



Rethinking Leadership, Management and Career Advancement for 21st Century Deans in the Social Sciences and Humanities at Makerere University

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Abstract

The study investigates Leadership, Management and Career Advancement for Female and Male Deans in Social Sciences and Humanities at Makerere University. The objective is to investigate the gender dynamics of leadership and management in academic careers of deans in Humanities and the Social Sciences and its effect on institutional development. The study is qualitative and quantitative in design, combining both primary and secondary data generated using a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews. The findings indicate that women as well as men face similar challenges in deanship with varying degrees. Factors that motivate male and females into deanship are identified as well as how both male and female deans react to these challenges, and the proposed support for deans' academic growth. This study provides options for university management on how best university governance and structures should enable the deans to discharge their academic mandates in the most efficient and effective way without compromising the deanship and academic growth of both genders. Overall, the study finds that although there are some significant efforts in place to mainstream gender in leadership and management among others, Makerere University structures are still in favour of the male gender. There are supportive structures in deanship but no deliberate efforts are in place to encourage women in deanship. The deans know what it takes to advance

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academically although the environment does not seem to have changed so much to create a level ground for females to compete for leadership positions – something that may negatively impact on institutional development and gender equity in particular. Makerere University needs to rethink its leadership and management strategy to integrate gender fully with a view to becoming more inclusive for institutional development.

Key words: Gender, Leadership and Management, Institutional Development

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur le leadership, la gestion et le développement des carrières des doyens et des doyennes des facultés des sciences sociales et sciences humaines de l'Université de Makerere. Il a pour objectif d'examiner la dynamique genre du leadership et de la gestion des carrières des doyens des facultés des sciences sociales et sciences humaines et son effet sur le développement institutionnel. L'étude est qualitative et quantitative dans la conception, associant les données primaires et celles secondaires générées à l'aide d'un questionnaire et d'entrevues face-à-face. Les résultats montrent que les femmes aussi bien que les hommes sont confrontés aux mêmes problèmes relatifs au décanat avec des degrés variables. Les facteurs qui motivent les hommes et les femmes à postuler au décanat sont identifiés ainsi que la façon dont ces derniers réagissent vis-à-vis de ces problèmes et l'appui proposé pour le développement académique des doyens. L'étude offre des options pour la gestion des universités sur comment la gouvernance universitaire et des structures devrait mieux permettre aux doyens de se décharger de leurs mandats académiques de la manière la plus efficiente et plus efficace sans compromettre le décanat et le développement académique des personnes des deux sexes. Dans l'ensemble, l'étude a constaté que malgré les efforts considérables consentis pour intégrer la question de genre dans le leadership et la gestion entre autres, les structures de l'université de Makerere sont toujours en faveur du genre masculin. Il existe des structures de soutien à la nomination des doyens cependant il n'y a pas d'efforts délibérés pour encourager les candidatures féminines. Les doyens connaissent les critères d'avancement académique même si le contexte ne semble pas avoir changé autant pour créer des conditions égales permettant aux femmes de concourir pour les positions de leadership – des faits qui peuvent influencer défavorablement sur le développement institutionnel et l'égalité entre les sexes en particulier. L'université de Makerere cherche à repenser son leadership et sa stratégie de gestion pour intégrer pleinement la dimension genre dans un souci de plus d'inclusion dans le développement institutionnel.

Mots clés: Genre, Leadership et Gestion, Développement institutionnel

Background

Governance and leadership in higher education cannot be over-emphasized in preserving the integrity of academic values of the institution while, at the same time, positioning universities to be relevant in the emerging context that requires greater accountability in terms of quality of graduates. The decrease in government funding of universities the world over has made them less able to perform effectively, although it also came with decreased government involvement in the day-to-day governance of the universities. On the other hand, the increased expansion of the institutions in terms of student enrolments, numbers of institutions and diversified curriculum, calls for new forms of academic leadership and engagement. This point was articulated at the European Higher Education Area Ministerial Conference held in Bucharest, in April 2012. The conference considered the importance of active participation of the academic community – students, faculty, staff and institutional leadership – in the governance and development of higher education in a way that is responsive to social change and economic needs.

In Africa, and Uganda in particular, institutions of higher learning are persistently in a state of transition, responding and repositioning themselves in the light of global challenges (globalization, privatization, liberalization) as well as in the light of their social and institutional aspirations. This latter response derives from increasing expectations of governments and the public to support the broader national societal priorities. Institutions are under pressure to support the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which in one way or another all focus on poverty reduction and some of which may compromise academic quality and institutional development. For Makerere University, in particular, its mission statement is ‘to provide innovative teaching, learning, research and service [that is] responsive to national and global needs’ (Makerere University Strategic Plan 2008/09-018/19, Annual Report, 2010).

Makerere University plays a multiplicity of roles, including supporting national policies such as universal primary education, universal secondary education, directly building the required human resource to support policies for national development as well as focusing on the attainment of its vision ‘to be a leading institution for academic excellence and innovations in Africa’. This notwithstanding, Makerere University is experiencing a paradigm shift from a faculty-based system to a collegiate system of governance. This comes with new leadership and management roles where the core responsibility of academic leadership has been decentralized to schools in colleges. The primary responsibility of deans is perceived to be academic; to oversee teaching and research missions of their schools/institutions, yet some of these duties

are highly administrative and increasingly, administrative responsibilities are overshadowing academic roles. The deans are spending their time attending administrative meetings of the college and university, looking for sources of funding for the schools, handling administrative matters of the faculty members as well as students. By the nature of deans' roles and responsibilities, it may seem that the very best faculty members, namely, those with strongest reputations and influence are drawn into the academic governance process, either through formal election or appointment.

Although Makerere University has had a series of reforms at the structural and administrative levels, the process of becoming a dean or any other administrator for that matter has not changed. The process of becoming a dean takes place at the faculty/school level through the following steps:

- a. Academic Registrar announces vacant position in a faculty/school through a circular letter requesting for nominations.
- b. Interested individuals in faculty/school are nominated; the names are submitted to the Academic Registrar.
- c. Academic Registrar sets date for election of dean and communicates same to the faculty/school. Candidates may campaign depending on the culture in the school; for example, the School of Law does not hold elections, they agree on one candidate and the name is submitted to the Registrars' Office unopposed. In other schools, however, two to three candidates run for election and this means they campaign until the date when elections are held.
- d. All eligible academic members of the school vote by secret ballot in the presence of a returning officer from the Academic Registrar's office; and a representative for each running candidate.
- e. Tallying is conducted in the presence of the electorate and the results announced.
- f. The results are submitted to the Academic Registrar's office by the returning officer.
- g. The Academic Registrar communicates the results to the Appointments Board of the university and the successful candidate is appointed for a period of four years.
- h. The Appointments Board communicates to the college, the school and individual candidate when to take over office.

However, once selected the deans do not go through orientation or induction processes to enable them have fuller understanding of their roles and responsibilities; they simply carry on through trial and error. Because of this, deans are often confronted with issues that tax their effectiveness as academic and administrative leaders within the university governance system. These issues include lack of management training in academic and administrative leadership that may constrain their productivity as academic staff, innovations and institutional development; the method of getting into office may affect and compromise their legitimacy; and some university authorities may resort to appointing deans outside of any legal framework which may not be based on merit. Besides the deans may be caught in the crossfire to protect academic interests of the faculty/school and, at the same time, undertake certain administrative duties on behalf of management which are not directly relevant to the faculty/school. Above all, the academic life of a university takes place within the schools and departments, whereas the deans may not have much to say in matters of budgeting and financial allocations. The tendency in most universities is to devolve most administrative issues to schools while leaving the frustrating matters of financial allocations to the deans (Mama and Barnes 2002).

In African universities, emerging governance models are marked by the growing influence of the business enterprise model as an organizational ideal, a characteristic that most institutions are now requiring of their deans; thus, apart from their role as academics, deans, together with heads of departments, oversee critical units on which the academic life of the institution revolves. In fact, they are the academic engines of the institutions, linking schools and faculty members to university councils and senates, and to the outside oversight bodies. The bodies that deans preside over – the professoriate, faculty, and departmental boards – constitute a critical academic heartland that determines the academic life and direction of the institutions. This is in addition to a variety of constituents, including the faculty, the university management, students, government and the alumni. To be effective, therefore, they must understand and juggle through often disparate interests and conflicting goals in order to serve effectively.

The multiplicity of roles they have to play may impact on the female and male deans differently in terms of their capacity and ability to offer the core functions of teaching and learning, and research missions of their institutions. This, of course, will be in addition to their career growth, administration of the faculty/school and institutional development, among other things. Do male and female deans have similar experiences and challenges in these universities? Universities have been and continue to be male colonies; hence these institutions are masculine and very averse to the academic growth of female

faculty members. One of the questions arising out of this is how do female deans survive in the male dominated structures? Has enough been done to decolonize and de-masculinise the structures, expectations, and horizons of our universities to allow effective leadership? These and many other questions were investigated.

The study interrogates a whole range of issues:

- a. The gender dynamics of leadership and management in the academic careers of deans in the Humanities and Social Sciences;
- b. How male and female deans integrate academic, leadership roles and responsibilities into personal academic career growth with institutional development;
- c. Possible gender differences in the support Makerere University extends to the deans to achieve their roles and responsibilities as administrators and academic leaders;
- d. The challenges faced by male and female deans in their academic leadership roles and responsibilities; (v) How the deanship could be made more productive in administration and career advancement.

The research is situated within the discourse of gender and equity in education. Gender is defined within the confines of society and what society ascribes to an individual insofar as positions of responsibility and sex are concerned. Gender relations or social relations of gender have several interrelated types of referent: most obviously, there are the relations between men and women; of women with women, and of men with men (Young 2001.) Whether and how women relate to each other as mothers, sisters, friends, co-wives, competitors, confidantes in solidarity or otherwise are not simply an individual action but constitutes part of the gender relations. Similarly, whether and how men relate to each other as fathers, patrons, sons, brothers, rivals is partly defined by gender discourses of masculinity.

Gender relations also include the relations of categories of women, to social phenomena whether the state, education systems, economic relations, and political systems or the division of labour, or other; and the different relations of groups of men to those same phenomena. Like other forms of relations, gender relations are structured by ideologies and beliefs, practices, property, and resource access and ownership, legal codes and so on. Gender ideologies about femininity (lack of) capacity and (preferably none) autonomy may, for example, be embedded in the construction of who becomes dean or not (Ayesha et al. 1997). Equity in this context is taken to mean equal benefit in access to institutional resources and opportunities. Gender equity is ingrained in the structural, social and political factors that constrain and perpetuate inequalities.

Within African higher education are embedded legacies and circumstances that have shaped formal institutions, ranging from primary schools through to university colleges and technical institutions.

Furthermore, in every context, the impact of gender is negotiated through multiple variables, each one being responsive to particular global, national and local forces influencing basic questions of resources in one locale or the other. While questions of male and female ratios tend to dominate broad-based research on gender and African higher education (driven often by advocacy and policy interests), context-specific studies illuminate the gender gaps in analysing institutional contexts and systems. This study provides options for university management on how best university governance and structures should enable the deans to discharge their academic mandates in the most efficient and effective way without compromising deanship or/and academic growth of both sexes for institutional development.

Methodology

The study targeted the current and former deans, particularly those who had served a complete term and were on the second term,¹ and those who had already served two terms of deanship and were now either principals or deputy principals. The study focused on the social sciences and humanities as well as related disciplines, including deans from the Colleges of Education and External Studies (CEES), College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), the College of Business and Management Sciences (COBAMS) and The School of Law. An effort was made to contact all the deans from these colleges; however we only succeeded in reaching eight out of thirteen. Of these, three were females and ten were males. Three of the former deans were serving as Principal and Deputy Principal after they had served for eight years as deans.

The study was mostly qualitative given the small number of targeted respondents. The qualitative method/approach was also based on the need for a more in-depth understanding of the context and the gender dynamics of deanship in Makerere University. Primary data were generated using a questionnaire and an interview guide to conduct face-to-face interviews. Face-to-face interviews were deemed important to understand the complexity of deanship; and to capture and present deans' experiences. Experiences were later grouped under the following themes: motivation to leadership positions, balancing roles, institutional support, and challenges. Secondary data were generated from the University Annual Reports and Fact Books and other relevant documents on leadership and management at Makerere University to support the primary findings. Data generated was basically aimed at compiling information on personal experiences of deans in the humanities and social sciences.

Results

The former and current deans were aged between 45-65 years of age. Thirteen deans out of whom three were female responded to the questionnaire. All deans had been heads of departments before ascending to deanship. The position of head of department was elective like the position of dean of school. All deans had a PhD as the minimum academic qualifications in line with the requirement for becoming a faculty member at the University. Guidelines for becoming dean are clear and are made public before the commencement of the electoral process.

Composition of Deans in Humanities and Social Sciences

Makerere University formerly run a faculty system of governance until it went collegiate in 2010. The restructuring was intended to promote effective management of the University and efficiency in financial matters. In addition, the University has been promoting gender mainstreaming consciously since 1998 and has consequently institutionalized. The Gender Mainstreaming Directorate is an administrative unit aimed at institutionalizing gender in administrative functions of the University. The School of Women and Gender Studies is the lead agency and academic unit for gender mainstreaming. However, the restructuring did not improve the number of females in deanship, as shown in Table 1. Increasing the numbers of females in leadership is important because they have a right to participate in administration and management of the university as well as making sure that the voices of women are heard and their concerns addressed.

Table 1 shows that the status of females in leadership has not changed much before and after restructuring. Not even the restructuring could attract more female leaders into deanship. Out of the sixteen schools created after restructuring, only four are headed by female deans compared to three female deans/directors out of 12 faculties/institutes before restructuring. This represents an increase from 16 per cent to 26 per cent in female representation before and after restructuring. This composition is not different from that of 2008 when women in leadership formed less than 25 per cent of the leadership in faculties (Makerere University Annual Report 2009). One of the challenges that women faced then was actually getting into positions of leadership. This was attributed to a number of factors, including personal characteristics and motivation into the academic career and deanship; perceptions and expectations of deanship; and institutional factors. However, the number of women eligible for deanship in the entire university is small. Table 2 presents males and females in various positions. As already stated becoming a dean requires an individual to be at the level of senior lecturer and above.

Table 1: Composition of Deans and Directors Prior and Post-Restructuring of Makerere University

Before Restructuring			After Restructuring		
Faculty	F	M	School	F	M
Faculty of Social Sciences	x	x	Liberal and Performing Arts		x
Faculty of Arts		x	Social Sciences		x
Faculty of Economics & Business Management		x	Languages, Literature and Communication		x
School of Education		x	Women and Gender Studies.		x
Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics	x		Statistics and Applied Economics		x
School of Law		x	Law		x
Institute of Psychology		x	Psychology		x
Institute of Adult and Continuing Education	x		Education		x
Makerere Institute of Social Research		x	Makerere Institute of Social Research		x
East Africa Institute for Higher Education Studies and Development		x	East Africa Institute for Higher Education Studies and Development		x
Computing and Information Technology	x		Computing and Informatics Technology		x
East African School of Library and Information Science		x	East African Library and Information Sciences		x
			Distance and Lifelong Learning		x
			Economics		x
			Business		x

Table 2: Teaching Staff by Faculty March 2010 (Before College Formation)

Faculty	Professor		Associate Professor		Senior Lecturer		Lecturer		Assistant Lecturer	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Arts	1	3	3	11	6	11	4	43	20	34
EASLIS – Library & Information Service	0	3	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2
Computing & Information Technology	0	0	0	1	1	4	0	3	15	22
Economics and Management	0	1	0	0	1	3	2	8	9	32
Institute of Statistics & Applied Economics	0	1	0	1	0	4	2	8	6	10
Institute of Adult & Continuing Education	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	3	6	9
Institute of Psychology	0	1	0	1	2	2	2	4	4	6
Law	0	3	1	3	1	3	3	5	5	11
School of Education	0	1	1	0	1	8	11	25	25	8
Social Sciences	1	2	1	6	7	14	9	17	17	16
Total	2	15	6	23	20	53	38	118	109	150

Source: Makerere University Fact Book 2009/2010 2nd Edition

Females form approximately 24 per cent of eligible members of staff in terms of the minimum position (that of a senior lecturer) which qualifies them to stand for election. However there are other qualifications that are considered, such as whether the individual has held a headship position before. It is very rare for an individual who has never headed a department before to be elected into deanship. In addition, an individual should be 55 years or below to qualify for election. After restructuring, only 26 per cent of the females are eligible to stand for elections, just an increase by 2 per cent, as shown in Table 3.

Deans were asked what they considered the attributes of a good dean. Both male and female deans observed that a good dean regardless of sex should be:

....Accommodative, considerate, a team player, visionary, a good listener, patient, have good interpersonal relations, have commitment to serve above self, promote transparency, be hard working, and observe university rules and regulations. A good dean is an individual who understands the demands and expectations of the office and develops strategies to fulfil them.

In other words, a good dean should promote a good working environment for all staff as well as promote and work for the growth and development of the institution. It was noted that these were attributes that did not rhyme with an elective post where the electorate may expect preferential treatment in addition to performance and academic excellence. As one of the male deans explicitly put it, the qualities that supported him to become a dean included:

...good interpersonal relations, good academic record and performance; [being] widely published, good communication skills; personal confidence; high self-esteem, determination, [being] a strategic thinker with an innovative mind, self-motivation. [These are attributes some of which female deans are lacking].

However, other deans who had been in administration for a long time (10 years) observed that these qualities represented a narrow definition because deanship tends to be mechanistic but, of course, once in the office, the deans soon find out that experience, personal academic growth in leadership, ability to enforce disciplines under the unit become crucial. Deans find themselves as resource mobilisers; local and international official spokespersons for their respective units; they also find themselves to be humane, empathetic and practical in solving social and economic problems of their constituencies, including serving as *loco parentis* over the students. It was further highlighted

that these activities constrain the deans' academic roles, as well as their focus on developing innovative academic programmes. The elective mode of accession to deanship is likely to bring forth deans with popular tendencies rather than ability. The constituency tends to vote into office people who will understand them and appreciate their social, economic and other inabilities. This is likely to compromise institutional development.

Besides, deans must have a good carriage, command visibility and respect as well as demonstrate integrity² and be able to acquit themselves in any academic encounter. Deans are role models for staff and students. Asked whether women are good leaders, male deans noted that, like men, women can be good or bad depending on the environment, contingency and individual personality; but that they are probably more careful than male deans. They said further that female deans are likely to be less radial and more emotional, although one male dean was apt to observe that: 'Women need more training and empowerment and to be given a chance to serve other than just putting them in leadership positions.'

A female dean confided that '...sometimes they do not take us seriously' As if to confirm the earlier statement by the male dean. This again points to underrating of candidates, pointing to the masculine and patriarchal tendencies of male leaders.

Motivation into Academic Career and Deanship

We made an assumption that self-motivation into the academic career and deanship was essential for female and male deans to deal with the challenges they faced. Female deans reported that prior to becoming deans; they had focused on individual and institutional growth, getting heavily involved in the university's management and working committees and the schools' committees and activities. The male counterparts reported that they were curious and committed to serving. A male principal and previously dean said experience and performance made him to vie for deanship:

I had been [a] part-time lecturer before I decided to be re-designated to faculty staff; I had obtained an upper second degree at undergraduate training and had interest in becoming [a full-time] faculty staff.

Yet another respondent indicated that, as a student leader at undergraduate level, he had worked as administrator, taking several leadership assignments. He said these responsibilities made him acquire leadership skills, enticed him to becoming passionate about teamwork and cultivated a commitment to leadership.

Table 3: Academic Staff by College by Rank 2012/13 (after College Formation)

Colleges/School	Professor		Associate Professor		Senior Lecturer		Lecturer		Assistant Lecturer	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Computing & Information Science	0	3	0	2	2	5	2	4	23	24
Humanities & Social Sciences	2	9	7	17	12	22	12	43	29	53
Business & Management Sciences	0	1	0	1	3	7	4	15	17	37
Education & External Studies	0	2	3	4	3	10	11	22	18	31
School of Law*	0	4	1	4	1	1	1	8	12	12
Total	2	19	11	28	21	45	30	92	99	157

*The School of Law has not yet gone through structural transformation, but is in the process of becoming a college.

Source: Makerere University Fact Book 2012/2013

At least 10 male deans had gained prior access to public offices that exposed them to leadership; they were able to articulate intellectual and social issues; and had prior access to opportunities for attending conferences, receiving fellowships and grants. These acted as training grounds for them to take on higher administrative offices. All deans affirmed that keen interest for the job and commitment to serve the institution, ability in terms of leadership skills and experience, encouragement and support from colleagues and assertiveness motivated them into becoming deans. In addition, they mentioned that awareness of the institutional environment and its needs were critical issues that required attention at the schools. Whereas some deans felt that they had skills to perform as deans, other deans were motivated by curiosity to see what leadership at the deanship level would be like and how they would manage others. The female deans reported that they had a passion to serve; they considered themselves open and transparent, wanted to follow their dream and actually searched for opportunities that would take them to the place of their desire.

Several deans claimed that the way to the deanship opened to them in a number of ways: for some it was through promotions and re-designations from administrative to faculty staff that made them possible candidates. For others it was through training and having the right qualification. As one dean put it: 'I happen to have a PhD in Management, which is leadership added value'. At least two male deans had their opportunity to become dean brightened by receiving training that was related to the deanship functions, including supervision of graduate training programmes, networking and communication. Comparing their performance with those who did not have benefit of previous training or management experience is outside the scope of this study. It was observed, nevertheless, that female deans, unlike their male counterparts, network less between their female and male peers, even though networking was cited as one of the key attributes that could propel one into deanship.

Balancing Roles, Academic Growth, and Institutional Development

Time allocation and use is a critical factor in effective leadership and personal academic growth. Time allocated to leadership and management roles negatively affects the research productivity of the faculty. Both female and male deans said it was difficult to integrate personal academic growth in leadership and management as well as institutional development. Deanship took most valuable time that would be used to carry out research, attend conferences, and write and publish papers for personal academic growth. This was further aggravated by the sex of the dean, the male deans noted. The female reproductive roles, such as caring for the nuclear and extended family; attending to domestic chores and children if they still needed close attention; guiding the

growing adults in the home, tending the sick and playing some community roles. All these roles compete for the dean's available time. Women, therefore, need to prioritize and apportion time, by planning their time and adhering to the schedules.

All serving and former deans noted that deans' time is difficult to plan because of the various assignments they have to attend to. An experienced former dean put it this way:

An ordinary day for a dean requires that the dean attends to the students and parents or guardians, faculty, university administration, alumni and stakeholders, including people from government, non-government organizations, private sector and people from the general public who may have a concern. The dean is required to attend management meetings within the colleges and represent the colleges on University management meetings and coordinate between both the college and the main University administration. The dean is also a link between the stakeholders of respective schools, including the faculty, administrative staff and students. The dean sources for faculty; is responsible for the general supervision and administration of the affairs of the faculty, institute, college or other academic body and as such is responsible for the promotion and maintenance of efficient teaching and research in the relevant unit as well as institutional development at that level.

As in other universities, research is rated highly in academic advancement and recognized as the main avenue for personal academic advancement. However, the more time spent on leadership and management roles, the less time is available for research; and this can affect or delay personal academic growth. All deans interviewed found integrating institutional development and family roles into deanship very cumbersome. In other words, the opportunity cost of deanship to personal academic growth is very high and, in most cases, inversely related to institutional development.

Three deans intimated that a supportive family, especially the spouse, is very crucial for the success of the dean. This requires understanding, working closely and having ongoing discussions about the job requirements, demands, and time commitment. These have been found to be crucial ingredients in a successful deanship. As a male former dean put it, a dean must:

...strive to provide for them; meet their demands; dedicate Sunday for the family or some other time for the family and be available whenever you have the time.

Another dean said: ...instead of spending a lot of time in the office, I made an office at my home.

Yet another one had to forgo his family in order to satisfy the job demand as he had to work from 7.00am to 7.00pm. These are but a few of the circumstances that few female deans would like to endure to succeed as deans given all the family responsibilities they shoulder. It was further observed that institutions see the dean as an individual and not as a social being with a spouse. This plays up often when the dean is invited for functions, usually it is one person -- the dean alone -- that is invited; yet for the deans to succeed in office everyone close to them, beginning from the spouses, would have to pay a price. Deans' spouses play a big role in the success of any deanship.

To aid institutional development, a male dean observed need for a dean to secure donor/development partners' support, introduce innovative and relevant programmes and review old ones as well as support colleagues in their quest for further studies and academic growth. These expectations from the dean normally weigh heavily on their well-being. A female dean affirmed:

...institutional development requires one to devote extra time and effort to the institution; support from colleagues is very crucial; and so too is the need for patience to study the academic faculty, identify areas of specialties among the staff and try to weave them into productive working teams.

Challenge of Satisfying a Variety of Constituencies

Serving multiple constituencies all with different demands and expectations puts pressure on deanship. Three of the male deans satisfied these constituencies by giving mandatory services to students: they allow for full time accessibility, listen to their problems and try to respond to their problems where possible. They also provide counselling services to students, encourage them to communicate through circulars on particular issues of concern, and keep them aware of possible challenges that may crop up in a public university.

One must be seen to be fair and just as well as firm. One male dean noted:

...some challenges arise out of the limited knowledge of the constituency; for example, to the students, the dean is a role model, a counsellor, who should be able to address academic, social challenges ... and/or even financial challenges. Deans are sometimes adjudicators between parents and their children, especially as higher education is becoming a private good where parents are expected to pay. Misappropriation of

tuition by the student may require the intervention of the dean. This requires a person who knows how social and economic system[s] work to protect his constituents. Of course, it requires time and experience to deal with such students.

At least two male deans observed the need for deans to work closely with colleagues in the school, consult with college principals, and be open to parents and students. Furthermore, they canvass the need to establish working teams, delegate and involve colleagues in tasks, have an established school strategic plan to support the deanship, remain focused, and have regular evaluation of their activities and performance. All deans said that skills development in deanship was crucial, as highlighted in one of the female's words:

Besides, extra skills are needed for effective leadership and to become better deans, including skills such as financial administrative orientation; knowledge transfer processes; negotiation skills and conflict management; these are essential in deanship and grantship writing. Finally deans require an induction, a formal orientation for at least one month in administration before they assume offices of deans. Short leadership courses for existing deans would suffice especially for deans that come through the electoral process.

Institutional Support and deanship

In terms of leadership, deanship is supported by the university structures and a wide array of policies and guidelines that are in place. The dean has an office where all the functions of deans are executed with the support of his staff.³ However, deanship is technocratic with set rules and regulations.

An elected dean in particular has to weigh between efficiency and loss of confidence from the electorate. One of the male deans admitted:

...restructuring has broken down the barriers and created space for deans to have an opportunity of bringing in innovations. Deans are presiding over fairly new faculty who are ... more liberal both in ideology and university structures. This allows deans to be more innovative and creative. There are more linkages between the institutions and national engagements than previously; therefore deans become more relevant to national and institutional development and discipline growth.

Under the collegiate system of governance, the principal is the overall head of the college, assisted by a deputy. A college is composed of schools which are

headed by deans. Under the deans are heads of departments (known as chairs) who head the academic programmes. Below the heads of departments, are the lecturers. Information flows back and forth this structure in support of a deanship. Information flows through the deans to the deputy principal. This structure is crucial for the dean's effective leadership and for individual growth.

Most of the projects and collaborations with the school go through the deans' offices. This provides an opportunity for the dean to lead the project implementation teams. Some of these projects are research based and, therefore, provide opportunities for the dean to publish. Besides, funding opportunities become available through the deanship which the dean can take advantage of. Organizations may seek faculty support in projects, policy development, analysis, and evaluation. This provides opportunities for deans in personal academic growth among other things.

Interestingly, financial support may be extended to deans of schools who generate a lot of private funds through institutional development programmes, private projects from government ministries and non-government organizations, and not through the University budget. Only one female dean reported that the college supported their travel and training needs. There are institutional development funds that the dean can take advantage of, especially for research and travel to present papers at conferences. The above, notwithstanding, the deanship robs deans of their valuable time that could otherwise be fruitfully used for academic development.

All deans agreed that regulations are in place that allow for them to go on annual leave for a total of 30 working days, just like any other member of staff. Deans can also organize and go on sabbatical leave. This provides opportunities for academic and career advancement through interaction and exposure to other experienced scholars. All these provide avenues to publish. Besides, it provides room for networking and sharing ideas on academic and personal development issues.

However, there were no privileges that the University extended to deanship for academic advancement as a result of the incumbent's gender. Deans point out that to make the deanship more productive, serious thought has to be given to re-defining the characteristics of deans and identifying the person who should measure to the standard. A respondent argued that candidates should ascend to deanship after they have gone through academic growth.

All deans observed that integrating all the functions is extremely difficult and recommend that the university should grant the deans resources, including grants, fellowships and subventions to finance career development. In terms of leadership, it was agreed to shorten the term of office. The Makerere University's term limit is currently four years. Five deans mentioned that the

institution should create a deanship fund to support deans to do institutional work or elect people who already have the funds. As deans put it:

...the university facilitates the deans financially to perform the work they do as deans. There is need for access to support services, including those provided to the Deputy Vice-Chancellors; and provide regular and reasonably paid activities, and provide paid assistants and or coordinators. ...there is need for commitment from university management to enable deans implement their respective strategic plans; to provide them with refresher training and monitoring and evaluation services.

In order to serve the community effectively, respondents observed that the University should create an enabling environment for service or outreach to take place. They further said that public dialogue and community-based studies should be pursued with increasing productivity of outreach services.

The female deans proposed the need to create a forum for deans to meet and share their concerns. Currently, deans only meet in Senate where they only discuss academic matters, including students' academic and welfare issues; academic staff issues and management of academic programmes, and so on.

Besides institutional support, support for the dean from the faculty is vital, as this would necessitate collegial working relations between the dean and the faculty. A female dean and three male deans argued that there is a need for faculty staff to perform their roles with minimal supervision, as well as participate in and ably represent the dean on university committees and functions where possible to allow the dean to spend the time to carry on with their academic growth. They all observe that this would be possible if the faculty staff is well tuned on self-motivation. Male deans observed that their colleagues support the deanship by taking the lead to develop proposals, participate in the school's activities and accept more assignments from the dean.

Furthermore, the deans emphasized the need to exercise some level of self-initiative and innovative ways of doing the business of deanship, including initiating projects in the schools; and attracting funding from NGOs and donors to support research and academic activities in order to enhance academic advancement. They also canvass engaging research assistants' services and organize regular seminars to promote academic growth in the school.

Finally, whereas the male deans noted that they faced no particular challenges as male deans (one actually said, 'My manhood has not created any problem for me'). They noted, however, that Makerere University structures and institutional culture are covertly gendered on the assumption that there are no qualifying females for deanship. They argue, therefore, that providing

more opportunities for women to excel would break the structures. The establishment of a fully-fledged School of Women and Gender Studies and a Gender Mainstreaming Directorate is a positive step by the university. The male deans observed that the Gender Mainstreaming Directorate should drive itself and be more visible among the academic units to ensure more females get leadership positions.

The female academics said mentorship sessions, gender mainstreaming of functions and policies and gender training would help improve on the gendered nature of structures in the university. They noted that some of these steps had been taken by the university although they were yet to be implemented fully to bear fruit.

Discussion of results

Gender issues in deanship, academic growth and institutional development

It was observed that deanship at Makerere University is dominated by males as the University structures are still gendered. The collegiate system of governance brought with it four colleges under social sciences and humanities, namely, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (five schools), School of Law in transition, the College of Education and External Studies (two schools), College of Business and Management Sciences (three schools) and the College of Computing and Information Science (two schools).

Out of 15 schools of social sciences and humanities, only three had female deans, this is surprising since women the world over are concentrated in the social sciences and humanities and more so at Makerere University, one of the first to mainstream gender into the education structures. Ayesha et al (1997) qualify the limited number of women in leadership positions by pointing out that women tended to be concentrated in the middle and lower ranks of the academic ladders, most of them at ranks of lecturer. Indeed this is displayed in Table 2 (before restructuring) and Table 3 (after restructuring) where 129 male and 147 female academic staff, respectively, occupy the positions of lecturer and assistant lecturer. The transformation processes can increase the number of females in positions of leadership only if there is a pool of eligible and interested candidates. It is a fact that in a number of colleges the eligible female candidates for deanship were not there to begin with. To become a dean, the minimum requirements are that the individual must hold, at the very least, the position of senior lecturer and fall below the age of 55 years.

Ayesha et al (1997) explain that women are grossly under represented on strategic decision making committees, such as the research board that awards

funds for research on the basis of applications forwarded from the faculties; on the academic staff, promotions committee on which deans of faculty are the representatives; and the academic appointments boards which are constituted by the chairpersons of departments. They further observe that apart from under-representation of women, even with respect to their proportion of academic staff, there is evidence of the under-qualification of women in comparison to their male colleagues in terms of completing their doctoral studies. In the current study, there are only 64 female doctoral degree holders occupying four ranks of professor, associate professor, senior lecturer and lecturer, compared to 99 females with a master's degree at a rank of assistant lecturer. If these 99 female holders of Masters of Arts degrees are supported in their doctoral studies, it would boost the number of females eligible for leadership positions in the university. The female deans further explain that the female faculty face a number of barriers, including under-rating by their largely male colleagues and at times by fellow female staff.

Rudo Galdzanwa corroborated this in Ayesha et al (1997) by pointing out that this arises out of the colonial past education policies. The barriers to females getting into positions of deanship are also institutional, historical and social-cultural, such as limited access to education for the girl child, negative perception of women and their entering into the masculine and patriarchal spaces, and the negative perceptions of women leaders. Rudo Galdzanwa (1997) further said that women education was geared towards improving their performance as housewives and to tie them to agriculture in rural areas. These factors account for the absence of eligible and competent female representation in academic spaces, including leadership positions. Bunting (1994), Lumumba (1993) Rodu Galdzanwa (1997), and Chivaura (2000), on the other hand, attribute poor ratio of women to men academics and gender gaps to a range of factors such as colonial legacies in education at all levels of society, national forces that lead to democracy, structural adjustment programmes on government budgets and the unpredictable dynamics of gender itself among others. These factors coerce women and girls back into conservative domestication and appear to be less welcome in male dominated spaces and, particularly, in institutions of higher learning as in this case.

These factors further provide an explanation for the case of Makerere University where male deans planned to enter leadership positions early. The headship of departments has been one of the training avenues for acquiring the necessary skills for deanship. Furthermore, the male deans have more experience than their female counterparts and, therefore, are more informed of the requirements, rights, obligations and expectations of deanship. The male deans also understand the university structures and how to use informal

networks, policies and regulations to advantage. They know who, how and when to approach relevant individuals within the universities structures for support. In short, the male deans know that successful deanship is influenced by the dynamics and interactions of people and institutions. They use this knowledge to network with colleagues and play politics within the academic space. As such, they are able to make their ideas known and accepted by their colleagues and they manage to convince their constituencies of their capabilities to lead their units to success. In so doing, these male deans are successful in making themselves visible and their work recognized and appreciated, thus wielding more power in leadership. The male deans also know that self-initiative is essential for upward movement to deanship, as opposed to the female faculty's disinterest in taking up deanship or leadership positions in the university, which has been mentioned as one of the strong barriers to women's upward movement in the academic space. It was further reported that it is easier for male deans to talk to their families and inform them of the challenges of leadership, and their families, especially the spouse would listen, and they would be given the required support; this is quite unlikely for the female deans. The female deans, just like their fellow female instructors, have to fulfil all family responsibilities without any interference from the university leadership duties and obligations. Male deans reported no specific male-related challenges to deanship apart from the general challenges of administration. On the contrary, feminists have repeatedly pointed out how the triple roles of women and the non-supportive environment disadvantage them and retard their academic growth and their entry into leadership positions.

It has been said that the female deans are not strategic even when they are in deanship positions; they are often relegated into submission and providing university management with information whenever required to do so. They rarely use their leadership position to access other powerful positions, a response that the male deans interpret to mean being less active or even not being qualified for the leadership position women hold. This is corroborated by the male deans who insisted that female deans should be trained: '... women needed training and empowerment to be given chance not to just position them for mockery.' Yet the female deans on their part noted: '... Women can make good leaders, but in a male dominated world, women must work harder, be patient, be ready to face harsh criticism, and be tolerant.'

This mindset and approach feminizes even the schools under the leadership of female deans, a situation that is not appealing to the constituencies of these female deans. Thus, according to male deans, constituencies prefer male to female deans, as Mama (2003) and ACU (2000) have argued; that at no time have women been formally excluded from Africa's post-independence uni-

versities but rather the historical, socio-cultural and attitudinal factors play an upper hand in their upward mobility. They note that despite the apparent equity in access and affirmative action, universities have remained highly male dominated spaces both numerically and culturally; and that gender inequalities in Africa's public universities make a mockery of all the proud nations' political and policy commitments to gender equality and justice because as the leading institutions of higher learning, they are rightly expected to lead and not lag in the realization of people's aspirations for full democracy and for social justice.

Research is an important aspect of career growth in institutions of higher learning as it determines promotion at every level in the academic advancement. The female faculty further emphasize the issue of family roles as being one of the major barriers to integrating academic growth and deanship. Even with an understanding spouse, the duty of family care, household chores, extended families are a responsibility of the woman irrespective of her status in society. As one counsellor put it:

...women's particular role in society which entrusts them with the care of children and elders in the family makes them scared to take risks. ...she thinks about the future of her children, or the family...a man thinks of his stomach eventually...where a man will quickly jump on the adventure irrespective of doubts and mystery, a woman will first try to think through it. (*New Vision* Tuesday 12th February 2013).

Women tend to be able to combine intuition and logical thinking. They are aware of the implications of others and their actions and they think more carefully about the resources needed to accomplish a given goal. This is an extra burden that may contribute to less motivation for females to compete and venture into more responsibility and stress-inviting positions, something that is outside the ambit of the institution. The male gender is aware of this apparent weakness and exploits it through overt and covert disapproval of women taking responsible positions, something that the institutions may not influence.

Becker (1964) in human capital theory argues that efficient specialization can often lead to extreme arguments of biological determinism, with some arguing that higher levels of testosterone makes men more willing to engage in competition than women. This is contrary to the declarations and resolutions of the African higher education establishments such as Tannanarive (UNESCO, 1963), AAU, (2005), the Kampala Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Intellectuals (CODESRIA 1991 and Kabonesa, unpublished) and a great many grand university mission statements that indicate that it is not about competition but the persistent institutional inequalities which

reflect a lack of commitment to gender issues and taking them seriously in the intellectual sphere. The university is affected by external political and social environment which Dzodzi Tsikata (2002) argued that it is interpreted and translated into the lives of individual women academics and gender differences to the detriment of their career attainment. Women who take up employment are faced with demanding academic careers, gender unfriendly institutional environment and equally demanding reproductive roles. There is need for a deliberate effort to integrate the influence of the gender roles in assessing the ability and capacity of female gender in institutional processes and strategies and strike a balance. Rudo Galdzanwa (2002) has argued that the demands of academic culture under excruciating economic and social circumstances have shown that one of the ways women have sought to improve the quality of academic life has been through challenging social harassment, now recognized to be a widespread occurrence within higher education institutions. This suggests that the only way to compel institutions to take gender equity seriously is to make gender one of the performance indicators of institutional ranking.

Conclusion and recommendations

The study has investigated leadership, management and career advancement for female and male deans in social sciences and humanities at Makerere University. The objective was to investigate the gender dynamics of leadership and management in the academic careers of deans in the humanities and social sciences and its effect on institutional development. It focused on the challenges male and female deans face in their academic leadership roles and responsibilities; how they integrate academic, leadership roles and responsibilities into personal academic career growth with institutional development; the gender differences in the support Makerere University extends to the deans to help them achieve their roles and responsibilities as administrators as well as support for academic career growth; and how the deanship could be made more productive in administration and career advancement. The study was qualitative and quantitative in design, combining both primary and secondary data generated using a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews. Options are provided to the university management on how best university governance and structures should enable the deans to discharge their academic mandate in the most efficient and effective way without compromising deanship and/or the academic growth of both genders.

Overall, the study finds that women as well as men face similar general challenges in deanship with varying degrees. However, women have gender-specific challenges related to their other roles as mothers, wives, care givers and home managers. Factors that motivate males into deanship are related to

personal growth, power and visibility; while females are motivated by the need for personal growth and a strong conviction to serve the community. The study suggests that since the challenges that female faculty face outweigh the motivation factors for competing for leadership positions in institutions of higher learning, support should be extended to deans for academic growth. Although some significant effort is in place to mainstream gender in leadership and management among others, Makerere University structures are still gendered in favour of male gender. There are supportive structures in deanship but no deliberate efforts are made to encourage women to vie for deanship. The deans know what it takes to advance academically although the environment does not seem to have changed much to create a level playing ground for females to compete for leadership positions, something that may negatively impact on institutional development and gender equity in particular. Makerere University needs to rethink its leadership and management strategy to integrate gender fully with a view to becoming more inclusive.

Notes

1. A term is a period of four years, and deans normally serve two terms (eight years) only.
2. These qualities were however mentioned to come with age, expressions, dress code, body build and experience. Some of these qualities are missing in potential female candidates.
3. Personnel is recruited, remunerated and fired when there is need on the deans' behalf.

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