

## Globalization and Higher Education in Africa

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**Abstract:** Globalization has rapidly developed into a complex system of circuits of exchange, interactive dynamics, and structures that collectively interact at high levels to produce rapid change affecting most aspects of human life. This non-empirical paper will assess how globalization has impacted on education in higher institutions of learning in Africa, mainly focusing on universities. The specific objectives of the paper are (1) to examine the concept of globalization as perceived by various scholars (2) to explore the linkage between higher education and globalization (3) to critically analyze the impact of globalization on higher education in Africa, and (4) to recommend appropriate responses to globalization by institutions of higher learning in Africa. Although there are many different definitions of globalization as the paper will explain, the modern perspective of Evans et al. (2011) is roundly used. Globalization, thus, is a widening, deepening, and speeding up of interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary life; from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual. Hence in the context of higher education and drawing in the above definition, global higher education can be referred to as the widening, deepening and speeding up of interconnectedness of universities within the global world. This has resulted to an academic capitalism discerned in increased massive university education, enhanced accountability, rapid privatization, and increased marketization of universities. Consequently, despite some negative effects, there is a realization of considerable impact on equality of opportunity, equity, quality, and efficiency of African universities. In the case of African universities, globalization is a project and a process of neo-liberalism which has been articulated through several structural adjustment programs (Tiyanbe-Zeleza, 2003). In such scenario of globalization, it is recommended that a scanning of global trends and realities be made and infused in the curriculum of all fields of study so as to build stronger regional alliances in Africa and Asia. Likewise, significant investment is required in managing, optimizing, and retaining academic talent in an increasing competitive academic market. Finally, African universities should develop a measurement system to evaluate progress towards increased levels and trends of globalization.

**Key words:** academic capitalism, globalization, marketization of universities, massive university education

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Concept of Globalization and Higher Education

Although there are many different definitions of globalization, the modern perspective of Evans et al. (2011)

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will be used for the purpose of this paper. Evans et al. (2011) define globalization as a “widening, deepening, and speeding up of interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary life, from the cultural, to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual”. Hence, in the context of higher education and drawing in the definition of Evans et al. (2011), global higher education can be referred to as the widening, deepening and speeding up of interconnectedness of universities within the global world. This implies that universities are no longer isolated institutions of society operation in particular towns or cities, but rather as global higher education institutions that are connected to the global world, irrespective of their country of origin.

Within the last couple of years, globalization has become a critical mantra in academic discourse as nations have effected socio-political and economic changes aimed at creating a single economic entity for the movement of goods, capital, services, skills and technology. Therefore, an examination of what it entails is an excellent starting point. At its most basic form, globalization has been ascribed as “what happens when the movement of people, goods, or ideas among countries and regions accelerates” (John, 2005). While the cross-border movement of people, goods and ideas has occurred throughout history, it is the current speed and quantity that demarcates the globalization era from any other period in history.

Globalization is also conceptualized as a change process, which according to John (2005), has four interrelated connections, post-national forms of production and distribution of goods and services enhanced by enormous volumes of international trade, foreign direct investments and capital flows, information, communications and media technologies that facilitate the flow and exchange of ideas over wide geographic areas thereby raising the premium of knowledge-intensive work, large scale migration of skilled labor and attendant cultural transformations and exchanges that challenge national values and norms of sending and receiving countries. The implications of these transformations on African societies have been revolutionary, if not seismic. Rapid privatization of public enterprises and the provision of social services have occurred simultaneously with removal of public subsidies, downsizing the civil service along with cuts in government expenditures in social and productive services whose costs have been passed to the beneficiaries through “cost-sharing”. Incentives for international as well as local private investors have been provided for through tax holidays and exemptions.

Alam (2011) continues to argue that not only have these transformations complicated Africa’s efforts to redress colonial-induced socio-economic disparities among the various ethnic groups, they have, in most instances, intensified these disparities. Consequently, intra-ethnic conflicts have accompanied the liberalization of the continent’s economies. The loss of the mediating effects that the state provided through the provision of social services has given rise to various patterns of exclusion and inclusion thereby igniting the conflicts.

The preceding analysis summarizes how globalization has been conceptualized including its ramifications in Africa. Some scholars such as Gustavo and Stromquist (2000) have conceptualized globalization in terms of top-down perspectives. The top perspective perceives the political, economic, cultural and social actions reaching a world wide scale. This, in turn, leads to the states, international corporations and societies. Local societies are inextricably interwoven in this vortex as they compete for legitimization of their African counterparts such as Botswana and South Africa are cited as examples of nations that have registered economic boom due to economic liberalization occasioned by globalization.

The down perspective, on the other hand, sees globalization treated with suspicion and anxiety by the poor and impoverished middle class in third-world countries. Contrary to expectations, the global market has not delivered its benefits but instead it has increased the economic might of transnational corporations, the G7 countries, international financial institutions and other supranational organizations. The outcry over the adverse

effects of the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programs on vulnerable groups such as the poor, women and children in Africa, Latin America and Asia best exemplifies this down perspective.

The emerging scenario is that globalization has been a double-edged sword. While some have prospered economically and accumulated power politically, others have been impoverished economically and disempowered politically. The unfolding scenarios have provided opportunities and challenges for societal institutions including education. The consequence of globalization on the higher education sector is the next focus in this paper.

### **1.2 Relationship between Globalization and Higher Education**

As globalization has increased as an organizing process in socio-economic and political reforms and relations, so too has the view that education is a significant catalyst in enabling nations become globally competitive gained currency. Higher education is critical for nations to compete in global markets, attract foreign investments that call for high productivity and flexibility in the use of technology to upgrade higher value of goods and services. It is higher education that provides the springboard for raising productivity and lays the foundation for technological change. It is in this context that the link between globalization and higher education is most apparent.

"Higher education" notes the Task Force on Higher Education and Society "is to a knowledge economy as primary education is to an agrarian economy and secondary education to an industrial economy" ( Bloom, 2010). The genesis of the conflation between higher education and the global knowledge can be trace to both the Reagan and Thatcher administrations in the US and UK respectively after their countries lost economic market share to the Asian tigers-Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong (Sheila & Leslie, 2007). Through a conscious investment in human capital coupled with growth in research and development, most of these nations, shackled in poverty and underdevelopment a few decades earlier, had leapfrogged to be world economic superpowers. Henceforth, universities in the US and UK, through strategic funding and policy initiatives, would be tied to the economy in order to enhance the countries' global economic competitiveness. It is this rationale that has informed the impetus for reforms in higher education to make it attune to the needs of the global knowledge economy.

Through higher education, nations would become competitive in the new global economy. The modern emergent globalized knowledge economy is fueled by applied sciences and engineering, especially information generation, processing and storage. It is one in which highly educated university graduates are indispensable. It is one in which highly productive workers would command high-paying jobs. Universities would be responsible for training of creative, inventive and innovative individuals to produce products that enhance a nation's global competitiveness.

Resultant state policies have sought to steer universities away from their hitherto social and intellectual mission and more to the marketplace. Emergent policies have led to decreased funding in order to steer universities to solicit financial support from competitive market sources; partnerships between universities and industry that focus on product development, innovation, market of educational and business services have been enunciated; state oversight powers over universities have increased including the state bureaucrats' abilities to shape programs and curricula, standardize academic work, and encourage and supervise contract research. Further, there has been increased managerialism to manage both the new state-university relations and contract research while at the same time transferring costs of education to students (Gustavo & Stromquist, 2000).

That the globalized political economy has had a homogenizing effect on higher education cannot be gainsaid. The entrepreneurial university, for instance is a local adaptation to globalization forces in which institutions with divergent histories and contrasting structure betray a converging restructuring characterized by what the

entrepreneurial archetype (Massimilano, 2004). In the case of African universities, globalization, according to Tiyaambe-Zeleza (2003), is a project and process of neo-liberalism which has been articulated through the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programs. This has given way to the corporatization of university management, the commercialization of learning and, ultimately, the commoditization of knowledge. The incorporation of African higher education into the neo-liberal global political economy by the World Bank, rests on the amalgam of the bank's monetary clout, technical expertise and enormous political influence.

The Bank's prescription for the maladies (World Bank, 2013) afflicting Africa's higher education have involved a combination of a reduction in state funding, competitive funding of universities, promoting state university entrepreneurship as a means of generating additional revenues, introduction of tuition fees, institution of cost-sharing to be borne by the beneficiaries of higher education, allowing the development of private universities, and instituting accountability measures. Through these reform measures African universities will not only provide equitable access to all segments of society, they will also join the new global knowledge economy

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

While the business world has changed dramatically over the last decade to address the reality of globalization in the sphere of business, most African universities have remained intact as local universities servicing local needs of citizens studying at their closest universities (Alam, 2011). However, a small number of universities in Africa have managed to attract students from other provinces, countries and regions.

The critical dilemma is the extent that universities in Africa have adapted to the reality of globalization. The pertinent question is, are higher education institutions preparing students to work globally, or do they still function as institutions operating with local mindset for a local market? To a large extent, most African universities have remained local and this sets a problematic precedence in the era of globalization. This paper thus looks at how globalization has impacted on education in higher institutions of learning in Africa mainly focusing on universities.

### **2.1 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to assess how globalization has impacted on education in higher institutions of learning in Africa mainly focusing on universities.

### **2.2 Objective of the Study**

- To examine the concept of globalization as perceived by various scholars.
- Explores the linkage between higher education and globalization.
- To critically analyze the impact of globalization on African higher education.
- To seek a harmonization between globalization and higher education in Africa.

### **2.3 Methodology**

Drawing on Yang's (2003) work, this paper adopts critical theory as a theoretical framework based on an extensive literature review. Critical theory offers valuable analytical insights to delineate a bigger and clearer picture of the globalization discourse at local, national and global level (Yang, 2003). As suggested by Alam (2011), this paper deals with the relationship between globalization and higher education in Africa, with a focus on determining the impact of globalization on higher education. In order to ensure that a balanced perspective about the impact of globalization on higher education is presented, articles by leading higher education scholars

and commentators covering the globalization of higher education systems in twenty different countries over the last twenty years have been studied. These countries include a mix of African nations.

Of the numerous forces that have shaped higher education systems (Alam, 2011), none has had more profound consequences in the 21st Century than the forces of globalization. Globalization however refers to the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture. From the developed world to the developing one, globalization has been instrumental in redefining the character and shape of universities in ways that are remarkably different from other forces that have influenced these institutions. African higher education is no exception. Beginning in the mid 1980s, international influences on the continent's university systems began to have dramatic effects which have continued to this day.

By and large, globalization is to African higher education in the 21st century what neo-colonialism was in the early 1960s at the dawn of independence. Both have had a dramatic impact in realigning the higher education system. This paper examines the impact of globalization on the continent's higher education. These transformations are manifest in "academic capitalism" (Slaughter & Leslie, 2007); institutional efforts and strategies to secure external financial resources. These strategies can be discerned in increased massification, enhanced accountability, rapid privatization and increased marketization of universities, all of which have had considerable impact on equality of opportunity, equity, quality and efficiency of Africa's higher education.

### **3. Globalization Impacts on African Universities**

#### **3.1 Massification**

Of the various consequences of globalization, none has been more dramatic than massification, the growth in university institutions and access to them as a means of addressing demand in higher education. Globalization has led to increased enrolment in higher institutions of learning. The growth in university institutions and access to them has been a means of addressing demand in higher education. The goal has been to address the problem of elitism and associated with Africa's post independence national universities. New categories of institutions have emerged to occupy university places, and previously underrepresented students; ethnic minorities, women and those from lower socio-economic status have found a niche in universities. The surge in enrolment in captured in Table 1, Enrolment Trends in Selected Universities in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1999–2004.

**Table 1 Higher Education Enrolment in Selected African Countries**

Country	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Angola	7,845	-	-	12,566	48,184	37,547
Botswana	5,092	-	6,844	7,406	-	9,663
Cape Verde	706	801	718	1,810	2,215	3,028
Ethiopia	52,283	67,722	87,431	101,829	147,920	172,083
Ghana	-	29,939	36,953	39,427	-	60,690
Kenya	-	44,223	45,790	47,477	-	67,556
Madagascar	23,290	25,072	24,868	24,678	28,615	33,631
Mozambique	10,322	11,619			17,255	22,256
Nigeria	392,990				714,338	746,422

As observed in the data, surge in enrolment occurred in leaps and bounds, reaching impressive heights at in 2003–2004. Even in small countries like Cape Verde, the growth from 1999 to 2004 was an impressive 428%. Other nations that witnessed similar growth include Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana and Nigeria. The growth in enrollment reflects as increasing demand for higher education which itself is a function of rapid population growth. The UN estimates that Africa's population growth rate has been among the largest in the world with a mean annual growth rate of 4.4%. Rwanda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Angola are the sub-Saharan countries that have witnessed the largest growth rate, and will continue to do so till 2025. It is by no coincidence that these countries are also among those that witnessed a sizeable surge in higher educational enrollment. And this surge is in tandem with global trends where there has been a dramatic growth in student enrolment as elitism, with its small enrolment, has been perceived as inimical to the necessities of national global competitiveness.

In addition to the growth in student enrolment, massification has occurred along two well-defined trajectories. The first is the establishment and subsequent growth in the number of private universities. The immediate post-independence era in Africa was suspicious, even hostile, to the notion of private universities. However, since the mid-1980s there has been a paradigm shift which has seen private universities gain a footing in the continent's higher education landscape. The second has been the increasing privatization of public universities. As demand for higher education has increased and state resources to support its growth and operations have dwindled, privatization has become a viable option to address the twin challenges of demand and resource generation.

The growth of private universities in Africa is a microcosm of global trends in the growth of private universities. There were hardly any private universities to speak of at the dawn of independence in the 1960s but by 2003, the number had grown so that in countries like Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana, the number of private universities exceeded public ones. The development of these private higher education institutions has occurred in three waves. The first is religious universities which dominate private higher education in Kenya and Uganda. The rise of this type of universities was aimed at providing a religious fervor in higher education. The second wave is elite private universities.

These are expensive and appealing to education demands of the affluent who aspire for a more distinct type of higher education. Kenya's the United States International University, which attracts upper-class students from East and Central Africa, represents the elite sector of higher education. The third wave is the tuition-dependent demand-absorbing types, among the fastest growing institutional types particularly in Uganda. As the name implies, their main role has been simply to meet the growing demand for higher education.

Besides the increase in private institutions, massification has been aided by the increasing privatization of public universities through a mix of privately-sponsored fee-paying students, partnerships and linkages. Public universities in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria and Senegal have opened their institutions of fee paying students who do not receive state subsidies to finance their education unlike their government-sponsored counterparts. Both the University of Lagos (UNILAG) in Nigeria and Cheik Anta Diop University in Senegal had by 2004 established satellite campuses in order to meet the increasing demand for higher education (World Bank, 2013)

This new multifaceted approach to admitting students has been driven by the desire to address the growing demand for higher education amidst the decline in state funding for public higher education. Taking Kenya as a case in point, Table 3 shows the growth in self-sponsored student in the three largest public universities. By 2004, this category of students had almost equaled the number of government-sponsored students. At Makerere University in Uganda, self-sponsored students had exceeded state-subsidized students by 2004 constituting almost 80% of the student body (Bidemi, 2007)

Partnerships and linkages constitute another avenue through which massification has articulated. By partnering with private middle level colleges, public universities have been able to admit additional undergraduate students and, thereby extend their reach beyond the confines of their main campuses. This model of enrollment growth has been popular in Kenya and South Africa. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology pioneered this model in Kenya and by 2004 had the most extensive partnership with private and public colleges in the country. Doubts about the quality of degrees granted under this arrangement have led to the charge of “garage universities” (Wachira, 2013). In South Africa, the University of South Africa, the premier distance-learning institution in the country, has the most extensive collaborative partnership with local and foreign colleges (Krusz & Kraak, 2003).

In a variety of ways, university massification has had considerable impact on equality of educational opportunity. While actual enrolments have increased, class-based disparities in access to university education have also become apparent. The dual-track tuition policy involving government-sponsored and privately-sponsored students has led to bifurcation of the student body along class lines. Only those capable of meeting the full cost of university education seek enrolment as a self-sponsored student since educational loans are not available to such students in Kenya and Uganda. In addition a student with lower academic qualification but with financial resources can enroll in prestigious university program (such as medicine) while one with superior qualification but without the requisite financial means cannot do so in Kenya. In Uganda only around 10–20% of Makerere University students are government-sponsored and entitled to free education (Bidemi, 2007).

Though countries like Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa have established loan scheme programs to assist government-sponsored student pay a subsidized tuition fee, excessive subsidization of the same along with massive administrative costs have led to inefficiencies and poor recovery rates. By 2010, in Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria interest rates were between 2–3%, well below the cost of inflation. In South Africa subsidies led to the forgiveness of 40% of the loan if a student successfully completed their studies (Bruce, 2004). Oketch (2003) has estimated that in some instances administrative costs of the student loan scheme have run as high as 20%.

Under these conditions of massive university expansion, faculty differentiation has become a notable trend. Most of the teaching staff in private universities is part-time or half-time. In public universities departments with massive enrolment and partnership colleges have had to rely on part time instructors as well. The outcome has been a dichotomous teaching profession consisting of full-time professoriate that is ingrained with the workings of academia and engage in scholarship and a large part-time teaching fraternity operating in the periphery that has only a modicum appreciation of academia. A differentiated faculty such as this has enormous implication on quality of scholarship particularly for public universities which hitherto were epicenters of quality academic research.

It is possible to assume that university expansion has created opportunities for advancement for women academics. However, empirical evidence suggests otherwise. University expansion may even have exacerbated the marginalization of women. By 2004, Kenya women academics that had joined the university teaching ranks at the inception of public universities expansion had become disillusioned because: Their entrance into the university teaching positions and accelerated promotion to lectureships has been a dead end. Departmental establishment coupled with a lack of research funds continued to ensure that these women remain locked in junior lectureship positions. For example, some women complained that their doctoral theses stagnated because they lacked funds to conduct field work. They were constantly advised to use their own money with the promise that the university would reimburse them when funds became available. The women lacked these extra funds (Njoki, 2004).

In all, globalization forces have stimulated the rapid expansion of African higher education as a way of meeting demand and mitigating elitism. It has been a strategy to increase the number of university graduates as a means of meeting demand along with developing manpower to enhance nations' global competitiveness. In the process, it has led to the demise of national unitary system of higher education and led to a system of highly differentiated institutions. The consequences of these developments have been apparent in equality of education opportunity, efficiency as well as in academic quality.

### **3.2 Accountability and Growing Managerialism**

In order to steer universities towards the market cycle with global competitive needs, increased accountability requirements and growth in managerialism have come to define recent higher education developments in Africa. Consequently new university structures and processes have emerged leading to the growth in the number of administrators. Administrators have acquired more powers and become key players in university governance. This re-engineering of governance has been driven by the belief that in the new globalization, administrators will serve as a linchpin connecting the assets and needs of the campus with the assets and needs of the external environment (Rowley, 2008).

The paradigm shift is accountability has also manifested that university administrators centralize university management and become increasingly proactive in the control of academics' work. New bureaucratic structures, superimposed on old ones, have constituted oversight offices to manage income-generating academic programs. Some of the accountability measures have been in response to concerns over decline in academic quality owing to massification while others have been promulgated by state-mandates on performance accountability. In Kenya, for instance, under the State Corporations (performance contracting) Regulations 2004 Legal Notice No. 93 all state corporations (Including universities) are required to sign performance contracts with the government and submit quarterly performance reports. In response, Kenyatta University established the Center for Quality Assurance to monitor the quantity and quality of work output by academics.

Similar accountability measures have been instituted at the University of Botswana which established an American-style Institutional Planning Development (IPD) office which has been responsible for setting up key performance indicators for programs and activities in line with the institution's strategic plan. Together with Centre of Academic Development, IPD has undertaken program reviews and internal quality assurance assessment.

The increased importance of accountability and the institutionalization of layers of office to monitor adherence to performance indicators has ushered in a corporate management culture in the universities. This growth in managerialism has seen a shift in emphasis as to what can be recorded, documented and reported about teaching and learning as opposed to concern with the educational process at the heart of university education. Simply put, the introduction of managerial values has cast to the sidelines the traditional democratic educational values that have informed higher education.

The need to ensure accountability and to link institutional programs to the market has also fueled the increased importance of strategic planning. Through strategic planning committees with membership drawn from various university stakeholders, administrators have been able to steer public universities in directions aimed at generating resources for the universities as well as meeting market labour requirements. Hitherto university planning was a centralized activity undertaken by central government ministries of education. By 2004, however, virtually all African universities had adopted strategic planning as a vital tool in navigating an increasingly



competitive environment. Kenyatta University in Kenya embarked on its first strategic planning project in 2004 with financial and personnel support from the Rockefeller Foundation. The 2005–2010 strategic plan aims at transforming the university into a world-class institution, globally connected through partnership and information technology, research-oriented and training labour-ready graduates who are creative and independent thinkers among others (Kenyatta University, Strategic Plan, 2005–2010).

Underpinning the new accountability measures has been the systematic adoption of quality assurance as the new accountability metaphor. There is nothing inherently wrong with striving for quality but in this instance, quality has come to represent a new category of managerial control. Quality is a code word for performance indicators which can be measured and recorded-objectives must be set, planning, reviewing, internal monitoring and external reporting must be continuously demonstrated. Quality assurance is a carryover from business and industry where uniformity and consistency is overriding.

Quality assurance in African higher education has been articulated through accreditation and other forms of external regulations. Whether these have promoted education quality has been a subject of intense discussion. As a case in point, in South Africa, Cosser<sup>28</sup> has challenged the notion that external accreditation necessarily translate into quality. Following a critical review of the accreditation processes undertaken by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) and the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Cosser (2008) has observed that the emphasis on a narrow external-oriented definition of quality undermined the development of an all encompassing internal-oriented view of quality especially in private institutions.

The new accountability requirements along with the attendant growing managerialism have lead to a loss of the centrality of the academic profession in the university governance process. In turn, it has lead to the ascendancy of external environment, corporate managers and fundraising as the driving force in university operation as opposed to the internal environment, instruction and the academic profession. The deleterious effects of these developments on academic quality and faculty academic freedom cannot be ignored.

While the benefits of globalization on academic freedom should not be underestimated, it seems that a market-driven higher education system undermines academic freedom in five major ways: in terms of student access and solidarity, disciplinary differentiation and devaluation, integrity of research and publishing, management and security of tenure, and permeability and dilution of institutional traditions.

### **3.3 Privatization**

Already two aspects of privatization have been considered in the context of massification — the surge in private higher education and the privatization of public higher education. In this section, privatization is examined from a different perspective, namely the pressures universities have experienced to raise revenue through avenues such as consulting, grants and other non-teaching activities. Furthermore, another dimension of privatization is the transfer of these revenue-generating activities into private management.

These aspects of privatization are tied to globalization's neo-liberal discourse that emphasizes cutbacks in state expenditure in higher education, deregulation and liberalization. Privatization of the global development agenda compels public universities to realign their operations in order to secure external funding in a competitive environment. Some scholars have indicated there is a tinge of distinction between privatization and quasi-marketization (market-like behaviors) on the one hand and market-behaviors when it comes to public institutions on the other. Privatization incorporates “academic capitalism” (discussed earlier) and “market-like

behaviors” as opposed to “market behaviors”.

Thus, Market-like behaviors refer to institutional and faculty competition for money, these are from international grants and contracts, endowment funds, university-industry partnerships, institutional investment in professors’ spin-off companies, or students’ tuition and fees. Markets behaviors on the other hand refer to for-profit activity on the part of institutions, activity such as patenting and subsequent royalty and licensing agreement, spin-off companies, arm’s length corporation, and university-industry partnerships when there is a profit component (Slaughter & Leslie, 2007).

Clark (2009) has further noted that due to globalization along with growing preponderance of the market, universities have been compelled to venture into areas that would guarantee them entrepreneurial revenue. Safe to say, then, that privatization in African universities has been one of market-like behavior in the sense that revenue, not profit, has been the main motivation.

State budgetary allocation to African universities has been in decline despite increase in student enrollment. This has put considerable financial pressures on universities and has hampered their operational efficiencies. In Ghana (Paul, 2003), in early 2000 the five state universities only received 40% of their budgetary requests from the state while in Uganda (Nakanyike-Musisi, 2003) the government was only able to fund 10% of the request for higher education in 2012. As of 2003, higher education in Africa was a US\$4–5bn enterprise, a low expenditure figure given that the continents population was around 700 m (Damtew, 2004).

Three universities exemplify the revenue-generation entrepreneurial spirit that has permeated African higher education until 2004. The University of Pretoria in South Africa has evolved an elaborate program of revenue generation that involves lease of university facilities to Damelin, a private college with which it has had collaborative partnership. The university has also established a Department of Business Activities to ensure effective functioning with particular focus on customer satisfaction. In addition, it has established the Business Enterprises at University of Pretoria (Pty), a wholly-owned subsidiary, which represents business interests in various academic disciplines. In collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the university has formed the Southern Education and Research Alliance (SERA) to focus on the exploitation of intellectual property in both CSIR and the university through the commercialization and licensing of patents. Furthermore the faculty has been granted opportunities to work in university-owned companies as well as companies that lease university premises. While no data has been available to gauge the success of these initiatives, it is apparent that university has embarked on a path dedicated to entrepreneurialism.

Makerere University, in Uganda, has long been the poster-child for university entrepreneurialism on the continent. With support from international donors such as the World Bank, Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, the university has embraced entrepreneurialism which by 2004 had saved it from pecuniary embarrassment wrought by decades of civil war that had left the country bankrupt. Though the bulk of the revenue has been generated by tuition fees, there has been some, albeit marginal, income derived from consulting and renting out of facilities.

In the financial year 2002–2003, the revenues generated by the university included 6% from development project, 3% facilities hiring, 1% consulting and 1% other ventures (Bidemi, 2007). In keeping with the Kenyan government declarations that “the central thrust of the policies is to rely on market forces to mobilize resources for growth and development” (Kiamba, 2004) and that the time has come to seriously take account of universities’ potential to generate income internally” (Ibid), since the late 1990s the University of Nairobi, along with other public universities, embarked on a program of entrepreneurial activity. Having incorporated a holding company, the University of Nairobi Enterprise & Services Ltd. (UNES), the university has invested in consultancy services,

conference facilities, restaurants, lodging facilities and bookstores as primary revenue generating sources. Others include research grant and contracts as well as cost-recovery programs from student catering and accommodation.

The data presented above suggest that African universities have been filling the void left by reduction in state subventions. Indeed Makerere and Nairobi universities have been able to finance critical infrastructure development and provision of educational materials that have been previously neglected due to declining resources. This financing arrangement, however, has invited questions of efficiency from a variety of angles. First, university employees operate as state-subsidized entrepreneurs, while the cost of this state subsidy has barely been accounted for in the operating costs, the cost-efficiency of these enterprises remains doubtful. In addition, since university labor is expended in competitive marked environments, there is a case to be made about the exploitation of academic labor force. Publicly subsidized academic labor is expended in risky marked environments without the requisite safeguards provided by private companies.

Second, and related to the first, has been institutional risk arising from academic capitalism. Risk is conceptualized as what the investor assumes on entry into the marketplace, a precarious position since universities are novices in this area. The legal hiccups over patents and profit sharing that confronted HIV/AIDS collaborative research between the University of Nairobi and institutions in USA and Japan in early 1990 and with UK and US institutions in the late 1990 (Munene & Otieno, 2008) demonstrate the financial and reputational risks facing African universities.

In addition to issues around efficiency, privatization has also been confronted with questions around equity. Ishengoma (2004) notes that at the University of Dar-es-salaam, students from poor homes sublet their rooms leading to five and six in a room, and illegally prepare meals in the hostels resulting in electrical malfunctions. At Egerton University in Kenya, students from poor households have adopted to the harsh realities of cost-sharing by engaging in business activities such as selling foodstuffs, photography, electrical repairs, hair care boutiques, photocopying, printing and telephone services (Mwangi & Bosire, 2004). All these are the consequences of cost-recovery measures instituted with respect to student accommodation services. Thus, ineffective means testing to determine students' ability to financial needs for room and board coupled with inadequate loans to meet leaving expenses has meant that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds have borne the most impact from cost-recovery measures in residential life.

### **3.4 Marketization**

Marketization is used here to denote strategies through which universities have used in order to align themselves with the marketplace. These strategies have included re-focusing student curricular interests as well as identifying opportunities for entrepreneurial activities. These strategies have resulted in coupling of university programs and activities to the market, a marked departure from the post-independence university where focus was on the development of a social and cohesive society so that the markets could function well.

A consequence of the alignment of academic programs to suit market needs has been the ascendancy of applied and technical-oriented disciplines such as biochemistry, biotechnology, engineering, computer science and tourism in tandem with the basic sciences, social sciences and the liberal arts. The skills obtained from the former programs have become invaluable in the new globalized economies ushered in by the neo-liberal development policy, as they are all linked to economic productivity. Given the high demand for these programs they have become the programs of choice in most African universities, public and private, since 2000. In this context, globalization has fostered uniformity in program offering among African universities as nations have sought to

enhance their comparative advantage in the global economic realm.

The market alignment of academic programs has also been articulated through the reconfiguration in the shapes of programs and delivery modes. By 2004 African higher education had evolved, adapted and reinvented itself into a complex web involving different kinds of training and modes of delivery resulting into hybrid forms of higher education. There has been an increased movement towards non-degree short courses targeted towards busy executives in business and non-governmental organizations. East African public universities, Kenya in particular, have developed such courses in the fields of HIV/AIDS management, accounting, project management, and entrepreneurship studies. To make the degree programme student friendly and hasten the time it takes to graduate, there has been a notable reduction in residency requirements. At Kenyatta and Nairobi universities in Kenya, a written thesis is no longer required to obtain a masters degree. Rather students have an option of either writing a project (which is considerably less rigorous and demanding) or producing a thesis. Delivery modes have also witnessed innovation with virtual universities (African Virtual University being the most prominent), correspondence courses, and sandwich programs being the most prominent of the long distance modalities employed.

As Sall (2004) notes, this evolution of African higher education has been pioneered by public universities in response to growing demand for higher education. In view of the limited higher education opportunities in the continent relative to the population, a pluralistic, well-managed public university, with multitasking capability to reach various groups seems to be the most logical response to growing local and global demand for highly skilled labor.

Marketization has been also articulated through the rapid growth in university centers and institutes as venues for organizing teaching and research in contrast to traditional academic departments. Across much of the continent, the years 2003 and 2004 had their share of growth in cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research centers and policy institutes dedicated to research and graduate level-teaching. These non-traditional academic initiatives have provided two advantages to the universities. First, they have provided a valuable conduit through which to fundraise externally for support in a graduate academic programming. Second, they have provided avenues for establishing short-term training programs without the convoluted process of curriculum committees and senates required for traditional academic programming.

Marketization has had considerable impact on African universities character and operations. There has been increased faculty differentiation based on disciplinary specialization. Those in highly marketable discipline-mentioned above-have been viewed as more desirable than their counterparts in traditional academic programs. In tandem with the perceived market value of various disciplines, Kenya's Nairobi and Moi Universities have instituted a differentiated salary structure in which part-time instructors in highly marketable disciplines are paid at a higher scale than their counterparts in disciplines viewed as lacking in market potential. Differential pay based on discipline is one of the leading contributors to institutional tensions thereby lowering the overall efficiency of a university's operations.

Since academics have to align their work to the market, there has been a heightened urge for academic to either unionize where unions are absent or reinvigorate existing ones. In Kenya, the need to grant more power to the academic resulted in the registration of the Universities Academic Staff Union (UASU) in 2003 after a 24-year proscription by the state. In 2004 UASU organized a nationwide strike involving all academics in public universities over terms and conditions of service including salaries (Sall, 2004). In 2003 the University of Ilorin in Nigeria was a scene of faculty and student protest over the governments decisions on funding and terms of service

for academics on the one hand and the university's administrators decision to interfere with faculty tenure (Tiyambe, 2004). In 2004, Makerere University academics went strike protesting poor pay which had persisted despite the improved financial health of the institution. These incidents suggest that while Marketization may have been a boon to African universities, it has also precipitated institutional tensions centered on faculty remuneration. These incidents of institutional instability have a detrimental effect on internal efficiency in university operations.

### **3.5 Globalization and ICT in Higher Education**

There are 28 universities in Uganda, of which five are public and a total student population of more than 100,000 (Nakanyike-Musisi, 2010). Makerere University, the oldest and largest university in Uganda, is well equipped in terms of ICT infrastructure, and as a result of strong donor support, offers courses in the sciences and information technology. Scores of grassroots initiatives are implementing ICTs in a variety of creative ways. Liberalization of the telecoms sector has resulted in rapid growth in this sector. Uganda, a landlocked country that lacks a fiber-optic telecoms backbone, depends on satellite links. In support of its vision of ICTs as important focal points for education and development, Makerere University established a Centre for Excellence in Computing and ICT (CIT) in 2004. CIT's many activities include hosting an international research journal on computing and ICTs, and offering consultancy services in ICTs.

Tanzania has 30 universities and over 200 tertiary education institutions, where up to 68,000 students were enrolled in 2007 (Ngugi, 2007). Through its Education and Training Sector Development Programme 2008-17, the government is committed to tertiary education and ICT development. A NREN is currently being formed, called TERNET, to connect the universities. TERNET is part of the UbuntuNet Alliance, an umbrella organization that promotes collaboration with universities in other countries. The telecoms market in Tanzania is fully liberalized. Universities are allowed to own their infrastructure, and to purchase an international gateway to the internet. This is likely to improve connectivity considerably of tertiary education in the near future.

### **3.6 Brief on Negative Impacts of Globalization on Higher Education in Africa**

The commercialization of higher education and the profit motive in certain cases supersedes the need for quality provision, and erodes the traditional values, intellectual character and critical thinking of university life. In certain countries the quality of higher education is considered to be of a low quality (Wangenge-Ouma, 2007). Higher education in Africa operates in strong national systems of educations and is generally subject to local needs and strong local regulation. There is also a poor understanding of the higher education systems of the Africa (Yang, 2003).

Global imperialism or colonialism is created when the "strongest" universities (mostly from the UK and USA) are strengthened and "weaker" universities in Africa are weakened because they do not have the resources to globalize. While national qualifications frameworks exist in many countries, the absence of regional and global qualifications frameworks stifle student mobility (Eisenhart, 2008). The most advantaged people in developing nations are empowered, while the poor remains disadvantaged, thus the "elitist" nature of higher education is perpetuated (Wangenge-Ouma, 2007), there are currently many obstacles to the effective exercise of free international movement for both students and staff in higher education in African countries (Eisenhart, 2008)

The emphasis on research rather than teaching is more suitable to the needs of richer countries unlike in African countries where the need for skills development is more profound (Williams & Van Dyke, 2007). Dominant cultural values and systems are spread throughout the world, and may threaten the survival of local cultures and customs in most students in higher learning institutions in Africa (Qangenge-Ouma, 2007).

Uncertainty caused by globalization and ambivalence is likely to lead to increased managerialism in higher education, and could be resisted by academics and administrators. Most journal reviewers are from western countries, and they are the “gatekeepers” of science and are likely to reject different approaches and perspectives from other regions.

### **3.7 Recommendations**

The key question to address is: what exactly can African universities do to reposition themselves to adapt to globalization? Further mentioned recommendations can be implemented to start addressing the challenge of globalization in higher education.

- First and foremost, there is a need to scan global trends and realities and make them an explicit part of institutional planning and curriculum in all fields of study. In addition, there is a need to form alliances with international universities and other bodies such as professional associations or research institutions. Moreover, African universities need dynamic leadership who are committed to the sound governance of universities in a global world. Hence, a purposeful strategy for globalizing the university, including mitigating all risks and challenges associated with this decision should be created.
- Likewise, significant investment is required in managing, optimizing and retaining academic talent in an increasing competitive academic market. More than that, research projects should be launched to further research the impact of globalization on higher education, within countries and across countries and regions.
- There is also a need to build stronger regional alliances in Africa and Asia to ensure a stronger emerging market focus in higher education, and thereby reducing the reliance on Western approaches in curriculums. This will encourage more international staff and student exchange programs.
- Furthermore, there is a need to utilize global social networking forums to infuse a stronger international platform in forming and building relationships, in order to establish an appropriate balance between global and curriculum content in all aspects of learning programs, for example, articles, textbooks, case studies and other means of teaching.
- In similar vein, more international guest lecturers’ to instill a global culture in teaching and research should be encouraged. There should be purposeful focus on joint publications with international authors. Hence, there is a need to develop the global mindset of local students to be able to become real global citizens, in order to create global academic cultures within African universities.
- Finally, Africa’s higher education sector should develop a measurement system to evaluate progress towards increased levels of globalization at university level.

## **4. Conclusion**

The onset of the 21st century has been a watershed in African high education. These early years have been characterized by the need for institutions to respond, in structures, process and outcomes, to the imperatives of globalization — a homogenizing and internationalizing force in which ideas, people, goods and services move seamlessly across borders. This movement is accentuated by improved communication technologies along with privatization of state enterprises and the provision of social services. It is a transformative process in which national competitiveness in the global arena has become significant the extent that it informs national policy agendas.

While response to globalization by African universities has been a boon to some institutions and students, It

has led negative consequences along multiple fronts. Issues of academic quality, equity in access, and internal efficiencies have confronted universities as they have made transitions to meet the growing realities of globalization. As these challenges continue to confront African higher education, questions will continue to face universities about their public roles and mission.

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