

Privatization of Higher Education in Tanzania

Kapinga Bernadetha Benjamin and Bie Dunrong

Department of Higher Education, Huazhong University of Science and Technology,
Wuhan, 430074, P.R. China

Abstract: Since 1995, when it became legally possible for private higher education to operate in Tanzania, the sector has grown to become a significant part of the country's higher education system. This study examines the problems that lead to the privatization of higher education in Tanzania. A key finding of this study is that the problems that lead to the privatization of higher education in Tanzania include: the fiscal incapacity of the state to expand higher education through public universities and inability of the public universities to respond immediately to household demand for employment-oriented courses. Private higher education is characterized by small segment of higher education yet makes important contributions in providing opportunities for many students, who would otherwise not be able to find a place at public institutions.

Key words: Higher education, public higher education, private higher education, liberalization of higher education, privatization and access to higher education

INTRODUCTION

Recently, private higher education in Tanzania has grown at a rapid rate. But it did not exist in Tanzania until the end of 1995 due to fiscal incapacity of the state to expand higher education through public universities and inability of the public universities to respond to immediately to household demand for employment oriented courses hence, the government deciding to liberalize higher education scheme and allow the establishment of private institutions thus, the privatization of higher education was introduced in Tanzania. Given the large scale of expansion of Tanzanian private higher education, 68% of students are enrolled at public university (MHEST, 2006). Private higher education in Tanzania, in general provide crucial service to the nation as the country struggles to increase access to higher education.

Therefore, there is a need for more positive and constructive relationship between private and public sectors in dealing with the challenges in their systems. Such challenges must include how best to offer education that is relevant to the society, sustainable development at the same time applicable in the world of globalization and international competitiveness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is based on secondary data obtained from Tanzania's Higher Education Institutions as well as

Tanzanian Ministry of Higher Education. The main sources of information for this study include: books and ministry of Higher Education's Website.

The analysis was carried out by critically examining the problems that lead to the privatization of higher education in Tanzania. Data presentation was carried out in statements.

Higher education in Tanzania: In Tanzania, higher education is part of a broader tertiary education sector. The Government of Tanzania defines tertiary education as all post secondary education. Higher education refers to an advanced diploma or a degree (MHEST, 2004). Institutions providing higher education in Tanzania include 8 public universities, 22 private universities and university colleges and 15 additional public Institutions of Higher Education (these include 6 professional institutes, 2 institutes of Technology, a wildlife college and a business college). All universities in Tanzania are regulated by the Tanzanian Commission of Universities (TCU). Participation rates in higher education in Tanzania are low. In 2005, 51,080 students were enrolled in higher education programmes, representing a Gross enrolment ratio of 1%. The majority of students that is to say, about 78% were enrolled on a program leading to a degree level qualification (UNESCO, 2007).

Gender equity is an important agenda. Although, women's participation in higher education in Tanzania is only 32% (UNESCO, 2007), it is rising rapidly. Prior to 1990, <10% of students in higher education were women

(MHEST, 2004). By 2001 women's participation rose to 23.7% (UNESCO, 2006) and by 2004 had reached 29% (UNESCO, 2006). Women's participation rates are higher at private universities; 37.7% of students on higher education programmes at private universities are women (MHEST, 2006). In both public and private universities, women's participation rates fall at each level of higher education, although, rates of participation for women on undergraduate, masters and Ph.D degrees remain higher at private universities than public. At public universities, 21% of master students and 18.9% of Ph.D students are women, compared to 34.6 and 30.7%, respectively at private universities (MHEST, 2006).

Public higher education in Tanzania: Public universities are large organizations offering courses in a variety of subject areas, such as: accounting, computer science, business administration, journalism and mass communication, engineering, clinical medicine, law, agriculture, teacher education, community development and social welfare. It offers Bachelor degrees, postgraduate studies ranging from award of postgraduate diploma, Master and Ph.D. Depending on the academic discipline, a bachelors degree takes between 3 and 5 years, Master between 9-36 months and a doctorate ideally 3 years after a master degree, but often it takes as long as 10 years or more for completion.

There are currently 8 public universities and 15 additional public institutions of higher education. All public higher education in Tanzania are controlled by the government through Ministry of Education and Vocation Training. The first public higher education institution in Tanzania was established in 1961, as a college of the University of London. In 1970, it became an independent national university called University of Dar-es-Salaam.

Admission to public universities is very competitive and is based on pass mark achievement on the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (ACSEE). A limited number of non-traditional students enter public universities through Mature Age Entry Examinations and through distance leaning conducted by the open university of Tanzania that operates in all 25 regions of Tanzania mainland. Public universities are also allowed to fill vacant places with qualified privately sponsored students.

Public institutions greatly depend on the government for financial support and have limited freedom and autonomy. Chief executives on such institutions and other top leaders are usually appointed by the state, with or without consultation with other stakeholders. The

dominant mode of relationship between the government and public institutions is one of state control or interference. Although, each institutions has its own regulations regarding staff appointment, evaluations, promotion and even dismissal, these regulations are modeled on government regulations on similar issues. It is therefore, all public higher institutions, though, semi autonomous are regulated and controlled by the government through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and other relevant governmental ministries.

By the end of 1995, when the state was unable to spent public funds on postsecondary education and inability of public institutions to absorb the increasing demand for higher education, Tanzania government decided to allow the establishment of private institutions thus, the privatization of higher education was introduced into Tanzania higher education.

Emergence of private higher education in Tanzania: Private higher education is one of the most dynamic and fastest growing segments of the 21st century (Altbach, 1999). There are numerous reasons for their emergence on a large scale (Varghese, 2004). 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 larger scale public subsidies to social sectors will reduce investment possibilities in the productive sectors and hence the overall growth potentials of the economy. Third, the demand for courses and subjects of study had changed and public universities were thus, unable to respond to this phenomenon. Fourth, the deterioration of public sectors that is due to severe lack of resources and population increases is not commensurate to the successful progress of the primary and secondary education. The transition from state planning to market forces was also associated with the expansion of 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.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Private institutions play an important role in Tanzania higher education by providing study opportunities for many students, who would otherwise not be able to find

a place at a public institutions, providing a nation with high quality education at all levels, a nation that produce the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills to solve the society's problems, to meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels, enhancing socio-economic development in Tanzania.

Private higher education did not exist in Tanzania until 1995, where by government granted private universities permission to operate. By 1999, >19 private universities were undergoing accreditation reviews by the higher Education Accreditation Council. There are at present 7 registered private universities and colleges, mainly offering bachelors degrees and advanced diplomas in business administration and related fields, journalism and mass communication, law, education and health sciences. Tanzania as in many developing countries, the demand for higher education beyond what public institutions provide is largely responsible for growth. Financially, fiscal incapacity of the state to expand higher education through public universities and inability of the public universities to respond immediately to household and demand for employment oriented courses, Tanzania government were actively encouraging private institutions to fill up the gap. Hence, the privatization of higher education has become an important trend in Tanzania higher education.

In particular, Tanzania, where higher education Accreditation Council was established in 1995 made provision for the establishment of private higher education institutions. Since then, enrollment in private universities has increased rapidly. For example in 2005, 11% of students in higher education were enrolled in private university (MHEST, 2006).

Privatization of higher education has taken in different forms in Tanzania

Privatization as cost sharing: Tanzania government introduced Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB) to enable students to cover on-or-off-campus accommodation costs and meals sold in university cafeterias, which they have to repay at a later stage.

Corporatization of universities: Tanzania universities have established cost units, companies or corporations at department or university levels to regulate income generated from various sources. For example, the Dar-es-Salaam University of Tanzania has created for-profit companies within the university.

In Tanzania private higher education is of different types
Not-for-profit private institutions: In Tanzania not-for-profit private institutions are owned and operated by

religious organizations such as Christian and Muslim private universities. There are about five Christian universities for example, St. Augustine University of Tanzania, Tumaini University owned by Lutheran Church and one Muslim University of Morogoro. They offer courses in theology and related areas. In addition, they also offer course in humanities, philosophy and in market friendly areas such as economics, accounting, business administration, etc. These religious private institutions in Tanzania they rely much on endowments and fees collected from the students. Majority of them are self-financing institution.

For-profit higher education institution: In this case, some private institutions in Tanzania operate and produce profit. For the most part, they are for-profit entities, seeking to earn money for the owners or stakeholders. There are about eight for-profit-private institutions in Tanzania, for example, The Hubert Kairuki Memorial University, the University of Arusha, Zanzibar University and Mount Meru University. For-profit private institutions in Tanzania rely heavily on tuition fees and other fees for operations. They do not receive fund from the government. Tuition fees range from US\$ 1,400-8,135 depending on academic program. They offer courses in business administration and related fields, journalism and mass communication, economics, accounting, law, education, health sciences etc.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the study shows that the fiscal incapacity of the state to expand higher education through public universities, the inability of public universities to respond immediately to household demand for employment-oriented courses created a conducive environment for the emergence and expansion of private higher education in Tanzania.

Recently, the private sector is a fast-expanding segment of higher education in Tanzania. In terms of institutions, they have large numbers compared to public institutions. However, in terms of enrolment, the private institutions still continue to be a small segment of higher education.

The private higher education in Tanzania can broadly be categorized into two: those operating for-profit and not-for-profit institutions. In general, the for-profit private institutions levy high fees, offer market-friendly course and create a surplus. Not-for-profit private institutions in Tanzania are owned and operated by religious institutions i.e., Christian and Muslim institutions. They offer courses

in theology and related areas. In addition, they also offer courses in humanities, philosophy and in market-friendly areas such as economics, accounting, business administration, etc.

The private higher education in Tanzania, in general provide crucial service to the nation as the country struggles to increase access to higher education. Therefore, there is a need for more positive and constructive relationship between private and public sectors in addressing challenges in their systems. Such challenges must include how best to offer education that is relevant to the needs of society, sustainable development at the same time applicable in the world of globalization and international competitiveness.

Also, the government through the education Act of 1995 need more encouraging private organizations and groups to establish private institutions and should offer to them whatever support they can provide within their levels-so as to increase the participation rates in higher education.

REFERENCES

- Altbach, P.G., 1999. Comparatives on Private Higher Education. In: Altbach, P.G. (Ed.). *Private Prometheus: Private Higher Education and Development in the 21st Century*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- MHEST, 2004. Higher and Technical Education Sub Master Plan (2003-2018). Vol. 2. Dar-es-Salaam: Dar-es-Salaam University Press.
- MHEST, 2006. Basic Statistics on Higher Education, Science and Technology. 2001/2002-2005/2006. Dar-es-Salaam: Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.
- UNESCO, 2006. Global Education Science and Technology Education Statistics Around the World. UIS: Montreal.
- UNESCO, 2007. Global Education Digest. Comparing Education Statistics around the World. UIS: Montreal.
- Varghese, N.V., 2004. Patterns in Ownership and Operation of Private Higher Education Institutions. In: Varghese, N.V. (Ed.). *Private Higher Education*. IIEP-UNESCO, Paris.