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New trends in higher education

# Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa

Edited by N.V. Varghese



Association for the Development  
of Education in Africa



Association  
of African Universities

## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

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Private higher education is a recent phenomenon and an emerging sector in many countries in Africa. Information on this sector is rather scarce and not easily available. The present volume attempts to provide information and insight into the operation of private universities in different countries of Africa.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Association of African Universities
ABTI	ABTI-American University of Nigeria
AEAM	Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar
AEB	Associated Examination Board
AIC	African Inland Church of Kenya
AMECEA	Association of the Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa
ANE	Agriculture, natural resources and environment
ANU	Africa Nazarene University
AOG	Assemblies of God
ASUU	Academic Staff Union of Universities
BMG	Business and management
BUSE	Bindura University of Science Education
BWP	Botswana Pula
CAMES	African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education
CEMIS	Centre d'études supérieures en management et en informatique
CFR	Certificate of Full Registration
CGMI	Church of God Mission International
CHE	Commission for Higher Education
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CHEIEA	Catholic Higher Education Institute of Eastern Africa
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPR	Certificate of Provisional Registration
CUEA	Catholic University of East Africa
CUT	Chinhoyi University of Technology
CVCPT	Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals in Tanzania
DES	Direction d'enseignement supérieur
DOE	Department of Education
DU	Daystar University
EAST	East African School of Theology
EdSep	Education Sector Project

#### List of abbreviations

EIA	École internationale des affaires
ELCT	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
ENEA	National School of Applied Economics
EOS	Engineering and other sciences
ESAG	École supérieure d'administration et de gestion
ESFIAM	École supérieure de finance, d'audit et de management
ESIG	École supérieure d'informatique et de gestion
ESP	École supérieure polytechnique
ESTM	École supérieure de technologie et de management
ETSHOS	École technique supérieure des hôtesse et des secrétaires
FASEG	Formation adultes en sciences économiques et de gestion
FCFA	Franc de la Communauté financière africaine
FET	Further education and training
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
GETFund	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GoK	Government of Kenya
GPA	Grade point aggregate
HAS	Health and allied sciences
HE	Higher education
HEAC	Higher Education Accreditation Council
HEG	Hautes études de gestion
HEI	Higher education institution
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HWI	Historically white institutions
IACOM	Institut africain de commerce et de marketing
IAM	Institut africain de management
IAU	International Association of Universities
ICT	Information and communication technology
IDM	Institute of Development Management
IFACE	Institut de formation en administration et en création d'entreprise
IFC	Institut de formation professionnelle
IFC	International Finance Corporation

## List of abbreviations

IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPD	Institut polytechnique Dakar
IPG	Institut privé de gestion
ISCAE	Institut supérieur de commerce et d'administration d'entreprise
ISEC/ PIGIER	Institut supérieur d'études commerciales – Pigier
ISEG	Institut supérieur entrepreneurship et de gestion
ISF-EI	Institut supérieur de formation Eurexco International
ISFG	Institut supérieur de formation de gestion
ISG	Institut supérieur de gestion
ISI	Institut supérieur d'informatique
ISSIC	Institut supérieur des sciences de l'information et de la communication
ISTI	Institut supérieur de technique industrielle
IUIU	Islamic University in Uganda
IUP	Institut universitaire professionnel
JAMB	Joint Admission and Matriculation Board
JKUAT	Jomo Kenyatta University of Technology
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
KCMC	Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College
KEMU	Kenya Methodist University
KHBC	Kenya Highlands Bible College
LI	Legislative instrument
MAI	Mathématiques appliquées et informatique
MASU	Masvingo State University
MBA	Master's in Business Administration
MMU	Mount Meru University
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSTHE	Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education
MSU	Midlands State University
MU	Mzumbe University
NAB	National Accreditation Board
NABPTEX	National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations

### List of abbreviations

NACTE	National Council for Technical Education
NBTE	National Board for Technical Education
NCCE	National Commission for Colleges of Education
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
NEGST	Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology
NIIT	National Institute of Information Technology
NIST	National Institute of Science and Technology
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NUC	National Universities Commission
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
OUT	Open University of Tanzania
PACC	Pan Africa Christian College
PFPP	Policy Framework Paper
PIHE	Private higher education institution
PNDCL	Provisional National Defence Council Law
PROAP	Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO)
PWF	Planning and Welfare
RIHED	Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SCT	Scott Theological College
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSNIT	Social Security and National Insurance Trust
St PUTC	St Paul's United Theological College
STC	Scott Theological College
SUA	Sokoine University of Agriculture
SUZA	State University of Zanzibar
SZL	Swaziland Lilongeni
TALIF	Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund
TEA	Tanzania Education Authority
TU	Tumaini University

## List of abbreviations

UCAD	Université Cheikh Anta Diop
UCD	University College, Dar es Salaam
UDB	Université Dakar Bourguiba
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam
UEA	University of East Africa
UEAB	University of East Africa at Baraton
UFR	Unité de formation et de recherche
UGB	Université Gaston Berger of Saint-Louis
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	University of Nairobi
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
UPE	Universal primary education
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
USIU	United States International University
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
WMA	World Mission Agency
WTO	World Trade Organization
WUA	Women's University in Africa
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe Open University

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*N.V. Varghese*

### **Introduction**

The public sector played a dominant role in the promotion of national development in the post-World War II period. Public-funded expansion of higher education became an essential part of the development strategy adopted by many national governments. State-supported higher education was not seriously questioned for nearly three decades. Structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s included policies to reduce the role both of the public sector in general, and of public-funded higher education in particular. Furthermore, these programmes favoured the diversion of public resources from education to productive sectors, as well as the diversion of public investment from higher to lower levels of education. These measures led to a decline of higher education in many countries.

The globalization process and growth of the knowledge economy, which depended heavily on information technology and highly trained personnel, necessitated an expansion of higher education in the 1990s. Moreover, the expansion of secondary education has increased the number of people seeking a university degree, putting pressure on the higher education sector to expand. The state was not in a position to support an expanding higher education sector and, therefore, diversification of sources of funding and institutional arrangements for provision of higher education became necessary. The former led to the privatization of public universities, while the latter encouraged the establishment of private universities.

### **Privatization and the private sector in higher education**

Privatization implies the operation of market principles in a public or private institution. The type and level of privatization can take different forms, such as: (a) privatization of student support services; (b) privatization as cost sharing through loan/scholarship schemes; (c) privatization through education vouchers that permit parents

## **Executive summary**

to choose the schools and universities for their children based on the payment provided by the state; (d) privatization through the corporatization of universities. Some universities have established cost units, companies and/or corporations with operational autonomy. They have the freedom to borrow money, acquire investment shares and enter into business ventures to meet a major share of operating expenses; and, (e) the private management of public education. In this situation, the public authority provides funding to private institutions, but the institutions are in charge of their management.

The studies included in this volume are on private institutions of higher education (PIHEs) and are from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The private higher education institutions in these countries, as in other countries, can broadly be divided into for-profit and not-for-profit institutions. For-profit institutions receive no funding support from the government; some of them are registered as corporate bodies and operate like a corporate sector or enterprise. These private for-profit institutions attained legitimacy in the 1990s, and a majority of the private higher education institutions that emerged during this period are for-profit organizations. Many of the not-for-profit private higher education institutions are supported by religious agencies. The theological colleges and Islamic universities operating in many countries in the region are examples of this trend.

### **Ownership of private institutions**

An analysis of PIHEs in African countries reveals that the following patterns of ownership exist:

- Some PIHEs are owned by foreign bodies and operate like multinationals. Australia's Bond University and Monash University, and Holland's Business School Netherlands, are examples of foreign-owned private higher education institutions. The United States International University (USIU), Kenya, was established as a company incorporated as per the code of the state of California, USA.

Similarly, Daystar Company in the United States of America (USA) owns Daystar University of Kenya. In South Africa, the government has forced some PIHEs to register as foreign companies.

- Some PIHEs operate in collaboration with foreign institutions. For example, in South Africa, there is a rapid proliferation of providers linked to institutions and universities in the United Kingdom, USA and Australia. Some of the PIHEs offering two-year courses in industrial and professional subjects in Benin are affiliated to foreign universities and institutions located mainly in France. The Solusi University, Zimbabwe, is affiliated with Andrew University, Michigan, in the USA. ENEA (*École nationale d'économie appliquée*) in Senegal collaborates with Suffolk University in the USA. Some foreign collaborations are established through the government or public universities.
- Some PIHEs collaborate with institutions within the same country. Africa has private institutions that are organized in more than one of these combinations. For example, some of the not-for-profit PIHEs in Ghana offer degree-level courses in collaboration with the University of Ghana. The co-operation between Africa University and the University of Zimbabwe is another example of local collaboration although, in this case, degrees are awarded independently by each of the institutions.
- Some are religion-supported institutions. Religion-affiliated higher education is a precursor to many of the private higher education institutions in many countries. The religion-affiliated institutions are established either by Christian missions or Muslim organizations. In Africa, a larger number of institutions of higher education are supported or sponsored by the Christian organizations. The Catholic University in Kenya, the Uganda Christian University, the Adventist University in Cameroon, St Augustine University in Tanzania and Africa University of Zimbabwe are some of the examples of universities affiliated to the church. The Islamic universities in many countries such as Ghana and Uganda are examples of higher education institutions supported by the Islamic faith.

## **Programmes of study**

The courses offered in private universities in Africa reflect either a commercial consideration or a religious orientation. In general, the private universities of recent origin offer courses that require less investment in terms of infrastructure and equipment. The for-profit institutions cater to the private business enterprises and offer courses that are market-friendly. Courses in business administration, computer sciences, accounting, marketing, economics and communication, etc., are very common in for-profit private universities. One of the features of private higher education in African countries, as mentioned earlier, is the presence of the non-university sector in higher education. In countries such as Benin, Cameroon, Ghana and Senegal, professional and vocational courses are very popular in the private institutions of higher education. These institutions offer selected courses and are better understood as ‘boutique’ institutions as compared with the ‘supermarket model’ of public universities.

The religion-affiliated universities offer courses focusing on religious epistemologies – either on Islamic or on Christian beliefs and traditions. For example, the courses offered by the Islamic University of Uganda incorporate Islamic perspectives. Thus, the political science curriculum offers a module on Islamic political thought. Catholic universities in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe reflect this orientation towards religious studies. The Africa University of Zimbabwe started with two faculties – the Faculty of Theology and the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The courses offered and degrees awarded in theology assist men and women who would like to join the church hierarchy. Most of these religion-supported universities also offer courses in other subject areas.

## **Financing and management**

Tuition fees form the financial backbone of many private institutions. For-profit private universities operate like an enterprise generating profit. The total income of private institutions is determined, therefore, by the number of students and the rate of tuition levied. Employment-

oriented and market-friendly courses attract a larger number of students to these institutions. The religion-based universities, in general, levy a lower rate of fees as they receive subsidies from their parent organization, and at times the staff is drawn from the church hierarchy and may not draw salaries. For example, religion-affiliated universities of Kenya, Ghana, Uganda and Zimbabwe, among others, obtain financial support from their sponsors. However, some universities receive support from other sources. Certain private universities get a part of their resources from voluntary contributions, supplies in terms of equipment, etc. Some of the private universities are engaged in income-generating activities. Needless to say, student fees continue to be the dominant source of income for the private universities.

Tuition fees do vary between PIHEs. The for-profit institutions levy fees on the basis of full cost recovery and, if possible, to generate a profit. One can see that the level of fees in for-profit institutions is several times higher than the per capita income in the countries. In some instances, the PIHEs affiliated to universities or institutions abroad levy higher fees, and households are willing to pay the higher rate of fees provided the students get a degree from a foreign university. Fees levied by not-for-profit PIHEs are relatively low and affordable to many.

The profitability of private institutions depends on their savings on expenditure. Salaries (especially staff salaries) form a dominant part of the expenditure of educational institutions in the public domain. Many private institutions make savings by employing teaching staff on a part-time basis. In some of the church-affiliated universities of Africa, the people engaged in church activities teach without charging the university any payment or accept a salary lower than the market rate. This brings down expenditure and, at times, in the case of not-for-profit PIHEs, the benefits are passed on to students in the form of reduced fees.

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## PREFACE

In the past, universities in most countries were dependent on public funding for their growth and expansion. The economic crisis and resulting financial squeeze, as well as the structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s, generally reduced the ability of the public sector to provide continued and adequate funding support for an expanding higher education sector. Countries adopted varying strategies to cope with the situation. One of the important strategies common to many countries was the encouragement and promotion of private universities. The market-friendly reforms introduced in the countries of Africa after the structural adjustment in the developing world are also creating a situation conducive to the growth and expansion of the private sector. Many countries without legal provision for the operation of private higher education institutions have enacted laws in favour of establishing private universities/institutions.

Today, the private sector is the fastest growing segment in higher education within many countries. Private universities are established either by private foundations, by for-profit agencies, or by religious organizations. In a short period of 5-10 years, more private higher education institutions than public ones have been established in transition economies, making the private sector an important partner in the provision of higher education. Private institutions are established by philanthropic, religious and private organizations and foundations, as well as by for-profit private agencies.

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) initiated a study with the objective of analyzing the trends and patterns in the growth and expansion of private higher education. Case studies were carried out in CIS countries and in Kenya and Bangladesh, and these formed the basis for a policy forum organized by the Institute in Tbilisi in 2002. Many countries in Africa have experienced the establishment of several private universities in the recent past. The Institute, in collaboration with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the Association of African Universities (AAU),

## **Preface**

organized a policy forum in Accra towards the end of 2004. This forum provided an opportunity to bring together country teams consisting of policy-makers and researchers to discuss issues related to the private sector of higher education. This volume is based on the papers prepared for the policy forum.

I am grateful to ADEA and AAU for their support and collaboration in organizing the forum, the authors who prepared the research report, and to my colleague N.V. Varghese for directing and facilitating the preparation of the papers included in this volume.

Mark Bray  
Director, IIEP

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# GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA\*

*N.V. Varghese\*\**

## 1. Introduction

The significance of higher education becomes paramount as knowledge increasingly plays a key role in fostering economic and social development. An analysis of the role of higher education in the context of sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries (Bloom *et al.*, 2005) shows that expanding higher education contributes to promoting faster technological catch-up, improving a country's ability to maximize output and decrease the knowledge gap and poverty in the region. There seems to be increasing recognition of a positive contribution of higher education to economic development, and there is a strong case for expanding the base of tertiary education in the developing world. In the past, the expansion of higher education in sub-Saharan Africa was possible only through the public universities, which had a near monopoly in providing higher education in countries of Africa during their post-independence period. The financial crisis of the state compromised its ability to fund an expanding base of higher education in Africa. The market-friendly reforms and deregulation policies initiated under the structural adjustment programmes, the privatization of public sector units, and the encouragement of the private sector in the context of the globalization process created a stimulating environment for the emergence of the private higher education sector in Africa. This environment was supported by legislative measures to establish private institutions of higher education in many countries. At present, the private sector is a fast expanding segment of higher education in Africa, although it continues to account for a small share of enrolment

\* This is an abridged version of the theme paper presented at the Policy Forum on *Private Higher Education in Africa*, held on 2-3 November 2004 in Accra, Ghana.

\*\* Head, Higher Education and Specialized Training at the IIEP (UNESCO), Paris. The opinions and views expressed in this paper are of the author and hence should not necessarily be attributed to the institution where he is employed.

## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

in higher education. This paper attempts to analyze the growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa.

The plan of this paper is as follows. *Section 2* discusses the emergence of the private sector in higher education in Africa. *Section 3* considers the growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa. *Section 4* deals with the types of private higher education institutions in Africa. *Section 5* highlights the ownership patterns and orientation of private higher education institutions. *Section 6* is devoted to a discussion on the programmes of study and courses offered by the private institutions. *Sections 7 and 8* discuss teacher and student profiles, respectively, followed by a discussion on the quality of education provided by the private institutions in *Section 9*. *Section 10* analyzes the sources of financing private institutions, and the final section makes some concluding observations.

## **2. Emergence of private higher education in Africa**

The nation-building phase during the period following national independence in the African countries was led by the state and its public sector units. During this phase, many of the countries relied heavily on foreign capital and foreign personnel in crucial areas of national development. Recognizing the importance of qualified and trained manpower, especially to manage the economy and to plan and organize their educational systems, most countries emphasized the development of higher education. In fact, in many countries, there was a “state monopoly on tertiary education” (World Bank, 2002: 69). However, the monopoly of public universities was more of a universal phenomenon than one confined to the developing world or to the African countries. Indeed, nearly 95 per cent of the students in Western Europe, 80 per cent of the students in the USA, and most students in Africa and Asia still pursue their studies in public universities. The exception to this trend concerns some of the countries in East Asia and in Latin America, where private universities were well-established (Gonzalez, 1999).

The sub-Saharan African countries have one of the lowest GERs in tertiary education. In 2000, the GER in higher education in SSA was only 3.5 per cent (UIS, 2003). A majority of the African countries in 2000 have an enrolment ratio of less than 5 per cent. More importantly, the distance between African countries and countries in other regions has widened due to the slow progress made in this region.

State-sponsored development in general, and that in higher education in particular, was questioned from the 1980s onwards. The ascendancy of market ideology together with changes in Eastern Europe provided a smooth transition of the world economy to a process of globalization. One of the sectors leading the globalization process was the knowledge economy, which relied heavily on information technology. National competitiveness in a knowledge economy depended on the availability of persons with higher education. Further, the expansion of secondary education put pressure on higher education to expand, and more importantly, the rates of return analysis, which formed the theoretical basis for the diversion of public resources from higher to primary levels of education, indicated higher returns to higher education than to the primary sector in certain developed countries (Carnoy, 1999). The higher education sector and people with higher education took on new importance in the knowledge economy (UNESCO and World Bank, 2000) and the state was willing to invest more in higher education in the developed world. In the developing world, market-friendly reforms in the public universities and the encouragement of private sectors contributed to the revival of the higher education sector. In other words, privatization of public universities was a major change in the developed world and, together with encouragement and promotion of the private sector in higher education, also became a major change in higher education in the developing world.

There is a need to make a distinction between the privatization of public universities and private institutions of higher education (PIHEs). Privatization implies applying private sector or market principles in the operation and management of institutions of higher education while ownership rests within the public domain. The private

sector institutions, on the other hand, reflect the growth of the non-state sector in higher education. In most cases, this sector does not receive funding from the government; and in any case, they do not rely on state funding for their growth and expansion. Privatization can imply full pricing of the services with no funding support from state or quasi-privatization with partial funding by the state (Sothorn and Yiibing, 1995). The more common case in African countries is quasi-privatization. Even in universities such as Makerere in Uganda, which is very successful in mobilizing resources of its own, a major share of the resources continues to come from the state exchequer.

Privatization of public institutions has taken on different forms to be implemented in certain segments of the university sector. These include, for example, the withdrawal of subsidies and funding for living expenses; cost recovery and cost sharing measures through a sponsored students scheme as implemented in several countries in Africa; and the voucher system, among others. Private higher education includes different types, such as: state-supported private institutions; not-for-profit private institutions; religious agency-sponsored PIHES; for-profit higher education institutions, etc. (for a detailed discussion on this see Varghese, 2004b).

The private universities and institutions discussed in this paper are those non-state universities that are self-financing. These self-financing universities and institutions mushroomed in the 1990s. Many private universities that appeared in the 1990s were for-profit organizations or not-for profit institutions supported by religious bodies. There are numerous reasons for their emergence on a large scale (Varghese, 2004b). *First*, the inability of the public sector to satisfy the growing social demand for higher education has necessitated the entry of the private sector in order to expand access conditions. *Second*, the changing political view of large-scale public subsidies to social sectors will reduce investment possibilities in the 'productive sectors' and hence the overall growth potential of the economy. *Third*, in many countries, the demand for courses and subjects of study had changed and public universities were thus unable to respond to this phenomenon. *Fourth*,

in countries where the public sector is criticized for its inefficiency, the private sector is increasingly promoted for its efficiency in operation. *Fifth*, in many centrally-planned economies, the transition from state planning to market forces was also associated with the expansion of the private sector in higher education. In fact, privatization of education – especially higher education – was an integral part of the reform measures and, at times, of the conditionality for receiving external funding support during the transition period.

While political thinking favouring the application of market principles in higher education was a debatable issue in the 1980s, it became an operational principle guiding developments in higher education in the 1990s in Africa. Although private agencies were active in school education in sub-Saharan Africa (see Kitaev, 1999), the legal framework for the operation of private sector higher institutions did not exist in many of the countries in Africa until the 1990s. This was one of the constraints in the emergence of the private sector in higher education in Africa. The increasing social demand for higher education and the demand for a different type of education (James, 1991) led to initiating policy measures encouraging the private sector in many countries, which used to have a virtual monopoly of public higher education institutions.

Kenya was one of the few countries where private universities have a longer history and co-existed with public universities. In Kenya, the *Kamunge Report* (Presidential Working Party on Education, 1988) recommended cost sharing in education and the establishment of private and *Harambe* institutions. In 1991, the World Bank, in advancing credit assistance, prevailed upon the government to restrict the growth of enrolment in public universities to no more than 3 per cent per annum up to the year 2017. These developments encouraged the establishment of a large number of private universities and institutions in Kenya. Senegal passed a law in 1991 that enabled the establishment of private higher education institutions. This law was reinforced by another one in 1994. Consequently, many institutions of higher education were established in response to the social demand for professional,

### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

technical and vocational education. Legal provision for private higher education was made in Benin in the 1990s. A large number of private higher education institutions were established in the 1990s. As of now, there are 27 private tertiary-level institutions offering courses mostly in different vocations.

Nigeria had a prolonged history of legislating in favour of private higher education institutions. Although initiated in the 1980s, the aspirations for the establishment of private higher education institutions became legal and authorized only in the 1990s. When the law on private higher education became effective in the 1990s, many private higher education institutions were established (Jibril, 2003). In Uganda, too, the legislative measures on private higher education institutions gained momentum only in the 1990s. Similar cases emerged in countries such as Cameroon, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

An analysis of the developments in Africa points out that there was a strong move towards public universities during the period of independence. The 1990s saw the emergence of private sector institutions in Africa. It can be argued that the de-regulation policies under the structural adjustment programmes, the fiscal incapacity of the state to expand higher education through public universities, and the inability of public universities to respond immediately to household demand for certain market-friendly courses led to a movement towards increasing social demand for private higher education. The globalization process further reinforced the need to go beyond the public institutions of higher education. Private higher education institutions in many countries operate in collaboration with foreign universities and institutions located in Europe, the United States of America and Australia. This marks a definite shift in the conceptualization of the development of higher education from a national public entity to a market-based service to be offered on demand and for a price, and traded with other countries if necessary. The recent workshop on WTO/GATS and Higher Education in Africa (AAU, 2004) illustrated trends in the entrenchment of market principles in the provision of national and cross-border higher education in Africa.

### **3. Growth and expansion of the PIHEs in Africa**

The private sector is the fastest-growing segment in higher education in many countries in Africa. This is particularly true in terms of number of institutions. In fact, private universities outnumber public universities. However, in many instances, private universities continue to be small and account for a relatively low share of the total enrolment in higher education. The private sector, no doubt, has become an important sector in these economies. The role of the private sector is not confined to universities alone. In fact, the non-university sector is emerging as a good competitor in private sector higher education in many countries.

Initially, Kenya led the establishment of private higher education institutions in Africa. It was soon joined by Benin, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Mozambique and Cameroon. In general, Francophone African countries lagged behind their Anglophone counterparts in terms of a move towards the establishment of private higher education institutions in Africa (Levy, 2003). As of now, the sub-Saharan countries have more than 100 private universities, more than half of which were established in the 1990s. In fact, between 1991 and 1999, nearly 65 private universities were established in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2002).

It is difficult to obtain information on private sector institutions in many countries. *Table 3.1* provides information on a limited number of countries. The number of private higher education institutions is large in Benin, Cameroon and Tanzania, among others. In many countries, private institutions outnumber the public universities and institutions of higher education. However, in terms of enrolment, public institutions still dominate the scene in Africa.

**Table 3.1 Private higher education institutions and universities in Africa**

Country	Private
Benin	27
Cameroon	17
Ghana	28
Nigeria	13
Kenya	14
Senegal	48
Tanzania	10
Uganda	15
Zimbabwe	4

*Source:* Teferra and Altbach, 2003, and various papers included in the volume.

#### **4. Types of PIHEs in Africa**

There are at least three types of PIHEs in African countries. These are private universities, private colleges and non-university institutions of higher education, mostly in the area of vocational and professional training. Private universities offer courses leading to a degree, while courses offered in other types of institutions very often lead to a certificate or a diploma. The duration of courses in the non-university sector institutions is shorter and mostly vocational in nature. These three types of private institutions co-exist in the same country. For example, Nigeria at present has three private universities, and several private polytechnics and colleges of education. In Ghana, private colleges run diploma and certificate-level programmes (Effah, 2003). In countries such as Senegal, Benin and Cameroon, non-university private institutions are more common than private universities. Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe have a good presence of private universities. South Africa seems to have a preference for both types of institutions.

Some of the private institutions of higher education (PIHEs) are registered and recognized by public authorities. Some award degrees accredited by agencies responsible for accreditation. The status of the

PIHEs in this regard depends on the legal provisions created by the country. For example, Kenya has clearly laid down steps or stages in the registration of a private university to recognition and accreditation (Abagi and Nzomo, 2001). In South Africa, all private providers are now required to register their institutions and apply for accreditation for their programmes with the South African Qualification Authority. Zimbabwe has clearly set out the conditions for the establishment of private universities. The first private university of Zimbabwe (Africa University) was established by the United Methodist Church and formally inaugurated by the President of the country in 1994. This institution was conceived to be an international university, and hence it stipulates that nearly 60 per cent of the students and staff will be drawn from outside the country.

There are also instances where a good number of institutions are not registered and recognized, yet still operate and attract students. In Cameroon, for example, many PIHEs that are operating are not authorized to do so, as they do not meet the requirements regarding infrastructure, equipment, and staffing stipulated by the government; many of them are therefore operating illegally (Njeuma, 2003). There are similar cases in other countries. Many of the recent private institutions were established in response to the market-driven forces and are unplanned in many ways. Often, for-profit institutions operate in legally ambiguous settings. They admit students and teach courses without a right to offer degrees or certificates recognized by the government or the accreditation agencies (Levy, 2002).

Two factors contribute significantly to this state of affairs; first, inadequacies in the legal provisions for the establishment of PIHEs. This leads to a lack of clearly-defined operational principles and regulatory mechanisms for opening and operating PIHEs, and such situations provide fertile ground for the mushrooming of PIHEs. Second, the employment market recognizes training provided and certificates issued by PIHEs, even when they are not formally recognized by the public authorities. This happens especially when employment is generated increasingly in the private sector, which is the situation in many of the

African countries where norms and rules for recruitment can be more flexible than those in the public sector. In other words, the emergence of private sector dominance in creating employment opportunities gives scope for the continued operation of PIHEs, even when they are not formally recognized by the public authorities.

## **5. Ownership of institutions of private higher education**

The ownership pattern of private institutions of higher education varies among countries. An analysis of ownership patterns of PIHEs in many countries, including African countries (Varghese, 2004*b*), reveals that there are the following patterns of ownership: i) some PIHEs operate like multinationals; ii) some PIHEs operate in collaboration with foreign institutions; iii) some are foreign collaborations established through the government or public universities; iv) some are religious organizations; v) some are private firms established by nationals and operating within the national confines; and vi) some establish collaboration within institutions of the same country. Africa has private institutions that combine more than one of these patterns.

Many private universities and institutions of higher education are owned and operated by or affiliated to foreign universities. In one of the recent studies in Georgia (Sharvashidze, 2004), it was found that many private higher education institutions are founded either as a joint venture with universities or institutions abroad, notably in the USA, or are registered as a limited liability company with multiple partners or a collaborative project between the Georgian and other governments. Africa has a combination of these ownership patterns.

Some of the PIHEs in Africa are owned by organizations or agencies abroad. Malaysia is an example of a country with campuses operated by foreign universities and institutions (Lee, 1999). For example, Bond University in Australia, Monash University in Australia and Business School Netherlands in Holland are examples of foreign-owned private higher education institutions in Africa. The United States International University (USIU) in Kenya was established as a company incorporated as per the code of the state of California, USA. Similarly, Daystar Company

in the USA owns Daystar University of Kenya. In South Africa, the government has forced some of them to register as foreign companies (Levy, 2003). On the other hand, the African University of Zimbabwe is established as an international university following national rules and regulations.

Some of the PIHEs in Africa operate in collaboration with other universities or organizations abroad. For example, in South Africa, there has been a rapid proliferation of providers linked to institutions and universities in the UK, USA, and Australia (Subotsky, 2003). Some of the PIHEs offering two-year courses in industrial and professional subjects in Benin are affiliated to foreign universities and institutions located mainly in France. The Solusi University in Zimbabwe is affiliated to Andrew University, Michigan, in the USA. ENEA in Senegal collaborates with Suffolk University in the USA.

Some PIHEs collaborate with universities within the country to facilitate and award degrees. Some of the not-for-profit PIHEs in Ghana offer degree-level courses in collaboration with the University of Ghana. Co-operation between Africa University and the University of Zimbabwe is another example of local collaboration, although in this case, degrees are awarded independently by each of the institutions. At times, PIHEs have an affiliation with more than one university. For example, the Arupe College in Zimbabwe started as an exclusive male Jesuit private college and is affiliated to the University of Zimbabwe for certain degrees and to the Gregorian University of Rome for some other courses.

Religion-affiliated higher education is a precursor to many of the private higher education institutions in many countries. The religion-affiliated institutions are established either by Christian missions or Muslim organizations. In Africa, a larger number of institutions of higher education are supported or sponsored by the Christian organizations. The Catholic University in Kenya, the Uganda Christian University, the Adventist University in Cameroon, St Augustine University in Tanzania and Africa University of Zimbabwe are some of the examples of universities affiliated to the church. In fact, each of the countries

where private higher education is emerging as an important sector has experienced the establishment of several religion-affiliated universities. The religious agencies were confined to school-level education until recently. However, the PIHEs give scope for religious organizations to extend their influence to the higher education sector.

Daystar Company owns Daystar University in Kenya, with one of its objectives as providing academic leadership to the church in Africa. It raises funds from Daystar US and Daystar Canada for awarding scholarships to students in the University in Kenya. The Solusi University in Zimbabwe is a Seventh-Day Adventist university, and staff and their families are expected to be professed members of the same faith (Maunde, 2003).

## **6. Programmes of study and courses offered by the PIHEs**

Academic interest and advances in the frontiers of knowledge mold the programmes of study and courses offered in public universities in general. Private motivations and financial considerations determine the courses offered by the private universities. Since many of them are self-financing and profit-generating, they must offer courses that have a premium both in the education market and on the labour market. The demand for particular courses and their prices (fees levied) in the education market are determined by the employability of the graduates. In this sense, the education market and labour market give signals to the private institutions, and their success depends upon their ability to respond quickly to such signals.

An analysis of courses offered in private universities in Africa reveals either a commercial consideration or a religious orientation. It seems the primary objectives of establishing a university are reflected in the curriculum offered by the private institutions. The for-profit institutions cater to the private business enterprises. Needless to say, the PIHEs of the for-profit category and those not affiliated to religious bodies offer programmes that are market-friendly. Courses in business administration, computer sciences, accounting, marketing, economics, communication, etc., are very common in for-profit private universities.

One of the features of private higher education in African countries, as mentioned earlier, is the presence of the non-university sector in higher education. In countries such as Benin, Cameroon, Senegal and Ghana, professional and vocational courses are very popular in the private institutions of higher education. These institutions offer selected courses and are better understood as 'boutique' institutions (Thaver, 2003) as against the 'supermarket model' of public universities.

In general, the private universities of recent origin offer courses that require less investment in terms of infrastructure and equipment. This contrasts with some of the private initiatives in other countries, such as India, where engineering and medical colleges, which require a high level of investment in infrastructure and other facilities, are common in the private sector. At times, the courses offered and the affiliation of the university with institutions abroad help the universities to increase their fee rates. The trend in PIHEs in Africa shows that they mostly offer courses in subject areas that require lower levels of investment in infrastructure facilities.

The religion-affiliated universities offer courses focusing on religious epistemologies – either on Islamic or on Christian beliefs and traditions. For example, the courses offered by the Islamic University of Uganda incorporate Islamic perspectives, with the political science curriculum offering a module on Islamic political thought, and so on (Thaver, 2003). Catholic universities in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Uganda reflect this orientation towards religious studies. The Africa University of Zimbabwe started with two faculties – the Faculty of Theology and the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The courses offered and the degrees awarded in theology assist men and women who would like to join the church hierarchy.

It must be noted, however, that even in the church-affiliated or Islamic universities, the courses are not confined to religious studies. Most of these universities also offer courses in other subject areas. For example, a majority of students at Daystar University in Kenya (nearly 85 per cent of students) opt for employment-oriented courses and a

small proportion of students seek religion-oriented courses. The same is the case with other universities.

## **7. Teaching staff in private institutions of higher education**

Private institutions very often operate with a limited number of staff members. One of the unique features of the PIHEs is that they have very few regular staff, a large number of part-time teachers and a limited number of full-time teachers. Many private universities in Africa rely heavily on part-time teachers. At times, some of the private universities in Africa are headed by senior professors from the public universities. In many private universities, there seems to be a positive correlation between the share of part-time teachers and doctor-level qualified teachers. This is mainly because many part-timers are drawn from public universities, and professors in public universities are well qualified. Relying on the teaching staff from public universities is a good mechanism to ensure quality in teaching and savings in expenditure. However, the question on the impact of such a practice on public universities needs to be analyzed.

There are exceptions to this trend of relying heavily on part-time teachers, with some recently-established private universities having a majority of regular staff. There are instances where full-time staff members are recruited from public universities. Certain universities established as international universities have a high share of full-time staff members. Arupe College in Zimbabwe has international staff from the USA, UK, Germany, Tanzania and India, among others. The Africa University of Zimbabwe stipulates that nearly 60 per cent of its staff members should be from abroad. In some of the universities, such as Solusi University, staff and their families, who are members of the Seventh-Day Adventist faith, must give tithes to the church (Maunde, 2003).

The profitability of private institutions depends on the savings they make on expenditure. Salaries (especially staff salaries) form a dominant part of the expenditure of educational institutions in the public domain.

Many private institutions make savings by employing teaching staff on a part-time basis or relying on church-affiliated staff members.

## **8. Student profile in PIHEs**

Most of the private institutions are self-financing. Student fees form the main source of income for many of the PIHEs. Since they are self-financing institutions, fees charged are also high. Therefore, in general, students coming to private institutions are those with the capacity to pay.

In many countries, competition for admission to public universities is very high. In general, those who are not admitted to public universities seek admission to PIHEs. In other words, the chances are that the academic profile of the participants may be lower in PIHEs when compared with their counterparts in the public universities. Some of the PIHEs in Africa attract foreign students. The Africa University and Solusi University are examples of institutions that attract foreign students, especially from neighbouring countries. Some of the universities, given their religious orientation, attract students from the same community or denomination. This is the case with students in the Faculty of Theology. In certain cases, students in the Faculty of Theology are already a part of the church hierarchy.

There is a general belief that many of the private universities attract more male students than female students. The gender balance depends on the subjects offered and fees levied. Courses offered in the Faculties of Arts and Humanities with low levels of fees attract a larger number of female candidates. Courses offered in the Faculty of Theology attract a larger number of male students. Courses such as arts and the humanities, communication, community development and marketing are areas in which women outnumber men. However, courses offered in economics, business management, information technology and accounting attract more male candidates.

At Daystar University, Kenya, female students outnumber male students. They account for 59 per cent of the total. However, at the postgraduate level, the male share is marginally higher. Even in USIS,

Kenya, female candidates outnumber male candidates. This is an interesting trend because the GER of females is half of that of the males in Kenya. In CIS countries, the participation of females outnumbers that of males in higher education, and hence this is not a significant finding for these countries. Perhaps the social background of the students may explain this trend in Kenya.

Why do students seek admission to PIHEs? The first and most important reason is that they expect to be employed soon after graduation. That is, investment in education in PIHEs improves the chances of avoiding unemployment. Further, if the PIHEs are well established and of better academic credibility than the public universities, students consider that it is an opportunity for them to find employment in lucrative private-sector jobs, multinational corporations and/or international agencies. This is all the more true if the PIHE is owned by a foreign university or operates in collaboration with them. These considerations prompt students to pay high prices for these courses. They are also highly motivated to take advantage of the new opportunities provided to them.

## **9. Quality of education in PIHEs**

It is very difficult to generalize on the quality of PIHEs. They vary widely, depending on the agency responsible for establishing the university, the legislative requirements for infrastructure and other facilities, etc. The quality of education institutions is based on various factors, such as the level of infrastructural facilities, the quality of programmes offered, the qualification levels of teachers, the performance of students in their evaluation while in the university, and their performance once on the labour market.

Many of the countries in Africa have strict legislation on the infrastructural facilities to be provided. Some of the PIHEs do not comply with these stipulations and are not recognized. Kenya has very stringent regulations for establishing a private university. These stipulations apply to the programme, qualification levels of the staff, infrastructure, etc. In Cameroon, many PIHEs are not recognized since they do not comply

with the infrastructural requirements as stipulated in the regulations. Some of the PIHEs operate with very limited facilities.

One of the features of PIHEs in Africa is that a majority of them offer courses in subject areas that require limited investment in infrastructure. The courses in theology, humanities and the social sciences demand fewer facilities than science, engineering and medical areas. However, it must be mentioned that, in terms of facilities, some of the PIHEs are better equipped than public institutions in certain countries. Similarly, the technology used and the teaching/learning process are better than what one finds within public universities.

Many countries in Africa have already established accreditation agencies and regulations insisting that the courses offered by the PIHEs be subject to close scrutiny by these agencies and accredited by them. For example, the regulations in Kenya are very strict in this regard. Private institutions in Kenya are formally accredited by the accreditation agencies. South Africa, too, regulates the quality of programmes offered in PIHEs through the accreditation requirements. Some of the private institutions have foreign collaboration, and certificates are jointly awarded or are awarded by the foreign university or institution.

The academic qualification of teachers is another important area affecting the quality of education offered. The PIHEs in Africa are better placed in this regard for at least two reasons. First, many of them depend heavily on part-time staff drawn mainly from public universities. Second, well-established PIHEs hire qualified teachers, at times doctoral degree holders, as their staff. Daystar University in Kenya is a good example of this trend. Needless to say, the conditionality of scrutiny by the accreditation agency itself acts as a good quality-regulating mechanism. However, the facilities for staff development and research opportunities for staff are rather limited in PIHEs.

It is interesting to note that although many of the students in the PIHEs have a lower-level academic profile than those in the public universities, their academic performance, in general, is better. Drop-out rates are low and graduation rates high in almost all PIHEs. This may be

partly due to the fact that fees mean that only those who really want to pursue a study programme seek admission to the PIHEs, and be partly due to the fact that the students, in general, are highly motivated and perhaps more motivated than their counterparts in the public universities. Private institutions very often monitor student progress more closely than what is being done in public universities.

One important criterion for the success of the private institutions is the employability of its graduates and the employment rate among them (for a discussion on recent trends in the employment of university graduates in Africa see Al-Samarrai and Bennel, 2003). Data on these are not readily available. However, the indications are that the PIHE graduates find jobs more easily than those from the public institutions. This is mainly due to the fact that the PIHEs offer employment-oriented courses and respond more quickly to the changes in the employment market than do public institutions. Moreover, the demand for admission will decline if the unemployment rate among graduates of PIHEs is very high. The very fact that the PIHEs are continuing to expand indicates that people have a positive perception of the PIHEs in terms of offering courses that will enable their children to get a job.

### **10. Financing of PIHEs**

For-profit private universities operate like an enterprise generating profit. Tuition fees form the financial backbone of many private institutions. The total income of private institutions is determined, therefore, by the number of students and the rate of tuition levied. For any given level of tuition fees, these institutions attempt to attract a larger number of students in order to maximize profitability. This is achieved, as discussed earlier, through introducing courses that are popular on the employment market and not offered by traditional public universities. Studies in Asia (Sothorn and Yibing, 1995) and case studies in CIS countries (Varghese 2004*b*) confirm that student fees form the backbone of financing the PIHEs in the CIS countries, in Africa and in Asia.

The religion-based universities, in general, levy a lower rate of fees since they get subsidies from their parent organization, and at times the staff are drawn from the church hierarchy who may not draw salaries. For example, religion-affiliated universities in Kenya, Ghana, Uganda and Zimbabwe receive financial support from their sponsors. However, some universities obtain support from other sources. Some private universities get a part of their resources from voluntary contributions, supplies in terms of equipment, etc. Some of the private universities are engaged in income-generating activities. Needless to say, student fees continue to be the dominant source of income for the private universities.

Tuition fees do vary between PIHEs, and at times, the variation is substantial. The for-profit institutions levy fees on the basis of full cost recovery and, if possible, to generate a profit. In Kenya, the average rate of fees levied by for-profit institutions for a year of study is around US\$1,800/, with the USIU levying a fee of US\$2,800/ from students coming from Africa and around US\$4,800/ from students coming from the USA (Njome, 2003). One can see that the level of fees in for-profit institutions is several times higher than the per capita income in the countries. In some instances, the PIHEs affiliated to universities or institutions abroad levy higher fees, and households are willing to pay the higher rate of fees provided the students obtain a degree from a foreign university. Fees levied by not-for-profit PIHEs are rather low and affordable to many. For example, the fee charged by the University of Solusi is US\$55, which is one of the lowest, and certainly lower than fees levied by public universities including the University of Zimbabwe (US\$272). They receive contributions from the religious organizations.

The profitability of private institutions depends on the savings they make on expenditure. Salaries (especially staff salaries) form a dominant part of the expenditure of educational institutions in the public domain. Many private institutions count on this. They make savings by employing teaching staff on a part-time basis. In some of the church-affiliated universities of Africa, the people engaged in church activities teach without charging the university any payment or accept

a lower salary than the market rate. This brings down expenditure and, at times, in the case of not-for-profit PIHEs, the benefits are passed onto students in the form of reduced fees.

## **11. Concluding observations**

An analysis of the developments of higher education in Africa shows that there was a strong move towards public universities and an emphasis on the national system of education during the period following independence. The establishment of a public university was seen as a sign of national pride and a symbol of self-reliance in many countries. However, the monopoly of the public sector institutions in higher education came to an end towards the last decade of the twentieth century, when private sector institutions emerged as a viable alternative. It can be argued that the de-regulation policies under the structural adjustment programmes, the fiscal incapacity of the state to expand higher education through public universities and the inability of public universities to respond immediately to the household demand for employment-oriented courses created an environment conducive to the emergence and expansion of private higher education in Africa.

At present, the private sector is a fast-expanding segment of higher education in Africa. In terms of number of institutions, they surpass public institutions in many countries. However, in terms of enrolment, the PIHEs still continue to represent a small segment of higher education. The private sector operates both types of institutions, training people in specific vocations, colleges and universities. In general, the PIHEs are small in size and offer mostly market-friendly courses in a limited number of subject areas.

The PIHEs operating in African countries can be broadly categorized into two types: for-profit and not-for-profit institutions. In general, for-profit PIHEs levy high fees, offer market-friendly courses and create a surplus. Many of them operate in collaboration with foreign universities and institutions located in Europe, the United States of America and Australia. There is a fairly close correlation between the existence of not-for-profit PIHEs and the involvement of religious agencies in the

provision of higher education. Most of the not-for-profit PIHEs have an affiliation to a church or to an Islamic institution. They offer courses in theology and related areas. In addition, they offer courses in humanities, philosophy and market-friendly areas such as economics, accounting and business administration. Many of them levy relatively low levels of fees, sometimes lower than those charged by public universities.

Operational efficiency of PIHEs should be higher than that of the public universities. The for-profit PIHEs ensure their operational efficiency primarily by increasing the gap between the fees collected and the operational cost of the institution. Staff costs being the major item of expenditure, they try to minimize their spending on this count. This is done through relying heavily on part-time teachers. In other words, the level of profit at a given level of fees is a good indication of the operational efficiency of the for-profit PIHEs. The not-for-profit PIHEs, especially the church-affiliated institutions, rely on staff from the church hierarchy in some of the faculties. In general, students' studies are more closely monitored in PIHEs than in public institutions. Generally, the graduation rate among students in the PIHEs is high and employment prospects better. The superior performance of graduates both in examinations and in the employment market gives the PIHEs higher credibility and this credibility is an investment in their own future. There is also a social and economic compulsion for the PIHEs to perform better, since their existence depends on their capacity to attract more and more students.

The emergence of PIHEs raises issues related to national development from a broader perspective. There are areas of study that are important for the country but not friendly to the market, and these courses may not be offered by the private sector. The multi-faculty public universities service the society in many of these areas better than a typical PIHE can do. Private universities are changing the conception of a university with multiple faculties, departments and subject areas of study. As pointed out by one of the authors, the conception of the university is changing from a supermarket model offering all options, to a boutique model where only limited items will be catered to. Many of the PIHEs

offer more training rather than a deeper understanding of the subject area from a theoretical point of view. Their main function is knowledge transmission rather than contributing to knowledge generation.

Teaching is the main function carried out by the PIHEs. They rarely emphasize research. The public universities are engaged both in teaching and research organizations. The PIHEs do not have infrastructural facilities to carry out research. Many of them rely on part-time teachers and do not have regular staff to carry out these responsibilities. It is important to draw the implications for national development if institutions of higher education are confined only to teaching responsibilities in limited disciplines. It is important to develop a vision (Mama and Ann-Marea, 2003) of future society and the role of university education in shaping its citizens.

There are issues related to PIHEs that move towards a more equal society. Given the higher level of fees levied by the PIHEs, especially the for-profit ones, private universities will attract students from a better social-economic background. This creates a cleavage between those who can afford higher education and those who cannot. Again, since the employment market will reward those who have degrees/diplomas from these institutions, inequalities in opportunities for admissions to these PIHEs will have a negative effect on equity, especially in the long term. In other words, the application of the ability to pay principle in admissions can contribute to widening intergenerational inequalities.

Another issue relates to gender parity in admissions. In some of the countries, gender disparities are wider in PIHEs than in public universities. However, this cannot be generalized. Gender parity depends on the level of fees and the types of courses offered. Since many of the PIHEs are not-for-profit, they offer courses in women-friendly subject areas. In fact, in some of the universities, such as Daystar in Kenya, women outnumber men in enrolment.

Do private universities contribute to the weakening of public universities? One of the important reasons for establishing PIHEs is to absorb the excess social demand for higher education that cannot

be satisfied by the public universities. However, there are instances, especially in Kenya, where enrolment in public universities has declined in the recent past. Nonetheless, this cannot be generalized as enrolment in many public universities indicates that they are continuing to grow despite the existence of private universities. Another aspect of the problem is that PIHEs rely heavily on part-time teachers drawn mainly from public universities. There are instances where students in public universities have launched agitation on this issue. This is an area that must be approached cautiously, especially in a situation where the salaries of university teachers in the public sector are rather low. On the other hand, relying on teachers from public universities has a positive influence on the quality of instruction provided in the PIHEs. However, whether such an arrangement negatively affects the quality of education provided through public universities is an issue which requires further discussion.

All of these issues lead us to think about the need to develop a realistic and sustainable policy towards the expansion of private higher education. State funding was assured and subsidies provided to promote higher education when the public sector was dominant in development, employing a major share of university graduates. If the same logic is extended now, the private sector, which employs a major share of the university graduates, should pay for graduates and their education. The profit from public education accrues to the private sector when they are the major consumers of the product – the graduates. If this principle is adopted, the alternative is to request the private sector to pay for the running of public universities. When the private sector acquires physical capital, they are willing to pay for the capital asset and its use. However, when they hire human capital, they pay only for its use. Therefore, there is a case for requesting the private sector to pay for those who are educated in the public universities.

The new realities of the globalization process reinforce the need for the continued expansion of higher education in Africa. The enrolment disparity in higher education between African countries and the developed world is increasing. Therefore, there is a need to expand

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higher education and a case for seeking alternative arrangements to expand the system, if public resources are not available. Fortunately, there are no conflicts between public and PIHEs in many areas of their operation. The courses offered and organizational arrangements of provision are different in the two setups. Therefore, a peaceful co-existence of the two sectors may be a viable and realistic alternative.

Will the PIHEs be able to replace the public sector in higher education? The chances of this seem to be limited. The public universities make a significant contribution to broader objectives of national development, and this cannot be substituted by private universities. The public universities, in general, provide secular education irrespective of the orientation of the student, whereas many of the not-for-profit PIHEs are affiliated to religious bodies – either Islamic or Christian (Thaver, 2003). It is important to establish linkages between religious orientation, national development goals and social progress objectives.

The PIHEs are a reality in Africa. Their growth and expansion indicate absorption of both excess social demand and differentiated demand for higher education. In this sense, they do not really compete with the public universities. However, some trends with possible long-term implications must be underlined. First, the state provides secular education, whereas private universities, at times, offer religious education. The growth of private universities in Africa is closely linked to a trend of religious revivalism taking place in the region. Second, the for-profit universities levy a high rate of fees, making it difficult for students from the lower socio-economic background to participate. Since higher education has an impact on inter-generational income distribution, such a selection process may lead to growing inequalities. Third, private higher education becomes an easy route for many foreign transnational institutions to enter and remain in the education business in Africa. This needs to be seen in the context of GATS (Varghese, 2005) and trade in education. While many countries are trying to protect the national character of their higher education system, the entry of foreign universities through the PIHEs may denote a move in a different direction.

In the ultimate analysis, the private sector alone should not be entrusted with the responsibility of deciding on their participation in the production of public good. Public authorities need to articulate the public-private role in higher education. The state must intervene to provide regulation and to develop a framework for the operation of private universities. Although the private universities reduce the financial role of the state, they may increase the regulatory role of the state in provision, quality assurance and student support systems. A more regulated private sector and a clearly-defined division of labour between public and PIHEs will help serve the long-term national interests in a more appropriate way.

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## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN GHANA

*P. Effah\**

### 1. Introduction

The term private higher education is subject to many different meanings or interpretations. It may generally be understood as the increase of private mechanisms of finance and control of higher education systems or as the growth of private higher education systems worldwide (Altbach, 1999, cited by Alma Maldonado-Maldonado, 2004). Privatization in higher education may also be identified in terms of fees charged, business behaviour, philanthropy, or increase of private institutions (Jones, 1992). Another variation is the lack of ownership or regulation by the state.

There are situations, such as in India, where private colleges are affiliated with public universities or, as in the Netherlands and Belgium, where religiously-affiliated private institutions are funded, in part, by the state. A universal definition of private higher education, therefore, becomes more difficult. Such considerations may well have led Drew (1999) to the conclusion that the time has come for the public-private distinction in education to be recognized as a binary opposition that is over-simplistic, hierarchical and ripe for deconstruction. As the structure and operation of governing boards and the disposition of legal control are what radically distinguish one from the other, rather than the source of funds for financial support, the expression 'privately-controlled', is now widely used to express the difference between private and public institutions (Pattillo, 1990; cited by Drew, 1999).

### 2. Private sector in higher education in Ghana

Private sector participation in tertiary education in Ghana is more recent than that in basic education. Indeed, the first formal basic education in Ghana was delivered in private institutions set up by either individuals or organizations such as churches.

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There has been an upsurge in private higher education institutions in Ghana in recent years. This has been caused largely by increased demand for tertiary education resulting from high population growth and expanded enrolment at the basic and secondary levels, which far exceeds the capacity of the public institutions. Enrolment in universities increased by 436 per cent, from 11,857 in 1991/1992 to 63,576 in the 2003/2004 academic year, while in the polytechnics the increase was of 1,463 per cent, from 1,558 in 1993, when they were upgraded to tertiary status, to 24,353 in the 2003/2004 academic year. In terms of demand for places in universities and polytechnics, the available figures compiled by the National Council for Tertiary Education suggest that, between 1996/1997 and 2003/2004, the percentage of applicants admitted into the universities in Ghana ranged from 25 to 40, thus turning out a large majority of the youth who qualify for higher education.

A university built for 3,000 students is currently coping with about 24,000 students without corresponding expansion in academic and physical facilities, overstretching existing facilities to their elastic limits.

Globalization and the information and communication technology revolution has influenced the development of private higher education worldwide. International providers of higher education are increasingly seeking to establish branches elsewhere, particularly in developing countries. Nearly 60 per cent of Brazil's tertiary-level students are currently enrolled in private institutions. Indonesia has 57 public universities and more than 1,200 private universities, with enrolment of more than 60 per cent. In South Africa, roughly 50 per cent of the country's students are enrolled in private institutions (World Bank, 2000). These developments are spreading fast to other parts of Africa.

Private participation in tertiary education is regulated by a number of Acts. The Education Act, 1961 (Act 87; as amended in 1965) empowers the Minister of Education to approve the establishment of private tertiary institutions, close institutions, and make regulations for the establishment, management and conduct of the affairs of the institutions. Following educational reforms introduced in 1987, these

functions are in practice performed through the National Accreditation Board (NAB), established in 1993 by PNDCL 317. Detailed regulations are provided in the Legislative Instrument (L.I. 1700) of 2000. The Board is specifically charged with the responsibility for the accreditation of both public and private tertiary institutions with regard to the contents and standards of their programmes and the determination of the equivalences of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications offered by institutions in Ghana or elsewhere.

Among the critical elements that NAB focuses attention on in its accreditation exercise are: minimum entry requirements for admission; academic programmes; staffing; physical facilities and equipment; library facilities; employment prospects for graduates; and funding levels.

### **3. Size of the private sector**

In the past, little information was available on private higher education institutions. In a report prepared for the World Bank (2001), LaRocque quotes a study on private tertiary education in Ghana in September 1995 as estimating the number of private tertiary institutions, either in operation or planned, at 80, 11 of which had received accreditation from the NAB. At that time, the Board was less than two years old and struggling through teething problems. This may, therefore, explain why many institutions were operating without authority. The situation has improved significantly. As of 31 January 2004, 28 private tertiary institutions had received accreditation from NAB, categorized broadly into: university colleges – nine; theological colleges – six; tutorial colleges – nine; distance learning institutions – two; and journalism/screen arts – two. The indications are that the trend in growth will continue.

In terms of student enrolment, the private tertiary institutions, understandably, tend to have far smaller numbers than the public institutions. From an estimated total enrolment of 5,000 in 1995, student enrolment in eight of the 28 accredited private tertiary institutions as of the 2003/2004 academic year was 5,383. These eight are the largest institutions in terms of enrolment. It would, therefore, be safe to

estimate that the current total student enrolment in all 28 accredited institutions may not exceed 8,000 compared to the over 80,000 in public tertiary institutions.

#### **4. Ownership patterns in private higher education**

Generally, private tertiary institutions in Ghana are split among those not-for-profit and those for-profit. The institutions that are not-for-profit are mostly owned by religious bodies and are primarily aimed at providing service and teaching. Examples of these are the Central University College, All Nations University College, Methodist University College and the Islamic University College. These institutions teach mainly degree and diploma programmes, and derive their revenues from tuition fees as well as charitable donations that are sourced both internally and externally. Although these institutions are not-for-profit, they charge far higher fees than the public higher institutions. There are also a number of theological colleges in the country that are not-for-profit.

The for-profit institutions are mainly tutorial colleges that offer mostly foreign programmes leading to the award of international diplomas and professional certificates. Examples are the Graduate School of Management, which offers programmes leading to the award of diplomas certified from the UK, and the Ghana School of Marketing, where the programme offered leads to the award of a certificate from the Chartered Institute of Marketing in the United Kingdom. These institutions derive their revenues mainly from tuition fees, which are, on average, high.

There are also a few for-profit international providers of private higher education. Two of these institutions offer distance learning programmes leading to international certificates.

#### **5. Agencies providing private higher education**

In Ghana, the agencies that provide private higher education are mostly religious bodies, for-profit organizations, and international providers.

### **Religious bodies**

Christian missions pioneered private participation in tertiary education in Ghana. There has been an upsurge in the desire, particularly by the religious bodies, to establish private universities. By March 2004, the National Accreditation Board had granted accreditation to six theological colleges and nine private tertiary institutions, mostly owned by religious bodies, to offer degree programmes in religious or theological studies, administration and accountancy, among others.

The Catholic, Protestant, Charismatic and Muslim communities in Ghana have established their own universities. Most of these institutions started primarily as a mechanism for delivering religious or theological education, but have since moved into the provision of a wider range of job-oriented courses such as accounting, business administration, computer studies, marketing and others.

### **International providers**

There are few international private tertiary institutions in the country; these are owned by international bodies. An example is the NIIT Franchise in Accra, which has been set up as part of an information technology training and education network of NIIT around the world to offer fee-paying short courses and two-year professional diplomas. New York University has also opened a campus in Accra where its students are given an opportunity to attend special courses at the University of Ghana, Legon, and the National Film and Television Institute.

### **Linkages with universities abroad**

One of the requirements for the accreditation of a new institution is its affiliation to an established university, either local or abroad. Sixteen of the 28 accredited institutions are affiliated with external institutions and professional bodies. Some of these private institutions thus have linkages with universities abroad for teaching, the awarding of degrees, twinning and franchising. As with the public universities, most of the private tertiary institutions invite lecturers from recognized universities abroad on sabbatical, visiting, or adjunct lectureship positions to teach.

Others also serve as external examiners to ensure that high standards are achieved and maintained.

## **6. Financing and management of private higher education**

This section discusses courses offered, staffing situation and funding, and states the case for private participation in tertiary education.

### **Pattern of course offerings**

One significant feature of private higher education in Ghana is the pattern of course offerings. The emphasis has been on courses in business administration and management, computer science and information technology, the study of religion and theology, and professional programmes in accountancy and marketing. As shown in *Table 6.1*, 12 of the 28 private institutions, representing 43 per cent, offer degree programmes in business administration and management, followed by theology and computer studies – in that order. Professional courses in accounting and marketing come next.

The reason for the concentration on business administration, information technology and professional courses is difficult to discern. These are career-oriented and job-related programmes that prepare students directly for the labour market. This is particularly important in an era in which graduate unemployment is increasingly becoming an issue of concern. It is noted, for example, that in a recent study undertaken under the auspices of the Association of African Universities in six African countries including Ghana, published in the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, graduate unemployment was estimated at 8 per cent for graduates in the humanities and natural sciences and only 3 per cent for business graduates (Mugabushaka *et al.*, 2003: 57).

The focus on religious studies and theology is not unexpected. Religious bodies pioneered both basic and secondary education in Ghana and have decided to complete the cycle by moving into tertiary education. They are also concerned about inculcating moral training at the tertiary level.

As *Table 6.1* shows, none of the private higher education institutions offer programmes in engineering, medicine and sciences. This is against the background that government policy is to achieve a science/arts student enrolment ratio of 60:40 at the tertiary level. The available figures show that in the public universities the science/arts ratio worsened from 43:57 in 1996/1997 to 34:66 in the 2003/2004 academic year. The same pattern is observed in the polytechnics, with corresponding ratios of 55:45 in 1996/1997 and 41:59 in 2003/2004. What this means is that an increasing number of students are studying arts and humanities rather than science at the tertiary level.

**Table 6.1 Number of institutions offering programmes**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>MA/MBA</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Diploma</b>
Administration/management/commerce	2	12	4
Computer science/information technology		6	8
Religious studies/theology	1	10	6
Police practice and security practice		1	1
<b>Professional qualifications</b>			
ACCA		3	
CIMA		1	
Chartered Institute purchasing and supply		1	
Screen arts/journalism		1	
Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM)		4	
Natural sciences	-	-	-
Medicine and applied sciences	-	-	-

*Source:* Institutional data.

The high initial capital outlay required and generally high cost of running science and engineering programmes are among the major reasons why private tertiary institutions are unable to participate in engineering and science and technology programmes.

Given that less than 3 per cent of young people aged 17-21 are enrolled in tertiary institutions in Ghana, private participation in higher education, even in the arts and humanities, should be encouraged. What

needs to be done is to resource the public tertiary institutions to expand their science and technology programmes to train more students in these areas. Private tertiary institutions should be encouraged to participate in science and technology programmes.

Already, discussions within the private sector point to a bright future. The Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist and Valley View universities are seriously preparing to start programmes in agriculture, medicine and science.

### **Staffing**

The question of recruitment and retention of staff, particularly faculty, in both public and private tertiary institutions is a serious one. It is estimated that, within the next 10 years, over 55 per cent of the academic staff of the institutions of higher learning will reach the mandatory retirement age of 60 (UCC Corporate Strategic Plan January 2003). This situation is not helped by the extremely low rate of replication of the academic staff through the training of postgraduate students and the generally unattractive conditions of service in the public institutions.

*Table 6.2*, which shows the staffing situation in six selected private tertiary institutions, indicates that the situation is generally encouraging. For example, at Central University College, there are 56 academic staff, made up of nine PhD, eight MPhil, 12 MA/MSc, seven professional and other staff, while Valley View comes next with a total of 45 academic staff. Of the 14 academic staff at the Islamic University College, Ghana, eight are full-time, with five for the religious studies programme and three for business administration, while six are part-time for the two programmes. Ashesi University College has nine full-time and 16 adjunct and visiting academic staff. Public universities and industry serve as the source of part-time teachers for the private institutions. In the majority of cases, the teachers who have taken up headships and deanships in the private institutions have retired from the public universities.

Some of the private tertiary institutions are able to invite visiting faculty from Europe and America to take short-term teaching appointments. Eight such teaching appointments were made by Ashesi University College between 2002 and 2003.

The evidence from data available from the private tertiary institutions confirms that the qualifications of their staff are comparable to those in the public institutions. In terms of staff-student ratios, the situation is better in the private than in the public institutions, given the large number of students in the latter. Again, in terms of pay structure, the private institutions offer better salaries and incentives, ranging from 20 to 100 per cent higher than rates obtained in public institutions. A major concern is that many of the lecturers in the public tertiary institutions are the same people offering part-time service in the private institutions. This can have serious implications for quality.

A similar pattern may be observed with regard to the non-academic staff. One of the features of public tertiary institutions is the large number of non-academic staff. Retrenchment and redeployment exercises carried out in the late 1980s did not solve the problem. *Table 6.2* shows that generally the non-academic staff in private institutions are few, with many having degrees and professional qualifications.

### **Sources of funding**

Among the distinguishing features of a private tertiary institution is its source of funding. *Table 6.3* shows the funding sources of selected private tertiary institutions, the predominant source being student fees, which range from 20 per cent at All Nations University to 95 per cent at Wisconsin University. Other sources include: support from abroad as high as 50 per cent at Islamic University College Ghana, and grants from sponsors, the highest recipient being All Nations University with 70 per cent of its funding from this source and donations. In addition, the Ashesi University College has a foundation. Private tertiary institutions in Ghana are free to set their own fee levels. Tuition fees range from 1,000 United States dollars (US\$1,000) to US\$4,000 per year. Ashesi charges US\$2,000 per semester for a degree programme, while at NIIT, students pay around US\$1,500 for a two-year diploma programme.

**Table 6.2 Number of academic and non-academic staff**

<b>Academic staff</b>							
<b>Institution</b>	<b>PhD</b>	<b>MPhil</b>	<b>MSc/ MA</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> degree</b>	<b>Professional qualifications</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
Valley View	9	8	18	6	4		45
Islamic	7	7	-	-	-	-	14
Wisconsin	4	6	4	1	-	-	15
Catholic	9	-	11	5	-	-	25
Ashesi	3	5	2	-	-	1	11
Central	11	8	12	7	7	11	56
All Nations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Presby	4	-	6	1	-	-	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>Non-academic staff</b>							
Valley View	4	2	9	11	27	31	84
Islamic	1	-	4	1	1	3	10
Wisconsin	3	-	3	2	4	2	14
Catholic	2	1	3	4	2	1	13
Central	-	-				-	14
Ashesi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All Nations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Presby	1	1	1	1	1	14	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>154</b>

*Source:* Institutional data.

Although private tertiary institutions are funded entirely from private sources, the government provides support to the institutions in several other ways. In Ghana, since the establishment of the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund), a major landmark in the history of education in Ghana in 2002, students pursuing accredited programmes in private tertiary institutions are eligible for the same student loans operated through the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) as their colleagues in public tertiary institutions. The GETFund is 20 per cent of value added tax set aside for the development of

education in Ghana. Currently, the level of the student loan is the same, irrespective of need and course. A process has been initiated to review the scheme to make it possible for students in greater need to have access to higher loans.

**Table 6.3 Sources of funding by percentage**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Student fees</b>	<b>Donations</b>	<b>Grants from sponsor/s</b>	<b>Support from abroad</b>	<b>Others</b>
Valley View	83	-	10	3	4
Islamic	50	-	-	50	-
Wisconsin	95	-	-	-	5.40
Catholic	60	0.35	23.48	7.38	9.02
All Nations	20	2	70	8	-
Ashesi	-	-	-	-	-
Central	93	4	-	-	3
Presby	29.8	7.5	59.7	1.5	1.5

*Source:* Institutional data.

There is an ongoing debate on whether or not private tertiary institutions should benefit from the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund). Several opinions have been expressed on this subject. Consensus seems to be emerging on the use of GETFund for the following activities in private tertiary institutions:

- student support through the student loan scheme;
- staff development and management capacity building; and
- contract research.

The use of GETFund to provide physical infrastructure, plant and equipment for private tertiary institutions is, however, problematic; the implications of this need to be fully examined.

As part of a recent Education Sector Project (EdSep), the Government of Ghana has sought a US\$78 million credit from the World Bank to improve education. Of this amount, US\$33.4 million has been allocated to the tertiary education sector to be operated as a Teaching and

## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

Learning Innovation Fund (TALIF) available to be assessed by tertiary institutions through the submission of proposals based on clearly defined criteria. Private tertiary institutions are eligible to access 2 per cent of the amount available each year on condition that they have a minimum of 3 years accreditation from NAB.

### **Benefits of private higher education**

Private provision of higher education can contribute toward a balanced development of education. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) strategy document, *Investing in private education in developing countries* (1999), identifies a number of benefits. In relation to Ghana these benefits include:

- expanding educational opportunities to more Ghanaians as existing public tertiary institutions are unable to meet the high demand for tertiary education that has arisen out of the rapid growth in population and the expansion in pre-tertiary education following the introduction of the educational reforms in 1987;
- freeing more public resources to be targeted at the disadvantaged, the needy and the poor;
- demonstrable capacity to innovate and share good practices in education delivery; and
- increasing employment opportunities.

### **Quality control mechanisms in private institutions**

One of the main concerns of any educational system is the issue of quality. Indeed, the question of standards in education is fundamental, both nationally and internationally. There are several measures of quality including: students' performance on standardized tests; quality of teachers; students' exposure to current knowledge and information; academic expenditure per student; teacher-student ratio; the library and its holdings; and the general state of the learning environment (Antwi, 1992; Effah, 2003).

There is concern that the expansion of both public and private tertiary institutions may lead to the lowering of the quality of what is offered

to students. This is why the National Accreditation Board has been empowered through a law to grant both institutional and programme accreditation. It is for this reason that affiliation is necessary.

The process of accreditation involves a preliminary assessment of the readiness and genuineness to operate a tertiary institution that may lead to the issue of an interim letter of authority to allow an institution or proprietor to begin establishment processes. This is followed by formal accreditation, which may be granted in full for a five-year period, partially or even denied. The final stage is the grant of a charter by the President. Institutions are required to seek accreditation for new programmes before they are offered. They are also enjoined to submit an annual report of their activities to the Board. An accredited institution is, until granted a charter, required to be affiliated to an established and recognized institution, which shall award its degrees for the accredited institution under its supervision.

Private tertiary institutions have drawn attention to a number of problems relating to affiliation. These include:

- the requirement that parent or mentoring institutions should show evidence of accreditation;
- high cost of affiliation;
- delays in processing applications for affiliation; and
- lack of clarity about the obligations of the mentoring institution;

... all of which can frustrate the efforts of new institutions seeking accreditation.

One way of addressing some of the problems identified with the process of affiliation is for both the institution seeking affiliation and the mentoring institution to develop and sign a memorandum of understanding that spells out the detailed obligations of each party in the agreement.

On benefits derived from affiliation, six private tertiary institutions cited awarding of degrees, external examining, faculty training and curriculum development. Affiliation also speeds up the process of recognition as students of the affiliated institution are awarded degrees

of the mother or mentoring institution. The process of affiliation also seeks to safeguard the mushrooming of universities.

Beyond accreditation, a number of the private tertiary institutions surveyed have established self-regulating mechanisms to ensure that standards are maintained. Six out of seven institutions have quality assurance policies. One without a policy has established an office for quality assurance. Indeed, two of the institutions have indicated that quality assurance mechanisms have been incorporated into their routine operations. Two other institutions have assigned the responsibility for quality assurance to an Academic Advisory Board and Academic Planning and Assessment Office, respectively.

Among the quality assurance practices mentioned by the institutions are: course evaluation; students' evaluation of faculty; performance evaluation; external examining; peer review of faculty; monitoring of teaching and learning; and periodic assessment and reviews.

External examiners at Swarthmore College and the University of California at Berkeley have rated the performance of Ashesi students as comparable to that of students at top-tier institutions in the United States (Ashesi University College 2004 catalogue). These developments are reassuring as they guarantee a place for private tertiary institutions on the tertiary education landscape. In order to ensure that standards are maintained, private institutions need to comply strictly with guidelines developed by NAB.

## **7. Private universities and research**

The importance of research in a university cannot be over-emphasized. Research is so central to the work of the university that it is often acknowledged as the hallmark of the university. Research helps to retune faculty and to train academic and professional staff; it is also the process through which new knowledge is produced and transmitted to society (Effah, 2003).

The evidence available suggests that not much research is being undertaken in the private tertiary institutions. This is reflected in

the fact that, of the 28 accredited tertiary institutions, only two offer postgraduate programmes – one an MTheology degree and the other an MBA. In the survey of quality assurance practices obtained in seven selected private tertiary institutions, none mentioned research activities.

Admittedly, the private tertiary institutions have been preoccupied with addressing their teething problems. Research activity is also expensive. Care should be taken that the private tertiary institutions are not transformed into purely teaching institutions. They should spend time and effort on research to remain viable partners in the academic community.

One exception to this trend is the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Center, which is dedicated to mission research and applied theology. The main areas of its research focus are culture, language, religion and history. Within its period of existence, it has been able to achieve recognition as a pace-setting centre for research into African Christianity. One interesting feature of its MTheology programme is that each candidate is required to write a one-page abstract in his/her mother tongue. The centre also receives students from all over Africa. It is developing partnerships with existing higher education institutions in Ghana to offer multi-disciplinary programmes at the postgraduate level. The Methodist University College, Ghana, has also initiated measures to strengthen research activity in the university.

One way of encouraging research is to establish a research fund that should be available to both private and public institutions. Government institutions must also be encouraged to commission research, which could be undertaken by faculty from public or private institutions.

## **8. Public policy, equity and gender issues**

As has been observed, private participation in tertiary education is a recent phenomenon. Its absence from the scene during the mid-1980s, when educational reforms were being introduced, largely accounted for its not being represented on the three supervisory bodies created out of the reforms, namely, the National Accreditation Board (NAB),

National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX).

As they have grown in numbers and are making significant progress, private tertiary institutions need representation on these supervisory bodies to enable them to contribute to the process of public policy formulation on tertiary education. It also means that private tertiary institutions need to organize themselves into a vibrant and strong association to serve as a useful medium for making their contributions.

As for equity and gender issues, no conscious policy seems to exist in private tertiary institutions, except for isolated cases. Ashesi University College is one of the exceptions. It has a financial aid policy that provides scholarship on the basis of multiple criteria including – but not limited to – academic merit, leadership potential and financial need. The university also uses financial aid as a tool for achieving gender balance among its student body. These are commendable efforts that need to be adopted or adapted by private tertiary institutions.

## **9. Observations and conclusions**

Owing to a number of factors including age, focus and extent of social responsibilities, comparison between public and private tertiary institutions is difficult. Private institutions in Ghana are relatively young. Some are even yet to graduate their first batch of students. Nonetheless, a number of significant issues are worth citing. One attraction to private institutions is the flexibility in their course offering and timetabling. At NIIT, for example, courses are run in the morning, afternoon, evening and weekends, making it possible for students to choose the suitable session. Again, innovative ways, including PowerPoint presentations and other new instructional skills, are used in course delivery. Students are equipped with practical and entrepreneurial skills to prepare them for the job market.

At a recent graduation ceremony at the Central University College, it was mentioned that a company in Ghana that interviewed over 200 applicants for employment in the fields of marketing, banking

and finance, human resource development and accounting, appointed 30 graduates, of which 25 came from the university. NIIT, a computer training institute, won the Gold Excellence Award for best computer training school in the Ashanti Region (*Daily Graphic*, 16 October 2004) while Master Abdul-Manaf Atakurah, a second-year student at the Islamic University College, Ghana, won the first position in a recent inter-college competition (*Free Press*, 4-10 October 2004). Although these are isolated cases, they point to the great potential that private tertiary institutions hold for Ghana in the absence of detailed tracer studies.

It is, however, pertinent to point out that these observations cannot be said of all 28 accredited institutions. Some, particularly the for-profit institutions, are experiencing serious difficulties. One is on the verge of folding up due to financial difficulties. Furthermore, there is competition not only among the private institutions, but also from those in the public sector, as government policy allows public universities a 5 per cent foreign students quota and an additional 5 per cent quota for Ghanaian-sponsored fee-paying students. Since the public fees are lower than those charged by the private institutions, the first call by a student is normally to try the public institutions.

It is also necessary to emphasize in these concluding remarks the need to encourage private institutions to extend their operations to cover science and technology to help meet the government's aspirations.

The full potential of public and private partnerships in tertiary education is yet to be exploited. Given the respective strengths of both public and private institutions, such partnerships will yield mutual benefits through mechanisms such as the sharing of facilities and resources, including the exchange of staff and students. One area in which partnership can yield beneficial results is science and technology. Given the difficulty in starting science and technology programmes, private institutions could enter into partnerships with public institutions in the provision of science and technology programmes. Again, both public and private institutions stand to gain from tracer studies involving graduates from both sets of institutions.

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Feedback received from such studies should help to improve curricula and training.

We wish to conclude by posing a question: Is private higher education a threat or promise? John Drew's answer to this question is that it is neither, as it is already a reality (Drew, 1999). The emergence of private institutions, particularly at the tertiary level, is helping to nurture the culture of contributing to one's education.

The growth and survival of private institutions will depend upon a number of factors, including the nature of the regulatory framework provided and the partnerships that will be developed between the public and private sectors in the education enterprise. The acid test will be whether or not the private institutions will be able to break and sustain new ground in the delivery and management of tertiary education.

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## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN KENYA

*O. Abagi\**

### 1. Introduction

As Kenya progresses into the twenty-first century, higher education is facing unprecedented challenges, arising from increased public demand, the rising importance of knowledge as the principal driver of growth and development, dwindling employment opportunities and the fast growth of information, communication and technology (ICT). The role of higher education in Kenya, as in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), is now recognized as being more influential than ever in creating greater opportunities for individual development, selection and placement in the competitive labour market. Besides, higher education is seen as an important vehicle for accelerating economic growth and development in general. The role of private higher education in meeting these challenges is even greater than before because, currently, public universities in many countries in SSA are experiencing the deterioration of infrastructure facilities, the erosion of the quality of services provided, and limited financial support from national governments and public sectors.

Today, in Kenya, the private sector is the fastest-growing segment of higher education. This is because of two main factors. First, the Government of Kenya (GoK), since the 1980s, has adopted the strategy of promoting private institutions of higher education to meet the ever increasing public demand. Second, more and more employees and lecturers have turned to private higher education institutions for educational and upgrading services. As the demand for higher education increases in the country, new types of private higher education institutions are also emerging – for example, the newly established Women’s University of Science and Technology in Nairobi.

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In this paper, we present the landscape of private higher education in Kenya. We highlight issues of establishment and growth, enrolment, courses, teaching staff and financing of higher education. This paper is a shorter version of a longer report based on the study of private higher education supported by UNESCO.

## **2. Policy shifts and legal basis for private higher education in Kenya**

The emergence and growth of private higher education is a new phenomenon in Kenya, being only about 20 years old. Between the 1970s and 1980s, public higher education institutions played a dominant role in providing higher education in the country. The first truly private university in Kenya was marked by the establishment of a campus of the United States International University (USIU) in 1969. This was followed by Daystar University (DU) in 1974, and the Seventh Day Adventist church sponsored University of East Africa at Baraton (UEAB) in 1978. Another existing institution, the Catholic Higher Education Institute of Eastern Africa (CHEIEA), was restructured and granted a charter to operate as the Catholic University of East Africa (CUEA) in 1994. Other religious colleges that have since been given varying forms of recognition as universities include: St Paul's United Theological College (St PUTC) established in 1903; the Kenya Highlands Bible College (KHBC) in 1953; and Scott Theological College (SCT) in 1962. Five private universities have received a government charter while 10 have been granted registration or letters of interim authority to operate as universities.

Despite their existence, these private tertiary institutions were largely unnoticed except in the theological domain which a majority of them served. Part of the reason lies in the fact that from independence up to the late 1980s, the existing public universities were able to absorb virtually all candidates qualifying for higher education, a development that was aided in part by the massive government investment in higher education, itself in conformity with the recommendations of the first report on education in Kenya (the Ominde Report of 1964), which stressed the importance of university education in producing skilled human resources to run the various facets of economic, political

and social life of the new nation. Indeed, this policy was buttressed by the good economic performance in the first two decades of independence.

The policy shifts that culminated in the recognition of private universities emerged in the late 1980s and were occasioned by three main factors. First, the economic downturn from the 1980s militated against massive government spending on education as a whole, which consumed close to 40 per cent of government recurrent expenditure. A gap was thus created which other non-state players could fill. Second, rates of return analysis revealed higher private returns to university education and higher social returns to basic education. On this basis, it was both logical and prudent for the government to spend more on basic education and for individuals to meet increased costs of higher education, given the high private rates of return. Thirdly, and perhaps more importantly, policies fronted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the 1980s emphasized a limited role for the government in the economic and social arena. The policies urged for government divestiture from state enterprises, including education. The cost-sharing policy, under the structural adjustment element of the policies, became the guiding principle in investment in education. Other than advocating for greater private participation in financing education, the World Bank, in advancing credit assistance to Kenya in 1991, prevailed on the government to accept a conditionality that put a ceiling on the growth in public university enrolment to no more than 3 per cent per annum up to 2017. The impact of this policy has been to create a large clientele for private universities, given the inability of public universities to absorb all of the qualifying candidates, while the population of students in public universities has stagnated.

The calls for limited government involvement in the provision of services coincided with an increase in population and a resultant pervasive demand for higher education. Public universities could not meet the demand alone, hence the need to liberalize higher education. It was, as such, necessary to put in place policy mechanisms that would stimulate the growth of non-state provision of higher education.

### Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa

Consequently, a number of policy instruments were issued by the government to ensure the implementation of its liberalization policy. First, in 1985, the government enacted the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) Act to regulate the provision of higher education in Kenya. Secondly, in 1988, the government established the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond. On private universities, the report recommended that “the establishment of private and *harambee* (self-help) institutions be encouraged but controlled to ensure they offer courses relevant to the needs of Kenya and maintain acceptable standards”, and that “the functions of CHE ... be reviewed” (Republic of Kenya, 1988: 71-72). This policy was restated in yearly economic surveys published by the government and other policy documents, such as the Policy Framework Paper (PFP) in 1996, the Master Plan on Education and Training (1997-2010) and the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System in Kenya (Koech Report, 2000).

The principal legal entity charged with the responsibility of guiding the establishment and operation of private universities in Kenya is the Commission for Higher Education, set up by an Act of Parliament in 1958. The Commission was mandated to co-ordinate the development of higher education, including (a) long-term planning, programming, budgeting, financing, student enrolment, scholarships, staff and physical development; and (b) accreditation of private universities and post-secondary institutions. The establishment of CHE witnessed a new dawn in the era of private higher education provision as regulations were clearly laid down, including the requirements for accrediting private universities. Consequently, applications from both religious and secular providers for the setting up of new universities inundated CHE's files.

In addition to the CHE Act, two other notable legal instruments guiding the establishment and operation of private universities in Kenya are the Universities Act, Chapter 210B (1985) and Legal Notice No. 56 (The Universities [Establishment of Universities] Standardization, Accreditation and Supervision) Rules, 1989. The former spells out

19 functions of the Commission, including its role in promoting the objectives of university education, accrediting universities, ensuring the maintenance of standards, advising the government on the standardization, recognition and equation of degrees, diplomas and certificates, and arranging for registration, visitations and inspection of private universities, among others.

In enforcing its functions, CHE has so far chartered five private universities while registering and giving interim authority to nine others. The accreditation process falls into three categories: full accreditation/ the granting of a charter; registration; and letters of interim authority. Currently, only universities in the three categories are authorized to advertise and/or mount approved degree and postgraduate certificate and diploma programmes. All other universities that have applied but not yet been issued with letters of interim authority are not supposed to mount university-level programmes or advertise their programmes. However, a number of private institutions have entered into agreements with public universities to offer degree or diploma courses on behalf of or in co-operation with the other universities including public universities. Much as the CHE Act is silent on such arrangements, the individual acts of the respective public universities give them leeway to do so. These institutions include Strathmore College, which offers degree courses in collaboration with Jomo Kenyatta University of Technology (JKUAT), the Australian University Institute, the Kenya College of Accountancy, the Kenya School of Professional Studies, the Kenya Science Teachers' College, and Kianda College, among others.

### **3. Ownership and provision of private higher education**

Private higher education is characterized, in terms of ownership, by Christian organizations, individual entrepreneurs, as well as corporate entities. Ninety per cent of the institutions are owned and run by Christian religious organizations. Invariably, institutional ownership is shared by both local and foreign concerns. This is particularly so given that most of the sponsors are church organizations that have their headquarters outside the country. *Table 3.1* shows the private universities in Kenya by date of establishment and founders.

**Table 3.1 Private universities by ownership or founder**

<b>University/date founded</b>	<b>Founder</b>
University of Eastern Africa Baraton, 1978	Africa/Mideast division of Seventh Day Adventist
Scott Theological College, 1962	African Inland Church of Kenya (AIC)
Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), 1993	Association of the Member Episcopal conference in Eastern Africa (AMECEA)
Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST), 1980	Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM)
United States International University (USIU), 1969	United States International University in the USA
East African School of Theology, 1976	Partnerships of Assemblies of God (AOG) in EA and Kenya Assemblies of God
Pan Africa Christian College (PACC), 1978	Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
St Paul's United Theological College, 1930	Anglican Institution Corporate in 1949, joined by Presbyterian and Methodist churches
Kenya Highlands Bible College, 1953	The World Gospel Mission
Africa Nazarene University (ANU), 1994	The Nazarene Church
Daystar University, 1974	Mr. S.E.M. Pheko (African), Dr. Donald and Mrs. Faye K. Smith (Americans) - affiliated to Daystar University in the USA
Kenya Methodist University, 1994	Methodist Church
Kabarak University, 2001	Mr. Daniel arap Moi (President of Kenya)
Women's University of Science & Technology	Commercial organizations and individuals

The table shows that religious-based institutions, specifically those established and run by the Christian churches, not only constitute the bulk of private universities in Kenya but also the oldest. These institutions are essentially theological-based colleges that have been in existence for quite some time and have, since the enactment of the CHE Act, applied for and been given recognition as university-level

institutions. Those that have been chartered have converted their names to include the 'university' nomenclature. There are cases where universities are founded by individuals or private investors. The only secular private university in Kenya is the United States International University (USIU). This institution was established directly by the parent university in Santiago, USA. In 2002, another private institution, Kiriiri Women's University of Science and Technology, was given a letter of interim authority to operate. This institution is wholly owned by businessmen.

#### **4. Student enrolment**

The students enrolled in private higher education institutions are about 10,000. This is approximately 25 per cent of those enrolled in the six public universities in the country. Female student representation is higher in private universities, constituting 54.5 per cent of the population in 2002 (Republic of Kenya, 2002) compared with 32.2 per cent in public universities. Arguably, the increasing number of females attending private universities reflects the limited number attaining the minimum cut-off points for admission into the public universities. Since more females than males fail to qualify, they find opportunity in the private universities. The nature of courses could also be a factor. *Table 4.1* presents the enrolment in private universities in the 1997/1998-2000/2001 academic years.

For the two largest private universities (Daystar University and United States International University), the proportion of female students exceeds 50 per cent, with the proportion of female students in the 2000/2001 academic year at DU being 60 per cent. The 2001/2002 data shows that of the 9,129 students enrolled in private universities, the accredited institutions have the bulk of the enrolment, at 7,639 or 83.7 per cent. The unaccredited institutions enrol the remaining 1,490 or 16.3 per cent. This could be due to several factors, not least of which is the recognition that these institutions are given by employers, the fact that they have been in existence for a relatively longer period of time, and that they have bigger capacity since the infrastructure has

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been put in place, among others. The proportion of women is, however, significant in both cases.

**Table 4.1 Enrolment by gender in private universities\*, 1997/1998 – 2000/2001**

Institution	1997/1998			1998/1999			1999/2000			2000/2001		
	Male	Fem.	Total									
<b>Private accredited</b>												
DU	565	727	1,292	720	961	1,681	861	1,417	2,278	734	1,078	1,812
UEAB	470	372	842	498	454	952	537	507	1,044	645	661	1,306
CUEA	-	-		742	660	1,402	807	810	1,617	705	772	1,477
USIU	868	940	1,808	902	999	1,901	928	1,032	1,960	1,140	1,171	2,311
STC	68	14	82	80	16	96	84	19	103	75	18	93
Sub-total	1,971	2,053	4,024	2,942	3,090	6,032	3,217	3,785	7,002	3,299	3,700	6,999
<b>Other private</b>												
ANU	230	159	389	200	119	319	264	154	418	316	176	492
NEGST	67	28	95	68	40	108	44	46	90	60	44	104
EAST	112	23	135	106	25	131	77	20	97	77	20	97
PACC	80	13	93	73	24	97	85	26	111	78	24	102
NIST	53	18	71	20	9	29	43	22	65	94	42	136
KHB	37	21	58	42	27	69	47	36	83	57	29	86
St PUTC	92	13	105	84	15	99	83	17	100	27	10	37
KEMU	-	-		74	33	107	103	56	159	103	56	159
Sub-total	671	275	946	667	292	959	746	377	1,123	812	401	1,213
Total	2,642	2,328	4,970	3,609	3,382	6,991	3,963	4,162	8,125	4,111	4,101	8,212

\* Excluding Kabarak University and Kiriiri Women's University of Science and Technology, that are yet to admit students.

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2001.

## 5. Financing and management of private higher education

### Courses offered

One dominating feature of private university provision in Kenya reflects a heavy leaning towards the humanities – with mostly theological and arts-based curriculum programming. Of the 14 private universities in Kenya, all of them except USIU offer Bible courses with

such diverse titles as: Biblical studies; theology; Christian ministries; or religion. Three factors seem to determine the programmes offered in these universities: tradition (i.e. original objectives for which the universities were set up), cost and market demands. The institutions offer both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, though the former constitute the bulk of its courses. *Table 5.1* provides details of the courses offered in these universities.

**Table 5.1 Degree programmes offered in private universities**

University	Degree programmes offered
University of Eastern Africa Baraton	Science, technology, business, arts, education, health, theology & religion, humanities and social science
Scott Theological College	Biblical studies, theological study, Christian ministry studies
Catholic University of Eastern Africa	Theology, commerce, education, humanities
Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) 1980	Biblical studies, theological, historical studies, educational studies, business administration, sociology
United States International University (USIU)	Accounting, philosophy, political science, psychology, business administration, sociology, and others
East African School of Theology	Christian ministry, theology, Bible studies
Pan Africa Christian College (PACC)	Bible, theological, church ministries, community health, agriculture
St Paul's United Theological College	Bible and preaching, Biblical ethics, theological liturgics, etc.
Kenya Highlands Bible College	Bible studies, theological studies
Africa Nazarene University (ANU)	Theology, business administration, computer science, mathematics, etc.
Daystar University, 1974	Accounting, Bible, business administration, communication, marketing, peace, and reconciliation
Kenya Methodist University	Technology, basic and health sciences, education, theology

*Source:* Commission for Higher Education, 2001.

## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

Traditionally, the universities, with the exception of United States International University, were set up to provide Biblical teachings to meet the evangelism goals of the various churches and para-church organizations, not only in Kenya, but in Africa as a whole. USIU provides more programmes than most other private universities. This could partly explain why it has higher enrolment despite being the most expensive institution. Its programmes include: a Bachelor of Science in information technology, hotel and restaurant management, tourism management; business administration, and international business administration; and a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism, international relations, and psychology. Graduate programmes include: a Master of Arts in international relations, counselling psychology, business administration, and international business administration; and a Master of Science in management and organizational development.

From 2000 onwards, we have seen a deliberate move by other private universities to broaden the range of programmes they offer for a number of reasons. First, the institutions realize that they can only attract more students if they have a wide range of programmes to choose from. Second, at the time the institutions were licensed, they indicated that they would continuously review and expand their programmes in order to satisfy the national manpower needs. Given that they are continuously assessed to determine the extent to which they are meeting the conditions of licence, they have to diversify to satisfy the regulatory body that they are within the licence requirements. Third, there is increased competition between the private universities for students, and one way of beating the competition is to have a diverse range of programmes. The competition has taken a new dimension with the launching of alternative fee-paying programmes in public universities going by different names, such as alternative or parallel programmes, Module II, evening classes, etc.

### **Profile of teachers**

It is not easy to obtain data on staff in all private universities in Kenya. This is because the institutions take a lot of caution in giving the names of their staff, most of whom are part-time staff employed in

public universities. The following general features are worth noting. First, the bulk of lecturers in private universities originally taught in public universities. Secondly, a significant proportion of the teaching force in these institutions is part-time staff. These are public university lecturers, but engaged to teach specific courses at specific times. The number of staff in the private universities is presented in *Table 5.2*.

**Table 5.2 Student enrolments and staff in private universities\*, 1999/2000**

University	No. of students 1999/2000 AY			Total no. of faculty			Staff: student ratio
	Male	Female	Total	Part- time	Full- time	All	
UEAB	645	661	1,306			59	22:1
STC	75	18	93			13	7:1
CUEA	705	772	1,477	58	57	115	13:1
NEGST	60	44	104			44	2:1
USIU	1,140	1,171	2,311	65	41	106	22:1
EAST	77	20	97			15	6:1
PACC	78	24	102			14	7:1
St PUTC	27	10	37			15	2:1
KHBC	57	27	86			-	
ANU	316	176	492	12	15	27	18:1
DU	734	1,078	1,812			84	22:1

Source: CHE, 2001.

\* Data for NIST and EAST not available.

There are wide variations between the universities in terms of the number of staff and their distribution by gender. Expectedly, the universities that lead in enrolments have higher student-staff ratios than the smaller ones. Invariably, these happen to be the chartered universities. Of the non-chartered universities, only ANU seems to have enrolment figures higher than the rest in the category. The two universities with the highest number of staff are CUEA and USIU.

USIU currently has 106 members of academic staff, of whom only 41 are full-time and 65 part-time, meaning that up to 57.5 per cent

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of staff are part-timers, mostly from public universities. Female staff constitute only about 20 per cent of the total number of academic staff. The staff qualifications indicate that 31 per cent of the total number of staff hold doctoral degrees. Notably, the proportion of women with doctorate degrees in the university is only 15 per cent (*Table 5.3*).

**Table 5.3 Teaching staff by sex and qualification, USIU**

Qualification	Full-time teaching staff		Part-time teaching staff		All
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Master's	18	4	39	12	73
Doctorate	16	3	12	2	33
All	34	7	51	14	106

*Source:* USIU, 2001.

Given the enrolment figures of 2,311 in *Table 5.2* and the staff level of 106, the overall student-staff ratio at USIU is 22:1. Daystar University on the other hand has a full-time staff of 84. Part-time staff was not given. Of this, 44 are female. The academic qualifications of the staff are presented in *Table 5.4*.

As is the case with USIU, a majority of the academic staff at Daystar (84.5 per cent) hold master's degrees, while about 12 per cent are doctorate holders. Though smaller than USIU, Daystar has more full-time teachers than USIU. However, the student-staff ratio is the same at 22:1.

**Table 5.4 DU staff qualifications**

Qualification	Number
Master's	71
Doctorate	10
Professors	3
Total	84

*Source:* Daystar University.

Unlike USIU, where the majority of the lecturers are male, DU has more female than male lecturers. A majority of the female staff are at the

level of lecturers and senior lecturers, while there is no female staff at the level of Dean and above (*Table 5.5*).

**Table 5.5 Staffing levels, Daystar University**

Staffing grade	Male	Female	Total
Graduate Assistants	1	2	3
Assistant Lecturers	11	7	18
Lecturers	18	18	36
Senior Lecturers	7	16	23
Deans	3	0	3
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	1	0	1
Total	40	44	84

*Source:* Daystar University.

While the male-female staff ratio at USIU is 4:1, Daystar University has a ratio of almost 1:1. Figures for other universities could not be obtained for an overall comparison of the private university teaching force.

### Sources of funding

The universities vary a great deal in terms of sources of funds from tithes, full dependence on tuition fees, to gifts and endowments (*Table 5.6*).

That most institutions depend on sources of funds other than fees means that their programmes are subsidized by donations, gifts, endowments, etc. Only USIU is fully dependent on fees, and as such is one of the few universities that has broken even.

Daystar University has four main sources of funds: (i) academic fees; (ii) boarding and catering charges; (iii) endowments, gifts and trusts; and (iv) income from university auxiliary enterprises and investments. Currently, Daystar University generally receives funds to meet development costs by donations from Christian organizations from the USA, Europe and Canada (some of these include the Tear Fund of the United Kingdom, the Lutheran Church of Germany, the Maclellan Foundation and the Stewardship Foundation in the United

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States, Bread for the World, plus other local churches and individuals). The Japanese Government is also helping to build a library at a cost of 60 million Kenya shillings (Ksh).

**Table 5.6 Sources of funds and financial aid in private universities**

University	Sources of funds
University of Eastern Africa Baraton	Tuition 42%, fees 4%, student fund 5%, investments 2%, assets 0.5%, auxil 41%, appropriations 8%
Scott Theological College	Savings 15%, local gifts 4%, committal projects 17%
Catholic University of Eastern Africa	AMECEA contributions, grants, donors, foundations, etc.
Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST)	Donations from AEAM, etc.
United States International University (USIU)	Tuition fees
East African School of Theology	Church donations/contributions
Pan Africa Christian College (PACC)	Tuition, subsidy from PACC, tithes from faculty, house rents
St Paul's United Theological College	Fees 20%, endowment fund 5%, bursaries 70%, others 5%
Kenya Highlands Bible College	Fees charged, endowment fund, dairy project, etc.
Africa Nazarene University (ANU)	Fees 74%, Church contribution 3%, Church gifts 22%
Daystar University	Foundations, individuals, fees

## 6. Quality of education and employment of graduates of private institutions

Private universities are relatively small in size but, more importantly, more peaceful. By this very fact, the general assumption is that the quality of education given is high due to the low student-teacher ratios. It is also assumed that the students, being few, have maximum use of facilities such as libraries, laboratories and information and communication technologies that are vital for academic excellence and

research. Staff are also better paid, and are therefore more motivated than their public sector counterparts. Since the students pay high fees, the institutions strive to provide quality education commensurate with the fees – otherwise, no one would be willing to put their money into unworthy institutions. It has also been argued that the close policing of private universities by the Commission for Higher Education in itself contributes to the quality of education in these institutions. The supervision by CHE is meant to ensure that the institutions adhere to strict standards and regulations set up by the Commission. Such supervision is lacking in public universities.

Private universities have fairly well-developed internal quality control mechanisms. This is evident on three fronts. First, they have a system for internal self-evaluation on a yearly basis. This is done in preparation and anticipation of inspection by CHE. Each institution therefore prepares an evaluation report which details the measures being taken to achieve the objectives of the university. The report also details the progress made in addressing the concerns pointed out by the Commission in its previous year's report. This report is submitted to CHE on a yearly basis.

On a second level, there is the internal evaluation of teaching staff by both colleagues and students. In most universities, staff are evaluated on a grade point aggregate (GPA) of five. This measure makes teachers work hard so as not to get an unfavourable rating, since those who get a below average rating are issued with warning letters and may eventually lose their jobs. Another unique practice in some of these institutions is the professional manner in which examinations are set and moderated by peers before being accepted. In one university, it was evidenced that the examination papers are moderated to ensure that they cover all the levels of knowledge in Bloom's (1979) *Taxonomy of educational objectives*. This is in sharp contrast with what is obtained in public universities, where such rigour is unheard of.

Private universities have produced graduates who fit very easily into the job market due to their focus and emphasis on offering market-driven courses. A cursory glance at the course structure of these institutions

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reveals that many of them offer accounting, business studies, economics and commerce, information technology programmes, communication, etc., which are essential for the job market. The credibility attained by some of the private universities in some of the courses offered is also a contributory factor explaining why most of their graduates get jobs faster and more easily than their public university counterparts. USIU has, for instance, been known to offer quality education, particularly in the psychology and business fields. Due to such notions held by employers, graduates of these fields easily get jobs. On the same continuum, Daystar has made a mark in communication programmes and a number of those employed in the media houses are graduates of this university.

The graduates of some of these universities also play a role in ensuring the successful entry of subsequent graduates into the job market. USIU has existed as a private university in Kenya from 1969. To this day, some fairly well-placed people in the private sector, including managing directors of companies, have undertaken studies at USIU. When graduates from USIU seek jobs, particularly in the private sector, they therefore find employers who identify with them and are more ready to vouch for their 'quality'. It should further be noted that even in the theological disciplines, students are normally sponsored by their churches, para-church organizations, and even NGOs with a Christian focus. As such, they are sent to acquire specific skills to add onto what they have. On finishing, they either go back to their jobs or find the jobs for which they were being prepared waiting for them.

## **7. Conclusion**

The growth of private higher education institutions in Kenya has had an intended effect on public universities. They have created competition for, on the one hand, both students and lecturers, and for the production of graduates with market-oriented and in-demand skills on the other hand. Implicit in this competition is a requirement for higher education to become more businesslike and to operate much more like a private sector business. Although this has been the case for most of the private higher education institutions, the leadership

and management of public universities has not been very efficient. Since public universities are funded by government/public resources, their management has been politicized. Senior managers at the public universities have been political appointees for years in the country, and the President of the country was the Chancellor of all six of the public universities. This changed only 18 months ago, when the new government took over, and now there are separate Chancellors for the six public universities, although appointed by the President.

High-level management and technical skills are now required in our higher education institutions, public or private. Vice-Chancellors, in particular, will have to become much more management-oriented, extricating themselves from the micro-management of university administration, beneath which they currently tend to be submerged, in order to provide vision, leadership and more effective interaction with policy-makers and potential alternative sources of funding. Public universities will have to follow the private higher education institutions in terms of hiring Vice-Chancellors in a competitive manner, rather than just appointing them. Furthermore, universities will have to develop high quality and relevant courses in order to survive in a competitive environment.

Generally, most of the private universities in the country have been following good governance principles, including creating an enabling environment for dialogue with both students and staff. This has not been the case in public universities. As a result, public universities have been faced with major problems and challenges, including frequent strikes by students and staff, low morale among the academic and non-academic staff, and a mass exodus of qualified lecturers. The majority of these lecturers have been employed in private universities, with very good salaries – three to four times what they used to earn in public universities.

Another issue worth mentioning is the fact that private universities, compared to public ones, have managed to continuously design, review and adapt their course programmes according to market demands. This has increased public demand for their courses, and employers are

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targeting graduates from such institutions. As a consequence, in the last two to three years, public universities have followed suit and are now in the practice of offering part-time/evening and flexible courses (Module II) targeting employees. However, it should be noted that the introduction of Module II or parallel programmes in public universities, coupled with aggressive marketing, poses a serious threat to the growth of private universities in Kenya. In the 2000/2001 academic year, the institutions registered a 9.1 per cent growth that declined to only 1.5 per cent in 2001/2002, a period that has seen the growing popularity of the programmes mounted by public universities. Increasingly, many females enrol in these programmes. Since tuition income constitutes a significant proportion of revenue for the private universities, low enrolment levels would result in reduced revenue.

Although the total undergraduate enrolment of Kenyan private universities, both chartered and non-chartered, is about 9,129 compared to 52,906 in public universities for the 2001/2002 academic year, the institutions have provided alternative access to higher education for those who would otherwise have missed the opportunity. However, it should be noted that the majority of Kenyans are yet to access private university education, mainly due to the high cost of education in these institutions. This is compounded by the fact that students in private universities are expected to pay 100 per cent of the fees, whereas those in public universities can apply for loans and/or a bursary. While students in public universities are not sent away due to the inability to pay fees, those in private universities are blocked from attending lectures until they complete fee payment. Some private universities have also adopted policies that deter would-be students. In certain cases, a private university imposes a surcharge of 5 per cent for the late payment of fees.

The state of private higher education, as reviewed in this paper, points to a good opportunity to support and configure the higher education system in a focused and systematic manner, notably to address the challenges of limited access, quality and relevance of higher education. Besides, the cost of higher private education in the country

has become a major hindrance for many students and employees who would like to pursue higher education. Equity should mean more than access into higher education. It must incorporate equity of opportunity – the institutional environment in which learners, through curriculum options, teaching learning materials and processes, and mentoring, genuinely have every chance to succeed. Equity, to be meaningful, also means ensuring that learners have access to quality and relevant education, and graduate with the relevant knowledge, skills and attributes that are required not only in the labour market, but also for the economic growth and social and political development of the country. The reform of private higher education should, therefore, be undertaken in a holistic manner, encompassing the entire national education reform *vis-à-vis* the development transformation in the country (see for example, Kenya's economic recovery strategy for wealth and employment creation 2003-2007, which the government has just launched).

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## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

*T. Ajayi\**

### 1. The private sector in higher education in Nigeria

The demand for higher education in Nigeria, particularly at the university level, has outgrown what the system can cope with, as less than 20 per cent of those who passed the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board Examinations are admitted each year to university (Salim, 2004). Those left out scramble for places in polytechnics, while an insignificant number, made up particularly of those who could not gain admission into the universities or polytechnics, then try their hands at colleges of education. In Nigeria, over 80-90 per cent of those leaving the secondary school system wish to go on to a university or other form of higher education, therefore the competition is very keen. It is also necessary to point out that before the advent of private higher education, governments bore almost all the cost of higher education.

The financial squeeze that most governments at the federal, state and local level are faced with in Nigeria led to an attempt to promote cost sharing. This was achieved by introducing the private higher education bill through an amendment decree in 1993. This decree stipulates the categories of people, aside from governments, that can establish and own private higher education in Nigeria. These categories of people include:

- companies sponsored in Nigeria, who are citizens of Nigeria; and
- an individual or association of individuals who are citizens of Nigeria and who satisfy the criteria set out in the schedule to the act for the establishment of higher institutions.

The act stipulates the national minimum standards for the establishment of higher institutions, either public or private. The criteria or rules are stated below.

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## **2. Criteria for establishing an institution of higher education in Nigeria**

1. The academic structure and spread of discipline of the institution shall be such as would cater for areas of felt need.
2. (A) Evidence shall be produced to show that the institution would be provided with adequate:
  - funding, both capital and recurrent; and
  - academic and support staff.(B) The proposed staffing guidelines shall meet with current guidelines of:
  - the Universities Commission; or
  - the National Board for Technical Education; or
  - the National Commission for Colleges of Education.
3. The federal government must be satisfied that, on approval being given, the sources of funding and sufficient amount of funds will be available.
4. The federal government or its accredited agency shall ascertain and be satisfied that:
  - (A) The fixed enabling assets – that is, funds, land, movable and immovable assets – are appropriate for establishing the institution in the light of such factors as:
    - the type of institution envisaged;
    - its philosophy and objectives; and
    - the cost of goods and services prevailing at the time.
  - (B) The assets shall be assigned to the institution on approval being given for the institution to be established; and
  - (C) The applicant has supplied a concrete and guaranteed source of financial support for the university to the tune of US\$20 million, US\$10 million for a polytechnic or monotechnic, and US\$5 million for a college of education, over a period of five years.
5. (A) A proposed institution shall have clearly spelt out the master plan for infrastructural and programme development for at least 20 to 25 years, making adequate provision for:
  - plan space, aesthetic beauty and fixed financial assets; and

- a minimum land area of 100 hectares for a university, 50 hectares for a polytechnic or monotechnic, and 25 hectares for a college of education, in a salutory site.
- (B) The site distance from an urban complex shall take into account the availability of municipal services including water, transportation, private accommodation and other consequential services in its community.
6. (A) A proposed institution shall have an adequate environment base and shall be open to all Nigerians irrespective of ethnic derivation, social status, religious or political persuasion.  
(B) Accordingly, its laws and statutes shall not conflict with the conventional responsibilities in academia or interfere with avowed traditional institutional autonomy.
  7. To pre-empt problems of inadequate municipal facilities, the proposed institution shall have a clear policy on student and staff accommodation and catering services.
  8. The proposed institution shall have a well-articulated mission and set of objectives, which may be original and innovative, but unequivocally in consonance with the socio-economic and political aspirations of Nigeria.
  9. To create and sustain credibility and confidence from the start, the administrative structure of the proposed institution shall not depart too radically from established norms.
  10. The library, laboratory and workshop facilities, including instructional tools and consumables, shall be adequate and there shall be long-range plans for sustaining them.
  11. The planning and feasibility report of the proposed institution shall include proposed contacts and affiliation with existing similar institutions and plans for co-operation and interaction.
  12. The criteria set out in the schedule shall also apply to a proposed Open University, except that:
    - (A) the minimum land area requirement shall not apply;

(B) guidelines prescribed by the appropriate authority as regards technical infrastructure for functional and effective operation shall be satisfied.

### **3. Private higher institutions – size and enrolments**

Of the seven operating private universities in Nigeria, Madonna University is the largest, with an enrolment of 3,710, followed by Babcock University with an enrolment of 3,080, while Pan-African University – a wholly postgraduate private university – has the lowest enrolment size of just 144 students, as can be seen in *Table 6.1*. However, in terms of the number of academic staff relative to student numbers, Babcock came on top of the table (with 130) while Madonna has only 98 academic staff. For quality to be sustained, private higher institutions must observe the minimum standards as stipulated by their relevant agencies.

### **4. Ownership patterns in private higher education**

The ownership patterns in private higher education in Nigeria include, among others: diverse religions; organizations; private corporate bodies; and individuals/family. Religious bodies own 90 per cent of the existing eight private universities, while a private corporate body owns 10 per cent. The reverse is the case with the ownership of polytechnics, as six out of seven private polytechnics are owned by corporate organizations and individuals. The only known private college of education is owned by a religious body of the Catholic mission in Nigeria.

#### **Distinction between not-for-profit and for-profit agencies in the provision of private higher education in Nigeria**

All private higher institutions owned by corporate bodies or organizations, whether they are universities, polytechnics or colleges of education, can be said to have been established for profit-making purposes, but none of these institutions openly declare such an intention. They have always claimed to have been established for the professional developments of the clientele. Similarly, one can also assume that all private higher institutions owned by religious bodies

are not-for-profit since their primary motive is to use the institution as a means of evangelism.

Investigation, however, showed that all private higher institutions charge higher fees than publicly-owned higher institutions, whether these are federal or state-owned. Federal higher institutions charge no tuition fees, except for some municipal services, whereas state higher institutions do charge fees. As a whole, however, private higher institutions charge the highest rates of fees; this, of course, depends on the fame/profile of higher institutions and programmes. Generally, science and engineering-based courses are more costly than social/liberal courses. It can, however, be said that there is no remarkable distinction between not-for-profit and for-profit agencies in the provision of private higher education in Nigeria, as all of them charge higher costs, though concession may be given to students who belong to the same faith or religion as that of the institution.

### **Agencies providing private higher education in Nigeria**

There are three major agencies providing private higher education in Nigeria. At the university level, religious bodies dominate the scene, running up to 80-90 per cent of private universities in the country. These private universities aim at producing high-quality professionals, and vocational, religious and general education. At the polytechnic level, commercial organizations dominate the scene, while there is little or no impact of private ownership of colleges of education affiliated to foreign or international institutions.

For example, Babcock University Ilisan-Remo was established on 10 May 1999 by its proprietor, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Nigeria. The Seventh-Day Adventist mission is probably one of the oldest church organizations in Nigeria today, with branches all over the states of federation that enjoy a strong connection with their sister churches overseas. Another religious body or agency established at Benson Idahosa University in Nigeria is the Church of God Mission International (CGMI). The CGMI is a Pentecostal church and one of the

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latest religious missions in Nigeria strongly linked to American church organizations.

The Baptist Convention of Nigeria owns Bowen University. It was established in July 2001. The Baptist Convention is one of the oldest churches in Nigeria. They have their strongest influence in the south-west of Nigeria.

The Covenant University, located at Ota, in the south-west of Nigeria, was established by the World Mission Agency (WMA) on 12 February 2002. The World Mission Agency also owns one of the fastest-growing Pentecostal churches, the Winners Chapel International of Nigeria.

Madonna University, located in Okija, Anambra State of Nigeria, was established in 1999. It is owned by a religious organization simply known as the Congregation of Brothers of Jesus. Not much is known about the activities of this body, the Congregation of Brother of Jesus, beyond their strong hold in Anambra State.

Igbinedion University, located in Okada in Edo state of Nigeria, was established in 1999 with the philosophy to provide an opportunity for young men and women to learn under the most conducive atmosphere, imbibe the highest moral and ethical values, and develop their entrepreneurial instincts. The university is owned by Chief (Dr.) G.O. Igbinedion, a private businessman. It is run for profit, and to that extent it is seen as a commercial organization.

The Pan-African University, located in Lagos, Nigeria, was established as a private university in February by the Pan-African Development Foundation, a non-governmental organization presided over by a reformist and industrialist, Prof. Pat Utomi. The university is at present a postgraduate institution with both full-time and part-time programmes in business administration and economics. The university serves as a direct link to the needs of the industrial sector of the Nigerian economy.

ABTI University was recently established, and is yet to take off.

### **Private polytechnic education in Nigeria**

At present, there are seven private polytechnics in Nigeria; all but one are established and run as commercial organizations. These are:

1. Lagos City Polytechnic, Lagos;
2. Universal College of Technology, Ife, Ogun State;
3. Grace Polytechnic, Omu Ijebu, Ogun State;
4. Wolex Polytechnic Lagos, Lagos State;
5. Allorer Central Polytechnics, Ota, Ogun State; and
6. Ronik Polytechnic Lagos, Lagos State.

Our Saviour Institute of Technology Enugu, in Enugu State, is the only religious-based privately-owned polytechnic in Nigeria.

### **5. Linkages with universities abroad for teaching and awarding of degrees**

Of the eight private universities in Nigeria, only the Babcock, Idahosa and Pan-African universities can be said to presently enjoy any known form of linkage with universities or bodies abroad for the purpose of advancing teaching and learning. There is no evidence at the moment of any linkages leading to the awarding of foreign degrees or any form of twinning and franchising.

### **6. Financing and management of private institutions**

#### **Types of courses offered in private universities**

The types of courses offered in private universities in Nigeria are not different from the courses offered in conventional public universities. Emphasis is, however, on the following courses: education; the humanities; management; social sciences and technology; basic and applied sciences; law; agriculture; health sciences; engineering technology; and medical sciences. Only two universities currently offer courses at the postgraduate level. These are Pan-African University, whose main focus from inception was postgraduate programmes on both a

part- and full-time basis in business administration and economics, and Igbinedion University Okada, which offers some postgraduate courses in its six colleges, namely: arts; social sciences; business management studies; law; health sciences; and engineering technology.

### **Types of courses offered in private polytechnics**

The courses offered in private polytechnics in Nigeria include, among others: business studies; computer studies; financial studies; food technology; general studies; mass communication; secretarial studies; science and technology; accountancy; business administration and management; public administration; and marketing. One interesting observation is that all the private polytechnics in Nigeria offer more non-technological courses, such as business management and accountancy, while only three technological courses (computer studies, science and technology, and food sciences) are currently being offered.

### **Profile of teachers in private universities**

A cursory look at the profile of teachers as can be seen in *Table 6.1* shows that there are 1,570 staff in the eight private universities in Nigeria, of which there are 497 academic staff, 60 senior technical staff, 247 senior administrative staff, and 766 junior staff.

There is no evidence that the teachers in private universities are drawn from the public universities, but it could be assumed. Two things, however, are very clear: Most of the teachers are regular and are in posts; and researchers do not have access to data concerning the qualifications of teachers in these universities. It was therefore a privilege to see the recent monitoring report of private universities in the country, whose conclusions were as follows.

None of the universities met the NUC minimum standards in terms of quality of academic staff and required number, with the exception of Pan-African University, which was observed as developing a high calibre, committed and sufficiently numerous staff base. The National Universities Commission (NUC) specifies that the academic staff mix by rank is expected to be 20:35:45 respectively for professors/readers :

senior lecturers : lecturers, and below. By implication, only Pan-African University Lagos presently meets these important requirements as specified by the NUC in terms of the qualifications and number of academic staff.

**Table 6.1 Staff numbers by private university category and enrolment, 2002/2003**

Name of university	Academic staff	Senior technical staff	Senior administrative staff	Junior staff	Total	Enrolment
Igbinedion	99	4	40	60	203	1,937
Babcock	130	25	59	402	616	3,080
Madonna	98	13	15	49	175	3,710
Bowen	43	5	39	15	102	507
Pan-African	19	-	32	51	102	144
Benson	56	-	40	-	96	989
Covenant	52	13	22	189	276	1,360
ABTI	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	497	60	247	766	1,570	11,727

*Source:* National Universities Commission (NUC), 2003.

In terms of salary grade levels, it was observed that all the universities in Nigeria pay the recommended salary scale negotiated by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and accepted by government to all their staff.

At the polytechnic level, the academic staffing situation is not much different from what is observed at the university level. While in most courses, such as accountancy, business studies and secretarial studies, the academic staff situation can be said to be adequate in terms of quality and numbers, the same cannot be said of marketing, where there are over 873 students without a single professional academic staff in the department.

**Table 6.2** Number of teaching staff and student enrolments in private polytechnics in Nigeria

Department	Lagos City College		St Saviour		Universal College of Technology		Grace Polytechnic	
	Staff	Enrolment	Staff	Enrolment	Staff	Enrolment	Staff	Enrolment
Accountancy	5	184	-	60	2	93	6	215
Business studies	5	148	14	478	6	85	4	127
Computer studies	6	129	4	79	6	36	6	45
Business management	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	-
Mass comm.	-	-	10	374	5	-	-	-
Public Admin.	-	-	-	31	4	-	-	-
Secretarial studies	5	57	5	47	8	-	6	59
General studies	6	17	6	-	-	-	10	-
Marketing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	873
Financial studies	-	-	11	376	-	-	-	-
Food tech.	-	-	5	17	-	-	-	-
Science lab.	-	-	9	78	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	202	-	-	-	-
	27	535	64	1,801	31	214	32	1,319

Source: National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), 2004.

### Size of non-staff libraries and laboratories

*Table 6.1* indicates that all the private universities currently operating in the country have taken on a requisite and adequate number of non-teaching staff, with the exception of Babcock University, which seems to have an excessive number of junior staff for the number of students enrolled. It was also observed that the polytechnics have a sizeable number of non-teaching staff to provide adequate services in all the schools and colleges. However, private higher institutions should not run into the danger of overstretching or overblowing the numbers of non-teaching staff in view of the consequences in the wage bill and on the recurrent budget in later years. It is also recommended that private higher institutions improve on their present state of laboratories and

infrastructural facilities, procure more equipment, and develop a good equipment maintenance policy or strategy. Indeed, public higher institutions are characterized by decay and dilapidation.

### **Funding sources of private higher education**

Private higher education institutions are funded mainly by school fees, donations, endowment funds, fundraising activities, and insurance from international associates. It is generally observed that they charge higher fees than any public university or polytechnic could charge. Fees vary according to courses and levels. On average, they are about 500 per cent higher than what students in public higher institutions are paying. Therefore, while governments have succeeded in sharing the cost of higher education through these private institutions, another question has been raised concerning equity in higher education in Nigeria.

### **Profitability of private education institutions**

Most of the bursars of private higher education institutions interviewed observed that it is too early to talk about profit as, at this stage, the institutions are at the early stage of development and investments in fixed assets are continuing. Several of the higher institutions established by religious bodies indicated that the main motive for establishing the institutions was not profit but rather of an evangelical nature. However, they do not rule out the possibility of breaking even or making a profit in the future when situations in the institution are more stable, with all facilities in place, and when goodwill and integrity have been fully established. In the opinion of this researcher, however, empirical studies might be necessary in the future to determine the profitability or otherwise of establishing private higher education institutions in Nigeria.

## **7. Quality of education and employment of graduates of private institutions**

### **Quality control mechanisms in private institutions**

The quality control mechanisms in private institutions are different from those of public higher institutions. In view of the size of the

### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

country, the federal government – through the Federal Ministry of Education – has put in place four agencies that ensure the compliance of private and public higher institutions with the National Minimum Standards in order to ensure the quality of higher education in Nigeria. These agencies are:

- the National Universities Commission (NUC);
- the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE);
- the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE); and
- the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB).

These four agencies of the Federal Ministry of Education are charged with ensuring that public and private higher institutions are monitored and comply with minimum standards nationwide. For example, all private higher institutions are to ensure that prospective students pass the annual joint admission and matriculation board examination before they can be admitted. Similarly, the NUC, NBTE and NCCE ensure the compliance of private higher institutions with the accreditation of minimum standards concerning the following: staffing, physical facilities, financing of programmes, books, journals and other resource materials for the programme, employers' rating of graduates, Vice-Chancellor and panel members to sign statements of fact reports, and finally panel recommendations for the improvements of the institution.

### **Employment prospects of graduates of institutions**

The employment prospect of graduates of private institutions can be said to be currently higher than that of public institutions because, for the first time, employers of labour can compare and choose better hands. Secondly, private higher education students tend to finish faster than those from public institutions, as these most of the latter are riddled in Nigeria with strike actions usually embarked on by unions and students. Again, every public and private higher education institution is expected to inculcate skills apart from their course of study, to help the graduates to be job creators rather than jobseekers. These innovations have been helpful to numerous graduates from higher education institutions in

Nigeria. Whether learnt in a private or public institution, putting into practice skills learnt at school enables graduates to earn a living without looking for non-existing jobs.

### **Private universities and research**

The traditional functions of universities are to teach, research and provide services. Universities in Nigeria, both public and private, are bound to this longstanding culture. Private universities in Nigeria are already carving a niche for themselves by maintaining a direct link with the private sector and by conducting action research that can inform them of policy shifts in terms of product brands as well as in the area of staffing needs, so that they remain up to date in the competitive global world. The Pan-African University is maintaining a strong lead in this respect.

## **8. Conclusion**

### **Private and public higher institutions – a comparison?**

It might appear rather too early to conduct an in-depth assessment on the operation of private higher institutions, particularly universities, in view of their relatively young age in Nigeria. However, it is becoming very clear that the rush of parents to the few private higher education institutions is a demonstration that private institutions are perceived as more organized than public ones. Secondly, the fact that, since 1999, when the first set of private higher institutions were established, until the present time, we have not seen cases of closure or cultism in these institutions, indicates that they are more stable in terms of attainment. A visit to some of these institutions during this study also shows that many of them have a well-designed structure, neater environment and clearer vision statement, which tends to convince observers that, given sufficient time, private universities or higher education institutions in Nigeria will compare favorably with older public higher education institutions – or even surpass them.

### **Private higher institutions and equity**

As has been observed in this paper, the operations of private higher institutions in Nigeria and the high fees charged, sometimes representing more than 500 per cent of what other Nigerian students pay in federal or state universities, raises the question of equity. As a policy, students in federal universities are free from paying tuition fees; the same category of students pay little or nothing for municipal services like accommodation and transportation. For example, at the premier university of Ibadan, students pay as little as 90 Naira for bed space for a year – an amount that represents less than half a dollar a year. In state universities, students pay some fees for tuition, accommodation and other municipal services. These are higher than what students are paying in federal universities, yet students in private higher institutions are charged far more than what their counterparts are paying in either federal or state universities. It can therefore be said that there is no equity in what students are paying in higher institutions in Nigeria. It is therefore recommended that some form of grant be given to assist students in private higher education institutions in Nigeria, so that the equity gap can be reduced to the barest minimum.

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## **BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SENEGAL**

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### **1. The birth of private higher education in Senegal**

Higher education includes the sub-system of training and scientific research open to secondary school graduates. This spans the totality of training courses taught in the universities, institutions and schools within the public, private and mission sectors. Private higher education is therefore a whole entity of the education system found at all levels of training.

Private education is about education given by institutions created by persons or institutions other than the State and which cover post-secondary training.

In Africa, and mainly in Francophone Africa, private education began at the secondary level, then developed within the basic and pre-elementary sector. It had a religious orientation, being either Catholic or Islamic.

The beginning of private education at the tertiary level is relatively recent and can be traced back to the 1980s. It is important to note that private higher education, from its inception, experienced a spectacular development. This is not very surprising because the 1980s mark the beginning of the crises in African universities, particularly in Francophone countries and, for that matter, in Senegal.

With regard to higher education in Francophone Africa, especially in Senegal, it is not superfluous to recall briefly the genesis of this crisis, which began to show its effects in the 1980s and therefore brought about the birth and the development of private higher education.

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### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

In Francophone Africa, French colonization, with its policy of assimilation, aimed at training elite Africans in institutions in France. With a few exceptions, it was only after independence – that is from the 1960s – that higher education institutions started developing in this country, exclusively as public universities.

At the beginning, due to the full validity of the degrees and certificates awarded, these young African universities enjoyed strong support from the former colonial power in terms of quality human resources as well as financial and material support.

Modelled on educational establishments in France, these institutions, for over a decade, taught the same courses as their counterparts in France and the degrees and certificates awarded were of the same value.

Later, this equal validity of certificates was replaced by equivalences, while the African institutions did not undertake the necessary reforms to adapt to the needs of the societies for which they were turning out managerial personnel. This led to a growing non-adaptation of training to needs, which in turn gave rise to a profound higher education crisis in Francophone Africa, bringing about the beginning of a continuous chain of degradation in learning conditions within the public higher education sector.

It is within this understanding of national universities during the first 10-15 years of their existence that we can trace the main causes of the crises in these institutions. These include the relevance of training, financing of research and pedagogical activities; and academic freedom and university autonomy.

#### **Relevance of training**

Job opportunities for the graduates of the newly-created African universities at the dawn of independence were mainly linked to the need for managerial personnel by administrative services. As time went on, these needs were met, leaving the system to face two major difficulties.

In the first place, while the initial job opportunities were gradually filled, training profiles remained the same. Naturally, this situation led to a more acute non-adaptation of training to new job opportunities, given the failure to identify and take into consideration the needs of new profiles. This gave birth to what is known as 'higher education certificates of unemployment'. Despite attempts by the state to integrate graduates of these certificates into active life, as a result of the non-adaptation of training to these jobs, the results have been very disappointing.

The second major difficulty is related to the rapid population growth, which led to a continuous increase of high school certificate holders for whom the university is the only post-secondary structure capable of taking care of their high numbers. That is why, for a long time, higher education has been confused with admission to the university. The university has therefore witnessed an astronomical increase in its enrolment, with an infrastructure created for 5,000-7,000 students now being forced to cater for triple this number, if not more. Adding to the difficulties borne out of such a situation pertaining to infrastructure are other problems such as the insufficiency of managerial staff, leading to overtime work inimical to research activities, which constitute one of the bedrocks of quality higher education.

### **Financing of research and pedagogic activities**

The resources necessary for the proper functioning of an institution of higher education where teaching and research go hand-in-hand are generally very important. Apart from the necessary infrastructure for students and research, one must also reckon with increasing running costs as well as the cost of equipment. Increases in the remuneration of personnel, especially for the teaching and research staff, are dependent only on the promotion of such personnel. These promotions constitute a major objective in higher education because they reflect the performance of the lecturers. Movement from one section to another, or from one grade to a higher one, bring about very remarkable changes in remuneration. To this could be added further studies at all levels necessitating travel and movement, so as to

link with the scientific community of the world for the exchange of ideas. Universities which are not productive in research can only be considered as improved secondary schools. Nevertheless, we are all witnesses to the scarcity of financial resources as a result of the world economic crisis. In African countries, this crisis relates to other factors, such as the structural adjustment policies imposed by the World Bank and other development partners from the 1980s. This has led to the consideration of higher education as a non-productive sub-sector benefiting from state subsidy, which should be reduced or decreased from its current level of more than 95 per cent of university budgetary resources to the barest minimum.

Even more serious is the reduction in funding, which comes at a time when the demand as well as the need for access to higher education is becoming higher and more diversified. At this point, it is necessary to refute the erroneous ideas which seek to give the impression that there are too many students in African countries. Indeed, aside from their right to education throughout their lives, the ratio of students to the total population of any of these countries is still low as compared to the situation in the rest of the world! The real problem can be traced to the difficulties related to the satisfactory running of these tertiary public institutions.

In developed countries, 50 per cent of youth in the higher education age bracket have the opportunity to do so, while only 12 per cent of their counterparts in developing countries have access to university education! This shows how dangerous and even backward the idea is that higher education is a luxury for developing countries.

On the subject of access, it is appropriate to emphasize the long-existing dichotomy between the public system and the private system, a matter of great concern to public authorities, and which is developing as a result of an increasingly high level of exclusion within the public system as well as a diminishing quality level.

### **Academic freedom and university autonomy**

Universities and university dons have special social responsibilities regarding sets of rights and responsibilities. These are founded on *academic freedom and university autonomy*, the interpretation of which the two protagonists – government and university dons – do not seem to agree on.

This difference in interpretation is not peculiar to Senegal or Africa; it is universal. It is the importance of this question which led UNESCO to commission the International Association of Universities (IAU) to prepare a draft declaration on the topic, with the terms of the debate still not very well spelled out. However, UNESCO outlines it in the following: “Academic freedom and the autonomy of institutions of higher education presuppose an additional responsibility of work output, including the normal output and anything that has to do with finance, self-evaluation regarding research and teaching, and a regular concern for efficiency”.

On the whole, it should be admitted that states that devoted substantial amounts of resources to these universities who, in turn, were unable to put in place all the required courses, had to organize sponsorship for students to train abroad; the selection for such courses, which was very competitive, benefited from international, bilateral and multilateral support and co-operation.

The combination of unfavourable factors within local institutions compelled parents, who had the means to do so, to send their undergraduate children to universities and other institutions of higher education abroad.

During this period, the private sector was not totally absent from higher education, but the existing institutions limited their activities to short professional training courses leading to the award of the *Brevet de technicien supérieur* (Vocational Training Certificate), mainly in the secretarial field.

It should be recalled that at its beginning, the reputation of private education in general and private higher education in particular, in Senegal, was so bad that during the meeting of all stakeholders of education and training held in January 1981, the gradual phasing out of private higher education was unanimously recommended! But due to the deepening of the crisis, private education rose to the occasion and increasingly became an important component of the national educational system, especially in the tertiary sector.

## **2. The development of private higher education in Senegal**

### **Legislative and regulatory framework**

In the beginning, private higher education institutions were not held in good reputation by the public and especially the parents of wards, who considered them as commercial enterprises whose proprietors used them primarily as a means of earning income rather than as institutions contributing to education and training.

From 1990 onwards, several institutions sprang up at various levels of training, compelling the public authorities to start paying more attention to the conditions and modalities of their creation as well as controlling their operation so as to curb the excesses observed.

The development context during this period was characterized by a string of major events in the field of higher education in Senegal, where the crisis continued to worsen. It was notably characterized by the following:

- the follow-up to the shocking realization of the education stakeholders' meeting and the submission in 1984 of the findings of the National Commission on Educational Reforms which was set up after the general stakeholders' meeting;
- the results of the National Forum on Higher Education held under the initiative of the government and which brought together from April 1992 to August 1993 more than 400 actors within the system; and

- the implementation of a series of reforms, beginning in the 1994/1995 academic year, at the *Université Cheikh Anta Diop* (UCAD) within the framework of the Higher Education Improvement Project, using the recommendations of the National Forum with the financial support of the World Bank.

This intervention of the authorities in favour of the development of private higher education in Senegal brought about the following:

- the passing of Law 91-92 of 16 February 1991, encouraging individual or collective private initiative, thereby making these actors partners in technical education and professional training;
- the passing of Law 94-82 of December 1994 on private educational institutions; and
- the signing of the blueprint agreement on the promotion of private education in Senegal on 2 May 1995. This agreement was established and signed between the minister in charge of higher education and the chairman of the committee of heads of private higher education institutions.

This document, which now regulates the relationship between the ministry in charge of higher education and the committee of higher education institutions, stipulates the content of the following regulatory documents:

- authorization for opening an institution supported by the documents of both the proprietor and the institution;
- authorization to practice, which includes, on the one hand, some elements related to the authorization to manage the institution, and on the other, to teach in it;
- the conditions and modalities for obtaining approval;
- administrative, financial and pedagogic controls exercised by competent structures of the state which, in this case, is the Higher Education Directorate; and
- award of certificates with the distinction clearly being made between research degrees, those awarded by institutions and their equivalences.

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In the transitional provisions of this agreement, which still regulates the relationship between the ministry in charge of higher education and private higher education, it is clearly stated that “while awaiting the publication of the legislative and regulatory instruments on private higher education in Senegal, private higher education institutions that are signatories of this Agreement, having been in existence for a year, shall be automatically authorized and shall adopt the denominations of their choice, with the addition of the following label: private higher education institution approved by the State”. This Agreement was signed in May 1995 by eight institutions (see *Appendix 1*). Presently, the number of educational establishments approved is 20 of the 40 who have received temporary approval from the Higher Education Directorate.

### Major characteristics of the educational institutions

#### *Number*

The number of institutions has increased since 1994 and is continuing to increase.

**Table 2.1** Number of private institutions by year

Year	Institutions
1994	4
1999	31
2003	48

In a period of 10 years, the increase in the number of private higher education institutions has been considerable, yet not all private establishments have been accounted for in these official figures. The Directorate of Higher Education indicates that there are about 10 applications currently being considered.

According to recent data from surveys undertaken on the ground by the Directorate of Higher Education, the geographical distribution of the setting-up of private institutions of higher education is as shown in *Table 2.2*.

**Table 2.2 Geographical distribution of private institutions of higher education**

Administrative region	Percentage of institutions
Dakar	88
Saint-Louis	7
Thiès	2.5
Kaolack	2.5

Regarding the total enrolment of these institutions, the same survey shows a total close to 10,000 students as of December 2003. As of the same date, the total enrolment of students for the two public universities of this country was 33,900: 31,000 for UCAD of Dakar and 2,900 for *Université Gaston Berger* of Saint-Louis (UGB). These figures are confirmed by those in *Appendix 2* (9,320 students of which 4,623 are female).

Still on enrolment figures, a survey carried out in 2003 by a sociology student of UCAD reveals that:

- fifty-three per cent of enrolled students are females (49.6 per cent according to the figures in *Appendix 2*); this clearly illustrates the constraints associated with higher education for females in long-duration courses;
- the average age of students is relatively low (23 years) as compared to what is obtained in the universities; this can be perceived as the result of the duration of courses offered and the constraints related to the financing of studies; and
- there are a certain number of non-Senegalese nationals coming from various Francophone African countries.

To encourage enrolment in this sector, the blueprint agreement of May 1995 provides that students admitted and registered in these approved institutions can benefit from scholarships and bursaries. However, the impact of this measure is still low because it caters for only 4 per cent of the totality of scholarship beneficiaries.

### *Nature*

Regarding the nature of private higher education establishments in Senegal, there are training institutes or schools on the one hand, and universities on the other hand. These can be classified into three main categories, according to their origin.

#### ***Initiatives of natural persons or corporate entities***

This category includes institutions set up by private promoters or proprietors, who are generally Senegalese nationals. These educational establishments belong to the category of institutes and schools where the Catholic mission has played a pioneering role and continues to occupy the forefront. However, the contribution of the secular sector is gaining more and more ground. Two of the five private universities in operation today are to their credit. These are *Université Dakar Bourguiba* (UDB) and *Université du Sahel*.

#### ***Relocation of universities of the North***

These exist educational establishments resulting from the partial relocation of a university of the North, generally in partnership with a Senegalese institution. This is the case of the Suffolk University of Boston, USA, set up on the campus of the National School of Applied Economics (ENEA) which is part of UCAD. The same applies to *Université El Hadji Ibrahima Niassé*, which is in partnership with the Clinic of Professor Iba Mar Diop, Honorary Dean of the Faculty of Medicine: the Pharmacy and Odonto-Stomatology Department of UCAD; and the International University's Higher Institute of Management.

#### ***Private establishments operating in public university structures***

In this area, one can cite the following examples:

- private courses operated under the Faculty of Economic Science and Management (private courses of IFACE, ISG Tourism and ISG Management) as well as those of the *École supérieure polytechnique*, which are all under UCAD;

- private courses under the UFR of Applied Mathematics and Informatics operating under UGB; and
- private courses of the National School of Administration and Magistracy, which is also a public institute of higher learning.

#### *Courses offered*

The courses offered here are first and foremost professional. They are tailored to lead to the award of certificates that meet the demands of job profiles of the various economic sectors of the country. This offers several opportunities to the certificate holders to enter professional life, be it working with companies or in self-employment. From this point of view, one can conclude that private higher education establishments have a higher external efficiency, calculated by the rate at which the certificate holders of these institutions are absorbed into the job market, thereby contributing to development.

One must add that the majority of the courses offered are of a short duration of two to three years after the *baccalauréat* (advanced level certificate) or an equivalent certificate. However, some of these institutions offer longer courses (*Appendix 2* indicates the duration of courses in some of the establishments).

In this area, the major asset of these private institutions is their flexibility in the adaptation of courses and their duration as compared to the rigid arrangement in public institutions. However, regarding short professional courses, the State is also making some progress, especially with the imminent opening of Regional University Centres as well as the project to create a third public university, *Université polytechnique de Thiès*, which is at an advanced stage.

#### *Resources*

##### ***Infrastructure***

Among the documents for the application of a permit to open a private higher education institution figures a land title deed or a leasing/hiring agreement as well as a detailed plan of the premises. One could maintain that very few institutions have their own premises. Most

of them are housed in private buildings or other places of habitation which have been renovated and re-adapted to suit their new purposes. It should be pointed out that the development and modernization programmes of these institutions fall under the conditions of the investment code.

### ***Human resources***

The regulation currently in force contains sufficient guarantee of the requirements for managing a private higher education institution. Indeed, one must have a teaching certificate, tenure, at least an M. Philosophy or equivalent certificate and five years' professional experience. Lecturers must have at least an M. Phil. or equivalent degree.

However, the reality on the ground is very different. Considering the human resource base of these institutions, only a few of them satisfy the requirements of the regulation regarding teaching and management of such establishments.

In each institution, the conditions and modalities of employing lecturers vary according to the Director of the institution, who has the ultimate power to take such a decision. Certainly, there are a number of qualified staff among these teachers, but one can also count a number of student teachers yet to complete their own courses at the university.

Considering the nature of courses run by these institutions, one finds among the lecturers a high number of professionals whose profiles correspond with the courses taught.

Another important characteristic worthy of note is the low number of full-time lecturers, with the majority being employed part-time. Some indications in the table below, based on verified data drawn from *Appendix 2*, give a clear picture of the situation in these institutions.

**Table 2.3 Staffing situation in private higher education in Senegal (2003)**

Category of institutions (number)	Total number of students	Number of lecturers	No. of permanent lecturers	% of permanent lecturers	Students/lecturers	Students/permanent lecturers
Universities (7)	4,140	504	204	40.4	8.2	20.2
Schools (12)	1,619	341	148	43.3	4.7	10.9
Institutes (15)	3,561	538	88	16.3	6.6	40.4
Totals (34)	9,352	1,383	440	31.3	6.7	21

Source: Ministry of Education, 2003.

The total number of teachers per establishment as well as per institution is relatively high, leading to a more than satisfactory number of students per teacher as well as of the total number of lecturers (6.7) and number of permanent teachers (21). These rates are incomparable with what exists in public higher education establishments, and particularly for the first degree levels of the universities.

On examining the composition of the teaching staff of the private sector, one realizes that the total staff strength is certainly high, but the percentage of permanent teachers is around 40 in the universities and schools and 16.3 in the institutes. Under these conditions, if the number of students per permanent teacher can still be accepted as good in the universities and schools (20.2 and 10.9 per cent), it is however worrying in the institutes, where it is 40 per cent!

The table below gives us figures on gender analysis of student and teaching staff enrolments.

**Table 2.4 Gender breakdown of student enrolments and teaching staff**

Type of establishment	Students			Teachers		
	Total	Female	%	Total	Female	%
Universities	4,140	2,027	48.9	504	47	9.3
Schools	1,619	810	50	341	18	5.7
Institutes	3,561	1,786	50.1	538	35	6.5
Totals	9,328	4,623	49.5	1,383	100	7.2

Source: Ministry of Education, 2003.

## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

If the representation of females is satisfactory among students (at 50 per cent), it is extremely low among teachers (7.2 per cent).

Still on the teaching staff, which is dominated by part-time teachers, one may also point out that even the pedagogical training background of these teachers is doubtful. Due to the highly professional nature of the training offered, a greater number of these part-time teachers are persons working in the professional areas concerned but without any pedagogical training. Some of the part-time teachers are from the public universities. In most cases, they are young teachers with good academic qualifications, but lacking in pedagogical training and experience.

### ***Financial resources***

Private higher education establishments can receive funding from the State according to well-defined conditions within the regulatory framework. The difficulty in satisfying these conditions, coupled with the effects of the economic crisis of the State, constitute important factors militating against the granting of State funding.

The chunk of the financial resources of private higher education establishments comes from tuition fees paid by enrolled students. Despite the non-availability of data on tuition fees paid annually, they can be estimated at 600,000 FCFA for institutes and schools and 1,000,000 FCFA for universities per student. One can also notice the differences among establishments; demand is higher for some of them, and for that matter, some are more expensive. It also stands to reason that these are establishments attended by students coming from fairly wealthy homes.

It should be noted that the management of these financial resources is far better than in public institutions, because the private institutions are run as commercial entities with a private management style.

One should add that, compared to public institutions, these establishments do not offer social services (accommodation, cafeteria services, medical cover) which, in the public set-up, absorb a higher percentage of the budget than what goes into academic activities.

However, it should be emphasized that, practically, private higher education establishments do not devote their resources to research activities, in spite of the fact that research is a fundamental component of quality higher education; better still, it is one of the three fundamental elements of the mission of higher education:

- teaching (optimizing the critical appropriation of knowledge);
- research (contributing to knowledge production); and
- service to the community (management and value addition to knowledge).

### **3. Private higher education in Senegal: perspectives**

Private higher education in Senegal, which is becoming more and more important for various objective reasons, is a component of the educational system, as elsewhere in the world.

#### **Need for effective supervision**

The Senegalese authorities, having foreseen the new development, put in place a transitional legal and regulatory framework not only for monitoring the development, but also for quality control.

This provisional framework, which constituted a good basis, continues to prevail even at a time when provisions better adapted to the changes are being prepared.

What is more worrying is that the monitoring structures charged with oversight responsibility for enforcing the provisions (that is, the *Direction d'enseignement supérieur/DES*) admit that they do not have the necessary means to fulfil their mission.

Applications for the opening of new establishments are being considered, and the monitoring of those already in existence is not being carried out. In this way, it is difficult to have an exact idea of the quality of existing establishments; a situation which is detrimental to the system. It is an undeniable fact that there are excellent institutions among those in existence, but whose image may be tarnished due to generalization and the absence of control.

The future of private higher education depends mainly on the strict application of legislative and regulatory provisions which control the system and their periodic adaptation to the changes on the ground. This implies that the DES be provided with indispensable means to facilitate their work (human resources, logistics). There is no doubt that order has to be established in the system for it to gain credibility.

It is the guarantee of respect of the conditions for the opening of new establishments as well as the strict enforcement of regulations which will give private higher education credibility.

### **Quality improvement**

Quality in higher education depends on what is called internal efficiency. By internal efficiency, one means the link existing between the totality of academic and institutional resources and investments, and the concrete results obtained from the training of students. In other words, it is a matter of measuring the academic performance of teaching and evaluation within the system.

The internal efficiency of teaching is a result of several variables, the most significant of which are as follows:

Six pedagogic and academic variables:

- relevance and quality of study programmes;
- quality of teaching methods;
- access to new pedagogic tools (ICT);
- modes of evaluation;
- quality of university research in the academic area concerned; and
- control and management of the influx of students.

Six variables linked to human resource management:

- quality training and competence of the teaching staff;
- availability of a considerable number of lecturers;
- status and working conditions of lecturers;
- quality training;
- competence of the professional, technical and administrative staff;
- and

- status and working conditions of staff.

Five infrastructural and logistic variables:

- institutional capacity and quality of maintenance of the physical infrastructure;
- quality of academic information systems and management;
- validity and relevance of scientific equipment and instruments;
- computer hardware and ICT equipment in working order; and
- sources and mechanisms of financing.

In this very important area, a lot remains to be done, particularly in the areas of research, training of teachers, access to ICT, and above all in the field of documentation. Greater attention needs to be paid to the working conditions of teachers.

### **Credibility of certificates awarded**

It can be said that the greatest portion of credibility of private higher education depends on the value of certificates awarded at the end of the training given to students. Private higher education establishments award a variety of certificates at the end of two, three, four and even five years of training according to the type of institution. Some of these certificates are recognized by the state, which, in the transitional provisions in force, defines the conditions of this recognition: “Authorized establishments can award certificates recognized by the State on condition that the course be subjected to examination and approval by competent authorities. Such recognized certificates bear the signature and seal of the State”. In addition, it is recommended that approved establishments, with support from DES, negotiate agreements with State universities, institutes and schools, so as to obtain guarantee for their certificates.

Regarding the guarantee of the quality of certificates, in Francophone Africa there is an incontestable intergovernmental organization which gives recognition to certificates and establishes their equivalence. This organization is the CAMES: the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education. CAMES deliberates on official courses drawn up by member

states. It is important that private higher education establishments subject the certificates they award to CAMES for approval.

### **Financing**

In the area of financing, great opportunities exist for private higher education.

The 1999 strategy of the education sector of the World Bank, which at the same time emphasizes the improvement of access, quality and efficiency of education, recognizes that private education is an essential complement of public education, particularly in developing countries confronted with public resource constraints as well as other challenges, and takes note of the degree of innovation within private education.

A partnership between the Bank and the International Financial Company (IFC) encouraged the strengthening of interventions of the IFC in all components of private education, including schools and universities.

The managers of private higher education establishments have an opportunity which they should be able to exploit with the help of the state and development partners.

In conclusion, one can maintain that private higher education is recognized and accepted as an essential component of the educational system and must be better integrated into the map of university education in the country.

It accounts for a proportion of the student population totalling one third of the number of students of the two public universities in the country and holds the trump card for greater external efficiency, which is a better response to the training and employment equation.

It is controlled by a set of legislative and regulatory instruments which must be updated and, above all, enforced. These instruments, although provisional, set the conditions and modalities for the opening and functioning of an institution. The lack of adequate monitoring therefore negatively affects credible institutions.

Monitoring falls under the ambit of DES which, for now, has neither the human resources nor sufficient equipment to undertake this important mission.

Special attention has to be given to the nature and conditions for the award of certificates which, in the long term, must respond to the same demands as those awarded by public establishments.

For a greater democratization of access to higher education, increased financial support must be offered to private higher education by the state as well as development partners, who wield the real opportunities.

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## Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa

Task Force on Higher Education and Society. 2000. *Higher education in developing countries – peril and promise*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

### Appendix 1

List of signatory institutions to the Agreement for the promotion of private higher education as of May 1995.

1. Collège St Michel
2. École technique supérieure de Dakar
3. École supérieure de commerce
4. Immaculée Conception
5. Institution Sainte Jeanne d'Arc
6. Institut privé de gestion
7. Institut supérieur de formation à la gestion
8. Institut supérieur de management des hôtessees et des secrétaires  
ETHSOS

## Appendix 2

### Data on the institutions of private higher education

UNIVERSITIES						
Institutions	Number of students		Number of teaching staff			Duration of courses in years
	of which (girls)		total / fem / permnt.			
Université Dakar Bourguiba	1,029	(476)	54	01	-	4
Université du Sahel	195	(-)	70	02	60	2,3 and 4
Univ. Intern/Institut supérieur management.	944	(561)	130	13	35	2-5
UCAD: FASEG/Inst. form. adm. créat. entrep. (IFACE)	398	(250)	50	05	15	2-5
UCAD/FASEG/Inst. sup. gestion-tourisme (ISG)	205	(140)	17	09	02	2-5
UCAD/FASEG/Inst. sup gestion-(ISG)	441	(250)	43	07	12	2-5
UCAD/ESP	928	(350)	140	20	110	2-5
UGB/ UFR/MAI	-		-			-
École nation. administr & magist/Inst. sup. fin.	-		-			-
Total	4,140	(2,027)	504	47	204	
SCHOOLS						
Institutions	Number of students		Number of teaching staff			Duration of courses in years
	of which (girls)		total / fem / permnt.			
Complexe St Michel	306	(132)	49	2	27	2
Institution Ste Jeanne d'Arc	245	(152)	41	11	-	2-4
Immaculée Conception	34	(34)	09	04	(-)	2
École sup. d'infor. & de gestion (ESIG)	102	(38)	21	03	21	2 and 5
École tech. sup. hôt. & secrét. (ETSHOS)	203	(167)	33	03	08	2
École sup. finan. audit & manag.(ESFIAM)	38	(14)	17	01	0	2 and 4
École sup. tech. manag. (ESTM)	112	(20)	35	01	0	2 and 4
École des hautes études gestion (HEG)	169	(52)	31	0	04	2, 4, and 5
Centre étud. sup. manag. & inform.(CEMIS)	105	(45)	37	02	-	2 and 4
École sup. adm. & gestion des Entrep. (ESAG)	60	(25)	10	0	32	2
École sup. commer. Sup. de CO (Sup. de CO)	197	(107)	46	03	06	2

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École intern. des affaires (EIA)	48	(24)	12	01	50	2 and 4
Total	1,619	(810)	341	18	148	-
<b>INSTITUTES</b>						
Institutions	Number of students		Number of teaching staff			Duration of courses
	of which (girls)		total / fem / permnt.			in years
Hautes études canadiennes intern.	147	(51)	40	04	02	2, 3 and 4
Inst. africain management (IAM)	557	(296)	61	02	14	2, 3 and 4
Inst. formation professionnelle (IFP)	600	(360)	61	06	05	2
Inst. sup. étud. commer. (ISEC/PIGIER)	142	(93)	23	01	-	2
Insit. privé de gestion (IPG)	602	(352)	69	03	08	2 and 4
Inst. sup. tech. industrielle (ISTI)	180	(42)	39	02	08	2 and 4
Inst. sup. entrepreneurship & gestion (ISEG)	215	(90)	63	06	28	2 and 4
Inst. universitaire professionnel (IUP)	60	(18)	25	01	0	2 and 5
Inst. sup. form. gestion (ISFG)	67	(38)	14	01	0	2
Inst. sup. d'informatique (ISI)	510	(173)	42	02	21	2, 4 and 5
Inst. sup. scien. info. & comm.(ISSIC)	142	(70)	21	01	-	2 and 3
Inst. afric. commerce & marketing (IACOM)	66	(36)	28	02	02	2
Inst. sup. Commerce & adm. entrep. (ISCAE)	41	(51)	14	01	0	2
Inst. polytech. Dakar (IPD-Thomas Sankara)	180	(83)	21	02	0	2 and 3
Inst. sup. form. Eurexco Intern.(ISF-EI)	52	(33)	17	01	0	2
Total	3,561	(1,786)	538	35	88	-

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## RECOUNTING THE STATE OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

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### **Abstract**

Several studies on different aspects of private higher education have been conducted in the past few years in South Africa. As a result, a picture of the nature of the sector and its size and shape has emerged. However, as new institutions are established and some old ones close down – because student enrolments change from year to year and because the overall system of higher education experiences changes in policy and the environment within which it operates – it becomes necessary to revisit audits of the developments in the components of that system. In this case, this article serves the purpose of re-auditing the state of private higher education in South Africa, within the changing policy and environmental context of higher education. It makes use of literature generated by the previous studies and factors in new empirical information, with regard to changes in the policy environment and data on private higher education institutions. The article analyzes public-private partnerships, the size and shape of the sector, the for-profit and not-for-profit dimensions, and the quality of teaching and learning in the private higher education sector.

### **1. Introduction**

Throughout its historical development, the private higher education sector operated on the fringes of the public higher education sector and, as such, was never identified as a factor in the higher education system of South Africa. Its sudden burst into the mainstream of higher education in the 1990s, in different forms such as franchises, partners to local public and foreign institutions, with a direct and independent

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presence of transnational institutions, or simply as local privately-established institutions, was largely thought to be a threat to the well-being of the higher education system of the country. This and other misconceptions about the sector still exist, even though it is gradually beginning to be understood.

A few empirical studies on private provision of higher education in South Africa have been conducted. These include a study of the size and shape of the private higher education sector (Mabizela *et al.*, 2000); a case study of 15 private higher education institutions focusing on staff, students, management and facilities conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (Kruss, 2002); an analysis of 58 private higher education institutions that had applied for the re-accreditation of their programmes by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC)<sup>1</sup> of the Council on Higher Education (CHE)<sup>2</sup> in 2002 (CHE, 2003), and a study of public-private partnerships in the provision of higher education in South Africa (Mabizela, 2005). Some of these studies were triggered by a need to understand the operations of the sector since, previously, these had been concealed and some of the sector's operations were new anyway.

The private higher education sector is dynamic. It develops and changes with time. This dynamism suggests that there has to be a continuous study of its developments, its role in human resources, social development and in higher education, and of how the sector can be developed in order to give support to the higher education system of South Africa, alongside the public higher education sector. To this extent, this article seeks to examine the private higher education sector as it now operates and to take cognizance of the information generated by previous studies.

Thus, in order to make a thorough assessment and re-examination of the sector, this article first retraces the development of the policy

1. The HEQC is a permanent sub-committee of the Council on Higher Education and is mainly responsible for accreditation of higher education learning programmes.
2. The CHE is a statutory body set up to advise the Minister of Education on any aspect of higher education. It started to operate in 1999.

environment for private higher education in South Africa and encompasses the latest developments in government policy on the sector. Secondly, it briefly analyzes public-private partnerships in the provision of higher education and the impact the phenomenon has on the higher education landscape. Thirdly, it updates existing knowledge on the size and shape of the sector, including the levels and fields of its operations. Fourthly, it examines the for-profit and not-for-profit dimensions of the sector and analyzes the profitability of for-profit private higher education institutions. Fifthly, the article considers the quality of private provision of higher education and then concludes.

## **2. Historical context of private higher education policy**

Private higher education dates back to the beginnings of the higher education system in South Africa, early in the nineteenth century. However, because privately established institutions of the time never remained private institutions, but were taken over to become state-owned, there was no policy or legislation until the mid to late twentieth century, when some post-secondary institutions survived as private institutions.

The Correspondence Colleges Act, No. 59 of 1965 (Department of Education, 1965) was the first legislation that dealt with private provision of post-secondary education in South Africa. At the time, some private providers offered tuition by correspondence, possibly because there was an unmet demand for distance provision of vocational education and at levels lower than the qualifications offered by the University of South Africa (UNISA), the only correspondence higher education institution at the time. That is, private providers offered non-degree courses at the post-secondary education level. The act, among other things, established the Correspondence Colleges Council, with powers to register private tuition providers.

A few years earlier, the Eiselen Commission (Department of Education, 1951 - U.G. No. 53/1951: paragraph 356) had reported nine institutions which provided courses, particularly to black students, ranging from the secondary to degree level. The Commission reported

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a growing demand for correspondence education among blacks and hence a “rapid increase in the number of students enrolled” (paragraph 357) with private correspondence institutions.

Another phenomenon, which developed prior to the enactment of the Correspondence Colleges Act, was the offering of some courses in collaborative arrangements between public and private institutions. This practice was first reported in the 1948 De Villiers Commission of Enquiry on Technical and Vocational Education (Department of Education, 1948). The government only began to regulate university partnerships with other providers in Sections 18A and 18B of the 1984 Joint Statute (Department of Justice, 1984). The statute stipulates, among other things, that the university council shall accept final responsibility for learning programmes and teaching taking place in its partnerships; the council shall determine admission requirements for partnership students and shall be responsible for recompensing its university partner institutions for aid in the provision of tuition.

By the early 1990s, the above-cited legislation had, somehow, lost touch with the reality of the demands of students, leading to a somewhat *laissez-faire* situation that saw the mushrooming of private institutions. Confirmed evidence by both private and public sector personnel shows that the newly-established private institutions were started by individuals privately offering tutorials and lectures to UNISA students (i.e. distance education students). Upon identifying the increasing demand for such tutorials and lectures, some began to establish centres, some of which were later developed into private institutions.

After the democratic elections of 1994, there was mounting pressure, especially on historically white institutions (HWIs) to adhere to the principles of transformation by, among other things, admitting black students. Prior to 1994, HWIs were lawfully barred from admitting black students, although some broke the law by modestly admitting black students. Some face-to-face (or residential)<sup>3</sup> HWIs, especially the Afrikaans institutions, started offering distance education with a view to increasing their enrolment, especially that of black students (see, for example, Bolsmann and Uys, 2001: 179-182). Partnership agreements

with private institutions became a vehicle towards achieving this goal, but without having the physical presence of such students on their main campuses (see Cloete and Fehnel, 2002: 387).

Hitherto, and with the exception of the Correspondence Colleges Act, there was no legislation or policy on private higher education. A radical step towards the recognition of private higher education institutions came through the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (South African Government, 1996). In the terms of Section 29(3) of the Constitution, everyone has the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, independent educational institutions that do not discriminate on the basis of race, are registered with the state, and maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable educational institutions. This law opened space for the establishment and recognition of private higher education institutions, among others.

The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), a temporal body set up by the first democratic government to advise on higher education policy, recognized the presence of private higher education and its potential to contribute to access in higher education (NCHE, 1996: 100). The NCHE generally recommended:

“emphasis to career-focused programmes, to programmes in science and technology, to shorter-cycle (one and two year) certificate and diploma programmes and to redressing current race and gender inequalities across all programme fields and levels” (NCHE, 1996:100).

Indeed, these are some of the areas in which private higher education institutions have found a niche market, albeit unwittingly in some instances, but due to existing demand.

3. In international literature, the term ‘face-to-face institution’ is used interchangeably with ‘residential institution’. Because residential has a dual connotation (place to live – student residences – and contact between students and lecturers), ‘face-to-face’ is preferred to denote the face-to-face contact that occurs between students and lecturers during the tuition delivery process, as opposed to distance education where, theoretically, there is no face-to-face contact between the two.

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Subsequent to the Constitution and the NCHE report, the White Paper on Higher Education (Department of Education, 1997a) declared recognition of “a relatively well-established private higher education sector in South Africa, offering programmes under franchise from professional institutes or from local and international universities, and in some cases under their own auspices”. The White Paper further declares that the ministry wishes to avoid the risk of *laissez-faire* proliferation of higher education programmes offered by an increasing range of providers, without the benefit of a planning framework and without adequate safeguards to ensure the quality of provision. Furthermore, the policy states that the ministry recognizes that private provision plays an important role in expanding access to higher education, but:

“the key challenge in expanding the role of private institutions is to create an environment which neither suffocates educationally sound and sustainable private institutions with state over-regulation, nor allows a plethora of poor quality, unsustainable ‘fly-by-night’ operators into the higher education market” (Department of Education, 1997a).

Finding that balance has indeed proven to be extremely challenging, as will be demonstrated in the discussion below.

The subsequent Higher Education Act (Department of Education, 1997b) puts into practice the declaration enshrined in the Constitution, policy recommendations of the NCHE, and the actual policy entailed in the White Paper. According to Section 51 of the Higher Education Act:

“No person other than a public higher education institution or an organ of state may provide higher education unless that person is:

- (a) in the prescribed manner, registered or conditionally registered as a private higher education institution in terms of this Act; and
- (b) registered or recognized as a juristic person in terms of the Companies Act, 1973 (Act No. 61 of 1973), before such person is registered or conditionally registered as contemplated in paragraph (a).”

Section 53 of the act stipulates that applicants should be financially capable of satisfying their obligations, maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public higher education institutions, and comply with the requirements of the appropriate quality assurance body and with any other reasonable requirement prescribed by the Minister.

To promote an enabling environment for higher education institutions, Section 3(3) of the Higher Education Act empowers the Minister of Education to determine the scope and range of operations of the public and private higher education sectors and of individual institutions in either sector. Furthermore, the CHE maintains that in the interests of coherent and rational planning, higher education is and must remain an exclusively national competency (CHE, 2000: 46). The private higher education sector, though, mainly provides career-focused and shorter cycle certificates and diploma programmes, which, hitherto, have been neglected by public higher education institutions, with the exception of those directly applicable to the higher education system. Moreover, the scope and range of private higher education providers remains at the behest of market forces. That is, private higher education responds to student and labour market demands and is, thus, shaped accordingly.

Like the mushrooming of new private providers in the 1990s, the escalation of partnerships between public higher education institutions and private providers went unchecked, reaching undetermined proportions. This prompted the Minister of Education to impose a moratorium on new partnerships from February 2000. In the meantime, the Department of Education conducted an investigation into the partnerships phenomenon. The National Plan for Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001) lifted the moratorium in 2001, and declared that the Ministry would not fund student places in partnerships unless such programmes were approved (by the CHE) in the public institution's three-year rolling plans. The National Plan further requires that public institutions seek approval for the introduction of programmes for which state subsidies are not needed. Programmes

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should meet quality assurance criteria set by the HEQC (Higher Education Quality Committee). Equally, public institutions concerned should take full academic responsibility for partnership programmes and students must enjoy all benefits that come with registration at that public institution (Department of Education, 2001: 66).

With regard to the functions of private higher education institutions and their agreements with public institutions, the CHE (2000: 45) is of the view that:

“appropriate legislation and regulations would enable private institutions to contribute to providing access to higher education of quality and meet development needs, on their own, or in responsible partnerships with South African public institutions”.

To this extent, the Ministry of Education concurs with the CHE that the sector is inadequately regulated. The CHE statements infer that private higher education institutions are not regulated in such a way as to fulfil the role of being complementary to public higher education institutions, as well as of contributing to social development. Indeed, whilst private institutions on a limited scale provide access to higher education, the existing policy is inadequate in terms of improving this aspect of their functioning. However, the examination of the pros and cons of making the private higher education sector complementary to the public sector requires a separate discussion.

The Department of Education promulgated a set of regulations for the registration of private higher education institutions in 2002 (DoE, 2002). These regulations outline: the eligibility criteria used for applicants who want to operate private higher education institutions; guidelines for compliance with registration requirements; and responsibility criteria for the maintenance of registration, among others. They require private institutions to offer only programmes leading to qualifications that are registered on the NQF (National Qualifications Framework), to maintain the necessary academic and support staff with appropriate academic or professional qualifications and experience to achieve the objectives of each programme, to maintain quality management

systems, sufficient space, equipment and instructional material, to not exceed the enrolments that the facilities and equipment can reasonably accommodate, and to maintain full records of each student's admission, academic progress and assessment of learning for each programme.

In spite of the fact that both the CHE and Department of Education support the view that private higher education institutions should complement the public sector institutions, the legislation and policy do not stipulate criteria or procedures for private institutions to fulfil this role. This further explains the shortfalls of policy and legislation on private provision of higher education. Thus, some commentators believe that government policy is aimed at protecting the public from programmes of dubious quality, as well as at protecting public institutions, because some of these attributed their diminishing student enrolments to competition from private institutions (Bitzer, 2002: 25; Cloete and Fehnel, 2002: 382). In addition, Cloete and Fehnel (2002: 382-3) argue that government policy stopped innovative undertakings "which could have addressed some of the priority areas in higher education, such as increasing enrolments in science, mathematics and technology courses". However, none of the private higher education institutions operate in the identified priority areas. This is because programmes in science, engineering, mathematics and technology are expensive to run, and private higher education institutions are overwhelmingly for-profit and would not venture into programmes requiring lots of resource investments and deemed to be non-profitable to them.

Despite all the legislation and policies outlined above, there is still no connection between the private higher education sector and the social agenda, on which both private and public institutions would be required to focus. That is, the private higher education sector is not regulated such that it addresses the existing social agenda of transformation of the country, improves access to higher education and the gender balance, and tackles the issue of scarce skills. Moreover, the existing policy and legislation do not set criteria for levels at which private institutions should (or should not) operate. For instance, the

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CHE (2000: 45-6) suggests that private providers seeking to function as multi-purpose institutions should be required to meet the set criteria and also fulfil the social purposes, roles and goals of institutions of that particular category. As a result, private institutions are expected to “maintain acceptable standards that are not inferior to standards at a comparable public higher education institution” (Department of Education, 2002: 16(3)), even though they are not comparable to public higher education institutions in all possible respects. That is, private higher education institutions are expected to perform at unreasonably high levels. For example, none of the private higher education institutions in South Africa are universities and yet they are expected to compare to universities.

Furthermore, despite the official recognition of some private institutions, in the form of accreditation of their programmes by the HEQC and registration with the Department of Education, there is no set procedure for articulation within the private sector and higher education across sectors. In this regard, the CHE (2000: 46) suggests that mechanisms for articulation must exist to ensure that the system is highly integrated. It further suggests that articulation between institutions “must be embedded features of, and must permeate, the entire system so that continuing education, life-long learning, horizontal and vertical mobility are all enhanced” and should not be left to individual institutional partnerships. All these mean that for the Department of Education to achieve its goal of a fully-integrated and single co-ordinated system (see Department of Education, 1997*a*), private higher education should be appropriately regulated and recognized as part of the higher education system.

### **3. Public-private partnerships in higher education**

A study of provision of higher education within public-private partnerships was conducted in 2002 and 2003 (Mabizela, 2005). The purpose of the study was to examine why and how public-private partnerships for provision of higher education arose, to consider the roles and responsibilities of partner institutions, and to investigate the

impact of these partnerships on the existing higher education landscape in South Africa.

The study found that in 2002/2003 there were 55 private providers in partnership with 12 public higher education institutions. Three types of public-private partnerships were identified and these are: service partnerships; tuition partnerships; and professional institute partnerships. Tuition partnerships were further subdivided into specialist, comprehensive, capacity development and access partnerships. Each of these is described below.

### **Service partnerships**

Service partnerships have private partner institutions that provide infrastructure and administrative support services to distance education students of face-to-face public institutions. Public partner face-to-face institutions that venture into distance education register students through their private partner institutions. All learning materials and qualifications are the responsibility of the public partner institution. The main function of private partner institutions is to co-ordinate and facilitate administrative links; they do not lecture, teach or tutor, hence they are called 'service partner institutions'. This type of partnership is a result of the fact that public face-to-face institutions that venture into distance education do not have the necessary infrastructure and do not want to invest in it because it might be temporal. They therefore make use of the services of experienced private distance education institutions.

### **Tuition partnerships**

Tuition partnerships have private partner institutions that offer face-to-face tuition, hence the term 'tuition private partner institutions'. In fact, some 'tuition private partner institutions' have learning programmes of their own. These are by far the largest group of institutions involved in public-private partnerships, and based on common characteristics have been divided into four sub-types.

### **Specialist partnerships**

Specialist partnerships comprise private partner institutions that specialize in only one or two fields of study, hence the term 'specialist private institutions'. 'Specialist private partner institutions' do not necessarily have large student enrolments and are mainly in partnership with dedicated distance education public institutions (e.g. the University of South Africa – UNISA). The main operation of the private partner institutions is to offer franchised learning programmes, to the extent that they are often dependant on these franchise agreements for survival. Their facilities tend to be limited to classrooms where tuition is delivered or practical training conducted.

### **Comprehensive partnerships**

Comprehensive partnerships have private partner institutions that are sometimes referred to as 'multipurpose' providers. These providers strive to develop their own higher education learning programmes alongside franchised ones. They have their own physical facilities to cater for face-to-face provision of tuition, and often invest heavily in creating a campus environment. They offer a diverse choice of learning programmes drawn from various fields of study, some of which may be franchised from public distance and face-to-face institutions, transnational institutions, professional institutes and various examination boards. 'Comprehensive partnerships private partner institutions' tend to target school leavers. All but one of the 12 such institutions examined in the study had their own learning programmes that were accredited by the HEQC and registered with the Department of Education.

### **Capacity development partnerships**

Capacity development partnerships have private partner institutions that take the development of their disciplines and professionals centrally, and invest their material resources in the process. The focus is on training and capacity development of their resources (personnel, infrastructure and discipline – field of study).

### **Access partnerships**

Access partnerships have private partner institutions that register and certify students so that they will be able to enrol with public partner institutions upon successful completion of the private partner tuition. These students would not ordinarily gain entry to public institutions because they do not meet the set academic entry requirements. In fact, public partner institutions may recommend students to the private partner. Curriculum and tuition are developed within partnerships, with public partner institutions either participating in curriculum development and/or endorsing learning programmes. Access partnerships are developmental in nature and are sometimes characterized by hybrid qualifications – that is, programmes comprising learning materials taken from both sides and certificates bearing emblems of both institutions.

### **Professional institute partnerships**

Professional institute partnerships have privately established professional institutes that operate in applied and practical domains of disciplines. The interest and priority of professional institutes is to improve the professional competence of practitioners in their respective fields. They develop their own learning materials and programmes, and provide them through either distance education or franchises. Professional institutes are some of the biggest franchisers of education and have been involved in the oldest partnerships with public institutions in South Africa.

In the 2002 academic year, there were 85,657 students enrolled with private higher education institutions. Of these, 55,885 were in public-private partnerships and some 29,772 enrolled directly with private institutions.<sup>4</sup> Eighty-six per cent of partnership students enrolled in the few distance education programmes that were offered

4. From a study of 86 registered private institutions in 2001, Subotzky (2003: 421) found that there was an overall figure of 85,657 students enrolled with private higher education institutions. Of these, 55,428 were partnership students, of which 43,267 were certificated by local public institutions. There were 30,229 enrolled directly with private higher education institutions.

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by public providers and logistically administered by private providers (service partnerships). Only 14 per cent were enrolled in much smaller numbers across a far more diverse set of distance education programmes which were mediated by face-to-face tuition (tuition partnerships). Paradoxically, this means that the majority of programmes were delivered face-to-face, whereas the overwhelming majority of students studied through the distance education mode and with no face-to-face tuition.

There was concentrated demand for qualifications in business, commerce, management studies, education and computer studies. In fact, partnerships reflected the same enrolment patterns found in public institutions. There was very little presence of key study fields in which there are shortages in the labour market such as manufacturing, engineering, health sciences, social services and the mathematical, physical and life sciences.

Most partnership programmes were offered at certificate and diploma levels or Level 5 in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This is the base level of higher education. The reason for concentration at NQF Level 5 is because private partner institutions are not equipped to support higher levels of education in the higher education band.

A number of public institutions claimed to be entering partnership agreements because they wanted to make higher education accessible to students. It transpired, though, that most institutions meant geographical and formal access, particularly within metropolitan areas, including those offering distance education. However, no work was done in the partnerships' learning programmes to ensure the intellectual development of students. Thus, partnerships provided institutional differentiation to diversify choice of distance education institutions. This partly explains larger enrolments in service partnerships than in tuition partnerships, for example.

Distance education students enrolled with public higher education institutions, but requiring additional learner support in the form of face-to-face tuition, largely drive the demand for these partnerships.

Private partner institutions offer such face-to-face tuition. This unique mediation of distance education may be due to a weak educational foundation, leaving students unconfident to study on their own through distance education without face-to-face backup. It may also be due to the location of public institutions and their inflexibility, which does not allow them to offer face-to-face tuition at the places and times that are easily accessible and convenient for working students.

Whereas the majority of programmes in public-private partnerships were founded on the demand for face-to-face mediated distance education, the vast majority of partnership enrolments fell within a few distance education programmes offered by traditionally face-to-face (or residential) public institutions. Much of this provision was in the form of further diplomas in education and arose because of a push for the marketization or 'corporatization' of some public higher education institutions. Such public institutions sought to generate new forms of income and hence new markets for student enrolment (Cloete and Fehnel, 2002: 387). Traditionally face-to-face institutions began to provide distance education, even though they had no experience of it. Given their inexperience, they sought the services of experienced private providers in this regard to assist with the daunting logistical and administrative demands of their new venture into distance education provision. As a result, 'service private partner institutions' belong to the old generation of private institutions established prior to the 1980s.

Internationally, the demand for face-to-face tuition in distance education is also prevalent because, according to De Boer *et al.* (2002: 25), "despite the support for ICT in higher education, most analysts agree that the traditional pattern of face-to-face teaching and learning will continue to exist". For that matter, distance education is so called because of the development of other interventions of lecturer-student contact (including face-to-face tuition delivery) from the earlier method of correspondence education, which had no form of contact between the two except through correspondence.

In both the technikon and university sector partnerships, the majority of learning programmes were delivered face-to-face, followed

by the mixed mode and then the distance education mode. Despite the fact that the majority of students were registered for the distance education mode, face-to-face provision offered more diversity in terms of learning programmes.

Private partner institutions were junior partners in the majority of partnerships. They did not have even close to the same powers as public partner institutions. There was very little capacity development provided to private partner institutions, the few exceptions being those institutions within access and capacity development partnerships.

Educationally, there was very little that private partner institutions were able to contribute to the partnerships. Many of the private institutions (44 of the 55) were not involved in the development of materials, nor were they involved in determining how those materials were to be used. Such decisions rested with the public partner higher education institutions. That is, private partner institutions did not have significant responsibilities in the partnerships. Most private partner institutions were, thus, more like tuition agents for public partner institutions.

#### **4. The matter of size and shape**

In October 2004, there were 99 private higher education institutions registered with the Department of Education. Of these, 10 were provisionally registered, meaning that they have not fulfilled all the requirements for registration. Fourteen had been issued with letters of intent to cancel their registration because of their continued failure to comply with requirements of their registration. Only three, Bond University, Monash University (both Australian) and the Business School of the Netherlands were transnational institutions.

In the terms of Section 54(7):

“no private education institution may call itself a university or a technikon or confer a professorship or an honorary degree or use the title of Rector, Vice-Chancellor or Chancellor, unless it is registered

as a private higher education in terms of Chapter 7 and the word ‘university’ or ‘technikon’ appears in its name”.

Usage of the titles ‘university’ or ‘technikon’ has to be approved by the registrar of private higher education institutions if a private institution wishes to have either in its name. None of the registered private higher education institutions are either universities or technikons. Even transnational institutions such as Bond University and Monash University, which operate as universities in their home countries, are, thus, registered as Bond South Africa and Monash South Africa, respectively.

Moreover, none of the registered private higher education institutions are research institutions. They are all teaching institutions. A few that aspire to function as universities have some of their lecturers involved in individual research and participating in academic conferences. Some are in a process of establishing research departments.

Historically, unlike the public higher education sector, private higher education was regarded as informal and therefore did not have formal channels of accountability and reporting of its enrolment patterns. In a first attempt to measure the sector, Mabizela, Subotzky and Thaver (2000) found that there were approximately 108,000 headcount students enrolled in 145 private institutions. However, this figure included students enrolled at the further education and training (FET) level, because most private institutions combined FET and higher education. Subsequently, Subotzky (2003: 421), drawing on data submitted by 86 private higher education institutions that were registered with the Department of Education on December 2001, reported a total of 85,657 students. Approximately one third – 30,229 students – were registered for programmes owned by private institutions. The other two thirds – 55,428 students – were registered in programmes offered in partnerships, with certification done by public partner institutions. This figure parallels the 55,885 headcount partnership students reported in a separate study conducted in 2002/2003 on public-private partnerships in the provision of higher

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education in South Africa by the Human Sciences Research Council (Mabizela, 2005). Both Mabizela *et al.* (2000) and Subotzky (2003) reported that, black students “and Africans in particular” formed the greater proportion of enrolments among race groups. Women were fairly represented among “local private institutions” and under-represented in “transnational institutions” (i.e. those offering higher levels of higher education, e.g. MBA). The race and gender breakdown of enrolments in private higher education institutions is still very difficult to conclusively discuss because private higher education institutions have not been aggregating their enrolments in the manner possible for such an analysis.

In 2001, 71 per cent (or 21,586) of the total of 30,229 headcount enrolments in private higher education institutions were at NQF Level 5 (Subotzky, 2003). Moreover, there were 9,466 (11 per cent) headcount enrolments reported to be below NQF Level 5. Similarly, the CHE (2003: 24) found that, of the 58 institutions that had applied for re-accreditation of their programmes with the HEQC in 2002, 49 (84.5 per cent) offered programmes that, although presented as at higher education level, were actually at FET Level 4. A small number of institutions offer courses at NQF Level 6 (first degrees and higher diplomas), mostly in public-private partnerships (Mabizela, 2005). This is testimony to the fact that most private sector institutions in South Africa are not yet equipped to support senior degree programmes.

The majority of private higher education institutions are situated in the three main metropolitan areas of Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Mabizela *et al.* (2000) found that 56 per cent operated from the Gauteng Province and 14 per cent and 11 per cent from KwaZulu Natal and Western Cape, respectively. This spread is directly linked to their responsiveness to their ‘clientele’. First, these metropolitan areas are centres of high economic activity and have a large number of employees who require higher levels of knowledge and qualifications. Second, the metropolitan areas host a concentration of industries, which constantly requires specialized skills that some private institutions offer or purport to offer. Private institutions conveniently provide these programmes

because they are offered after working hours and by face-to-face mode. While private institutions are able to fulfil these requirements, the quality of content is a matter for a separate investigation and discussion. Third, these metropolitan centres host a relatively stronger concentration of public higher education institutions that attract large numbers of students, some of whom, for various reasons, are unable to obtain entry. As such, private higher education institutions become alternatives.

Most studies confirm that the majority of private institutions mainly offer business, commerce and management studies (Mabizela, 2005; Subotzky, 2003; and Kruss, 2004). For example, in 2001, 34 per cent of (or 10,306) private higher education enrolments were registered in the field of business, commerce and management studies. This was followed by information technology (IT) or computer studies, with 24 per cent of (or 7,037) enrolments. Regarding public-private partnership programmes, 70 per cent of enrolments were at first-degree level (NQF Level 6), particularly in the field of education. This suggests that partnership student enrolments in this field targeted on-the-job teachers who wanted to upgrade their qualifications. Thus, private higher education institutions make little contribution to training students in higher-level skills and in scarce skills. Moreover, this means that the private higher education sector has quantitatively an insignificant impact on the higher education system and on human resources development. Considering that the public higher education sector averaged about 620,200 headcount enrolments between 1999 and 2002, private higher education sector therefore supports about 5 per cent of higher education students in South Africa.

While the private higher education sector provides no highly qualified graduates, they play an important skilling role. The NQF Level 5 at which they mainly operate interfaces with FET and provides intermediate skills. Kraak (2004: 75) defines intermediate skills as “those located in the middle education and training band that include all post-junior secondary school certificates and their equivalents but which exclude degree level qualifications in higher education”. Because universities derive most of their state funding from degree

programmes, they tend to neglect certificate and diploma programmes (NQF Level 5) and focus on higher levels of the higher education band (NQF Levels 6-8), also specializing in academia, research and practical training of higher education learning. While this arrangement appears to be clearly demarcated, Kraak (2002: 10) observes that lately there has been a convergence to NQF Level 5 marked by a 'downward institutional creep' of public higher education institutions and an 'upward institutional creep' of public FET colleges. Thus, NQF Level 5 has become a convergence point of growth due to high demand for certification at that level (see also Kruss, 2004). It is on this basis that Kraak (2002: 10) suggests that there is growth of 'intermediate skilling' and, by implication, that the growth potential of private higher education institutions is enormous, despite questions about the quality of provisioning. It is at this level and to this demand that many private higher education institutions respond.

### **5. For-profit and not-for-profit**

The for-profit and not-for-profit dimension is not always easy to determine, because while some institutions claim not to be for-profit, they actually draw financial profits from their involvement in higher education provision. The type of company by which a private institution is registered does not solve this problem either. For instance, institutions registered as Section 21 companies under the terms of the Companies Act No. 61 of 1973 are supposed to be not-for-profit. However, institutions can be registered as not-for-profit but their operations generate enough income for them to be able to reinvest in their operations, sustain salaries of the personnel, or even informally distribute profit to company owners or shareholders. Thus, their not-for-profit status remains only technical, as Levy (2002: 20) notes that most of the world's private higher education is legally not-for-profit. This means that, in order to determine the status of institutions, a number of characteristic features have to be identified and, even there, the decision may not always be conclusive.

Besides the type of company and claims made by institutions, another method is to analyze their balance sheets. Whether or not institutions

are profitable does not really matter, because the original objective of registering institutions as for-profit entities is to generate profit. Levy (2002: 20) argues that legally for-profit institutions need not actually turn a profit. Not-for-profit private higher education institutions that intend to make profit, but are unable to, cannot be detected through analysis of their balance sheets. Such a state of affairs illustrates that there have to be factors taken into consideration before deciding whether institutions are for-profit or not, for example, whether 'for-profit' refers solely to the type of business and/or its ability to generate profit.

Despite the nature of complexity of the for-profit and not-for-profit status of private higher education institutions, some trends and patterns can be determined from available data. For instance, not-for-profit private higher education institutions are mainly religious institutions, despite the fact that some venture into commercialization. Of the 99 currently-registered private higher education institutions, 20 (20 per cent) are religion-based or owned. All of them are Christian faith institutions, despite the fact that there is a relatively significant Muslim and Hindu following in the country.

Of the 99 currently-registered private higher education institutions, 13 are listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) as education companies. This does not necessarily mean that other institutions that are not JSE-listed are not-for-profit, but the status of some of those that are not listed is not as obvious as those that are listed.

A study of public-private partnerships in the provision of higher education (Mabizela, 2005) showed that of the 55 private institutions that were in partnership agreements with 12 public institutions, only 13 were registered with the Department of Education. All 13 registered private institutions, including 32 others, were for-profit institutions. Put differently, 81 per cent of the partnership private institutions were for-profit.

Indeed, the proliferation of for-profit private higher education institutions is not unique to South Africa. The United States of America,

Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brazil, and Peru are some of the countries with similar experience (see Gonzalez, 1999; Levy, 2002 and Lee, 1999). Characteristically, for-profit private higher education institutions have been identified as operating largely in the provision of certificates and diplomas (non-degree qualifications) and less in the provision of graduate studies (programmes leading to degree qualifications). This is also the case with many private higher education institutions in South Africa (as discussed in the section above on the size and shape of the sector). Sawyerr (2002: 38) observes that for-profit private institutions largely have “a decisive concentration on courses with a strong vocational and directly market-responsive character, and hardly any natural science or technology”, an observation that truly applies to South Africa. The reverse is true for institutions that claim to be not-for-profit, in that they predominantly operate at university level, and often are religion-based initiatives (see Sawyerr, 2002: 39). A further discussion of the dimensions of for-profit/not-for-profit is carried out in the next sub-section.

## **6. Ownership, funding and profitability**

Ownership of private higher education institutions in South Africa is very diverse. Some are family-owned businesses, while others are owned by religious institutions or consortia and corporations. The type of ownership sometimes reflects on the actual type of private institution. For example, private institutions owned by corporations are often for-profit. However, there are religious-owned institutions that take on a for-profit character even though generally they are not-for-profit. Such religious-owned institutions also venture into the learning programmes perceived to be financially lucrative: commerce; business; management studies; and information technology.

Some education companies (i.e. private companies that own higher education institutions) began to list themselves on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in 1996. Among other reasons for listing, Acumen (one of the education companies at the time) cited an increase of its capital base and a desire to provide the company with a further source from which permanent capital could be obtained. Clearly, this means

generating more profit. By 1999, there were five education companies listed. By 2000, these five companies owned 43 institutions (30 per cent) of the 145 private institutions that had applied for registration with the Department of Education (see Mabizela *et al.*, 2000). Their share of student enrolments was about 60 per cent of students in the private higher education sector. Some companies de-listed and, currently (October 2004), only ADvTECH and Naspers are JSE-listed education companies. The companies also operate in other sectors such as media, employee recruitment and placement. Moreover, not all for-profit institutions were listed in the JSE. That is, some for-profit institutions generate profit outside of JSE listing.

In October 2004, of the 99 registered private higher education institutions, eight were owned by Naspers (Educor)<sup>5</sup> and five by ADvTECH. Of the 30,229 students enrolled with registered private higher education institutions in 2001, 6,397 (21 per cent) students were enrolled with Educor institutions. Of the 55,428 partnership students, 48,291 (87 per cent) were enrolled with Educor institutions. This means that, of the total of 85,657 (own and partnership) students enrolled with registered private higher education institutions in 2001, 54,688 (64 per cent) were enrolled with Educor institutions.

ADvTECH accounted for 6,725 (8 per cent) of the total of 85,657 students enrolled with private higher education institutions in 2001. Of the 6,725 students, 3,544 (53 per cent) were enrolled for ADvTECH's learning programmes and 3,181 (47 per cent) were enrolled in partnership programmes offered in ADvTECH's private higher education institutions.

Thus, in 2001, Naspers and ADvTECH (the two JSE-listed companies) accounted for 61,413 (72 per cent) of all private higher education enrolments. That is, overwhelmingly, private higher education students were registered with for-profit institutions. The large number of

5. Until 2000, the Education Investment Corporation Limited (Educor) was an independent company directly listed in the JSE. It was acquired by Naspers which hitherto, among other companies, owned the National Private Colleges comprising Lyceum and Success Colleges and Mentor Business College.

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partnership students between the two companies (57,869 or 68 per cent of all partnership students) suggests that their partnerships with public higher education institutions and professional institutes may be another source of income, since their involvement in education is accompanied by profit making.

Sources of funding for private higher education institutions are very diverse. For example, they come in the form of tuition fees, income generated through trading of shares (for those that are stock market-listed), selling of business franchises (where relevant) and offering of franchised learning programmes from transnational institutions, local public institutions and professional institutes.

The profitability of private higher education institutions, however, is not easy to determine. Such an exercise will require a careful monitoring of balance sheets of companies that own for-profit private higher education institutions. This is taking into consideration the problems relating to balance sheets already discussed above. The fact that some of the big education companies also operate at other levels of education (general and further education levels) as well as in other areas of business (e.g. employment recruitment agency, outsourcing of temporal employees, media and others) further complicates analysis of the profitability of education companies.

Despite the difficulty in identifying and analyzing profitability of for-profit private higher education institutions, some trends of the listed companies could provide clues. The choice of listed education companies or their holding companies as an example is due to the fact that they are clearly for-profit. At the peak of the listing of education companies between 1998 and 1999, Moneyweb ([www.moneyweb.co.za](http://www.moneyweb.co.za)) observed that education was fast approaching the kind of status that security, information technology and financial services were acquiring as 'big winners' of booming stock market shares.

Educor was the first education company to list in the JSE, on 19 June 1996. At the time of listing, its shares were worth 300 cents and closed at 225 cents on its first day of trade ([www.moneyweb.com](http://www.moneyweb.com)). By September

1997, Educor's shares had peaked at 650 cents. In December 1998, the company reported a turnover of 151 per cent. Profit attributable to shareholders rose to 71 million Rand (R) or 104 per cent, compared to R35 million in 1997. The education division contributed 26 per cent of the R71 million attributable profit, of which 42 per cent (10 per cent of the turnover) came from the distance education wing, with 58 per cent (36 per cent of the turnover) from face-to-face learning. In its financial report, the company summed up its projection as follows:

“The education companies all have strong market shares, and much sought after curricula and, while student numbers may be less buoyant than in previous years, the demand for superior education and training continues. In addition, the group will continue its drive into the area of adult basic education and training where there are exciting growth opportunities” (*Cape Times – Business Report*, 3 March 1999).

At the time Educor was bought by Naspers in June 2000, its shares had plummeted to a mere 26 cents. Educor was reported as having a “satisfactory year”, yet its losses before tax in each of the 2001 and 2002 financial years amounted to R68 million. In fact, in 2001, the market value of the company was estimated at around R49.4 million, about 25 per cent of what it was on listing in 1996 ([www.moneyweb.co.za](http://www.moneyweb.co.za)). According to Naspers, for the fiscal year ending 31 March 2003, Educor had a revenue of approximately R550 million ([www.naspers.com](http://www.naspers.com)).

Clearly, there was (and probably still is) a problem with profitability of education, especially among listed education companies, despite contrasting statements often reported in the media. The fact that three out of five education companies de-listed is, perhaps, an even better indication that higher education in South Africa is not as profitable as it used to be before legislation on higher education came into effect in 1997, or in the years when legislation was still new (i.e. between 1997 and 1999). In its submission to the Competition Tribunal (November 2002), Naspers conceded that both colleges (Lyceum and Success) were in financial difficulty attributable to a reduced turnover and a massive increase in operational expenses, which were double

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those expanded in 1998 (Competition Tribunal, Case No. 45/LM/Apr00). Moreover, an informal analysis<sup>6</sup> of balance sheets of 17 private institutions for the academic year 2003 showed that those institutions were not profitable.

There could be numerous reasons for the decline of the profitability of private higher education and some of the obvious ones are dealt with here. First, the Higher Education Act came into effect in 1997 and required that all private higher education institutions be registered with the Department of Education. Before they can be registered, the Department of Education requires that they have programmes accredited by the HEQC. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) initially carried out the accreditation function because the HEQC was not yet set up. Originally, this was a long and demanding process and operations of unregistered institutions became threatened as some institutions failed to meet the requirements of the regulatory framework. Secondly, the public was increasingly becoming aware and acting cautiously against unregistered institutions. As such, a number of private higher education institutions lost many potential 'clients' in the form of students. Thirdly, the Minister's moratorium in 2000 on new partnerships between public and private higher education institutions and the subsequent strict policy on these partnerships dealt a further blow to the potential revenue for for-profit private higher education institutions.

The non-profitability of private higher education institutions does not necessarily mean that they are not sustainable, which is possibly the reason why many still continue to operate. Non-profitability of the JSE-listed companies also does not necessarily mean that the smaller for-profit private higher education operations are not profitable.

Although it is not illegal and there is no inherent conflict between using higher education for financial gain and addressing social development, the parochial orientation of the private higher

6. An informal analysis of balance sheets of 17 private higher education institutions was carried out in the Department of Education. That is, it was not meant as a formal study or even as some sort of decision-making.

education sector institutions in South Africa tends to marginalize social development, relevance and democratic practices. That is, for-profit private higher education institutions generally do not seek to address social challenges or other challenges generally facing higher education such as access, equity and quality. Schwartzman (2002: 102) observes that contemporary private institutions do not aspire to play any significant role in the definition and construction of a new social order. Unfortunately, this takes place in the context of a general perception that private higher education institutions are more responsive to the labour market (and/or student needs) than public sector institutions. Given this perception, it would then appear that the definition and construction of social order are not regarded as part and parcel of labour market requirements. Therefore, the perceived responsiveness of the private higher education sector does not address social development.

## **7. Quality of education and employment of graduates of private institutions**

Under the terms of Section 53(1)(b)(ii) of the Higher Education Act (Department of Education, 1997*b*), the registrar of private higher education institutions may register an applicant as a private higher education institution if the registrar has reason to believe that the applicant, with regard to all of its higher education programmes

“... will comply with the requirements of the appropriate quality assurance body accredited by SAQA in terms of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995)”.

In the case of higher education in South Africa, the relevant SAQA accredited quality assurance body is the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the CHE. Therefore, private (and even public) higher education institutions must have their programmes accredited by the HEQC. As such, before private higher education institutions are considered for registration, the Department of Education requires that their programmes be accredited by the HEQC. In fact, in terms of the Regulations for the Registration of Private Higher Education Institutions, over and above accreditation of learning programmes, an applicant

applying to operate as a higher education institution must provide a written declaration that it will maintain the necessary academic and support staff, with appropriate academic or professional qualifications and experience to achieve the objectives of each programme; will maintain a quality management system including assessment policies and procedures appropriate to each programme; will maintain sufficient space, equipment and instructional material to provide education and training of sufficient standard to achieve the objectives of each programme; will not exceed the enrolment that the facilities and equipment can reasonably accommodate; and will maintain full records of each student's admission, academic progress and assessment of learning in respect of each programme.

However, despite the above-stated requirements, in its report of the re-accreditation process of programmes of 58 private higher education institutions, the CHE painted a bleak picture of the quality of private higher education provision (CHE, 2003). There is no doubt that the majority of private higher education institutions in South Africa are set up as small for-profit businesses, a trend also to be found internationally (Levy, 2003: 5). As such, they survive by investing little and can simply pull out if they do not yield the required returns. Thus, the CHE (2003: 39-41), whose function includes regulating higher education provision in South Africa, found that many private higher education institutions do not have structures and strategies to deal with quality assurance and that

“[s]tudents articulated complaints around access, poor or non-existent inter-library loan facilities, and generally under-resourced libraries that made assignments and other tasks very difficult to accomplish” (CHE, 2003: 36).

This negative picture is compounded by reports that the sector largely relies on inexperienced, under-qualified and mainly part-time employed staff, much against the requirements for the registration of private higher education institutions (see Department of Education, 2002). The CHE observed that “some institutions consisted entirely of part-time staff” while in others there was a lack of adequately qualified

and experienced staff (CHE, 2003: 31-33). The CHE report implied that these discrepancies led to poor quality of teaching and learning at the private higher education institutions. Even worse, there seemed to be no effort to improve these conditions. To this end, the CHE (2003: 46) concluded that “poor quality programmes, despite being financially accessible to low-income families, do a disservice to their students and the country in general” in that they inject poorly prepared graduates into the labour market.

Furthermore, the study on public-private partnerships in the provision of higher education in South Africa (Mabizela, 2005) found that in most cases public institutions used the partnerships instead of developing their own infrastructure for distance education provision. Thus, essential equipment and materials such as books, libraries, computers, Internet and computer training centres were not given the necessary attention. The result was that the quality of learning in partnerships was often questionable, despite the fact that private institutions mainly offered fields of study that did not demand expensive equipment and infrastructure. In other words, the observations made by the CHE on registered private institutions can be extended to include partnership programmes.

It is for this reason that both policy and the public higher education sector have to shoulder some blame. Higher education policy does not provide for the development of the sector in a way that would allow for interventions by public higher education institutions to ensure quality education at the private institutions. Instead, the current approach is rather punitive towards private institutions. In Ghana, for instance, all private university colleges must affiliate with public universities for quality assurance purposes, although this may not be ideal for many parties involved and may not be suitable for replication in other countries. The point, though, is that public higher education institutions are shouldered with the responsibility of developing quality in private higher education institutions. Nevertheless, a strategy needs to be devised in order to uplift the quality of provision in the private higher education sector in South Africa.

So far, there has been no comprehensive study of the employability of graduates of private higher education institutions in South Africa. However, alongside the concern over quality of learning in private higher education institutions, inherently, there is also concern over the quality of graduates who enter the labour market from the sector. Kruss (2004: 114) argues that some private institutions are driven by the corporatization of higher education, “in response to a demand for programmes and qualifications directly tailored to the specialized needs of corporations”. That is, some private higher education institutions offer programmes that are demanded by corporations and in that way their graduates are, somewhat, assured employability – if the students were not sent by corporations in the first place.

### **8. Conclusions**

Despite the drawn-out evolution of policy and legislation of private higher education in South Africa within a relatively short period, the balance between getting rid of ‘fly-by-night’ operations and the creation of an environment which does not “suffocat[e] educationally sound and sustainable private institutions” (Department of Education, 1997a) has not yet been attained. Such a balance will only be attained once the private higher education sector has been fully integrated into the higher education system, whereby articulation between the sectors will be possible. For this state of affairs to be achieved, private higher education should be appropriately regulated such that it serves a particular level of higher education and, therefore, should not be compared to the public higher education sector. For private higher education institutions that wish to operate as universities and universities of technology, clear criteria and guidelines should be set.

It is also the CHE’s view that private institutions that seek to function as ‘multi-purpose’ institutions should be required to meet set criteria for such institutions and also fulfil their social purposes, roles and goals (CHE, 2000: 45-46). Basically, this refers to private institutions that wish to operate similarly to existing public institutions. However, the suggested criteria by the CHE is not yet in place. This article further suggests that ‘multi-purpose’ institutions should be regulated differently

from 'single-purpose' institutions so that their levels of operations and objectives are accurately monitored and appropriately developed. Thus, private higher education institutions should be appropriately legislated at a suitable level, which will equate them with public higher education institutions, because the two sectors are not operating at the same levels of the higher education band.

The current legislation on private higher education is not designed such that the sector positively contributes to the higher education system and human resources development needs. It mainly concentrates on the financial viability of private higher education institutions and the quality of their programmes. Indeed, these two aspects are important, but the legislation neglects other aspects to which the sector can contribute positively, such as facilitation of access to higher education, especially in areas where public higher education institutions are unable to reach and offer face-to-face tuition. If private higher education can be involved in this area of higher education provision, it can also be made to address the imperatives of equity and be nurtured to provide quality education.

The narrow focus of the private higher education sector in terms of fields of study needs broadening, especially to include fields of study that are key to human resources development in the country. Moreover, there has to be improvement of the public-private partnerships in the provision of higher education such that they provide quality education and properly serve the demand for this service. A policy that enhances the productivity of this phenomenon is required.

The quality of learning at the private higher education institutions has been reported by the CHE to be in poor form. All aspects that contribute to a good quality learning environment, teaching and learning, such as the condition of classrooms/training centres, the quality of teaching, qualifications of teaching staff, libraries and teaching materials are said to be in a poor state. Of course, the standard is not the same for all private institutions. The whole higher education system has to improve this situation if the private higher education sector is to contribute positively to the system itself, the human resources development needs

of the country, and the employability of its graduates. It has become clear that public higher education cannot meet all the demands for higher learning in South Africa, thus the private higher education sector has to be nurtured in order to address the shortfalls of the public sector, among other requirements. An example of such a shortfall is the provision of intermediate skills (or higher education) which public institutions are not geared for, and this is the gap private institutions currently exploit.

Within the sphere of addressing shortfalls of the public higher education sector, there are imperatives such as access (formal and epistemological); gender; social class; race; and rural-urban equity that still need close monitoring in the higher education system of South Africa. Such monitoring has to ensure that there is balance and fairness across these aspects. The private higher education sector should ensure urban-rural, gender, social class and race equity, as the public higher education sector is expected to do. As such, the intervention of a legal framework is required for both the public and private higher education sector, so as to ensure that neither sector is unfairly discriminated against in the provision of higher education in South Africa.

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## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN TANZANIA

*N.A. Kuhanga\**

### 1. Introduction

In Tanzania, university-level higher education institutions have a young history. It begins with the establishment of the University College of Tanganyika in 1961 as an affiliate of the University of London (United Republic of Tanzania, 2003: 6). Before the establishment of the college, Tanzanians were sent to Makerere College in Uganda for general and for medical degree programmes or to the Royal Technical College in Nairobi, Kenya, for engineering and technical training. Others were sent to Europe, and especially the United Kingdom, and India.

In 1963, the three East African governments reached an agreement to form a federal type university called the University of East Africa (UEA) with its headquarters in Uganda. The University College of Tanganyika transferred its affiliation status to UEA and was renamed University College, Dar es Salaam (UCD). However, the University of East Africa was short-lived, as it was dissolved in 1970, giving birth to three fully-fledged universities – Makerere University (MU) in Uganda, the University of Nairobi (UN) in Kenya, and the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) in Tanzania.

During the period between 1970 and 2003, four more public universities were established, namely, the Sokoine University of Agriculture, SUA; the Open University of Tanzania, OUT; the Mzumbe University; and the State University of Zanzibar. The Mzumbe University was a result of upgrading the then non-university level Institute of Development Management (IDM), Mzumbe. In addition, three university colleges were also established – two of them under the University of Dar es Salaam, and one under the SUA. *Table 1.1* gives the current status of university-level higher education institutions in Tanzania. It is important to note that, on average, 26.5 per cent of enrolment in public institutions is currently made up of women.

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**Table 1.1** Number of undergraduates by gender enrolled in public universities, 1999/2000 – 2003/2004

Institutions	1999/2000			2000/2001			2001/2002			2002/2003			2003/2004		
	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T
University of DSM	1,275	3,698	4,973	1,498	4,108	5,606	1,870	4,869	6,739	4,163	5,985	10,148	3,501	7,365	10,866
Muhimbili Univ. Col. of Health Sciences	186	461	647	219	577	796	283	684	967	361	794	1,155	605	1,228	1,833
Univ. Col of Lands & Arch. Studies	82	606	688	77	614	691	81	705	786	786	98	884	142	825	967
Sokoine Univ. Col of Agric.	374	1,300	1,674	495	1,645	2,140	592	1,504	2,096	669	1,672	2,341	724	1,796	2,520
Open University of Tanzania	813	4,347	5,160	973	4,689	5,662	1,004	4,347	5,351	1,160	4,523	5,683	2,581	7,732	10,313
Mzumbe University	310	751	1,061	356	718	1,074	195	510	705	216	502	718	526	1,143	1,669
State University of Zanzibar			0			0			0	18	38	56	98	88	186
Moshi Univ. Col of Co-op & Business Studies	45	69	114	58	80	138	85	166	251	128	221	349	167	389	556
Total	3,085	11,232	14,317	3,676	12,431	10,107	4,110	12,785	16,895	7,501	13,833	21,334	8,344	20,566	28,910
% Female/male	21.5	78.5	100.0	22.8	77.2	100.0	24.3	75.7	100.0	35.2	64.8	100.0	28.9	71.1	100.0

Source: HEAC, 2004.

Until the liberalization policy on higher and technical education was put into place in 1995, there was no private university-level institution offering circular education in Tanzania. The existing post-secondary education institutions were religious institutions established to train pastors and other religious leaders. Thus, they were theological colleges affiliated to institutions outside the country. Among those that were well-known in the country were the Makumira Theological College, Arusha; the Baptist Seminary of Eastern Africa, Arusha; and the Tanzania Baptist Seminary in the outskirts of Arusha. Makumira College has now become a constituent institution of Tumaini University (TU) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). The other two theological colleges referred to above have been elevated to university-level institutions. The Baptist seminary has become the Mount Meru University (MMU) and the Tanzania Adventist College has become the University of Arusha.

In the meantime, the number of university colleges in the country has risen to 14. However, the number of students enrolled in these institutions has remained low due to the small size of the institutions at their initial establishment. By and large, it is the private non-university institutions that are growing fast in both number and sizes. Currently, 52 of 90 registered non-university institutions are private; that is more than half of registered institutions. The distribution of these institutions by ownership and fields of study offered are as detailed in *Table 1.2*. It is to be noted that more than half of the private institutions provide courses in health and allied sciences (HAS).

*Table 1.2* includes the State University of Zanzibar and Mzumbo University. Enrolment figures for Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences and the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies are included in those of UDSM, as these two colleges are constituent colleges of the latter. Moshi University College of co-operative and business studies has recently become a constituent college of SUA, but operationally it has yet to function as such.

**Table 1.2 Ownership status of registered technical institutions as of 30 September 2004**

Subject board	Ownership		Total
	Public	Private	
Agriculture, natural resources and environment (ANE)	15	5	20
Business and management (BMG)	12	3	15
Engineering and other sciences (EOS)	15	8	23
Health and allied sciences (HAS)	39	29	68
Planning and welfare (PWF)	9	7	16
Total	90	52	142

*Source:* NACTE, 2004.

The focus of this paper, however, is on private higher education institutions that offer university education, although at times reference will be made to non-university higher education as such institutions offer education programmes leading to semi-professional and professional qualifications. In fact, some of them will soon begin offering degree programmes under the umbrella of the National Council for Technical Education.

## **2. The private sector in higher education**

### **Change of policy on higher and technical education**

Until 1995, the government was the sole provider of higher education at the university level. It had established three universities which, until then, had been growing, albeit slowly. As indicated above, student enrolment has increased appreciably, so that today the public universities and university colleges have together, on average, an annual student enrolment of about 29,000. Considering the humble beginning in 1961 with only 14 students, this is a tremendous achievement. Now the country can get locally-trained human resources at the university level in almost all essential fields of study – social sciences, humanities, business management, science and technology, agriculture, medicine, etc.

However, despite these developments Tanzania has been lagging too far behind in terms of providing opportunities for higher education compared to other countries in Africa south of the Sahara. The participation ratio was and is still indeed one of the lowest (URT, 1998). *Table 2.1* presents a picture of the situation in countries of Southern Africa.

**Table 2.1 University age cohort participation rates in higher education in selected African countries**

Country	Participation rates (%)
South Africa	9.11
Namibia	4.66
Swaziland	2.22
Kenya	1.47
Botswana	1.33
Uganda	1.23
Zimbabwe	1.05
Lesotho	0.98
Zambia	0.83
Angola	0.44
Malawi	0.42
Mozambique	0.33
Tanzania	0.27

*Source:* CVCPT, 1997.

Other important factors were also identified as impediments to the social, economic and political development of the country. They included the need to achieve a critical mass of highly-trained human resources to enable the country to compete effectively in the global knowledge-based economy, the strong social demand for higher education now that people have realized that higher education has high economic and social returns, and the need for equitable access to higher education. Regarding the latter, the government was not only concerned with giving equal opportunities to men and women, but

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it was equally concerned with the need to balance the opportunities between the poor and the well-to-do.

Taken together, these factors, combined with those relating to the issues of the quality and relevance of the education provided, prompted the government to institute a policy in 1995 that aimed at expanding the provision of higher and technical education and training in the country. It also prescribed the parameters within which it would be provided to ensure that the concerns would be addressed fully.

This was to be done in two ways. The first was by encouraging the existing public universities to diversify their degree programmes on the basis of national needs and market demand for trained human resources. This has been responded to positively by all universities. Each university has increased the number of degree programmes and diversified fields of study. For example, UDSM is currently offering 72 undergraduate degree programmes, up from seven only in 1970, while SUA has 15 undergraduate degree programmes; in 1984 it had only three.

The second approach was to invite other stakeholders to participate fully in providing higher education by investing in the establishment and the running of higher education institutions. It was hoped that this move would help to address the issues raised above. Accordingly, in 1995, the government decided to liberalize the provision of higher and technical education in the country through the introduction of a National Higher Education Policy. The policy invites and encourages individuals, groups of people, commercial firms and non-governmental organizations, either in partnership with the government or privately, to establish and manage higher education institutions.

For its part, the government promised to provide an enabling environment through legislation. In the meantime, it has defined its major role as being “to develop a framework for it to provide supervision, regulations, guidance and incentives” (URT, 1995). Two Acts of Parliament have been passed which establish organs that oversee the establishment and governance of public and private universities

and non-university institutions alike. These are: the Higher Education (Amendment) Act, No. 10 of 1995, which established the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) and set out its functions and powers; and the National Council for Technical Education Act No. 1 of 1997, establishing the National Council for Technical Education and providing for its functions and powers.

Essentially, these are regulatory organs which operate as semi-autonomous bodies. Each of them has already developed regulations and guidelines pertaining to the process of getting an institution established, recognized and accredited. One of their major responsibilities is to advise the government on the planning and development of higher and technical education, including matters relating to manpower planning, staffing, budgetary and capital provision, efficiency of the sector and development of the curriculum.

The government has also taken another important step which will go a long way in promoting the expansion of private higher education. It has established a Student Loan Board which is due to be operationalized in the coming year. The board will provide loans to all needy students studying in any higher education institution, whether public or private. The action has been taken to partially address the problem of balancing the distribution of opportunities for higher education between the poor segment of the society, which is basically rural, and the financially able communities.

The liberal policy has paid dividends as a good number of private university-level institutions have been established since it was introduced in 1995. *Table 2.2* presents the annual enrolments of the universities and university colleges over the last five years. Before that date, there were three institutions offering degree-level programmes under affiliation arrangements with institutions outside the country. However, there are now 14 of them at different stages of the country's accreditation process. So far, only four private universities have been accredited. The remaining three have received the country's accreditation body's Certificate of Provisional Registration (CPR), the second stage in the accreditation process for institutions operating

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under the umbrella of the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC). On the other hand, four colleges have been granted the Council's Certificate of Full Registration (CFR), while two colleges and one institute offering degree-level courses have been given the Council's CPR.

Institutions which have obtained CFR can offer degree programmes and award degrees, while those at the CPR level can offer degree programmes but would need to obtain the CFR to award degrees. It should be noted, however, that the conditions governing accreditation apply to both public and private higher education institutions, without discrimination.

### **Capacity of private higher education institutions**

Accreditation of institutions under the umbrella of the NACTE consists of four stages: preparatory registration; provisional registration; full registration; and accreditation. To date, only one institution has been granted NACTE's Accreditation Certificate. This is because when the NACTE was established in 1997, it found the majority of non-university-level institutions already established. So, the first task for them was to evaluate each of the institutions in order to determine whether or not the institutions met the established criteria for the status claimed by each one of them. The evaluation conducted revealed that none of these institutions qualified for full registration, while some qualified for provisional registration and the rest fitted into the preparatory stage of registration.

As can be seen from *Table 2.2* and *Table 2.3*, the capacity of university and non-university institutions in Tanzania is small. *Table 2.3* shows that none of the institutions have a capacity above 250. For university-level institutions, part of the reason can be found in the origin of the institution.

**Table 2.2 Number of undergraduates by gender enrolled in private universities, 1999/2000 – 2003/2004**

Institutions	1999/2000			2000/2001			2001/2002			2002/2003			2003/2004		
	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T
St Augustine Univ. of Tanzania	117	175	292	153	172	325	204	200	404	204	201	405	229	244	473
Tumaini Univ. KCMC	25	34	59	48	59	107	61	93	154	86	106	192	100	156	256
Tumaini Univ. Makumira	9	131	140	12	136	148	14	131	145	16	125	141	21	133	154
Tumaini Univ. Iringa	50	99	149	78	93	171	112	181	293	162	182	344	226	373	599
Tumaini Univ. DSM	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	55	126
University of Arusha	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	49	112	161
College of Education Zanzibar	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69	222	291
Zanzibar University	37	67	104	65	133	198	100	203	303	144	295	439	145	293	438
Hubert Kairuki Memorial Univ.	11	15	26	18	25	43	28	36	64	41	45	86	61	74	135
International Med. & Techn. Univ.	19	39	58	9	10	19	34	59	93			0			0
Bugando College of Health Sc.												0	4	6	10
The Aga Khan University												0	79	9	88
Mount Meru University												0	6	27	33
Total	304	643	947	436	726	1,162	619	1,025	1,644	731	1,061	1,792	1,060	1,704	2,764
% Female/male	32.1	67.9	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	37.7	62.3	100.0	40.8	59.2	100.0	38.4	61.6	100.0

Source: HEAC, 2004.

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**Table 2.3 Capacity of selected private technical institutions**

Subject board	Institution	Registration award	Enrolment	
			Capacity	Actual enrolment
ANE	Njuweni Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Kibaha	Provisional	90	60
	Vision Hotel and Tourism College – Dar es Salaam	Preparatory	30	10
	East African College of Hospitality & Tourism Management – Dar es Salaam	Preparatory	40	51
	The African Institute of Business Management – Dar es Salaam	Preparatory	50	24
BMG	Masoka Management Institute – Moshi	Full	120	120
	Financial Training Centre – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	140	140
	Institute of Procurement and Supply – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	160	100
EOS	Learn IT Ltd. – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	180	150
	Institute for Information Technology – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	250	200
	Institute of Management and Information Technology – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	100	65
	JR Institute of Information Technology Arusha	Provisional	180	140
HAS	Medical Laboratory Sciences School, Ikonda – Makete	Full	50	25
	Ilembula School of Nursing and Midwifery – Njombe	Full	150	45
	Hydom School of Nursing – Mbulu	Full	120	30
	Kolandoto School of Nursing – Shinyanga	Full	120	30
PWF	Royal College of Journalism – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	200	120
	Morogoro School of Journalism – Morogoro	Full	60	35
	Dar es Salaam of Journalism – Dar es Salaam	Provisional	200	160
	Newman Institute of Social Work, Kigoma	Provisional	150	70

Source: NACTE, 2004.

Many of them are a result of upgrading existing religious institutions established to cater for the needs of the churches that established them. In practice, they were small institutions whose yearly enrolments were small. Upgrading to a university-level institution has meant the upgrading of the programmes, teaching facilities, and improving

physical facilities rather than constructing additional teaching/learning facilities and student accommodation facilities in order to expand student enrolment. Capacity building in terms of physical facilities, in order to raise enrolment levels, will take time because of financial constraints, which are experienced by practically all institutions.

### **3. Ownership patterns in private higher education**

#### **Motives for establishing private higher education institutions in Tanzania**

In Tanzania, there are three identifiable motives behind establishing private higher education institutions:

- a genuine desire to participate fully in the provision of education in response to the call by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania;
- political prestige and economic reasons; and
- to cater for the needs of a specific segment of the society.

#### *Genuine desire to participate fully in providing higher education*

This category is formed mainly by religious organizations. Usually, such organizations have shown interest in providing primary and secondary education. These are genuinely not-for-profit organizations. They are often very co-operative in their dealings with the regulatory organ under which they have to operate, namely, the HEAC or the NACTE. Their reactions to observations/recommendations made by evaluation teams sent to assess the quality of an institution's teaching, research facilities, academic programmes, academic staff, and the overall performance of the institution are based on a lack of understanding of the reasons behind such recommendations. Once the misunderstandings have been cleared, they willingly accept and implement the recommended improvements. Practically all owners of institutions who fall into this category are locally-based.

#### *Political prestige and economic reasons*

In this category, there are both local and foreign promoters of higher education. Usually, at the beginning they use the first motive, that is, the

desire to participate in the provision of higher education in response to the country's call. However, the real motive surfaces when the evaluation process begins in earnest. They begin talking about the best institutions they have established elsewhere in the world or about the best plans they have for the proposed institution and the country. They present the image that they have no financial problems, yet they would insist that they be allowed to operate even before the initial stages of registration and recognition have been concluded. They sometimes display the attitude that they have nothing to lose if they do not get the permit to establish the institution. There are also prospective promoters of higher education who threaten to withdraw their investments if they are not allowed to establish the proposed institution immediately.

Three characteristics have been observed from institutions established for political prestige and economic gain. These are:

***Using political influence and pressure***

Owners of such institutions have, more often than not, resorted to political influence and pressure in their effort to short-circuit the accreditation requirements. Investors who initially discussed with the government their intention to invest in higher education in the country, and managed to get an agreement through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on basic principals regarding investing in higher education, have used the MOU to demand preferential treatment, that is, that they should not be subjected to the normal accreditation procedures: They should simply be registered, be allowed to enrol students and be accredited.

***Importing programmes wholesale***

In their desire to impress upon the accrediting organ that they are eager to launch the proposed degree programmes immediately, they usually import foreign programmes wholesale or simply adopt local ones without recourse to the guidelines and criteria of the accrediting agency concerned. The management of such institutions hurriedly recruit a few full-time academic staff to head the proposed programmes, but the majority of the recruited academic staff are part-time staff. There

are institutions which had even launched the programmes and enrolled students quietly before reaching the stage when they would be allowed to do so. This then becomes the reason for pressing the accrediting agency to compromise its own regulations and guidelines.

Fortunately, accrediting agencies have always stood firm by the provisions of the acts establishing them on the one hand, and the guidelines, rules and procedures governing the accreditation of higher education institutions on the other hand. Because of this firm stand, some investors have withdrawn their investment and at least one institution has been deregistered.

### ***Managing institutions by remote control***

For institutions established for economic gain, the owners have two managements. The first one is based at the institution itself. It has no power of control over the institution. In theory, its power is to fulfil conditions of registration, recognition and accreditation. It is even provided for in the constitution or trust deed that establishes the institution, as are the legal organs purported to be responsible for policy decisions, monitoring and controlling the activities of the institution, aimed at carrying out the mission of the institution as stipulated in the constitution. These include the council or governing board and its committees, and the senate and its committees, etc.

The board of trustees becomes the effective management of the institution. It may be within the country or it may be situated outside the country, but the ultimate result is the same: that is, it runs the institution by remote control, although the owners will always be quick to deny that they ever interfere with the day-to-day running of the institution. In the worst case scenario, the board of trustees takes over the control of the institution by simply appointing a substantial number of its members to the council and senate. The chairman of the board of trustees becomes the chairman of both the council/governing board and the senate. In one case, eight out of 12 members of the council were members of the board of trustees. Unfortunately, all of them were based outside of the country. Meetings were held outside Tanzania where the majority of members lived (that is, if they were held at all),

and decisions were passed on to the institution's local management for implementation. In most cases, the decisions were contradictory to the regulations, guidelines and requirements for accreditation. It usually takes a lot of time and effort to get such institutions on the right track.

#### *Religious institutions*

The motive of some of the institutions is to provide opportunities for higher circular education to a particular group in the society. This is particularly true of certain religious organizations which want to establish universities to cater for their faithful only. Thus, they have parochial and discriminatory admission requirements, discriminating against people of other faiths, even though their constitutions provide that discrimination on the basis of colour, race, religious belief or gender will not be allowed in the institution.

#### **Linkages with other universities or colleges abroad**

The first type of linkage that exists is that of affiliation, whereby an institution of higher learning in Tanzania, usually a college or institute, seeks affiliation status with an established university abroad for the awarding of degrees and for the supply of teaching staff. It does so in order to support the institution's own efforts to meet the requirement of ensuring that the institution has a core of teaching staff in each department and for each subject. This type of linkage has been developed in only two institutions. Both are affiliated to fully-established universities; one of which is in Africa and the other in Asia. The first institution specializes in education, while the second trains nurses at the degree level.

There are two other newly-established universities which originally were seminaries training pastors and other church leaders. One was affiliated to a university established for the same purpose in the neighbouring country, Kenya, while the other was affiliated to a religious university in the United States of America which has a branch in East Africa. But since the two institutions have become fully-fledged universities, they offer degree programmes for their own awards. They are now in the process of phasing out the programmes under

the old arrangement. However, they are encouraged to maintain the relationship for co-operation in research and academic staff exchange.

As stated in the last paragraph, the second type of linkage with other international and regional institutions aims at establishing co-operation in academic staff exchange and research. Sometimes this type of linkage may include the establishment of sandwich programmes whereby a young university in a country like Tanzania may establish a master's or doctoral degree programme which is taken in two parts. The coursework part is provided by the co-operating university abroad and the research part and thesis/dissertation writing is done at the home university.

Unfortunately, this type of linkage which should benefit young universities is lacking in most of the new universities. Only three universities enjoy that status. Two are owned by religious organizations, and both of them are planning to be federal universities with a number of constituent colleges scattered throughout the country. While one of them has only one constituent college at the moment, the other already has four constituent colleges. For the latter, three of the constituent colleges were established before the university was granted its accreditation. It is these colleges which forged links with universities abroad. Now the parent university has developed additional linkages. The former was accredited before the first constituent college was established. Thus, it is the university itself which developed the early linkages with other institutions.

The third university was established through the efforts of an individual who had gathered sympathy from different parts of the world. And, in fact, he pioneered investment in private higher education. He was the first to establish a private university in Tanzania, and using his experience as a former senior academician, did not lose time in establishing linkages with institutions abroad. As for the rest of the universities, they need a lot of encouragement and constant pushing from the accrediting agency concerned to establish such linkages, as it does not seem to be a priority for them.

#### **4. Financing and management of private institutions**

##### **Academic programmes offered**

One of the guiding principles which led the government to put in place a national policy for higher education in 1995 was to lay down guidelines for the rationalization and control duplication of course programmes and awards (URT, 1999). The government, through its Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education (MSTHE), observed that there was a mushrooming of higher education institutions, including universities, parallel with the duplication of course programmes and awards. Furthermore, there was need also to discourage a tendency which was developing of institutions at the tertiary level “seeking to assume a status above what they really are, or else awarding qualifications and titles above their capacity and outside their statutory limits” (MSTHE, 2002). The government was also determined to address the problem of the imbalance in student enrolment between science and technology programmes provided by the existing institutions on the one hand, and student enrolment in the liberal arts programmes on the other hand. This move was prompted by the realization that this is an era whose environment demands scientific literacy for technological advancement.

However, these concerns have yet to be seriously addressed. Most of the private institutions go for course programmes which demand less financial investment to get started compared to the science and engineering programmes which require heavy investment in equipment and plants. Thus, most private universities have opted for liberal arts programmes, law being the most common programme. The other popular programme is business administration, which is being taught in most comprehensive private universities, including those whose core programmes are theology and religious studies.

So far, only two private universities have plans to offer degree programmes in the engineering fields in the future. Presently there is none; nor is there one which offers degree programmes in agriculture and related fields. There is one institution operating under NACTE

which has been cleared to offer degree-level courses in engineering. On the other hand, there are four universities/university colleges which offer degree programmes in medicine and nursing. The natural sciences are taught in two of the five institutions which train teachers for secondary schools and teacher-education tutors who teach in teacher-training colleges. They are the teaching subjects for future teachers and tutors. In the remaining three, teaching subjects are selected from the liberal arts, and in two of them, religion is the main teaching subject. And, finally, the branch of science which is becoming very popular in private institutions is computer science.

Of the 52 institutions which produce trained human resources to meet national needs for skills at the middle level, five provide programmes in the area of hospitality and tourism industry; three in the business and management areas; six in engineering and other sciences; 10 in the health and allied sciences; and six in what are termed as planning and welfare areas, journalism, community development and social work. At least at this level, there is fair distribution and rationalization of programmes.

### **Agencies providing private higher education in Tanzania**

As has already been pointed out, most of the existing private higher education institutions in Tanzania are established and owned by religious organizations; only two are foreign-based; the rest are local organizations. Of the 14 private universities and university colleges, 11 are owned by religious organizations. Church organizations own eight institutions, and Moslem organizations own three. All three Moslem organizations are foreign-based. Of the remaining three institutions, two are owned by foreign investors, one of which started off its operations as a for-profit institution, but now it seems to be changing its stance since the business does not pay much.

### **Teaching staff**

One of the most critical problems which institutions of higher learning have to grapple with is the recruitment and deployment of an adequate number of well-trained and experienced teaching staff to run

all the programmes being proposed by the institutions. This is as true for private institutions as it is for public institutions. Academic staff recruitment is usually an after-thought; it is not integrated in the overall plan for the establishment of an institution. Institutional strategic plans which are drawn up as one of the requirements for accreditation rarely have a recruitment and training timeframe, so that by the time the proposed institution is ready to be launched, at least a core of academic staff will be in place for each programme. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that, even if the strategic plans contain a sub-set of human resources recruitment and deployment, this latter is hardly followed – especially at the initial stages of the institution’s existence – because of the rush to have programmes launched. They appear to minimize or even to avoid expense on human resource training and development.

Unfortunately, the country does not have a pool of trained and experienced human resources for the higher education institutions to draw from. Each institution has to train its own human resources. That is how the older public universities manage to meet the human resources needs of their faculties and institutes. The current situation is such that private institutions, like new public institutions, rely heavily on part-time teaching staff, even when the institution has come into existence through the upgrading of a non-university institution of higher education. This is because a substantial number of the academic staff may be found to be below the academic standard expected of a university.

The heavy reliance on part-time teachers by the private universities has a negative impact on the well-established public universities and colleges, because it is their academics who serve these other institutions as part-time teachers. The strain is bigger on those departments that do not have adequate staff in post since, as public institutions, they have to observe the restriction imposed on the recruitment of new employees in the whole public sector. The number of new staff an institution is allowed to employ at any given moment is inadequate to meet the needs

of the departments. Thus, in the long run, the quality of teaching in the institutions that supply part-time teachers is bound to suffer.

It is common to find in private higher education institutions that the majority of the teaching staff will have master's degrees, with very few academics having doctoral degrees. In fact, there are institutions with no PhD holders, but with some first degree holders teaching degree programmes. However, thanks to the existence of accrediting agencies, once first degree holders are found teaching in a degree programme, they are asked to stop immediately.

It should be pointed out, however, that there are private universities which, on the whole, have started off very well. They put a lot of effort into the planning and preparations for launching academic programmes; they recruited the core academic staff for each programme and had most facilities lined up before the operationalization of the programme; and right from the beginning, they worked out staff development plans which they tried to adhere to. Like other institutions, they use part-time teaching staff but not on a large scale. They are almost at the same level as the well-established public institutions in terms of the recruitment of academic staff.

### **Staff remuneration**

In terms of remuneration, practically all private institutions started off in the same way. The institutions did not have attractive conditions of service; the schemes of services which provide salary scales and fringe benefits, promotion criteria, etc., were poor compared to those in public institutions. Since most of the institutions are owned by religious organizations, the management of these institutions simply adopted wholesale the conditions of service, schemes of service, and salary scales of religious institutions owned by their religious organizations. However, with advice from the accrediting agency concerned, the situation has changed. Almost all private institutions with university status have pegged their salary scales to those of public institutions. In most cases, they have even adapted the regulations governing the terms and conditions of service. In a few cases, the private institutions pay better salaries to their employees than public institutions do.

### **Size of non-teaching staff**

Most private higher education institutions are overly strict in employing non-teaching staff that include administrative officers, personal secretaries, technicians, and the like. As a result, the size of the non-academic staff is small to the extent that it could cause inefficiency in the day-to-day operation of an institution. This could be the outcome of not having a human resources policy which spells out the kind of support services needed to enable the academic programmes as well as the administration to run smoothly, efficiently and effectively. This is an area which needs to be reviewed by most private institutions. However, public institutions have had to do just the opposite. Now that they have some policy on human resources management, or through government intervention, they have had to retrench some of their non-academic staff to reduce the labour force to a reasonable size as determined by the management of each university/college. Services which are not core to the mission of the institution have been outsourced in order to reduce unnecessary overhead costs.

### **Provision of teaching/learning facilities**

In most of the private institutions, libraries are inadequately stocked with the required books to support the academic programmes. They are particularly poor in the acquisition of journals and periodicals. In most cases, they have yet to computerize the system, and where they have, they do not have an adequate number of PCs for accessing books and journals. There are cases where there are no qualified librarians to manage the libraries; one often finds library assistants manning a university library. However, the situation has improved tremendously over the last two to three years due to regular assessment visits by technical evaluation teams. Constant advice from experts in the visiting teams has helped to bring about speedy improvements.

### **Sources of funds**

By and large, the main sources of funds for private higher education institutions are grants from the owners of the institution, student fees and donations. Owners provide the largest part of the revenue the institutions need to run the approved programmes. Because of the

small enrolment, income from fees is small and will not grow unless the enrolment reaches the optimum size. Financial assistance from donors, when available, is usually confined to financing research activities and the acquisition of teaching and learning materials. Five institutions have sizeable incomes from internal income-generating activities. Thus, like the public institutions, private institutions face serious financial constraints.

Fortunately, in keeping with its policy of creating an enabling environment for the establishment and operation of private higher and technical education institutions, the government has created an organ called the Tanzania Education Authority (TEA), whose main function is to provide loans and grants to public and private education institutions and organizations in order to enable them to meet the costs of their activities. So far, 27 loans have been granted, 18 of them to higher education institutions - 15 public and three private. The funds disbursed can be used for the promotion of any activity of an institution in keeping with the mission and objects of the institution. The TEA has identified key areas for support, including construction or rehabilitation of education facilities, supply of educational equipment and resources, and human resource development.

Public support through special fundraising functions assists in meeting costs for improving teaching and learning facilities' libraries and computer laboratories, but the amount received through such activities is small. Some institutions are now seriously considering the possibility of diversifying sources of funding, following the example set by some public institutions which have put policies in place that enable departments, faculties/institutes, and the central administration to receive a percentage of incomes accruing from consultancy services rendered by its staff. Some institutions are beginning to consider investing in joint ventures with private investors interested in investing in economic programmes on university land. The outcome of these efforts has yet to be seen, since they have just begun implementing the joint economic activities.

### **Profitability of private higher education**

As for the profitability of higher education institutions, it would be fair to say that presently there is no university-level institution which has been able to make financial profits from its academic activities. On the contrary, those investors who established their institutions for profit-making have already wound up the business or have changed their original thinking and are now providing higher education as a social service, probably out of fear that they would lose their political image if they were to close down the business.

On the whole, it is the non-university institutions that provide education and training in the areas of hospitality and tourism, information and communication technology, and management science, who make some profit, mostly from short-term courses of two to three months' duration.

However, the experience gained from the developed world is clearly telling developing countries that governments cannot avoid the responsibility of financing higher education in their countries, because the contribution made by the private sector will always be small. *Table 4.1* reveals the reality existing in the world today.

The developed world has some basic assumptions for expecting substantial contributions to the financing of higher education. These include, among other things:

- that there is large middle and upper class of people who recognize and appreciate the value of higher education, and who are ready to pay for it;
- that a large private sector exists in the country which is “dependable, willing, and able to invest in higher education and at the same time pay taxes”; and
- that the country is blessed with the existence of major financial and philanthropic foundations interested in funding higher education. (URT, 1998).

**Table 4.1** Percentage of education expenditure at all levels by source of funds

Country	Public sources	Private sources
Australia	85.0	15.0
Canada	90.1	9.9
Denmark	99.4	0.6
Finland	92.3	7.7
France	89.7	10.3
Germany	72.9	27.1
Ireland	93.4	6.6
Netherlands	98.0	26.1
Spain	80.1	19.9
United States	78.6	21.4
Haiti	20.0	80.0
Hungary	93.1	6.9
Republic of Korea	70.0	30.0
Venezuela	73.0	27.0
Japan	73.9	26.1

*Source:* Jemenez, 1995.

Such basic assumptions cannot hold water in developing countries. Most of them do not have large middle and upper classes as in Europe and America, since the private sector is only just developing and has yet to give birth to financial and philanthropic foundations. Thus, governments of Africa will continue to play the leading role in promoting and financing higher education. What the governments should do is to institute taxation policies which would give tax exemptions or tax relief to people and firms that give financial assistance to higher education. Such a move may attract the private sector to support the development of higher education in our countries.

### **Quality of education and employment of graduates of private institutions**

One of the major concerns of the government before 1995 was how to ensure that the higher education institutions that had been mushrooming in the country were offering quality programmes and

that the graduates were adequately prepared for the existing job market. Each institution set its own standards for programme preparation, qualifications of the teaching staff, as well as that of the non-teaching staff, quality assurance systems and the minimum standards for teaching and learning facilities: classrooms/lecture rooms, laboratories and so on.

The situation arose because, even within the public sector, institutions were established and run by different ministries. Thus, the government saw the need for establishing central co-ordinating bodies according to the levels of higher education offered by the various institutions. And as we have seen already, two bodies were established to perform that function. The first is the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC), which is concerned with institutions that provide university-level education and training. The second is the National Council for Technical Education (NACTE), responsible for technical education and training.

The two organs are essentially regulatory bodies whose functions are to address all the concerns of the government and the public regarding: quality assurance, equity and access to higher education; relevance; quality of the programmes, teaching staff and teaching and learning facilities; governance; student support, and; institutional accountability to the society they serve.

### **Functions of the regulatory bodies**

#### ***The HEAC***

Section 65 of the Act establishing the HEAC (URT, 1995) lists the functions of the HEAC. This list is not exhaustive, but includes all the essential elements which one would expect to find in the functions of an accrediting agency. Partially, they include the following:

1. advising the government on the establishment of higher education institutions;
2. accreditation of higher education institutions;
3. co-ordinating long-term planning;

4. promotion of co-operation among the institutions of higher education in Tanzania;
5. examination and approval of proposals for courses of study and course regulations submitted by institutions of higher education;
6. receiving and considering applications from institutions or organizations seeking to establish private higher education in Tanzania, and making recommendations thereon to the government;
7. making regulations in enrolment in state institutions of higher education and providing a central admissions service to higher education institutions;
8. ensuring the maintenance of the standards of programmes and examinations in higher education institutions;
9. advising and making recommendations to the government on matters relating to higher education and research;
10. making regulations on the standardization, recognition and equation of degrees, diplomas and certificates conferred or awarded by foreign institutions and local institutions; and
11. visiting and inspecting higher education institutions.

These functions have already been translated into regulations, guidelines and operational tools which have been given to all prospective investors in higher education, as well as to all existing institutions, public and private alike. They are used in the evaluation of institutions.

### ***The NACTE***

Also established by the Act of Parliament in 1997 is a set of functions it has to carry out to ensure that institutions under its umbrella provide high quality education and training. The functions of the NACTE are to:

1. ensure the overall co-ordination of technical education and training;
2. establish a national system of awards;
3. ensure the relevance of technical education and training to labour market demands;

#### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

4. institute systems of quality control and quality assurance in technical education and training;
5. register and accredit both public and private technical education and training institutions capable of delivering courses; and
6. establish a central database on technical education and training, which will serve as a source of information needed by the government for the strategic development of technical education and training.

Like its sister body, NACTE has already drawn up the necessary regulations, guidelines and operational tools needed to carry out the functions enumerated above; and they are already being used in the evaluation of intended institutions.

#### **Operationalization of HEAC and NACTE**

The two bodies are fully operational. Each one of them has set up its committees or boards as prescribed by their respective Acts. In the case of the HEAC, it has three committees: the Accreditation Committee; the Admissions Committee; and the Grants Committee. The first two have operated since 1997, while the latter was set up more recently and is, therefore, still working on its operational procedures.

The HEAC now oversees admissions to higher education institutions which admit candidates who meet the 'A' level pass requirements, university and non-university institutions alike. Individual institutions select applicants according to their own admission criteria as pre-approved by the HEAC. The lists are submitted to the HEAC for validation. This technical task is undertaken by the Joint Admissions Meeting of all admissions officers of existing institutions. The agreed lists of qualifying applicants are then submitted to the council through the latter's Admissions Committee, which vets the lists from the Joint Admissions Meeting.

The Accreditation Committee of the HEAC considers all reports in respect of institutional evaluation, validation of programmes, and evaluation for purposes of recognition of qualifications submitted by individuals and employers to the council for evaluation. So far, this committee has been dealing with the accreditation of new institutions only, both public and private, but the majority of those that have been

evaluated for accreditation are private higher education institutions. Only three public institutions have so far been subjected to the HEAC evaluation process.

On the other hand, NACTE has set up five boards according to area of study (Annual Report NACTE, 2000/2001). Related areas are clustered together. The boards are:

- Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (ANE) Board;
- Business and Management (BMG) Board;
- Engineering and other Sciences (EOS) Board;
- Health and Allied Sciences (HAS) Board; and
- Planning and Welfare (PWF) Board.

Using these boards, NACTE started its operation by evaluating all institutions to find out the actual situation regarding the status they should have and the level of qualifications their programmes should work towards, taking into account the qualifications of the academic staff, the quality assurance system in place, the condition of teaching and learning facilities, and available financial resources. As mentioned earlier, 90 institutions have been evaluated and given full registration. In the process, NACTE has discovered that none of the institutions which offer postgraduate programmes are qualified to do so. Accordingly, they have all been ordered to stop admitting students to those programmes; they should limit themselves to the diploma level only.

The two accrediting agencies have started off well in implementing the objectives for which they were established. For example, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education has made the following statement about the performance of the HEAC:

“The Council has to-date commendably tried to accomplish a number of tasks as stipulated, particularly given the short time since it began practical operations in 1997” (URT, no date).

“Notwithstanding this, HEAC is yet to do much towards the accomplishment of the tasks within its legal mandate. For instance, accreditation of institutions still requires strict definitional and operational criteria; academic programmes and awards are yet to

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be scrutinized and equated; staff designations and titles still require scrutiny and standardization by level of staff qualification and rank of institution ... and the Council itself needs the force of law to be able to enforce institutional compliance with the guidelines it issues" (URT, no date).

Apart from praising the HEAC, the statement also indicates that the task lying ahead is a mammoth one, for the two bodies will not only deal with the initial regular evaluations of new institutions under them, but will also have to carry out periodic evaluation exercises every four or five years for re-accreditation purposes.

### *Employment prospects of graduates of private institutions*

The experience so far has been that the performance of private higher education institutions has been good; for some of them the performance is very good. The latter are institutions which started off very well, in that they painstakingly fulfilled all requirements for registration, recognition and accreditation without recourse to any manoeuvres for shortcuts to accreditation. These are the ones which implemented all or most of the recommendations made by the technical evaluation teams that visited and evaluated them. Their programmes are as good as those of the older public institutions, and their graduates, too, are as good as those of the older ones. They have one big advantage over the older institutions in that they have small numbers of students, which allows personal contacts in seminars and tutorials. Thus, they are able to produce quality graduates. Few institutions have done tracer studies on their graduates. The results are encouraging, for they show that their graduates compete favourably with those from public institutions.

It should also be noted that at least five of the institutions became universities or university colleges by upgrading their status from seminaries or religious colleges to universities or university colleges. Thus, they are still phasing out the old programmes, or if they have done so and are now producing university graduates, they will still be serving their religious organizations, for they have yet to introduce

'circular' programmes. Having said that, it must also be stated that the performance of some of the institutions is mediocre and great efforts must be made to improve them if their graduates are to compete well in the job market.

#### *Private universities and research*

This is the area of activities in which most private universities and colleges are lagging behind. Apart from medical institutions where research is always an ongoing activity, there is very little going on in the other fields. The CVs of academic staff members tell the full story. There are institutions which have existed for seven years now but, during that period, few academics will have produced a publication in a refereed journal or will have published any research findings. The CVs still remain very thin.

The main excuse is always that there are no funds given for research. However, an institution which encourages its academic staff to engage in research and consultancy will urge its faculties and departments to put in place two things: a research policy; and a research agenda which gives research priority areas over a plan period. It will then draw up an institutional research policy and agenda to be used for soliciting funds. Few private institutions have done that. The regulatory bodies have a responsibility to constantly remind and indeed require higher education institutions to make research a priority in the academic programmes and to demonstrate the results through the production of scientific papers and publication of research findings. Senior academics should be put to task to demonstrate that they deserve to remain as employees of an academic institution.

## **5. Conclusion**

### **Outcome of government policy on the provision of private higher education in Tanzania**

The call by the government and market forces for individuals, groups of people, and non-governmental organizations to come out and invest in higher education through any mode or arrangement,

either as private providers or as partners, with the government is timely and in step with current trends worldwide. Today, Tanzania boasts 22 university-level institutions, i.e. 12 universities and 10 university colleges offering degree-level programmes. Just looking at the number, this is an impressive performance. The overall student enrolment, too, has gone up by about 3,000, thus helping to improve the participation ratio which, for the over 35 million people of Tanzania, is too low.

As we have seen above, the quality of the products from these institutions is generally good, but the institutions will have to continue to work on improving the following areas:

### **Size of institutions**

Due to the fact that most of the institutions are a result of upgrading non-university institutions to university status, their physical facilities and their capacities have not changed significantly. They were established to provide a special type of education and training to meet the needs of a small clientele. Therefore, the yearly student intake was small in keeping with the expressed needs of their clientele. But now that they are allowed to open up to a wider clientele, they tend to rush toward establishing new secular programmes to attract more students. Because of limited space, all that is done is to squeeze more programmes into the timetable. The small facilities become crowded, creating a non-conducive environment for teaching and learning.

At times, owners house their institutions in rented premises in the central parts of towns, and so limit their potential for expansion. They too have the same tendency to introduce more and more degree programmes in premises which are meant only for a small number of students. As in the first case, crowding becomes the inevitable result. In such situations, teaching and learning are bound to suffer.

On the other hand, the present trend of upgrading small institutions to university status or allowing individuals and non-governmental bodies to establish small size universities without definite plans of future expansion will not help the country improve the participation ratio which, as we have seen earlier, is currently one of the lowest.

There needs to be a deliberate policy requiring a minimum level of student enrolment and programmes for an institution to be accredited as a fully-fledged university. At the very least, the corporate plans of proposed institutions should show definite strategies for achieving that goal.

The present accrediting agencies may not have the power to do that and, even if they had, they would need strong backing by the government, for it could easily touch on many interests and therefore become a political issue. The alternative would be to adopt India's system of higher education, where there are fewer universities of world repute, but each one of them has a number of affiliated colleges. Any college wishing to become an independent university has to meet defined minimum requirements for facilities, programmes, academic staff and administrative structures, etc. Unfortunately, at present, each aspiring owner of a higher education institution wants to have a university without observing the requirements for becoming a college or university. They need to be considered differently for they have different statutes.

### **Recruitment and development of academic staff**

It has been pointed out that private higher education institutions depend highly on part-time teaching staff working full-time at the well-established public institutions. At times, they also use part-time staff from other private institutions. As the number of institutions increases, so do the demands on the academic staff of older universities. Ultimately, the teaching in the base university suffers, since their senior staff members are constantly on the move, i.e. in Zanzibar or on the mainland. The problem facing private institutions is that the pool of highly qualified people who could be recruited for teaching posts in the universities is small and does not contain all the professional expertise needed. The best alternative will be to recruit those who are doing their master's degree programmes and then develop them along career paths of higher education institutions.

Unfortunately, there are few first degree holders who get untied scholarships to study for master's degrees or who can sponsor themselves so that at the end they will be free to join university teaching. In the developed world, there is a deliberate policy of sponsoring people in different disciplines to undertake postgraduate studies because it is after completing that level that people become more functional and more literate in today's globalized knowledge economies. It is high time for our governments to introduce a special scholarship fund for postgraduate studies to help create a pool of highly-trained human resources from which universities can get the staff they need to carry out their mission of teaching, doing research and rendering services to the community.

### **Financing of private higher education**

It cannot be disputed that the most willing partners in the knowledge industry in Tanzania do not have adequate financial bases for their institutions. They need outside assistance or alternative sources of financing. So far, they have been able to finance the initial stages in the development of the institutions they have established. They continue to contribute substantially to the running costs of the institutions, but they bank on student fees to enable them to meet all the running costs. Fortunately, the government has made it possible for people to get loans to pay for studies in private institutions. It is now possible for an applicant searching for a place in a university to choose a private university as their first choice. But still, there is a need to construct new teaching facilities, fund research, and introduce modern technologies in teaching. As things are in most private higher education institutions, it is difficult to see how the owners are going to manage this challenge. Efforts are made by institutions to develop new facilities, to improve existing ones, and to recast programmes so as to meet market and social demands. The Tanzania Education Authority (TEA), through its grants and loans to institutions, is complementing efforts by institutions to finance their own activities. The loans and grants will greatly enable private higher education institutions to achieve their objectives. Even

so, there is a need for institutions to diversify their sources of funding, including instituting plans for internal income-generating activities.

### **Implications of private higher education institutions on equity**

In terms of gender equity balance, the private higher education institutions have increased the opportunities for women with requisite qualifications to study at universities. A trend has developed in the older comprehensive universities to raise the cut-off point for admission to popular programmes such as business studies and law. For example, to study law at the University of Dar es Salaam, one has to have a minimum of nine points, and for business studies, one must have eight points or above. Thus, the cut-off point for the programmes is very high and the competition for admission is stiff. However, applicants now have a number of institutions to choose from. In fact, the percentage of women in private institutions is better generally. It ranges between 25 per cent and 30 per cent, although the numbers involved are small because of the overall small enrolments.

Private higher education institutions are also bringing about equity in terms of location. Public institutions are concentrated in the Eastern zone of the country. But private institutions are coming up in Northern Tanzania – the Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions; Western Tanzania – Mwanza; Southern Highlands – Iringa and Mbeya; as well as in the Eastern zone – Dar es Salaam, Morogoro and Zanzibar. As indicated before, two of the owners of private institutions of higher education have plans to establish a constituent college in each zone of the country. When this happens, higher education will have been taken closer to the majority of the people. No doubt the institutions will have positive impacts on the surrounding areas. Two things are likely to happen. First, secondary school students in the different areas will have role models to emulate and will ultimately decide to aim higher in their educational careers. Secondly, if the institutions become innovative and actively implement their missions, that is, to teach, conduct research and render community service, they will influence the communities around them

through continuing education and extension work, thus contributing directly to the development of the area concerned.

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## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

*G. Tumwesigye\**

This paper attempts to give a brief account of the establishment and development of private higher education institutions in Uganda. Higher education (HE) in Uganda is offered to students who have completed advanced secondary school education or its equivalent.

The paper is divided into five sections. *Section 1* gives the general introduction to higher education in Uganda. *Section 2* will discuss the size of the higher education sector, the rapid expansion of the sector, and higher education sector reforms. *Section 3* will present the procedure of establishing a private university in Uganda. *Section 4* will highlight some challenges facing private higher education in financing, management, physical facilities, quality and employability of graduates from private higher education institutions. Finally, *Section 5* will give conclusions.

### **1. General introduction to higher education in Uganda**

Although Uganda has made concerted efforts to expand higher education by increasing the gross higher education enrolment ratio of 2.5 per cent in 1995 to 4 per cent in 2004, it still remains a small sector. However, the expansion has been faster in the recent past, primarily due to the increasing social demand for higher education in the country.

Uganda currently has two categories of higher education institutions. Public and private universities form the first category, and the second category, which is mainly public, is composed of other tertiary institutions such as national teachers colleges, Uganda technical colleges, colleges of commerce, agricultural and fisheries colleges, the forestry college, co-operative colleges, vocational institutes, health/medical colleges, and hotel and tourism institutes. The paper will focus mainly on the first category and in particular on private universities in Uganda, which have been growing rapidly since 1988.

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## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

With the growth of the private sector, new market forces are appearing in the higher education sector. The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (2001) provides the macro framework to regulate these new market forces. The act allowed the establishment of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) whose main functions are to streamline the establishment, administration and standards of universities and other institutions of higher education in Uganda, as well as to provide other related matters.

The pattern of ownership of private universities in Uganda spreads over a range of different organizations that are either private or religious. The religious organizations have different backgrounds and beliefs. Those that established not-for-profit private universities are the Organization of Islamic Conference (Islam), the Church of Uganda (Protestant), the Catholic Uganda Episcopal Conference (Catholic), and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Private individuals have also established some for-profit private universities.

Although the focus of this paper is on private higher education, the paper highlights its development in mainly public universities and other tertiary institutions in order to bring development in the private higher education sector into perspective.

## **2. Growth, facilities and reforms in the private higher education sector**

This chapter discusses the size and rapid expansion of the sector as well as sector reforms.

### **The size of the higher education sector**

From 1922 until 1988, there was only one university in Uganda, Makerere University (public), whose total enrolment in 1993/1994 was only 7,000. Yet the demand for university education was and is still high. For example, newspaper (*The New Vision*, 8 March 2004) reports indicate that in 2004 more than 12,000 (or 37 per cent of) qualified students from advanced secondary schools did not gain admission to university. Such excess in the demand for higher education may be one

of the indicators that the expansion of the higher education sector was not well planned.

From 1988 onwards, the university education system started to expand rapidly. The second university, the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU, private), was licensed in 1988. In order to address the big demand for university education, the Government of Uganda liberalized policies to admit privately sponsored students into public universities and to allow the establishment of privately owned universities that charge tuition fees.

According to the report of a survey of Uganda's higher institutions of learning, published by the National Council for Higher Education (November 2004), Uganda has 29 universities, 25 private universities (13 licensed and 12 unlicensed) and 4 public universities, with a total university enrolment of 67,934 students and 3,990 academic staff. The teacher:student ratio is 1:24. The sub-Saharan average is 1:12. Public universities account for about 70 per cent of the total university enrolment. However, the oldest university - Makerere University - continues to be the largest, accounting for more than 62 per cent (42,251) of the total enrolment and about 42 per cent of the total teaching staff.

Several other private universities have been reported in the local press to be in the process of establishment. Although the percentage of private universities is about 86 per cent, the total enrolment at the private universities is only about 30 per cent. This clearly shows that the capacity of private universities is still low compared to public universities. However, privately sponsored students in public universities are estimated to represent about 74 per cent of the public universities' total enrolment. The total public university enrolment in 2002/2003 was 46,370, of which 34,370 were privately sponsored students. This is the case because the Government of Uganda sponsors only 4,000 students per year in public universities whereas there is still high demand for higher education. The enrolment for only Makerere University in 1950, 1993/1994 and 2003/2004 was 252, 7,000 and

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42,251 students, respectively. The percentage increase in about 10 years is 504 per cent.

*Table 2.1* gives the universities and other tertiary institutions by name, year when lectures began, founding body, total enrolment and teaching staff by gender, as well as the student-teacher ratio for 2003/2004.

**Table 2.1 Higher education enrolment by gender and number of teachers, 2003/2004**

Name of university	Year when lectures began	Founding body	Total enrolment	Female enrolment	% female enrolment	Teaching staff	
						Total	T/S ratio
<b>Public universities</b>							
Makerere University + Makerere University Business School	1922	Government	42,251	17,956	42	1,265	33
Mbarara University of Science and Technology	1989	Government	1,123	387	34	144	9
Kyambogo University	2002	Government	3,330	1,423	43	264	10
Gulu University	2002	Government	640	139	22	39	13
Sub-total			47,344	19,905	42	1,782	27
<b>Private universities – licensed</b>							
Islamic University in Uganda	1988	Organisation of Islamic Conferences (OIC)	2,415	847	35	113	21
Ndejje University	1992	Luweero & other dioceses	1,032	430	42	47	22
Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi	1993	Catholic Church	1,403	544	39	93	15
Bugema University	1994	Adventist Church	1,878	735	39	94	20
Busoga University	1999	Busoga Diocese	472	188	40	91	5

**Table 2.1 (continued)**

Kigezi International School of Medicine, Kabale	1996	Private	*	*	*	*	
Namasagali University	1999	Private	556	232	42	59	9
Nkumba University	1999	Private	3,233	1,569	49	118	27
Uganda Christian University, Mukono	1999	Church of Uganda	2,556	1,180	46	76	34
Aga Khan University, Uganda	2001	Private	81	79	98	14	6
Kampala International University	2001	Private	2,875	1,230	43	105	27
Kampala University	2001	Private	432	188	44	43	10
St Paul Regional Study Centre, Arua			127	34	27	28	5
Sub-total			17,060	7,256	43	881	19
<b>Private universities – unlicensed</b>							
Bishop Barham University College			535	164	31	64	8
Bishop Stuart University			527	221	42	33	16
Busoga University – Grotius School of Law and Professional Studies			462	155	34	96	5
Central Buganda University			182	147	81	21	9
Fairland University			161	37	23	22	7
International Institute of Education, Katwe			293	123	42		

Kabale University	122	29	24	20	6
Kumi University	831	261	32	33	25
Luwero University	*	*		*	*
Nile University	58	12	21	30	2
Teso University	*	*		*	*
World University of Leadership	359	122	34		
Sub-total	3,530	1,277	36	319	11
Total for universities	67,934	28,438	42	2,982	23
<b>Other tertiary institutions</b>					
10 National Teachers Colleges	18,787	6,611	35	373	50
5 Uganda Technical Colleges	1,588	94	6	134	12
5 Uganda Colleges of Commerce	3,517	1,604	46	167	21
3 agricultural colleges, 1 forestry college & 1 fisheries training college	942	154	16	98	10
2 co-operative colleges	225	63	28	21	11
2 hotel and tourism institutions	201	92	46	20	10
Health, medical, hygiene & paramedical school	2,359	720	31	195	12
Sub-total	27,619	9,338	34	1,008	27
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>95,553</b>	<b>37,776</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>3,990</b>	<b>24</b>

\* Statistics not submitted.

Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (Planning Department); NCHE, 2004.

### Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa

The distribution of the 29 universities is as follows: Central region: 15 (52 per cent); Eastern region: six (21 per cent); Western region: five (17 per cent); and Northern region: three (10 per cent).

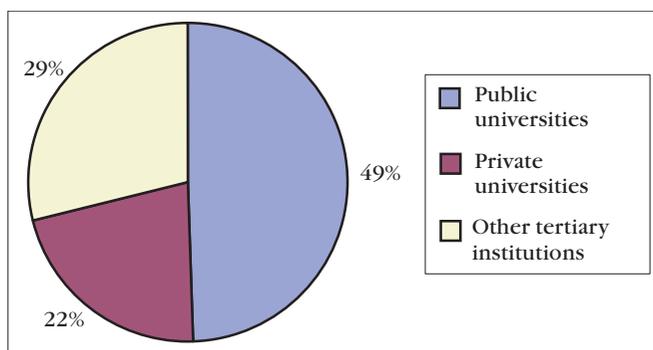
Table 2.2 gives the percentage share of enrolment in higher education.

**Table 2.2 Percentage share of enrolment in higher education, 2003/2004**

Type of higher institution	Enrolment	Share of enrolment (%)
Public universities	47,344	49
Private universities	20,590	22
Other tertiary institutions	27,619	29
Total	95,553	

Source: Compiled from National Council for Higher Education, 2004.

**Figure 2.1 Percentage share of higher education enrolment, 2003/2004**

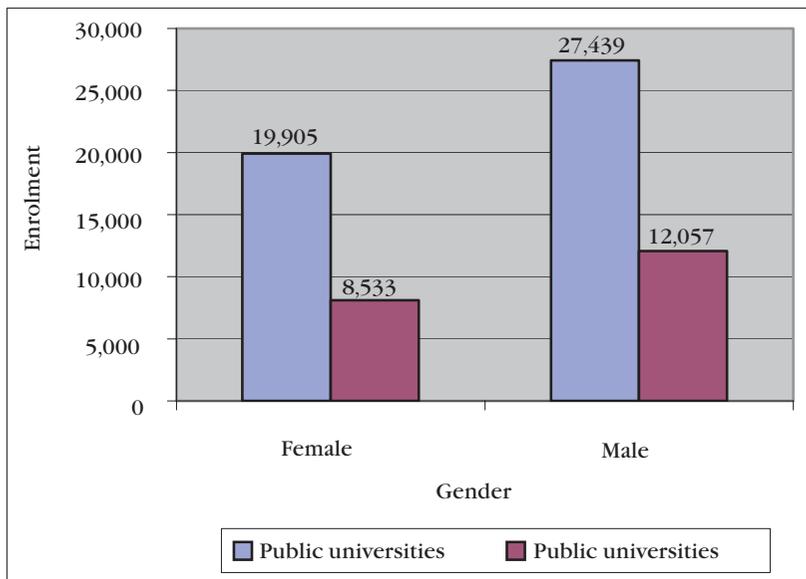


Source: Compiled from National Council for Higher Education, 2004.

The private universities represent the lowest share of 22 per cent of total higher education enrolment, other tertiary institutions enrol 29 per cent and public universities take the largest share at about 49 per cent. The university sector (private and public) accounts for over 70 per cent.

Female enrolment in private universities and in public universities is very similar at 41 per cent and 42 per cent respectively. This represents a significant improvement overall. For example, before 1989 at Makerere University, female enrolment represented only 12 per cent of total undergraduate level enrolment. However, this percentage increased to about 31 per cent in 1993, 39 per cent in 2000 and 42 per cent in 2004. The increase in female enrolment may have been caused by the introduction of extra points for female applicants in 1989 to gain admission to public universities and the increasing number of girl children going to school.

**Figure 2.2 Enrolment by type of university and gender, 2003/2004**



*Source:* Compiled from National Council for Higher Education, 2004.

The teacher-student ratio is lower in private universities at an average of 1:17, while it is 1:27 in public universities. The ratio for Makerere University is 1:33.

### **Rapidly expanding higher education**

Despite the rapid increase in enrolment in higher education, the benefits to economic development may not be substantial because the increase occurred mainly in the disciplines of the arts and humanities, which are not widely believed to be as critical to economic development as the science and technology disciplines. According to the November 2004 report of a survey of Uganda's higher institutions of learning, only 17 per cent of tertiary students were doing science-related courses, which is below the sub-Saharan average of 29 per cent. The rest (83 per cent) were taking arts and humanities courses. Furthermore, at the graduation ceremony on 28 March 2003, Makerere University conferred degrees and diplomas upon 2,273 graduates. Two hundred and two (9 per cent) were doing science-related courses while 2,071 (91 per cent) graduated in arts and humanities. In order to foster faster economic development, as detailed in Uganda's development plans, there is a need to quickly shift from arts-based to science-based courses. The Strategic Plan for Higher Education 2003-2015 has addressed this imbalance between science-related and arts-related courses. However, Uganda should not lose focus of the relevance and importance of arts-related courses. Emphasis should also be put on job creation types of courses rather than on the current courses, which make graduates jobseekers.

Although the student enrolment in higher education is growing rapidly but is still low, it is expected to increase. *Table 2.3* gives projections of expected enrolment in higher education. The causes for the increase are due to three main reasons:

- demand from the first Universal Primary Education (UPE) graduates who are expected to enter higher education institutions in 2009. UPE enrolment increased from 2.7 million pupils in 1997 to 7.6 million in 2003. Secondary school enrolment increased from 518,931 students in 2000 to 683,609 in 2003;
- population growth rate of over 3.4 per cent a year;
- steady macro-economic growth, which has increased the number of people able to afford higher education.

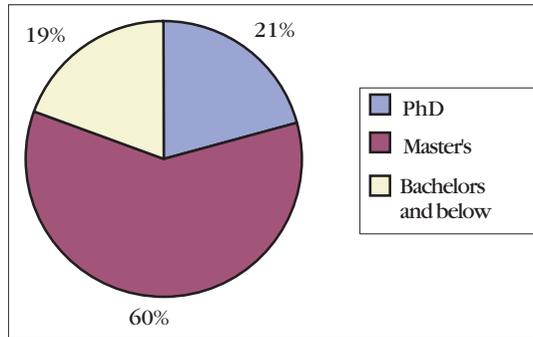
**Table 2.3 Projected enrolment and demand for higher education institutions in Uganda, 2003-2015**

Year	Projected population at 3.4% annual growth	Population of higher education enrolment age assuming 11% of the population
2003	24,748,977	2,722,387
2004	25,590,442	2,814,949
2005	26,460,517	2,910,657
2006	27,360,175	3,009,619
2007	28,290,421	3,111,946
2008	29,252,295	3,217,752
2009	30,246,873	3,327,156
2010	31,275,267	3,440,279
2011	32,338,626	3,557,249
2012	33,438,139	3,678,195
2013	34,575,036	3,803,254
2014	35,750,587	3,932,565
2015	36,966,107	4,066,272

Source: Government of Uganda, *Strategic plan for higher education: 2003-2015*.

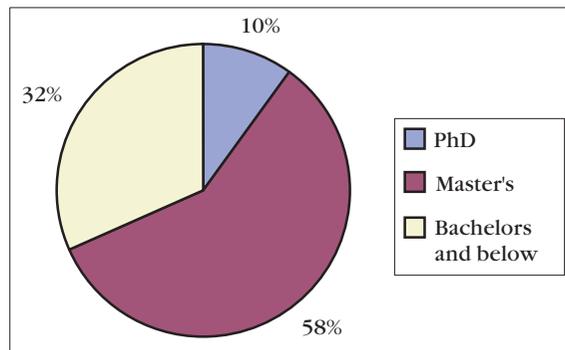
According to the Strategic Plan for Higher Education, the government and the private sector will finance the expansion of facilities in public and private higher education institutions. The Ministry of Education and the National Council for Higher Education will work out details of the expansion to cater for the projected larger number of students.

**Figure 2.3 Qualifications of academic staff at public universities**



Source: Compiled from National Council for Higher Education, 2004.

**Figure 2.4 Qualifications of academic staff at private universities**



Source: Compiled from National Council for Higher Education, 2004.

### **Physical and academic facilities at universities**

The November 2004 study revealed that the physical and academic facilities are inadequate at most universities. The majority of the universities have facilities that fall far below the minimum standards as specified by the NCHE.

For instance, ideally 60 per cent of staff should have a PhD, with 15-50 per cent being acceptable; at least 70 per cent of staff should ideally have a master's degree, with 50 per cent being an acceptable proportion.

The figures above show that the proportion of academic staff members with a PhD is at the lower end of the acceptable range for public universities (at 21 per cent) and in the unacceptable range for private universities (10 per cent). The proportion of academic staff members with a master's degree is acceptable for both public and private universities, at 60 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively.

The ideal computer:student ratio is 1:5 and the acceptable ratio is 1:20; the ideal student:book ratio is 1:40 and the acceptable ratio is 1:20; the ideal library space per student is 2.5m<sup>2</sup> and the acceptable space is 1m<sup>2</sup>; the ideal laboratory space per student is 3m<sup>2</sup> and the acceptable laboratory space is 1m<sup>2</sup>; and the ideal lecture room space per student is 2.5m<sup>2</sup> and the acceptable space is 1m<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 2.4 Facilities at universities, 2003/2004**

	Students/ PhD staff		Students/ computer		Students/ books		Library space/ students		Lab space/ students		Lecture space/ students		
	Total enrolment	PhD Staff	Ratio	Computers	Ratio	Books	Ratio	m <sup>2</sup>	Ratio	m <sup>2</sup>	Ratio	m <sup>2</sup>	Ratio
<b>Public universities</b>													
Makerere University+ Makerere University Business School	42,251	335	126	1,493	28	873,347	21	5,618	0.13	18,293	0.43	11,236	0.27
Mbarara University of Science and Technology	1,123	5	225	29	39	25,708	23	540	0.48	7,152	6.37	2,007	1.79
Kyambogo University	3,330	23	145			185	56	230	0.07	5,288	1.59	6,113	1.84
Gulu University	640	7	91	17	38	2,819	4	112	0.18	540	0.84	808	1.26
Sub-total	47,344	370	128	1,539	31	1,087,129	23	6,500	0.14	31,273	0.66	20,164	0.43
<b>Private universities - licensed</b>													
Islamic University in Uganda	2,415	21	115	43	56	18,525	8	411	0.17	1,158	0.48	2,669	1.11
Ndejje University	1,032					25,376	25					1,040	1.01
Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi	1,403	17	83			19,295	14	1,033	0.74	529	0.38	1,150	0.82
Bugema University	1,878	18	104	200	9	87,588	47			555	0.30	1,199	0.64
Busoga University	472	4	118			8,301	18	266	0.56				

Kigezi International School of Medicine, Kabale	*		*	*								*	
Namasagali University	556	2	278	12	46	2,068	4	79	0.14	76	0.14	548	0.99
Nkumba University	3,233	10	323	62	52	10,220	3	255	0.08			2,034	0.63
Uganda Christian University, Mukono	2,556	13	197	75	34	52,437	21	610	0.24			1,898	0.74
Aga Khan University, Uganda	81			15	5	987	12	52	0.64	35	0.43	70	0.86
<b>Private universities – licensed (cont'd)</b>													
Kampala International University	2,875	*		*		*		*		*		*	
Kampala University	432	6	72			1,407	3	56	0.13	49	0.11	354	0.82
St Paul Regional Study Centre, Arua	127	1	127			9,420	74	57	0.45			254	2.00
Sub-total	17,060	92	185	407	42	247,624	15	5,179	0.30	2,452	0.14	11,714	0.69
<b>Private universities – unlicensed</b>													
Bishop Barham University College	535					18,395	34	706	1.32	236	0.44	519	0.97
Bishop Stuart University	527					3,610	7	199	0.38	209	0.40	552	1.05
Busoga University – Grotius School of Law and Professional Studies	462	3	154	14	33	6,227	13	329	0.71			694	1.50

Central Buganda University	182			12	15	1,483	8	16	0.09			54	0.30
Fairland University	161	1	161	7	23							97	0.60
International Institute of Education, Katwe	293												
Kabale University	122	2	61			13,344	109	230	1.89			368	3.02
Kumi University	831			40	21	13,950	17	122	0.15			278	0.33
Luwero University	*							98		300		250	
Nile University	58	4	15									1,881	32.43
Teso University	*					102							
World University of Leadership	359												
Sub-total	3,530	10	353	73	48	57,111	16	1,602	0.45	445	0.13	4,644	1.32
Sub-total for private universities	20,590	102	202	480	43	304,735	15	6,781	0.33	2,897	0.14	16,358	0.79
<b>Total for universities</b>	<b>67,934</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>2,019</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1,391,864</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13,281</b>	<b>0.20</b>	<b>34,170</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>36,522</b>	<b>0.54</b>

\* or blank may indicate that statistics were not submitted.

Source: NCHE, 2004.

## **Reforms in private higher education**

Some reforms proposed, which are not specific to the private higher education sector but affect public universities and other tertiary institutions as well, include:

- the passing by the Parliament of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (2001), which provides for the establishment of the National Council for Higher Education to streamline the establishment, administration and standards of universities and other institutions of higher education in Uganda and provide for other related matters, is the first major reform. This act creates a new environment in which higher education will operate. It gives the procedure for establishing a private university, a private tertiary institution, a public university and any other matter related to institutions of higher education;
- the shifting of some of the higher education cost burden from taxpayers to parents and students, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of higher education;
- enhancing quality and relevance of higher education by broadening the tertiary curriculum in a way that will attempt to balance humanities and social sciences with relevant and appropriate science and technology-based subjects. Every higher education student must pass English, Swahili and communication skills, and take both science and arts subjects up to the end of the first year at the university. The broad curriculum should include subjects that will enhance patriotism and national consciousness;
- increasing information and communication technology (ICT) capacity and usage in teaching and learning in higher education. ICT should be integrated in all operations of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to enable them to produce better-skilled, more efficient and relevant human resources to operate a sustainable knowledge-based economy in Uganda;
- asking HEIs to develop and implement mechanisms that attract, train and retain good academic staff;

### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

- that HEIs should establish a research fund, institute a research levy on student fees, and publish and disseminate research findings;
- introducing a credit system that will eliminate the current HE rigidities;
- improving and expanding physical facilities (like lecture rooms, laboratories, library space, computer laboratories; installing ICTs in libraries, stocking libraries with up-to-date and relevant text books and journals), recruiting and training more qualified lecturers; and
- providing timely intervention to prevent and control HIV/AIDS in HEIs through the development of an HIV/AIDS prevention strategy.

### **3. Stages of establishing a private university in Uganda**

Sections 95-102 of the act give the procedure for establishing a private university.

#### **Application to establish and operate a private university**

- A person/firm/organization intending to start a private university applies to the NCHE.
- The application is accompanied by the proposed name, physical location and academic character of the institution, its aims and objectives, detailed financial base, proposed governance, academic programmes (including control and administration), academic facilities like library and equipment, existing or proposed human resources including academic and administrative staff, existing or proposed physical infrastructure, and a timetable indicating the steps to be taken for three years after establishment towards the realization of the objectives of the university.
- The NCHE organizes a meeting(s) with the applicant to verify resources and information given in the application and later organizes inspection visits.
- Detailed findings of the inspection team are submitted to the Minister of Education.

### **Provisional licence for a private university**

- If the NCHE is satisfied that the applicant has in place what was declared in the application, that the applicant is following realistic plans to achieve the objectives for which the university is being established, that the university is likely to attain the academic standards prescribed by the National Council for Higher Education and that its establishment is in the interest of the public, the National Council for Higher Education may issue a provisional licence to the applicant to establish and operate a university. Reasons for not warranting a provisional licence shall be communicated to the applicant and remedies indicated.
- The NCHE publishes the names and particulars of the private university in the Uganda Gazette. The provisional licence is valid for three years from the date of publication.
- A private university issued with a provisional licence shall prepare and submit an evaluation report of its activities to the National Council for Higher Education, which closely monitors its operations.

### **Application for the grant of a charter and accreditation**

- A private university that has been in possession of a provisional licence for at least three years and has fulfilled all set conditions may apply for a charter and accreditation.
- If the National Council for Higher Education is satisfied with the evaluation report, the council shall appoint an Inspection Committee to ascertain the correctness of the information given on the academic, administrative and social affairs of the private university.
- The Inspection Committee submits its report to the National Council for Higher Education within six months of the appointment date.
- If the National Council for Higher Education is satisfied with the report that the university has adequately addressed the human, physical, financial and other necessary resources, the council may recommend to the Minister of Education that the private university be granted accreditation.

## **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

- The Minister shall, within 90 days of the recommendation, submit the application and the recommendation to the President of Uganda, who may grant a charter to the university. After granting a charter, the Minister shall as soon as possible, by legal notice, publish the charter in the Gazette and public print media. This does not mean that the university is now free from the NCHE and can do whatever it wants. The NCHE can mount a visitation at any time to ascertain that the institution is still on course.

### **Revocation of a charter**

The President may, upon recommendation of the National Council for Higher Education, through the Minister, revoke a charter issued under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (2001) if the university is not carrying out its functions in a proper manner or the university is in breach of its charter. When a charter is revoked, the Minister shall as soon as possible, by legal notice, publish the revocation in the Gazette and thereafter the university shall cease to be a university after one year from the date of the legal notice. However, the academic awards granted when the revoked university was still recognized remain valid.

### **Rules regarding operations of private universities**

- No person or group of persons or organization shall establish and operate a university without the relevant provisional licence, charter or certificate granted by the NCHE.
- Universities should recruit academic and administrative staff that meet standards and qualifications set by the NCHE.
- The language of instruction shall be English, although any other language may be used as a medium of instruction.
- Teaching should include practical solutions to social and economic problems in the community and therefore should be problem-solving based.
- Admission, training and assessment of students in universities should be based on merit.

- Any university that wishes to change its name or part of it must apply in writing to the NCHE. The application shall be published in the Uganda Gazette and only granted if there are no objections.
- Universities shall submit annual reports to the NCHE and the Minister of Education in a prescribed form setting out activities and achievements towards its objective and shall set institutional standards in those years.
- Finances of universities irrespective of their sources should be soundly managed.
- Private universities shall be free to become constituent colleges or affiliates of any other institution as long as they meet set rules and conditions to do so and with the approval of the NCHE.
- Private universities shall be required to act in conformity with legal and relevant regulations required of them by the NCHE and the Ministry of Education.

#### **4. Some challenges facing private universities**

Challenges facing private universities are numerous and vary from university to university. This paper will present some of the main challenges.

##### **The financing challenge**

One of the biggest challenges faced by private universities in Uganda is how the university owners finance private university education. Every private university charges tuition fees paid by students and/or parents. However, the cost of higher education is so high that the fees will not suffice to maintain the students at the universities and provide quality education. *Table 4.1* gives the average unit cost in United States dollars for three private universities and two public universities.

**Table 4.1 Average unit cost for three private universities and two public universities**

Name of university	Current average unit cost converted into US\$**	Preferred/ realistic unit cost converted into US\$	Current average fees paid converted into US\$ (private students)
Uganda Martyrs University (private)	3,237	2,111	2,388
Islamic University in Uganda, Mbale (private)	808	2,222	600
Uganda Christian University, Mukono (private)	954	1,794	555
Makerere University (public)	1,017	2,111	758
Mbarara University of Science and Technology (public)	3,823	4,257	1,511

\*\* Current exchange rate is about US\$ 1 to 1,800 Uganda shillings.

Source: Government of Uganda, *Strategic plan for higher education: 2003-2015*.

How then do private universities finance the big gap between the high cost and the low fees? Some of the new private universities, in addition to fees, receive financial support from donors around the world, churches, income-generating activities and individuals, while most of them do not have financiers and depend on fees. The universities should be accountable to their key stakeholders. It would be interesting to find out how private universities that depend mainly on fees bridge the big financing gap.

In line with government liberalization policies, the government should give incentives to the private sector to provide needed quality higher education.

- Higher education institutions should be permitted to order science equipment and science materials free of tax.
- Science and computer laboratory construction equipment should not be taxed until the national percentage of students registered in science and technology subjects reaches 75 per cent of total registration.

- The government, working with the National Council for Higher Education, should develop a scheme for charitable deductions on income tax for gifts to higher education institutions.
- All licensed higher education institutions should be permitted to access donor community grants on terms worked out by the National Council for Higher Education and approved by the Ministry of Education.
- For-profit institutions should not be given tax breaks on gifts.

### **The management challenge**

According to the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (2001), each private university shall have a governing body and an academic structure whose composition, powers and duties are specified in its charter. A private university shall establish such faculties, schools, institutes or centres and such departments as may be specified in its charter. The governing body and academic structure manage the university operations.

Private universities are relatively new in Uganda and may pose some management challenges due to insufficient relevant managerial experience by the university managers. They must be adequately trained in institutional management. In the past, some universities experienced management problems that almost led to their collapse.

The November 2004 study revealed that all higher education institutions did not have well-documented, reliable and accurate data about their institutions. It should be desirable to have the higher education records computerized and regularly updated by the respective institutions.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa identified the management challenge and is expected to establish a training centre to conduct leadership and management training in order to build the capacity of senior university administrators to effectively manage their complex institutions.

### **Inadequate physical facilities**

Physical facilities at universities must match the increasing enrolment if the quality of university education has to be achieved and maintained. Notwithstanding the rapid expansion in the past 16 years, the capacity and facilities for university education in Uganda are still inadequate. The facilities are lecture rooms, offices, library and laboratory space, computers, and textbooks. Most of the universities do not have access to computers and consequently can neither access the web nor use computer-aided learning to help in offering quality higher education. Laboratories and libraries are missing in some universities. Even where they exist, they are ill-equipped with inadequate laboratory equipment and textbooks. Only two universities in Uganda are reported to be close to an adequate level of facilities. By 2015, it is planned to increase university facilities (as given in *Table 4.2*).

**Table 4.2 Current and planned facilities for 2015**

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Planned</b>
Science laboratory space	47,770 m <sup>2</sup>	1,247,560 m <sup>2</sup>
Computer laboratory space	200 m <sup>2</sup>	1,295,330 m <sup>2</sup>
Classroom space	121,824 m <sup>2</sup>	282,966 m <sup>2</sup>
Library space	35,312 m <sup>2</sup>	288,520 m <sup>2</sup>
Library book collections	1,111,296	5,266,314
Academic staff	3,572	10,629

*Source:* Government of Uganda, *Strategic plan for higher education: 2003-2015*.

### **Quality of private university education**

The rapid growth of universities (especially private universities) responding to market forces of demand and supply has raised the issue of quality education. The commercial motives of some universities may compromise their quality.

The November 2004 study established that the higher education institutions do not have enough qualified academic staff, especially at private universities. Furthermore, universities have a large number of

part-timers and the permanent staff work at more than one institution, which may result in poor quality at universities.

The National Council for Higher Education and the Education Standards Agency work in harmony in order to ensure quality education. Some quality control mechanisms are in place. These include:

- quality control committees at the levels of academic departments and faculty. They review applicants for academic staff positions, promotions, admissions, examinations, marking and awarding of certificates;
- in some of the universities, staff review committees that scrutinize applicants for appointments and promotions;
- universities have senate committees that review academic matters that are sent from lower to higher levels of the academic system;
- these senate committees act as judicial commissions on all academic matters in the universities; and
- the approval of examination questions, the marking of these questions and the awarding of final marks are certified by external examiners who are presumed to be impartial.

### **Employment prospects for private university graduates**

Depending on the disciplines, some private universities are said to be of such good quality that employers prefer their graduates to those of some public universities. However, my speculation is that graduates from private universities may find it difficult to get employed, especially those that study at unlicensed universities. The NCHE is planning to conduct a tracer study aimed at finding out the whereabouts of university graduates.

## **5. Conclusions**

Although enrolment of foreign students in some private universities is above 50 per cent of total enrolment, Uganda's higher education system as a whole is not yet popular with foreign students, whose enrolment now represents an average of only 2.7 per cent. However,

### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

the expanding secondary school enrolment is likely to exert a lot of pressure on higher education institutions in the near future.

The Government should plan how to absorb the large number of qualified students from advanced secondary schools who have failed to get university admission. This issue of excess demand for higher education may lead to undesired consequences if not handled properly and in time.

The NCHE has expressed concern over the mushrooming of universities, some of which are not licensed, that are irresponsible and driven by commercial gains at the expense of quality education. The NCHE stresses the need for higher education to be subjected to global forces and to maintain high standards. However, it has on many occasions asked for the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (2001) to be amended in order to give, among other things, the NCHE power to take appropriate action against such irresponsible or illegal universities. Since the demand for university education is still high, unlicensed universities are likely to continue enrolling students unless the act is amended to give the NCHE power to close down such universities.

I also believe that empowering the NCHE may lead some universities that may not be viable to close down and/or merge in order to form viable ventures.

The implementation of the proposed reforms may not be possible if the NCHE is not empowered. Empowering it may instil some discipline and improve the quality of education.

If the government is to encourage economic development through appropriate education, then it must intervene in order to help private universities to overcome the challenges they are currently facing.

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## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

*B.R.S. Chivore\**

### 1. Introduction

The establishment of private higher education in Zimbabwe should be taken within the context of the history of education and the expansion of education provision at all levels. These levels are: primary; secondary; and tertiary. At the tertiary level, this expansion was determined by the laws of supply and demand (this being still the case in 2004).

### 2. Developments

In this discussion, examples are drawn from private teacher education colleges, as well as private universities. Since we cite examples from teacher colleges, this means that private tertiary education is as old as other forms of formal education – primary and secondary. Teachers' colleges such as Gutu, Morgenster, Howard, Mtshabezi, Nyadire, Bondolfi, and St Anthony, to name a few, were started by private missionary organizations. In 2004, only three teacher colleges, namely Morgenster (reformed church in Zimbabwe), Nyadire (United Methodist), and Bondolfi (Roman Catholic), remain private church-owned institutions. The remaining 10 teacher education institutions were government colleges. These were built well after private mission colleges had been established.

### 3. Higher education provisions

In this paper, higher education refers to university and teacher education. At independence in 1980, there was one university, the University of Zimbabwe, with an enrolment of 2,000 students. Currently, there are 11 universities, seven of which are state-owned and five of which are private. Among them, there are 40,000 students. The seven state universities are: the University of Zimbabwe (UZ); the National University of Science and Technology (NUST); Midlands State University

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#### **Growth and expansion of private higher education in Africa**

(MSU); the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU); Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE); Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT); and Masvingo State University (MASU).

#### **4. Private universities**

There are five private universities, as already noted above. These are: Solusi University (Seventh Day Adventist); Africa University (United Methodist); Catholic University in Zimbabwe (Roman Catholic); the Great Zimbabwe University (reformed church in Zimbabwe); and the Women's University in Africa (denominational). It is useful to note that of the five private universities, three are run by the three church organizations which own the three private teacher education colleges. Another important point to note is that more private universities are destined to open within the next five years.

#### **5. Policies on private tertiary education**

The establishment of private tertiary institutions is governed by the Government through the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) established by an Act of Parliament in 1990. The 1990 Act referred to above created the National Council for Higher Education, whose functions and responsibilities include:

- maintenance of appropriate standards on teaching, courses, examinations and academic qualifications of tertiary institutions;
- receiving and considering applications for the establishment of private universities and university colleges;
- provision of common student admission procedures for higher education;
- advising the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education on the establishment, maintenance and expansion of universities and university colleges; and
- co-ordination of all tertiary education institutions.

#### **6. Establishment of private universities in Zimbabwe**

For the establishment of a private tertiary institution, initial application is made to the National Council for Higher Education. The Council makes its recommendations to the Minister of Higher and

Tertiary Education, who, in turn, consults and makes recommendations to the President of Zimbabwe. After the application has been accepted, this is proclaimed in the Government Gazette.

## **7. University charter**

A private university is established as a body corporate. In other words, it can sue or be sued in its own corporate name. The charter of a private tertiary institution contains certain fundamental provisions. These include:

- the name of the institution;
- its aims, objectives and functions;
- membership, governance and administration;
- admission procedures of students;
- appointment and condition of service of staff;
- faculties; and
- rights and discipline of students.

Private institutions are forbidden from discriminating against staff and students on the basis of religion, race or creed. In other words, private tertiary institutions, like public tertiary institutions, are forbidden to violate the country's constitution, on which these charters are based. According to the National Council for Higher Education Act N°32 (3):425:

“If, after receiving recommendation in terms of this section for revocation of a charter, the President is satisfied that it is in the interest(s) of higher education in Zimbabwe generally for the charter of the university or university college concerned to be revoked, the President may, by proclamation in the Gazette, revoke its charter with effect from such date as he/she may specify in the proclamation.”

In short, therefore, the establishment of private tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe, as in any country the world over, is a political action or politically sanctioned.

## **8. Factors for the development of private tertiary institutions**

The development of private universities is a post-independence phenomenon. The same cannot be said about private teacher education institutions, which were the first to develop before government teacher education institutions. There was no private university in Zimbabwe before 1992. The only universities then were state-owned. As a matter of fact, at independence there was only one university, the University of Zimbabwe situated in Harare. The main factors or reasons behind the establishment of private tertiary institutions, universities and/or non-university institutions could be summarized as follows:

- demand and supply of places at existing public institutions;
- religious convictions; and
- the profit motive, that is the desire to make money.

## **9. Demand and supply**

One cannot write about demand and supply of tertiary education in Zimbabwe without taking into consideration the expansion that took place at the secondary level since independence. In 1970, there were 177 secondary schools with an enrolment of 66,000 pupils. In 1996, there were 1,528 secondary schools with an enrolment of 760,567 pupils. This represented increases of 135 (763.3 per cent) schools and 694,367 (652.4 per cent) pupils over that period. Between 1990 and 1993, expansion in both schools and numbers of pupils declined or levelled up. But from 1994 onwards, the number of schools and pupils started to rise once more. To illustrate this, in 1996 there were 760.56 pupils. In 2001, the figure rose to 866,171 pupils. This was an increase of 115,448 (15.4 per cent) during this period. The point to stress is that secondary education in Zimbabwe expanded and is still expanding (2004). This expansion is bound to be felt at the university level (MOESC, 1970-2000).

To enter a university in Zimbabwe, a candidate is required to have at least two 'A' level passes. These passes should be from recognized boards such as the Zimbabwe Examination Council (ZIMSEC), the University of Cambridge Examination Board, London, or the Associated

Examination Board (AEB). Since the attainment of independence in 1980, the number of candidates seeking places at the University of Zimbabwe has been increasing (*Table 9.1*).

**Table 9.1 Demand for first-year student registration at university, 1990-1994**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
No. of students qualified	4,350	5,093	5,555	5,221	5,681	25,900
No. of students registered	1,937	2,135	1,689	1,773	1,871	9,403
No. of students not accepted who qualify	2,413	2,960	3,866	3,448	3,810	16,497

*Source:* University of Zimbabwe statistical report, 2004.

Places have not been matched by supply. To illustrate, from 1990-1994, a total of 25,900 pupils passed at least two 'A' levels. In other words, they qualified to enter the University of Zimbabwe. But during the same period, only 9,403 (36.3 per cent) managed to obtain a place at the University of Zimbabwe to do their undergraduate studies.

## 10. Demand for undergraduate places outstrips supply

The Williams Commission (1989 Executive Summary) noted this point when it reported:

“The number of applicants for the university degree studies has greatly increased. As a result, the qualifications required to obtain a place at the University of Zimbabwe have risen sharply. Enrolment in the upper sixth form’s capacity to accommodate those seeking and capable of being successful in the university education will decline unless expansion of the university system takes place.”

Admittedly, from 1992 onwards, some candidates obtained places at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) and Africa University, but their numbers were insignificant. From 2000 onwards, new public universities started operating. These were: Midlands State University; Chinhoyi University of Technology; Masvingo State University; Bindura University of Science Education; and Zimbabwe Open University. Even after the expansion of state-owned universities,

the demand for university education outstripped the supply, such that candidates with relatively good 'A' level passes joined the country's teachers' colleges.

## 11. Religion

To date, newly opened universities have been sponsored by religious organizations. These are: Africa University (American Methodist); Solusi University (Seventh Day Adventist); Catholic University; and Great Zimbabwe University (reformed church in Zimbabwe). The establishment of these religious universities is in line with the establishment of private teachers' colleges such as Morgenster Teachers' College (reformed church in Zimbabwe), Bondolfi Teachers' College (Catholic Church) and Nyadire Teachers' College (United Methodist).

**Table 11.1 Private teachers' colleges and their enrolments (2004)**

	Female	Male	Total
Bondolfi	618	375	993
Morgenster	754	602	1,356
Nyadire	443	308	851

Source: Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education statistics, 2004.

It is clear from the information in *Table 11.1* that there are more females than male student teachers at private teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. In fact, the same applies to state teachers' colleges. The reason for establishing religious tertiary institutions (universities) is that having established various schools under different religious denominations, these denominations want to continue this tradition at the tertiary level.

## 12. Other motives (gender)

In Zimbabwe, there is only one non-religious private university. This is the Women's University in Africa (WUA). This university is a non-profit-making university. It was founded on the realization that, in existing universities, women were under-represented; hence the need to start a private university that targeted women. But it must be

emphasized that this university does not discriminate on grounds of gender, race or religion. Consequently, male students are admitted. In 2004, the composition of students according to gender was: 367 (68 per cent) female and 170 (32.0 per cent) male. In terms of staffing, the gender position was nine (45 per cent) female and 11 (55 per cent) male academic staff. We will return to the issue of enrolment and staffing at this university later. Suffice to say that this university was gender-driven when it was formed.

### 13. Profit motive

The motive of private universities and of teachers' colleges for starting courses is not to make financial gains. This motive applies to vocational and technical colleges. There are numerous private vocational and technical colleges formed for profit motives.

### 14. Enrolment

To reiterate an important point, there are five private universities in Zimbabwe in 2004. Their enrolments are shown in *Table 14.1*.

**Table 14.1 Enrolments at private universities in Zimbabwe (2004)**

	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Catholic University	-	-	-	-	-	-
Women's University in Africa	367	68.0	170	32.0	537	100.0
Africa University	27	35.5	49	64.5	76	100.0
Great Zimbabwe University	301	36.1	531	63.9	832	100.0
Solusi University	112	31.8	240	68.2	352	100.0
Total	807	49.9	990	50.1	1,797	100.0

*Source:* Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, 2004.

The information shown in *Table 14.1* is of undergraduate students only. At the time this information was gathered, the present author was not able to obtain statistics from the Catholic University.

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An interesting point to note is that, on the whole, it appears there is gender parity in private universities in Zimbabwe; for example, Women's University in Africa has the highest percentage (68 per cent) of female students. The second point to note is that, taken against the total number of students at universities in Zimbabwe, private universities have a percentage enrolment of roughly 6 per cent. This means that state universities dominate the provision of university education.

### **15. Ownership patterns**

Of the five private universities, only one, Women's University in Africa, is not owned by a religious organization. The denominational distribution is as follows: Catholic University – the Roman Catholic Church; Africa University, United Methodist; Great Zimbabwe University, Reformed Church in Zimbabwe; and Solusi University – Seventh Day Adventist. Needless to say, this is in line with one of the major reasons why these universities started – to foster denominational convictions at the university level through formal academic education.

All private universities in Zimbabwe are non-profit institutions, but they have connections with their mother church organizations. While they all receive charters from the government, some private universities received their degrees from linkages with overseas universities to which they were affiliated. Solusi University, for example, received its charter from the Government of Zimbabwe in July of 1994, but started offering degrees of Andrews University (USA) in 1984. The Government of Zimbabwe, until 1994, did not recognize Solusi as a university, nor did it recognize the degrees offered. The degrees were, however, recognized in other African countries. Africa University, which was granted a charter in 1992, is an American Methodist Church University whose students are recruited from all over Africa. It has a Pan-Africanist approach to university education.

### **16. Staffing**

In all universities, whether private or public, the minimum academic and/or professional qualifications required for one to be a lecturer is a master's degree (Mbizvo, 2003). The Women's University Acting

Registrar noted (2004) that: “As a guiding principle, WUA recruits academic staff members who have at least a Master’s degree in the relevant area to the post of lecturer”. Similar sentiments are expressed by Nyagura (2003) when he says, “that university academic staff possess a minimum qualification of a [master’s] degree”.

A breakdown of staff at private universities is shown in *Table 16.1*.

**Table 16.1 Staffing at private universities in Zimbabwe (2004)**

	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Catholic University	-	-	-	-	-	-
Africa University	40	74.0	14	26.0	54	100.0
Great Zimbabwe University	25	83.3	5	16.7	30	100.0
Solusi University	29	60.4	19	39.6	48	100.0
Women’s University in Africa	11	55.0	9	45.0	20	100.0

*Source:* Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, 2004.

That all universities, whether private or public, are required to hire academic staff who have at least a master’s degree, is in itself a quality control measure that will be discussed later. Suffice to note that even at Women’s University in Africa, there are more male than female staff. The same situation prevails in state universities.

## 17. Non-teaching staff

It was not possible to obtain statistics for non-teaching staff from private universities. The information gathered was from Women’s University in Africa; this information showed that, in total, there were 19 non-teaching staff, such as the Bursar, Chief Librarian, and in areas such as administration, human resources and various other academic departments. Experience by the present author indicates that, on average, there are around 50 non-teaching staff at private universities. Africa University and Solusi University, which are fairly well-established, have well over 100 non-teaching staff. It is important to note that, in

terms of structure, non-teaching staff are similar to those in state universities; for example, they include the bursar, registrar, human resource managers, and so on.

## **18. Funding**

While it was not possible to get exact figures relating to the total budget used to run private universities in Zimbabwe, information obtained related to the sources of funding. All private universities rely on fees paid by students. On average, each student pays 5 million Zimbabwe dollars (Z\$) per semester. All private universities receive financial assistance through donations from their parent denominations or organizations. For example, Solusi University receives donations from the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the USA, while Africa University receives donations from the United Methodist Church in the USA. These private universities also have student financial aid schemes for needy students. These private loans and grants are administered by students' aid committees (Chivore, 1995).

## **19. Courses offered at private universities**

The courses offered at private universities in Zimbabwe are in the following broad areas: arts and/or the humanities; theology; agronomy or agriculture; management and/or administration; education; and commerce. Sciences are offered on a limited scale; these tend to be in the environmental areas. The reason for this has to do with lack of funds as well as staff. In fact, areas such as engineering, medicine and geology, among others, are a preserve of well-established state universities such as the University of Zimbabwe and the National University of Science and Technology.

## **20. Courses offered at private teachers' colleges**

As far as courses offered at teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe are concerned, these are mainly in three categories for primary colleges. These are: teaching practice; theory of education; and main academic subject and professional studies. Professional studies include subjects taught at the primary level and the methods used.

It is crucial to note that, unlike at private universities, private teachers' colleges receive grants from the government and all the lecturing staff are civil servants. Academic and professional matters are controlled by the University of Zimbabwe under the scheme of association, as will be discussed later under quality control. The question is: How private are private teachers' colleges, given that lecturers are civil servants, and that these colleges receive grants from the government?

## **21. Facilities**

The fact that private universities offer primarily arts and humanities courses is mainly due to the shortage of funds. This shortage of funds affects facilities such as laboratories and libraries. In 2004, the Women's University in Africa operated from rented premises at the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), awaiting the construction of permanent structures. The same applied to the Great Zimbabwe University, which also operated from temporary rented premises. For both of these universities, there were no laboratories and library facilities were very limited. As a matter of fact, shortage of facilities, such as laboratories, is not confined to private universities. Newly-opened state universities such as Masvingo, Bindura, Chinhoyi and Midlands have relatively limited facilities in the form of libraries and laboratories. It is a national problem.

## **22. Quality control**

Quality control in education is a process rather than an event. That being the case, there are several stages where quality control is affected.

## **23. Entry requirements**

In both private and public universities, quality control is effected through minimum entry requirements. These are a minimum of two 'A' level passes, plus five 'O' levels, including the English language. These requirements apply to all universities, private or public. In fact, most state universities require three 'A' levels. For Africa University (Chivore, 1995: 24), it is stated:

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“For all programmes at Africa University, candidates are required to demonstrate the ability to communicate in the English language. Candidates from non-English speaking countries have facilities and staff for intensive English language proficiency and communication skills which include the ability to write.”

The Solusi Bulletin (2003:22) notes:

“The general principle for admission to Solusi University is that a student must have fulfilled the requirements for entrance to the University of Zimbabwe.”

It should be noted that, while entry requirements at private universities are the same as those that apply to state universities, the quality of passes at the ‘A’ level differs. It is common knowledge that candidates who wish to enter universities start by applying to reputable state universities such as the University of Zimbabwe and the National University of Science and Technology, among others. They apply to join private universities having failed to obtain places at state universities. The reasons for this are status, fees and the perceived quality of education, which is regarded as better at state than private universities. Private universities charge fees while state universities offer loans and grants to students.

Academic staff being required to have a minimum of a master’s degree in any discipline at private universities is another form of quality control. But, as is the case with students, academic staff would rather be employed at state than at private universities. In Zimbabwe, lecturers have been leaving the country for greener pastures. This has not only affected private universities but also public universities (*Table 23.1*).

True, the figures are from the University of Zimbabwe, which is the country’s leading university, but if it can happen at this university, the situation is bound to be worse at private universities. To illustrate, from 1998 to 2004, the vacancy rate for all academics has risen from 28 per cent in 1998 to 37 per cent in 2004. This deterioration in the staff vacancy rate is found in non-academics and is worse in medicine and engineering. To a large extent, private universities rely on academics

that come from the University of Zimbabwe. If this source is bad, the recipient cannot be good. Quality delivery of the service is bound to be affected. We noted that poor salaries affect staff (*Table 23.1*). Information from the University of Zimbabwe shows that, compared to those in the region, staff salary levels are the worst. These salaries are more or less similar to those at private universities.

**Table 23.1 Staff statistics and vacancy rates for certain categories of staff in 1998, 2002 and 2004 at the University of Zimbabwe**

Year	Description of staff category	Establishment	Strength	Vacant posts	Vacancy rate
Aug. 1998	Academics	1,174	840	334	28%
Aug. 2002	Academics	1,277	986	291	23%
Aug. 2004	Academics	1,126	706	420	37%
Aug. 1998	Senior non-academics	156	129	27	17%
Aug. 2002	Senior non-academics	148	142	6	4%
Aug. 2004	Senior non-academics	183	159	24	13%
Aug. 1998	Technical/clerical	474	349	125	26%
Aug. 2002	Technical/clerical	333	326	7	2%
Aug. 2004	Technical/clerical	333	323	10	3%
Aug. 1998	Medicine	307	155	152	50%
Aug. 2002	Medicine	315	176	139	44%
Aug. 2004	Medicine	267	118	149	56%
Aug. 1998	Engineering	98	62	36	38%
Aug. 2002	Engineering	87	82	15	15%
Aug. 2004	Engineering	78	50	28	36%

*Source:* University of Zimbabwe, 2004.

**Table 23.2 Salary scales for three universities in the region (September 2004)***A) Comparative salary scales for academic staff*

Exchange rate : Botswana Pula 1BWP = Z\$1,162

Swaziland Lilongeni 1SZL = Z\$922

Post	Botswana		Swaziland		Zimbabwe	
	University of Botswana Starting salary per month (Converted to Z\$)	University of Botswana ceiling salary per month (converted to Z\$)	University of Swaziland current starting salary (converted to Z\$)	University of Swaziland ceiling salary (converted to Z\$)	University of Zimbabwe current starting salary	University of Zimbabwe current ceiling salary
Professor	Z\$23,721,068	Z\$28,652,596	Z\$20,365,072	Z\$21,187,465	Z\$6,450,000	Z\$6,450,00
Associate Professor	Z\$22,500,960	Z\$25,833,384	Z\$18,724,901	Z\$19,958,029	Z\$4,403,200	Z\$4,403,200
Lecturer	Z\$12,338,116	Z\$21,205,338	Z\$9,876,100	Z\$14,044,906	Z3,248,000	Z\$3,522,560
Staff Dev Fellow/ Assistant Lecturer	Z\$7,069,608	Z\$11,227,631	Not provided	Not provided	Z\$1,803,549	Z\$2,074,088

## B) Comparative salary scales for other selected categories of staff

		Botswana		Swaziland		Zimbabwe	
Posts at the University of Botswana	University of Zimbabwe equivalent posts	University of Botswana Starting salary per month (Converted to Z\$)	University of Botswana ceiling salary per month (converted to Z\$)	University of Swaziland current starting salary (converted to Z\$)	University of Swaziland ceiling salary (converted to Z\$)	University of Zimbabwe current starting salary	University of Zimbabwe current ceiling salary
Vice-Chancellor	Vice-Chancellor	Z\$32,663,820	Z\$32,663,820	Not provided	Not provided	Z\$8,694,000	Z\$8,694,000 (fixed)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Pro Vice-Chancellor	Z\$30,066,750	Z\$30,066,750	Not provided	Not provided	Z\$7,389,900	Z\$7,389,900 (fixed)
Directors	Registrar, Bursar, Librarian	Z\$18,335,198	Z\$25,833,197	Not provided	Not provided	Z\$3,522,560	Z\$4,403,200
Assistant Directors/manager	Senior Assistant Registrar	Z\$12,752,950	Z\$21,205,338	Not provided	Not provided	Z\$2,536,000	Z\$2,818,0498

Source: University of Zimbabwe, 2004.

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The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe gets Z\$8,694,000 per month, while his/her equivalent at the University of Botswana gets Z\$32,663,820 per month. A professor at the University of Zimbabwe is paid Z\$6,450,000 while his/her counterpart at the University of Botswana and Swaziland is paid Z\$28,652,596 and Z\$21,187,465, respectively. It is not surprising that academics, whether they are from private or state universities, leave for other countries. Quality is bound to be affected. Mabizela (2004:1) illustrates that academics leave universities in Africa for greener pastures, and argues:

“Moreover, most African higher education systems are losing quality academics through retirement, immigration to developed countries, and migration to private enterprises. Even more troubling is their inability to replenish such losses.”

Other forms of quality control at practically all private as well as state universities in Zimbabwe include:

- staff appraisal at the end of each year by those in professional administrative positions;
- peer reviews of each others' teaching; and
- review of programmes through external assessment or examinations.

Having noted the above mechanism for quality control, there is a need to rationalize and streamline quality control. This is because the number of universities has grown and is bound to grow in the future. There is a need to have a unit within the National Council for Higher Education tasked with the overall responsibility for quality control.

### **24. Teachers' education quality control**

In Zimbabwe, all teachers' colleges are associated colleges of the University of Zimbabwe. This includes the private teachers' colleges already noted. The University of Zimbabwe, through the Department of Teacher Education, is responsible for the monitoring, evaluation and approval of infrastructure, libraries, laboratories, teaching staff, syllabi, examinations and final approval and certification of successful candidates. This scheme of association has been responsible for the

production of quality non-graduate primary and secondary teachers who have found employment in the region, beyond the region and overseas. In fact, by the time these qualified teachers leave college, they have covered first year university work such that those who proceed to do the BEd spend only two years at the university (see Chivore, 1995 for details on the scheme of association).

## **25. Research**

Research capacities of private universities in Zimbabwe are limited. The same applies to newly-established universities. Finances as well as experienced human resources are limited. A lot needs to be done before one can speak of meaningful research being carried out in private universities in Zimbabwe.

## **26. Employment prospects**

It was not possible to obtain information on employment prospects by candidates who have graduated from private universities. There are no records kept that have documented jobs obtained by candidates from private universities. Given the fact that the majority of candidates in private universities are in the arts, humanities and commercial disciplines, they face staff competition from candidates who qualify from well-established state universities. It is common knowledge that the majority of the candidates in the discipline noted above end up as – or already are – teachers.

## **27. Concluding observations**

Private tertiary education is a permanent feature of Zimbabwe's education system; it is here to stay. This is because the demand for tertiary education cannot be met by existing state institutions. The government encourages private sector participation in tertiary education. Private and public tertiary institutions complement each other. Compared to state tertiary institutions, private tertiary institutions are relatively expensive; they attract candidates (both students and lecturers) who would not have obtained places at state universities, even though they meet minimum requirements. Given the fact that private institutions

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are a permanent feature of the country's education system, and the fact that they are bound to expand, there are implications for resources: human, material and financial. As for human resources, both private and public institutions compete for resources from the same general pool. This pool is from well-established state universities, such as the University of Zimbabwe and the University of Science and Technology. With the flight of lecturing staff, other developing and developed countries of the region, this is bound to affect the quantity and quality of academics who finally find themselves at private tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe.

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