerere University sought to set up a special senate committee to look into the criteria for correcting the regional imbalance. However, according to the deputy registrar in charge of admissions, at the time the question of regional balancing was seen as complex and potentially explosive. Instead, more viable solutions to close the regional gaps were to be sought in upgrading schools in disadvantaged areas. In a not very surprising turn of events, ahead of general elections the following year, district quotas were suddenly introduced in 2005. What interests are at stake and how far district quotas have addressed regional inequality is a question we deal with later in this chapter.

Closely intertwined with class and regional diversities is the question of gender disparities in education in general and in higher education in particular. Formal education as established by the colonial project was gendered in that men and women were placed differently in terms of the nature and purpose of education. The numbers of women were minimal, and their education was narrowly defined and directed only towards enhanced domesticity. According to Nakanyike colonial and missionary education was specifically focused on educating women as future wives through what was termed a 'practical down-to-earth curriculum' in most girls' schools (1992: 178). Boys on the other hand were oriented towards higher education. Indeed the founding motto of Makerere University – 'In all things let us be men' – could scarcely be more telling.

The gender gap in higher education did not arise only from the marginalisation of women in the education system and the domestic-oriented curriculum. There were also specific discriminatory practices. For example Makerere University was established in 1922 but only admitted women in 1945, and by independence in 1962 only about 77 women had been admitted. Moreover the first women to join Makerere were still subjected to a different curriculum and regulatory framework:

> In March 1945 the first women students were admitted to Makerere College. Only one was a direct entry from school through the ordinary channels … [F]our of these had no secondary schooling but had been trained as Primary School Teachers … [and] their admission to the College was a venture of faith … Their course consisted of four subjects, of which three, English, Social Studies, and either History or Art, were to be taken with men students, and a fourth, Educational Studies, by themselves (Kwesiga 1998: 3-4).

Colonial policy towards women's education was basically to regulate the pace of girls' education lest it lead to societal breakdown. Government was therefore even more cautious than the missionaries in their approach to women's education in general and higher education in particular. Government's hesitation to allow women to enter higher education went beyond Makerere College. For example the 1952 Education Annual Report warned against 'unqualified' women going to study overseas. All this moral caution and bias was directly reflected in the meagre funding provided for girls' as opposed to boys' education by the colonial government.

Although independence and the processes of struggle towards its attainment brought about slight changes in women's education, the situation remained heavily skewed in favour of men. Throughout the early independence period the few women who accessed education beyond primary schooling originated from well-to-do families. Additionally they had to struggle in the face of gender ideologies within the school and family environs. The schools reproduced gender-based stereotypes through specific subject combinations (e.g., home economics, office practice) that limited girls' choices to enter various higher education institutions (Kwesiga 2002). At family level, factors militating against women's education have included the work burden, parents' choices of who is to be educated and to what level and deep-seated ideologies about femininity and masculinity.

The years of turmoil (1971–1986) had a significant impact on the gender terrain in Uganda. The destabilisation brought about changes in gender identity as men and women struggled to survive in a country fraught with economic dislocation and political uncertainty. Hence colonial ideologies such as

men as breadwinners came under relative stress. Education of girls in some cases paid off more in terms of actual returns to parents and encouraged them to send girls to school. However this response 'from below' did little to change the level of access to higher education. The university (read state) therefore offered little space for the consumption of energies from below, creating a glaring gender gap in which female enrolment hovered well below 25 per cent (Kwesiga 2002).

We have seen that there are critical points of diversity in Uganda's education system and how these have historically determined entry into Makerere University. Social class as a constellation of one's location either by space (region, urban/rural) gender and religion, among others, has gained notable prominence, especially with the change in the financing of higher education. In the next section of this paper we attempt a comparative analysis of Makerere's response to these and other points of diversity and what this has meant for student access.

Responding to Diversity: The Needy Students Scheme Versus Affirmative Action and Quotas at Entry

Despite the pervasive privatisation and constant shrinkage of state funding, the notion of 'national ownership' of Makerere University has remained central. In fact the shrinkage of state funding has made the issue of inclusiveness much more apparent, in that the ratio of students locked out of government sponsorship has grown bigger and bigger. The quest to address issues of diversity and inclusiveness has seen various policies intended to address inequalities at different levels. We can divide these policies into four main components.

The first component is the failed Needy Students Scheme, which aimed at tackling disadvantage within the admitted student body through provision of special allowances. The second is affirmative action tackling disadvantage at entry.[6] The third is affirmative action as an incentive relating to such schemes as those for biological children of members of staff to motivate the latter and ensure staff retention in the face of inadequate salaries. The scheme to encourage talented sportsmen and women in a bid to strengthen sports in the country also falls in the category of affirmative action as incentive. The fourth and most recent intervention is the quota system. This entails both a quota for each district and a preference for science-based and other courses considered critical for national development. We deal with each of these in some detail to demonstrate the different turning points and the interests shaping these responses. We look the ways in which these responses relate to the context of

reforms and the attendant manifestations of liberalism embedded within these reforms.

Equity from Within: The Needy Students Work Scheme

The Needy Students Work Scheme can be seen as an attempt to address social and economic gaps in the face of liberalising reforms in the university. From the inception of Makerere in 1922 up to the end of the 1980s, once a student was admitted, the government virtually met all study and living expenses. It was free university education. All staff (academic, administrative and support, expatriates or local) were fully catered for from state funds, not only in terms of their salaries and wages, but also for their housing, leave expenses and other related allowances. Student expenses covered tuition fees, board and lodging, books and any necessary equipment. Once in every academic year, students received allowances, popularly known as 'boom', to cater for day-to-day expenses and for transport to and from their home districts.

Through the crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, Makerere like all other institutions in Uganda suffered serious setbacks. The state progressively limited admission figures to what was affordable, as opposed to who qualified, and the end of the 1980s saw the introduction of cost-sharing, following a recommendation of the Education Policy Review Commission Report 1989. In particular, 'boom' and related personal and travelling expenses were abolished. Students protested against these liberalisation strategies with strikes and riots, leading to even fatalities. The Needy Students Work Scheme, aimed at addressing social disadvantage amongst students, was introduced at this time, partly in response to the student unrest.

Discussions on 'The Needy Students Work Scheme' were concretised in the 1990–1991 academic year. The aim, according to a letter from the Dean of Students, was 'to assist those students who were unable to raise enough money for their personal needs. The money was not a free gift but was to be worked for' (Dean of Students 1994). The original plan was to administer this scheme at district level, where local government councils (then known as Resistance Councils) would identify the most needy, and such students would have to work during their long vacations. The scheme was for all public tertiary institutions, although it became more visible at Makerere University. Owing to the many practical difficulties that arose, the scheme was short-lived. Government abolished it in the 1994–1995 financial year, although Makerere continued to administer the scheme until the 1995–1996 financial year.

According to a number of people talked to, the idea of addressing social disadvantage was noble, but the policy had many flaws. The very mention of the scheme invited a sigh. A number of the administrators in Makerere only

remembered it as a source of further problems rather than a solution, but with scanty information even on the problems. For one deputy registrar it was merely a ploy to reward government supporters. But one former student (1989–1990 intake and part of the needy) argued that she registered herself as needy due to fear for the worst: 'We knew that following on the heels of the abolition of allowances would be the requirement for us to pay tuition, since the debates at the time were on whether or not the state should pay for higher education'. The major flaw often mentioned by the different actors was the lack of clear criteria for identifying who was needy and who was not. As indicated by the former students' views, registration was based on self-identification. Conditions for qualification were not spelt out. A student who joined the university a year after the scheme was introduced described his process of joining the scheme as follows: 'We saw the posters inviting those who felt they were needy to assemble at the Faculty of Arts Quadrangle. We went there and became needy!'

A deputy registrar observed that initially there was an attempt to assess students at entry into university based on the contents of their rooms. A team went around the university halls of residence assessing the beddings and other things that students had in the rooms. Apparently students discovered this and tried to make their rooms look 'needy', even to the extent of borrowing old beddings. Student committees were given the opportunity to identify deserving beneficiaries, but reports were that these were equally compromised in the process. The administration then changed strategy and tried to assess the students' background at village level using the RCs. In the words of one deputy registrar 'everybody became needy at this point'. RCs were said to give false information. In essence, however, the task according to one former registrar was a challenging one on the part of the RCs. More often than not a village would send one or two students to Makerere University. RC officials at village level could therefore not afford to deny these students (sons or daughters of the soil) the privilege of accessing allowances. Therefore this strategy also had to be abandoned, since virtually every admitted student became needy. In the first year of its operation 5,000 of the 7,000 students applied to join the scheme. As shown below, the number of 'needy' students almost doubled within the space of five years.

The statistics in Table 4 show a steady rise in 'needy' students over the years. We also see the highest number coming from dominant (urbanised) districts. Through discussions it was noted that figures for districts could not be relied upon. This is because, as students realised that transport allowance depended on how far from Kampala they were from, there was a tendency for them to indicate a far-off district of origin in order to maximise their allowance.

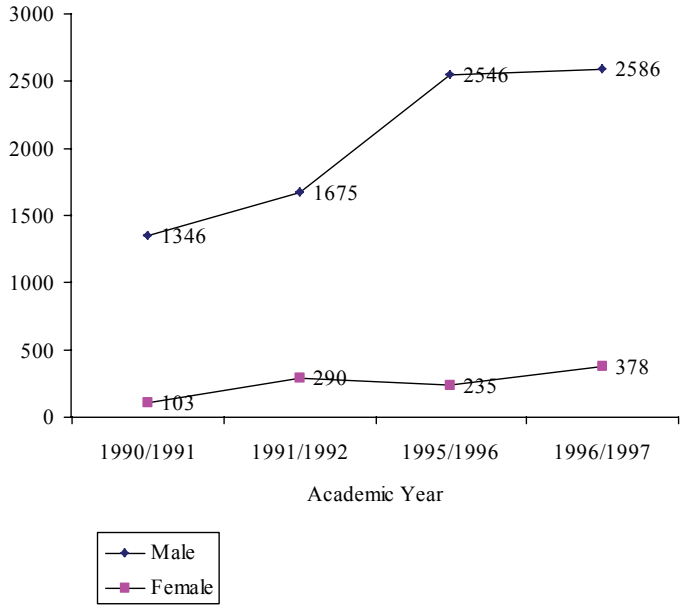
Table 4: Needy Students by District over Selected Years

District	1990/1991	1991/1992	1995/1996	1996/1997
Apac	61	86	54	77
Arua	105	124	173	175
Bundibugyo	2	3	5	8
Bushenyi	107	155	215	201
Gulu	49	67	116	108
Hoima	21	26	30	47
Iganga	52	89	121	121
Jinja	29	42	59	63
Kabale	99	147	189	174
Kabarole	55	65	68	82
Kalangala	1	3		
Kampala	25	27	71	87
Kamuli	37	36	69	66
Kapchorwa	12	12	12	9
Kasese	15	10	37	41
Kibaale	2	11	20	14
Kiboga	2	5	4	6
Kisoro	21	36	63	66
Kitgum	31	38	63	71
Kotido	13	11	15	10
Kumi	90	105	72	84
Lira	68	76	78	105
Luwero	19	29	57	65
Masaka	37	44	90	95
Masindi	13	17	31	43
Mbale	59	86	145	129
Mbarara	95	167	210	208
Moroto	9	9	9	9
Moyo	34	33	37	40
Mpigi	36	58	121	147
Mubende	18	37	41	49
Mukono	33	58	91	71
Nebbi	37	47	37	39
Ntungamo*	N/A	N/A	65	80
Pallisa	19	52	55	70
Rakai	14	13	41	48
Rukungiri	61	81	130	147
Soroti	113	126	101	108
Tororo	91	125	133	133
Total	**1585**	**2156**	**2928**	**3096**

Source: Makerere University Archives.
Key: *District created in 1995.

The needy students profile also indicates a skewed gender divide. Although the student population was predominantly male, the gender gap in needy students was much wider than the absolute numbers of males and female students. Hence a selection of seven halls of residence[7] over a selected four-year period shows that out of a total of 9,159 beneficiaries only 1,006 were female. Demonstrated in the chart below is the steep curve for male students as opposed to the more or less constant one for female students.

Figure 1: Gender Divide of Needy Students for Selected Year



One explanation for the gender divide in the scheme was that the term 'needy' was seen as demeaning, and while many male students used the scheme to improve their financial status, female students tended to avoid being identified with the scheme. Apparently, female students detested the work involved of slashing the compound and emptying dustbins. But a much more critical explanation lies in the nature of the scheme and the kind of politics underlying it. For example, one former female student had no idea of how people joined

the Needy Students Association because the needy students' space was fast turned into a male club.

Because of the loose definition of a 'needy' student the estimated original fund of Shs 26 million earmarked for Makerere University rose to Shs 55 million by the time the scheme was abolished. The original fund was Shs 15,000 per student but was eventually raised to Shs 26,000. The scheme was politicised, especially after 1 February 1992 when the Makerere University Needy Students Association (MUNSA) was formed. According to records the Chairpersons of the scheme used it as a vehicle to attain leadership of the Students Guild. MUNSA was also used to hold university management at ransom each time the funds from government were delayed. For instance, on 22 November 1994, MUNSA members locked up the administration building and the library until management agreed to address their issues. MUNSA officials used the scheme as a vehicle to make more demands from government.[8] A lot of time was spent in correspondence and meetings between government and university officials, MUNSA and the Students Guild.

The scheme failed mainly due to inadequate planning and comprehensive articulation of diversity. Though part of the blame can be placed on the 'dependency syndrome' of university students, the broader problem stemmed from the erratic reforms and an equally erratic response to the contradictions arising from those reforms. Had the scheme been adequately conceptualised, Makerere could have run it on its own through the study-work concept which students in many parts of the world have long embraced. The needy students' scheme was a victim of the policies and politics that had begotten it. The idea of bridging the socio-economic gap amongst the students was hence abandoned. The Makerere of the twenty-first century, where self-sponsored students are the majority, seems to call for a rethinking on needy students. The majority of self-sponsored students study through hardships of seeking 'dead years', carrying on with retakes and poor living conditions. Hence many individual students would be very willing to take part-time jobs, but there is no established study and work schemes at the moment.[9]

The Female Scholarship Initiative (FSI): A Donor-Funded (Female) Needy Students Scheme

The government needy students' scheme collapsed in 1996. The idea of tackling disadvantage in the face of privatisation was then resurrected in another form through a donor-funded initiative for female students. The Female Scholarship Initiative (FSI), fully supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York under a five-year agreement, was designed to focus on social and geo-

graphical disadvantage as well as targeting the science deficit for females. Starting in 2002, the initiative had benefited a total of 435 students by 2005.

Selection for the FSI follows a meticulous weighting system that basically addresses equity on the basis of social disadvantage as well as the nature of the programme. The cardinal aim of the project is to get females into science disciplines, although there are also (limited) slots for humanities. Hence 70 per cent of the fund goes to sciences and only 30 per cent to humanities. Each programme, science or humanities, is given weightings based on the percentage distribution of females in a particular study programme. High weightings accrue to study programmes where females are grossly under-represented.

The FSI specifically targets the socially disadvantaged, weighted by criteria such as what parents do for a living, whether or not both parents are alive and the number of school-going children in the districts. Additionally points are awarded on the basis of who paid fees at secondary level. A candidate earns more weighting if a person other than the father paid these fees. Other considerations include the candidate's district of origin and the secondary school they went to. The disadvantaged status of a district is determined based on the UNDP Human Development Report 2000 for Uganda. Districts with a similar Human Development Index (HDI) are grouped together and a score assigned to them. The poorer districts in terms of the HDI get the highest possible score while the better off districts get the least score. Secondary schools are categorised on the basis of a weighted average score based on the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education performance. The maximum possible score for a school is awarded for the worst-performing schools and the minimum for the best-performing schools.

The three-year experience of the FSI demonstrated that targeting social disadvantage is complex. It is not easy to ascertain socio-economic levels from information provided through filling in a form. Cases of fraud and misinformation were common, with many applicants providing false information in order to access the scholarship. A GMD team had to carry out actual visits to the districts and homes of the applicants and beneficiaries. Those who were discovered to have provided false information had their scholarships withdrawn.[10] Another major limitation of the scholarship initiative was the limited impact in terms of competitive and professional courses, particularly in science, due to the rigid admission system. Although there was a 30:70 bias in favour of science, the problem is that the scholarship was given only after university admission, when the weighting system had already placed students mostly in courses not of their first choice. For example, if a candidate obtains the requisite points for Medicine but gets cut off on the basis of the limitation of government slots, that candidate may be placed in BSC on government spon-

sorship. Since she is already on the government list, she automatically does not qualify for the FSI. Courses like medicine, agriculture and veterinary medicine, therefore, are still under-represented in FSI.

Furthermore, the bias in favour of science indirectly reproduces privilege. The FSI sub-committee in fact found it difficult to secure candidates to pursue sciences because most of the applicants for science were not actually needy. It was therefore concluded that females who pursued sciences, especially at Advanced level, were not needy. They came from well-to-do families and were able to attend schools that had the facilities for science education. Subsequently, the committee recommended that the percentage for science be reduced to 60, since the primary focus of the scholarship was to bridge the socio-economic gap. The operation of the FSI shows that the idea of a mechanism to address educational disadvantage is not totally discredited. What is rather at stake is that the state is detached from the need for more targeted investment to address disparities. Such a scheme is seen as okay as long as it does not involve government investment.

Equity at Entry: Affirmative Action and Quotas

In Uganda affirmative action has been the most common response to imbalance. The Uganda Constitution (1995) recognises the need for affirmative action and has many clauses aimed at eliminating discrimination on the basis of gender, age and disability. At the general level of political structures affirmative action programmes in favour of women and other 'marginalised' groups (youth, persons with disability, etc.) were instituted as soon as the National Resistance Movement (NRM) took over power in 1986.

In the education sector affirmative action has a much longer history. It has been practiced in one form or the other, since girls were formally brought on board in the formal education arena in Uganda. In the 1920s a senior education officer in charge of female education had a distinct role of enabling more girls to attend school, although this policy was soon abandoned. The periodic commissions which reviewed the system and made recommendations to government have all expressed concern about low participation levels of women in formal education.[11]

Affirmative action programmes have ranged from lower school fees for girls (up to the early post-independence era) to admission to key mixed government-aided schools with a lower score cut-off for girls in comparison to boys (still in practice today). A Schools' Incentives Scheme in the form of specific support awards for schools with programmes to support girls' education was operational during the 1990s. Other related areas include alternative forms of education to enable pupils to take classes in conformity with their life

modes, for example, the Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja programme (ABEK) or Complementary Primary Education (COPE), both of which allow learners to perform family roles (e.g., livestock rearing, crop farming and trading) along with formal study. When 'partial' universal primary education (UPE) was introduced in 1997, it was a policy to ensure that two of the four pupils per family who enjoyed free education had to be girls (from 2000 UPE encompassed all children of school going age).[12] However all these affirmative action practices remained at lower levels. Affirmative action at tertiary level (at Makerere University) was only instituted in the 1990s. Why did Makerere introduce affirmative action in the 1990s and not before? In what ways does affirmative action interface with the reforms in the same period?

Affirmative Action: The 1.5 Points Scheme for Female Undergraduate Students

Affirmative action for female undergraduates, the '1.5 points scheme', has been the most far-reaching policy response to the gender gap in higher education in Uganda. The 1.5 scheme in effect adds one and a half points to the scores of eligible female applicants for undergraduate programmes. Through an approved weighted score for each programme, admission is then decided according to merit. This was a decision by the Makerere University Senate. What accounts for this particular translation of gender access into policy? What is the impact of the 1.5 policy and other related initiatives within the changing environment of a university undergoing massive reforms?

One way to understand the visibility of gender as an access issue would be through the perspective of a 'moment of opportunity'. The beginning of the NRM regime coincided internationally with the end of the United Nations Women's Decade and the conference in Nairobi at the end of 1985. This was the height of the women in development (WID) crusade that sought to integrate women into the development process. Among the forward-looking strategies that emerged as a consensus from the Nairobi UN Conference was the participation of women in decision-making structures. Some of the women who attended the Nairobi conference returned to Uganda to develop a new organisational terrain which specifically focused on forming non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to advance women's interests. One such organisation formed in this period was Action for Development (ACFODE), which conferred with other women's organisations to generate a list of demands in the context of a state 'still finding its feet' (Ahikire 2004). Following on some of the gains in terms of reserved positions in political structures, women activists advanced similar concerns with regard to university education. Under ACFODE leadership women activists lobbied university management for af-

firmative action for some time before a proposal was presented and accepted by senate. Although debates ensued and it was not a sail-through situation, at a special meeting held on 14 June 1990, Senate passed the 1.5 policy by a forty to fourteen vote. The fact that there had to be a vote is indicative of potential for opposition. But much more informative is the opening remark of the chair at the same meeting:

> He reminded members that the meeting would address issues which had been raised by the Chancellor of the university which included measures to be taken in order to increase intake into the university generally and increase the number of female students admitted into the university in particular... [and] also told members that there was need on the part of the university to be sensitive to public outcry and to respond to it as favourably as possible (Senate 1990).

From the above it is clear that women activists had succeeded in factoring the question of women's access into the broad discussion of 'opening up'. That the senate meeting passed the policy to take immediate effect in the 1990–1991 academic year admissions cannot be distanced from the fact that a meeting of deans and directors with the chancellor was due to take place the following day.

The 1.5 scheme delivered numbers. Female representation in the student body rose from 24 per cent in 1989 to 30 per cent in 1990 and by 2004 stood at 37 per cent for government-sponsored programmes and at 42 per cent for private programmes with a global percentage of 46. Senate records indicate that when the scheme commenced in 1990–1991, 51 per cent of the female candidates admitted into the university benefited from the scheme (Senate 1997).

The evidence from Makerere University admissions indicates that, with regard to government-sponsored programmes, the 1.5 point scheme makes a big difference between eligibility and actual admission. Results of a review of the 1.5 scheme commissioned by the Gender Mainstreaming Division in 2004 demonstrated that a substantial 31 percent of females enrolled would otherwise have been left out. On the other hand the 1.5 scheme has had more impact in humanities than in science as Table 6 indicates.

Thus, despite the 1.5 scheme, critical gender gaps persist in science. Significantly the female representation in 2002/2003 shows percentages of more than 50 per cent, which means that the science deficit tended to minimise the effect of the 1.5 scheme. It would have otherwise delivered much greater numbers.

Table 5: Percentages of Females Admitted to Makerere University over a Selected Period

Academic Year	M	F	%F	
1984/1985	1071	312	23	
1986/1987	1192	368	23	
1987/1988	1330	343	21	BEFORE THE 1.5 POLICY
1988/1989	1266	400	24	
1989/1990	1281	407	24	
1990/1991	1547	658	30	
1991/1992	1400	621	30	
1992/1993	1312	678	32	
1993/1994	1381	742	34	
1994/1995	1974	680	26	AFTER THE INTRODUCTION
1995/1996	1558	686	30	OF 1.5 POLICY
1996/1997	3487	1952	35	
1997/1998	3696	2115	36	
1998/1999	5157	3214	38	
1999/2000	8098	4942	38	
2000/2001	8259	5183	39	
2001/2002	8158	6129	43	
2002/2003	8119	6536	45	
2003/2004	8214	6941	46	

Source: Kwesiga (1998); Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2002).

Table 6: Percentage of Females Admitted for Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts Degrees over a Selected Period

Academic Year	B. Science	B. Arts	B. Social Sciences
1988/1989	13	24	29
1989/1990	13	15	29
1990/1991	21	34	41
1991/1992	17	30	37
1992/1993	23	40	39
1993/1994	21	41	37
1994/1995	26	43	38
1995/1996	17	38	33
1996/1997	20	35	39
1997/1998	18	40	36
1998/1999	17	40	44
1999/2000	20	44	44
2000/2001	20	46	47
2001/2002	**20**	**44**	**42**
2002/2003	**18**	**51**	**54**

Source: Kwesiga (1998).

Admission of Children of Makerere University Staff

As competition for entry became stiffer, with entry pegged to what the state could fund, Makerere staff realised that their children were being increasingly edged out. As already noted, the required grades (cut-off) continued to rise as more students applied for admission. Makerere University staff whose salaries continually declined in real terms felt disadvantaged, as they could not afford to place their children in 'Grade A' schools. The question then was, why should these children be disadvantaged despite their parents' service to the community, simply because the state could or was only willing to fund a limited number.

A special scheme for the children of staff was therefore suggested as a long-term strategy to attract, motivate and retain senior staff and to reward

long-serving staff. As a result, university policy, as approved by Council in 1993, provided for admission of the biological children of staff under the specified categories. The children would be given special consideration for admission to a course of study in the university provided that the points obtained were not more than 2.5 points below the cut-off for that course of study. Other conditions related to the parents' tenure in the university and the intake capacity of the various courses of study. The key point, however, was that initially the children of staff who qualified for admission according to the said criteria automatically became government-sponsored. In the first year of its operation a total of forty-six students were admitted under the scheme.

There was some opposition to this scheme, especially in government circles, on the grounds that this would create a special class of students. Hence the university was required to take great care in setting the parameters within which this scheme would operate. Yet in 1996 the points for the scheme were increased to 4, and soon there were in fact two schemes rather than one. The first was admission of eligible biological children under government sponsorship with 4.0 points or less below the cut-off point for a particular course of study. The second was a fee rebate for those admitted on private sponsorship (50 per cent day and 30 per cent evening). A total of 222 children benefited by accessing university education on government sponsorship from 1992–2004, while 420 benefited from a fee rebate in the period between 1997 and 2004.

In 2005, however, the Admissions Board noted that the two-pronged scheme was not only inconsistent but also failed to achieve the objective of increasing access for the children of staff. The board observed that the number of children admitted under government sponsorship was very low compared to the number of applicants. It was further noted that the government policy on admission under government sponsorship with a science and district quota did not cater for children of staff. A new policy passed by Senate (and still to be approved by Council) was therefore proposed to take the scheme out of the government equation of sponsorship. The new scheme, to be named Waiver of Rebate, was to take effect in the 2005–2006 academic year. With a concession raised to 5.0 points below the cut-off, the children would access programmes of their choice with a 100 per cent tuition rebate. One way to understand the fact that members of staff could accent to the lowering of admission standards was that this was almost the only avenue possible in the context of a university facing an access crisis. The staff response was in line with the "sharing of the spoils" thrust that resulted from stiff competition for static resources.

Admission of People With Disabilities (PWDs)

The AA for People with disabilities was put at 4.0 points below the cut-off points of courses applied for. The allocation of 4.0 points to students with disabilities, like the 1.5 scheme, was a result of the general representation trend at the national level. People with disabilities have representation in the national parliament and in local governments. In addition PWDs have lobbied to gain entry the public decision-making arenas, including educational institutions. For instance, as the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (2001) was being amended in 2003, PWDs managed to get slots on councils of public universities. It is in this context that Makerere University established the scheme in 1992, although it only picked up momentum in the 1995–1996 academic year.

Under the scheme the priority order when considering applications from PWDs was in the following order: blind, deaf, low vision, hard of hearing, candidates with mobility appliance, candidates with physical disabilities. Later these categories were expanded to include albinos and people with chronic medical problems such as sickle cell anaemia and asthma. No quota or capacity limitations were set. Candidates applied for courses they felt they could manage as long as they qualified for the particular course (with not more that 4.0 points below the cut-off point). As an affirmative action programme this scheme was important in opening up access for these categories of students. However one would have expected that admission of PWDs would over time breed other spill-over benefits for students, such as ensuring more user-friendly physical facilities. Although at one time some faculties (such as Social Sciences) had a small fund, apparently drawn from locally generated funds, to assist such students, the overall university environment did not change to increase access for PWDs once admitted. Access to many lecture halls and other facilities remained the same, predicated on the 'able'. There was also a case of a lame student who had to drop out of medicine at the third year because the instructors demanded so. According to one deputy registrar the student progressed well until she reached the stage for clinicals, and the lectures were of the view that clinicals and crutches could not go together. This example demonstrates a larger limitation of interventions from above. In this case AA for the disabled ensured entry but did little to ensure equitable and quality access within the system.

Admission of Talented Athletes

In 1993 the University Council approved yet another special scheme to consider the admission of talented athletes in a bid to recognise and encourage young talent and contribute to national sports development. The constituency

for this scheme was mainly the Ministry of Education and Sports, whose express aim was to encourage sports in the country. Candidates were supposed to have excelled (first to third position) at national level in a sporting field. Initially the bonus was 2.5 points below the cut-off point for a specific programme of study. Up to ten places were to be reserved for athletes on government sponsorship, and the candidates were to be encouraged to continue participating in their sports. In 1995 the Ministry issued a procedure to be followed with effect from 1996. The initial selection was to be done through the National Council of Sports and its associations, who would forward the list of nominations to Makerere through the Ministry of Education. The concession was also effectively raised to 4.0 points.

However, a review of the scheme in 2005 indicated that rather than creating an incentive for promotion of sports it was acting instead as a reward system, as an end in itself to the beneficiaries. Since no stated requirements to keep the scholarship existed, most students tended to abandon their sports once admitted. In some other cases students admitted on the basis of sports talent lacked the bare basics of the sport on the basis of which they were admitted. All this pointed to loopholes not only in the initial nomination from the Ministry and the National Council of sports but also in relation to the entire rationale and framing of the question of access.

The Science Shift and the District Quota

In March 2005 the Ministry of Education announced that government had decided to recast university sponsorship in favour of programmes critical to national development. The idea was that emphasis on science and technology was necessary if Uganda was to develop. Consequently 3,000 university places amounting to 75 per cent of the total government sponsorship in public universities were allocated to science-based programmes. Apparently this 'science shift' was a mutation of Makerere's own proposals to government. In 2004, Makerere, in a bid to justify a tuition fees increment, proposed that government should introduce a student loan scheme to improve access to university education, while at the same time providing bursaries and other subsidies in sciences and other critical areas for human resource development (Ebila 2005). The government chose to act on the second part of the proposal only, and not by increasing its commitment but rather by reallocating the more or less traditional 4,000 places for the public universities.

In the same vein district quotas were introduced to address regional imbalances in higher education, although cynics read a populist agenda into the policy, noting that it was announced just months away from the 2006 general elections. According to the policy the remaining 25 per cent of university placed

(1000 slots) left over from science were to be filled through district quotas, as well as the other schemes of sports and disability. At the first intake in 2005 each district was allocated sixteen slots. Makerere University therefore acted on a kind of directive indicating the slots per division and per programme in the case of merit-based science admissions. However implementation of the district quota was apparently intricate. The selection went through stages. The first priority was given to people who had schooled in their home district. Hence, in consideration of the sixteen slots, the highest competitors would be those who originated and had done their schooling in the particular district. The minimum qualification was put at the bare minimum of two principal passes for university education. While districts such as Kampala, Bushenyi, Arua and Gulu easily filled the quota, some districts, including Nakapiripirit, Kaberamaido, Kotido, Adjumani, Katakwi, Moyo and Bundibugyo, could not do so. At the first stage, for example Bundibugyo filled only five places, 30 percent of its quota. The second stage for those districts that could not fill the quota was to 'fish' for candidates, in other words, take those who originated from the districts but had studied in schools in other districts. In this case people who originated from such districts but had studied in 'Grade A' schools had an edge over those who went to marginal schools. And as only flat/absolute points were considered for district quotas, the quotas were 'flooded' by humanities, according to one deputy registrar in charge of admissions.

The Efficacy of Makerere's Response to Diversity

In various ways the different schemes have expanded access and diversified the student population in higher education in Uganda. Affirmative action for females and people with disabilities in particular have brought about dramatic changes in quantitative composition. A female student is no longer a rare minority in the university, and there is more likelihood of meeting a disabled student than, for example, ten years ago. However there are fundamental fractures in the way the access issue has been framed. As already observed, the dominant responses to diversity have not required any substantial reordering. As opposed to the needy students work scheme, for example, which required well thought-out policies and commitment of resources, affirmative action and quotas merely redivide and subdivide the already meagre government sponsorship. The 'struggle for the spoils' approach to government sponsorship partly explains Uganda's bloated education system, in which schools, teachers, parents and students alike are under immense pressure. This accounts for the not uncommon phenomenon of 'pumping' in schools, where students are placed under immense pressure to cram and pass exams with pure A grades.

Worldwide, the use of affirmative action and quotas as ways to address social imbalances have received their share of criticism. While, for example, affirmative action remains an instrument for making inequality within institutions visible, it may not necessarily address the heterogeneity of the social group in question and may in some cases deepen inequality. This is the question that has dominated debate in South Africa on the issue of addressing racial imbalance. On the issue of affirmative action for black South Africans, Shubane, for instance, argues that the 'group approach might benefit individuals who might least need affirmative action benefits … [as] a blanket approach mostly benefits those best equipped to claim the benefit (1995: 14).

Looking at the scheme for female undergraduates as the most visible of all the other schemes in the past, it can be seen that one basic weakness was a simplistic view of gender relations, with access conceptualised on the basis of the individual. Stemming from the liberalist Women in Development (WID) approach, affirmative action tends to generate "blanket" strategies (Eisenstein 1986). Yet it is understood that girls do not constitute a homogenous category. Some are from families with higher socio-economic status who usually have access to better-facilitated schools. Their parents are in a position to pay for tuition and meet all expenses for private sponsorship. Indeed some views are that the approach still favours the elite, since it tackles access at the very apex of the education system while glossing over the factors that bar the majority of girls from attaining secondary school in the first place.

The same can be said for the science shift and the district quota interventions. They are based on individualised strategies rather than tackling the structural weakness within the education system. The consequence is that the well-to-do always emerge as the key beneficiaries. If we take the example of the science shift, it is very clear that the ad hoc move by the government to fund only science-based courses directly benefits those from schools that offer them in the first place. For example, in the 2005–2006 intake, of all those admitted to the BSc programme in Medicine and Dental Surgery, ninety were from urban schools, principally from the central region, with the exception of only three schools from the west.[13] Districts such as Kotido, Yumbe and Pader did not have science candidates (Ahimbisibwe 2005).

How does the science policy speak to the broader national context? The individual-based science policy deepens inequality by rewarding those who have been privileged to attend good schools. In its ad hoc nature the policy indicates no plan to provide science laboratories and related materials for schools. Asked about the representation of females in science as compared to arts, the Dean of the Faculty of Science had this to say:

> The problem is not so much here but rather the source of these students from secondary. You know generally secondary schools and HSC [Higher School Certificate] in particular, the number of students who opt to take science is small. It is hardly 20 percent … and proportionately the number of girls could even be small. So our catchment area is very small for girls to come to university …. [Y]ou will find a large proportion of girls taking arts and a smaller fraction for sciences (Survey for Gender Equity in Higher Education in Selected Commonwealth Countries 2004).

In Uganda, science as a field has an extremely weak institutional structure right from the primary and secondary schools. Schools, especially the historically disadvantaged ones, as already noted, are not able to invest in science. As Kasozi (2003) observes, most of the 'mushrooming' secondary schools in the country do not focus on science and technology. Of course these schools in themselves are not the problem. Rather they are a manifestation of a highly fragmented and inequitable education system.

More importantly, the teaching of science is circumscribed by a punitive rather than an enabling orientation, hence the minuscule numbers attracted to the field. In the case of girls, gender oppression aggravates the other factors where school practices, familial ideologies and peer influence all construct science as too hard for them. Teachers already hold assumptions about girls in science and either discourage them or do not bother to encourage them.

On the urban bias the individual-based interventions, whether we talk about affirmative action or quotas, tend to benefit urban-based schools. Well-resourced urban primary schools lead to best secondary schools and ultimately to university eligibility and final selection. Through a review of the 1.5 points scheme it was established that Grade A schools contributed 71.3 per cent of the beneficiaries (GMD 2004). This goes for the science-based admissions as well as for the district quotas. Since affirmative action is applied across the board, the privileged have an added advantage of increasing their points to gain entry to the programmes of their choice more than those from poorer schools and poorer families, who often have lower, though still eligible, marks. Basically what affirmative action does is that it stands at the very end of the tunnel only to tap those whose privileged position in society enables them to come out. It largely leaves the structure of the tunnel intact.

With particular reference to affirmative action for female students, an additional question of dented legitimacy exists. There is a peculiar emergence of a discourse on the female students as sex objects less interested in academics and not be taken seriously. Ridicule of female students depicting them as inferior and incapable has been rife and is on the increase. The '1.5 girls', as they

are popularly called, are supposed to be the underdogs of the academy, 'Bakateyamba' in Luganda. There are claims that the 1.5 scheme has made girls lose confidence and motivation, that it has lowered standards, that it is unfair to boys, that it confirms the academic inferiority of girls. Press reports for example often express open hostility. In 1995 it was reported that failures at Makerere had shot up to 900, and one opinion had it that this was a 'Curse of Lazy Makerere Girls':

> It is not difficult to see one source of the problem. When the NRM introduced the 1.5 bonus points for females only, girls who were not academically fit for the hill end up on campus. They then turn the campus into a beauty salon … with their sugar daddies picking them in limousines. They neglect studies. When exams come the backdoor females … cry foul after failing. It is now up to those who approved the 1.5 boost to lazy girls, otherwise the Hill of the Intellectuals is going to the dogs (*The Monitor*, 14 August 1995).

Such hostility towards the 1.5 scheme ultimately has to do with the limited opportunities for government sponsorship. The real contest is not about the 1.5, rather it is about the changing context of access, where government sponsorship is at the heart of it all. Agaba, for example, a third-year male student (Social Sciences) observed that some male students think that the 1.5 points for females denies boys the right to be admitted to courses of their choice. In analysing the African experience with higher education, Ajayi and Johnson (1996) note that, though affirmative action is needed to compensate for historical imbalances, great caution should be taken so that 'discrimination against past oppressors does not become institutionalised' (1996: 162). Turning this argument round, it could be argued that past oppressors have devised a mechanism of 'new subordinations' in the face of declining privilege.

Unpacking Numbers and Access Outcomes

The backdrop of the above responses to diversity remains, as it were, the liberalist higher-education reforms. As Makerere evidently increased its revenue through fee-paying students, the government even more conveniently defaulted on payment of its sponsored students (Musisi and Muwanga 2003). Together with the move to increase the marketability of university courses, the private sponsorship programme brought the student population to the 40,000 mark, as already indicated. Different lenses to this change project different positions. For some the move shows Makerere on the road from elite/ivory tower to mass education. For others the marketisation has only increased false access. We will now explore these issues, basically dealing with access outcomes and what they mean for the university community (students and staff) and for society at

large, and offer a critical appraisal of the Makerere reform process in view of the nature and outcome of student access.

On Makerere's reform process, Musisi and Muwanga argue as follows: 'Since 1992 the sorry state of affairs at Makerere has been reversed. In less than ten years, Makerere University's student population has expanded almost fourfold with the vast majority now paying fees' (2003: 1).

This view captures the dominant discourse on Makerere reforms. In terms of access the Makerere model, otherwise referred to as a reversal, emits the quantitative message of growing numbers, and any gaps that would otherwise destabilise the 'model thinking' are referred to as challenges. The language of challenges denotes a linear process with no contradictions. Our view is that the language of models and challenges tends to mask the deep-cutting fractures in the university function, masking too the contradictions and deepening inequalities engendered by the reforms.

We use both general and specific examples from the Faculty of Social Sciences[14] to examine the successes as well as the ruptures in the Makerere model. The Faculty of Social Sciences is one of the university units with the largest expansion in student population in the last ten years. It comes fourth after the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education and the Institute of Adult and Continuing Education. The student explosion in the Faculty of Social Sciences began in 1995, when intake jumped from the previous 483 to 793 students, almost doubling again by 2000–2001, when the intake had increased to 1452. The Faculty of Social Sciences is also one of those units where an increase of fee-paying students as income generation is real. The sudden increase in numbers has not been matched with expansion of other requirements – teaching, office and accommodation space, library collections, laboratory and other related scholastic materials. A lecture room originally meant for 80 students now has to accommodate over four hundred. In the specific case of first year, when the students offer three subject combinations, one is lucky to get a place to stand inside the lecture room, hence the language of attending lectures by 'rumours'. Teaching and administrative staffing levels have remained relatively static. Paradoxically the university in the very same 1990s decided to ban recruitment on the basis that the wage bill had expanded beyond what the resource envelope could afford.

At the very general level the opening up and the introduction of private sponsorship programmes expanded access. The average intake figures show that 11,000 students would otherwise have been left out of university education. In a consideration of the university sector in East Africa, Nyaigottu-Chacha rightly observes that privately sponsored student programmes have opened up opportunities for tens of thousands of East Africans who meet university

admission requirements but would not otherwise secure admission due to the restricted intakes determined by limited government funding (2004: 103). Evening classes make it possible for employed people to pursue university education while continuing with their regular responsibilities (Nyaigotti-Chacha 2004). Furthermore, the diversification of courses offered at Makerere, though distorted by the overriding aim of income generation, have brought some critical and interesting subjects of study into focus. Here the importance of external programmes and the expansion of adult education cannot be over-emphasised.

However, the expanded access, and the changes accompanying it, carries one fundamental problem. This is the marketisation of education and the use of fee-paying students as a source of income. Expansion by increasing the numbers of fee-paying students proceeded without enough critical consideration of the consequences. Rapid and unplanned is how Obong (2004) characterises the expansion of Makerere University in the 1990s. The student and what he or she needs and gets out of expanded access has been largely marginalised.

As the effect of big numbers began to manifest itself, the first target became the student, and particularly female students. Alongside common comments such as 'students are not serious these days' are views and beliefs that females are performing poorly because they are just plain lazy, vain and even ready to stoop so low to cheat in exams. However, most of such beliefs are rarely founded on concrete grounds or are best based on over generalisations. For instance, female students from 'posh' (urban) families are perceived to be less serious to the ones from rural areas who tended to aim high in academics to obtain good degrees and thereby uplift the standard of their families.

Nevertheless, the fact that shortcomings of male students have not led to a construction of a typical male student as negative raises questions. Does this say something about the tendency to stereotype women, where an exception is turned into the norm? Is this something about the changing class composition of female students over time? Or is this a manifestation of the changing face of the university as a whole, where the (female) student is the most visible component of a fractured institution?

At another level evening students, more than those on day programmes, tended to carry the label of being 'unserious'. Lecturers often commented that day students performed better than evening students, and that evening students were not serious, dominated retakes, often drop out or abscond, etc. Evening always came second to day, as seen in the university practice of 'Day and Evening' in the consideration of programming and of results. As expected, private students thence constituted a secondary class, critical victims of the reform process. Worst of all however was the additional secondary status of evening. The chances of government-

sponsored students graduating on time (76 per cent) were more than five times higher than the chances for private students (15 per cent).

The question of what lies beneath the accusations about student seriousness requires, therefore, a much more critical lens. Indeed what is the level of seriousness of the university as a whole? In a typical ad hoc manner that left the 'model' fairly undisturbed and unquestioned, the university administration in 1998 made a decision to appoint a senate committee to investigate the causes of student failure that had apparently reached unprecedented levels in undergraduate humanities courses (Obong 2004). A summary of the report of the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Poor Performance presented in December the same year makes the following points:

- Many students registered in core courses with big class sizes not attending lectures, or simply standing in lecture halls due to lack of sitting space and audibility.
- Faculty dictating or giving ready-made notes to students, or conducting public lectures instead of the normal lectures.
- Faculty giving only one class assignment, which could be multiple-choice questions, for the whole semester.
- Faculty returning course assignment scripts at the end of the semester when students have already completed semester examinations.
- Students plagiarizing each others' class assignments and the lecturer assessing without detecting this.
- Faculty in the humanities courses examining students with multiple-choice examinations, even where these might not be appropriate.
- Departments abandoning class tutorials and seminars.
- Classes being conducted as early as 7 a.m. on Saturdays and at times on Sundays.
- As many as 60 percent of the students in some big classes failing semester examinations and as many as two-thirds of postgraduate students failing to complete their courses within the scheduled time period.

Source: Obong (2004: 118)

Clearly the above issues were not purely about student performance. They raise broader questions about the entire university function, encompassing the learning environment as well as the output of the institution. Academic staff in the various units have not been blind to the question of numbers. With regard to the Faculty of Social Sciences in particular, lecturers have attempted to raise the problems of teaching loads, marking and the whole issue of the student-staff ratio. The response from administrators has been that lecturers are

still stuck in the past. The argument is that teaching does not have to involve physical delivery of a lecture all the time. ICT is paraded as the remedy. In meetings of senate it is not uncommon for people in social sciences to be reminded that the essay form of assessment is 'conservative'. Structured and multiple-choice questions are supposed to be a remedy for the heavy loads. The voices of those who bear the burden of large loads is a 'murmur' in the face of the powerful force of those who gain from the income generated.

At the 47th Graduation Ceremony on 1 April 2005, the university chancellor talked about numbers. In effect re-echoing the murmurs of teaching staff, Prof. Apolo Nsibambi (himself a former lecturer at the university) expressed concern at the overwhelming student numbers and the negative impact on the quality of teaching.[15] On 10 July 2005, the *Sunday Vision* newspaper carried a story about 'Rot in Makerere'. Apparently an undercover reporter went to the university to investigate the public outcry about cheating exams and ended up sitting for two exams. The spirit of the story was that the numbers had brought about laxity:

> One need only play their cards well…I could have been hired by a rich part-time student to sit the exams. Just as one can walk through the main gate and exit through the southern gate unchecked, it is possible to illegally walk into the examination room undetected (*Sunday Vision* 2005)

The story raised eyebrows but was not surprising. The chancellor immediately ordered a probe, asking the university to investigate the exam scam reports. The vice-chancellor responded two days later with an unsurprising denial. He had instituted an internal investigation which established that the story was false. But whatever the truth of this particular story, Makerere will inevitably have to address the issue of standards in its reform path. The rumours and scandals about standards result directly from the unplanned and unfocused innovations.

The clear message is that both students and lecturers have devised survival mechanisms in a situation that in effect oppresses both of them. Lecturers are compelled to teach both day and evening to make ends meet in what Altbach sees as a kind of 'on-campus moonlighting' (2005: 2). They therefore prepare notes which they read in class or place at photocopiers for collection (See examples in appendix.) A walk through the Faculty of Social Sciences would leave one in no doubt that photocopying is a booming business. Students need not attend lectures; they can simply photocopy notes. Apart from attempts to cheat or employ 'mercenaries', students have another strategy of manipulating the fluid system. They cried – both males and females – in explaining why they

missed tests or failed them. Reasons range from sickness (where others have to go back to the village for treatment) to lack of money.

Another murmur that could not find space for legitimate expression was about private students subsidising the government-sponsored ones. A concern was that Makerere had over time evolved into a parasitic university. Although the fees paid by private students were relatively less than the unit cost, the private sponsorship programme evidently provided a stopgap for what would otherwise be a miserably cash-strapped university. It provided for payment of allowances (known as 'top up') for all staff, from messengers to secretaries to vice-chancellor. What does the student receive in return?

A consideration of dropouts, dead years and retakes shows bigger numbers in the privately sponsored cohort. In particular the evening students were more likely to have retakes than those in the day programme. The semester system and the evening programme have seen evening students operating a permanent crash programme. The evening programme begins at 5 p.m. when the rest of the university (including lavatories) is closing and continues up to 10 p.m.

Figure 2: Number of Retakes in the Faculty of Social Sciences for Selected Years

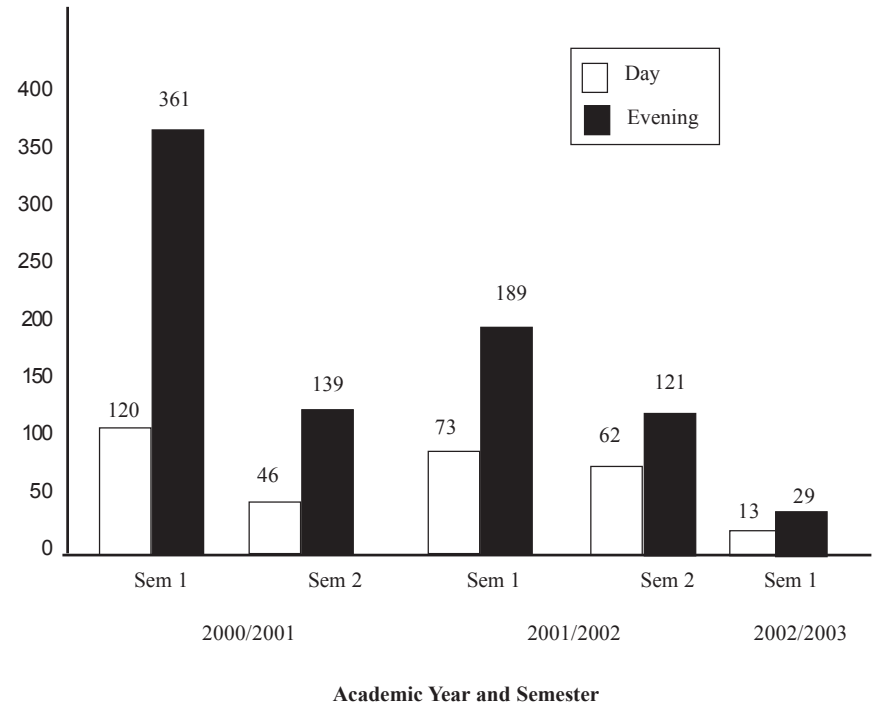


Table 7: Student Retakes in the Faculty of Social Sciences over a Selected Period

		2000/2001				2001/2002				2002/2003			
		Study Programme				Study Programme				Study Programme			
	Sex	Day	%	Eve	%	Day	%	Eve	%	Day	%	Eve	%
Semester One	*Male*	24	**2**	73	**7**	20	**2**	46	**4**	3	0.3	9	0.9
	Female	20	**2**	69	**7**	10	**0.9**	30	**3**	3	0.3	4	0.4
	Total	**44**	**4**	**142**	**14**	**30**	**2.9**	**76**	**7**	**6**	**0.6**	**13**	**1.3**
Semester Two	*Male*	14	**2**	28	**3**	21	**2**	24	**2**	N/A			
	Female	4	**0.5**	28	**3**	10	**1**	28	**3**	N/A			
	Total	**18**	**2.5**	**56**	**6**	**31**	**3**	**52**	**5**				

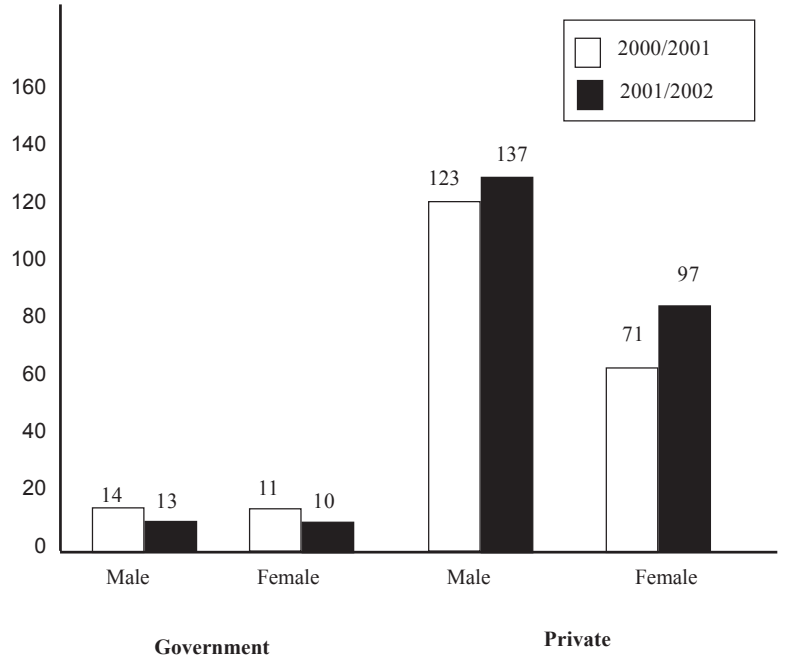
Source: Makerere University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Records.

Compensation for the limited time is Saturdays where from 8 a.m. students are hopping from one lecture to another until the 6 p.m. The lecturer who comes for the 6 p.m. lecture hour talks to a virtually 'lifeless' group of people.[16]

The statistics in Figure 2 and Table 7 trace a specific cohort of students beginning their first year in 2000–2001 and completing in 2002–2003 in the Faculty of Social Sciences. What is demonstrated is that retakes were very high in the first semester of the first year. The explanation was that students are often excited to be at the campus and, by the time they settle in, the semester is coming to an end. But this also talks specifically to the manner in which the university is unprepared to receive the large numbers and enable them to settle in to begin the semester on time and be ready for a final exam after seventeen weeks. The other and perhaps more significant aspect is the consistently higher numbers of retakes in the evening than in the day programme.

The drop-out rates closely follow the pattern of retakes. Figures available in the Faculty of Social Sciences show that in the 2000–2001 academic year a total of 25 government-sponsored students (14 males and 11 females) dropped out, while the total for private students was 194 (123 males and 71 females). In

Figure 3: Dropouts in the Faculty of Social Sciences by Sponsorship



2001–2002, 21 (11 males and 10 females) dropouts were government-sponsored and 246 (137 males, 97 females) were private students (see Figure 3). The problem of dropouts may not be significant in terms of percentages, but it indicates a specific trend stemming directly from the nature of the reforms that Makerere University has undergone.

Dropouts in higher education should, in an ideal world, be at the very minimum, resulting mainly from such incidents as death and sickness. But for privately sponsored dropping out seems to be fast becoming the norm. The university administration presumed the students to have "absconded". There was also an indication of a higher dropout rate among male students. Apart from the fact that males are the majority, there is also an increasing phenomenon that males are often assumed to have more capacity to make money. In such cases parents and guardians put more emphasis on females. The overall picture is the relative degree of false access on the part of students. Students and parents may manage to pay the first semester or the first year and then find that they cannot continue. The student drops out, and the university proceeds with business as usual. The lost income on the part of the parents and students is never a consideration.

Conclusion

By way of closing reflections on the issue of access at Makerere University, we make a number of observations. We have argued that the reform process and the opening up accompanying it have greatly expanded access. However this access may be concealing far-reaching contradictions. As staff and students struggle to keep pace with the reform model even outrageous things have become normalised. It leaves one with no doubt that both staff and students are cheated by the system.

The privatisation process within a public university calls for a critical rethinking. Evidently the state can no longer shoulder the financing the entire university sector. In any case the open access within public universities and the establishment of various private universities mean that the sector has expanded tremendously. However the issue is that student fees cannot finance the university. Alternative sources of funding are inevitable. For a public university such as Makerere the government must, as a matter of necessity, realign its priorities to have a much higher stake in higher education if the sector is to serve its purpose.

Government's stake in education should therefore not stop at dividing and re-dividing the meagre slots for sponsorship. As already argued, affirmative action and quotas, as a response to diversity, have only meant a reallocation of the fixed slots that government already funds. The outcome has been a repro-

duction of elite privilege in several categories, whether we talk of women's affirmative action or quotas such as for science and districts. Beyond these short-term and top-down interventions there is need for structural transformation in the education system that addresses disadvantage at the root as opposed to the apex. This means that, for example, regional and gender disparities would be addressed at all levels of education. With reference to the science shift in 2005 and how it inevitably knocked out areas with no science subjects, the executive director of the National Council for Higher Education recommended that government needed to empower schools in rural areas. One would need to 'unpack' that empowerment and what it entails in real terms to achieve equity in higher education.

Government sponsorship for students is a key access issue that needs to be revisited in view of the changes that have taken place. General debates have indicated that it is no longer justifiable to select a few students for the comfortable life inside the campus while the majority pine away as private students. Moreover those who actually get to that sponsorship are already the privileged, largely urban and from predominantly good schools. These are complex questions which call for equally far-reaching, long-term solutions. Quotas can only serve as temporary measures.

The issue of student loans has been mooted as a way of increasing access to higher education in an equitable manner. In addition student loans are said to increase the commitment of students to their studies while at the same time providing a fair means of expanding the university sector without being a parasite on parents and students (particularly the poor). In Kenya, where the policy of giving loans to students has a much longer history, there was initially the problem of mechanisms for recovery once the students graduated. A Higher Education Loans Board was established in 1995, charged with the disbursement of loans, scholarships and bursaries to needy Kenyan students as well as the recovery of the loans. It is important to examine whether or not such an option is possible in the Ugandan context.

Notes

1. This fact has become common place in the media. It forms one of the constant pleas by the Vice-Chancellors at graduation ceremonies. Sometimes it is a cause of strikes by students, especially when the meagre funds paid in lieu of residence and special faculty allowances are delayed.
2. These include Islamic University in Uganda (1988), East African Christina University, Ndejje (1992), Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi (1993)), Nkumba University (1999), Namasagali University (1999), Kampala University (2000), Bugema University (1994), Uganda Christian University, Mukono (1999),

Kigezi International University (2000), Aga Khan University (2001), and Kabale University (2005). Several other universities are in operation, though not licensed yet. For others such as Namasagali, the National Council for Higher Education has withdrawn the licence on account of failure to meet required standards.

3. In addition, many of the newer universities still lack qualified staff and frequently rely on Makerere staff for their teaching, on a part-time basis.
4. Many of the rural-based secondary schools were established in the spirit of 'taking services to the people' but such schools, at least in each sub-county then, were not well resourced. Known as 'Tata' Lorry or Third World schools, many have remained at that level. While it is clear that such schools have made some difference in widening educational access, such access has largely been of secondary status. Many lack science laboratories and good libraries. Although the government could attempt to redress the situation of these schools by providing science laboratories and libraries, the issue of rural schools goes beyond mere laboratories and libraries. There are more complex factors such as the living conditions. Positive change will probably be felt in the distant future.
5. This phenomenon could be explained in terms of its location, bordering with Kenya as well as the colonial heritage where a number of educational institutions were established there, perhaps due to the favourable terrain. Despite this fact however, the Eastern region over time tumbled on the HE landscape due to insurgency and related factors.
6. Due to space limitations, the whole question of gender mainstreaming in Makerere University, as a much broader access issue beyond the consideration of student needs and experience, is not included here. The gender perspective and the shape it has taken within Makerere University during the same period as the liberalisation reforms is a critical issue for consideration. Further, the significance of the Women and Gender Studies department as an academic unit together with the Gender Mainstreaming Programme as part of the strategic direction of the university are equally critical for analysis.
7. This leaves out two halls of residence. One is Complex which was mixed at the time but with much fewer females than males. The other is Africa Hall for females where data could not be obtained. A former student resident in Africa Hall indicated that the hall is very small compared to all the other halls of residence.
8. According to a former student beneficiary, the chairperson of MUNSA claimed to have visited the State House to see the President and returned on the same day with a donation of 10 million Shillings 'extracted' from the President.
9. In 2004, the Students' Guild Government officially submitted requests for employment of needy students to the various university units (General Circular letters by the Employment Minister, Students Guild dated 10 January 2004). It would appear that district administration would also embrace the idea; since

some of the districts often sponsor students directly (e.g. Lira, Arua, Kibaale and Gulu sponsor a few students).

10. Thirteen scholarships were withdrawn in November 2004 as a result of the home validation exercise. The Senate Committee on Gender Mainstreaming further recommended cancellation of 23 more scholarships.
11. Such commissions include De la Warr Commission (1937), De Bunsen Commission (1958), Castle Commission (1963), and Kajubi Commission (1989).
12. A practice also emerged where in mixed schools (primary and secondary), if the head teacher is male the deputy must be female and vice versa. There is a central government scholarship for secondary school education awarded to one girl and one boy per sub-country annually. It is also government policy to build or re-enforce science laboratories and libraries for rural based girls' and/or mixed secondary schools.
13. The district of origin column however shows some variations with a number of marginal districts such as Kanungu, Katakwi, Pader, Kiboga appearing occasionally which meant those students had studied in schools outside of their districts of origin.
14. It was not possible to obtain concrete data (for example on performance) from all the units of the university. The available information from the FSS is used to illustrate the larger debate.
15. The university subsequently announced that the intake of private students for the academic year 2005/06 would be less by about 2000.
16. Personal experience teaching Gender and Development, a double lecture from 6 to 8 p.m., on Saturdays.

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Appendix 1: Undated Notice in the Faculty of Social Sciences

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Appendix 2: Notice Board at the Department of Women and Gender Studies

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Appendix 3: SOC 1203 final examination question paper, June 2005

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2005
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SEMESTER II, 2005/2005
SOC. 1203: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES, THEORIES AND METHODS

Date: Saturday 25th June 2005 Time: 9.00 a.m. – 12.00 Noon

Instructions:
1. Section A is compulsory and takes 50 Marks
2. Answer any TWO questions in Section B. Each Question takes 25 Marks.
3. Do not write anything on this question paper. The question paper **MUST** be handed in with the Answer sheet(s)

SECTION A (Compulsory)

1. Sociology is .....
a. The scientific study of human groups
b. The study of behaviour unique to particular situations
c. A form of philosophy
d. A science developed during the middle ages

2. Which of the following is an example of social interaction?
a. Playing solitaire computer game
b. Arguing with a friend
c. Reading a book
d. None of the above

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The University as a Site of Knowledge: The Role of Basic Research[1]

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Abstract

This paper extrapolates from the tensions between the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA) and the university administration to make a case for academic freedom in Tanzania in particular and Africa in general. It draws on two key statements on academic freedom in Africa – the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics (1990) and the Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility (1991), to discuss the role of basic research in the university as a site for knowledge production. The paper argues that the quest for academic freedom is only meaningful if universities renew their commitment to the public good. Only by fulfilling the public trust as weavers of the social fabric and upholders of the highest ethical dimensions of human life can universities reclaim their position in society and the world at large.

Résumé

Cet article procède à une extrapolation des tensions entre University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA) et l'administration de cette même université, afin de plaider pour la liberté académique en Tanzanie en particulier et en Afrique, en général. Il s'inspire également de deux déclarations clés concernant les libertés académiques en Afrique : la Déclaration de Dar es Salaam sur les libertés académiques et la responsabilité sociale des universitaires (1990) ainsi que la Déclaration de Kampala sur les libertés intellectuelles et la responsabilité sociale (1991), dans le but d'évoquer le rôle de la recherche fondamentale au sein de l'université, en tant que lieu de production de la connaissance. L'auteur affirme que la quête d'une certaine liberté académique ne conserve tout son sens que si les universités renouvellent leur engagement envers le bien public. Ce n'est qu'en méritant la confiance publique, en leur qualité de tisserands de la toile sociale et de garantes des grandes valeurs éthiques de l'humain que les universités pourront réclamer leur position au sein de la société et du monde, de façon plus large.

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> 'The scramble to get into college is going to be so terrible in the next few years that students are going to put up with almost anything, even an education.' Barnaby Keeney, President, Brown University (cited in Charlton 1994: 14)

Introduction

On 30 April 2003, the then United States Ambassador to Tanzania, Mr Robert V. Royall, was scheduled to inaugurate a USAID-funded modern transportation engineering laboratory on the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) main campus ('The Hill'). This was at a time when the United States and Britain were pouring down thousands of tons of bombs on Iraq. On 29 April 2003 the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA) strongly and unreservedly protested at the presence of the Ambassador on the main campus and called upon its members and the university community to boycott the event. UDASA stated that the American and British bombing campaign was

> reducing … [Iraq] to rubble, and literally disarming children, as the likes of Ali losing their limbs [had] shown'. It also complained that as a result of the bombing 'the great libraries and museums of Iraq went up in flames, destroying the record of over ten centuries of Arab, Islamic and human civilisation.

The UDASA protest did not go down well with the university administration, even though the Tanzanian government was also opposed to the invasion of Iraq, as Parliament had been informed in the same month. The vice-chancellor responded to the UDASA statement through a letter to the chairperson on 9 May 2003. Among other things the letter questioned whether the statement was not contrary to the right to academic freedom. The vice-chancellor argued:

> A university is a free market of ideas. One would, therefore, have thought that 'un-embedded' intellectuals would have asked, not for a boycott of Ambassador Royall's visit, but for an invitation to him to a discussion/debate/panel discussion with others holding views different from those of UDASA.

The letter continued: 'Why was this option not exercised? By condemning the US unheard as is done in the statement, will an invitation to a US government representative to the UDSM for a debate/discussion stand any chance of success?' The letter went on to question even the calibre of the academic members of staff, claiming they were not aware of the implications of their actions. 'Has UDASA reflected', the vice-chancellor asked, 'on what intellectuals elsewhere in the world who read the UDASA statement will conclude about the calibre and quality of intellectuals at UDSM?' Then came the real crunch:

> Would any of the un-embedded intellectuals have their sons, daughters or relatives studying or living in the US or UK? Would one meet any of them standing in queue for a visa to the US or UK? Will any of them neither seek nor accept funding for research, sabbaticals, and other academic pursuits from any of the two countries?

The following year UDASA and the university administration clashed again, after the administration, on 21 April 2004, suspended all students for 'security' reasons. This followed a two-day boycott of classes in protest at the Student Loans Bill, aimed at introducing the last phase of so-called cost sharing in higher education. On 20 April students had demonstrated against the bill, only to meet the wrath of the state in the form of the police and paramilitary, who broke up the demonstration using excessive force. Many students were wounded or jailed. When UDASA protested against this shabby treatment of the students, the administration questioned its legitimacy as an organisation and the manner in which it conducted itself as far as decision-making was concerned. The administration even challenged UDASA to conduct an opinion poll to ascertain whether its members truly agreed with the positions taken by the organisation, arguing that UDASA lacked even the basic rudiments of strategic planning.

Under such circumstances can the university still be considered a site of knowledge? Is it possible to undertake basic research in a situation where donors and international financial institutions (IFIs) dominate in every sphere of society and academia? What all the above demonstrates is the fact that there is nothing like academic freedom in the abstract. In the case of our countries, it 'exists fully and concretely for those who control the means of production and circulation of knowledge, whether as a private or state capital; they can decide what to produce and how to produce it' (Ake 1994: 17). The dictum that knowledge is power has been familiar since the times of Francis Bacon, but with rapid advances in information technology in the North, it is said increasingly that knowledge and the capacity to produce it are becoming key economic inputs which at the extreme supersede land, capital and labour.

The 1990 and 1991 Declarations on Academic Freedom

To discuss meaningfully the topic at hand, it is necessary to revisit the context under which two key statements on academic freedom in Africa were produced – the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics (1990) and the Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility (1991). The budgetary crises in African states during the late 1970s and 1980s had resulted in governments bowing to

the dictates of international financial institutions by liberalising their economies and introducing anti-welfare policies as part of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). Currency devaluations and sky-rocketing inflation rates had eroded the earnings of the people in general, including academics. Institutions of higher learning had become characterised by the collapse of infrastructure such as libraries, bookstores and research facilities, serious shortages of books, laboratory equipment and research funds, inadequate teaching personnel and poor staff development and motivation.

In this context working conditions and remuneration in institutions of higher learning verged on the catastrophic. Academic members of staff were migrating to 'greener pastures', including apartheid South Africa, or resorting to outside work such as dubious donor-funded consultancies or even keeping poultry. Classrooms were overcrowded, students were becoming lecturer-dependent (relying on lecture notes and readers' notes) and lecturers were increasingly demoralised. In addition there was a steady deterioration of social and cultural values on many campuses, with a resurgence of gender-based, racial, nationalist, ethnic, religious and cultural prejudices, amidst an atmosphere of petty antipathies, bad conscience and brutal mediocrity. In the early 1990s, for example, a female student at the University of Dar es Salaam, Revina Mukasa, committed suicide as a result of gender harassment.

There were more and more incidents of violence on campuses, along with a marked tendency for students to regroup themselves in terms of ethnic affiliations. Ethnic affiliations, which were previously unheard of among students in Tanzania, had become necessary; it was claimed, to be a 'survival mechanism'. Students helped each other cope with the hardships resulting from 'cost-sharing' measures, but only within ethnic groupings.

On the other hand the deteriorating situation resulted in growing activism on campuses as a result of the growing demands by academics for a living wage and protests by students against the so-called cost-sharing measures. Usually governments in Africa have responded to this activism with the use of force, deploying military and security forces on campuses to 'restore law and order'. In several instances confrontations between these forces and students or academic staff have led to the closure of campuses. It was in this context that questions about academic freedom and the responsibilities of higher learning institutions and their autonomy were raised. The debates ranged from those focusing mainly on better living and working conditions to those 'concerned more directly with academic freedom and the relationship of the intellectual to society…[and] to those directly and centrally involved in broader democratic struggles' (Diouf and Mamdani 1994: 4).

The Dar es Salaam and Kampala declarations were not explicit on the role of the universities as sites of knowledge or even on the role of basic research. It seems that these issues were assumed to remain within the context of the traditional objectives of the university – scientific enquiry, pursuit of knowledge and the search for the whole truth in the interest of social transformation and human emancipation. The institutional transformations that were to be introduced in the universities in the 1990s and how these would impinge on knowledge production and research in general were hardly taken aboard, even in subsequent follow-ups on academic freedom (see CODESRIA 1996 and Sall 2000, for example). The issues of vital importance in the discussions in the 1990s remained those of harassment, repression, intimidation, suspensions, remuneration and freedom of expression, association, demonstration and assembly.

Postmodernism, Knowledge, Research and Neoliberalism

The French postmodernist Jean-François Lyotard published a book in 1979 which was translated into English in 1984 as *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Lyotard 1984). In this work Lyotard accounted for the changing nature of knowledge in the advanced capitalist societies and reassessed the role of the universities, given the computerisation process in those societies. His working hypothesis was that 'the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the post-industrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age' (Lyotard 1984: 3). The term 'postmodern condition' was used to describe the state of knowledge and the problem of its legitimation, following what Lyotard considered to be the transformations that had been taking place in those countries since the 1950s.

According to Lyotard the Enlightenment project and its metanarratives concerning meaning, truth and emancipation, which had been used to legitimate both the rules of knowledge and the foundations of modern institutions, besides laying down the game rules for science, literature and the arts, had reached a crisis in the most highly developed societies. The 'postmodern condition' was defined by 'incredulity toward metanarratives' (Lyotard 1984: xxiv). By this phrase Lyotard meant to point to 'the obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation' to which corresponds 'the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institution' (Lyotard 1984: xxiii).

Lyotard further claimed that knowledge was increasingly becoming the major force of production and was increasingly becoming translated into quantities of information, with a corresponding reorientation in the process of research. He claimed that 'the miniaturization and commercialization of machines is already changing the way in which learning is acquired, classified, made avail-

able, and exploited' (Lyotard 1984: 4). Knowledge in computerised societies was becoming 'exteriorised' from knowers, and the age-old notion of knowledge and pedagogy being inextricably linked was being replaced by a new view of knowledge as a commodity: 'Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its "use-value" …' (Lyotard 1984: 4-5).

According to Lyotard knowledge in the form of informational commodity had become indispensable to productive power: 'It is conceivable that the nation-states will one day fight for control of information, just as they battled in the past for control over territory, and afterwards for control and access to and exploitation of raw materials and cheap labour' (Lyotard: 5). In this context the idea that 'learning falls within the purview of the State, as the mind or brain of society' was giving way to the idea that 'society exists and progresses only if messages circulating within it are rich in information and easy to decode' (Lyotard 1984: 5). In sum:

> We may thus expect a thorough exteriorization of knowledge with respect to the 'knower', at whatever point he or she may occupy in the knowledge process. The old principle that the acquisition of knowledge is indissociable from the training *(Bildung)* of minds, or even of individuals, is becoming obsolete and will become ever more so. The relationships of the suppliers and users of knowledge to the knowledge they supply and use is now tending, and will increasingly tend, to assume the form already taken by the relationship of commodity producers and consumers to the commodities they produce and consume – that is, the form of value (Lyotard 1984: 4-5).

In the computer age, with the state playing more of a regulatory role, the power to make decisions will be determined by the question of access to information. Eventually academics will not be needed, since much of the work they undertake will be taken over by computerised data network systems.

Lyotard was essentially acknowledging the omnipotence of the free-market economy.

The university, with all its faculties and intellectual specialisations, becomes untenable because of the new nature of knowledge – cyberspace information processing which quantifies knowledge according to computer logic. For postmodernists the knower has been transformed into a consumer of knowledge. Perhaps these claims by Lyotard, which were celebrated in Europe and exerted profound influence among other postmodernists, could have remained a European academic fad, except for the fact they reinforced the ideas developed by the theorists of 'post-industrial society', such as Touraine (1971) and

Bell (1974) on information/knowledge workers. These theorists argued that industrial society was moving from a goods-producing to a service economy and was characterised by the pre-eminence of the professional and technical class and the widespread diffusion of 'intellectual technology'. After the 1968 student revolts in Europe Touraine predicted the possibility of deepening conflicts between students and teachers upholding the humanistic values of liberal education on the one hand and, on the other hand, those who control the technocratic apparatuses and are dedicated to economic growth.

Above all Lyotard's claims were being given credence and substance by developments in science – the new information technology (global cyberspace), the new cosmologies developed by conventionalists (the theory of everything) and the developments in genetic science (the human genome project). They also coincided with the rise of neo-liberal politics with the ascendancy of Pope John Paul II (Karol Wojtyla in 1978), President Ronald Reagan (1980) and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1981) and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which signaled the complete triumph of the market economy. African and other developing countries were forced to structurally adjust their economies, adopt market-oriented policies and privatise public enterprises. With the rise of computer technology, cellular phones, modems and faxes, the world's financial markets became hooked up into a system of 24-hour non-stop trading. Take-over specialists bought and sold enterprises all over the world, making tens of thousands of workers redundant and countless stockholders rich, regardless of the long-term economic goals of a country.

The determinists in genetic science, sponsored by the multibillion-dollar Human Genome Project, which aimed to map and analyse the complete genetic blueprint of human beings, lent weight to the idea that human beings are pre-determined, whether in terms of intelligence, free market entrepreneurship, sexuality, male dominance, etc. Thus the project worked to legitimise the status quo of existing inequalities and forms of domination. Meanwhile, as far as physics was concerned, theories of chaos and complexity demolished the notion of control and certainty in science. Conventionalists claimed that scientific methods are just myths and that scientific knowledge is manufactured. Paul Feyeraband (1971: 5) had earlier explicitly argued that the 'only principle that does not exhibit progress is: anything goes …. Without chaos, no knowledge. Without a frequent dismissal of reason, no progress'.

As a 1994 European Union White Paper pointed out, there has been an increasing shift from the kind of society where formal learning occurs once-off towards one in which education does not stop after one has obtained a qualification. Thus both public and private organisations are increasingly taking on

the continuing education of their members as a major responsibility. The South African National Commission for Higher Education therefore concludes:

> This means that higher education institutions will no longer have a monopoly on the transmission of knowledge, which will become increasingly diversified, with the higher education institution being only one of many organisations competing for the education/training market (NCHE 1996: 39).

In such an environment, if higher education institutions are not to be marginalised, they are going to have to develop partnerships with both private and public-sector organisations .

Neo-liberalism and Institutional Transformation in Tanzania

Broadly, whatever the misgivings some may have, post-independence Tanzanian nation-building was based on welfare policies that assumed the public provision of health, education, water, etc. This was reflected even in the conception of what the university and other institutions of higher learning were all about. According to Nyerere (1973: 192-3) the university was an institution where people's minds should be 'trained for clear thinking, for independent thinking, for analysis and for problem solving at the highest level. This is the meaning of 'a university' anywhere in the world.' Thus the university's role was threefold: to transmit advanced knowledge from one generation to another 'so that this can serve either as a basis of action, or as a springboard for further research', to advance the frontiers of knowledge 'through its possession of good library and laboratory facilities', and finally to provide high-level manpower to society. All three are necessary: 'a university which attempts to prohibit any one of [these functions] would die – it would cease to be a university' (Nyerere 1973: 193). For Nyerere universities in developing countries have exactly the same high responsibility towards themselves and their societies:

> Thus our university, like all others worthy of the name, must provide the facilities and the opportunities for the highest intellectually enquiry. It must encourage and challenge its students to develop their powers of constructive thinking. It must encourage its academic staff to do original research and to play a full part in promoting intelligent discussion of issues of human concern. It must do all these things because they are part of being a university; they are part of its reason for existence (Nyerere 1973: 197).

In keeping with this vision post-independence education policies in Tanzania were premised on the provision of education, especially higher education, as the basis for social and economic development, with the state playing the central role.

However, the neo-liberal policies which were developed in the 1980s to cope with the crisis that had begun to face African economies since the 1970s argued that developing countries, with their abundant supply of unskilled labour, had a comparative advantage in the production of labour-intensive goods and services.[2] With increased free trade, this argument held, the wages of unskilled labour would increase in these countries, since goods produced by unskilled labour in the developed countries would face competition from those from developing countries, given the scarcity of unskilled labour in the former. Therefore free markets and competition would enhance technological progress and lead to high-quality, sustained growth in the developing countries (Michalopoulos 1987: 24). Within this context the World Bank produced a number of studies on education in Africa from the mid-1980s on (World Bank 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990a, 1991; Kelly 1991) calling for drastic reductions in state funding of higher education in Africa on the pretext of promoting higher efficiency and more egalitarian distribution of resources.

These studies claimed that the social return on public investment in primary education was 28 per cent, while that on tertiary education was only13 per cent. They also argued that the return on *private* investment in higher education was as high as 32 per cent. The studies concluded that individual university graduates received about 2.5 times more income over outlay than the government but received 34 times more from the government than what primary students received. Accordingly, they concluded, education financing was unbalanced, and investment in higher education was inefficient. In the words of Michael Kelly (1991: 7), 'wastage, proliferation of small institutions, excessively large (especially non-teaching) staff and the nearly universal policy of charging no fees all contribute to high costs'.

The studies also argued that the distribution of education expenditure was very inegalitarian. For example, they claimed that 40 per cent of university students came from white-collar families (professionals, government employees and corporate employees). White-collar families represented only 6 percent of the population but appropriated about 27 per cent of public education expenditure. Thus, rather than alleviating poverty, public expenditure in higher education, it was claimed, was increasing it. The World Development Report of 1990 identified the most critical elements of poverty reduction as labour-intensive growth, investment in human capital and safety nets for the poor. It emphasised the need for growth that is labour-intensive and removes distortions in labour markets. This was a time when many donor agencies had shifted their support to projects promising short-term pay-offs, which were mostly administered by NGOs whose success did not depend on high-level skills,

such as technical skills or PhDs. This approach reinforced the shift away from higher education as a development priority (Doss et al. 2004: 2).

At a World Bank meeting of African vice-chancellors in Harare in 1988 it was even claimed that Africa's need for university education to fill white-collar jobs could be met by overseas education institutions, so that resources could be channelled to primary, secondary and vocational education. The assumption was that African workers were destined for a long time to remain unskilled workers. This was the position of the World Bank's first Africa- specific education policy paper, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalisation and Expansion* (1988). The paper was produced at a time when the bank's lending for the social sector was constrained to make room for SAPs lending in what the bank considered to be productive sectors. The main thrust of this policy was that higher education was too expensive and mainly favoured better-off population groups at the expense of primary and secondary education for the majority.

Since there was resistance from the institutions of higher learning, the World Bank called for a restructuring of education, so that there could be public cost-recovery and reallocation of government spending towards levels with the highest social returns. This, according to the World Bank, would promote higher efficiency and more egalitarian distribution of education resources. The bank was of the view that the higher education system should be made to operate at the lowest possible public cost and that higher-education institutions should exist by virtue of being 'viable' and 'efficient'. By viability was meant the institutions 'producing' for the 'market' and paying for themselves. The introduction of cost-sharing was part of this package. By efficiency was meant revising syllabi to ensure 'products' better suited for the market. The World Bank envisioned a network of market-oriented 'centres of excellence' replacing the present university systems. In the view of the World Bank education was bound up with the development of the overall economy. The crucial and determining factor was the question of employment (and unemployment), since educational levels have an effect on employability. Rhetoric aside, this was an expression in a subtle way of the view that universities should be turned into vocational schools in all but name!

According to the World Bank the multiple changes in economies, cultures and communication systems under globalisation call for greater flexibility in production to meet increasingly diverse global consumer needs. This flexibility can be attained by using new computer-led technologies and employing a more educated labour force in more participatory forms of work organisation. This has led to an increased need for a multi-skilled labour force that can adapt to new technologies and the continuous deployment of new knowledge. The

world is entering a new stage – that of the 'knowledge society' – in which productivity is increasingly becoming dependent on knowledge as a form of symbolic capital. Since higher-learning institutions are the natural habitat of specialised knowledge, they should therefore play a central role. The role of higher-learning institutions in Africa becomes one of producing skilled professionals and knowledge workers who can compete internationally.

Within this context higher education, like other public services, was increasingly being drawn into the world market. For example it was claimed that students were becoming consumers free to choose the best courses and that there was big money to be made by private firms. Higher education had therefore become a commodity. The income from foreign students in Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries topped USD 30 billion in 1999. Even the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has turned its attention to this sector; the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) has included higher education on the list of services to be privatised since 1994. The negotiations on facilitating the flow of students and educational resources and on establishing colleges and campuses in foreign countries were planned to be completed by 2005.

In terms of financial resources public universities now had to compete with many other institutions. The changing forms of knowledge dissemination, and the entry of a plethora of private and public institutions performing the same work, ended universities' knowledge 'monopoly'. As far as research was concerned, it was claimed that, given the globalising trends, universities could no longer claim to be the leading sites of knowledge production. Their pre-eminent role had been eroded by multinational and private sector research laboratories, scientific and cultural councils, research councils and agencies and a host of individual and commercial organisations. Within this context the separation between theoretical (basic) and applied knowledge, it was claimed, was being contested both by the new forms of knowledge production and by new management models of research.

In light of these developments internationally, and the changing conception of the role of the university that they have given rise to, one can begin to make sense of the transformations that began to take place in the University of Dar es Salaam in the 1990s. The University of Dar es Salaam started reviewing its mission, objectives and activities in 1991, given that donors had shown a willingness to fund those transformations. The *raison d'être* for the review, it was claimed, was the fact that since 1985 Tanzanian society had undergone major changes politically and economically. The economy had changed from centralised to market-oriented, and the political system had changed from a one-party to multi-party. As the university administration concluded, 'the existing ca-

pacities of the university were seen to be inadequate in meeting the increasing demand, thus calling for new and more efficient modes of delivery and strategic thinking' (UDSM 2004: 2).

Basically the thinking behind the review was in line with the policies that were being pushed by the World Bank and that had already been accepted by the government of Tanzania. UDASA's critical appraisal of these ideas in 1993, and of the issue of cost-sharing proposed by the university administration, fell on deaf ears. The administration went ahead with launching the Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP) 1993–2008, which aimed to analyse institutional strengths and weaknesses, find ways to reduce the costs of training students, agitate for a 'flexible' University Act to improve the 'autonomy' of the institution and, finally, improve the working conditions and environment for staff and students.

With the implementation of the ITP over the years student enrolment increased from 2,898 in 1995 to 8,411 in 2002 and to almost 14,000 by 2004. The proportion of female students increased from 15.9 per cent in 1995 to 31 per cent in 2004. The increase in enrolment resulted from an increased number of private students rather than from more government sponsorship. At another level the university privatised and outsourced several functions and had reduced the number of support staff by 1,013 by June 2002. It increased to some extent the space for teaching and student accommodation and introduced new training programmes and new management units. ICT infrastructure and capacity were enhanced, as were awareness and utilisation of ICT resources. The university also hived off units involved in the provision of services such as catering, accommodation, cleaning, transportation, etc., created a 'conducive environment for outsiders to invest on university lands' and adopted contract employment as the norm instead of employment on permanent and pensionable terms (UDSM 2004: 4-5). Over the past few years the university has also embarked on the introduction of 'programmes of excellence' that aim for multidisciplinarity and that respond to job markets. A more corporate institutional culture has also been promoted.

All these transformations are aimed at responding both to global trends and the national goals advocated in the Tanzania Vision 2025, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Higher Education Sub-Master Plan, the Science and Technology Sub-Master Plan, the Civil Service Reform Programme, the National ICT Policy, etc. The stakeholders in the implementation of the transformations are the government, the university management, the university council, the Programme Steering Committee, the major university offices, the boards of colleges, faculties, institutes and major departments, the private sector and the 'development partners' (donors). Staff and students are the 'beneficiaries'.

As a result of this process the University of Dar es Salaam has reached a point where the production of 'marketable goods' – works, courses and graduates – is given priority over academic excellence, and where academic excellence is defined, in the narrow terms of policy makers, as marketability of courses and 'outputs'. With these corporate strategic goals in place until at least 2013 it would seem that the University of Dar es Salaam is behaving like Rip Van Winkle. For example the University of Cape Town, which introduced similar institutional transformations in the mid-1990s, abandoned them in 2001 after recognising the dangers they posed as far as knowledge production and dissemination are concerned. More recently the World Bank itself has made an about-turn regarding its policies on higher education. Since 2000 the bank has produced reports which have suddenly rediscovered the centrality of education and, in particular tertiary education, for 'the creation of intellectual capacity on which knowledge production utilisation depend and to the promotion of lifelong-learning practices necessary for updating people's knowledge and skills' (cited in Sall 2004: 179). Moving away from the higher-education model of the 1980s and 1990s the bank has begun talking about alternative models with a re-emphasis on the traditional forms of public higher education and knowledge production (Sall 2004: 180). It is recognising that the public university as conceptualised in the 1960s provided the services it was expected of it, and that the social value of its degrees was quite high, even in times of crisis. It is recognising that, with the policies of the 1980s and 1990s, there was hardly any basic research being undertaken and universities had ceased being sites of knowledge production in anything but name.

Conclusion

Under the present conditions academic freedom belongs to those who control and own the means of production of knowledge and its dissemination, not those who actually generate and disseminate the knowledge. With international financial institutions and donors playing a central role, the trend has been towards privatisation of educational processes, programmes and responsibilities while at the same time strengthening state control. The language has changed: students have been redefined as 'consumers' or 'customers', and universities have become 'providers'. The officials and administrators use the language of 'inputs', 'outputs' and 'throughputs', and any notion that education serves some form of collective public good has been removed.

Basic research, as traditionally defined, is a focused, systematic study undertaken to discover new knowledge or interpretations and establish facts or principles in a particular field. This has always been differentiated from applied research, which though also a focused, systematic study, is done in order

to discover the problem-solving applications of the knowledge established by basic research. However, since the current transformations in higher education began, university staff members have either been engaged as 'counterparts' (spare parts) by researchers from Europe and the US, basically as enumerators, or at best they have survived on consultancies guided by external terms of reference. Even where it has been possible to undertake research independently, this has been possible mainly through new research centres or programmes such as the Research in Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) and the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) which have been established through donor funding to cater for the interests of the current economic dispensation.

At the University of Dar es Salaam no distinction is now made between consultancies and independent research; they are both 'research'. Moreover, as far as most are concerned, a research is only genuine when it involves field work and questionnaires. It is not surprising, therefore, that some lecturers teach focus group discussions (FGD) and rapid rural appraisals as research methods. These are eclectic methods that have been developed by donor agencies for purposes of collecting data in a short period in order to make quick decisions on a project. There are local academics who have learnt the same tricks of academic entrepreneurship as their colleagues of the Atlantic world and who have found a fertile ground for prospering in these circumstances of anti-foundationalism and sophistry expressed in the form of relativism. Some of them have been enjoying affluent styles of living using grants from so-called applied branches of science and research, which are claimed to be applications and developments of the 'pure' knowledge of the academy. There are those who have even been employed by branches of the state and industry, thus making 'research' a big business. This tendency for academic entrepreneurs to emerge has over the years been accompanied by the prominence of centres, bureaus, institutes, programme-based teaching, etc.

Under such circumstances a successful academic is not one whose research is acceptable to his or her discipline or relevant to human needs but one whose research is capable of attracting the greatest funds or who controls a research institution capable of distancing itself from the purely teaching structure of the faculties and departments. The most successful have been those employed to advise the government, the international financial institutions and other donors. Financial sponsors are the ones who determine the forms of knowledge, and accepted knowledge has over the years come to be defined as knowledge produced by 'research technicians' or 'professional researchers' rather than genuine scientists. The academic entrepreneurs have reduced knowledge to 'pragmatic' teaching programmes and research on practical concerns.

In this way the 'stakeholders' have been able to proclaim that 'in such a worldwide informational economy investment in what is called "human capital" becomes strategic [and] universities become fundamental tools for development' (Castells 1993: 66). They have further proclaimed that knowledge is increasingly no longer a cognitive appropriation of socially determined material transformations for life processes, but instead has become simply a post-industrial force of production, since the real substance of knowledge is informed by developments in science (global cyberspace, theories of everything and progress in genetics and its aims) and the triumph of liberal democracy and a free-market economy. The world has therefore entered an era in which cosmologies of the human subject are not the real thing, since technology and economics have fused under labels such as 'computer economy', 'electronic services' and so on. In sum it is an era of the celebration of the 'end of history' (as Fukuyama famously put it), even while all *other* histories are excluded.

Popular, academic and political thinking in Tanzania and Africa generally has increasingly ceased to debate emancipationist politics, politics which would lead to the transformation of societies and help people reach a stage where others' humanity is not contested. Any critique of social realities from the point of view of liberation has become less fashionable. The most fashionable debates are around issues of how African countries can best be 'globalised' as an answer to welfarism, nationalism, socialism and so on. This celebration of the dehumanisation and desocialisation of relationships has been internalised by some academics, so that the concept of the university as an institution in which the faculties are central and the administration plays a supportive role has been reversed. The administration is now the university and the faculties are mere subsidiaries, as in business organisations!

In such an environment education becomes only a matter of the pursuit and provision of degrees and certificates. Career advancement, not the production of knowledge, becomes the key academic goal, to the extent that it is even possible to marginalise good scholarship and research. This situation becomes an excuse for some academics to pursue private interests to the neglect of public and social responsibilities and, increasingly, there arises a category of academics that live *off* the academy rather than *for* it. The university becomes just another way of getting ahead in the world, economically or otherwise, since there is a market of donors, NGOs, international donor organisations and consulting firms to which one can vend his or her 'research' skills. In the name of responding to international imperatives these academics accept the transformation of education from outside the academy based on the findings of consultants who may have little understanding of the difference between universities and corporations.

It is only with the recognition that universities can neither function like government departments nor like businesses that the central issues of knowledge production and basic research can be brought to the fore again. Mahmood Mamdani has pointed out that the reason universities cannot function like governments or businesses is because they are not limited by the short-term considerations of winning votes or making profits. Universities therefore have a unique freedom which gives them the capacity for longer-term research. The value of such research is not measurable in monetary terms, but by its significance to society, if it expands options for a secure and independent future. It is for this reason that higher education has never been profitable anywhere in the world and has always depended on heavy social subsidy (Sall 2004: 203-4).

If the value of higher education is indeed tied to the job market, then it would be logical to simply close universities in developing countries, as there is already too much unemployment! Why train more and more people who will only end up becoming unemployed? Moreover, to tie the whole question of education to the market is to go against the whole essence of human dignity, since what is disregarded here is the fact that education is a fundamental human right. Once upon a time slaves were denied the right to learn how to read and write on the pretext that plantation work did not require them to have such skills. When they were turned into workers, they were told that all they required was simply vocational or technical skills for particular utilitarian ends. They were not supposed to be trained so as to be able to think! That is how colonial education was modelled, and it is this type of education which is being encouraged again today, training in skills but not in thinking. We have become colonial subjects again.

Because education is geared towards the market, students – and even lecturers, I would argue – do not have reading and writing habits, except for utilitarian or bread-and-butter questions, that is, to pass examinations, get a job or a promotion, etc. Nobody wants to go beyond the classroom materials. When it is then claimed that education standards are falling because people are not able to speak or write properly in English, knowledge is being reduced to the question of language. But how does one master any language in this world without using it constantly in reading and writing? The question is pertinent for those of us who would like to consider ourselves 'knowledgeable' without ever visiting libraries or having a single book in our homes (although, of course, the TV or copies of tabloids will definitely be there).

The issue is that conceptualisations of change in the education sector today do not start from the point of view of the problems facing people and their history, or how to make education effective in improving the human condition, but how to create slaves for Mr Money Bags. The debate is no longer about

how to bring about forms of knowledge that enhance the chances of mutual survival by dealing with the problems facing humanity, but how our economies and societies can effectively compete and be integrated further into the global economy. It is hardly recognised that even the so-called revolution in communication so beloved by market fundamentalists has itself ignited an awareness of the problems facing humanity locally, regionally and internationally. The fundamental issues of transformation in education, therefore, need to deal with the extent to which the education system is playing its role in dealing with societal problems. This is the social responsibility of any education system worth the name, and it is only from this position that we can justify demands for academic freedom among students and lecturers.

From this point of view the search should be for an education system that equips people with the necessary tools to create or acquire knowledge and concepts necessary for the survival of the human race in this rapidly changing world. In other words it is the search for those concepts that enhance emancipationist and transformational modes of social activity. Such forms of knowledge and concepts definitely go beyond the job market's 'person power requirements'. Job markets and markets in general are a constraint on creativity, scientific inquiry, fidelity to the pursuit of truth and intellectual freedom in general. The academy's accommodation to market forces and global forces is nothing more than an ideologically determined position which would like to turn the university into a supermarket without any long-term consideration of national and societal needs. The historical experience in Africa requires a greater ferment of ideas and a more intense sense of commitment to social transformation and human emancipation than ever before. Taking such a position means viewing education from the point of view of fundamental human and peoples' rights. An equitable provision of education cannot be guaranteed if the link between the education institutions and the society is simply a matter of finance. There is nothing like 'free' education or social services in the world, as those who advocate the commercialisation or privatisation of social services want the world to believe. All governments in the world derive their revenue from taxation. It is for this reason that they are supposed to be responsible for the provision of social services and infrastructure. In other words it is society, not governments, that finance social services. Therefore to talk of free services is to mask the truth. To talk about government assistance (or so-called cost-sharing) to those who cannot afford it is a mystification, since those who cannot pay are the majority. Simply put, an education system that treats knowledge production as an industry tends to reinforce inequalities and hierarchisation.

What is important is to search for those responses that would define us in this world, where even our very humanity is questioned. In our situation (given

the nature of the problems facing the mass of the people) an intellectual must have a social and historical context. He or she cannot be just a free-floating agent but must be capable of reflecting upon and crystallising the woes and concerns of the masses of Africa – those who are marginalised, exploited and oppressed. The social responsibility of intellectuals lies in the rehabilitation of those academic practices which are sensitive to human predicaments, committed to responding to societal needs by engaging in critical inquiry and analysis and dedicated to championing social forms and organisations capable of fulfilling the needs of the human community as a whole.

Any so-called intellectual who takes it for granted that there is no alternative to the dominant forms of thinking about how the world is, anyone who takes 'for granted that maximum growth, and therefore productivity and competitiveness, are the ultimate and sole goals of human action; or that economic forces cannot be resisted' (Bourdieu 1998: 30), should be called to account. We cannot accept as inevitable the reduction of the state, the removal of the notion of public interests and the destruction of all philosophical foundations of welfarism and collective responsibility towards poverty, misery, sickness, misfortune, etc. on the pretext of reducing the costs of investors and creating an 'enabling environment' for the market.

If universities and their intellectual communities are to remain relevant and socially responsible, they must take the lead in revolting against those notions that treat knowledge and education as private goods and that result in the perpetuation of abuse, prejudices, mediocrity and regressive and repressive interests wrapped in forms of 'universalism of the West'. The precondition for any meaningful renewal of a genuine search for authentic forms of knowledge is the existence of a body of critical intellectuals committed to being radical witnesses on behalf of those who sleep with empty bellies and children who have never experienced childhood because they have to wield guns at tender age. Such an intellectual body must avoid the unwitting pitfall of the demolition of metanarratives, as is the fashion now, or the simple application and use of models. It must win the intellectual high ground for theoretical independence. It is therefore necessary to take philosophy seriously, as the discipline that has traditionally underwritten what constitutes science (or knowledge in general) and determined which political practices are legitimate (Bhaskar 1989: 1). Such a community must be in a position to interrogate the various ontologies in the world, the kind of accounts of the world they give and their status in Africa. For us it is those emancipatory forms of knowledge which should inform our practices, those forms of knowledge which are oriented to human well-being and environmentally sustainable ways of life. Against all the cynicism estab-

lished by social Darwinism (the cult of the of winner), we must stand against the destruction of those ideals associated with public service, equality of rights and equal access to education, health, culture, research, art, etc. This is the basis of any meaningful renewal of our universities as sites of knowledge and research.

In sum, under the present circumstances, the quest for academic freedom as a right for the producers of knowledge is only meaningful if the universities and their academic members renew their commitment to the public good, which has always been the bedrock of any university worth the name. It is also in this way that public investments in higher education can be justified. It is by offering the best education, knowledge and research which address issues of public interest and the problems facing the people. Only by fulfilling the public trust as weavers of the social fabric and upholders of the highest ethical dimensions of human life can institutions of higher learning reclaim their position in society and the world at large. Rather than supplant the traditional role of training minds and producing thinkers, the new technological revolutions should be made to enhance this role. If there are no thinkers and people who are innovative, creative and original, who is going to advance these technologies further and use them for human good?

Notes

1. Paper originally prepared for 'Academic Freedom, Social Responsibility and the State of Academia in Tanzania' Workshop, organised by the University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA), held on 10–11 February 2005 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
2. Most of the following argument is based on my article, 'Social Policy and Development in East Africa: The Case of Education and Labour Markets' in *Social Policy in the Development Context: Africa and the Challenge of Social Policy*, UNRISD, 2003.

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Academic Freedom, the Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education and the Social Responsibility of Academics

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Abstract

This paper critically examines 'The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics' (1990), in view of arousing interest around and stimulating discussion concerning the provisions of the declaration. It argues that for the declaration to serve its purpose, it needs do more than generate an African debate on academic freedom and social responsibility of intellectuals generally, and on the use of a legal format in crystallising democratic political perspectives in particular. The paper stresses the need for more concrete action by scholars in the interest of academic freedom and social responsibility of academics, if they are to be taken seriously.

Résumé

L'article jette un regard critique sur la « Déclaration de Dar es Salaam sur les Libertés Académiques et la Responsabilité Sociale des universitaires » (1990), afin de susciter un certain intérêt de même qu'une discussion autour des dispositions de ladite Déclaration. Pour que cette Déclaration puisse atteindre son objectif, elle doit faire davantage que susciter simple débat sur les libertés académiques et la responsabilité sociale des intellectuels de façon générale, et sur un comportement juridique permettant de cristalliser les perspectives politico-démocratiques, en particulier. Pour être plus crédibles, les universitaires doivent mener des actions plus concrètes dans l'intérêt des libertés académiques et de la responsabilité sociale des intellectuels.

Introduction

When I was first invited to present a paper on 'Academic Freedom, the Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education and the Social Responsibility of Academics' for a workshop on Academic Freedom, Social Responsibility and

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the State of Academia,[1] the topic did not appear to pose much difficulty. However, upon later reflection, it increasingly became clear that this huge topic was heavily loaded, as it involves consideration of three sub-themes, each of which could constitute a topic on its own for a sizeable paper. My aim is to address the exhortation of the workshop organisers to review the commitment of the various associations to the basic principles of the two declarations,[2] and reinvigorate the social commitment of intellectuals. However, to avoid an inordinately lengthy rendition, this paper focuses on just one of the basic instruments in which the three sub-themes are to be found. Since the Dar es Salaam and Kampala declarations on academic freedom were made over a decade ago, some questions need to be posed relating to practice, both in terms of implementation of the principles laid down in the declarations and of what has been happening in the practical academic sphere since then. However, it is not necessary to examine both declarations, since, according to a reliable source, the 'Kampala Declaration' is closely modelled on the 'Dar es Salaam Declaration' (Shivji 1991a). I therefore refer only to the Dar es Salaam document in this paper, the declaration that most of my audience at the workshop were more familiar with.

In revisiting the Dar es Salaam declaration, I will attempt to see if there are provisions in it regarding a practical implementation mechanism, particularly for the prescriptive aspects of the declaration. If there are no such provisions, why is this the case? If there are such provisions, then the question is whether implementation measures have ever been taken and with what results. If no such measures have so far been taken, what should generally be done to remedy the situation? To facilitate a focused discussion of the three components of our complex topic, I will address each aspect in turn, prior to a generalized visualisation of the topic as a whole. However, as one can reach a holistic position only by starting from a holistic perspective, my discussion commences against a general view of the topic, considers its three main components and then concludes with a general view of the whole complex subject.

General Critique of the Dar es Salaam Declaration

The Dar es Salaam declaration was adopted on 19 April 1990 by delegates of staff associations from six institutions of higher education in Tanzania.[3] In its preamble, the declaration made it clear that academic freedom, like other rights, needs to be constantly defended. It states: 'But rights are not simply given; they are won. And even when won, they cannot endure unless protected, nurtured and continuously defended against encroachment and curtailment' [The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics' (1990)]. The substantive provisions of the declaration are ex-

plicit on such themes as 'Education for Human Emancipation', 'Obligations of the State' and 'Rights and Obligations of Communities'. Moreover, in Parts II, III and IV of the declaration there are not only normative ('shall') provisions but most of them are expressly stipulated as 'Rights and Freedoms', 'Obligations of the State and Administration', 'Responsibility of Institutions', and 'Responsibility of Academics'.

One therefore expects to find statements in the declaration regarding how follow-up actions will be handled, by whom or by what organ of the signatory institutions. One expects to find a provision on how the signatory institutions will carry out their obligations under the declaration and with what consequences or expectations for compliance or non-compliance. However, the signatory institutions, assuming the delegates had the requisite mandate to commit the memberships of their respective constituencies, do not seem to have established any forum, secretariat or other form of leadership that one can point at with certainty in the declaration or any instrument referred to therein. Who or what organ is supposed to monitor compliance with the principles set out in the declaration or to mobilise action in the event of non-compliance? Did the draftspersons and signatory institutions regard such a basic issue as irrelevant, unimportant or unnecessary? If so, why? Ordinary common sense and common practice would seem to require some kind of compliance mechanism. However, although the declaration made many fine enunciations, it seems to have left them hanging in mid-air without any legs to stand on, any heads to carry them forward or any hands to guide them along the charted path.

One finds an interesting, though controversial, explanation for this apparently inexcusable omission in a 1991 article by Prof Issa G. Shivji, the only article I am aware of that seriously attempts to discuss the declaration from a jurisprudential viewpoint. Let us hear him in his own words before making any specific comments. In the course of contextualising the declaration in terms of its 'inspiration and style', Prof. Shivji observes:

> The Dar Declaration overturns the usual conceptualisation of human rights instruments/declarations which on the philosophical level proclaim universal values and see their realisation at the technical level of justiciability/enforcement machinery. In the Declaration universal values are embodied and seen to be realised in the process of particular historical and political struggles. The authority of the Declaration lies primarily in its potential to *legitimate* the struggle for academic freedom rather than influence the setting of legal standards in a justiciable instrument. The aim of the Dar Declaration is probably most appropriately illustrated by the ringing call of the Algiers Declaration:

> 'May all those who, throughout the world, are fighting the great battle, at times through armed struggle, for the freedom of all peoples, find in this Declaration the assurance of the legitimacy of their struggle.'
>
> …In keeping with the nature and tenor of the document, the Declaration does not provide any sanction for a breach of an article'. The 'sanction' presumably would be the collective social censure exercised by the academic community as a whole. (Emphasis in the original, Shivji 1991a: 129-30.)

If the above-quoted excerpt captures well the spirit underlying the Dar es Salaaam declaration, then the glaring omission of implementation provisions was both deliberate and ideologically motivated. What was produced was an enunciation of principles, norms, rights and obligations for the general guidance and legitimisation of the member organisations and individual academics. As for sanctions there was felt to be no need for these, beyond presuming that there would be so-called 'collective social censure' by the whole academic community. But surely even such highly 'democratic' censure would need some organisational initiator whose leadership legitimacy would need to be specifically stipulated. Otherwise – and this is how matters seem to stand under the present provisions of the declaration – everything has to be left to chance and good fortune.

As Prof Shivji points out, at the very beginning of the declaration it is stated that, following the formal launch of the declaration in July 1991, the next step was supposed to have been 'for the staff associations to pressurise the respective administrations at their institutions to accord the declaration formal recognition. Eventually, the Government itself will be approached to accord the declaration political acceptance' (Shivji 1991a: 128). However, one finds no clearly defined person(s) or organ(s) charged with these stated tasks. The staff associations are not required to 'pressurise' the administrations of their institutions, nor is there any responsibility placed on any person or organ to approach the government to press for political acceptance of the declaration. Yet, when the normative word 'shall' is used, as it is in this declaration, one has to wonder how such provisions are to be enforced. Since the declaration is self-executing, in the sense that it is meant to establish legitimatising principles, the 'shall' becomes a moral or political, not a legal, justiciable imperative.

The Need for Implementation Mechanisms

It is now evident that the Dar es Salaam declaration has a serious gap that requires serious consideration, even if this gap was intended by its authors and signatories. It lacks general or specific implementation provisions or any

practical implementation organs. That the practical dimensions of the declaration are to be viewed, if at all, not in terms of any prescribed implementing organs and their performance, but only how, in voluntarist fashion, the signatories have lived up to the declaration's principles, makes further analysis of the significance of the declaration largely speculative, if not futile. One of the advantages we would all have derived from having specific implementation provisions in the declaration would presumably have been systematic reporting on matters and issues of basic significance to the declaration and its stakeholders. Observances and derogations alike would indicate what has happened along the path traversed from the launching of the declaration to the present day. We would have been able to revisit the provisions with the help of documented practical instances. We would be able to learn from both past successes and failures in implementation and therefore plan for better approaches and more effective action in the future. Therefore, one of my recommendations would be to revisit the declaration with a view to making provisions that will address its practical shortcomings without unduly watering down the declaration's principles or diverting it from its areas of concern, focus and emphasis.

Article 52 of the Dar es Salaam declaration, which falls under 'Part V: Ratification and Accession', is the only provision in the document that envisages the establishment of any follow-up body. Article 52 states that 'any autonomous staff association or autonomous student organization of an institution of higher education in Tanzania may accede to this Declaration by depositing instruments of ratification with the body established in that behalf.'

This provision has no parallel elsewhere in the declaration, nor is there any substantive provision under which such a 'depository' body could be established. But at least by way of exception, one finds here a sense of 'implementation practicality', if one may put it that way.

At the same time I can see no reason, either in principle or in terms of practicality, why the original and subsequent signatory institutions could not constitute themselves into implementing and/or monitoring agencies of the declaration, with accountability obligations for the various matters stipulated in the document, on behalf of an apex coordinating body representing all of them. Such a body could be responsible, for instance, for overseeing or monitoring implementation, and for pushing for adoption of the declaration by the state. Meanwhile, the signatory institutions' staff associations and/or student organisations could be assigned respective institutional matters under the declaration.

For instance, the provisions of Chapter One: Education for Human Emancipation and Chapter Three: Rights and Obligations of Communication (both under Part I: Basic Principles) and Chapter Four: Obligations of the State and

Administration (Part II: Academic Freedom) could be shared between the two levels, each concerning itself with aspects that relate to its area of focus. The rest of the provisions – Chapter One: Rights and Freedoms, Chapter Two: Autonomous Academic Organisations, Chapter Three: Security of Tenure (all under Part II Academic Freedom), all those in Part III: Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education and those in Chapter One: Responsibility of Institutions and Chapter Two: Responsibility of Academics in Part IV: Social Responsibility – would seem to fall squarely within the areas of the respective staff associations and/or student organisations. It would be necessary to have some common guidelines or criteria on which follow-up, implementation or monitoring activities would be based in order to facilitate consistency in reporting, dissemination and analysis, decision making and implementation, etc.

Academic Freedom

Against this background I do not intend to say much about the sub-theme of academic freedom, since there is a danger of stating the obvious. However, some critical remarks need to be made on some of the provisions with a view to rendering them less ambiguous in a future revised version of the declaration.

Academic freedom is covered under Part II of the declaration. It is conceived of quite rightly as involving the basic rights and freedoms of members of the academic community (both staff and students) at higher education institutions, partly in their roles as members of society and partly as persons specifically engaged in academic activity as teachers, researchers, administrators/workers and students. As such the document draws its inspiration from international and regional instruments on rights and freedoms, particularly those subscribed to or ratified by Tanzania. The declaration also cites the post-1984 inclusion of a Bill of Rights in Tanzania constitution, noting in the preamble the Bill of Rights' provisions on 'the right to education and the right to opinion and expression which include academic freedom'. Therefore, it is evident that the declaration takes a bold step by relating the universal rights and freedoms, and the principles underlying them, to the specific interests and concerns of the members of the academic community in higher education institutions.

This is important because it means the declaration is not claiming anything special for any elite interest but only restating and reasserting, for the academic community, the rights and freedoms already guaranteed in theory for all. For that reason, in a formal sense, the declaration has complete legitimacy; it is an expression of people endeavouring to exercise some of their most basic rights and freedoms, namely, the rights of association and freedom of expression. This should augur well for the acceptability of the declaration to the state

and the institutional administrations, whatever their suspicions about the import and potential implications of adopting or accepting it wholly or partly. The promotion of the declaration should only face the usual opposition from the conservative inhibitions and attitudes of institutional cultures rather than any accusation that it is impertinent or even 'revolutionary'. Ironically, the difficulty of 'selling' the declaration to the powers-that-be may lie precisely in its unquestionable legitimacy. Its expression of rights and obligations in such lucid language is likely to pose an embarrassment to the authorities, given their frequent non-observance of these rights and obligations in daily practice.

In brief the rights and freedoms clauses of the declaration are simply asserting, for all members of the academic community in their various lines of activity, the right to pursue the same rights and freedoms stated in the constitution freely and without unjustifiable interference from authority. To be justifiable any such interference must stem from clear grounds of public health, morality or evident national security, etc., and must observe basic democratic principles. The declaration also espouses the right of participation in organs of institutional governance by students and staff, as well as the right of students to challenge or differ with their instructors in academic matters without suffering any reprisals or prejudice in consequence. None of the articles states anything new or strange, let alone unacceptable, in principle, in a democracy. But what is of crucial importance, of course, is the actual realisation of the stated rights and freedoms, which cannot be accomplished without both pro-active and reactive measures being taken to assert, protect, nurture and continuously defend them against encroachment and curtailment.

The articles under Chapter One of Part II are generally well-formulated. They are reasonably balanced, enunciating individual rights and freedoms amply, but without prejudice to the rights of others or to generally accepted norms and principles as well as democratic culture. This is reassuring and makes the articles capable of standing up to generally accepted democratic standards and to the test of time. The exception is Article 25, which concerns among others, 'the right of students on academic grounds to challenge or differ from their instructors in academic matters without fear of reprisal or victimization.' To whom is this last phrase addressed? This right can only be exercised where there is a conducive teaching and learning environment which, among other things, includes a tolerant attitude on the part of instructors and an academic culture that espouses free and critical exchange of ideas. In such an environment constructive ideas, questions and criticisms, even dissent, are respected and tolerated. In such an environment fear of 'reprisals' or 'victimisation' would have no basis and would not arise. If there are grounds for fear, then students will be discouraged from expressing themselves.

Article 24, therefore, rather than requiring institutions to create, nurture and sustain such an environment, is pronouncing a right to have no fear of reprisal or victimisation, even in institutions where the academic culture is in diametric opposition to freedom of expression. What is important in this article is the pronounced right; the 'fear' aspect could be expressed in a separate article dealing with the obligation of institutions to create and nurture an academic culture and environment that espouses tolerance of differing views, etc. and that therefore removes any grounds for fear of reprisals or victimization by students or staff who challenge or differ from instructors in academic matters. If I may venture a suggestion for reformulation, the word 'fear' should be deleted and the whole phrase from there to the end of the article be rendered as 'without being subjected to any reprisal or victimisation or any other form of direct or indirect prejudice'.

Autonomous Academic Organizations

The provisions of the declaration on autonomous academic organisations are contained in two articles (26 and 27) in Chapter Two of Part II. These articles basically restate rights and freedom of association, assembly and expression with specific reference to members of the academic community in their pursuit of furthering their 'academic and professional interests'.

It is important to underscore the point that the declaration does not deal with rights and freedoms outside the academic domain. If it were to address itself to rights and freedoms in any other domain, then one would say it would be wholly or partly *ultra vires*, as it were, and would lack basic legitimacy. The right to self-expression envisages 'the right to write, print and publish their own newspapers or any other form of media including wall literature, posters and pamphlets' (Article 27). Being aware that such a right may be abused, to the prejudice of others, both within and outside the academic community, the article quite responsibly imposes a condition upon the exercise of the right. It is worth reproducing this carefully phrased condition in full: 'The exercise of this right shall have due regard to the obligation of the members of the academic community not to interfere with the right of others to privacy and in any manner or form that unreasonably arouse religious, ethnic, national or gender hatred' (Article 27). Anyone who is aware of the ugly incidents caused by the so-called Mzee Punch wall literature in the 1970s and early 1980s at the University of Dar es Salaam (Peter and Mvungi 1986) will easily appreciate the point of this limitation.

Security of Tenure

The Dar es Salaam declaration deals with the issue of security of tenure in Chapter Three, Part II. Security of tenure is perceived in terms of entitlement

to a fair and reasonable remuneration commensurate with one's social and academic responsibilities, secure tenure for those confirmed in employment, whose dismissal or removal from employment should abide by the principles of due process, and the right to know of any alleged adverse information obtained by officials in their course of duty. The general idea is that members of the academic community should be reasonably secure to carry on their academic pursuits freely and with a sense of tranquillity of mind and career certainty.

However one wonders whether some of the expectations are not pitched a bit too high and others somewhat too low. For instance, Article 28 talks of 'fair and reasonable remuneration', but such remuneration may not amount even to a living wage for some, if not all, members of the academic community. The article also limits itself to those who are in active employment and ignores the issue of retirement. Security of tenure which does not look into the future after tenure ends is likely to be half-baked, if not fundamentally flawed. That is why the issue of adequacy, not just fairness, of remuneration is crucial. If one's remuneration is inadequate, the retirement benefits will be doubly inadequate! That is why members of the community will, before they come to that limbo, look for greener pastures elsewhere, engage in moonlighting sidelines, and thus fail to render the benefits or attain the objectives which the provisions enunciate to be the underlying considerations.[4] On the other hand, we should not forget that members of the academic community will, individually or collectively, commit themselves contractually to do or not to do certain tasks according to certain requirements, and that failure to meet these commitments may result in dismissal or transfer/recategorisation. Security of tenure therefore has to be understood as a somewhat elusive goal for academics: publish or perish, remember.

Obligations of the State and the Administration

The obligations of the state and the administration are covered in Chapter Four, Part II. In assigning obligations to the state and to the administrations of institutions, the declaration seems to assume either that these authorities will be convinced by the generally accepted nature of the rights and freedoms being asserted to recognise and abide by them or that some pressure will be exerted (by whom or what is not clear) to persuade them to do so. Since, as we have seen, no implementation mechanisms are mentioned in the declaration, the achievability of the provisions is not envisaged by the document itself. In this respect one obligation placed on the administration deserves special mention. Article 37 states that the administration has 'an obligation not to divulge any

information regarding members of the academic community which may be used to their detriment in any criminal, or other investigation or proceedings of the like nature'. But surely if one is suspected to have committed a crime against one's employer or a fellow member of the academic community, or is threatening the peace and tranquillity of the community, it would be very strange to expect the administration to be willing or to appear to condone such conduct by refusing to reveal pertinent information.

Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education and the Social Responsibility of Academics

In this section, I examine the remaining two sub-themes: autonomy of institutions of higher education and the social responsibility of academics. I do not intend to go into much detail but only to raise some issues for discussion.

Autonomy of Institutions

In Articles 38–40 the declaration spells out its view of the autonomy that higher education institutions should have. Most such institutions are of course established under individual statutory instruments which declare them to be 'bodies corporate', capable of suing and being sued, with perpetual succession and a common seal, etc. As such they may own, dispose of and generally deal in property, movable and immovable, etc. The declaration, however, is not much concerned with such matters. Its focus is on the independence of higher education institutions from state or other institutional interference, especially in relation to teaching, research and general administration. The declaration requires the observance of democratic principles of participatory governance involving all stakeholders. In particular it denounces any entry into the premises of higher education institutions by 'armed personnel, military or paramilitary forces, intelligence and security personnel or forces of law and order, singly or collectively', except under stated conditions where 'the Head of the institutions concerned has invited such intervention in writing; Provided that such invitation shall not be extended without consultation with and approval of a special standing committee of elected representatives of the academic community instituted in that behalf' (Article 40). These principles are laudable, but they face obvious problems arising from the fact that most higher education institutions in Africa rely on direct state funding, as well as funding by donor agencies. This tends to attract interference from those that 'pay the piper' as a matter of course, as it was.

According to a Commonwealth study conducted in the 1990s, the following were identified as the main potential areas of friction between universities and governments in developing countries:

- Who may teach and what may be taught.
- Who makes key appointments.
- Determination of enrolment growth rates.
- Financial and other resource management.
- Use of state security on campuses.
- Management of staff promotions and travel.
- Freedom to criticize the state.

(Richardson and Fielden 1997: 30)

To minimise such conflicts the study called for the establishment of objective criteria for funding and suggested that the function of setting institutional budgets and disbursing funds be given to an independent regulatory authority. This is already the practice in some Commonwealth countries outside Africa, and I would urge that similar measures be adopted in Africa, where state interference is a real threat to academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

Social Responsibility of Academics

Issues concerning the social responsibility of academics are covered in Part IV, Chapter Two of the declaration (Articles 46–50).[5] These provisions are exhortative; indeed, the normative word 'shall' is used sparingly, as though it would offend even the authors and promoters of the declaration. Members are exhorted to accept a responsibility or obligation to do one noble thing or another! These do's and don'ts include fulfilment of 'academic roles with competence, integrity and to the best of [one's] ability and performance of academic functions in accordance with ethical and highest scientific standards' (Article 46). However no model of such 'ethical and highest scientific standards' nor any mechanism for the establishment of one is provided for in the declaration.

Members of the academic community are said to have an obligation to inculcate the spirit of tolerance of differing views (Article 48) and to exercise their rights responsibly without prejudicing the rights of others (Article 47). They are urged not to participate in or be a party to anti-people actions or endeavours, including those that may be prejudicial to the members of the academic community. They are urged not to compromise scientific, ethical and professional principles and standards (Article 49) and to contribute to the cause of redressing historical and contemporary inequalities in our society (Article 50). The provisions sound fine in principle but are very weak in expression. The militancy one senses when others are being addressed in favour of the academic community becomes musing in the direction of the proponent interests. But the more serious problem, the bane of the declaration as a whole, is that even here no self-regulation machinery or guidance instruments are pro-

vided, nor is the need for any mentioned at all. The whole matter is left to the good sense of members of the academic community to handle in the best way possible. Thus we end where we began after all, with no legs to stand on, no heads or shoulders to bear the weight of the task and no hands to handle it!

Conclusion

I have addressed a complex issue under three sub-themes, each of which deserves separate treatment. The aim of this discussion has been to arouse interest around and stimulate discussion concerning the provisions of the Dar es Salaam declaration. Prof Shivji suggests that the declaration 'will have served its purpose if it generates an African debate on academic freedom and social responsibility of intellectuals generally, and [on] the use of a legal format in crystallising democratic political perspectives in particular' (Shivji 1991a: 134), but if that is all that is realised from the declaration is this really sufficient for the achievement of the provisions of the declaration? Do we not need to do much more? Hitherto what African debate on the issues raised by the declaration have we had? The very fact that the events mentioned on page one of his article 'overshadowed the document' suggests that something more concrete and more mundane was and is necessary. Otherwise we shall have to wait indefinitely for another workshop to 'debate'.

Notes

1. CODESRIA-University of Dar es Salaam Academic Staff Assembly (UDASA) forum held at Whitesands Hotel, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 10–11 February 2005.
2. 'The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics' (1990) and 'The Kampala Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Intellectuals' (1991).
3. The Ardhi Institute (now the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies, UCLAS), the Co-operative College, Moshi, the Institute of Development Management, Mzumbe, (now the University of Mzumbe), the Institute of Finance Management, Sokoine University of Agriculture and the University of Dar es Salaam.
4. For instance, Article 28 envisages members discharging 'their roles with human dignity, integrity and independence'.
5 Chapter One covers 'Responsibility of Institutions' in Articles 41-45.

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Gender and Research Attainment in Nigerian Agricultural Universities

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Abstract

The study uses data on the research outputs of 219 academics in three Nigerian universities of agriculture to compare gender with research attainment. The findings show that research attainment is slightly higher for male academics than for female. Academic qualifications and rank are significantly associated with gender and, although there was no significant association between promotion time and gender, male academics have higher publishing rates in journals and proceedings of repute. A high correlation also exists between gender and age, length of service and representation in management. More male faculty members are employed at top management positions, while the majority of female faculty members occupy middle management and entry levels. A policy of gender mainstreaming that would ensure gender balance in recruitment, training and research opportunities could provide a passage through which females gain greater access to positions hitherto dominated by their male counterparts.

Résumé

L'étude exploite les résultats de recherche de 219 universitaires provenant de trois universités agricoles nigérianes, afin de comparer le genre et la réussite au niveau de la recherche. Les résultats montrent que le niveau de réussite en termes de recherche est légèrement plus élevé pour les chercheurs de sexe masculin que pour ceux de sexe féminin. Les qualifications et le grade académiques sont considérablement associés au genre et bien qu'il n'y ait pas d'association significative entre le temps de promotion et le genre, il a été constaté que les universitaires de sexe masculin bénéficient d'un plus haut taux de publication dans les revues et écrits de renommée. Il existerait également une forte corrélation entre le genre et

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l'âge, la durée de service et la représentation au niveau des instances dirigeantes. Il existe davantage de membres des facultés de sexe masculin à des postes élevés de direction, tandis que les femmes membres des facultés occupent les positions intermédiaires ou inférieures. Une politique de rationalisation de la répartition de genre permettant d'assurer un certain équilibre de genre au niveau du recrutement, de la formation et des opportunités de recherche pourrait permettre aux femmes d'avoir un plus grand accès aux postes jusque-là réservés à leurs collègues de sexe masculin.

Introduction

Over the past three decades, the Nigerian tertiary education sector has expanded enormously. During this period, the proportion of faculty members eligible for tenure has gone up, but by far the most significant increase has been in male faculty. Recent studies have indicated how important the continued under-representation of women in education, particularly at tertiary level, is for agricultural development (Acker et al. 2000). Such gender differences clearly have consequences for the universities' tripartite mandate. However faculty performance, according to Ladebo (2003), is usually assessed and rewarded based on scholarly output and publication counts, with less priority given to teaching and service roles. Hence the organisational culture of academic journals, seminars and conference proceedings has become a factor in the assessment and promotion of faculty (Wilson 1993). Less advantaged positions persist even among professional women (Gunderson 1989). In support of this assertion Fameso (1992) and Oloruntoba (2001) found that male scientists still largely dominate agricultural research institutes in Nigeria. In terms of gender productivity, however, contradictory views were expressed. Rahji (2001) established that a large difference exists in labour productivity between the sexes. Bailey (1992) reported a higher level of research productivity by male faculty members. Kotrlik et al. (2002) have also noted that female faculty members are lagging behind more experienced male faculty members.

Of the universities in Nigeria twenty-four are federal institutions, and three of these are specialised universities of agriculture. Two of the universities of agriculture were established in 1988 in the southwest (in Abeokuta, Ogun State) and north (in Makurdi, Benue State), and the third was established in 1992 in the southeast (at Umudike, Abia State). Adopting the American collegiate system, and using experimental stations and model outreach villages, these institutions represent a new concept for promoting agricultural education and agricultural development services and the attainment of self-sufficiency in agricultural production in Nigeria. The distinguishing feature of these univer-

sities of agriculture is their tripodal mandate of teaching, research and community service focusing on agriculture.

Topical issues at the forefront of research in the universities of agriculture were in the core areas of agriculture, science, engineering and technology, which underpinned the vision for their establishment. For instance the Abeokuta University of Agriculture was judged the best in research and won the overall first prize of N1 million in the first Nigerian Universities Research and Development Fair (NURESDEF) organised by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in Abuja in November 2004. At the fair forty-three federal, state and private universities, as well as three inter-university centres, exhibited a total of 592 research projects (*This Day* 2004). Prior to this, in 2002, Abeokuta blazed the trail in quality of teaching, research and community service as rated again by NUC, making her the *primus inter pares*.

Generally research is a public domain in Nigeria and has had a powerful impact in several areas including agriculture, commerce and industry. The impact of agricultural research has been particularly remarkable, given that there were eighteen agricultural research institutes with specific mandates and linkages with the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, which is also a member of the Consultative Group in International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The finding that public research is inadequate led to assistance by the World Bank under the aegis of the National Agricultural Research Project (NARP) in 1994. Anecdotal evidence, however, reveals that little attention has been paid to gender differences of faculty in relation to research attainment in agricultural universities in Nigeria, despite the fact that increased research activities in tertiary education in developing countries and transition economies could fuel economic development.

Literature Review

The literature cited provides ample information on gender disparities but not particularly on women in science and technology. However literature on gender is critical in shaping policy directions. Early gender and development literature focused on economic development (Boserup 1970; Beneria and Sen 1981; Beneria 1995), gender and justice in economic development (Jacquette 1990), gender equality (Elson and McGee 1995), gender awareness (Elson 1993, 1995), gender and agricultural science (Buttel and Goldberger 2002), gender in development (Jobes 1997), gender in agriculture (Fortmann 1979, 1984; Olawoye 1989, 1994, 1995). Nowadays the key policy issue is that of gender "mainstreaming", a systematic strategy to promote equal opportunities for women and men and to break down traditional role patterns which perpetuate the marginalisation of women (Schayan 2002).

Inequality in the employment of men and women is a reflection of more general gender differences in the social and economic structure (Bose and Acosta-Belen 1994). The Women in Development Network (1990) put the percentage of women among university teachers in Nigeria at only 10 per cent, while the FAO (1984) reported that only 3.4 per cent of the agriculturally trained personnel from forty-six countries in Africa were women. Similar findings were recorded in the Caribbean, where men far outnumber women in senior academic and administrative positions in the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of the West Indies. Karl (1998) found that only 14.7 per cent of the staff of the Faculty of Agriculture at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, were women, the majority in the Home Economics Department. The same is true of the affiliated Federal College of Agriculture, Akure, where women overwhelmingly hold lower-level positions.

Radha Krishna et al. (2001) posit that journals provide an avenue of recognition for many researchers, since a published journal article is the first formal presentation to the scientific community of an innovation or discovery. Thus journals (and conference proceedings) may be the best source for the most current state-of-the-art literature in any discipline. It is also interesting to note that one of the criteria for promotion of researchers and academics is the number of such published articles. For example evidence of scholarly publication is presented on a three-yearly basis as a criterion for promotion in the Nigerian agricultural universities.

Approach

The objectives of this study were to:

- ascertain the gender distribution of senior academic and management positions in Nigerian agricultural universities
- identify gender differences with regard to promotion, publication rates and training opportunities
- determine the relationship between personal characteristics of faculty members and their research attainments.

The intended sampling frame was 540, but the actual sample consisted of 219 full-time academic staff members ranging from professorial rank to graduate assistants in the three Nigerian universities of agriculture. To guide the selection of the sample, secondary data reflecting the profiles of faculty members was collected from the personnel units of the universities and analysed.

In selecting the sample frame, two types of sampling techniques were used. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used to randomly select faculty members from each department/unit of each university and to represent a stra-

tum. The purposive sampling technique was then used to select all female members of staff in all male-dominated departments/units. This translated to 180 samples per university, which were designated for anonymity as A, B and C. Therefore a total response rate of 41 per cent was achieved, and the total sample size for the study was 219. The low response rate, particularly in university C, was attributable to refusal or unavailability of respondents as well as other factors prevailing at the time data was collected. Nevertheless the sample revealed important dimensions in the study and was representative enough to draw valid inferences. The questionnaire was face and content validated by experts, pre-tested and had an estimated internal consistency reliability measure (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.78. Primary data was collected from academic staff through the use of a structured questionnaire administered in personal visits and follow-ups. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics, Chi square and PPMC to test four alternate hypotheses. The alpha levels were set *a priori* at 0.05 and 0.01. A summary of population, sample size and questionnaire response rates are presented in Table1 below.

Table 1: Summary of population, sample size and questionnaire response rates

University	Population (N)	Intended sample	Sample size	Questionnaire return response (%)
A	280	180	103	57
B	283	180	99	55
C	250	180	17	9.4
Total	813	540	219	41

Findings

The findings are presented based on four alternate hypotheses posed for the study as follows:

- H_{A1}: There is gender equity in publishing rates, promotion waiting periods and training opportunities in the three universities of agriculture.
- H_{A2}: Women academics are less likely than men to attain senior scientific and administrative positions in the three universities.
- H_{A3}: A significant relationship exists between the personal characteristics of academics and their research attainment.
- H_{A4}: A significant relationship exists between time spent on teaching, research and extension of academics and research attainment.

Gender Equity in Publishing Rates, Promotion Waiting Periods and Training Opportunities

Like most universities the world over, research attainment in the three Nigerian agricultural universities is determined by the number of published articles in refereed journals and conference proceedings of repute. Indeed refereed journal papers and proceedings, books or chapters in books, monographs and non-refereed conference papers are usually channels for the dissemination of research and development activities among researchers. Hence publishing a paper in higher-impact journals is an indication of success in advancing the frontiers of knowledge.

Table 2 presents gender and promotion waiting periods in the Nigerian universities of agriculture and reveals that the majority of academic members of staff (69.1 per cent) reported 3-year modal waiting periods for promotion. However, in terms of gender, there are more male academics reporting the same 3-year waiting periods. Those that missed the 3-year promotion policy have a chance in the fourth year to be promoted, provided they have enough publications. Reports above 4 years are unusual responses. The data indicates that there is no statistically significant association between promotion time and gender. This implies that being a male or female academic has no bearing on promotion waiting periods. Hence eligibility for promotion is not based on gender but on other criteria.

The publication sets of male and female academics are summarised in Table 2. Chi-square analysis showed that a significant relationship exists between publishing rates and gender. Most male academics have higher publishing rates than their female colleagues, despite there being no significant differences in their promotion waiting periods (Table 3). This may be as a result of the close working relationships that appear to be common between people of the same sex. Although men and women can learn to work together as peers, changes in attitudes and behaviours are more difficult to bring about in supervisory relationships (Brush et al. 1995). Cole and Fiorentine (1991) found no evidence linking biological differences with differences in the achievements of men and women in science.

Peer reviews are not without problems. For example a gender-bias study by Wenneras and Wold (1997) proved that female applicants for Swedish MRC post-doctoral fellowships had to be 2.5 times more productive than their male colleagues to get the same peer-review rating for scientific competence. Certain safeguards built into the peer review process may therefore be needed to eliminate or reduce 'halo' effects. Consequently women academics are more likely on the one hand to suffer peer-review biases than men and on the other

hand to interrupt their research agenda to take care of children, sick or elderly parents or in-laws. As a result women's participation in research output throughout their professional careers appears to be lower in some cases than men's.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Academic Publishing Rates, Promotion Waiting Period and Training Opportunities by Gender: Nigerian Universities of Agriculture, 2003

Variable	Gender	
	Female	Male
Publications (Journals & Proceedings)		
(Number)	n=31	n=96
• 0-4	16.1	13.5
• 5-9	35.5	20.8
• 10-14	29.0	14.6
• 15-19	6.5	18.8
• 20+	12.9	32.3
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	10.319*	
Promotion Waiting Period (years)	n=42	n=120
• 0-3	71.4	68.3
• 4-6	26.2	22.5
• 7-9	0.0	4.2
• 10+	2.4	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	2.765 (NS)	
Training Opportunities		
University-sponsored	n=54	n=162
• Yes	63.0	56.2
• No	37.0	43.8
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi square	0.766 (NS)	
Type of Course sponsored	n=35	n=91
• University degree	60.0	62.6
• Short course locally	14.3	13.2
• Short course abroad	11.4	17.6
• Long course locally	2.9	1.1
• Long course abroad	11.4	5.5
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	2.393 (NS)	

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Academic Publishing Rates, Promotion Waiting Period and Training Opportunities by Gender (contd.)

Variable	Gender	
	Female	Male
Advanced degree	n=30	n=110
• Nigerian University	76.7	68.2
• Foreign University	23.3	31.8
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	0.808 (NS)	
Limitations to career advancement	n=36	n=103
• Family Responsibilities	27.8	6.8
• Personal Choice	16.7	11.7
• By the Dept. / Unit	11.1	15.5
• By Finance	33.3	50.5
• Others	11.1	15.5
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	12.550*	

*p ≤ .05 (2-tailed), NS = Not Significant

However, there is no linking evidence to suggest that male researchers are more likely to present their findings in higher-impact journals. On journal quality there is also no indication by gender of the expected number of citations of papers received in the five years, based on the journal in which the papers were published.

Table 3: *t*-test of Difference Between Male and Female Academics Promotion Waiting Period

	N	Mean	SD	STD of Mean	*t*-value	p
Female Academics	44	3.557	1.386	0.2090	0.502	0.616
Male Academics	120	3.710	1.836	0.1678	0.572	0.569

Mean difference = 0.1522 NS

Attaining Senior Scientific and Administrative Positions in Universities

A recent *World Development Report* (World Bank 2004) highlighted as key third millennium development goals the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, especially the elimination of gender disparity at all levels of education. Table 4 shows that gender inequality does manifest itself in structural assignment to positions in the universities of agriculture. Although an almost equal proportion of male (95 per cent) and female (96 per cent) academic staff are employed on full-time basis, there is a difference in educational level. Half of the males but only about a third of females have PhDs, while 57.1 per cent of females and 40.7 per cent of males have MA/MSc degrees. Only a few (14.3 per cent of females and 9.3 per cent of males) have only a bachelor's degree, thus confirming the relatively low education level of female faculty. Indeed possession of a PhD. is mandatory for all faculties in Nigerian universities. The majority of female academics (70.9 per cent) are of junior rank (lecturers) and are actively involved in research as well as teaching and extension activities like their seniors, while very few (only 7.3 per cent) are senior lecturers. This implies an influx of a broad spectrum of female academics into universities of agriculture lately.

Women also did not hold a fair proportion of executive positions but mostly occupied middle management and entry levels. Empirically there appears to be a statistically significant gender relationship between nature of appointment, rank, length of service and representation in senior scientific and administrative positions. This implies that there is no gender inequality in terms of these selected variables. However possession of the highest educational qualification is significantly associated with gender, which probably explains the disparity in the appointment of more senior male academics (32.8 per cent) than female (14.6 per cent). Men were much more likely than women to move directly from receiving a PhD to taking a faculty position in universities. These findings contrast with those of Buttel and Golderger (2002), where gender inequality manifests itself in significant differences between female and male scientists' level of academic appointment among US Land Grant Scientists. Punch (2003) observed that women academics were not adequately represented at the highest levels of organisations to successfully influence policy and cultural and social norms, and to increase the pace of change and statistics. This may appear to be true when generalised because male dominance in senior administrative and scientific positions has been acknowledged in many organisations. This is in line with the findings by Zulu (2003) on gender representation patterns in higher education in South Africa.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Academic Background and Appointment Indicators by Gender: Nigerian Universities of Agriculture, 2003

Variable	Gender	
	Female	Male
Age	n=58	n=160
• >25	1.7	0.6
• 26–35	48.6	26.3
• 36–45	32.8	43.0
• 46–55	17.2	26.3
• 56–65	0.0	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	31.41 (NS)	
Nature of Appointment	n=56	n=163
• Part time	1.8	0.0
• Temporary	1.8	5.0
• Full time	96.0	95.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	3.907 (NS)	
Highest Educational Qualification	n=56	n=162
• BSc/BA	14.3	9.3
• MSc/MA	57.1	40.7
• PhD	28.6	50.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	7.782*	
Status (Rank)	n=55	n=162
• Professor	5.5	6.8
• Reader/Associate Professor	1.8	5.6
• Senior Lecturer	7.3	20.4
• Lecturers	70.9	55.6
• Graduate Assistants	14.5	11.7
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi square	9.108 (NS)	
Length of Service (years)		
• 0–4	n=54	n=158
• 5–10	27.8	24.0
• 10–14	14.8	19.6
• 15–19	11.1	20.3
• 20+	18.5	16.5
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	6.767 (NS)	

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Academic Background and Appointment Indicators by Gender (contd.)

Variable	Gender	
	Female	Male
Representations in Management	n=11	n=53
• Head of Department	63.6	54.7
• Dean	36.4	30.2
• Director of Units	0.0	13.2
• Deputy Vice Chancellor	0.0	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	1.900 (NS)	

*p ≤ .05 (2-tailed), NS = Not Significant

Relationship Between Personal Characteristics of Academics and Research Attainment

Using the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis, the relationship between different personal characteristics was determined. Most correlations were significant but at different levels. For instance highly significant relationships were obtained ($p<0.001$) with correlation values ranging from 0.175 (highest education qualification and gender) to 0.768 (rank and highest education qualification), as shown in Table 5. It is apparent that there is an agreement between highest educational qualification, gender and rank. Furthermore significant relationships were also obtained ($p<0.05$) with correlation values ranging from 0.138 for gender and age and 0.288 for length of service and representations in management. These results further indicate that there is an agreement between gender and age, length of service and representation in management. Studies have shown overwhelming evidence of a correlation between age and research output among academics. Gordon and Scruggs (1984) reported that age was related to research productivity. Bland and Berquist (1997) observed that the average productivity of faculty seems to drop with age, although many senior academics remain quite active in research activities and their outputs are comparable to those of younger academics. Furthermore there is no empirical evidence to suggest that differences exist due to gender and age. The findings in this study however show a positive correlation between gender and age at 0.05 level of probability.

Table 5: Correlations Between Selected Socio-Demographic Variables

Variables	Age	Rank	Lengserv	Gender	Higheduc	Repmgt
Age	**1.00**					
Status/rank	.651**	**1.00**				
Lengserv	.702**	.722**	**1.00**			
Gender	.138*	.156*	.066	**1.00**		
Higheduc	.449**	.768**	.498**	.175**	**1.00**	
Repmgt	.272*	.318**	.288*	.131	.151	**1.00**

**p ≤ .001 (2-tailed), NS = Not Significant
Legend
Lengserv = length of service
Higheduc = highest education qualification
Repmgt = representations in management

Relationship Between Time Spent on Teaching, Research and Extension and Research Attainment

Table 6 presents the percentages of academic staff time spent in various work activities such as teaching, research extension and management tasks. Most of the work activity was spent on teaching (63.8 per cent). Women spent a slightly greater percentage of their time teaching (76.6 per cent) than men (67.6 per cent). In terms of gender male faculty spent 15.8 per cent of their time on research and female faculty 22.5 per cent. On management tasks males spent 19.5 per cent of their time while females spent 20 per cent of their time. The gender differences in extension were significant at 0.05 per cent. It is not surprising that, when research activities were controlled by length of service, the older, more experience males spent less time on research (56 per cent) and more time on management tasks. However, female faculty with less than 10 years experience spent more of their time on research than teaching. Therefore, there is empirical evidence to suggest that a gender disparity exists with regard to research attainment in universities. Research attainment is consistently slightly higher for males than for females.

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Faculty Time Spent on Teaching, Research and Extension by Gender: Nigerian Universities of Agriculture, 2003

Variable	Gender	
	Female	Male
Teaching (%)		
• 0–20	8.5	6.9
• 21–40	14.9	25.5
• 41–60	48.9	40.7
• 60+	27.7	26.9
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	2.448 (NS)	
Research (%)		
• 0–20	36.7	29.6
• 21–40	40.8	54.8
• 41–60	14.3	9.6
• 60+	8.2	6.2
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	2.991 (NS)	
Extension (%)		
• 0–20	89.3	85.4
• 21–40	3.6	14.6
• 41–60	0.0	0.0
• 60+	7.1	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi square	8.562*	
Management Task (%)		
• 0–20	64.0	57.8
• 21–40	16.0	22.7
• 41–60	8.0	11.3
• 60+	12.0	8.2
Total	100.0	100.0
Chi-square	1.067 (NS)	

*p ≤ .05 (2-tailed), NS = Not Significant

Conclusion and Policy Implications

In sum it can be concluded that the research attainment of female academics is lower than that of males. Gender differences in publishing rates implying gender bias could be premised on closer working relationships, better communication and stronger informal networks among male faculty. There are also few experienced female academics in top scientific and senior management positions, and the educational levels of female faculty are lower than those of males. However the most serious limitations on research attainment by female academics were family responsibilities and lack of financial resources.

This study has further exposed and reaffirmed the need to reduce the negative impact due to structured imbalance created in the social structures of institutions of the labour market. Female faculty mostly occupy junior ranks and continue to be more seriously under-represented in science and technology disciplines. Since eligibility for promotion is on a three-yearly basis, no evidence links gender with promotion waiting periods.

The gender differences should be explored by policy makers to ensure that faculty in tenure track are treated equitably in recruitment, training and research opportunities for professional growth. House and Baety (1990) contend that women will bring new perspectives and methods of administration as they ascend to higher positions. Hence there should be a concerted effort to increase the number of women in top management and research positions to a reasonable proportion of 10–30 per cent within the next five years. Through gender policy female faculty could gain greater access to positions hitherto dominated by men. Further studies should investigate important changes in the structure and composition of tenure faculty in Nigerian universities for 10 years or more. This will show if women have made a significant increase in their representation in senior management and research positions.

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La dynamique de l'enseignement supérieur privé au Cameroun

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Résumé

L'objectif de cet article est d'analyser la dynamique de l'enseignement supérieur privé au Cameroun, pour tenter de mettre en évidence ces principales caractéristiques. Pour ce faire, j'analyse l'évolution du fonctionnement des institutions d'enseignement supérieur privées officiellement reconnues, et j'utilise la statistique descriptive par le recours aux données officielles disponibles. Le résultat obtenu permet de caractériser l'enseignement supérieur privé au Cameroun par six traits principaux, ayant successivement un rapport avec sa structuration, son apport dans l'offre nationale de formation supérieure, la création d'emplois, son mode de financement, les taux d'encadrement des étudiants, et la question du partenariat comme solution à l'essentiel de ses problèmes.

Abstract

The paper analyses the development of private higher education in Cameroon, in order to highlight its main characteristics. To achieve this, I attempt to analyse the evolution in the functioning of accredited private higher education institutions, and use the technique of descriptive statistics from available official data. The findings allow us to characterize the Cameroonian private higher education system through six main features, related to its structure, share in the national provision of higher education services, creation of job opportunities, mode of funding, levels of student training, and the issue of partnership as a solution to problems faced.

Introduction

Depuis Becker (1964) et Mincer (1974) au moins, l'analyse économique de l'éducation est devenue un sujet important, notamment avec le relais des travaux empiriques démontrant avec efficacité le rendement positif de l'éducation sur le niveau du revenu futur et le standard de vie escompté des individus.[1] Les

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nouvelles théories de la croissance, notamment endogène (Barro 1991 ; Romer 1990, 1994), sont venues lui donner un relief particulier en affirmant sa contribution fortement positive à la croissance et au développement des pays (Loening 2005).

Au-delà des débats déclenchés dans le cas des pays sous-développés par Psacharopoulos (1988, 1994),[2] les analyses postérieures ont alors autorisé un approfondissement de la réflexion en terme d'arbitrage des individus entre éducation et pas d'éducation, entre les types d'éducation et de formation, entre la nature des qualifications à rechercher, entre les durées possibles d'études, et entre les coûts à supporter. Le refus de l'éducation, les choix entre enseignement public et privé, les options entre formations techniques (science, ingénierie, etc.) et générales (droit, littérature, économie, etc.), la décision de suivre une formation courte ou longue, primaire, secondaire ou tertiaire, etc. sont devenues des variables déterminantes de la décision d'investir ou non dans l'éducation. Alderman et al. (2001) montre ainsi que les ménages les plus pauvres préfèrent majoritairement pour leurs enfants des écoles privées, et que ce choix est croissant avec le revenu. La baisse des frais de scolarité ou la réduction de la distance séparant les ménages de l'école privée accroît les inscriptions dans ces écoles, en partie à cause des transferts d'élèves provenant des écoles publiques, mais en partie aussi de nouvelles inscriptions d'enfants qui, autrement, auraient fait le choix de l'analphabétisme…

L'arbitrage entre enseignement public et enseignement privé trouve là une résonance qui porte jusqu'au niveau de l'université. L'enseignement supérieur public et l'enseignement supérieur privé sont en effet devenus des enjeux de politique économique et sociale dans de nombreux pays (Coleman et Hoffer 1987), notamment en Afrique, avec d'une part les politiques de libéralisation mises en place à la fin des années 1980, et d'autre part le rôle d'éducateur majeur que se sont attribués les États sur la base de Déclaration des droits de l'homme ainsi que de leurs différentes Constitutions. Au Cameroun, face à la rentabilité croissante du secteur, à la déliquescence du système mis en place par le secteur public, à l'existence d'une épargne nationale oisive à la recherche de projets qualitatifs d'investissement, et face à l'inefficience de l'enseignement supérieur public (Khan et Tafah 2000), l'enseignement supérieur privé a pris une place centrale dans le dispositif de formation existant après le Baccalauréat ou le *General Certificate of Education*, GCE « A » *level.*[3]

Dans ce contexte, l'objectif de cet article est d'examiner la dynamique de l'enseignement supérieur privé (ESP) au Cameroun pour en souligner les principaux traits caractéristiques. En me focalisant sur l'enseignement supérieur *traditionnel*, c'est-à-dire « l'enseignement dispensé dans des institutions tertiaires d'enseignement telle que les universités publiques et privées, les

collèges, les instituts polytechniques, les écoles de formation professionnelle et les instituts de formation professionnelle, antérieurement appelés instituts universitaires de technologies » (Sall 2004:182), je définis l'ESP comme l'enseignement supérieur traditionnel dispensé dans les institutions privées et dans toutes autres structures nationales et internationales[4] adoptant le mode de fonctionnement et les objectifs du secteur privé. Je pose ensuite deux hypothèses que la suite du texte tentera de valider dans le cas du Cameroun : en premier lieu, l'ESP représente un accroissement salutaire de l'offre de formation ; en second lieu, l'ESP est aux prises avec un sérieux défi, à savoir le défi de la pérennité.

L'ESP est un salutaire accroissement de l'offre de formation

Depuis la publication des « Lois sur la liberté » en 1990,[5] l'enseignement supérieur camerounais, tout comme les autres secteurs d'activité jusque là fermés aux opérateurs privés, est marqué par l'arrivée de nouvelles structures de formation relativement dispersées dans le pays.

Pour avoir un aperçu relativement complet de l'architecture du secteur privé d'enseignement supérieur, je passe en revue les acteurs et les structures, les filières d'enseignement et de formation proposées, ainsi que la mutation qui s'opère progressivement dans l'enseignement supérieur public et qui doit être lu sous le prisme de l'ESP.

Les acteurs et les structures

Mis en œuvre par des promoteurs individuels ou institutionnels privés, L'ESP camerounais compte bon an mal an dix-huit (18) établissements. Ce dénombrement est fluctuant en fonction des habilitations délivrées par le Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur (MINESUP). Ce ministère organise en effet des missions d'inspections régulières pour s'assurer du respect de certaines normes imposées en matière de déontologie, de superficies habitables, d'espaces didactiques, d'équipements techniques, de curricula des enseignants, etc. Sur cette base, l'ESP est structuré en deux principales composantes (tableau 1) :

- la première composante regroupe les établissements créés par des opérateurs privés en individuels ou en groupes (mais quand bien même c'est le cas, il y a toujours un nom qui apparaît comme en étant le responsable majeur). Cette catégorie rassemble la majorité des instituts existants ;
- la seconde composante regroupe les établissements créés par des communautés religieuses, catholiques et protestantes notamment.[6]

Tableau 1 : Aperçu de l'ESP

N°	Institutions	Type	Nombre d'étudiants				
			1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
1	Université catholique d'Afrique Centrale*	Confessionnel	1170	1130	1237	1291	1374
2	Université adventiste Consendai*	Confessionnel			147	137	130
3	Faculté de théologie biblique du Cameroun*	Confessionnel			39	39	14
4	Faculté de théologie protestante de Yaoundé*	Confessionnel			172	172	135
5	British college of professional management	Individuel			901		
6	BTS professeurs réunis de Douala	Individuel			256	250	383
7	Ecole supérieure de gestion	Individuel	332	563	577	507	904
8	Ecole supérieure des sciences et techniques	Individuel	50	38	102	140	169
9	Fonab polytechnic de Bamenda	Individuel			54	96	101
10	Groupe Tankou enseignement supérieur de Bafoussam	Individuel	45	125	121	108	184
11	Institut des sciences économiques et informatiques et gestion de Yaoundé	Individuel			13		
12	Institut des technologies de l'information de Douala	Individuel	225	209	187		
13	Institut Samba supérieur de Yaoundé	Individuel	812	995	1242	649	831
14	Institut Siantou supérieur de Yaoundé	Individuel		847	1132	1637	1802
15	Institut supérieur de développement informatique et commercial de Yaoundé	Individuel		80	52	52	
16	Institut supérieur de management de Douala	Individuel			136	191	493
17	National polytechnic de Bambui	Individuel			49	92	96
18	Université des Montagnes	Individuel					
TOTAL			2634	3987	6417	5360	6616

* Institutions accueillant statutairement des étudiants camerounais et étrangers.
Source : MINESUP (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002).

Il faut noter que cette structuration coïncide avec le niveau des formations privées autorisées à délivrance par le MINESUP. En effet, hormis l'Université des Montagnes habilitée[7] à délivrer des formations supérieures à Bacc ou GCE « A » plus 2 ans, l'ensemble des instituts d'enseignement supérieur privé est limité à former des étudiants pour le Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS) ou pour le Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie (DUT). Certes, certains de ces instituts, à l'instar de l'Institut Siantou Supérieur ou de l'Institut Samba Supérieur et d'autres, offrent depuis quelques années des formations de niveau « Master » ou « DECS » (Diplôme d'Études Comptables Supérieures), mais la reconnaissance officielle du premier reste suspendue et celle du second est régionale, étant donné que c'est une formation reconnue au niveau supranational, en particulier par la Communauté Economique et Monétaire des États de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC).

Comme l'indique le tableau 1 qui récapitule la situation de l'ESP camerounais sur la base des données disponibles, la population estudiantine totale a évolué de manière significative depuis 1998, puisque l'effectif de 2002 représente le triple de celui de l'année de départ. Elle reste toutefois relativement faible, étant donné que l'effectif total des inscrits dans l'ESP demeure par exemple inférieur au nombre d'étudiants de la seule Faculté des Sciences Economiques et de Gestion de l'Université de Yaoundé II.

Cette progression est cependant remarquable et mime (mais dans une moindre mesure) les taux d'inscriptions généralement enregistrés dans le système d'enseignement supérieur public qui comporte six (6) Universités d'État. Elle matérialise sans aucun doute le succès croissant de ce type d'enseignement auprès des élèves et des parents, et répond de fait à une multitude de préoccupations, à savoir entre autres :

- la détérioration profonde des conditions d'encadrement dans les universités publiques nationales, tant au niveau des ratios enseignants/étudiants qu'en ce qui concerne les structures d'accueil (amphithéâtres, laboratoires, connectivité, accommodations, etc.[8]),
- l'immobilisme des formations offertes, obstinément réparties entre des facultés (et quelques « grandes écoles[9] ») délivrant des enseignements généraux de science, lettre, droit, économie et gestion,
- le succès toujours croissant des élèves au sortir du système secondaire, et matérialisé par des taux de réussites au Bacc et au GCE « A » exceptionnellement inférieurs à 50 pourcent,
- les difficultés de financement de l'expatriation des jeunes par des parents de moins en moins fortunés,

- l'option pour des formations plus courtes censées accroître le rythme et les possibilités d'insertion sur le marché du travail, grâce notamment aux parchemins obtenus deux années après la sortie du système secondaire. Cette option permet que l'enfant quitte le champ d'intervention des parents et parfois contribue à aider la fratrie en âge de scolarisation,
- l'inexistence de cursus de formation décalés par rapport au temps « normal » d'éducation. En effet, l'ESP propose des formations en « cours du soir » qui offrent de multiples possibilités non seulement aux élèves travailleurs, mais aussi aux parents qui souhaitent accroître leurs stocks de connaissances.

Mais l'une des raisons les plus souvent citées par les parents et les élèves pour justifier le choix de l'ESP par rapport au secteur public demeure sans conteste les filières de formation.

Les filières d'enseignement et de formation

L'arrivée des opérateurs privés dans le monde de l'enseignement supérieur a permis que s'exprime le génie de ceux qui s'intéressent au premier chef à la rentabilité de leurs investissements. Pénétrés pour la plupart du caractère sensible du secteur de l'éducation, notamment en termes de modelage et d'organisation de l'avenir d'un pays et du recrutement de ses élites dans une optique de développement (Brezis et Crouzet 2004), mais aussi en termes d'alternative à l'évasion des cerveaux (Ramphele 2004), les promoteurs des institutions privées ont surtout fait montre d'innovation dans le domaine des filières de formation. Deux apports majeurs caractérisent ces innovations : le nouvel affichage des anciennes filières d'une part, la création de nouvelles filières d'autre part (tableau 2).

Le nouvel affichage pour d'anciennes filières a consisté pour les opérateurs privés, non seulement à s'approprier les filières qui existaient déjà dans les cursus proposés par l'enseignement supérieur public au Cameroun, mais aussi à organiser autour de celles-ci un marketing audacieux. Ce faisant, ils ont opérés trois changements déterminants :

- le premier changement a consisté à rebaptiser en les découpant certaines filières, à l'instar de l'informatique de gestion et de la maintenance informatique qui prennent la place de l'informatique ; la comptabilité de gestion qui prend la place de la comptabilité ; de l'infirmerie anesthésie qui existait dans l'infirmerie, etc.,
- le deuxième changement a consisté à proposer un raccourcissement des filières existantes, pour leur donner un parchemin terminal de courte durée et faire des titulaires de ceux-ci des agents opérationnels en entre-

prise (BTS et DUT). C'est le cas de l'agriculture, du journalisme, de la gestion des ressources humaines, de l'ingénierie civile, du commerce international ou de la gestion financière, etc.,

- le troisième changement est l'usage intensif de la communication dans ces filières, notamment en faisant un large écho de leurs résultats aux examens officiels[10] (par voies d'affichage, de radio, de presse), donnant ainsi l'impression au public que ces formations n'existaient pas dans les institutions publiques de formation ; lesquelles s'abstiennent par tradition de toute publicité.

Tableau 2 : Les filières de l'ESP

Filières en exclusivité dans l'ESP	Filières existantes dans l'ESP et dans le secteur public
communication des entreprises	commerce international*
économie sociale et familiale	gestion financière*
théologie	électrotechnique
droit canonique	marketing
études islamiques	photo audio*
conciergerie	électronique
mécanique automobile	informatique de gestion
techniques de commercialisation	maintenance informatique
arts céramiques	plomberie
gardiennage	ingénierie civile*
administration des églises	infirmerie
assurance	froid et climatisation
secrétariat bureautique	gestion des ressources humaines*
techniques administratives	infirmerie anesthésie
laboratoire médical	journalisme*
tourisme et loisirs	hôtellerie et restauration
coiffure	comptabilité de gestion
haute couture	agriculture

* Bien qu'existantes également dans le secteur public, ces filières ne reçoivent de parchemins de niveau Bacc ou GCE « A » + 2 que dans l'ESP.
Source : Répartition de l'auteur à partir de MINESUP (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002).

La création de filières originales en relation avec le marché de l'emploi constitue le second apport des promoteurs privés. Rejoignant les analyses du Fonds National de l'Emploi[11] et sensibles au déficit décrié de l'adéquation entre la formation et l'emploi dans le pays, ceux-ci ont fait le choix d'accoler les nou-

velles filières de formation aux secteurs d'activité existants ou émergents dans le privé. On peut citer, sans prétendre à l'exhaustivité, l'hôtellerie et la restauration, les ateliers de réparation des appareils ménagers, les entreprises de radio et télévision privées, les églises de toute obédience, les établissements hospitaliers, les laboratoires médicaux, les bureaux de courtiers en assurance, les salons de coiffure, les cybercafés, etc.

Toutes ces nouvelles activités se sont avérées nécessiteuses en personnels qualifiés pour leur fonctionnement. Ainsi se trouvent justifiées les filières originales mises en place, et qui sont généralement répertoriées dans la première colonne du tableau 2. Cette originalité peut prêter à sourire bien qu'elle soit pleine d'enseignements : jusque là en effet, on était loin de penser au Cameroun que l'on pouvait mener des études d'administration des églises, encore moins de coiffure ou même de conciergerie ou de gardiennage…, tant ces activités semblaient ressortir du domaine de l'expérimentation orale et du transmis mais non pas de l'acquis, à fortiori d'un acquis diplômant. Face au chômage croissant des jeunes diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur public, la population a de plus en plus fondé des espoirs sur la capacité de ces formations originales ciblées et courtes à procurer des emplois, corroborant ainsi l'idée selon laquelle le rendement escompté de l'ESP est supérieur et plus étalé dans le temps que celui du secteur public (Brewer et al. 1999). En guise de réaction, ce dernier a alors appris à s'ajuster en opérant une certaine forme de privatisation.

La « privatisation » de l'enseignement supérieur public : la dynamique de la professionnalisation

La « privatisation » de l'enseignement supérieur a consisté, depuis 2000, à identifier certaines filières professionnelles pouvant permettre de spécialiser davantage les étudiants dans des disciplines porteuses au plan de la recherche d'emploi ou au plan d'un accroissement de connaissances spécifiques pour les publics travailleurs. L'idée de la « professionnalisation » de l'enseignement supérieur public a ainsi vu le jour dans les facultés dont les filières traditionnelles permettaient de proposer de telles formations, notamment de niveau Bacc + 5 en vue de l'obtention d'un Diplôme d'Études Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS). Les formations diplômantes proposées se définissent comme étant aussi bien des filières « professionnelles » c'est-à-dire adressées à des étudiants non travailleurs qui souhaitent poursuivre des études spécialisées, que des filières « professionnalisantes » davantage adressées à des personnes déjà en activité et qui espèrent obtenir des compétences spécifiques pointues liées à leur activité professionnelle habituelle. Ces deux compartiments ne sont pas

exclusifs puisqu'ils reçoivent indifféremment les deux types de publics, pourvu que les conditions d'inscription soient remplies.

Bien que la durée des études et les niveaux de diplômes ne soient pas les mêmes, cette idée de professionnalisation permet au secteur public non seulement de briser le monopole de l'ESP sur le terrain de la délivrance des formations adaptées au marché du travail, mais aussi de se positionner comme le défenseur institutionnel de l'adéquation formation emploi, en donnant un cachet officiel à ce qui aurait pu apparaître comme des formations au rabais (car le parchemin délivré par une université publique demeure beaucoup plus prestigieux au Cameroun que celui issu d'une institution privée[12]).

Pour tenter de rattraper le retard de rendement dont fait état Brewer et al. (1999), le secteur universitaire public a donc lancé ces formations « professionnelles » dont le caractère « privé » peut être relevé à quatre niveaux au moins :

- *La durée de la formation*. Elle n'excède que rarement 15 mois, y compris la période consacrée au stage professionnel ; ce qui permet au candidat d'avoir un parchemin opérationnel reconnu dans des délais raisonnables. A contrario, les filières classiques dans les universités ne délivrent qu'exclusivement des parchemins de bon niveau avant trois années de scolarité.
- *Le coût de la formation*. Il est très élevé par rapport au coût normal de la formation supérieure au Cameroun. A titre d'illustration, les frais de scolarité annuels dans le cursus universitaire public s'élèvent à 50 000 F CFA. Mais l'inscription dans les formations professionnelles n'est valide que si le candidat débourse des frais de scolarité compris entre 650 000 F CFA et 1 300 000 F CFA en fonction de la filière choisie. La conséquence logique est la réduction drastique du nombre d'étudiants inscrits (qui sont en général moins de 25 par filière)[13] ; ce qui était déjà l'une des solutions proposées par Khan et Tafah (2000) dans leur étude économétrique sur l'efficience de l'enseignement supérieur public au Cameroun.
- *Le corps enseignant*. Il est composé d'une combinaison de personnels universitaires et de personnels professionnels, c'est-à-dire des individus ayant des compétences de métier avérées et des capacités pédagogiques d'interaction avec le public qui a fait le choix de cette formation.
- *La rémunération des personnels enseignants*. Les filières professionnelles octroient des salaires horaires sans aucune commune mesure avec le système public qui les abrite. Dans ce dernier en effet, l'heure d'en-

seignement n'excède pas 6 000 F CFA pour les enseignants les plus qualifiés, tandis lesdites filières paient entre 15 000 F CFA et 25 000 F CFA de l'heure, avec l'exigence plus ou moins respectée d'un enseignement moins directif et plus andragogique. On a là une illustration parfaite du constat de Hosby (1994) selon lequel le secteur public réagit favorablement à la compétitivité de l'enseignement privé en augmentant notamment les salaires des enseignants. Ici encore, une des recommandations de Khan et Tafah (2000) trouve confirmation.

Les filières professionnelles recensées couvrent de nombreux domaines, à savoir par exemple et sans exhaustivité les métiers de la banque, de la finance, des négociations commerciales internationales, des techniques comptables, du droit fiscal, du droit communautaire, de la gestion et l'évaluation des projets, des transports, des politiques économiques, etc.

A l'évidence, l'ESP camerounais a directement ou indirectement accru de manière significative l'offre de formation disponible dans le pays. Les acteurs et les structures, les filières de formations proposées et la réaction de l'enseignement supérieur public en terme de professionnalisation ont permis de diversifier et parfois de réformer les qualifications potentielles du système général d'enseignement supérieur au Cameroun (on est passé d'une vingtaine de filières en 1990 à presqu'une centaine aujourd'hui), mais également de consacrer leur validité par des parchemins officiellement reconnus.[14] L'ESP a ainsi complété le système public, parce qu'au-delà de la barrière à l'entrée que constitue le coût de la formation, l'accroissement du nombre d'inscrits dans le secteur privé n'a pas réduit l'engouement des jeunes pour les formations offertes dans le secteur public.

Mais l'ESP peut-il tenir dans la durée et assurer les conditions de sa propre reproduction ? Cette interrogation introduit dans mon analyse la question de la pérennité du système privé d'enseignement supérieur.

L'ESP doit faire face au défi de la pérennité

Pour que l'ESP structure la société camerounaise et s'installe dans la pérennité, il a besoin de s'inscrire dans une vision stratégique de long terme qui ne soit pas seulement la résultante d'une pression démographique importante dont on espère qu'elle produira, dans tous les cas, une incessante demande d'éducation. En effet, qu'il soit direct ou induit du refus de renouvellement de l'homologation, le taux de mortalité important des institutions d'ESP (4 sur 18 en 2002) indique clairement que cette demande d'éducation est nécessaire mais pas suffisante.

Je pense que trois composantes au moins doivent être examinées dans ce face-à-face entre l'ESP et le défi de la pérennité : le problème du financement de l'ESP au Cameroun, le problème de la qualité générale du système, et la solution du partenariat.

Le financement de l'ESP

De manière générale, le problème du financement de l'éducation se pose en des termes tellement subtils en Afrique que je ne résiste pas à la tentation de reproduire ce paragraphe de l'excellent ouvrage de Rasera et al. (2005:9) :

> La question du financement de l'éducation en Afrique fait partie intégrante de celle, plus générale, de l'efficacité des politiques éducatives. C'est seulement dans ce contexte qu'elle prend tout son sens, parce que la politique éducative, par la nature des mécanismes et des activités qu'elle met en œuvre, ne constitue pas un objet, ou plutôt un projet, ordinaire, et que la question de son efficacité ne peut, dans ces conditions, aller de soi. Dans un grand nombre d'activités productives, la question du financement se pose en termes simples. Lorsque le mode et la technologie de production sont connus, la question du financement se résume à un problème de coût que les responsables intègrent aisément dans leurs calculs d'efficience et de rentabilité. Il n'en va pas de même dans la politique éducative. C'est avant tout parce que l'on sait peu de choses sur les politiques éducatives efficaces que le problème de leur financement se pose en des termes si complexes. La raison en est d'abord technique (ou technologique) et renvoie à l'opacité des conditions de cette « production » particulière. Elle est également liée à la nature du bien « éducation », dont une analyse du financement ne peut ignorer les liens qu'il entretient, d'une part, avec des dimensions aussi fondamentales du fonctionnement des sociétés que sont la culture, l'identité et la souveraineté nationales et, d'autre part, avec l'ensemble des autres fonctions collectives.

Or, ici comme ailleurs, le constat est que l'ESP qui fait pourtant partie de ces politiques générales d'éducation dont on recherche ardemment l'efficacité, a du mal à trouver son chemin dans la galerie déjà complexe du financement. Le cas particulier du Cameroun est d'apparence simple : l'ESP est financé à partir de deux sources bien identifiées : l'autofinancement et les subventions de l'État, dont le devoir est de soutenir toute action de développement de ses « fonctions collectives ». Mais de nombreux problèmes concernent cependant ces deux aspects.

En ce qui concerne les subventions en particulier et les dépenses publiques en général, la question de leur apport dans l'enseignement supérieur reste sujette à débats (Birdsall 1996). Par exemple, Bloom et Sevilla (2004) posent trois conditions pour qu'une telle politique d'investissement puisse réellement

promouvoir une allocation socialement efficiente des ressources : (i) le bénéfice social net provenant de ces investissements doit être positif, (ii) les promoteurs privés ne doivent pas disposer des capacités ou incitations nécessaires pour entreprendre un niveau d'investissement optimal sur le plan social, et (iii) les investissements doivent générer plus de bénéfices sociaux nets que les autres formes d'usage de fonds publics. Les auteurs estiment sur cette base que la première condition est susceptible d'être réalisée, la seconde l'est moins et la troisième est encore plus incertaine. Par conséquent, il n'y a pas de raison militant de manière décisive pour une politique de subventions de l'enseignement supérieur. Car la politique de subventions ne concerne pas seulement le secteur privé : elle constitue même en priorité un enjeu majeur pour l'enseignement public, à l'heure où la compétition est le maître mot de l'économie. De même qu'en Espagne et ailleurs on l'accuse d'introduire une distorsion fâcheuse dans le marché de l'enseignement supérieur (par exemple Marcos 2003), de même au Cameroun le subventionnement de l'enseignement supérieur public biaise le marché,[15] est souvent confronté à l'insuffisance des ressources étatiques disponibles (difficiles voire impossibles à mobiliser bien qu'inscrites aux budgets des Universités), et explique en grande partie l'impulsion gouvernementale à la politique de « privatisation » analysée ci-dessus.

Les données officielles disponibles en provenance du MINESUP indiquent clairement que les subventions à l'ESP ne sont généralement pas octroyées. Il ne reste alors aux promoteurs privés que le financement autonome de leurs activités.

L'autofinancement de l'ESP comprend pour l'essentiel les frais de scolarité versés par les étudiants et les fonds privés des promoteurs.[16] Il apparaît comme une contrainte serrée par des charges qui pèsent d'autant plus lourdement sur le budget des institutions du secteur privé que celle-ci refusent d'implémenter la politique qu'impose la modestie de leurs moyens financiers (à l'exclusion des institutions d'ESP confessionnelles au premier rang desquelles se trouve l'Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale – UCAC). Elles souhaitent entrer en compétition avec des institutions publiques qui ont pourtant bénéficié (et continuent à en bénéficier à la moindre opportunité) des investissements publics. Trois catégories de charges semblent particulièrement lourdes à cet égard :

- *Les charges infrastructurelles*. Ces charges concernent à la fois la construction et l'entretien des bâtiments principaux abritant l'institution, mais aussi et de plus en plus les bureaux pour enseignants, les chambres pour étudiants, les réfectoires, les terrains de sport et autres gymnases, les bâtiments pour des radios et télévisions privées, etc. Ces charges rehaussent certainement le prestige de l'institution mais grèvent lourde-

ment le budget de promoteurs souvent déjà accablés par le poids des emprunts bancaires. Le déficit d'entretien de ces infrastructures en termes de factures d'eau, d'électricité, de connectivité, de salubrité, de gardiennage, etc. est malheureusement parfois étalé au grand jour, sapant du même coup le prestige que ces investissements étaient censés donner. Il faut ajouter à ces charges les dépenses d'assurance et parfois de fiscalité qui leur sont proportionnelles.

- *Les charges salariales*. En conformité avec la supériorité des salaires du secteur privé sur ceux du secteur public, les institutions d'ESP rémunèrent leurs personnels administratifs mais surtout enseignants à un niveau généralement plus décent que dans les universités publiques, directement par un salaire horaire supérieur ou indirectement grâce à la compensation par heures d'enseignement dispensées. Dans la plupart des cas examinés, le salaire n'est généralement pas inférieur à celui servi dans le secteur public.[17] La composante constituée des charges salariales est donc un chapitre important du dispositif budgétaire dans l'ESP.
- *Les « coûts de menu »*. Par cette expression, je désigne les dépenses additionnelles qui accroissent probablement la visibilité de l'institution mais dont la pertinence peut être remise en cause. Il s'agit notamment des frais de publicité et de marketing, des dépenses de plus en plus importantes de prestige et de confort, telles des véhicules de liaison, des autobus pour les étudiants et le personnel, des téléphones portables de service, etc. dont il apparaît à l'évidence qu'elles constituent des gouffres financiers (assurance, carburant, dotations téléphoniques, chauffeurs, etc.). A ces dépenses doivent par ailleurs être ajoutées celles qui relèvent davantage des dysfonctionnements de la société en général, telles les dépenses « d'entretien » des agents publics de toutes les administrations qui verrouillent la chaîne de la conformité d'avec les normes publiques : fiscalité, hygiène, santé, enseignement supérieur, recherche, urbanisme et habitât, etc.

La conséquence immédiate de cette situation apparaît dans la détermination des coûts de la formation et des classes préparatoires (quand elles existent), qui oscillent généralement entre 200 000 F CFA et 1 000 000 F CFA par an et par étudiant en fonction de l'institution et de la formation désirée. Le tableau 3 suivant illustre le cas particulier de l'UCAC :

Tableau 3 : Les frais de scolarité annuels des étudiants de l'UCAC (en FCFA)

Filières ou spécialités	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
Premier cycle	550 000	605 000	605 000
Deuxième cycle	650 000	715 000	715 000
MSTCF	750 000	825 000	825 000
Troisième cycle	750 000	825 000	825 000
Infirmiers	300 000	300 000	300 000
Infirmiers anesthésistes	400 000	400 000	400 000
Classe préparatoire	330 000	365 000	365 000

Note : MSTCF = Maîtrise (ou Master) des sciences et techniques comptables et financières.
Source : MINESUP (2002:319).

Il faut donc débourser 605 000 F CFA par an pendant deux (2) ans pour se préparer au BTS par exemple, 365 000 F CFA pour une année de classe préparatoire, etc. Ce cas et les autres confirment la cherté de l'éducation supérieure dans le secteur privé par rapport au secteur public classique (50 000 F CFA). Ils mettent d'autant plus en relief l'attention qui doit être portée à la composante financière du défi de la pérennité pour l'ESP, qu'il faut absolument se garder d'établir une corrélation rapide entre les moyens financiers engagés et la qualité du produit formé. En effet, « les travaux comparatifs qui concernent l'efficacité des systèmes de formation sont de ce point de vue particulièrement éclairants (…). Ils soulignent la faiblesse de la relation observée entre niveau des dépenses et performances des systèmes éducatifs » (Rasera et al. 2005:160).

La seconde composante du défi de la pérennité se trouve ainsi confortée : si les moyens financiers ne peuvent conduire à la production de la performance, alors le soin apporté à la qualité devrait permettre de réduire la distance qui sépare d'elle.

L'exigence de qualité

La qualité d'un système éducatif se mesure directement par sa capacité à produire des individus qui réussissent aux examens officiels pour lesquels ils ont été formés. Elle se mesure indirectement par la qualité du staff enseignant (capables de suivre les programmes officiels d'enseignement et d'en dispenser les contenus avec talent) et plus généralement à la qualité de l'encadrement existant dans l'institution. Elle se mesure à posteriori par la capacité des produits formés à donner la preuve de leur compétence dans les domaines dans

lesquels ils ont subi avec succès une formation. Ces trois niveaux d'appréhension de la qualité ne sont pas équitablement simples à capturer.

La mesure à posteriori exige le calcul du rendement de l'éducation, dans ses aspects à la fois privé et social [Psharopoulos (1994), Okuwa (2004) ou de la Fuente et Jimeno (2005) en donnent d'édifiants aperçus]. Cette préoccupation fortement consommatrice en données d'enquêtes statistiques outrepasse l'objet de mon propos ici et pourrait faire l'objet d'investigations plus appropriées, du type de celles produites par Brewer et al. (1999).

La mesure directe résulte des statistiques disponibles. Or, de ce point de vue, les promoteurs privés sont rebelles à la production de leurs statistiques de réussite aux examens officiels *en pourcentage*, et préfèrent diffuser à profusion des statistiques brutes (nombre d'admis) qui frappent davantage l'imagination du potentiel « client » qu'est le public.[18] C'est ainsi que de manière éparse, on peut donner les statistiques en pourcentage de réussite à l'examen du BTS de l'Institut Samba en 1997 (41,03 pourcent), en 1998 (43,80 pourcent), en 2000 (22,77 pourcent) ; du Groupe Tankou Supérieur en 1998 (68 pourcent) ou de l'Institut Siantou en 2002 (37,50 pourcent). Mais de manière générale toutefois, il est établi que les pourcentages de réussite dans les institutions d'ESP sont en moyenne supérieurs à ceux des établissements d'enseignement public de niveau identique. Cette affirmation trouve du reste un certain fondement dans la mesure indirecte de la qualité du système.

La mesure indirecte peut en effet être prélevée par le truchement de deux indicateurs au moins : le taux d'encadrement des étudiants d'une part, le niveau de qualification des personnels enseignants d'autre part.

Le tableau 4 donne une indication du taux général d'encadrement dans les institutions d'ESP. Le ratio enseignant/étudiant de 1 pour 8 est extrêmement bon et dépasse de loin ce que l'on observe dans le secteur public, où des taux d'encadrement officiels de 1 pour 100 sont les plus faibles… Même au niveau de l'encadrement que peut offrir le personnel administratif et d'appui, la qualité se trouve du côté de l'ESP. En effet, en 2002 le ratio personnel administratif/étudiant de l'UCAC est par exemple de 1 pour 11, tandis que dans un seul établissement public comme la Faculté des sciences économiques et de gestion de l'Université de Yaoundé II, ce ratio est de l'ordre de 1 pour 200 !

Le niveau de qualification des enseignants de l'ESP est donné dans le tableau 5. On constate que 77,20 pourcent des enseignants sont titulaires au minimum d'un diplôme universitaire de troisième cycle (équivalent Bacc + 5) et 8,30 pourcent d'un diplôme universitaire de Maîtrise (équivalent Bacc + 4). On peut donc créditer le système d'une densité qualitative certaine.

Tableau 4 : L'encadrement dans l'ESP

	1999	2000	2001	2002
Effectif des enseignants	607	858	724	837
Taux d'encadrement	1/6,6	1/7,5	1/8	1/8
Effectif des personnels administratifs et d'appui	160[a]	20[b]	126[c]	122[d]

[a] Inclus : Université catholique, Institut Siantou, Groupe Tankou Supérieur, Institut de technologie de l'information, Ecole supérieure des sciences et des technologies, Institut Samba, Ecole supérieure de gestion
[b] Inclus : Institut Siantou
[c] Inclus : Université catholique, Institut Siantou
[d] Inclus : Université catholique
Source : A partir de MINESUP (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002).

Mais, et c'est ici que la seconde composante du défi de la pérennité prend toute sa dimension, le tableau 5 indique aussi que le corps enseignant est composé de 5 pourcent de personnes titulaires d'un diplôme équivalent Bacc + 2, et de 8 pourcent personnes titulaires d'un diplôme équivalent Bacc + 3. Si l'on peut admettre qu'un encadrement *strictement professionnel* soit assuré par des personnes titulaires d'un parchemin de métier de niveau Bacc + 3 (cas du journalisme), il est en revanche difficilement acceptable que des personnes titulaires du BTS (voire de la Licence) enseignent des postulants au BTS. Il s'agit là d'une faiblesse certaine que les promoteurs privés doivent corriger pour accroître la crédibilité de leurs institutions et éloigner du public l'idée néfaste d'une recherche effrénée de profit.

Conjugué aux problèmes liés à la conformité des bâtiments, à l'hygiène et à la salubrité, à la sécurité, à la qualité des infrastructures, etc. ce type de constat peut avoir pour conséquence un refus du renouvellement de l'homologation délivrée par le MINESUP aux institutions d'ESP. En effet, cette habilitation ne concerne pas seulement des masses physiques, mais également sinon en priorité les questions liées à la qualité de la formation en termes de contenus des programmes d'enseignement et de qualité des personnels devant assurer ces enseignements. Or de ce point de vue, et à cause de la sensibilité du secteur de l'éducation, le MINESUP s'est toujours illustré par son caractère extrêmement tatillon…

Tableau 5 : Répartition des enseignants de l'ESP par niveau de diplôme.

Diplômes des enseignants	Niveau d'équivalence après le Baccalauréat	Effectifs des enseignants				Total
		1999	2000	2001	2002	
BTS/DEUG/DUT	Bacc + 2	10	9	9	18	46
Ingénieur des travaux /Licence	Bacc + 3	24	9	9	29	71
Maîtrise	Bacc + 4	25	9	9	37	80
DEA/DESS	Bacc + 5	81	65	65	154	365
DIPLEG/DIPLET	Bacc + 6	30	10	10	54	104
Diplôme de journalisme	Bacc + 3	7				7
Doctorat	Bacc + 8	55	34	34	144	267
Diplôme en Sciences Infirmières	Bacc + 5				11	11
Agrégation	Bacc + 15				1	1
Autres	-	17				17
TOTAL		249[a]	136[b]	136[c]	448[d]	969

Note : BTS = Brevet de Technicien Supérieur, DEUG = Diplôme d'Études Universitaires Générales, DUT = Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie, DEA = Diplôme d'Études Approfondies, DESS = Diplôme d'Études Supérieures Spécialisées, DIPLEG = Diplôme des Professeurs des Lycées d'Enseignement Général, DIPLET = Diplôme des Professeurs des Lycées d'Enseignement Technique

[a] Inclus : Institut Siantou, Institut Samba

[b] Inclus : Institut Siantou

[c] Inclus : Institut Siantou

[d] Inclus : UCAC, Institut Samba, Institut Siantou

Source : A partir de MINESUP (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002).

La tentation des promoteurs privés à « tricher » avec ces éléments de qualité est grande, étant donné le poids de leurs contraintes financières, pour lesquelles aucune économie ne saurait être de trop. Le partenariat peut alors apparaître comme une issue envisageable.

La solution du partenariat

Le partenariat consacre une entente synallagmatique entre deux parties dans le cadre d'un accord qui engage. Populaires dans d'autres secteurs d'activité (les Accords de Partenariats Économiques – APE – qui lient les pays Afrique-Caraïbes-Pacifique à l'Union Européenne en sont une des illustrations les plus fortes), les accords de partenariat peuvent être une source de réduction des contraintes dans l'ESP. Je ne voudrais ici suggérer que deux types particuliers d'accords : les accords pour la sauvegarde de la qualité, et les accords pour le soutien au financement.

Les accords de partenariat pour la sauvegarde de la qualité doivent avoir pour objectif le développement de liens étroits et fructueux avec toutes personnes morales, physiques ou institutionnelles volontaires pour contribuer au maintien d'un standard élevé dans l'institution. Dans ce contexte doivent être différenciés accords « internes » et accords « externes » :

- les accords « internes » sont ceux qui sont négociés avec des partenaires locaux ou nationaux. Ils permettent d'ouvrir l'institution d'ESP au monde intellectuel qui l'entoure et autorisent une coopération que l'on peut bâtir sur divers domaines tels que les enseignements, la co-diplômation (délivrance de diplômes estampillés par toutes les institutions signataires de l'accord), les visites didactiques, les échanges d'enseignants, etc. Ce type d'accords est du reste déjà implémenté par certaines institutions, à l'instar de l'Institut Samba Supérieur qui en possède un avec l'Université de Yaoundé II dans le cadre notamment de la formation et la délivrance de certains parchemins concernant les études juridiques. L'accord induit implicitement un contrôle qualité de l'université sur le cursus délivré à l'Institut, et ne peut qu'accroître le crédit à donner à la formation, et donc à l'institution ;
- les accords « externes » sont ceux que l'on négocie avec des partenaires internationaux des milieux de l'éducation supérieure. Généralement exigeants en détails juridiques, ces accords permettent d'exposer l'institution aux normes internationales et peuvent ainsi constituer un élément d'appel vers la qualité. Ici encore, des institutions d'ESP bien inspirées expérimentent actuellement les avantages de telles ententes, notamment l'École Supérieure de Gestion qui est liée au Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers de Paris (France), l'Institut Siantou, l'Université des Montagnes, et bien d'autres. La présence de ces institutions internationales, le contrôle qu'elles exercent sur la qualité des produits formés, l'accueil de certains de ces produits dans leur pays d'établissement, la mise en place des programmes de bourses, leur souci bien compris de

ne pas galvauder leur réputation souvent mondiale, etc. sont autant de garanties qui doivent aider à sonner le glas de la médiocrité.

Les accords de partenariat pour le soutien au financement doivent avoir pour objectif majeur d'éviter que les soucis budgétaires ne conduisent à l'altération la qualité de la formation ; celle-ci étant facile à sacrifier sur l'hôtel de ceux-là. Deux types d'accord de nature très différente sont possibles dans ce contexte : les accords « citoyens » et les accords « anonymes ».

- Les accords « citoyens », de type sponsoring, sont ceux que l'on peut conclure avec certaines entreprises qui sont de plus en plus qualifiées de citoyennes parce qu'elles essaient d'atténuer l'esprit de profit qui caractérise naturellement leurs activités. Ces entreprises offrent des bourses d'études, construisent des routes et des ponts dans certaines communautés, déblaient les rues, entreprennent des travaux de voiries urbaines, etc. Il s'agit donc d'une opportunité franche et d'autant plus ouverte que les institutions d'ESP forment dans les métiers demandés par ces entreprises. De tels accords peuvent permettre de construire des salles de classe, d'équiper des laboratoires, d'acquérir du matériel informatique, d'obtenir du matériel sportif, etc. Plusieurs exemples existent pour confirmer la tendance croissante de ces ententes ; en témoignent les cérémonies de remise des prix aux étudiants les plus méritants, animées et fortement médiatisées par ces entreprises partenaires.
- Les accords « anonymes » sont d'une toute autre nature et commandent un changement radical du mode de financement des institutions d'ESP[19] . Il s'agit ici d'ouvrir le capital de l'institution, notamment aux parents d'étudiants intéressés (qui seraient ainsi viscéralement impliqués) et à certaines entreprises précisent qui, du fait des secteurs d'activités dans lesquelles elles opèrent, sont consommatrices des produits formés par l'institution. On peut même imaginer dans le cadre de cette recherche de financement additionnel, un recours au marché financier (Douala Stock Exchange) pour l'émission d'obligations…

Conclusion

L'objectif de cet article était d'examiner la dynamique de l'enseignement supérieur privé (ESP) au Cameroun pour en souligner les principaux traits caractéristiques. L'analyse de l'existant d'une part, et le recours aux données des dix-huit (18) « institutions privées d'enseignement supérieur reconnues par le Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur » d'autre part, ont permis de dégager les six (6) principaux traits suivants :

1. l'ESP se structure en deux catégories d'établissements, différenciés par leur caractère confessionnel ou individuel. Les institutions de type confessionnel sont manifestement plus nanties que les institutions de type individuel ;
2. l'ESP a accru de manière décisive l'offre de formation supérieure, soit en proposant un renouvellement des cursus existants, soit en faisant montre d'originalité dans la création de nouvelles filières adossées aux besoins nouveaux et émergents exprimés par le marché de l'emploi, soit enfin en provoquant une certaine « privatisation » dans le secteur public, consacrée par la création de nouvelles filières professionnelles. Grâce à lui, le nombre de filières est passé d'une vingtaine à presqu'une centaine en 15 ans ;
3. l'ESP est une activité génératrice d'emplois, comme en témoigne le nombre non négligeable des personnels administratifs et d'appui, ainsi que des personnels enseignants (même s'il s'agit souvent de pluriactivité). Ces emplois sont généralement rétribués à bon niveau ;
4. l'ESP est en totalité financée par les frais de scolarité des étudiants et par les fonds privés (et discrets) des promoteurs, à l'exclusion des établissements d'ESP de type confessionnel dont les fonds proviennent généralement des communautés qui les chapeautent. Ces frais de scolarité sont de loin plus élevés que dans le secteur public classique, notamment à cause des charges importantes auxquelles s'exposent (ou que s'imposent) ces institutions ;
5. l'ESP enregistre des taux d'encadrement généraux de loin meilleurs que ceux du système public classique (par exemple 1 enseignant pour 8 étudiants contre 1 pour 100 au moins). Mais la décomposition du corps enseignant de l'ESP par niveau de qualification commande de sensibles corrections ;
6. l'ESP doit faire montre de plus d'audace et d'imagination dans l'exploitation du partenariat, qu'il soit national ou international, de type sponsoring ou simplement financier.

Notes

1 Pour une riche revue récente, voir Loening (2005) et de la Fuente and Jimeno (2005).

2 Psacharopoulos a produit des résultants économétriques affirmant que le rendement social de l'enseignement primaire était de loin plus élevé dans les pays en développement que pour tous les autres niveaux d'enseignement (secondaire et supérieur); ce qui a provoqué d'intenses débats scientifiques dans la littérature. Aujourd'hui, le consensus qui semble se dégager est de considérer que

ces résultats ne sont pas uniformes et qu'ils sont fortement dépendants des contextes et des pays.

3 Le Cameroun est un pays bilingue français-anglais qui délivre donc des parchemins dans les deux systèmes linguistiques de formation.

4 Certaines institutions internationales ne sont pas prises en compte dans cette étude, parce qu'elles ne figurent pas parmi les « institutions privées d'enseignement supérieur reconnues par le Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur », expression consacrée au Cameroun. C'est le cas de l'Institut Africain d'Informatique et de bien d'autres.

5 En 1990 furent publiées de nombreuses lois ôtant les restrictions publiques existantes dans la plupart des secteurs économiques, et consacrant ainsi le vaste mouvement de libéralisation enclenchée par les revendications politiques.

6 Les fidèles de la religion musulmane n'ont pas encore créé d'établissement d'enseignement supérieur. Pour l'instant, les enseignements d'obédience islamique (*Islamic Studies*) sont dispensés dans un établissement privé laïque, le National Polytechnic de Bambui.

7 Plusieurs établissements d'ESP fonctionnent en marge de toute réglementation, mais réussissent pourtant à accueillir de nombreux étudiants. L'Université des Montagnes fonctionne ainsi depuis une demi dizaine d'années, mais sa reconnaissance officielle et son régime des études n'ont été obtenus que cette année 2005.

8 Une grève quasi générale a agité les Universités d'Etat du Cameroun durant le second semestre 2005. Au-delà de l'annulation des frais de scolarité et de l'élection des Recteurs, les revendications des étudiants portaient sur divers motifs, notamment l'inexistence des toilettes, l'absence de tableau et de craie dans les amphithéâtres, l'exiguïté des amphithéâtres existants, la rareté des chambres d'étudiants, etc.

9 Les « grandes écoles » offrent des formations polytechniques, mais aussi en journalisme, en relations internationales, en sciences commerciales, en industries agricoles, en didactique et pédagogie, en travaux publics, en postes et télécommunications, etc.

10 Les résultats des institutions de l'ESP sont généralement bons et, dans la plupart des cas, meilleurs que ceux du secteur public. Ceci est dû à de nombreuses raisons dont la plus importante demeure le taux d'encadrement des étudiants. J'y reviendrai plus loin.

11 Le Fonds National de l'Emploi (FNE) a été créé en 1991 dans le cadre de la dimension sociale de l'ajustement. Son mandat est de servir d'interface entre le secteur privé et les demandeurs d'emplois, d'octroyer des fonds (relativement modestes) pour le financement de certaines micro-entreprises, et d'aider au placement des jeunes dans le secteur privé, en subventionnant notamment une partie de leurs salaires. Le FNE a donné un éclairage nouveau à la plupart des métiers pour lesquels des formations sont aujourd'hui assurées par l'ESP.

12 Dans ce domaine du prestige, l'Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale est devenue une concurrente sérieuse des universités publiques.

13 Faut-il rappeler qu'au Cameroun, on dénombre généralement 3000 voire 4000 étudiants pour un seul niveau d'étude dans les universités publiques ?

14 Cet article ne considère en effet que les formations diplômantes. Il existe par ailleurs dans les institutions publiques et privées, de nombreuses formations « qualifiantes » qui procurent des compétences nouvelles à un public demandeur, mais qui ne sont pas sanctionnées par un diplôme officiel. Un « certificat » ou une « attestation » suffisent généralement.

15 Une simple simulation emplois-ressources montre qu'en moyenne, les frais de scolarité dans les universités publiques camerounaises seraient de l'ordre de 400.000 FCFA par étudiant et par an. Seule la politique des subventions permet que les étudiants ne contribuent que pour 50.000 FCFA à leur scolarité.

16 Bien entendu, les chiffres relatifs à ces fonds privés ne sont jamais disponibles, à cause de la discrétion des promoteurs.

17 Bien entendu, dans certaines institutions d'ESP, le salaire est inférieur. Mais pour les enseignants concernés, il s'agit d'un complément salarial qui ne peut être boudé dans un pays où la rémunération dans l'enseignement en général et dans l'enseignement supérieur en particulier est faible. Un professeur titulaire d'université gagne en Ouganda en moyenne 1.500$ par mois, au Kenya en moyenne 1.500$, au Gabon en moyenne 2.400$ et au Cameroun en moyenne 900$.

18 Et malheureusement, ces statistiques sont généralement monopolisées par les institutions concernées, et ce sont elles qui fournissent l'ensemble du système public (ministères, institut de la statistique, etc.) en données statistiques…

19 La plupart des promoteurs des institutions d'ESP sont de braves managers paternalistes des temps anciens qui ont longtemps fait la preuve de leur ingéniosité, mais qui peinent à suivre les changements qui s'opèrent autour d'eux. L'intrusion des « autres » dans « leur affaire » est pour eux une insupportable épreuve, et la qualité de ce qu'ils ont mis tant d'années à bâtir pourrait continûment s'éroder.

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