Plugging Holes in the University Systems for National Developments in the Knowledge Economy Context: *Experiences from Tanzania*

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the knowledge economy as a binding particle and a missing link for State, University, and Industries relation. It aimed at answering a question on implications of globalization and research use in policy processes on the current university-state relations. The theoretical framework guiding this discussion is on the stakeholders' theory. Its methodological philosophy is built of the interpretive paradigm using interpretive theory. As a qualitative study, it employed document analysis supported by detailed interviews, and data analysis was done through thematic, content, and discourse analysis. The discussion builds on the proposition that supporting university-based research, is considered to be an important element in the strategies to promote and sustain economic growth. Findings indicate an increasing demand for research-based information for policy purposes. Globalization forces has posed both challenges and opportunities in research use as well as university-state relations. Research skills which was traditionally housed in the universities, are now seen in non-university institutions while universities are more pulled into teaching as result of higher education massification. In both qualitative and quantitative terms research is seen to be concentrated away from universities making universities less relevant partner in policy processes. It was concluded therefore that globalization has improved information search and access mechanisms, however operational traditions and frameworks in this context is making it difficult for state-university relations. The study recommends that the university-state relation be improved need among other things to consider plugging holes in the operation frameworks.

Key words: *University, Development, Research in Tanzania, university system, Knowledge economy*

INTRODUCTION

State, universities and industries, as bodies have their presence in the society dated back to times of formal social organization and even earlier in some cases. These bodies have always operated independently with minimum or an indirectly connection between them. Evolution of Research and Development (R & D) concept into Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) practices through the Science and Technology (S&T) programs, brought an operational combination of the three institutions. This combination forms a setting that is accommodated into the Triple Helix Development Model of operation. This development model is also described as Schumpeter development model, a shortcut to leapfrog into development as opposed to conventional development model (the stage level) (Ahola,2005 and Kuznetsov & Dahlman, 2008). This is a socio-economic development phenomenon, which is building on a diminishing gap between knowledge creation, production and utilization for economic purposes. The central question is how strong is a university system as a strategic partner in socio-economic development in a country?

Literature Review

A Theoretical Underpinning

The theoretical and conceptual base of this paper is built on the decision (making) theory, and *Four Zone Strategic Engagement Model* which are discussed based on their basic principles' relevance to the study settings and their limitations.

Decision Making Theory

The Decision-making theory suggests that a body of knowledge and related analytical techniques need to be formally designed to help a decision maker choose among a set of alternatives in the light of their possible consequences. As Hansson (2005) argues, this theory further acknowledges that the criteria for choice ranking are very much influenced and need to be consistent with the decision makers' objectives and preferences. In this theory there are three scenarios in a picture in which one and only is likely to apply. These scenarios are classified as: certainty, risk, and uncertainty. Under the certainty scenario, each alternative leads to one and only one consequence and choosing is basically choosing its consequences. In a risk situation each alternative will have one among a series of consequences, and the chances of consequence occurrence are known. When the chances or probability of distribution for choices is unknown, the decision is said to be based on uncertainty and in this situation, it may be that alternatives and consequences are known but not in close correspondence to actions undertaken (Hansson, 2005). The theory gives a

collection of techniques and procedures to explore preferences and to introduce them into models of decision-making. The key concept in this theory is accurate information input in the course of decision making for effectiveness and efficiencies in the planning system. This concept therefore is considered important in the context of the study as its explanation put strong emphasis on institutionalization of a defined body that is responsible at any point in time to provide scientifically prepared information as a base for policy decision. On the other hand, the decision-making theory by implication underlines the quality of policy making process where the three scenarios are carefully mapped to allow an assessment of value related to outcomes from policy decisions (Babyegeya, 2002).

Four Zone Strategic Engagement Model
The Four Zone Strategic Engagement Model has two angle approaches that explain engagement in a global economy from the nation-state point of view. One angle is based on the participating agents, for the engagement to occur. This is an agent of change approach. The agents are grouped as nation state in one side and the institutions[1] on the other. The second angle reflects the site of action as far as engagement is concerned. This is the site of change approach. These sites of engagement are in three levels namely local, nation or global. These levels fit an explanation put forward as Glonacal concept, involving events at nation level that aims at effective engagement at global level with an understanding of the capacities and need at local levels. This setting and institutional operation levels is similar to the concept presented along the universities' activities in a *glonacal agency heuristic model* as discussed by Marginson and Rhodes (2002). This model describes forces and levels of operations that are important for institutions in terms of state, market and academic need to take into account for efficiency and effectiveness in the globalization era (Ahola, 2005; Marginson & van der Wende, 2007). In this model, with national and local levels on one end, and global site on the other as one dimension and another dimension will reflect a nation-state versus institution side. As a result of site of action for change against the agents of change, four areas engagements involving nation state and institutions within national boundaries and into the global economy are identified. These areas of engagement are numbered as 1, 2, 3 and 4 with labels intergovernmental negotiations, individual institutions as global actors; system organizations by government; and local operations of

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[1] For simplicity and consistence, institutions in this model and elsewhere in the text, more often than not, will stand to represent Universities as higher learning institutions

institutions respectively as figure 1, presents the Four Zones Strategic Engagement model: -
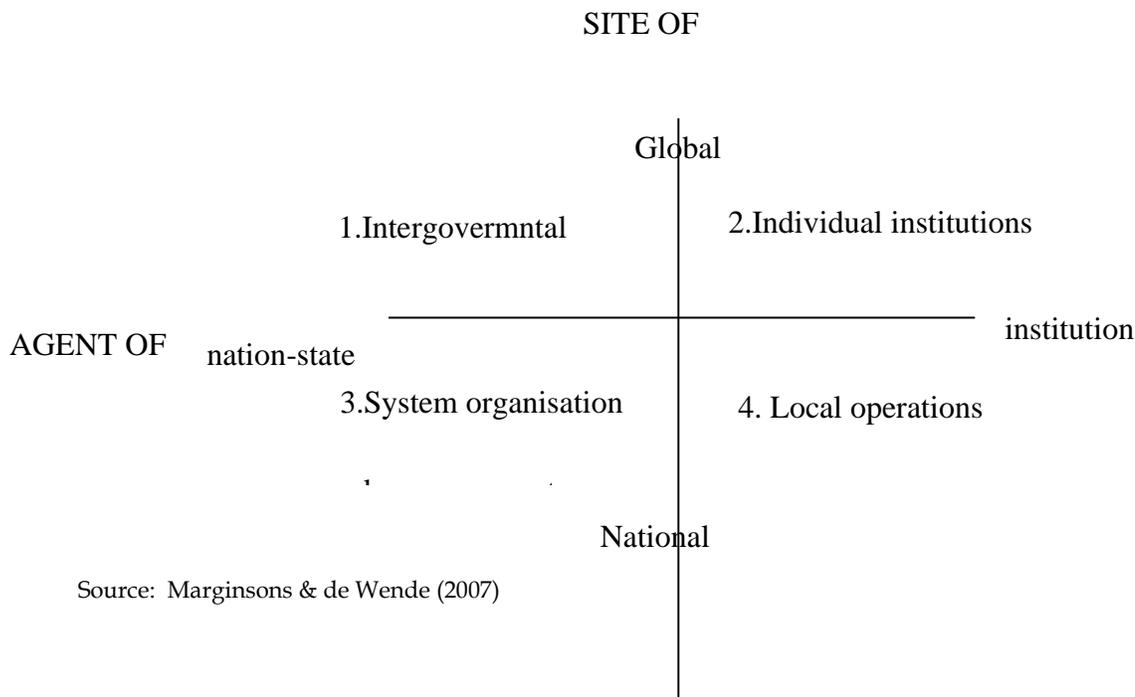
SITE OF

Global

1.Intergovermntal   2.Individual institutions

AGENT OF   institution

nation-state

3.System organisation   4. Local operations

National

Source: Marginsons & de Wende (2007)

Figure 1: Four Zones Strategic Engagement Model

Methodology

This study was stationed on the *interpretive paradigm*. The interpretive paradigm is formed by a combination of subjective view upon social realities on one hand and on the other, the regulated view upon social change. This paradigm hosts studies that have a concern to understand the world as it is, with interests on fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience (Ahrens, 2008; O'connor, 2005). Within an Interpretive paradigm, this study employed the *interpretive theory*, as research theory. The interpretive theory, as a research approach, is chosen over other theories in this paradigm, bearing in mind its position to explore and understand the phenomena based on the subject of study experiences and understanding. It is further argued that this theory is more accepting of free will and sees human behaviour as the outcome of the subjective interpretation of the environment (O'Connor, 2005; Thorne, *et. al*, 2004). This theory is appropriate in studies that are explanatory, context based and set to understand the process, and experience based as well as the possible/foreseeable theoretical outcomes (Ahrens,

2008). The interpretive theory was used to build the framework for data collection; information analysis; and/or interpretation. Methods applied for data collection in this study were mainly document content analysis supported by interviews with selected participants from Political parties, Research Communities and civil societies. Interview is particularly useful for establishing participant's experiences on themes of interests and opinion in a face-to-face (or otherwise) discussion between the respondent and a researcher. The method unearths both the factual and meaning components of the matter in this paper. Conversation as a verbal and/ oral exchange between intended participants of the study and the researcher underline the key feature of interview as a research method. Defining intervies as a method Berg (2008, p.9) has pointed out that:

"…a conversation with a purpose. Specifically, the purpose is to gather information.".

Policy documents from the government and political parties were used as another source of information, based on the content analysis. Konracki, Wellman and Amanduson (2002) have defined the content analysis as a qualitative process for systematically analyzing the existing texts, to develop objective inferences about a subject of interest. Advantages for this method includes, access to subjects that may be difficult, more or less impossible to research through direct, personal contact as the record has existed long enough to permit analyses of political phenomena over time; Raw data are usually nonreactive; The written record often provides for an increased sample size above what would be possible through either interviews or direct observation. On the other hand, time gap between text writing and analysis may imply a different context, and also that text especially state related may be classified rendering the text inaccessible to the researcher, are some of the disadvantages of using this method (O'Connor, 2005; Thorne, *et. al*, 2004). Governmental policies and political party's election manifestos in the recent years were selected for documents analysis. This selection of documents was consciously aiming at documents prepared in the last and contemporary policy episode which in the context of this study started in 1995 as discussed on the reform for globalisation as policy episode. Data analysis in this study, as qualitative approach requires, started with the data collection activities. Rabiee (2004), describes qualitative data analysis as:

> *…a continuum of analysis ranging from the mere accumulation of raw data to the interpretation …The process of data analysis begins during the data collection by skillfully facilitating rich data from interview, complementing*

them with the observation notes and typing the recorded information (Rabiee, 2004: 657).

This quote is supported by Kvale and Brinkman (2009), who argues that acts, in

data collection like, modifications of research tool in a course data of collection, review discussions following interview session with participants of the study that aims at confirming and correcting recorded sessions, are well considered part of data analysis (author's emphasis).

Findings and Discussion

These findings were organized based on the thematic, contents and discourse analysis. This analysis established four thematic areas as follows: Defining the Knowledge Economy; the concept of universities- State link/relation; the current situation on Universities and State relations; and how can the actual plugging holes to university systems be handles. The discussion in terms of subsections is arranged according to the listed order of themes.

Defining the Knowledge Economy

In the context of this article, it has been difficult to define the Knowledge Economy (KE) both within and between the participating groups. This could be attributed to the fact that KE is a new concept or that participants as actors in the policy cycle have not, at policy level, worked with the concept, signifying its absence in policy product. From Civil Society Organisation (CSOs), point of view, KE is seen as unclear concept that is not even grounded in policy mechanisms in place. One of the participants, for instance, commented that: *KE is not clear and often needs and extra conceptual translations, while a lot, is lost in translation.* There is as well a feeling that KE is extracted from the advanced training orientations which are essentially foreign, having limited connections to local/ actual needs of the society. Knowledge Economy in the context of developing countries, is called to be widened enough to include indigenous knowledge so as to promote ancient ideas in Africa and elsewhere that can be used to improve livelihood in a Knowledge Economy context. In a Tanzanian setting, Knowledge Economy is a cut and paste idea from the World Bank which evolved under the Presidency of Wolfensohn (1995 - 2005). It is featured in a knowledge society and operationalized through the lifelong learning philosophical stance. It is in this sense that the KE is seen as a foreign and borrowed idea that has not merged very well with the policy processes in Tanzanian like in other developing countries. Political parties, the ideal policy owners in the Tanzanian

setting, do not seem to have established an understanding on the KE wide enough to capture the university-state- industry linkage at least through knowledge-policy-economic productiveness translation. The concept, however, is seen to be understood by individuals within the parties, though is notably not institutionalized at party level. Policies on the other hand reflect a limited presentation on KE despite, a frequent mentioning in discussions between participants in all levels and categories. An analysis of documents from both government and political parties' sides as the main custodians of public policies (and policies to be), reflected two areas of concern in this section. One of the areas is on science and technology (S&T) while the other area is focus on economy to education link. Research and Development (R&D) has been addressed in quantitative aspects. Government documents, however, have marked the qualitative aspects of Science and Technology (S&T) which brings together higher education (universities essentially), R & D with a special focus on education and advanced technologies with innovation for economic production as the central motive. The former follows an understanding that, higher education is notably, the propeller of R&D into S&T advancement (Ahola, 2005 and Kuznetsov & Dahlman, 2008).

Political parties, on this matter, have their plans building on the mission as opposed to the vision from the government perspective. Note that, mission captures the strategies to achieve the goal while vision presents the anticipated ultimate picture as a prospective development goal in this context. Merging the S&T, R&D and higher education, political parties argue for more resource allocation for R&D and expands the S&T programs at the institutions of higher education (as centres of excellence). These strategies are coupled with efforts to promote incentives for scientific and research activities, patent licensing and copyrights registration to support inventions. The drive behind these moves is built on understanding that poverty in the southern hemisphere is largely propagated by poor science and technological developments, a sentiment shared by a number of authors (Ahola,2005 and Kuznetsov & Dahlman, 2008). Policy features in Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and as reflected in other government policy proposals has more or less similar issues across. Issues, such as allocate 1 % GDP for R& D through COSTECH and promotion Nyumbu into R & D institution, as featured in both the party policies and the government documents. This is attributed partly by the ruling experience that the party has enjoyed over time, or could be argued that the party takes advantage of government strategists who tend to cut and /or copy the government policies and paste into the party strategies. Another possibility is attributed by an overlap between party and government

systems in the Tanzanian politics, a legacy of one-party dominance. It is noted that Research and Development (R& D) evolution in the Tanzanian context had ended with S & T, falling short of Innovation parameter. The missing parameter would have implied that R & D evolved into Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) through S&T which can easily be rolled over under the Knowledge Economy principles (the contemporary globalization effected development) into knowledge for socio-economic purposes. It may be argued that until this type of evolution is affected at policy level, strategies listed under S&T namely promoting incentives for research/ scientific activities; patent licensing and copyrights registration as a support of inventions will be meaningless, unproductive and non-starter in real terms under the knowledge economy contexts. This argument is banking on an understanding that; innovation is the vehicle carrying knowledge into solving existing social problems.

Universities- State link: A Concept

The analysis on issues as presented by participants and review of policy documents in addition to the literature, has indicated a need to refresh the university (ies) positioning for social development, in the knowledge economy context. Across this analysis it was apparent that research related functioning was one specific role that makes universities peculiar institutions in contemporary development arena. Using Lord Sainsbury's words, Helen Lawton Smith, has pointed out that: -

> *Universities are the heart of our productive capacity and are powerful drivers of technological change. They are central to local and regional economic development and produce people with knowledge and skills. They are at the hub of business networks and industrial clusters of the knowledge economy*

Furthermore, there is an argument that:

> *There is a possibility of measuring the impact of universities on innovation and economic development, specifically on their local/regional economies, this is central to confirming the validity of the dominant paradigm that capitalizing on university research equals economic development (Lawton-Smith. 2005:.51).*

The statement that higher education is to knowledge economy, as primary education is to an agrarian economy and secondary education is to an industrial economy, seemed to build a concrete ground upon which the above statements to conceptual rest.

Universities and State relations: The Current Situation

Overtime the emphasis on university state relation is reflected through economic

development focus. This notion is mapped into policy, statements and strategies on developments since independence to date. It is this reflection that resulted into R & D, S & T, STI and the contemporary development into Knowledge Economy. In these settings what remains constant is the fact that university(ies)' role in creation, production and transmission of knowledge in one side and the government responsibility to support and institutionalize policies and/ or legal frameworks for the former's roles on the other (Utz, 2006; Kuznetsov & Dahlman, 2008). It is noted that, creation, production and transmission of knowledge is the role, with time, not resting solely on the universities and research institutions only as it was initially conceptualized in this article. These roles have gone beyond the university campuses into the CSOs, other government agencies, corporate institutions and private consultant firms at least from the angle of creation and production of knowledge. It is argued that higher education will no longer have monopoly on the transmission of knowledge which will become increasingly diversified with higher education being only one of many organizations competing for education/ training market. This argument, from Chachage (2009), however, is challenged by other scholars (to whom the author of this paper subscribes) who argue that the center pin for knowledge production will remain under the control of universities, for some time to come. The emphasis is seen as well from the arguments such as: - "… the universities are unique amongst human institutions in the range of knowledge they encompass" (Boulton &Lucas, 2008: 11). This is an extension of a position established in Godin and Gingrass, 2000: 277, that:

> *Using the concept of the presence, that is, the participation of a sector to the total number of scientific papers published in a given country, we have shown that despite a real diversification of loci of production, the presence of universities to the production of scientific research does not diminish in time. This is explained essentially by the fact that these new actors in the system of scientific production produce a large proportion of their papers in collaboration with universities.*

This is an emphasis that university remains more than ever at the heart of knowledge production. This situation is likely to remain so, for some time to come. Success stories from Asian tigers and the World Bank promoted Korea-Ghana development comparative case, as well as recent development into knowledge economies are seen to emphasize on the central role played by the universities for the positive socio-economic development. It has been pointed out that universities as tertiary level of schooling in the Knowledge Economy context have the following roles:

- Training qualified and adaptable labour force;
- Generate new knowledge; and

- Providing capacity to access existing stores of global knowledge for local adoption.

The later point on reaching the global store of knowledge, matches with the operational description of FSEZ under the influence of global as site of change and institution as an agent of change. The label for this zone goes in the name of *individual institution as global actor* (re: figure 1). As the label depicts universities have an advantage of accessing knowledge developments across the group as academic borders are elastic and porous in favour of knowledge as information flow. This scenario leaves universities as knowledge tentacles or receivers into the national borders, taking advantages of the academic and scholarly development, in ideal terms. Realistically, however, university-state relations in a Tanzanian setting are influenced by the operating legal frameworks which were built on the University of Dar es Salaam Act of 1970 and its preceding Acts. The framework has been affected by acts for establishing other individual universities, the education acts of 1978, 1995 and 1998 and the recent Universities Act of 2005 which replaced the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) and individual universities acts by the Tanzania Commission of Universities (TCU) and university charters respectively. These policy changes, among other things, have moved the government grip into university management in one hand, and an exponential enrollment growth at these universities, on the other (URT, 2005).

The grip of power from the government is reflected on the influences that TCU and the Minister have to a day-to-day operation of the university activities, in the name of quality control. TCU reaches the university classes to control contents taught, through the curricula audit mechanism, in addition to taking part in appointing the chairperson of respective councils as governing boards. The commission advises the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, through the Minister responsible for education (higher education), as the case is for public universities, on these appointments. The process, prior to introduction of the university act in 2005, used to involve the President who appointed the Vice Chancellor and then through him/her other members of the university management team. The recent legal framework for higher education, places the universities' operations as subjects to a range of government agencies which include though not limited to the ministry responsible for education (esp. higher education) for its *political* recognition; Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) for *accreditation* (.i.e. academic recognition); Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) for *regulations* related to research; Higher Education Students Loan Board (HESLB) for the admitted students

scholarship /financing; Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA) and Treasure (for public universities) are also important factors for the universities to operate smoothly (.i.e. financing operational costs). This setting leaves universities torn between operational principles and priorities. The priorities in higher education, as a sub-sector, were overpowered by an enrollment growth which has resulted into pushing away research and consultancies in favour of an overburdened teaching component. This phenomenon (overburdened teaching) has left universities which are essentially home to think tanks, out of knowledge creation roles, virtually invisible in policy cycles. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are notably more visible in policy processes than universities, while CSOs believe that universities stand a better chance to be taken seriously. Another concern in a policy cycle with respect to universities is that their information banks are not accessible to the public and when accessed the information is packaged based on academic traditions which are not necessarily policy friendly. Commissioned studies and consultancies have remained as the main venue of extracting knowledge for policy purpose from universities. The concern is however on the impact of financiers on Term of References (ToR) for the given assignments which are more likely to be tilted towards (designed and formulated to fit) financiers' interests, which are more often than not, influenced by the politics of the day.

In this line, political parties are notably looking into campuses for new recruits targeting critical minds – university students and academic members of staff. This makes universities, subjects of the political pressure, as partisan networks are seen to be built in campuses, over and above the scholarships and academic networks. According to the practice, the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), had established universities as a special zone carrying a regional level representation in party decision organs. The zone is included in women parliamentary special seats allocation into the National Assembly, a motivation enough to pull members into the network. Membership and party support are also linked to appointments into different positions both within universities and beyond. Scholars have mentioned likelihood of partisanship, and its possibility of influencing directions in scholarships. In this line, two research works were cited, as reference (by participants of the preliminary survey) among several, as possible impact of partisan elements on scholars, one involved REDET opinion polls on the state of political parties, which suggested that rural Tanzania had remained a stronghold of the ruling CCM while urban areas are for opposition parties. The findings were argued to be against the reality of 2000-2005 parliamentary representations, which reflected the opposite, as

most of opposition MPs were representing the rural constituents. The second example was a commission study done by the Ministry of Labour and Youth Development conducted by a team from the by then Economic Research Bureau (ERB) of the University of Dar es Salaam, which proposed for a minimum monthly wage, lower than the current (by that time). Most of economic parameters at that time proposed for different direction of the scale, actual living costs, US$ - TZS exchange rates and gasoline prices suggested that minimum wage was far below the living wage. Understanding the scholarly authorities that named research teams commanded, there is an argument that partisan orientation could be part of influences towards study conclusion. This is mentioned to be the common trend in a range of commissioned studies and consultancies

Plugging Holes to University Systems: Strategies and ways forward
In this line, issues were consolidated into arguments as a way forward to ensure that universities are better and well positioned in supporting national development. These arguments were packaged as strategies and discussed as follows:

Increased Allocation of Resources
Lack of resources to implement the vision and mission of the university, mainly financial resources is, notably, listed high in the agenda hence calling for an attention. Research line in a mission statement was arguably viewed as the link that spills over into improving teaching and consultancy services. Limited allocation of finances, accounts for, among other things, a poor pooling of knowledge banks from which the policy cycles could be benefiting by siphoning research based information. There was an argument that with more resources for research, consultancies services a likely to have better and updated information that can easily be tailored to fit the policy matter in question. In addition, vigorous research equips instructors (who are essentially researchers) with state-of-the-art knowledge on a range of matters in the subject areas. An increase of financial resources, for research purposes in universities, pioneered by the government, is important to ensure, an academic freedom on information processing. This thinking is in line with Boulton and Lucas (2008, p.12)'s assertion that:

> *…autonomous academics have the freedom and duty, liberally to contribute their understanding to the benefit of the society.*

The national research policy, presents the nature of limited resource allocation by citing funding levels. As an example, in 2003/4 fiscal year, research had an allocation

of 0.012% of GDP against 1% proposed in SADC protocol. This level is about 1% of the required allocation. Commitments of the government towards, an increased research funding as right starting point if universities are to stand tall in research activities and eventually build capacities for policy processes (URT, 2011). As much as participants agreed on increased resource allocation in both qualitative and quantitative terms, there is a call as well on a mechanism in place to ensure that universities are held to account for the resources through outputs. Outputs were mentioned to include though not limiting itself to research reports, books, models and articles, especially in indexed journal for comparative league purposes.

Commercialization of research activities in the universities system
This strategy was mentioned as a financial support mechanism built on the Research and Development programs in a tripartite arrangement involving Universities as research institutions, State as policy steering and industry as knowledge application venues for enhancing profit in financial terms. Engagement of industry in research programs is aiming at taming research knowledge into commercial production, a motive for industry to pour finances into research and hence development contribution into universities. This phenomenon has at a global level, opened a possibility to advance into research universities, entrepreneurial and corporate universities depending on the engagement intensity between industries and universities. This case builds on the knowledge triangle that emerges between education, research and industry which create a solid connect between knowledge generation, its utilization and its transformation into economic growth via production of knowledge intensive goods and services.

This is notably seen to have advanced from socio-economic development in knowledge management/ creation, among other things, coupled with limited financial resources allocation from the central government, hence a starting point in commercialization of research activities in a university system. This is seen as an important point of entry in two counts; one is that commercial activities in liberal economies are contributing highly to nation state revenues; therefore, directing research activities towards them will mean improving the profit margin and more revenue contribution through tax and other related benefits. The second count is based on re-orienting the university system into problem solving sort of knowledge creation as opposed to abstract thinking and research for the sake of it, as the case seemed under the basic research. Research from this count need to be directed towards finding solutions for actual and existing social problems in the society, in addition to charting ways forward, and this is the essence of education.

Mainstreaming of State Development agenda into Research and Training Programs

Another issue discussed, was on the merging of state development priorities to universities research and training arrangement. This arrangement requires the universities to mainstream national and international development strategies in training, teaching and in their consultancy targets. Achieving this will mean that research conducted in the universities will remain meaningful, in real space and time, to the government development activities (hence in a policy agenda) as much as it is for the universities themselves. It is assumed that issues raised from these researches will be used to support activities in development strategies at the same time give a practical insight of the academia group involved in the policy realities. In so doing policy makers and academia (i.e. researchers and students) will be brought closer, bridging the gap that had always existed between the theoretical knowledge provision in our training institutions and the reality which is the post training practical experiences, in the real world. In this case the gap so bridged may as well serve a harmonizing role between the policy and political thinking and academia thinking on developmental issues.

With interest on university-state link on policy matters, it was pointed out that, merging of the university mission-based programs with state policy priorities is key to improved relations between the two. This call was synthesized into relevance of universities programs coupled with intentions to effectively and efficiently use of resources, mainly financial and time, in policy processes. It is argued that research, consultancies be directed towards the state policy priorities to attract, into universities, the available resources allocated for policy processes. Time, allocated on information search given the policy prescription to include situations analysis and wider consultation, is bound to be significantly reduced on a long run, given the available information package, from the university activities as a result of the overlap, and opposed to parallel designed communication studies.

Building Capacities within University Systems

Discussions on this area were concentrated into two aspects of the strategy which at one point in time were seen to use interchangeably. One aspect was seen to reflect the quantitative human resource matters in the university systems. This aspect was built on an understanding that universities are understaffed in terms of teaching personnel as well as the supporting staff. In this line the capacity building strategy is directed toward ensuring that more staff are trained as a supply into universities coupled with training lower cadre staff to the highest as a long term approach to minimize the

gap that is to be created as a result of the aging position of professors in the Tanzanian higher education against the exponentially growing enrollment. In qualitative terms as second aspects of this strategy, there are two levels of arguments. One level is on professional capacity building that ensures that skills and knowledge relevant to the policy processes. This level had interest on ensuring the compatibility between the knowledge acquired in classes with the actual knowledge demanded in policy processes. It aimed at building a broader and relevant knowledge base with a focus on issues and scholarly leaves on policy issues borrowed elsewhere, decontextualized.

The second level touches the detailed understanding of the policy processes, in terms of dynamics and events in the policy cycles to allow an effective and efficient engagement in the cycle. It was evident from the discussion that universities are almost unaware of the events in policy processes. The phenomenon provides for lost opportunities in policy cycles hence a limited influence of the universities into the policy. Packaging of research information, notably, aligned in academic principles which are not necessarily fitting into policy cycles. Academic journal articles, research report and/ or books, are more often than not too bulk for policy purpose with targeted audience skewed towards the academic communities. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the Tanzanian contexts are notably visible in the policy processes partly because of the policy/ events knowledge available within themselves and its repackaging of the available knowledge into policy friendly, unbundled products such as policy briefs and position papers. This is as well attributed to an understanding of policy dynamics and events leading to establishing matching events for increased policy impact tailored in terms of lobbying and advocacy among others.

Consolidate Reward/ Remunerations System Across
Notably, in addition, to limited supply of human resources in higher education and universities in particular, there is a concern on brain drain. The brain drain impact on higher education as a sub-sector, is higher than in other sub-sectors in education and even higher when compared with other sectors. Fueling factors on this matter is a move toward better remuneration packages and rewards in line with the skills in possession. This sentiment was on the peak 1980s toward the 1990s. It led to professors and other staff flight to Europe and America. Tanzania experienced as well a movement of these skilled personnel toward the Southern African countries mainly Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This

phenomenon, seemingly, has gone down to a significant level and somewhat reversing as staff are coming back to work at universities in Tanzania. One of the explanations on this reversal is the improved remuneration scheme. Universities, however, have experienced an internal movement of its staff in what is termed as a carrier switch within the national borders. This movement, is termed as *internal-brain-drain. As* discussions suggest, the phenomenon is propelled by rewarding systems and recognition, to some extent. It is seen that rewards and recognitions are more concentrated in political carriers regardless of the skills in possession. There is a mention, as well, of other better remunerated institutions within the national borders such as Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) and Bank of Tanzania (BOT)- the central bank, where university graduates, end up being paid better than their professors. These institutions are more or less skill specific hence leaving the free carrier switch inclined towards political carrier. Financial rewards and social recognition given to politicians is increasingly motivating professionals towards active politics and academicians are not an exception.

Across the discussions, it is arguably, mentioned that improvement of remunerations packages, under a consolidated system where competence, qualification and responsibilities are key factors of classifications. An emphasis on competence based is set to encourage advanced training, hence more of a push towards academia. A glance on developed countries on this matter, suggested a negligible movement of academicians into political carrier, with an exception to profession linked/ profession specific. The assumption is that remuneration and recognition in that part of the world is first of all linked to competence/ qualifications and responsibilities and secondly the packages between academia and politicians are a world apart, in favour of the academia membership, hence encouraging academicians to stay/ maintain practicing their profession over time.

Promote non-Partisan Academicians' Forums
*A*cademic scholars have social responsibilities to serve societies in which they are part of, there is a call to institutionalize academic forums as part of this obligation. These forums, as a matter of fact need to rise above the partisan networks that are emerging within the university campus. In these forums it is expected that society-based topical issues are researched (studied), addressed and discussed to broaden and share an understanding of matters in question. The discussions on scientifically established issues (with the society in the mind) need to be taken seriously. This should involve a wider public as opposed to limiting itself to the academics. It is

argued that knowledge created in the academic forum, be pooled for future society use. Access to the pool as a knowledge bank, should be improved from the current level and open to any social group, as policy stakeholders. The case cannot be overemphasized for political parties and policy advocacy groups, so as to build an assurance for quality policy products (i.e. manifestos, strategies and policy directions) through the scientifically informed decision making, prior to public consumption). To ensure objective academic forums, it was cautioned that political party networks and politically motivated activities/ links, if they are embraced enough to swing academic opinion, be prohibited in campuses to minimize the influence of political forces on matters of national interests. Academic principles, ethics and moral values, as opposed to partisanism, be promoted to allow scholars to live the philosophies they preach. A repeated mentioning of *cheche za fikra* (loosely translated as sparks of ideas) times at the University of Dar es Salaam, the only university in Tanzania at that time, displayed a possibility of establishing a vibrant, politically active academic, without necessarily being partisan. Mkude. *et. al.,* 2003, p. 3 pointed out that:

> *During this period the campus was immersed in one of the most vigorous debates that have taken place in Tanzania in the wake of the Arusha Declaration and the Mwongozo Guidelines.*

The period referred to in this quote is between 1967 to 1975, and the debates said to be initiated by students through their *Cheche* Journal, as their mouthpiece.

Sectorize Universities
Connected to a call to build academic forums, there was a frequent mention of a need to bring professionals in different areas, including education, to one umbrella national link. This idea had interests in gathering the best minds at one focal point. A close analysis of issues in this line reflected a concern to re-organise our universities into sectoral specialization based on the existing potentials and comparative advantages across higher education as a sub-sector. This is a call to qualitatively expand higher education with possibilities to establish more universities along the professional lines while merging some of the unnecessarily duplicated cases. This meant that instead of having one discipline spread across, universities be amalgamated to form stronger academic unit, where best minds in the given discipline are concentrated. Higher education reforms in Rwanda, South Africa, the Netherlands, and Denmark and even in China are seen to have taken the merging approach for universities and/or institutions of higher education around the fields of study and professional lines. The quality control measures, in addition to

concentrating resources for efficient and effective higher education systems is cited as a justification behind the merger. From the mergers (or amalgamated), the best minds through the academic forums are expected to join forces in raising issues of interest to both academic and societal needs, in the discipline perspectives, establish facts and propose ways forward. This is seen as a challenging setting to academicians as units are expected to come up with state-of-the-art knowledge on a matter in question and contextualize (or decontextualize, as the case may be) for specific development purposes.

Issues and Position of Universities in the Tanzanian Education System

This reflection touches on the effect of globalization and research use in Tanzanian education policy processes. It is aiming at putting universities in knowledge economy contexts. In so doing it has left some issues that worth a reflection. These issues aim at displaying a critical picture that position university (ies) in education systems, in qualitative terms: -

Philosophical ground in education- Tanzania is known for its Education for Self-Reliance (ESR). The philosophy emerged as part of the 1967 Arusha Declaration. The country required a reformed education system where relevance and societal needs were taken as central focus in the knowledge transfer system. Level of technological development at inception time of this philosophy and some years later, made primary education as a focus of ESR implementation. Roll out of this philosophy as a policy issue, brought in Universal Primary Education (UPE) success of which put Tanzania in a global map, in late 1970s. There are arguments that reforms in education policies under ESAPs after 1980s economic crisis, aimed at disrupting the education system. This follows an assertion that, *education repackaging replaced UPE by EFA,* regardless of the former success records. EFA packaging was external to implementers and in a one-size-fits-all format, and above all it was supported by logics against which UPE was destroyed. There is a list of unanswered questions in this repackaging, some are; Without EFA what was in store for Tanzanian education strategies? What are the reminiscences of UPE / ESR in recent education reforms? Why limiting EFA to lower level of schooling? Linked to ESAPs is an *evolution of universities*, which was halted by government cut on social service spending, including education. With decreased funding, universities failed to maintain their mission-based functioning, especially on research and advanced training. It is about this time when the World Bank, in addition to shifting, education funding to primary schooling levels, it declared university education a luxury and unnecessarily for

public development. This declaration, according to Brock-Utne (2000), went to as far as suggesting a closure of African universities. This called for training abroad (mainly in Europe and America) at the financially at cheaper cost than at the national universities. Seemingly the proposal aimed at developing countries, East Asian countries were seen to reject the idea. East Asian focused on investing heavily on higher education, resulting into Asian Tigers, leapfrog into development as Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa remained to struggle. East Asian Countries seem to have learnt the lesson that universities are the engines of economic development. When higher education became a policy agenda, in Tanzania, knowledge creation as a specific role to universities, was not re-instated. Reforms in higher education focused mainly on, enrollment expansion hence, a teaching aspect of universities over research and consultancies. Guiding policy documents have shown no interest on research as a central function of universities, rather as an extension of training program. The higher education policy has categorically stated that: -

> *...long term training and research objectives shall consist of expanding student enrollment in institutions of higher education five folds by year 2005 and expanding intake of science and technology student to achieve the target of 600   scientist and engineers per 1 million by year 2005.*

Across the globe, universities are measured against research out puts, with research students, research staff and research grants being among the critical indicators for ranking purposes. A recent trend has recorded increased admission of doctoral and post-doctoral students in addition to growing number of research staff. These numbers matter as they involve the knowledge category as opposed to knowledge transfer (teaching and training) for undergraduate students. Tanzanian universities are seen to be inclined towards, coursework and dissertation programs to as high level as doctorate, against the traditional thesis based. The post-doctoral element of research training is not seen across universities, not mentioned in discussions with participants and was not even seen in policy documents within the national settings. Notably, national higher education policy, has emphasized on the collaboration between local and foreign institutions of research and higher education. The emphasis is clear that in all cases, interests of the local institution shall be safeguarded. Strategies and mechanisms in line with this can be represented by the Four Strategic Engagement Zones as displayed in figure 1. A closer look on collaborations, however, reflects limited positive associations between local institutions as opposed to foreign institutions. There are feelings that institutions are even operating against others, or even discrediting other institutions regardless the

operational and legal frameworks governing them. A range of cases were referred. Another area of interest to reflect on is absence of universities as analytical institutions in policy guidelines. There is a limited mentioning of universities as internal strategic tool and source of understanding for informed decision making, not even in the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, Universities Act of 2005 and, astonishingly, in the recently released National Research and Development policy (URT, 2010) the case is the same. In most cases, the reference is on making, a training tool for manpower sharpening, implying that universities role is left on shaping individuals through their teaching line activities.

Conclusion

It can therefore be concluded that globalization has improved information search, access and use mechanisms. However operational traditions and frameworks in this context is making it difficult for state-university relations to be strengthened. Plugging of holes in the university system, aims at improving institutionalized relation between universities as research institutions and the state on the other. In a knowledge economy context, universities are considered key strategic partners for a meaningful development. It is a role of the government to establish and guide operations of universities as knowledge creation institutions. No country has successfully crossed the significant development line in the contemporary world without having universities as strategic partners. For this purpose, it is fair to argue that plugging holes in the university system is in the interest of government and need to done by the government itself. This is in line with what Sanyal and Varghese (2007) pointed out that:

> *Supporting research, in particular university-based research, is considered to be an important element in the strategies to promote and sustain economic growth.... Furthermore, basic research was considered to be of critical importance for development and is to be supported by public money (Sanyal & Varghese, 2007:9)*

It is therefore recommended that the university-state relation to be improved there is a need, among other things, to consider two areas of action. One is an increased resource allocation to support knowledge creation and related activities. Two, a review of policies and operational frameworks in all areas where holes plugging initiatives will be focusing. The latter is important to arrest crosscutting issues that interfere with knowledge creation phenomenon in universities and limiting efficiencies while resources lasts.

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