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Myth and Ceremony: Contested Marketization and Internationalization Regimes in Kenya's Higher Education

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Abstract

The internationalization of higher education, which means integrating an international dimension into the functions and delivery of higher education, is increasingly a matter of immense policy significance for many governments and universities worldwide as higher education becomes a key instrument for international development cooperation and international trade. The past two decades have witnessed tremendous transformations in policy and structure across the sub-Saharan Africa higher education landscape. The defining features of the transformation include: the diversification of sources of funding, privatization and liberalization of the university sector, and severe reductions on government funding of universities across the region. In the Kenyan context, the discourses of global competitiveness, internationalization and pursuit of world-class quality assurance standards have featured prominently in a wide variety of the major recent policy documents. This paper set out to examine the phenomenon of marketization in higher education and explore the complex political economy of educational commodities. It reviews a range of policy discourses and instruments to reconstruct and analyze the growing rhetoric of 'global' competitiveness and the phenomenon of internationalization; examining its dynamic and troubled intersections with marketization and expansion within Kenya's higher education landscape. The paper argues that government policy and university activities strongly emphasize market-oriented logics of expansion and commercialization; but within the context of a highly fragmented and incomplete market landscape. Marketization therefore suitably satisfies the universities' natural instincts for economic survival at a time of severe financial distress and stiffer competition; while internationalization is utilized as myth and ceremony embellished with policy but not action.

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Résumé

Le rôle de plus en plus important de l'enseignement supérieur dans les domaines du développement international, de la coopération et du commerce international a entrainé le fait que l'internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur occupe une place d'une importance considérable dans la politique de nombreux gouvernements et universités à travers le monde. Au cours des deux dernières décennies, on a assisté à des mutations profondes tant politiques que structurelles dans le paysage de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique au sud du Sahara. Cette transformation s'est singulièrement manifestée dans la diversification des sources de financement, la privatisation et la libéralisation du secteur universitaire et la réduction brutale des financements alloués par les Etats aux universités dans la région. Dans le contexte kenyan, parmi les principaux documents de politiques récents, nombreux sont ceux qui font la part belle aux discours sur la compétitivité mondiale, l'internationalisation et le maintien des normes internationales de qualité. Cet article se propose d'étudier le phénomène de marchéisation dans l'enseignement supérieur et d'explorer l'économie politique complexe des produits de l'éducation. Il passe en revue toute une gamme de discours de politiques et d'instruments permettant de reconstruire et d'analyser la rhétorique de plus en plus généralisée sur la compétitivité « mondiale » et le phénomène de l'internationalisation, notamment en examinant sa dynamique dans ses liens controversés avec la marchéisation et son développement dans le paysage de l'enseignement supérieur au Kenya. Cette étude défend le fait que la politique gouvernementale et les activités universitaires insistent fortement sur la logique de marché comme moteur de développement et de commercialisation. Mais cela se passe dans le contexte d'une configuration du marché extrêmement cloisonné et incomplet. Il n'est donc point étonnant que la marchandisation satisfasse tout naturellement l'instinct naturel de survie économique des universités dans un contexte de précarité financière et de compétition plus féroce, alors que l'internationalisation est utilisée comme un *mythe* et *cérémonial* agrémentés non pas d'action mais de politique.

Introduction

> If Kenya's ambition to become a knowledge economy by 2020 is to be realised, it will need to know a great deal more than it currently does about its knowledge infrastructure, its systems for capturing and assimilating new knowledge, and its processes for utilising that knowledge in agriculture, industry and within the public sector (King 2006: 59).

In the period after independence in the 1960s through the 1970s, Kenya had only one university with a total enrolment of just over 500 students (Weidman

1995). This privileged elite enjoyed free university education completely funded by taxpayers. Inspired by the dominant human capital development ideology, the government of Kenya historically embraced the ‘developmental university’ model whereby the university system was firmly regarded as a critical instrument for socio-political and economic transformation of postcolonial African states (Banya & Elu 2001). Within this broad Keynesian paradigm, the government was fundamentally regarded as the absolute financier, controller and provider of higher education. For example, the *Ominde Commission Report 1964* vigorously established the view that Kenya’s university system was of fundamental significance to national development social transformation, and nation building; and recommended that public universities must receive complete public funding to promote development (GOK 1964:24).

This Keynesian approach to funding and planning was consistent with the broader policy and ideological paradigm during the time. In the 1960s, a significant body of empirical and conceptual analyses consistently demonstrated that increased investments in higher education produced significant positive effects on economic productivity and national development (Renshaw 1960; Schultz 1963; Becker 1964; Harris 1964; see also Woodhall 2007). During the same period, the international community and major multilateral donor agencies had also clustered around a broad ideological consensus in support of significantly increasing public investment in providing free higher education (Samoff & Carrol 2003; Banya & Elu 2001). However, beginning in the 1980s, this Keynesian model of free university education in sub-Saharan Africa came under severe pressure from a combination of complex domestic and international conditions.

The higher education policy and organisational landscape across the sub-Saharan African region has been shaped largely by international events, institution and ideologies over the last two decades (Sawyerr 2002). The most significant global ideological force was the emergence and worldwide spread of the dominant neoliberal economic thinking that emphasized increased application of market instruments in public management, privatization, and a radical withdrawal of government funding, especially the funding of higher education (World Bank 1988). The neoliberal ideology was firmly enforced and operationalized across the developing countries by the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Programmes in the 1980s (Ajayi et al 1996; Sawyerr 2002). Therefore, in the 1990s, the Kenyan government came under growing pressure from international donor agencies, to radically and urgently restructure how the higher education sector was funded and managed (World Bank 1988; GOK 1988; 1994; 1998).

On the domestic front, the country was undergoing an unprecedented economic stagnation, declining terms of trade, rising poverty, and rapidly growing population (GOK 1988). The domestic crisis was exacerbated by the phenomenal growth in the demand for higher education. Enrolment levels expanded significantly during the 1980s, and 1990s and have continued to grow rapidly to the present times. In 1980, there were only 5411 students enrolled in Kenyan public universities (Weidman 1995). The number exploded to 26,092 students in 1990 and by 2005 the total enrolment had escalated to 112,000 (Wangenge-Ouma 2008). By the start of the 1990s, the government had gradually but certainly lost the financial capacity to provide free university education. The government sought a loan facility from the World Bank in 1991 to stabilize the deepening financial crisis in universities; a move which forced the introduction of direct tuition fees and sparked unprecedented turmoil and student riots.

One of the consequences of the tightening resource environment described above is that funding for higher education has declined steadily in both relative and absolute terms since 1990; although overall government spending on the education sector in general, and on primary schooling in particular, has continued to increase significantly over the same period (KIPPRA Report 2000). Between 1991 and 2000, Kenya's public spending on education averaged 20 per cent of total public expenditure. This level of public spending was regarded to be high by world standards and also in comparison to other developing countries with similar economic and demographic characteristics (KIPPRA 2000:11). The higher education share of the consolidated education budget dropped from 20 per cent in 1990 to nearly 14 per cent in 1994. This funding level declined further to 13 per cent in the 2005-06 financial year and has continued to decline in recent years (Kenya 2005).

The second and more significant structural outcome of the evolving policy and funding environment is that Kenyan universities have adopted a wide spectrum of entrepreneurial strategies to diversify and optimize their revenue portfolio through market-oriented academic programmes and various commercialization activities (Kiamba 2004). These multiple trajectories of transformation represent the emergence and intensification of marketization of Kenya's higher education landscape and are described by various metaphors such as entrepreneurialism, marketization, commercialization, and privatization (Clark 1998; Wangenge-Ouma 2008:224). A key dimension of marketization is that knowledge is increasingly viewed as a commercial commodity that is suitable for production and distribution through competitive markets (Marginson & der Wende 2007). The emerging complex connections between knowledge and the market economy and the growing focus on the importance of internationalization in higher education, both suggest the need to investigate the nature of higher education as a commodity and its troubled intersections with the market phenomenon. Secondly, the rapid expansion and commercialization associated with marketization in higher education can potentially erode the capabilities of African universities to engage adequately in internationalization and to be integrated into the global circuits of knowledge production and sharing (Obamba & Mwema 2009). This paper, therefore also sets out to examine the multidimensional phenomena of marketization and internationalization in Kenya's higher education; investigating and questioning the troubled intercourse between marketization and internationalization of Kenya's higher education at the national public policy and at the institutional domains.

Marketization in Higher Education: Global Dimensions

> What purport to be our academic priorities are driven, in large part, by what money we believe may be available (Weyant 1987:11).

Higher education institutions and systems are undergoing unprecedented change and confronting the multiple challenges produced by the complex global processes of intense globalisation, advanced information technologies, rapid expansion and reconfiguration of knowledge production, and the emergence of the phenomenon of the global knowledge economy (Clark 1998; Zeleza 2005). This pervasive global transformation has been characterized as representing the emergence of the 'entrepreneurial university' or academic capitalism (Clark 1998). A key element of this transformation has been the trajectory toward more intense application of the 'market' as a critical instrument in the coordination, governance and provision of higher education worldwide (Jongbloed et al. 2004). In Western Europe, North America and Australia, the market phenomenon emerged internally as a result of internal economic and socio-political dynamics and deliberate policy making during the early-1980s (Marginson 1993). In Africa, the market phenomenon descended at about the same time but driven largely by external forces (World Bank 1988; 1994). The global shift towards neoliberal economics and marketization is entrenched by broader macroeconomic measures such as deregulation, decentralization, public spending reduction, New Public Management, privatization and public divestiture.

Supporters of the market assert that it encourages a more effective utilization of scarce resources, enhances efficiency, promotes quality and value for money, increases diversity and responsiveness within higher education, and generally stimulates organizational innovation (Clark 1998). In higher education, market instruments are also supposed to promote private enterprise and competition in the provision of higher education and to significantly reduce the degree of financial dependence of public institutions upon government revenues by encouraging public universities to diversify their revenue portfolios through alternative income generating activities (Dill 1997; Kiamba 2004). Another key dimension of this global shift is the phenomenon of commoditization. Commoditization means that all factors of production, including human labour, knowledge, and skills are stripped out and subordinated to the dominant forces of market exchange and profit maximization (Slater & Tonkiss 2001). Commodification of higher education displaces the creation and dissemination of knowledge from the social sphere to the sphere of economic production (Neave 2002). The importance of knowledge as the essential engine for economic productivity and development has been emphasized by the OECD (OECD 1996); and also more critically by the *World Development Report 1998/99;* which was also appropriately titled 'Knowledge and development'.

A brief examination of the literature indicates that marketization in higher education is a fluid and highly contested phenomenon. Marketization, or market-orientation, can be examined from a wide range of perspectives. In its most basic meaning, marketization denotes the application of market or quasi-market instruments to co-ordinate the production and provision of higher education. Djelic (2006) asserts that 'marketization' in higher education can be more adequately understood through the concepts of 'market ideologies' and 'market oriented reforms'. According to Djelic, 'market ideology reflects the belief that markets are of superior efficiency for the allocation of goods and resources' (Djelic 2006:53). This ideology, which derives its roots from classical liberal political economy, maintains that the market device is better than bureaucracies or government control in the production and distribution of commodities (Slater & Tonkiss 2001). On the other hand, 'market-oriented reforms' describe the 'policies that foster the emergence and development of markets and weakening of alternative institutional arrangements' (Djelic 2006:53). Djelic identifies such public policy reforms as privatization, deregulation, market liberalization; new public management (Djelic 2006).

Several researchers from diverse international contexts have examined marketization in different ways. In Germany, marketization is experienced as 'a decreasing reliance on state power, regulation, funding and steering in higher education'; whereas in Britain, it is conceptualized as privatization accompanied by increased governmental control (Pritchard 2005:452). In the Dutch higher education system, Jongbloed (2003:113) defines marketization as 'policies that are aimed at strengthening student choice and liberalizing markets in order to increase quality and variety of services offered by the providers of higher education' (p.113). Duczmal (2007) also defines marketization as the 'adoption of market practices or market-type mechanisms that increase competition, client orientation, and introduce management practices associated with private enterprise, while at the same time lessening financial dependence on government revenue'. In the Kenyan context, marketization is seen as a process whereby 'universities engage in for-profit activities such as patenting, spin-off companies, arms-length corporations, partnerships with a profit component, and profit sharing with food services and bookstores' (Munene 2008:2). According to Marginson (1997), marketization and privatization overlap because free market ideologies and practices depend on private ownership, private production of goods, and the retention of optimal profits in private hands. Marketization, therefore, denotes the adoption of market practices without necessarily privatizing the ownership of a public organization.

From the foregoing discussions, we can deduce that 'marketization' has multiple dimensions: it entails the degree of institutional autonomy from government control, increased product variety and competition among multiple providers, a wider spectrum of choice for consumers, intensification of income-generating commercial ventures and financial independence, a stronger emphasis on efficient organization and strategic management practices, and an overall belief in the resilience and supremacy of private enterprise over governmental bureaucracy. Marginson (1993) had provided a useful summary of what marketization means in higher education:

> markets in higher education imply a management that is entrepreneurial, students who want to secure the best possible return from their investment in education, and teacher-researchers whose polar objective becomes the maximum possible net income, from the least possible labour time (p.47).

Marketization and Policy Landscapes in Kenya

Marketization and privatization in Kenya and across the sub-Saharan African region emerged and intensified within the context of the production and reproduction of the dominant global ideological paradigms engineered externally by international donor agencies (Samoff & Carrol 2003). Multilateral donor organizations, notably the World Bank and its associated agencies, have been the most powerful and relentless global producers and transmitters of dominant ideological and policy paradigms which have continued to shape higher education in developing countries for decades (Banya & Elu 2001; Samoff & Carrol 2003). The market is the undisputed instrument for operationalizing the neoliberal economic ideology which was embodied in the controversial Structural Adjustment Programmes in developing countries during 1980s (Ajayi et al. 1996; Sawyerr 2002). Therefore, the emergence of market ideology and the associated policy regimes in African higher education cannot be adequately examined without being placed within the broader context of the dominant policy paradigms and shifting ideologies exerted by international donors.

During the period spanning the 1980s and through the new millennium, the World Bank radically shifted its development policy and investment priorities away from higher education in favour of a much greater investment focus on basic schooling (Samoff & Carrol 2003). World Bank economist George Psacharapoulous (1973) published the earliest comparative study of rates of return to education investment and concluded that the social rates of return to primary education was considerably higher in most countries than the social rate of return on higher education; and that the private rates of return on higher education were much higher than its social returns. The influence of this study remained relatively subdued during the 1960s by the other studies which supported greater public investment in university education on the basis of economic and human development (Woodhall 2007). But these radical findings became more dominant within the World Bank during the 1980's when a growing body of econometric and theoretical analysis reversed earlier standpoints and began to emphasize that public financial investment in university education produced higher private benefits and lower social returns (Psacharapoulous 1981; 1994; Psacharapoulous & Woodhall 1985; Psacharapoulous & Patrinos 2004: see Wodhall 2007). These key empirical analyses concluded that university education was no longer a viable priority for public spending and must be offloaded on to consumers. Moreover, both the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on *Education for All* and the 2000 Dakar *World Education Conference* directed heavy global emphasis to the achievement of universal basic education and called upon governments and international donors to put a higher global funding priority on basic education rather than university education (Samoff & Carrol 2003).

The World Bank and other major international donors have published numerous documents focused on higher education systems in developing countries. However, the most substantive ideological and technical background to the World Bank's neoliberal policy approach to sub-Saharan higher education is adequately captured in the body of two particularly influential policy research publications. The first key document is the 1988 policy research report on *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion* (World Bank 1988). Based on a study of some 39 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the paper described in detail the structural failures and ironies of the African higher education experiment. To tackle these fundamental failures, the World Bank demanded that governments should urgently formulate policies targeted at four fundamental issues: improving quality standards; increasing efficiency and reducing costs in funding and resource utilization; strengthening the relevance of academic programmes; and transferring the heavy public burdens of financing higher education to students and their families who are the direct beneficiaries of education (World Bank 1988:77).

The second key policy document emerged in 1994. This paper, entitled *Higher Education in Africa: Lessons of Experience*, contained more radical demands for structural and policy reforms directed at the university sector (World Bank 1994). This watershed policy paper focused on four radical proposals: diversification of higher education institutions, diversification of sources of funding, development of private universities, and a redefinition of the role of the government in higher education (World Bank 1994). These two policy papers have deeply shaped and transformed the management of university education in Africa and its relationship with the wider donor community. For the avoidance of any ambiguities or doubts about the dominant global influence of World Bank ideologies, the 1988 paper affirmed that:

> This study will guide the World Bank lending and technical assistance to sub-Saharan African education over the next several years. It should serve to provide a common ground for other donors as well (World Bank 1988:v).

As a result of these powerful global influences and conditionalities, combined with severe economic vicissitudes and demographic pressures on the domestic front, the 1980s and 2000s marked a turbulent period characterized by particularly intense policy and legislative development activity within Kenya's public sector in general and the education sector in particular. For example, the Universities Act (1985) was passed in Parliament to establish the Commission for Higher Education and to provide a policy framework for the growth and development of private universities in Kenya. In 1988, the Government issued a *Sessional Paper No. 6 of 1988;* which is regarded as the first policy blueprint to contemplate the introduction of cost-sharing mechanisms in the funding of public universities and the government's renewed momentum to expand university education and promote the development of private universities (Kenya 1988:30). The 1990s decade kicked off with the release of the *National Development Plan 1994-1998*. This economic blueprint elaborated the government policy emphasis on market instruments and the radical reduction of government financing of the public services. The plan emphasized that:

> The central thrust of these new policies is to rely on the market forces to mobilize resources for growth and development with the role of the

> government increasingly confined to providing an effective regulatory framework and essential public infrastructure and social services. The government will limit direct participation in many sectors and instead promote private sector activity (See Kiamba 2004:55).

Legislation and policy regimes produced in Kenya during the 1990s and 2000 have not only been directed at entrenching the expansionist approach in the higher education sector; but more fundamentally, these recent policy regimes have also focused on promoting the discourses of privatization, market liberalisation, entrepreneurialism, quality assurance, and strategic corporate governance (GOK 2000; 2005; 2007). These principles and discourses are embedded in several government policy blueprints. For example, the *Policy Framework Paper of 1996* laid great emphasis on the growing pressures to promote privatization, liberalization, market competition, and intensify cost-sharing funding mechanisms (Rodrigues & Wandiga 1997). The same market principles and financial austerity measures were further emphasized in the *Master Plan on Education and Training 1997-2010* (GOK 1998). The document states that:

> Universities will be encouraged to develop non-public sources of their revenues, including income-generating activities (such as returns from research and consultancies with industry and employers, services to the community, agro-based production, manufacturing for the market, including making equipment for use in schools, hiring out university facilities); grants and donations from NGOs and well-wishers; and funding from alumni (p.110).

The major policy documents identified above embrace an expansionist ideology and are clearly focused on promoting financial diversification in universities through the practices of privatization, entrepreneurialism, and marketization of higher education programmes. However, a growing body of recent government policy blueprints have adopted a significantly different focus. These recent policy regimes are heavily characterized by emergent discourses including internationalization, international partnerships; global competitiveness; knowledge economy; internationalization of quality and accreditation; university-industry linkages, and the pre-eminence of science, technology and innovation (GOK 2006). For example, *Kenya Vision 2030* blueprint (GOK 2007) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology *Strategic Plan 2008-2012* (GOK 2008) both represent an unexpected and fundamental shift in government policy. The new dominant policy emphasis is on promoting integrated Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) as the engine for transforming Kenya from a factor-based traditional economy into a more advanced knowledge-based economy; which departs significantly from earlier government preoccupations with marketization, privatization and expansion. The two divergent policy trajectories appear to overlap within the *Kenya Education Sector Support Programme 2005-2010* where the old and the new priorities are integrated together. The KESSP advocates a selective expansion, marketization, funding diversification, and a greater role for private enterprise in higher education; but the same blueprint also embraces the new global aspirations. The KESSP reaffirms that:

> University education will therefore need to be demand-driven, of the highest quality, gender-sensitive, technologically informed, research supported, democratically managed, and globally marketable (Kenya 2005: 256).

To summarize, the Kenyan higher education landscape has grown in size and organizational complexity in the last two decades and is increasingly characterized by marketization, privatization, and entrepreneurialism. Whereas these fundamental system transformations were driven largely by international forces, ideologies, and events; they have been operationalized through a broad range of governmental policy blueprints at the local level. The fundamental question that emerges is whether the emphasis on entrepreneurialism and expansion in most developing countries is consistent with the emerging policy priority on internationalization; or whether marketization represents potential danger to the development of internationalization programmes. In the section below, we review the key sociological and economic characteristics of higher education commodities and the failures that emerge if an attempt is made to provide higher education through competitive markets (Le Grande 1991).

The Character of Markets and Educational Goods

> It is to be recognized that the whole is not a single market, but a network of related markets, one for each seller (Chamberlain 1933).

In the most basic sense, the term 'market' describes a means of organizing the exchange of goods and services in which the medium of transaction is money; as opposed to traditional societies where commodity exchange was based on non-monetary and social connections (Slater & Tonkiss 2001). In the *Wealth of Nations* (1776), Adam Smith established that for an ideal competitive market to exist, at least three fundamental conditions must be satisfied: there must be commodities; there must be willing buyers and sellers; and there must be adequate information to all market actors equally. These tenets define the necessary and sufficient conditions for market operations. However, despite its presumed technical attractiveness and precision, the market can be a highly fluid and contested device when applied in the provision of particular categories of commodities, such as higher education (Le Grande 1991; Marginson 1993). Higher education is now widely seen as a commercial commodity and has become one of the most rapidly expanding growth industries within international trade. The World Bank reports that between 1999 and 2004, the number of students studying abroad had increased by over 60 per cent from 1.64 million to 2.21 million students respectively (Bashir 2007).

Liberal economists promote the market as the most efficient device for organizing economic activity and exchange. However, markets can manifest significant imperfectness, distortions and failures (Le Grande 1991). Chamberlain captured this distortion in the most succinct terms: ‘it is to be recognized that the whole is not a single market, but a network of related markets, one for each seller’ (Chamberlain 1933). Attempts to apply perfect market mechanisms within higher education economics can raise fundamental questions due to a variety of conditions linked both to the complex economic character of educational commodities (Marginson 1993; Marginson & de Wende 2007), and also as a result of the distorting powers and failures of the market itself (Slater & Tonkiss 2001). The theory of market failure postulates that the provision of any commodity through competitive markets will fail to attain allocative efficiency if the market for that commodity manifests one or more of the following three properties: positive externalities and public goods; economies of scale and monopolies; and information imperfections and asymmetries (Le Grande 1991:425). The higher education production function is characterized by most of these conditions; which implies that attempts to provide it through competitive markets can fail.

Information imperfection and asymmetry is a critical condition that intensifies the failure of competitive markets, especially in the case of higher education (Le Grande 1991). Information distortions relate to the complex character of education as a social phenomenon and an economic commodity. The deficits are also linked to the fact that students cannot obtain prior knowledge of higher education commodities until after actual consumption; because higher education also belongs in the category known as ‘experience goods’ (Nelson 1970). According to the definition of ‘experience good’, information about the quality, real costs, and real future values of higher education products is often scarce, unreliable and costly for students to acquire and utilize (Baldwin & James 2000). Even where detailed information might be provided, such as the massive volumes of university encyclopaedias and glossy prospectuses, the majority of students would still be unable to fully utilise the complex information to make informed decisions (Dill 1997; Baldwin & James 2000). Information is power; yet there are significant information distortions and asymmetries between providers and consumers of higher education (Agasisti & Catalano 2006). There are also steep imbalances of information and power between consumers from wealthier backgrounds and those from poorer households and other minority or less privileged social groups (Winston 1999). These structural information deficits are made worse in most African university systems where governments and universities have neglected all pretence at providing any form of information to their customers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that students in Africa know more about universities in Europe or North America but have no clue about what goes on in their own home institutions; nor do they know what courses lead to what careers.

Another related peculiar phenomenon is that unlike other market commodities, public higher education is often traded at zero prices or at highly reduced prices that are well below the real market value (Winston 1999). This price distortion is due to substantial government subsidies and tax incentives in the case of public higher education. In general, the pricing problem is also attributed to the fact that there is inadequate information to enable education providers or consumers to assess and determine the real costs and the optimal pricing for any educational programmes (Agasisti & Catalano 2006). Furthermore, the relative future outcomes or economic returns of university academic programmes are complex, multidimensional, long-term, and are therefore harder to determine and compare. These future outcomes are complicated further by the characteristics of the curricula, teaching methods, and the infinite diversity of students – who are the 'inputs' – in terms of the students' academic capabilities, interests, and backgrounds (Baldwin & James 2000:142). This unpredictability and risk element associated with the future economic returns to higher education represents a significant disincentive against private investment, especially the reluctance of financial markets to provide student loans (Agasisti & Catalano 2006).

The second fundamental source of competitive market failure in higher education relates to its own economic character. Higher education is now widely acknowledged to have a highly complex mixture of private and public goods which make it strikingly vulnerable to market failure as formulated in Le Grande (1991). In his classic paper, 'The Pure Theory of Public Expenditure', economist Paul Samuelson (1954) defined a public good as a good whose consumption is both non-rivalrous and non-excludable. By definition, a commodity is described to be non-rivalrous if it can be consumed simultaneously by a large number of people without one consumer or group depleting the commodity or eliminating the others from its consumption. Conversely, a good is described to be non-excludable if its consumption cannot reasonably be confined to a particular individual or group to the exclusion of all others (Marginson & Van der Wende 2007). In reverse, any good that is both rivalrous and excludable is classified as a private good. Public goods have an inbuilt natural tendency to accrue substantial positive externalities; which represents a huge disincentive to potential investors because they cannot control or attract all the returns of the investments in providing the public good. Hence, commercial banks, individual consumers and private entrepreneurs are hardly enthusiastic to invest in the highly risky educational enterprises.

Marginson (1993) suggests that higher education contains a complex combination of two categories of goods with widely different economic and sociological properties. The first kind is described as 'positional goods'; and the second category is referred to as 'knowledge goods'. According to Marginson, positional goods contain an inherent natural constraint against their production and value and do not therefore rely on market dynamics (Marginson 1993:47). In contrast, knowledge goods manifest a different and complex dynamic from positional goods. Knowledge goods are not susceptible to absolute scarcity; and nothing prevents knowledge goods from being produced and utilized in a completely capitalist market. Yet, it is similarly possible to produce knowledge goods under non-market conditions since they are inexhaustible, non-excludable, and the expansion of their production does not necessarily reduce their value to consumers (Marginson 1993). For instance, the knowledge of calculus can be disseminated to an infinite number of students without depleting the knowledge itself.

Internationalization and Marketization: Contexts, Concepts, Contests

> How are African universities trying to balance the demands of autonomy and accountability, expansion and excellence, equity and efficiency, diversification and differentiation, privatization and the public purpose, internationalization and indigenization, global visibility and presence and local anchorage in the face of liberalization? (Zeleza 2005:40).

Internationalization has acquired growing significance in recent higher education debates and practices worldwide. There are multiple explanations for this new development. First, various dimensions of higher education trends and phenomena are increasingly examined through international comparative approaches (Huisman & der Wende 2004). Secondly, there is a growing active involvement of international development organizations such as the UN, OECD, and the World Bank in matters of higher education development, analyses, and policymaking (van Vught et al. 2002). The emergence of supra-national governance structures and organizational networks within the field of higher education are also seen as important manifestations of the growing global connectedness and interaction of economies, labour markets, societies and cultures (de Boer, Huisman et al. 2002). Examples of supra-national governance structures include the Bologna Process in Europe, Association of African Universities, Commonwealth Association of Universities, CODESRIA, Inter-Universities Council for East Africa, and several others. There is also a growing realization that a wide range of human problems are increasingly complex, dynamic and transboundary, which implies that their solutions must also be increasingly collaborative, multifaceted, and crosscutting (Gibbons et al. 1994). This new transboundary paradigm of problem-solving has resulted in a much stronger global focus on international collaboration and partnerships among universities and other organizations in knowledge production, use and sharing.

Internationalization has a long history and has been discussed in widely different ways. These definitions are plentiful in several good textbooks on the subject. However, this paper embraces the more widely used definition of internationalization as provided in Knight (2005); which defines internationalization as 'the process of integrating an international, intercultural and/or global dimension into the goals, functions (teaching, research, services) and delivery of higher education'. The OECD has applied the term 'internationalization of higher education' to describe the varied forms of cross-border exchanges and mobilities that characterize the international landscape of higher education enterprise. In this regard, the OECD distinguishes four interrelated categories of mobility in higher education: student mobility, programme mobility, faculty mobility, and institutional mobility (OECD 2004).

Internationalization and collaboration in African higher education is not a completely new or surprising phenomenon at all (Obamba & Mwema 2009; Jowi 2009); although Africa, with the exemption of South Africa, still demonstrates the fewest and least diversified portfolio of internationalization initiatives compared to other regions (Altbach & Knight 2006:5). Relationships with universities located overseas have been a common feature embedded in the development of African higher education for many decades. Except for extraordinary instances like Egypt, South Africa and Ethiopia, the development trajectories of higher education across the African continent are intimately intertwined with the colonial political economy (Ajayi et al. 1996). The earliest higher education institutions in Africa were indeed established under the colonial regimes as subordinate colleges closely linked to the parent universities located abroad. These early colleges cooperated with the foreign institutions in every way, ranging from curriculum, academic faculty, governance, to examinations and certifications. This legacy portrays the historical international character of African higher education long before political independence (Jowi 2009). Global student mobility in Africa also emerged during pre-colonial years. Therefore, what is new is that the complexity, intensity and economic importance of internationalization and international cooperation have increased significantly in recent decades across Africa and worldwide (Zeleza 2005).

Internationalization has been a common feature in the development of Kenya's education for many decades as well. Indeed, the very first higher education institution on Kenya soil, the Royal Technical College Nairobi (later University of Nairobi), had significant international ties to London and Makerere, Uganda (Kenya 2006). The development of university education in the East African region has traditionally incorporated some degree of a regional and international component. The first three university colleges that emerged in the three countries within the East African Territory before independence were confederated to form the Federal University of East Africa, which consisted of Makerere College Uganda, Nairobi College Kenya, and Dar es Salaam College Tanzania. The three separate university colleges also maintained intense collaboration with the parent University of London on curriculum, governance, examinations, and certification. The *Ominde Education Commission* of 1964 (GOK 1964) declared that one of the goals of the Kenyan education system was to 'foster international consciousness'; although the report did not articulate how this goal would be achieved or operationalized.

The *Koech Commission Report 2000* claimed that education is 'to nurture internationalization of universal knowledge, including key technological advances, with a view to harmonizing it for national development' (GOK 2000). However, the specific rationales for which Kenya embraces internationalization are hardly clearly articulated nor is there any coherent policy for internationalization. A report of the *Public Universities Inspection Board* (PUIB) states that 'internationalization is aimed to enrich scholarship and diversity, invigorate intellectual inquiry and research, and foster international understanding' (Kenya 2006:71). A Ministry of Education conference report suggests that the government should formulate policies that promote 'partnerships between foreign universities and local institutions to offer their degree programmes locally' (Kenya 2004:48). The 2008-12 *Strategic Plan* of the Ministry of Higher Education also emphasizes the strategic importance of collaboration and linkages with both local and international organizations (GOK 2008). These diverse pronouncements suggest the embeddedness of internationalization within the overall policy discourse in Kenya.

The process and magnitude of internationalization can be examined both at the national level as well as at the scale of individual higher education institutions. At the institutional level, internationalization can take a wide variety of dimensions and at different levels of intensity and consistency (Qiang 2003). In order to be able to determine the extent of internationalization within a given institution or to perform credible comparative analyses of the level of internationalization across different institutions or time periods, some authors have recently undertaken to push the debate from conceptual definitions toward a greater focus on the measurement of internationalization. Brandenburg and Federkeil (2007) have developed what appears to be a sufficiently robust body of indicators that may be applied in any higher education context to measure the extent and character of internationalization and internationality. This broad range of indicators is summarized as follows:

(a) University management structures and policy,

(b) The internationality of academic faculty,

(c) Internationality of administrative non-academic university staff,

(d) Levels of funding allocated to promoting international programmes,

(e) Number of active partnerships, international networks and mobilities,

(f) Levels of international research funding, international research, and publications, and

(g) International orientation of curriculum and teaching: internationality of students, academic programmes and teaching partnerships.

Qiang (2003) has also suggested a dynamic analytical framework that may be applied to understand the scope and character of internationalization processes in higher education institutions. The framework is based on the idea that internationalization programmes of a university or country can be organized along two intersecting dimensions. Along one of the axes, internationalization programmes can be undertaken either in a 'systematic' or a 'sporadic' pattern. Qiang (2003) explains that some institutions undertake internationalization programmes 'in a sporadic, irregular, often knee-jerk way, with lots of loose ends in terms of procedure and structure; whereas others tend to develop more precise explicit procedures in an ordered and systematic manner' (ibid.: 259). The second axis is concerned with whether internationalization programmes can be either 'central' or 'marginal' to the institution's overall corporate strategy. Therefore, the institutional differences along the centrality-marginality continuum are characterized as follows: 'for some universities internationalization is essentially a relatively marginal activity - an interesting and stimulating addendum to a predominantly regional or national focus. For others, internationalization is highly central to their work and permeates every aspect of institutional life' (Qiang 2003:259). In sum, the indicators identified by Brandenburg and Federkeil (2007) and the conceptual paradigm suggested above (Qiang 2003) can form the building blocks for a conceptual exploration of the profile and trajectories of internationalization in Kenyan universities.

A fundamental dimension of internationalizing a university is the realignment of its vision, mission and philosophy to make it adaptive to programmes, activities, networks and processes that constitute internationalization (Brandenburg and Federkeil 2007). As Qiang (2003) has asserted, it is crucial to consider both the academic and the organizational elements that constitute internationalization. He emphasizes that 'internationalization must be entrenched in the culture, policy, planning and organizational processes of the institution so that it can be both sustainable and successful' (Qiang 2003:257-58). It also depends significantly on the establishment of innovative organizational structures and management systems, the commitment by university leaders, active involvement of faculty and staff, provision of adequate financing, clear articulation of the goals of internationalization and its full institutional recognition (Jowi et al. 2007). Examining the pattern of internationalization in Kenyan universities along the dimension of policy, vision and organizational structures can portray a relatively vibrant internationalization landscape; but examining other dimensions of internationalization can tell a completely different story.

Any rigorous review of the visions and strategic plans of the Kenyan universities illustrates that internationalization has become a clearly dominant discourse and rhetorical priority. The various universities' policy documents mention a wide range of actions that each institution plans to undertake to promote its own internationalization profile. For example, The University of Nairobi Strategic Plan identifies internationalization and linkages as a key priority for the university's strategic vision. The university states that 'more value-adding networks, partnerships and linkages need to be built at local, regional, and international levels if the university is to reposition itself in the global arena as a viable and vibrant institution of higher learning' (University of Nairobi 2008: 25-26). Moi University's current Strategic Plan notes the overwhelming importance of globalization and the fact that university education must be considered in a global context. However, with respect to specific internationalization initiatives, the Strategic Plan generally mentions isolated elements scattered loosely under various headings; but internationalization is not distinctly identified among the university's core strategic priorities (Moi University 2005).

From the examples reviewed, the universities' internationalization discourses do not provide a clearly articulated strategy for integrating a coherent international dimension into their activities. As some analysts have observed (Jowi *et al.* 2008), the momentum for internationalization in Kenyan universities is not exactly driven by the broader goals of integrating an international dimension into the curriculum, research, university community, scholarship and pedagogy; or increasing their participation in the expanding international networks and partnerships of knowledge production and sharing. Instead, the predominant underlying rationale for internationalization appears to be the pressure to find opportunities for academic staff development, promote and diversify the flow of external funding, elevate the university's prestige, and portray an image of legitimacy through quality assurance and accreditation. Put differently, internationalization in Kenya is narrowly defined, inadequately supported, and is seen predominantly as part of the universities' multiple income diversification strategies rather than as a more fundamental and multidimensional institutional activity.

The internationality of curricular, research programmes, student and faculty profiles are some of the key indicators of internationalization at national or institutional level (Brandenburg & Federkeil 2007). For many years, Kenyan public universities have demonstrated a relatively impressive international dimension with regard to research collaborations and institutional linkages and most universities have utilized these international collaborations to promote academic faculty development and institutional capacity. The universities have signed several memoranda of cooperation with many universities spread across various countries and have reaped significant benefits from these linkages (Jowi *et al.* 2007:13). However, these international linkage programmes are often short-term, conceived narrowly rather than comprehensively, and are largely driven and dominated by the foreign provider of funding. As a result of power asymmetries and a lack of institutional embeddedness, many linkages start to disappear shortly after the termination of the external funding and partnership. The impacts in terms of staff development can be felt for relatively longer, but capacity building for local research expertise is quickly eroded after a research partnership ends.

In the dimension of curriculum development and pedagogical approaches, there has been limited or no coherent attempt to integrate international and multicultural dimensions into academic programmes and teaching. Academic programmes, teaching, and the organization of academic practices and environments in Kenyan universities have remained predominantly oriented toward meeting the needs of local students and the domestic labour markets (Jowi

2009). Internationalizing the curriculum can entail, in part, the incorporation of international aspects of the curriculum and teaching methods in order to prepare local students for international graduate destinations and to cater for the needs of students from international backgrounds (Kiamba 2006). This approach, described as 'internationalization at home' as opposed to 'internationalization abroad', can provide local students and faculty with varied opportunities to gain international experience and perspectives through seminars, summer school, and guest lectures without having physically to travel abroad (Knight 2008). However, private universities in Kenya have a higher international profile in more dimensions than their public counterparts. The USIU, for example, has recently pioneered the introduction of premium academic programmes that both incorporate a relatively strong international component in their content, conceptualization and nomenclature, and also attract a more international student clientele. For example, their Global Executive MBA is conducted in partnership with faculty and resources from a leading business school in the USA, and is funded jointly by the Coca Cola Africa Foundation.

As regards the international profile of the academic faculty and the student community, the Kenyan landscape portrays a growing trajectory towards greater localization and internal fragmentation. Again, private universities in Kenya have a relatively higher internationality profile than public universities with regard to international student and faculty recruitment. A government report admits that the configuration of the student and faculty community in Kenya's public universities has become predominantly local since the 1980s (GOK 2006); and today nearly all public universities have negligible internationality in this dimension. In a 2008 survey, researchers reported that out of the total enrolment of about 130,000 students in all Kenyan universities; only 562 were international students, of which more than 350 were enrolled in just one private university (Jowi et al. 2008).

The fragmentation and localization of the national higher education landscape has acquired new depths of complexity through the emergence of the phenomenon whereby universities are competing in the establishment of multiple campuses and colleges countrywide to expand market penetration. This evolving trajectory, characterized by massive expansion and marketization, is driven predominantly by the growing pressure mounting against all universities to expand and diversify their funding portfolio through entrepreneurialism. Marketization and expansion initiatives are relatively less costly and less elaborate to implement and can also produce immediate and longer-term financial benefits, compared to internationalization activities which are significantly costlier and often entail more elaborate and complex strategies to develop and sustain. For these reasons, market expansion tends to command greater priority and political support than internationalization programmes in the eyes of most university administrators. The *PUIB Report* (Kenya 2006) has warned that one of the severest structural impediments to the internationalization of student communities, programmes, faculty, pedagogy and knowledge production within Kenyan universities is the tremendous local expansion driven by the soaring demand for higher education and the growing pressure upon universities to generate alternative income through marketization and commercialization.

Another key policy document, the Government's own *Vision 2030* development blueprint (GOK 2007), has sharply criticized the deteriorating condition of the numerous university campuses and contemplated that 'This expansion is likely to stifle the development of a diversified university system ... by affecting the quality and relevance of education at this level'(Kenya 2007:88). In short, there is growing realization that policies designed to promote system expansion and commercialization activities in developing countries do not seem to simultaneously support or create any incentive for internationalization. Altbach and Knight (2006) also indicated that domestic expansion can threaten internationalization; asserting that 'the interest in studying abroad or in enrolling in international programs may decline as countries increase [local] access to higher education' (ibid.:9). The authors also emphasize that the growing commercialization of institutional accreditation systems at the global landscape represent another major deficit for internationalization due to the emergence of 'accreditation mills' of doubtful integrity which confer accreditation to international higher education providers without or with substandard quality assurance and operational procedures.

Another possible explanation for the growing localization and diminishing internationality in Kenya and other developing countries can be attributed to the significant costs and political complexities involved in recruiting international students and faculty and also in marketing academic programmes across national boundaries (Brown 2004). Many universities in most developing countries cannot marshal the enormous resources and logistics required to mount a formidable campaign to attract and retain international academic faculty, develop and sustain international academic mobility, or even to market their academic programmes abroad. International Programme Offices have sprung up in most Kenyan universities, but many of these structures lack capacity, resources and clear mandates necessary to undertake international activities. In a recent study, Jowi et al., (2008) observed that 'the universities could not specify how much money is allocated for internationalization, and some did not even provide budget for internationalization' (p. 12). A report of the International Association Universities indicates that 78 per cent of universities worldwide have institution-wide policies for internationalization, 71 per cent have international offices, but only 65 per cent have budget provisions to support internationalization (Knight 2005).

Conclusion

This paper indicates that universities in Kenya have firmly embraced the neo-liberal economic ideology characterized by market-oriented policy regimes, privatization and entrepreneurialism. This fundamental transformation of policy and organization within the Kenyan landscape is linked to financial pressures and is strongly shaped by ideological shifts driven through the relentless instruments of international donor agencies. Marketization and entrepreneurialism have multiple manifestations. However, the higher education landscape does not entirely portray a competitive market. This paper has argued that this market distortion is due to the fallacious fragmentation between 'public' and 'private' provision of higher education, and also as a result of the market failures arising from persistent structural distortions and asymmetries of information within higher education. More significantly, the paper has argued that the deepening preoccupation with institutional proliferation and entrepreneurial pursuits within the domestic market appears to promote localization while severely undermining the institutional capacity and incentive for the development of internationalization processes and activities within universities.

The discussions of Kenya's internationalization trajectory seem to indicate that Kenyan universities still rank low along the centrality-marginality scale; with most institutions developing impressively worded visions and strategic plans for internationalization which they have no intention or capability to pursue or even finance. Hence, internationalization, in practice, occupies a marginal position. The universities are no better, even with respect to the sporadic-systematic dimension. The glossary of internationalization activities enumerated in university documents consists largely of isolated and poorly coordinated elements. They are mostly unsupported by a consistent regime of policies, governance structures and sustainable financial resources. Most universities focus on specific but isolated activities such as joint research projects funded by donors, or seeking opportunities for academic faculty to undertake training abroad under sponsored study programmes. There is little evidence of any broad based and systematic attempt to incorporate an international dimension into the curriculum and teaching-learning approaches, or to enhance the international experience and profiles of students and faculty on a more sustainable basis. Perhaps many universities can benefit from Leeds Metropolitan University's golden advice: 'internationalization is more about a transformation of mind than the movement of bodies'.

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