

**PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION AND THE QUALITY OF  
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Judith Rabwoni, declare that this is my original work and that it has never been submitted to any University for an award.

This work was carried out and completed at Makerere University.

Signature.....

Date.....

## APPROVAL

This dissertation has been accomplished under the supervision of the undersigned and has met all the research requirements needed by Makerere University and is ready for examination.

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## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this thesis to NORAD who has provided financial support during the Masters Program. May the Almighty God enable the NORAD program to continue helping the financially disadvantaged individuals like me. I again would wish to dedicate this work to my late father Fred Rabwoni Amooti and Mum Annah Rabwoni Abooki, and my brother Isa Isagara who since my childhood gave me the idea of never giving up.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of the private sector participation on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University. This study was instigated by the presence of the private sector participation in Makerere University and the claims by the media about the continued fall of students' grades and quality of graduates in Makerere University. Today majority of the governments in developing countries are under great pressure to restrain public spending on higher education. The structural adjustment programs favored by the International Monitoring Fund (IMF) and World Bank emphasize reduction in public expenditure, largely because of budget deficits and external debts. It was this state of affairs that prompted many countries to search for alternative sources other than the public treasury. It is against this background that the private sector has been seen emerging in running of the public universities.

The study used a qualitative approach and specifically employed an exploratory design. The study's objectives were to examine the influence of private sector participation in Makerere as a public University on (1) planning, (2) curriculum development, (3) and financing. It was carried out by administering interviews to purposively selected administrators, who included Personnel from the Department of Planning and Development, the Chief Executive Director of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum, and the Faculty Deans, and Heads of Department from the selected Faculties.

The influence of the private sector participation on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University was discovered to have improved the quality of academic programs in the University. The local industry was discovered to have not been actively involved much of the support to Makerere University is from the foreign bodies. To encourage the private sector to fully participate in the university affair, much more effort is needed by the university to persuade the private sector and clear policies should be put in place to guide both parties. Participation should be clearly spelt out through harmonization of university policies which would eventually change the attitude towards the practice. Generally, more studies in private sector participation in public university education are vital.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

This chapter provides background information on private sector participation and quality of academic programs in Makerere University. It entails a definition of the major concepts of the study, particularly the terms of private sector and quality. In addition, it entails the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, its objectives, the research questions that arise, and finally the scope and significance of the study. This background has been structured into four perspectives, namely; the historical perspective, the theoretical, conceptual and contextual perspective.

#### **1.1.1 The Historical Perspective**

In much of pre-colonial Africa, University education was considered a public good and therefore was exclusively provided for by the Government. Today majority of the governments in developing countries are under great pressure to restrain public spending on higher education. “The structural adjustment programs favored by the IMF and World Bank emphasize reduction in public expenditure, largely because of budget deficits and external debts. This state of affairs has prompted many countries to search for alternative sources in the provision of Higher Education other than the public treasury” (Kishore, 2008). At the time of Independence, Uganda inherited and continued with this colonial approach to university education. Karen (2008) argues that the students then acquired quality education that was facilitated by the suitable learning environment, well trained and committed personnel, sufficient learning materials, reasonable student teacher ratio and general stability in the country. For decades, Makerere University which was the only university in Uganda enrolled fewer than three thousand students, all

on full government scholarships. This trend changed in 1992 when for the first time government liberalized the education system thereby making a major shift from the decade's old colonial approach. Ten times the usual number of students was admitted, with only a small percentage being government sponsored. The bulk of students paid their own fees and this provided the University with much needed funds (Musisi, 2002). Coinciding with this increased enrolment was the transformation in the financial relationship between public universities and the state; leading the former to raising larger shares of revenue from the private sources as state support lost pace with the increased enrolment and rising costs (Owuma, 2003). The implementation of academic programs before then was hampered by financial constraints, out dated curricular, institutional inability to recruit and retain qualified staff, lack of adequate instruction materials and adequate physical facilities (National Council for Higher Education, 2006). The foregoing affected the quality of academic programs being offered in the university and has led to the emergence of the private sector's participation in public higher education. Kasozi (2009) argues that the public university system in Uganda may not be able to serve the public good for a long time to come, because it is in a state of a financial crisis, which is gradually making it unable to provide the quality education it, was established to deliver and which is necessary for the country's development.

Never the less, in a bid to safeguard the public good and to secure the future of higher education, public universities have embarked on partnerships with the private sector. The collaboration of the two bodies has seen the thriving of the academic world. The private sector has been involved in the management and planning of public university education in all aspects, and this situation has facilitated the public private interface. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (1999), private sector refers to the stakeholders in higher education provision and

consumption. They are persons or organizations that have investments in the content of a program, or in the dissemination and evaluation of a program.

Private sector include funders (both the donor community and the local industry) and administrators of programs, staff, program participants, and the wider community that benefit from university education. Over the last several years the interpretation of stakeholder involvement has changed as programs have focused not just on individual institutions, but the broader communities and the society. In respect to the fore going argument Makerere University has established a linkage with the community through the Makerere University Private Sector Forum. Makerere University Private Sector Forum (MUPSF) is a deliberate strategy and a centered means for the stakeholders' collaboration in addressing the Private Sector needs. MUPSF was approved by the University Council on 5th April 2006 at its 105th sitting, after endorsement by Senate at its 124th session. It has been mandated to spearhead the development and coordination of the imperative partnership between Makerere University and the private sector for the promotion and enhancement of competitiveness, fast transfer of technology through joint research and development projects.

The private sector being one of the engines of growth for Uganda's economy and a beneficiary of the University products has not been at the forefront to influence the policy agenda and practice in higher educational institutions with respect to market dynamics. (MUPS F, 2006) The Forum is a regarded as a new vehicle for promoting value addition to the University products in addressing the Private Sector needs. It is a central 'hub' for practical support and information dissemination, encourages and facilitates the University Departments by linking them up with

the Private Sector in socio-economic development, initiate demand driven joint research and practice to influence development policy and curriculum review, technology innovations and projects at national and regional levels.

Some scholars however express their distrust in the idea of involving the private sector in the provision of public university education in relation to the issue of quality of education being offered. Ssesanga (2004) articulates that in most tertiary institutions in Uganda there is a shift, whereby a political ideology that legitimizes a conception of education which emphasizes the development of the whole person is being replaced by a political ideology sustaining conception of education that emphasizes its economic role. He further adds that market orientation reforms in higher education in Uganda serve the business and industrial purpose at the expense of educational goals and purpose. Hence for university's efficiency and effectiveness to serve the development needs of the society, it has to continuously be checked and monitored in its operations by all the beneficiaries and the government to safe guard against diversion from its mission and vision.

### **1.1.2 The Theoretical Perspective**

This study views quality of academic programs as the most urgent concern in relation to the private sector's participation and hence invokes the Equity Theory. This theory proposes that individuals/organizations who perceive themselves as either under-rewarded or over-rewarded will experience distress. And that this distress leads to efforts to restore equity within the relationship. It focuses on determining whether the distribution of resources is fair to both relational partners in this case the University and the private sector. Equity is measured by

comparing the ratios of contributions and benefits of each person within the relationship (Wikipedia, 2009). Partners do not have to receive equal benefits or make equal contributions, as long as the ratio between these benefits and contributions is equal. To this study this theory implies that if the private sector provides support to public universities so as to meet the required quality, based on the existing terms and conditions agreed upon, the public university has in turn an output proper to the nature of the input. In this case, there is equal contribution of resources and sharing of benefits between public universities and the private sector. The product of the public university is not produced for the sake, but to fit the market force, for example the graduates being job creators and not job seekers, being practical and critical in the approaches, being enterprising, and so forth. In this case, the focal point of this inquiry is to study the nature of private sector participation in public universities and its influence on the quality of academic programs. Hence the major question: Does the private sector involvement and participation in public universities affect the quality of academic programs?

### **1.1.3 The Conceptual Perspective**

This study defines the private sector as (all) other partners in the provision of university education including the local industry, foundation bodies, the civil society organizations, NGOs, foreign organizations that give support to the university and all other stake-holders in the university excluding students, parents and the government. This study viewed participation as the independent variable. Participation according to Howard (1962) is the action or state of taking part with others. This study defined participation as the ability of the private sector to get involved in the provision of public university education through financial contributions to the university, provision of infrastructure, partnerships, decision making, planning and plan implementation and monitoring, budget and financial management, personnel management, academic management, curriculum development, research and publications to

mention but a few. The term nature as used in this study implies the level and mode i.e. (the level/mode of the private sector participation). This study conceptualized participation as private sector involvement in planning, curriculum development and financing in Makerere University. Private sector participation may influence the quality of academic programs. Proper planning including all the stake-holders may lead to achievement of university educational goals and benefit the society and yet, it may fail to achieve its purpose if it is of a poor quality. Collective efforts on curriculum development by all the stakeholders in university may promote relevance and quality of the courses being offered to the public, since the consumers of the university products are involved in the production process. Financing on the other hand may also influence the quality of academic programs, depending on the available resources.

In this study the dependent variable is quality. Rapid growth in enrollments amidst declining budgets during the 1980s and 1990s, the proliferation of private provision of higher education and pressure from a rapidly transforming labor market have combined to raise new concerns about quality. Countries are becoming conscious of the need for effective quality assurance and quality improvement (Materu, 2004). According to UNESCO Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional, multi-level, and dynamic concept that relates to the contextual settings of an educational model, to the institutional mission and objectives, as well as to specific standards within a given system, institution, programme, or discipline. Quality in higher education is a multidimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities. Quality is reflected both in the instructive processes and their output. For purposes of this study, quality of academic programs should be reflected in teaching methods, the relevance of the programs being offered to students, the relevance of research being done in the university, and products and services which should satisfy or comply consistently, with the requirements and expectations of

society and the private sector. According to Kaplanis (1994) quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a procedure or service or an item that bears on it the ability to satisfy stated or implied expectations. According to Kasozi (2009) quality in higher education is the highest level of intended of out-put.

#### **1.1.4 Contextual perspective**

The study took place in Makerere University the first and largest of the public universities in Uganda. The private sector is one of the engines of growth for Uganda's economy, one of the largest employer of graduates, and the potential client of innovations. For a long time the private sector has been detached from the university and thus this new era has seen its emergence in higher education as an educational and development partner (Makerere Private Sector Forum 2006). With the government's continued withdrawal from public university education, there has been a need for the private sector to actively participate in public university education so as to produce relevant products and services that may suit the community. Hence this study aimed at finding out the nature of the private sector participation in public universities and its influence on the quality of academic programs being a new member from a different field of operation which aims at profit making.

#### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

University education is globally regarded as the backbone of any economy (UNESCO, 2003). It is one of the means to developing the human resource of a country, provision of person power and generation of new knowledge. Thus its contribution to national development needs not to be over emphasized. In order for the university to adequately serve the national needs, it requires to

have quality academic programs, which are well planned, designed financed by all the stakeholders. However the National Council for Higher Education (2006) reports that the implementation of academic programs has been hampered by institutional inability to recruit and retain qualified staff, out dated curricular, lack of adequate instruction materials, adequate physical facilities and financial constraints, which was a result of the structural adjustment program favored by IMF that discouraged public expenditure because of budget deficits and external debts. This implies that public universities have to involve the private sector and all the stakeholders in the provision of public education if they are to meet the educational needs of the society (Akilagpa, 2002). The private sector is apparently one of the partners which universities can depend on. Never the less, one doubts the future of university education as an academic endeavor to build knowledge and expertise, if it continues to be influenced by the private sector whose participation may actually be for selfish interests. Such a scenario may threaten the quality of academic programs in terms of compromising both the quality of the instructive processes and the output which may negatively impact on the contribution of university education towards national development; thus the need to investigate the nature and influence of the private sector participation on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University.

### **1.3 Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of the private sector participation and its influence on the quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University.

### **1.4 Objectives**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- 1) To examine the nature of the private sector's participation in planning for public university and its influence on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University.
- 2) To assess the influence of the private sector's participation in curriculum development on the quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University.
- 3) To find out the influence of the private sector participation in financing on the quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University.

### **1.5 Research questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions derived from the research objectives basing on the problem statement.

- 1) What is the nature and influence of private sector participation in planning on quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University?
- 2) What is the influence of the private sector participation in curriculum development on the quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University?
- 3) What is the nature and influence of the private sector's financial contribution on the quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University?

## **1.6 Scope**

The study primarily focused on Makerere University in Kampala which is the first public university in Uganda. The Deans and Heads of Departments of selected Faculties (The Faculties of Technology, Agriculture, Social Sciences and Computing and Information Communications Technology) served as respondents. The study investigated the nature of private sector participation in planning, curriculum development and financing at the university and the influence of this participation on the quality of academic programs. The scope of private sector is limited to the donor community, the local industry, NGOs, Civil Society Organizations excluding the parents and students. The study was proposed to be carried out between August 2009 and April 2010.

## **1.7 Significance**

The study intended to inform Makerere University and Government as a whole of the nature and effects of private sector participation on the quality of academic programs. The findings of this study could help the ministry of education and the university in the policy making that concerns private sector participation in public Universities. The study could further prompt the private sector especially the local industry to actively get involved in the university affairs. The study could in addition prompt more researchers to investigate other factors affecting quality of academic programs and education at public universities.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents literature review aligned according to the respective study objectives. The relevant literature reviewed guided the study and the conceptual frame work that indicates the relationship between the two variables.

#### **2.1 Theoretical review**

This problem envisaged by this study arises out of the Equity theory of organizational studies. This theory proposes that individuals who perceive themselves as either under-rewarded or over-rewarded will experience distress, and that this distress leads to efforts to restore equity within the relationship. It focuses on determining whether the distribution of resources is fair to both relational partners. Equity is measured by comparing the ratios of contributions and benefits of each person within the relationship (Wikipedia, 2009). Partners do not have to receive equal benefits or make equal contributions, as long as the ratio between these benefits and contributions is similar.

Equity theory was first developed in 1962 by John Stacey Adams, a work place psychologist, who asserted that employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs that they bring to a job and the outcomes that they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others (Adams, 1965). The belief is that people value fair treatment which causes them to be motivated to keep the fairness maintained within the relationships of their co-workers and the organization. The structure of equity in the workplace is based on the ratio of inputs to outcomes. Inputs

are the contributions made by the employee for the organization; this includes the work done by employees and the behavior brought by the employees as well as their skills and other useful experiences employee may contribute for the good of the company.

Generally, the equity theory presents the following propositions:

- Individuals seek to maximize their outcomes (where outcomes are defined as rewards minus costs).
- Groups can maximize collective rewards by developing accepted systems for equitably apportioning rewards and costs among members. Systems of equity will evolve within groups, and members will attempt to induce other members to accept and adhere to these systems. The only way groups can induce members to equitably behave is by making it more profitable to behave equitably than inequitably. Thus, groups will generally reward members who treat others equitably and generally punish (increase the cost for) members who treat others inequitably.
- When individuals find themselves participating in inequitable relationships, they become distressed. The more inequitable the relationship, the more distress individuals feel. According to equity theory, both the person who gets “too much” and the person who gets “too little” feel distressed. The person who gets too much may feel guilt or shame. The person who gets too little may feel angry or humiliated.
- Individuals who perceive that they are in an inequitable relationship attempt to eliminate their distress by restoring equity. The greater the inequity, the more distress people feel and the more they try to restore equity.

In adapting the equity theory, the study does not ignore its shortcomings identified by scholars, namely that it questions the simplicity of the model, arguing that a number of demographic and psychological variables affect people's perceptions of fairness and interactions with others; that much of the research supporting the basic propositions of equity theory has been conducted in laboratory settings, and thus has questionable applicability to real-world situations; and that people might perceive equity/inequity not only in terms of the specific inputs and outcomes of a relationship but also in terms of the overarching system that determines those inputs and outputs. Thus, in a business setting, one might feel that his or her compensation is equitable to other employees', but one might view the entire compensation system as unfair (Wikipedia, 2009).

However this theory has been considered worthwhile for this study because, basing on its assumptions, we get the following implications to the study under consideration:

- “People and organizations measure the totals of their inputs and outcomes”. This means that the University has to accept the conditions set by the private sector for proper working conditions.
- “Stakeholders ascribe institutional values to inputs and outcomes”. Thus, two partners of equal concern performing the same work for the same reason may have quite different perceptions of the fairness of the deal and this may have an effect on quality of University education if divergent views are developed.
- “Organizations are able to adjust for purchasing power under local market conditions”. This implies that public universities may need to adjust on the academic programs being offered to address the local market needs which may influence the quality of academic programs.

There are a number of other competing theories which the researcher felt that could not be considered for example the Socialism theory of participation. The researcher felt that this theory could not apply because of its assumption that people in any organization have a potential of becoming economically liberated by participating actively and creatively in the production process and ultimately controlling the production (Nkata, 2004). It however ignores the issue of fair resource distribution to both relational partners which the researcher feels is an important component of the study at hand. Furthermore Resource Dependency Theory suggests that units are differentially valuable in dealing with crises emanating from its external environment (Wikipedia 2009).

Furthermore units that control resources that are strategic in terms of managing critical relationships between the firm and its environment achieve power within the organization. Therefore the firm depends disproportionately for its survival and success on units that control strategic resources (Adams 1965). This theory however ignores the mutual understanding, the dependability on each other, in the sense that the private sector depends on University products for human resource and the University also depends on the private sector for support. Hence the private sector cannot take over the full control of the public University education because its role is pre determined by its position in the society as a beneficiary and partner in university education.

The study employed the equity theory because it clearly brought out the relationship between two parties working together for the common good. Scott, Ayelet, & Brian (2008) assert that theories give researchers different “lenses” through which to look at complicated problems and social issues, focusing their attention on different aspects of the data and providing a

framework within which to conduct their analysis. The foregoing assertions are the very reason why the researcher has considered the use of a theory very essential for the study.

## 2.2 Conceptual framework

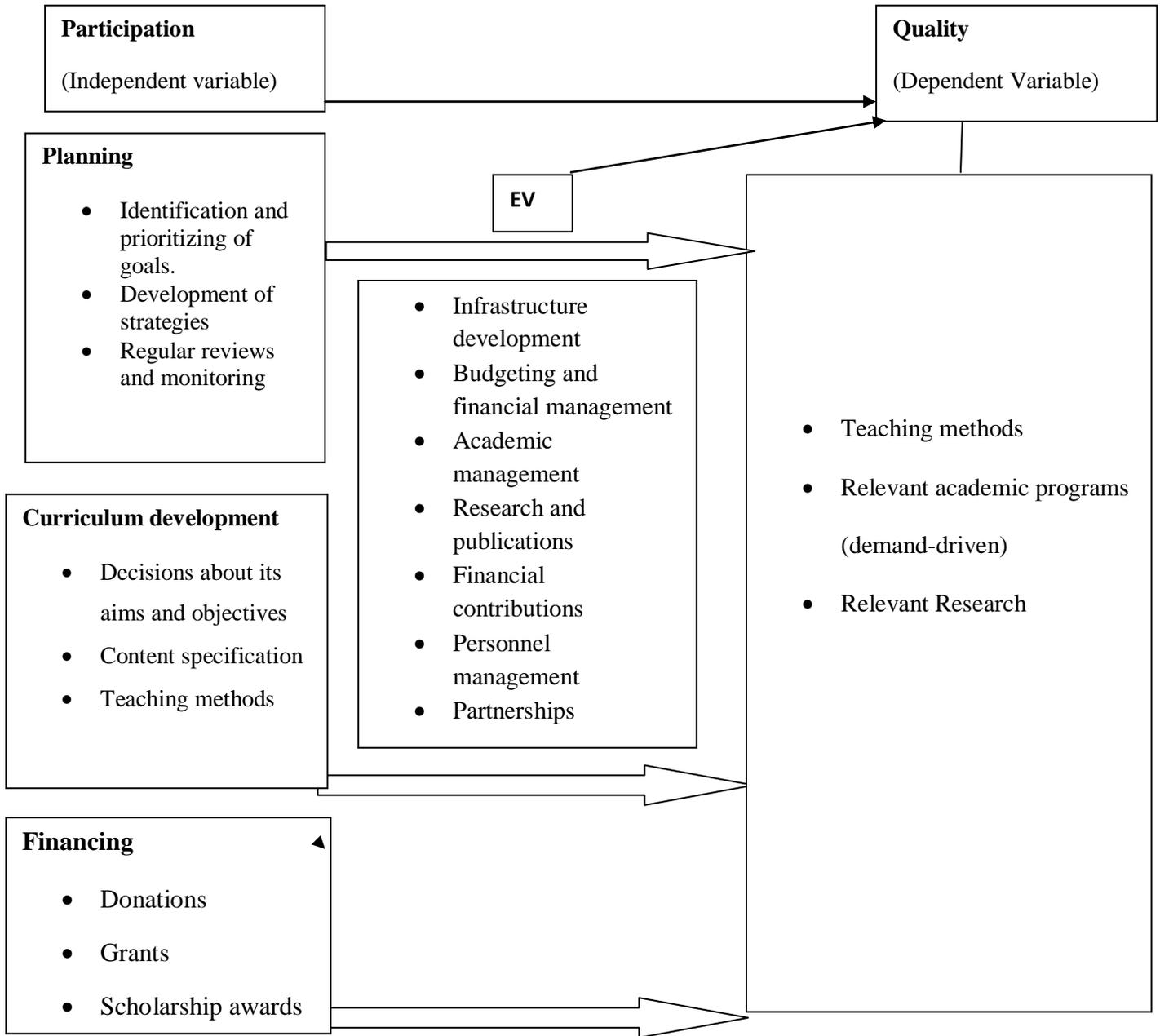


Fig 1 Participation and quality of academic programs in public universities

(Adapted from Oso and D. Onen 2008 A general Guide To Writing Research Proposal And Report. Page 53)

## **Interpretation of the model**

The model above illustrates the two main variables, namely: Participation of the private sector (independent variable) and quality of academic programs (dependent variable). The independent variable is divided into three aspects which are planning, curriculum development and financing. There is a link between the three aspects of participation and quality of academic programs. Planning is being considered in terms of prioritizing of goals, development of strategies, regular reviews and monitoring. Curriculum development on the other hand is focused on the aims and objectives, the content specification, and teaching methods as having a direct influence on quality. Financing is viewed in terms of donation, grants and scholarship awards.

However the private sector participates in public University education in many ways that also include infrastructure development, budgeting and financial management, academic management, research and publications, personnel management and partnerships, among others, which were treated as extraneous variables. Quality encompasses teaching, relevant academic programs (demand-driven courses) and relevant research. Planning, curriculum development and financing were considered as very important components that could affect quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University.

## **2.3 Review of Related literature**

This section presents the reviewed literature related to the study. Literature on planning, curriculum development, and financing in university education is presented according to the study objectives.

### **2.3.1 Planning and quality of academic programs**

Planning is a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions (Mintzberg, 1994). Institutional planning allows for a comprehensive and long-term perspective of the university which is based on a clear assessment and understanding of current activities. Presthus (1997) argues that conducting planning practices in a systematic manner requires human resources who have the designed planning skills and abilities, people who are professionally capable of conducting organization planning and the taking of decisions, which is done with application and utilization of high level intellectual knowledge and practical planning skills. However valid Presthus' argument may be it may not apply in the context of University education to date where the stakeholders may not necessarily possess the required planning skills, but have a responsibility in planning for their goods and services.

For any organization to serve its purpose, it requires to have proper planning mechanisms that seek contribution of ideas from all the stakeholders. Thus Makerere University has to do the same if it is to achieve the purpose and or its goals. Pacciano (1998) contends that there should be collaboration in strategic planning by involving internal and external stakeholders to achieve desirable goals. He further argues that for better improvement on plans, stakeholder's confidence in the leader and administration's participation is required. However, following Pacciano's argument, one wonders how committed the private sector would be in university education affairs without the connotations of profit making. On the other hand Forojalla (1993,

cited by Mbura, 2004) noted that the survival of the education system in African countries will depend not only on systematic planning, but also on the greater contribution of each community towards the development and maintenance of their local schools. This study concurs with the notions advanced by the scholars above. The researcher finds it important for the university to include all the stakeholders in the planning of the university. This is because the university does not exist for its own sake but for the community where it exists. It may be difficult for the university to understand the needs of the community unless it has involved the private sector in the identification of society needs, and this requires both parties to strongly be committed in whatever they are doing.

Byamugaba (1994) argues that effective policy formulation requires linkage both formal and informal communication and dialogue with actors and stakeholders in policy areas. This helps securing cooperation and ensures accommodation of possible conflicting interests to facilitate effective implementation. Never the less critics of participatory theory (e.g. Maden 1987, and Cohani 1990, cited by Nkata 1996) argue that “participatory process is suspect because it involves people who have less skill, are less accountable, and are less homogenous in nature”. The implication of this argument on this study is that the private sector may not be knowledgeable enough to plan for university academic programs since the university is not a profit making institution which could be the case with the private sector.

On the other hand Glassman and Rossy (2002) observe that effective planning helps higher education institutions (HEIs) to identify what makes them distinctive and what they have in common with other HEIs, and therefore it helps to maintain their individuality. However much the study advocates for the private sector involvement in the planning of the university,

it is skeptical on what might happen if the institution is directed to profit making other than producing person power to serve the society. The study therefore calls for a well defined guide line for both parties to follow in their co-existence.

Kaggwa (2005), in her study on challenges of quality control, found out that lack of involvement of all stakeholders in the general planning and curriculum development greatly affected the quality of programs, students, and teachers in Ndejje University. Much of the works done by the above discussed studies concentrated on the importance of planning in different contexts and indicating the importance of planning in almost all spheres of life. This study too is concerned with the stake holder's need for participation in planning, and the opportunities available for the improvement of the quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University.

### **2.3.2 Curriculum development and quality of academic programs**

Curriculum development in this study refers to the selection and organization of a set of intended learning outcomes and the process. Stenhouse (1975) defined curriculum as an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice. The curriculum has been a very thorny issue at universities in East Africa for quite some time now. There have been heated debates in matters relating to standards of courses/ degrees, their scope, and their relevance to the current needs, the work environment, especially in industry. There have been the expansion diversification and modification of teaching programs to ensure relevance and correspondence with private and public interests.

A number of new courses including professional ones were established and the existing ones modified (National Council for Higher Education, 2006). Attempts have also been made to focus the relevance of the curriculum to meet the needs of the broader community by offering a wide range of courses including vocational and professional ones that directly respond to public demand. Participatory Curriculum Development has the objective of promoting mutual learning and to revising and actualizing the curriculum with involvement of all stakeholders for example farmers, extension agents, bureaucrats, project staff, policy makers, suppliers, traders, researchers, students, teachers (Anita, 2000). Curriculum development further involves the gathering of all the people who have studied a particular topic or field of knowledge – the experts who have knowledge about the subject or course. From their knowledge, the experts inform the educator: how to structure that body of knowledge, how they would teach that structure to a new person who may not know all about it, how educators can develop a framework that new students can hang all the ideas on (Micheal, 2007).

The understanding of curriculum development in this study is however not concurring with the fore going assertions. The researcher does not believe in learners as empty tins where experts just pour in their knowledge but learners as sharers of knowledge with experts. Secondly the study is concerned with participation and expertise of the private sector in curriculum development and its effects on the quality of University education with a belief that its contribution to curriculum development may improve the quality of public University education. On the other hand, if the private sector lacks the expertise, the University may not produce an all round product as the intended educational objective.

However it should be noted that one party may have the expertise without the means to put ideas in practice and the other party may have the means however without the expertise hence the two parties coming together may achieve the aims and goals of public education. To be able to develop a meaningful curriculum it is necessary to have insights on the overall study situation and specific subject matter features. Without an analysis of the situation and specific needs, a wonderful curriculum could be developed but the appropriate needs of the target audience may not be met. Therefore, it is essential to have a large variety of stakeholders involved in the curriculum development process (El Sawi, 1996). The study thus intended to find out the nature and influence of the private sector's participation in curriculum development of public Universities as a partner and a beneficiary.

### **2.3.3 Financing and the quality of academic programs**

Finance is the science of funds management. The general areas of finance are business finance, personal finance, and public finance. Finance includes saving money and often includes lending money. The field of finance deals with the concepts of time, money and risk and how they are interrelated. It also deals with how money is spent and budgeted. Finance is used by individuals by governments, by businesses as well as by a wide variety of organizations including schools and non-profit organizations. In general, the goals of each of the above activities are achieved through the use of appropriate financial instruments and methodologies; with consideration to their institutional setting (Wikipedia, 2008).

Financing in this study refers to the financial contributions made to Makerere University. Education is both a private and social investment that is shared by individuals, students, their families, employers, government and other groups including international agencies but in

most countries, the share of private financing is limited because there is a general belief that societal objectives of equity and efficiency are better served when education is publicly financed (Okuwa, 2003). According to Woodhall (1995), government underfunding was a recipe for disaster on part of University management particularly for those Universities in the developing countries which relied entirely on public subventions. Junul (1992) and Okoth (1995) add that the insufficiency of public financial allocations and disbursements to government institutions of higher education had been and continue to be the main cause of the ineffectiveness of the management and subsequent service delivery in these institutions. However the studies above are not focused on the gap that the private sector is filling in the absence of the total support from the governments.

Secondly, arguments are more focused on the management challenges rather than the quality of university education. Hence this study focused on the nature of the private sector participation in planning, curriculum development and financing and its influence on the quality of the academic programs in Makerere University. Musingo (2004), in his study on the incorporated financial contributions of the private sector and its implications, observes that if Universities in Uganda are to operate effectively and efficiently, the business sector has to be fully incorporated into the management dynamics of these universities. In his study findings Musingo (2004) reveals that the financial contribution of the private sector is still low and unstable as much of the funding of public universities comes from government of Uganda. The local and foreign donors contribute very little while the business sector contribution is negligible (below 5%). On the other hand, Obiechira (1996) criticize the contribution of the Donors to the university financing by arguing that the university managers should not lose sight of the fact that international aid may have been seen by the givers as an instrument of foreign policy enabling them to guide and mould the

opinions in the receiving countries in their favor.

All the above studies are concerned with the private financing of university education and its implication on future management but again they have ignored the issue of quality of academic programs in public university education. This study focused on the influence of the private sector participation to the quality of academic programs. The private sector has greater influence on the quality of the academic programs being offered in the university; hence its contribution and participation may not be questioned. Universities have to put more effort on involving the private sector into the running of university affairs especially the academic programs. Times have changed from when a university existed as an ivory tower and a place for academicians only.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology used in the inquiry, namely: the research design employed the target population, the sample and sampling process, the tools and instruments used the issues of measuring validity and reliability, the procedures and analysis.

#### **3.1 Design**

The study employed the qualitative approach and specifically took an exploratory design that was based on qualitative data gathering procedures. The study opted for the mentioned design because of its suitability in obtaining people's perceptions and opinions, particularly of the private sector participation and the quality of academic programs in public university education. The study partly employed ethnography where the researcher studied the nature of the private sector participation in planning, curriculum development and financing in relation to quality of academic programs in public University education at Makerere University. The researcher opted for this inquiry because it was hoped that it would efficiently inform the study where an in-depth interpretation and analysis would be done. To overcome any anticipated insufficient results, triangulation of methods was employed. The study involved the interpretation of the data from respondents' point of view, guided by the recorded interview responses.

#### **3.2 Target population**

The target population in this study was all the 21 Deans and 8 Heads of Departments in Makerere University. Deans and Heads of Departments were chosen because they were considered to be information-rich respondents who directly dealt with the private sector. Makerere was convenient for the researcher because of financial constraints and

accessibility. The study was focused on Makerere University as an individual public institution not necessarily as representative of other public universities. However the conclusions that were drawn could be relevant to other public universities.

### **3.3 The sample**

The study used a purposive sampling method which targeted samples that accurately reflected the influence of private sector involvement on the overall target population. The researcher found it difficult to investigate on all faculties in the interest of time and finances and hence purposefully selected the sample size.

#### **3.3.1 Sample Size**

For efficiency and effectiveness the study purposefully sampled on 4 Faculties in addition to the Department of Development and Planning and the Makerere University Private Sector Forum. The sample was purposefully selected following the available information on where the private sector was participating most. Prior information was gathered from the Department of Development and Planning. Although the selection of four (4) academic units and two administrative units appeared limited, the researcher was confident that with a qualitative approach the quality of dealing with a few relevant samples was more meaningful than focusing on quantity which could entail duplication. The researcher acknowledged that the findings would not give a conclusive picture on the private sector participation and quality of academic programs in public university education at Makerere University; thereby implying the need for further research on different variables in different Faculties. Deans and Heads of Department of the selected Faculties were the respondents, together with personnel from MUPSF and the Department of Planning and Development because of their positions of responsibility in their respective offices, hence found the most reliable sources of information for the study.

### **3.4 Research tools**

#### **3.4.1 Interviews**

The study used unstructured face to face interviews for soliciting views. This tool was considered appropriate because it facilitates an open situation with greater freedom and flexibility which allowed the interviewer to probe more into the respondent's knowledge (Wimmer, & Joseph, 1997). The study opted for interviews because in face-to-face interview it was possible to record responses. Such interviews go beyond verbal expression, but the nature of words used, facial expressions and body language all communicate a lot and provide follow up and greater clarity of the issue in question. An interview schedule was designed to guide the study. An interview protocol was used for recording the information during the interviews and audio taping was also used during the interview process, the researcher found the instrument very useful during the data analysis stage.

#### **3.4.2 Document analysis**

The researcher studied the available documents on the private sector participation in Makerere University to supplement and verify the data gathered through interviews. This tool was considered suitable because it was less subjective with less bias, and the information was readily available such that the researcher did not get much trouble in accessing it. It also helped the researcher to obtain data that were non subjective in that the informants had given attention to compiling them (Oso and Onen, 2005). However, some documents had old and irrelevant information for the study. To overcome this obstacle, the researcher used the on line journals, articles, speeches, brochures and strategic plans among others.

### **3.5 Measuring validity and reliability**

#### **3.5.1 Validity**

The researcher sought validity by ensuring that the questions or items in the interview schedule conformed to the study's conceptual frame work. Evaluation of the tools by research experts and peers doing the same Course in Higher Education was also done to evaluate the relevance and clarity of questions and clarifying the bias and use of rich thick description (Creswell, 2003). This was done to ensure that the instrument was fit to yield the data intended.

#### **3.5.2 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the level of dependability of the questions in the research tool (Muyingo, 2005). Owing to this, question triangulation method was also used. According to Nkata (1998), this ascertains and ensures the clarity and reliability of the instruments. The researcher ensured that the instrument clearly specified the researcher's position so that the readers would know exactly what point of view instigated the data collection. The tool clearly stated who the informants were, their role, why and how they were selected. Tools were designed in a way that they were able to explicitly describe the situations and conditions under study guided by research objectives, to ensure consistency and reliability of the data (Amin, 2005).

### **3.6 Procedure**

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Dean of School of Education (Appendix Four). The researcher formulated the purpose of the investigation by describing the concept of the topic to be investigated. The research objectives were translated into research questions which made up an interview guide. The process of interview began by the researcher briefing the respondents about the purpose of the interview, and sought respondent's consent and assured

them respondent's confidentiality and anonymity. During the process the researcher used cryptic jottings and a tape recorded the respondents on their consent. Open ended question which were straight to the topic brief and clear were used during the interviewing process. After the interview, the text was prepared by transcribing the oral into written for analysis. Documents relevant to the study were obtained from different sources in the university, studied and analyzed.

### **3.7 Analysis**

The study employed content analysis, triangulation and threading or narrative summary as techniques in analyzing the data. Content analysis is the systematic description of behavior asking who, what, where, and how questions, to limit the effect of the analyst's bias. It was a good technique in the initial stages of data analysis but not sufficient in itself (Kumar, 2005). To overcome this shortcoming the research used other techniques like triangulation to strengthen the analyses. Triangulation helps in strengthening of analyses by combining insights from both tools and instruments which promotes high reliability and validity (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). However triangulation required rich skills and expertise in data analysis thus the researcher kept in close touch with supervisors for consultations and guidance. The data collected was prepared by typing notes, coding, and transcribing responses from interviews. The data was then sectioned accordingly, depending on the responses gathered and categorized under relevant themes; proceed by interpretation and making sense of it in relation to the study.

### **3.7 Conclusions**

The researcher drew conclusions arising out of the data analysis and interpretation. The implications of these results were made clear. In addition the researcher pointed out other areas that may require additional inquiry.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings (data reporting), and the interpretation of data collected during the study. The study was meant to determine the influence of the Private Sector participation on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University. Data was collected from six purposefully selected academic units of the University; namely, the Office of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum, the Planning and Development Department of the University, and four Faculties that included: the Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Technology, Social Sciences and the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology.

The respondents in this study included Faculty Deans, Heads of Department, the Executive Director of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum, and the Personnel from the Department Planning and Development. These respondents were thought to be the key informants because of their positions of responsibility in their respective units. The respondents were interviewed individually. Different academic Departments have different experiences with the private sector participation which varies from Faculty to Faculty.

#### **4.1 Private sector participation in planning and the quality of academic programs**

##### **Introduction**

Planning is a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result in the form of an integrated system of decisions. Planning allows a comprehensive and long term perspective of an organization which is based on a clear assessment and understanding of current activities. For the university to remain relevant it should have a strong and vibrant planning team. All the

stakeholders should be given an opportunity to participate in the planning exercise. And educational priorities should be well articulated and aligned with the institution's mission and vision. A number of questions were put to the respondents to establish the influence of the Private Sector participation in planning to the quality of academic programs in Makerere University. Questions related to identification and prioritization of goals, development of strategies, and how the private sector got involved in regular reviews and monitoring in relation to the quality of academic programs.

### **Identification and prioritization of goals and its influence on the quality of academic programs**

This study defines goals as projected state of affairs that a university or faculty plans or intends to achieve, an institutional desired endpoint. University education has at least four interlocking goals that includes; Dissemination of knowledge, Training of people, aimed at the production of the manpower needed for the preservation and progress of the nation and society, Training of researchers needed for the preservation and expansion of human knowledge and The development and enhancement of the inner potential of individuals (intellectual, moral, emotional, physical, social, cultural, spiritual, and others). Hence while the faculties are making priorities they have to consider the entire university goals.

The study found out that in most Faculties, the private sector is involved at the initial stages of planning. Out of the four Faculties that were visited, three of them which include the Faculties of Technology, Social Sciences and Agriculture revealed that the private sector was indeed involved in making the Five Year Strategic Plans of the Faculties. During the process of making the strategic plans identification and prioritization of goals is done. Respondents argued that

involving the Private Sector in the planning process has to a larger extent improved the quality of graduates and academic programs.

The foregoing implies that if the Faculties continue with the practice of involving the Private Sector in identification and prioritization of goals, the quality of the academic programs will improve hence putting the University at the competitive age; a demand by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Universities. On the other hand if the university remains a centre of academics and academicians, its future may be put in jeopardy and the quality of the academic programs may deteriorate with time if the stakeholders and ‘consumers’ of university products are not actively involved in planning. However in the Faculty of Computing and Information Communication Technology, the study revealed that the Faculty undergoes the planning process alone without the private sector’s participation, and later the program is presented to the private sector and other stakeholders for review.

The responses that the Faculty gets after the review are used to adjust on the Faculty programs accordingly, considering the mission and vision of the Faculty. This finding indicates that there are so many ways of involving the private sector in identification and prioritization of goals in the Faculty but not necessarily through involving them in the designing of the Faculty Strategic Plans. This means that if the private sector does not participate in the process of making the five year Strategic Plan, the program can always be presented to them (Private Sector) later for review and approval. All Faculties should endeavor to involve the Private Sector in the identification and prioritization of faculty goals no matter when and how, but should try their best to seek opinions of the beneficiaries and partners. If the private sector is involved in the planning of the faculties, many ideas could be generated that could help the university to

adjust accordingly. The study noted that societies we live in keep changing and hence we may not afford to get fixated on the same old ideas in a new era. Thus for the University to remain relevant to the people it is out to serve, it may need to involve all the stakeholders in its plans.

In the Faculty of Social Science the respondent from the Department of Gender, expressed a strong opinion about the role of the Private Sector in the planning process of the Faculty. During the interviews, the respondent observed that:

...you know as a Department when we are planning... we do not do it alone, we have the stakeholders such as representatives from the Civil Society Organizations, the Industry and Uganda Manufacturers Association who inform us of what is needed out there.... They inform us on where they feel we need to improve, on the academic programs or course content they think is irrelevant and should be changed or improved. In so doing, the Private Sector is helping us in identifying new academic programs that are demand-driven and relevant to the society that we are out to serve. Secondly we have the demands from the community; for example, of late people have demanded for a Diploma in Gender Studies, we have considered it and we are in a process of developing the curriculum... we shall invite all the stakeholders so that we present to them what we have come up with and seek for their opinion....

The study revealed that the Private Sector is treated differently in different Faculties. In Faculties like Social Sciences and Technology, the role of the Private Sector is given much value. Such a practice is an indicator to the public that academic programs and education in general are for the people and designed by the people, a practice that may strengthen the relevancy and

marketability of the academic programs and the graduates. Isolating the private sector from the university planning may lead to increased unemployment since the university may not be fully aware of what type of product (graduate) is needed in the labor market by the private sector. On the other hand if the two work together as components of a system the quality of the academic programs will greatly improve.

On the issue of identifying demand-driven courses, the respondent from the department of Gender in the Faculty of Social Sciences revealed that "...the private sector has played a leading role in helping the department in identifying demand-driven courses". Faculties through the private sector partnerships and linkages have been able to keep in touch with the society. The private sector has acted as a link between the University and the community or society. Faculties get feedback about their products through these linkages, and it is through such collaborations, that the demand-driven courses are identified and introduced to the Faculty, and later presented to the University professional body responsible for Quality Assurance for approval. The Quality Assurance body looks into the types of courses the private sector is in demand of, and then approves or rejects them. For example, the Department of Food Science in the Faculty of Agriculture, of late is offering short courses awarding certificates due to Private Sector demand. The idea that the university Quality Assurance Body comes in to evaluate the decisions taken by the faculties and the private sector in adopting new programs, is an assurance that all the new academic programs are demand-driven relevant and of good quality. But in situations where the private sector just identifies the academic programs may put any university at risk of duplicating the academic programs or courses being offered to the community.

An interview with the respondent from the Department of Planning and Development on the same issue also reported that it is through the Private Sector that the demand-driven courses are identified and introduced to the University. During the interview the respondent explained that:

...keeping in touch with the Private Sector, and involving it in the University programs is one of the ways that we identify the demand-driven courses. However, this is normally not formal, but it comes up during the Stakeholders meeting or conference. The Department has also been undertaking a program of Capacity Building for Decentralization under the [i@mak.com](mailto:i@mak.com). Which enabled people go out in the villages to identify what the needs of people really are, and what they want the University to do... through this initiative, there are courses that have come up as a result of this program....

It is thus clear that almost all the new courses in the University have come up as University response to the public outcry and demand. This may however be a challenge to those Faculties that do not consider the role and importance of the Private Sector in their programs. It further indicates that, for the Faculties and the entire University to remain relevant to the community, it has to stay in close contact with the Private Sector and all the stakeholders. This gives us hope that the quality of academic programs will greatly improve and serve the purpose for which they are introduced. This will also narrow the gap that exists between the University and the stakeholders.

An argument that was raised by almost all respondents was that, the role of the Private Sector is not really formal, but as beneficiaries and stakeholders they help in identifying the demand-driven courses. This is a reflection that the University is moving on a right track whereby the

stakeholders are part and parcel of the University programs. Furthermore, considering the above findings it is clear that the private sector does participate and has influence in the identification and prioritization of goals in the Faculties, a practice that the respondents said to be improving the relevancy and quality of academic programs in the University.

However, the findings in the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology stress the fact that the private sector does not have any direct and absolute influence on the identification and prioritization of goals and the entire process of planning at the Faculty. During the interviews the respondent reported that:

The private sector does not have direct influence on the planning and decisions taken by the faculty. The Faculty is always focused on what it is out to do, without any external influence. The Faculty presents its program to the stakeholders and the private sector and invites their contributions.

Much as the foregoing claims from the Faculty seem to be distancing the private sector's role in planning, the study however does not take these claims to be valid. Because using the very claim, one can see that the Faculty does not implement its programs before consulting the private sector, implying that the private sector has an in-put in the Faculty Programs and hence does have an influence in the planning of the faculty which could influence the quality of academic programs.

Despite the slight change in operation in the Faculty of Communication and Information Technology, the study may not be justified to suspend the role of the Private Sector in the planning of the Faculty. This is because, although the private sector is not involved at the time when the Faculty is putting up its programs together, but it comes in later to approve and give in

its contributions which in a way may influence the academic programs of the Faculty. The main issue of the study is to determine the influence of the private sector in the planning of the University but not on how the Faculties go about it. It has thus been noted that no matter how and when, the private sector has been given space in the University and Faculty planning. Except that the formulae of doing this vary from Faculty to Faculty because the relationship between the private sector and the University is not formalized. It was further revealed that Faculties that are in a close corporation with the private sector are doing well in terms of academic programs and in general, whereas those faculties that have not had a close link with the private sector are still vulnerable.

Furthermore, the interview with the Executive Director of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum also revealed that the private sector is involved in the planning of the University, an idea that supports the findings from all the visited Faculties. During the discussion with the member of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum, it was learnt that Makerere University Private Sector Forum (MUPSF) is a Multi-Sectoral Forum that brings together the Public, Private Sectors, and Makerere to address issues of mutual concern. The Forum aims at providing avenues for the Private Sector to participate in the University academic programs, like training and research, and stand to benefit from technology innovations generated by the academia. The respondent noted that:

...we are members of the Senate; we sit on the Policy Formulation Board. We do curriculum review every year. We work as one system; we are not separated from university activities. Hence we are very much involved in the planning of the University. We do not have representatives in Faculties, but sitting at the Senate Board, gives us an opportunity to review the plans of the lower units of

administration and to decide accordingly...

The establishment of the Forum could act as an indicator of the University commitment and need to involve the private sector in the University affairs. It is a sign of recognition that the Private Sector is part of the University system and its role cannot be ignored. As the saying goes that, “two heads are better than one” there is hope that the quality of academic programs and the general standards of education in Makerere University will undoubtedly greatly improve. The issue of quality and relevance may not be an issue in the long run because the university and the private sector will always embrace global changes together.

In the Faculty of Technology the situation is not so different from other Faculties, but the role of the Private Sector is very much valued. There is a strong belief that the private sector has to a larger extent influenced the quality of academic programs being offered in the Faculty, the quality of graduates and the quality of research that is being done in the Faculty. The Faculty is in close collaboration with the private sector and the entire community, and the benefit of this collaboration has been a two way strategy; the stakeholders have benefited from the transferred technology. The Faculty on the other hand benefits through the students industrial training facilitated by the private sector which enhance the practical part of the course. It was further learnt that this partnership with the private sector and all the stakeholders has made the Faculty and all its programs relevant to society. In fact the respondent from the Faculty of Technology remarked that:

The Private Sector helps us so much in achieving our main goal. Our over arching goal is to ensure that Engineering and Technology play a leading role in the

transformation of the society. This means that through research, or adaptation of our existing technologies, we assist in availing technology for the transformation of the society. For making the lives of our people easier and more meaningful, so the Private Sector definitely plays a big role in identification and prioritization of the Faculty goals, hence helping us to achieve our main goal. Secondly we have the programs that directly deal with the Private Sector which includes the Uganda Gatsby Trust and the Innovation System and Innovative Clusters, the former aiming at transferring technology to small and medium enterprises and the latter mainly deals with the small and medium enterprises....

Thus, basing on the above findings, it is clear that the Private Sector has influenced the prioritization and identification of the Faculty goals not only in the Faculty of Technology but in all the others that were visited, and hence influencing the quality of academic programs, though at varying levels. In other faculties the role of the private sector in planning is not given so much value. Whereas in others like Technology, and Agriculture, the involvement of the private sector is attached so much value, and even by looking at the visible facilities, one can conclude that in Faculties where the private sector has participated most, there is a sign of a good learning environment that includes internet connection and usage, computers, and the teaching and learning space, that can facilitate the demand-driven courses and a proper teaching and learning process.

The above assertion implies that if the Faculties put much emphasis of forming partnerships or collaborations and always consulting the stakeholders, the issue of irrelevant academic programs may never be hard of in the University. Concentrating on demand-driven courses may

also help in producing the graduates who can compete both nationally and internationally. However the challenge remains on other academic programs which are not demand-driven, but still needed in the knowledge society. The idea of taking up only demand-driven courses may compromise the academic courses hence causing a gap in the training of graduates.

The involvement of the private sector in the identification and prioritization of goals has not been given much attention in all the faculties, and thus there is still a need for all faculties to embrace the idea so as to improve the quality of academic programs and the entire education. Lessons learnt from those faculties that have fully involved the private sector in identification and prioritization of goals indicates that there is much improvement in the quality of the academic programs.

### **Development of faculty strategies and its influence on quality of academic programs**

Strategies in this study have been perceived as a bridge between policy and goals on the one hand and tactics or concrete actions on the other, they are identified means to achieving the goals. The study discovered that the private sector is involved in the development of Faculty strategies. The respondents during the study revealed that the private sector is always involved in the process of making the strategic plans of the Faculties, a practice that leads to the development of strategies. Respondents in all the Faculties studied reported the same thing of involving the private sector and other stakeholders in the development of the Faculty strategies. The study however revealed that the development of strategies is not a single planned activity and hence not so direct. Asked how this happens if it is not planned, one respondent in the Faculty of Agriculture noted that:

...there is no planned activity called development of Faculty strategies on our agenda but rather a multiple of issues. When we are in a process of making our Strategic Plans, the issue in question underlies within. So I would gladly say that the Private Sector does participate in the development of the Faculty strategies. This to me influences the quality of the programs and how they are delivered in order to produce the students who are suitable for competitive job markets. One of our strategies, aimed at producing highly trained graduates suitable for the competitive labor market, is having our students go for internship or industrial training which opens them up to the realities of working life...

The Faculty of Technology on the other hand has a unique relationship with the Private Sector. Whatever is done in the Faculty seems to be very clear to the private sector which has continuously worked with the Faculty as part of the system in the development of the strategies. An interview with the respondent from the Faculty of Technology revealed that:

The Faculty has got constant link and interaction with the private sector both large and small companies and industries are involved in the identification of the faculty strategies. During the course of study, students go for industrial training and internships as one of the strategies aiming at giving hands-on experience. The Faculty also organizes Annual Student's Exhibitions, to which we invite the private sector to see what we are doing and give us their input. We also send all our new programs to the professional institutions and to those private sector organizations to make their inputs....we try to balance between theory and practice. And most of the times, when students are here, they are being fed with the theory....we enhance practical skills through field attachments....We

expose our students to what is happening internationally...our students are able to learn from the internet. We also have programs where students can conduct experiments, which are based in Universities abroad, and have more advanced equipment... The private sector has played a very big role in identifying research areas... Some of them have funded our research and provide supervision to our students and other people from the faculty who are doing research...

From all the visited Faculties, it was found out that the private sector is playing an important role in the development of the Faculty strategies. However their role in planning varied greatly from faculty to faculty. Some Faculties like Technology and Agriculture reported that they cannot do without the private sector because they are part of a system, a component that makes up a system to function. It was also learnt that it is a University policy that the stakeholders have to be included in the planning of the Faculty at whatever level. Hence their role is mandated whether the Faculties want it or not. In the Faculties of Technology for instance, greater value is attached to stakeholders participation in planning at all stages without necessarily following the University policy but aiming at helping the lives of the people by making it easier through technology. This was observed by the respondent during the interviews. Hence the stakeholder's contributions in the planning of the Faculty are very important. They are the beneficiaries and consumers of the knowledge which is produced by the university and thus their role in planning is not an option but rather a mandate and necessity.

In all the faculties studied, the idea of involving the private sector in the development of faculty strategies is embraced. It was learnt that this has been ensured by University Policy in place which encourages all the faculties to involve the private sector in the general planning of the

faculties. It was however noted in some Faculties like Technology and Agriculture that the private sector's role is attached greater value and that the latter has greatly improved on the quality of the academic programs.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of and its influence on quality of academic programs**

This study perceives monitoring as the measurement through time that indicates the movement toward the objective or away from it. It is a process that provides information about the status and trends of a faculty or a university. Evaluation on the other hand is putting those data gathered by the monitoring exercise to use and giving them value, where learning occurs, questions answered, recommendations made and improvements suggested.

In all the four visited Faculties there seems to be no formal monitoring and evaluation of academic programs or courses. But it was observed that one form of monitoring and evaluation is when students are sent for field attachments or internship or industrial training. After the training, Faculties get reports from both the students and the supervisors from the places where internships have been done. The supervisors from the private sector indicate in their reports the students strength and weaknesses and other issues considered to be contentious that need to be taken care of. This is aimed at producing a well trained human resource. Issues like time keeping, public relations are given serious attention during the internships. It was further learnt that the nature of content given to students is also evaluated; the private sector is able to be judged from the way the students perform during the industrial training. Basing on this, the private sector is able to judge whether the content given to the students is up to date or irrelevant, sufficient or insufficient and then give advice to the Faculty accordingly. This argument was

supported by the Executive Director of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum who observed that:

...we follow up students in the field attachments to find out how they are progressing, and if there is any discrepancy, feedback is brought to the University. Students make reports and indicate the challenges.... the Forum requests the industries where students undergo training to also be supervisors, so that we are able to know whether the University is training candidates suitable for the job market...the Forum monitors the works of the Quality Assurance Board....

A similar claim was attested in the Faculty of Agriculture. The interview with a respondent in the Department of Food Science attested that there isn't formal monitoring and evaluation of the academic programs or courses, but it just happens automatically. When students go for internship or industrial training feedback is got, which serves the purpose of evaluation. During the interview the respondent said that "...We get reports from both the students and the supervisors from the private sector where internship has been done. The role of the private sector in monitoring and evaluation of the programs is indirect other than the suggestions that are made to the Faculty in the reports that precede the internship and field attachments..."

Having continuing students go for internship or industrial training adds greater knowledge and makes the academic programs a reality. Students are able to put into practice what they have learnt and to identify their own weaknesses without the teachers or the lecturer's intervention which may help the student do a realistic self evaluation and thus put more effort in learning and seeking guidance from superiors. This exercise could also improve the quality of academic

programs because there are checks and balances in the teaching and learning processes.

Similar to the above argument, the Department of Development and Planning was also contacted to ascertain the role of the private sector in monitoring and evaluation of the University academic programs. The study found out that indeed there is no formal guide-lines in place to involve the private sector in the monitoring and evaluation of the academic programs in Makerere University. The contacted official from this Department held that:

...we usually have stakeholder's conference after every two years and...One of the aims is to get feedback from the private sector. The private sector and the stakeholders use this as a platform to tell us what we have not done, and what we need to do. However, there is no formal arrangement for monitoring and evaluation by the private sector. The other aspect is 'voting by the feet'....if the University is not doing what the community of the private sector wants, then the students would stop coming. The research grants would stop, and even the scholarships from local industries would immediately stop. But for us as a University, the reverse has been true. So that's the kind of feedback that we get to evaluate our relevance and quality of the academic programs. Generally, evaluation of academic programs is through the stakeholder's feedback, and a Quality Assurance Body of the University which is mandated to ensure that the programs are relevant and of good quality.

Much as the role of the private sector in monitoring and evaluation is not formalized, the private sector has played a big role in the improvement of the quality of the academic programs in the University. As scholars, the University has a mandate to formalize this relationship in order

to have the full support from the private sector. And I would also wish to note that what the private sector has done is not enough though it has helped greatly. There is still much effort needed from the University policy makers, to formalize this exercise in order for the Faculties to do their best.

As earlier mentioned, private sector participation vary greatly from Faculty to Faculty. For example, in the Faculty of Technology, it was found out that the private sector mainly through the professional bodies or organizations does the accreditation of the academic programs, regularly checks on what the Faculty is training, and looks at the nature of the programs that are offered to students. Furthermore these professional bodies' checks on whether the Faculty has enough staff, the necessary equipment, the status of the laboratory, library, and other necessary facilities required of a Faculty. Apart from the Faculty of Technology, other Faculties emphasized that the practice of private sector participation in monitoring and evaluation is not formalized; but it is through the feedback that they get during conferences, meetings or workshops, which help them to know their stand in the "outside world", a practice that has helped these faculties to improve on the quality and relevance of the academic programs.

While reviewing the documents about the above issue, the Makerere University Department of Planning and Development Annual Report (2005) indicated that "in a bid to make higher education relevant to the society, under the Innovation at Makerere University Committee ([I@mak.com](mailto:I@mak.com)), Uganda Gatsby Trust continues to be the main interface between the Faculty of Technology and the private sector, particularly small and medium scale enterprises in Uganda". The former's support is through the provision of microfinance, development of business plans, and technology transfer. The collaboration has enhanced the Faculty's capacity for technology

transfer, and has also enabled staff and students get hands-on experience through working with the small and medium scale enterprises.

Students' evaluation of academic programs has been perceived as one of the forms of evaluation in some Faculties. It was discovered that students are always given forms to evaluate their lecturers, the relevance of the content that they are being given, and how well the content is delivered to them. Members of the teaching staff also do self evaluation, and are also evaluated internally. Some Faculties like Social Sciences and the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology have appraisal systems which are coordinated by the Human Resource Department. From the information collected through internal evaluation Faculties are able to adjust accordingly. And all this is aimed at improving the quality of academic programs, the graduates, and the entire education system and process of the University.

However the researcher was not convinced that this type of evaluation could improve on the quality of academic programs in the University. The self evaluation done by the members of the teaching staff may not be very realistic and concrete enough to act as a basis of evaluating the academic programs. The appraisal systems could act well as a way of motivating the staff rather than improving academic programs. The students on the other hand are in no better position to evaluate the quality of academic programs, because they may not be aware of how a quality academic program should be. Secondly while students are given evaluation forms they do not take this as a serious exercise and hence may just fill the form without giving it a serious thought. Thus the information gathered through such a process may be useful to the Faculty in other areas but not in the evaluation of academic programs.

There is much need to fully integrate the private sector in the general planning of the university. At the moment, there is evidence that the University has tried to integrate the private sector in the planning of the University, but not satisfactorily as revealed from the findings got in the three Faculties out of the four that were visited. There is need to fully incorporate the private sector in the University programs if the academic programs and courses being offered by the University are to remain relevant and meaningful to society. Much effort is needed in those Faculties that have not fully considered the role of the private sector in the University. Despite other shortcomings, the Faculty of Technology seems to be very comfortable with the role the private sector is playing, and is looking forward to benefiting much from the relationship they have with the private sector.

According to the documents reviewed, there was evidence that the private sector does participate in the stakeholders meetings and are also involved in the designing of the strategic plans in different faculties. Whereas there are efforts put in place by the University to produce the graduates who can immediately join the job market, it would be more ideal to involve the private sector in all the stages of planning. However the efforts put in place by the Faculties and the entire University cannot be underrated. Everything has a beginning; involving the stakeholder's in the planning of the University is a good indicator that the role of the private sector is not totally ignored. There is hope that if that spirit goes on, there will be great improvement in the quality of the academic programs and the entire education that the University is offering the community. The role of the private sector in the planning for Faculty academic programs has been found to be very influential in the improvement of the academic programs.

## **4.2 PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

### **Decisions about aims and objectives of the curriculum and how they influence the quality of academic programs**

A curriculum is the set of courses and their content, offered at a faculty or university. During the study it was learnt that the private sector is involved in curriculum development in different Faculties at varying levels. Faculties such as Technology and Agriculture after making their proposed curriculums they send to the Private Sector and the entire stake holder for inputs and comments before finally submitting the final proposed curriculum to the University Senate. During this process, the private sector gives in their submissions, and makes comments accordingly. In doing so the respondents contacted believe that the quality and relevance of academic programs is greatly improved. More so those members from the private sector also attend regular meetings of the Faculties. The respondent from the Faculty of Technology held that:

Whenever we are doing a Faculty Strategic Plan, we arrange with the Private Sector and professional organizations. At those meetings we discuss our curriculum. We also arrange special curriculum meetings and when we want to review our curriculum we normally organize retreats for members of the staff, together with members from the private sector. I believe and know that this influences the quality of academic programs and the general teaching and learning process, because we get inputs into the curriculum from the outside people. We get to know what actually is on the ground so that the curriculum is actually focused on the needs of the community. This enhances quality in that it actually makes our program relevant, since the ideas to be included in the curriculum

are contributed by the people who are actual beneficiaries. Their role in curriculum review is to identify the gaps and give in their inputs according to what the needs on the ground actually are, and also advise the Faculty according to public demand...

Such interactions with the private sector are likely to greatly improve the quality of academic programs. Having the stakeholders decide on the academic program and the nature of content together with the modes of delivery, there is no doubt that Faculties involved in such activities have improved the quality of their academic programs. If the private sector and the stakeholders are able to state or define the type of programs they want from a particular Faculty, and are able to develop with them the curriculum, there is no doubt that the University will produce graduates who are suitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century labor markets. There is also a possibility of elimination of irrelevances in the content and programs being offered by the Faculties, hence improving the quality of the academic programs.

It was learnt that from time to time the Faculty gets feedback from the Private Sector on the quality of the Faculty products (graduates); a practice that enables the Faculty to adjust accordingly and make a fill-in in the identified gaps. During the interviews one respondent noted that the role of the private sector is just obvious. Being a partner in the education process, the private sector has to plan with the Faculty or the University for the Latter's own good. Furthermore, it is a policy that if the academic programs are to be reviewed, members from the private sector or industry should be invited to attend, it's not a Faculty's own initiative but a University requirement. The products that are produced by Faculties and the University benefit the Private Sector. Thus, as beneficiaries and partners, the Private Sector has to decide on what is fit for her. Members from the private sector give comments on the programs and advise on

where changes and improvements are needed. This has improved the quality and relevancy of the courses being offered by the Faculties. For example, the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology Curriculum Review Workshop of May 2009, which included members from the private sector, did not approve a number of courses that had been proposed by the Faculty. Some courses were rejected and others were approved.

Stakeholders' give advice on the courses that are no longer relevant and in so doing the Faculty modifies its programs accordingly. This enhances quality because at the end of the day, graduates are able to fit in the job market and in the long run employers may stop complaining about the University producing irrelevant graduates. The above observation shows that much as the academicians may be well informed about their academic programs, the private sector as a consumer of the University products is more informed of what is out-dated and what is needed in the changing times. Thus the Faculties have to strengthen their relationships with the private sector if they are to remain relevant. Giving the private sector an opportunity to decide on programs that should be adopted is a university policy that facilitates the adoption of relevant programs. On the other hand getting the feedback from the private sector could also improve the quality of the academic programs. However the university does not solely need to depend on the private sector as the source of feedback but consider other means such as end of semester exams.

The study also discovered that the Makerere University Private Sector Forum is playing a big role in the area of curriculum development. The Forum is involved in the curriculum reviews of the University every year; and since the Forum links the Public and the Private, Faculties get feedback from the industry about the performance of the graduates or internees, identify the discrepancies in them, and forward the public outcry to the Senate and changes in the

curriculum are made. Looking at the Annual Reports of the Department of Development and Planning of 2006/7, Faculties are urged to involve the stakeholders' in the curriculum development and reviews, so as to have relevant courses and content that can serve the needs of the society. The Department of Planning and Development also does carry out tracer studies which aim at finding out the private sectors needs, and then these needs are incorporated in the University curriculum, this practice if well strengthen it will greatly improve the quality of academic programs and the general university education.

The researcher inquiring about the purpose of the tracer studies to the University, the respondent from the Department of Planning and Development noted that due to the global changes, the University needs to embrace these changes, and move at the same pace with which the world is moving. The respondent further noted that with the development of the use of ICTs, there have been a lot of changes in the ways how information is transmitted globally, hence the students have to be taught or given content that can enable them compete globally. The program of tracer studies that is being initiated by the Department of Planning and Development is a stepping stone to success. If the community is involved and consulted during the planning of the University, and the researcher is convinced that this program will greatly improve academic programs being offered in the Universities.

### **Teaching and learning methods and how they have influenced the quality of academic programs**

Teaching in this study is understood as the process, activities and the means that facilitate learning in an organized environment like the faculty and the university in general. Learning on the other hand is perceived as a process that brings together cognitive, emotional, and

environmental influences and experiences for acquiring, enhancing, or making changes in one's knowledge, skills, values, and world views (Illeris, 2000; Ormorod, 1995 as cited by Wikipedia, 2008).

During the study, it was also established that to add more meaning to the teaching and learning process, all the Faculties visited hosted Guest Speakers from the private sector. This was either on a regular basis or occasionally. Respondents claimed that Guest Speakers make an impact to the learners by emphasizing on what they have been taught by their regular lecturers, and telling them what exactly is on the ground in the outside world. This idea was claimed by all respondents to be motivating the students and encouraged to work hard to achieve the best. While in an interview with the respondent of the Faculty of Technology the respondent remarked that:

...we do have guest speakers who come and talk to the students, and this in away inspires them... it also improves the quality of teaching and learning, and the academic programs in a sense that Guest Speaker are the people in the field where the graduates are heading. Therefore, talking or sharing with the person from the ground or the field of work gives the students an opportunity to understand how exactly they need to conduct themselves while out of the University. This also encourages the learners to perform better and be able to achieve what they intend to achieve...

The practice of using Guest Speakers and Guest Lecturers if well programmed and availed to the students, there is an opportunity for the improvement on quality of the academic programs. This however requires proper monitoring and programming in order to safe guard against the

misuse of the allocated time for the course. Secondly, course instructors have to ensure that the Guest Speakers have relevant information to pass on to the students and have appropriate time to do it. This would be done to also safe-guard against contradictions that may arise and cause student's distrust to their teachers.

In the Faculty of Technology, the situation is slightly different; students have formed Associations such as the Makerere Engineering Society, Makerere Association of Survey Students and Makerere Architecture Student's Association. These Associations jointly organize public talks with members from the Private Sector on every Thursday afternoon. Being in practice, these members from the Private Sector are doing the real things which the students are still leaning in theories. During the interviews the respondent from the Faculty told the researcher that:

... You see, these people (guest speakers) are in practice doing the real things on the ground which our students are still learning...when they come, they give our students current issues and practical examples, and also talk about the theories that are just giving them knowledge, but which are not practical in their situation and can only be applied to other situations. Thus these talks generally enrich what our students have been taught in class by giving practical examples....

It is therefore clear that the private sector does participate in the teaching and learning of the students; a practice that is intended to enrich the teaching and learning processes and the curriculum in general. Such a practice may facilitate the adoption of a good and relevant curriculum together with the relevant academic programs and course content. Considering the findings about the above issue, the study revealed that much effort is still needed in the

area of creativity and innovations in teaching and learning methods. This has however remained a challenge in some Faculties where it was noted that inviting Guest Speakers was at times unaffordable because it involved finances which seem to be very scarce. And in some instances Faculties have foregone these Guest Speakers and used their usual and common methods of teaching. Every activity in the university requires proper planning. The study thus established that failure to raise money to facilitate Guest Speakers could be attributed to lack of proper planning that the Faculties ignore some activities which are equally very important for their success. The fore going point of concern may not be a permanent problem. It could have a remedy and can thus be rectified any time. This however calls for proper planning of all the activities of the Faculties.

### **Adapting of the demand-driven courses**

Most of the Faculties have resorted to the adoption of demand-driven courses due to public demand. The respondents interacted with, reported that more courses are coming up and that the University has to embrace the changes accordingly. Asked how relevant these courses are to the society, all respondents explained that the University is out to serve the society. The consumers of University products are the ones coming up with their concern and demand for new courses, because of the need that they have identified. Hence through the collaborations and linkages with the private sector, demand-driven courses have been identified and introduced to the various Faculties in the University. During the interviews in the Faculty of Technology the respondent reported that all the courses that have been introduced to the Faculty since 1990 are demand-driven and also very academic. The respondent further noted that:

Academic programs such as Construction Management and Communications are very crucial for the society today because of the growing telecommunication industry in Uganda. The continued construction accidents in Kampala city that have claimed many lives in a short period can highly be attributed to lack of expertise and knowledge, and this problem in our country can only be solved by the introduction of the Construction Management Course and other related disciplines in order to produce experts in the area which the Faculty is already doing. The Faculty of Computing and Information Technology is an answer to the growing Information Communication Technology globally. Many other new courses in the Faculties of Agriculture and Social Sciences have all been adopted due to the changes that have taken place globally.

The private sector has played a leading role in identifying the demand-driven courses in various Faculties in the University. This could have contributed to the relevance and quality of academic programs that the University is offering to the students and the community in general. In an interview with the Personnel from the Department of Development and Planning about the role of the private sector in identifying demand driven courses the respondent observed that:

Keeping in touch with the private sector and involving them in University programs is one of the ways that we identify the demand-driven courses. The private sector informs us of what is needed, and where they feel the University has to come in. This normally comes up in the stakeholders meetings or conferences. ...the Department has also been undertaking a capacity building program for decentralization under the [i@mak.com](mailto:i@mak.com). And this has enabled people go deeper in the villages as to identify what the needs of people really are and

through this initiative, there are courses that have come out as a result of this program.

In support of the above argument are the response gathered from the Faculty of Agriculture about the same issue. The respondent reported that the role of the private sector in identifying demand-driven courses was very obvious as recipients of the University knowledge. He also added that before the University is aware of the changes that have taken place, the private sector has already experienced and turns to the University for help. In an interview in the Faculty of Agriculture, the Head of Department of Food Science reported that:

The role of the Private Sector in identifying demand-driven courses is very obvious. In real sense, it's not the academic institution which should decide on what programs or courses to offer the community, since the ultimate aim for most Universities, if not all, is to feed into the needs of the society...Thus, it is only the stake-holders that can advise the University on what kind of programs needed which are relevant to their needs, the level, and training whether theoretical or practical, hence playing a leading role in identifying the gaps in University training, which in the end improves the quality and relevance of the programs and the graduates.

The idea that the private sector is involved in the identification of demand-driven courses purges the emotions of those who are worried about the future of Public University Education. If the University joins effort with the consumers of knowledge, which is the private sector, there is much promise and a sign of hope for the improvement of the academic programs and the general University Education. However, much as the demand-driven courses seem to be dominating the

job market, the University should safe-guard against being misled by the private sector. The University also needs to carry out market survey for its products and do much research on the market sustainability in order to avoid producing more graduates in bigger numbers than the available job markets.

### **Evaluation of Faculty Programs**

Faculties do their own evaluation which is normally done internally, and in some Faculties there is use of appraisal systems. The most common methods of evaluation are mainly through examination of students, internally and externally, which is done at the end of every semester. The external examiners make reports which inform the concerned Faculties on whether their curriculum is still relevant or out-dated, and also make comments on where they think there is need to improve. Judging the students' performance, the external examiners inform the Faculties on whether their teaching is to the expected standard of the university through questions which are given to the students. External examiners further evaluate the students' responses to questions, and get to know whether students have been given the relevant content and given it well. The foregoing was revealed by the respondent from the Department of Food Science in the Faculty of Agriculture.

The researcher further discovered that the private sector also does the evaluation of the academic programs that are offered to the students in different Faculties. Through the contributions made during curriculum review meetings, and Strategic Plan making, the private sector indirectly evaluates the Faculty programs. Discussing with the Personnel from the Department of Development and Planning about how the University evaluates the academic programs, the respondent reported that; “the evaluation is done through the stakeholders conferences and

that one other major indicator of the University progress is through the continued increasing numbers of students applying for admissions in the university. The respondent went ahead to state that if the University was giving out-dated and irrelevant academic programs to the community, then the former would have responded by seeking admissions elsewhere, where demand-driven or quality academic programs are being offered. Scholarships from the local industry would have stopped, and the research grants and donations from international organizations would have also stopped.

Considering the above argument, one would conclude that the continued existence of Makerere University is because of its quality of academic programs, and its relevance to the community. However this does not give enough ground to judge the quality of the academic programs the University is offering. Individuals' continued admissions can be attributed to something else but not necessarily the quality of academic programs the University is offering. Factors such as its location, its history, the issue of finances, and many others, could account for the above claim. At this point, the researcher would like to observe that all the means and methods of evaluation being used in the University can lead to quality in academic programs. Continuous student assessment and feedback, from the private sector can always keep the Faculties on a right track. The evaluation process helps the Faculties to know how they are performing, and how much they have achieved, and what needs to be done to remain relevant to the people they are out to serve. This is because Faculties get to know the areas in which they are weak, and where they need to change or improve. Together with the Quality Assurance Board of the University, Faculties could improve on the quality of the academic programs and relevance. But more modes of evaluation should be sought for the betterment of the University.

Recently in the Faculty of Agriculture, the Department of Food Science organized what they called a Quality Audit. People from the Private Sector, the staff, and other academicians, were invited to attend. This researcher was also chanced to attend. During this gathering people were consulted on a number of issues concerning the services of the Faculty. They were requested to give their views on how the Department was fairing and where they thought changes were needed. This exercise helped the Department a lot to adjust accordingly; a practice which could be adopted by all other Faculties for better service delivery. According to the Dean and the Head of Department of Food Science, this exercise was one of the greatest evaluations they have had in a long time. The Faculty got a chance to exhibit what it offers to the community, and also engaged all the stakeholders in the formulation of Faculty programs and activities.

Private Sector participation in curriculum development has been registered in all the Faculties that were visited; a practice that seems to be taking a trend in the University. This means that the University has realized the need to involve the stakeholders in the general planning for the better delivery of its services to the community that it serves, and for the improvement of quality and relevance. This brings hope that in the long run, university graduates will be able to compete globally, and this practice may also lead to the reduction of the unemployment problem which is facing our society. The idea of involving the stake holders in the planning and curriculum development, improves the quality of academic programs and the relevance of graduates to society.

According to the documents reviewed, the issue of curriculum development is still contentious and has not been explored. Administrators of the University together with the stakeholders feel

that there is need to develop the curriculum according to the global and market demands which has not been fully addressed. It is noted that the curriculum has been a very thorny issue at Universities in East Africa for quite some time now. There have been heated debates on matters relating to standards of courses/ degrees, their scope, and their relevance to the current needs and the work environment, especially in industry. Harmonization of curricula, especially for courses taught in more than one Faculty or Institute is thought to have been on the top agenda in the list of priority issues in the university. Secondly there has been the expansion, diversification and modification of teaching programs, to ensure relevance and correspondence with private and public interests. A number of new courses including professional ones were established, and the existing ones modified. Attempts have also been made to focus the relevance of the curriculum to meet the needs of the broader community by offering a wide range of courses including vocational and professional ones that directly respond to public demand.

There has been an introduction of market-driven and globally demanded courses or academic programs at both undergraduate and post graduate levels in Makerere University. New programs such as the Master of Arts in Higher Education Studies offered at the East African Institute of Higher Education Studies and Development, School of Education was developed in collaboration with Oslo University –Norway and the University of Western Cape in South Africa. This began in the academic year 2008/9. In the academic year 2009/2010 the Faculty of Social Sciences developed a program in Property and Estate Management. In the Faculty of Agriculture and Technology, many new courses have also been developed, all aiming at producing the graduates who can compete in both the international and local job market. There is evidence that to address the challenges of quality caused by expansion, diversifications and modification of teaching programs have been devised. “The University took measures to maintain and improve academic standards by establishing the Quality Assurance Board to maintain and evaluate

academic standards” (Makerere University Annual Report, 2002).

It is further documented that several partnerships have been established to link the Makerere University to international institutions that enhance teaching and learning through comparisons to international best practices (Department of Development and Planning Annual Report, 2006). The speech by Dr Sengendo, Dean of Faculty of Arts on the Stakeholder’s Conference in 2008, he noted that Makerere University has taken up the challenge to bridge the gap between itself, primary stakeholders and the potential employers of the University graduates. Equally important is the University’s growing consciousness to bring to the fore-front the scholarly and research activities which are manifestations of academic qualities and standards at Makerere University. He emphasized that one of the objectives of the exhibition was that Makerere University needs to improve its linkages or network with stakeholders, parents of the students, development partners, employers and potential employers of its human resources.

Considering the efforts being put forward by the University in bringing the Private Sector on board, it is clear that the role of the private sector has been given great value. As one of the scholars have warned, the University should be on the outlook and safeguard against the need for making profits out of education but to benefit the trained student. Vocational and practical programs should be given much attention in order to make the graduates self sustaining and this could reduce the unemployment problems being encountered by graduates in developing countries like Uganda.

On the other hand, Ssesanga (2009) argues that in Uganda, market-driven reforms to higher education tend to be characterized as having an overriding concern with value for money at the

expense of value added. Some universities aim at getting money from the students but not considering the relevance of the courses offered to the lives of students after school. He goes ahead to observe that it is increasingly becoming apparent in some higher education institutions in Uganda that student concern is only possible within predetermined funding, and resource constrained parameters. And that those contemporary market-driven reforms to higher education will result in relegation and de-emphasis of educational ideals; and in turn, this may compromise the ideology that legitimizes a conception of education which emphasizes the development of a whole person and seeking of knowledge as a common good which is steadily being replaced by a political ideology sustaining its economic role.

In his conclusion Ssesanga (2009) observed that market oriented reforms in higher education in Uganda serve the business and industrial interests at the expense of educational goals and purposes. In such circumstances, it would be reasonable to assume that education has now become an arena where business can be conducted and profits made. Thus the University much as it is trying to address the global demands, it should be on the out look to prevent the foreseen tragedy that it might face if preventive measures against economic drives are not sought. This could be achieved through the formalization of relationships. The university should regulate these relationships through formulating the policies that could address the issue in question.

Furthermore, the survey done by the National Council for Higher Education in (2005) indicates that most of the programs in universities in Uganda were academic, and literally of no immediate relevance to the evolving Ugandan job market. Institutions have not outgrown the civil service-driven production of graduates of the 1960s. And yet there is a compelling case for realigning Higher Education provision to the rapidly changing demands of the knowledge-based

global and domestic markets which are increasingly driven by the private sector. Hence from this survey, it is clear that there are few forward and backward reciprocal linkages between the worlds of business, industry and academic. Few Institutions have bothered to carry out tracer studies to establish what is marketable, and to adjust or even overhaul their programs accordingly. Institutions have carried on with the argument that business and industry should be proactive in Higher Education provision by sponsoring program relevant to their labor need, in short, medium and long run instead of importing skilled labor.

#### **4.3 PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN FINANCING AND THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

For any organization to prosper it needs finances. Finances are very crucial for running the day to day affairs of the university; and, financing as a term can be understood as an act of providing the necessary capital. The Private Sector in Uganda has become a partner in the financing of public university education. With the increased demand for university education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, government has been overwhelmed and thus cannot finance education alone in the Public Universities. This has seen the emergence of the private sector in financing of Public University education. Development partners like the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation, the NORAD, Rockefeller, and many others have greatly supported the University financially more than the Ugandan local industry. This means that there is still need for the University to lobby the local private sector for more support and bring it on board in the running of the University affairs. Having the development partners highly involved in Planning, Curriculum Development and Financing in public universities is an indicator that the local private sector has not been fully sensitized and universities require more efforts to persuade and make them realize that they are part of the University system.

Faculties in Makerere University are trying to do their best to market themselves to the private sector. In those Faculties where the private sector has participated most there is a great improvement a sign that the private sector participation in the Faculties vary greatly in Makerere University. This means that if the private sector is considered and treated as a real partner, the quality of academic programs and general education in a University or Faculty will greatly improve. For example in the Faculties of Agriculture, Technology and the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology, there is a lot of improvement in terms of buildings, internet connection, teaching and learning facilities, equipments among others, all attributed to the private sectors involvement in Planning, Curriculum Development and Financing and the general teaching and learning environment which has improved the quality of academic programs.

### **Nature of the financial contributions from the private sector and its influence on the quality of academic programs**

The study discovered that the local industry has contributed finances to university education mainly through scholarships awarded to students, and grants and donations given to the University. The private sector has also contributed finances through the partnerships with the University Personnel for research. An interview with the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology, the respondent noted that the private sector especially the local industry has been so redundant in the financing of education, hence the Faculty has only depended greatly on student's fees and donations and grants from the development partners. During the interviews, the respondent noted that:

...the donors have highly supported research, but the local industries have not. Donors have given us money to facilitate conferences and publications. The Faculty has an International Journal which is supported by the donors, it also has an International Conference, still funded by the donors. The local industry is coming on board but is too slow....

The private sector does also give scholarships mostly to the undergraduate students and the biggest beneficiary from Madhivani Foundation is the Faculty of Technology. The Faculty of Technology has been blessed by the goodwill from the donor community; the Faculty also receives one million dollars every academic year for research from the private sector, mainly the donor community. Donors also do give scholarships to PhD students who happen to be the University staff and this has improved on the quality of the lecturers in terms of scholarship. Carrying out an interview in the Department of Planning and Development, one respondent in support of the above arguments observed that:

...the local industry or the private sector per the normal understanding of the word does really finance the University to a lesser extent. They are smaller in terms of numbers. For example we have Madhivani, Uganda Breweries limited giving some scholarship, Kulika and the Carnegie Corporation supporting girl's education, but still in small numbers in terms of scholarship awards...thus, I would say it is mostly the private students that contribute a lot to the University.

Furthermore the University development budget is fully financed by the private sector. There are a number of scholarships from the private sector specifically for post graduates and the beneficiaries are mainly the staff of the university. The University also gets research

grants from the private sector and most of the research that is being done in the university is not government financed. The fore going assertion is an indicator that the private sector through financing the university has improved the quality of academic programs.

The Faculty of Social Sciences got a donation of a CISCO Program which has helped the Department of Gender to raise some money to help in the running of the Department. During the interviews with the respondent from the Department of Gender, it was reported that funds raised from the SISCO Program has helped the Department to purchase computers that are being used in the Department. From these funds the Department has also managed to purchase a double cabin vehicle which helps as means of transport in the Department.

With the support from the donors, the building of the Department of Gender was erected. Similarly the Faculty of Technology has managed to acquire a number of computers from donor support, the expansion of the Faculty is also attributed to the private sector especially the international organizations, all these contribute towards the improvement of the quality of academic programs.

### **Private sector financing of research and its relevance to the community**

The private sector and mainly the donor community have funded research up to a tune of 100% as revealed by one respondent from the Department of Planning and Development during the interviews. The researcher inquiring about how relevant the research funded by the development partners and the private sector is to community the respondent from the Faculty of Computing and Information Communications Technology reported that “donors do not restrict the Faculties

or the University on what type of research to be. The procedure is that Faculties do write proposals to the donors and when the donors are in position to give the research grant, they do depending on the proposal that have been presented to them”. Thus donors have no influence or dictated on what should be researched on. He further reported that, “...the Faculty has an International Conference and International Journal and not being restricted on what should be published”. This implies that for those faculties that have not benefited from the private sector funds have been reluctant to follow the procedures of getting the funds or have other problems hindering them.

The study discovered that most of the research done in the entire University was externally financed. During the interactions with the respondents, it was revealed that there is a wide spectrum of donors willing to finance the research. Hence the choice of the donor and area of study lays in Faculty’s or University’s interest. Donors are always willing to fund the research that is relevant to the community in which it is being done. This has helped the researchers in the University to overcome the situation of compromising our society needs in the name of research; hence, the university is able to do relevant research.

It was further discovered that the development budget of the University is fully covered by the Private Sector, and the Government does not fund research at all except in rare cases like in the Faculty of Technology where the Government gives money for undergraduate student’s research projects. The private sector financing research is one of the ways of improving the academic programs of the university. It is however a challenge if government does not also come up to fund research. One wonders what would happen if the private sector stopped financing the research.

The Personnel from the Department of Planning and Development during the interviews reported that the challenge of the University has been the dissemination of the information to people or the community where the research has been done. The study also discovered that there is a lot of research out there (in the University lockers) which is very good but has remained in the academic circles and does not go back to the ordinary person. Such research improves the academic world because it has generated knowledge, and it could probably improve the curriculum because the University is predominantly a teaching institution. And people may benefit from it through the knowledge transferred to the students. The researcher learnt from the Department of Planning and Development that the University is working to see that the research is disseminated, a proposed program that has not yet been implemented.

The private sector has supported the Faculties in identifying areas of research. It has also given the Faculties grants for research and publications. But the challenge is that publications have remained in the University and have not been used as a tool to help the community. Asking the Head of Department of Food Science in the Faculty of Agriculture about the relevance of research done by the Department in relation to the private sector funding, the respondent noted that:

The Private Sector has supported the Faculty in identifying areas of research, it has also given the Faculty research grants and publications funds but the publications have remained in the University. Having participated in identifying areas of research and giving funds the private sector in a way has improved on the relevance and quality of the research. However, the information or research

findings are not disseminated; the information remains in the academic circles which have remained a great challenge to us as academicians but the research we are doing is indeed relevant.

The researcher wishes to note that much as the University has not afforded to disseminate the research finding to the community, at least something has been done in the area of research. Much as the community problems are not yet solved through the research that has been done, it is still better because the problems of community are known instead of keeping in the dark.

As academicians we cannot afford to lose hope; we have to remain positive and focused. It's however a challenge that the University Development budget is fully financed by the development partners and the private sector and yet the government does still have control over the public Universities. One may wonder what "public" means in the case of an Institution like Makerere University if the government is not fully participating and the term 'public' may get another meaning other than the already known.

In the interview with the Executive Director of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum on the role of the Forum in the area of research, it was noted that the forum identifies the research areas and link the public to the Private Sector, and also monitor on the quality of research that is being done in the University. Thus research being one of the academic programs in the University, there is no doubt that the Forum may lead to the improvement of research being done in terms of numbers and quality. If the entire stake -holders and the University have the similar understanding of the term quality, then the academic programs will be perfect to both the provider of education and the recipient.

However, discussing with the respondent from the Faculty of Technology about the role of the private sector in financing the activities of the Faculty, the respondent had a different approach to the understanding of the financing or funding bit of the private sector to the Faculty, an idea different from all other respondents. He argued that in the Faculty of Technology the issue of tangible or hard cash is never considered but rather the equivalent. While trying to evaluate the role of the Private Sector in funding the Faculty he observed that:

... We think the private sector is financing the Faculty in an indirect way. Giving our students training without any payment, and at times some industries pay our students when they are undergoing training. If one could compute how much the private sector would get from us for training thousands of students who go for training every year, would be a huge amount of money, thus their contribution towards our students training is too much of a financial contribution.

The argument raised by the respondent above is like an eye opener. Time and again the private sector has been criticized for not contributing fully to the University education while forgetting the role it has played in training the students during industrial training. The above assertion reveals that the Private Sector has played a big role in University education and thus requires to be credited for the work well done without demanding anything from the parents or the University. Internship or industrial training being a free service to the students has enabled all those supposed to go for training to get a placement and the required training in places of their choice. The main reason why continuing students go for industrial training is majorly to get hands-on experience and hence there is no doubt that this improves the quality of academic programs.

## **Conditions attached to the finances from the private sector**

During the study the researcher discovered that funds that Faculties get from the Private Sector, do not have any strings attached or conditions that can jeopardize the quality of research intended. This therefore means that the university is able to carry out whatever research which is relevant to the university and society as a whole. Despite the government's inability to finance research, the university can still do it as one of its core functions with the support of the private sector. As earlier noted, there is a wide range of Donors willing to fund different research projects in different areas of interest with well defined conditions. This allows the researchers to pick the donor who is within ones interest.

In trying to find out how much the Private Sector has met the Faculty budget, it was learnt that in the Faculty of Technology, the Private Sector met the Faculty budget 100% research and an estimate of 10% as a contribution of training that the students undergo during industrial training which they would have incurred. The major financial contribution is got from the private students who pay more than 60%. In other Faculties visited, respondents could not give the percentage in figures but only claimed that the Private Sector contributed a small percentage which was not sufficient but gave a little relief.

The financial contributions given to Faculties by the private sector have greatly improved the quality of the academic programs in the university. Research being one of the core functions of the university and an academic program has been facilitated mainly by the private sector. A university like Makerere cannot be worth its name if it is not engaged in research. Research as an academic program is what distinguishes it from a high school. Without research the university cannot be worth the name. The study has found out that if it was not for the private sector to

finance research, Makerere University would be just a teaching Institution not far different from other teaching institutions. Hence the role of the private sector in promoting and improving the academic programs in Makerere University cannot go unnoticed.

According to Makerere University Strategic Plan 2001-2006/07, institutional achievements are facilitated by governments, internally generated income and development partners. Whereas Government support and internally generated income cover current costs, the Private Sector is involved in the funding of research. For example, the SIDA and SAREC give support to the Faculty of Social Sciences, Technology and Agriculture for the implementation of National Environmental Development Research, related to environmental management. Furthermore, the reviewed University documents revealed that on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005 the Vice Chancellor officially endorsed a Ford Foundation funded grant of 135,000\$ to support activities of Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC) in establishing programs on economic, social and cultural rights. This indicates that the private sector involvement in financing the University is improving the academic programs being offered in the University. Sensitizing and teaching the community about their rights remains a very fundamental program for the well being of the community which helps in drawing boundaries between individuals in their day to day operations (Department of Development and Planning Annual Report, 2006).

In 2002, the Faculty of Agriculture received donation in form of grants from both foreign and national agencies, to support research which totaled to 1.5million U\$ Dollars. Funds were received from Rockefeller Foundations to support the planning process of the Faculty. The private sector is also involved in infrastructural development. For example, the three storied building for the Department of Gender, the Faculty of Information Communications

Technology five storied, the four storied building of the Faculty of Technology and the new building of Food Science.

During the financial year 2004/5 Makerere University received Donor Funds that amounted to 7 billion Appropriation in AID (AIA) was 32.2billion .The University has received considerable support from the Pfizer, DANIDA, USAID and Foundation on the sustenance of the Infectious Disease Institute at Mulago. The Norwegian Government through Institutional Development Program furnished the 8000 miters library of Makerere University in an effort to boost facilities which enhance the learning environment.

It was further noted that the Development Programs of the University are covered by the development partners under the following four major programs:

The NORAD Institutional Development Program

The SIDA/ SAREC Collaborative Research Program

The Carnegie Institutional Development Program

The Capacity Building Program for Decentralization funded by Rockefeller

Foundation and the World Bank;

The foregoing assertions are in agreement with the documents reviewed during the data collection. The University is mostly getting the financial support from the international organizations and the local private sector is not contributing enough. This means that if the local private sector does not get fully incorporated in the University system, the international private

sector could be demoralized. The study learnt that failure of the local private sector to participate in a public university could be an indicator that the University has not done its best to put on the stall what it has to offer the private sector or the private sector could also be limited financially. It is however not too late, the University can start to plan with the private sector for the betterment of the University and the community it is out to serve. Faculties that have not been in touch with the private sector could seek guidance from those that have greatly benefitted and have had nothing to lose other than improving the general wellbeing of their students, staff and the communities around them.

However the respondent from Makerere University Private Sector Forum remarked that the University should be on the look out to safeguard against the need to solicit money from the private sector, but rather aim at creating the mutual partnerships. During the interview the respondent noted that:

...in these partnerships, for the University to continue serving its purpose, it should not have an interest of getting money from the Private Sector but rather look for opportunity. The Forum goes to the Private Sector to look for opportunities of research, innovations and employment for university graduates...

Hence this study noted that the Forum aims at bringing together the University and the private sector because the two are compliments, the University is the provider of knowledge and human resource. The industry or the private sector on the other hand is the provider for money to carry out research and innovations and it is also the consumer of human resource produced by the University. Thus the two should not live in isolation and their relationship should be formalized

and be focused at building a strong linkage that can strengthen the general university system.

This study has considered the comment made by the Executive Director as a warning in the dealings between the private sector and the public university. This means that collaborations and partnerships should aim at improving the quality and relevance of university education, or else the quality will be compromised. This further means that Faculties should not look at money as a solution to all the problems being met but aim at marketing what they already have and build reputation by producing graduates who are very productive and able to function in any conditions of life.

Generally the private sector has done its best in participating in planning, curriculum development and financing of the Faculties and in this they have played an important role in improving the quality of academic programs in Makerere University. However the participation in different Faculties varies greatly. The Faculty of Technology and the Faculty of Agriculture have registered much progress especially in the quality of the academic programs and the general improvement of the Faculties. Despite the efforts displayed by the private sector in participating in the university affairs, a lot still requires to be done. Much campaign and persuasion needs to be done by the University to fully bring the private sector on board. Findings also indicate that the local industry has not fully participated and this may be because it has been financially constrained, and that could be the reason as to why it is not actively involved in the University affairs.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to establish the private sector's participation and the quality of academic programs in Makerere University. The question of participation was vital given the increased numbers of students' enrolment and the pressure and strain this has put on the government. In public universities, academic programs are the most crucial elements and act as pillars on which the institutions are built. And the involvement of the private sector in the decisions about the former cannot be ignored. Policy makers need information about the benefits of the universities in involving the private sector in educational planning, curriculum development and financing, so that they are able to put in place guidelines that will effectively facilitate the harmonious co-existence of the two.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study to draw conclusions and make recommendations that can be useful for the private sector, the university and the policy makers, in working out the means of co-existence in public university education. The discussion, conclusions and recommendations in this Chapter follow research objectives as outlined in Chapter One. Areas for further research will be suggested herein.

#### **5.1 Discussion**

Private Sector participation in Public University Education has revolutionary implications, but in order to achieve the potential benefits it is necessary to focus on its role as a partner and as a component of the university system. Isolating the private sector may render the academic

programs being offered in public universities irrelevant, if the potential beneficiaries are neither put at the forefront nor actively involved in its functioning.

Research findings reveal that local private sector especially the Industry and the Civic Society Organization have not extensively participated in university affairs especially in areas of Curriculum Development, Planning and Financing. However, the International Private Sector or the Development Partners have played a very big role especially in the areas of research through financing. This could be a threat to the future of the University if the local private sector does not come up together with the development partners to support public university education. As a result, the life span of the so far achieved success may be short lived and this could jeopardize the quality of the Academic programs.

### **Private sector participation in planning and its influence on academic programs in Makerere University**

Data reporting and interpretation of documentary text results and interview responses from the interviewed individuals in all the faculties that were visited reveal that the private sector is involved in the making of the Faculty Strategic Plans and the general planning of the University. However, the involvement is not at all stages of planning and thus has minimal influence on the quality of academic programs being offered in the University. Despite the fact that the private sector is not involved at all stages, the findings give hope to society and the academia that the graduates could be relevant and suitable for the job market since the planning involves all the concerned parties. Discussing the same issue Forojalla (1993, cited by Mbura 2004) believes that the survival of the education system in African countries will depend not only on systematic planning, but also on the greater contribution of each community towards the development

and maintenance of their local schools. In Agreement of the foregoing assertion Nkata (2004) in his paper on the conceptual map for university effectiveness observes that the success and effectiveness of a university depend on achieving results through effective management of resources, commanding peoples commitment to and involvement with the university and developing compliant survival instincts to the changing and competitive environment.

In support of the foregoing assertions is Pacciano (1998) who contends that there is need for collaboration in strategic planning which can well be done by involving internal and external stakeholders to achieve desirable goals and for better improvement on plans, stake holder's confidence in the leader and administration participation should be vital. However contrary to the above, Presthus (1997) contends that planning practices requires human resources with rich planning skills and abilities, individuals with professional capability of conducting organization planning, which planning practice involves application and utilization of high level intellectual knowledge and practical planning skills; the argument that is supported by other scholars such as Maden (1987) and Cohani (1990), as cited by Nkata (1996).

The foregoing observe that participatory process is suspect because it involves people who have less skills, are less accountable, and are less homogenous in nature, such that communities cannot bear the added expense in participatory process and that it can place greater power in the wrong hands of people. This implies that the private sector may not be in position to plan for the university. This study does not concur with the assertions put forward by the scholars above. Much as the private sector may not have the professional planning skills, it has to plan with the professionals as beneficiaries of the products and services of the university. The study findings reveals that the private sector is involved at the identification and prioritization of goals during

the making of the strategic plans and informally still during monitoring and evaluation. It is thus not involved throughout all the stages of planning as it should have been. In such circumstances, this may result into the unintended outcomes.

However, it was discovered that the role the private sector has played in planning has greatly improved the Universities' delivery of services. There are efforts put in place by the University to bring private sector on board in the functioning of the University. The establishment of the Makerere University Private Sector Forum is one of the means to achieving success, but there is still much effort needed in the marketing of the University to mostly the local private sector whose participation in the university has been found to be negligible.

Byarugaba (1994) argues that for effective policy formulation there has to be a linkage between the university and the stakeholders in policy areas, which will help in the securing of cooperation and reduces on conflicting interests that may arise. This assertion implies that the university has to involve the private sector in its affairs to ensure relevance and harmony between the two parties. On the other hand Namugalu (2002) in her study on internal stakeholder's participation in institutional planning reports that stakeholders are aware of their obligations in the planning of the institution, but there has been a lot of negligence on individual duties, the reason being that in most cases what is discussed in the meeting just remained on paper and never implemented, a cause for reluctance and withdrawal from the institutional business. The idea above could explain why the local industry does not actively participate in the University affairs, it at all the ideas contributed by the private sector during the meetings are not implemented or put into action. Hence if the assertion made above is true the private sector is likely to get demoralized. The university should thus consider the contributions made by the private sector of

great importance and value, if the latter is to truly benefit from the relationship.

On the other hand, Rivarola (1999) suggests that stakeholders should be more knowledgeable in what they are assigned to monitor if they are to be effective. This assertion may however not be applied in the situation of Makerere University because all the stakeholders are not necessarily trained, but they do participate because of their mere existence and automatically partners and components of a university system. For the university and the private sector to benefit fully from each other there has to be a clear guideline to help both parties in the monitoring. Much as the private sector is involved in the university affairs, the study revealed that it is not fully involved in the monitoring of the academic programs a gap that needs to be filled.

The respondent from Food Science reported that the idea of the private sector getting involved in the university affairs would be costly for the Faculty and that is why the private sector is at times left out. Monitoring is an exercise that requires finances, and in most cases faculties are financially constrained to even address the most crucial area of priority. The foregoing observation could be one of the explanations why the private sector is not fully involved in the university affairs; hence the study finds it difficult to judge the situation.

Never the less Taylor and Miroiu (2004) asserts that the final stage in the planning process is monitoring. The aim is to assess progress made towards achievement of the targets put forward and thereby inform the updating and revision of plans, including the introduction of new or amended targets and it also takes into account changing circumstances and environments. Thus the researcher observes that if the private sector is not involved in the monitoring exercise then it is almost time wasted for the private sector to even participate in the initial stages but fail to complete the process or the exercise. On the other hand however, the private sectors

contributions are very crucial for the university's survival. As the saying goes better half of a loaf than nothing. In support of the foregoing argument is Banach & Gregory (2001), who asserts that stakeholders offer important insight into each phase of program planning, implementation and evaluation. Stakeholders are most commonly involved at the beginning stages of program planning. They are able to provide insight for the various needs that a program or curriculum should meet. Experience shows that once the goals have been set in the first part of program development, stakeholders are sometimes not consulted in latter stages of program implementation and evaluation. This is unfortunate because stakeholders have the potential to illuminate issues and needs during the course of program implementation.

### **Private sector participation in curriculum development and its influence on the academic programs in Makerere University**

The study findings revealed that the private sector has done an extraordinary role in curriculum development especially in identifying the demand-driven courses and identifying areas of research. The above finding shows the involvement of the private sector and their contribution towards the improvement of the academic programs. Banach & Gregory (2001), supporting the finding argue that stakeholders offer important insight into each phase of program planning, implementation and evaluation, and that they are able to provide insight for the various needs that a program or curriculum should meet.

However contrary to the above observations, Mbura (2004) argues that if a new program or course is to be introduced the idea should start at departmental level up to the university council. His study is however not in agreement with the above scholars. He seems to be limiting his judgment to the school environment and one wonders how a Department could come up

with a new course without carrying out a needs assessment with the stake holders or the private sector. Hence, stakeholder involvement is based upon the belief that expertise does not lie solely with program professionals. Stakeholders are persons or organizations that have investments in the content of a program, or in the dissemination and evaluation of a program (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999).

The study further learnt that participatory curriculum development may lead to the improvement of the quality of academic programs being offered at Makerere University. This finding is in agreement with Anita (2000) who noted that participatory curriculum development has the objective of promoting mutual learning and revise and actualize the curriculum with involvement of all stakeholders. To be able to develop a meaningful curriculum it is necessary to have insights on the overall study situation and specific subject matter features and this can effectively be done with the efforts of both the university and the stakeholders. The researcher is convinced that the more the private sector is involved in curriculum development of the university the higher the chances of improving the quality of academic programs as well as the relevance of the courses to the society.

The study further discovered that the private sector involvement in curriculum development has helped the university to come up with new programs which are mainly demand-driven and identifying the critical areas of research. This means that the university and its products will remain relevant to the society as long as the private sector is involved in the curriculum development exercise. This is because the private sector is being a consumer of the university products and a curriculum designer for the products. Concerning the fore going argument Ssesanga (2004) observes that in Uganda commodification of higher education is

steadily paving way to the introduction of explicitly consumerist policies, dominated by free market and individualistic impulses. He goes ahead to say that higher education in Uganda is has entered a variety of purchaser/provider relations. The fore going argument is however ignoring the fact that the situation that higher education institutions are in today demands consumer and provider relationship. Gone are the days when higher education was a real public good, provided freely by the government.

However El Sawi (1996) asserts that without a critical analysis of the situation and the needs of people, a wonderful curriculum may be made but the needs of the immediate beneficiaries may not be addressed. It is therefore essential to have a large variety of stakeholders involved in the curriculum development process the idea the study is seeking to find. The study however remains skeptical about the idea of the University concentrating on demand-driven courses which could result into compromising of other academic courses which are equally relevance and important to society. This leaves the study with unanswered questions of how sustainable is the demand or market for the demand-driven courses? What will happen if the demand for the current demand-driven courses goes down? How relevant will the graduates be to society if the demand goes down? All these areas need to be explored before the University is put into jeopardy by its own stake-holders and society that it is out to serve.

The study in the above observation is based on the idea that the private sector may not be in position to assess market sustainability, and this means that the University has to be careful and try to carry out a market survey of its products before introducing the new courses that are being demanded. The study further found out that most of the embraced demand-driven courses are not much into training self-fulfilling graduates, who are able to be innovative and creative. On

the above note, Gudmund and Michael (2000) observe that “in the knowledge economy, the value of goods and services is not only measured by their price, but also by the amount of new knowledge they embody the knowledge sector of the economy is the one responsible for the greatest contribution to growth and job creation”. This implies that demand-driven courses should empower the graduates to be job creators and not job seekers. The foregoing scholar’s assertion is contrary to the study’s findings. Apart from the Findings from the Faculties of Technology and Agriculture that indicate student’s involvement in practical work as technically expected the other Faculties are just giving new courses, but not necessarily ones that will help the graduates to be job creators.

To develop the curriculum further the study discovered that the University sends students for industrial training, the practice which is claimed to have greatly improved the quality of Academic programs in the University. It was learnt that students get to put into practice what they have learnt theoretically, a benefit to the students undergoing training and the graduates. However the study also discovered that the time allocated for industrial training or internship is rather short to allow the student to put all that have learnt into practice. Out of the six to eight Semesters allocated for full program or course training, only one semester is allocated for internship or industrial training. On the same issue Mulumba (2004) reveals that the three months the students spent in industry training had neither significant positive nor negative effect on that was offered to students. The students acquired reasonable hands-on skills. This practice is however very relevant to both student and the university.

However, the above observation means that in future the university may need to review the students study calendar to allocate enough time for training for better results. More time could be allocated to this training since this seems to be the core of the courses that are being offered.

In future the university could re-plan the time schedule for internship, the idea that may greatly improve the development and implementation of the curriculum which may facilitate the improvement of the quality of the academic programs. The private sector will have more time with students to be able to train them and help them accordingly.

Generally the private sector has done its best in the area of curriculum development which has facilitated the improvement of the academic programs. Despite the fact that the private sector is not involved in all stages of curriculum development, its contribution cannot go unappreciated. Identifying the demand-driven courses may help the university to solve the problems of the society which it serves. Furthermore the involvement of the private sector may help in improving the quality and relevance of the courses being offered and could also help in sieving out the old and irrelevant programs that are no longer of the use.

### **Private sector involvement in financing and its influence on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University**

Finally, the study disclosed that the private sector is involved in the financing of University Education. The local industry has contributed to the financing of Makerere University through awarding scholarships to students and partnering with the university in the areas of research; a contribution which has been found negligible but again cannot totally be ignored. This means that the University has a big task of persuading the private sector to get involved in the University affairs. On the same issue Musingo (2004), in his study on the incorporated financial contributions of the private sector and its implications, notes that if Universities in Uganda are to perform effectively and efficiently, the business sector has to be fully incorporated into the management dynamics of these universities. The above assertion concurs with the study and

the researcher maintains that for effective delivery of services to the society, the private sector has to be fully incorporated in the university general planning, curriculum development and financing.

The private sector especially the development partners have played a very big role in the financing of almost all the research that is being done in the University. The study further communicated that the development budget of the University is fully financed by the development partners. Development partners have not only stopped at funding research but also given scholarship grants to especially the post graduates and post Doctoral to University staff. Scholarship grants aim at improving the staff academic and of course will affect the lives of the beneficiaries positively by becoming more informed. In a way this improves the quality of academic programs if the university can have highly trained staff deciding and advising on the matters of curriculum and planning strategies and are also the same colleagues who teach the students, carry out research and supervise the research projects in the university.

However, Obiechira (1996) expresses his discomfort about the issue of donors giving assistance to the university. He argues that the financial contributions from donors may mislead the university managers which can lead to the compromising of the university principles, the fact that international aid may be seen by the givers as an instrument of foreign policy enabling them to guide and mould the opinions in the receiving countries in their favor. With such an assertion, the university is left with no option if the local private sector is not brought on board. This however cannot stop the university from getting the donor funds, but the administrators should be on the look out to safeguard against any unwanted outcomes.

However the study learnt that the financial contribution by the private sector does not negatively influence the quality of the academic programs being offered by the university. It is clear that the local industry's financial contribution is mainly through scholarships. A few and countable Industries do give scholarships to a few students. On the other hand, the International Private Sectors do cover the development budget of the University. Almost all the research that is being done in the entire University is financed by the international private sector or the development partners. Hence much more efforts to sensitize the local private sector are still needed, if the university is to continue serving the society.

Generally, the quality of academic programs has improved and may continue improving if more effort is put in planning, curriculum development and financing. On the other hand Blankstein (1996), cited by Neema-Abooki (1999), contends that quality requires all individuals to work co-operatively for the benefit of every one. In support of the above scholar, Kaggwa (2002) observed that lack of involvement of all the stakeholders in the general planning and curriculum development highly affected the quality of programs in Ndejje University. Hence this study noted that there is still a need for Makerere University to open up opportunities and avenues for the private sector's involvement and participation in the university affairs including financial aspects.

Considering the study findings, it is clear that the more the private sector is involved in the University functioning, the higher the chances of the general improvement of the university. This argument is based on the findings gathered from Faculties such as the Faculty of Technology and the Faculty of Agriculture and particularly the Department of Food Science, where the private

sector has participated most. This study has treated the Faculty of Technology as a model Faculty of all those covered by the study, where the private sector's participation is very evident. This means that if the private sector is actively involved in the running of the university, there will be significant improvement on the quality of the academic programs which could also improve on the quality of graduates. Other Faculties could seek guidance from the Faculty of Technology on how they have managed to fully incorporate the private sector into the running of the Faculty affairs especially the academics.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn as a result of the research work carried out in the area of private sector participation and its influence on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University.

### **(1) Planning**

The findings of this study indicate that there is no policy put in place to guide the participation and involvement of the private sector into University planning, and hence there is still a need to involve all the stakeholders in the planning of the university at all stages.

### **2. Curriculum development**

The private sector is involved in the curriculum development of the university and its influence on quality of academic programs has been felt. However there is still a need to involve all the stakeholders in all stages of curriculum development if maximum quality of academic programs is to be achieved.

## **(2) Financing**

The financing of University education requires both Public and Private Resources. The involvement of the private sector into the financing of University education may increase the University's efficiency and help in maintenance of its quality and relevancy. The local industry does not contribute reasonably to the financing of University education, especially in the area of the research which is very crucial as one of the University academic goals. The University has not done its best in 'selling' its programs to the private sector and there is no strong linkage between the two entities.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Following the discussion of the results and the conclusions therefrom, this study recommends the following measures and strategies that the government and the University should take to improve on the quality of academic programs in Makerere University as follows:-

- (1) There should be a formulation of University policy on private sector involvement and participation in University planning; a clear policy formulated by all the stakeholders in the university to make all the actors accountable and aware of their roles. Constant consultation between the university and the stakeholders should be considered and given a priority. This will enable the private sector to actively participate as part of the University system which could strengthen and greatly improve the quality of Academic programs being offered.
- (2) For a University to continue existing, it is dependent on the curriculum design and development relevant to the society where it exists. This curriculum development can only achieve relevancy if all the stakeholders are involved. The private sector can be

involved in identifying the needs of the society and identifying the content and subject matter which will suit and or serve as a basis to address the needs of the beneficiaries. Thus this study recommends that public universities in Uganda especially Makerere, should endeavor to always involve the private sector in curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation of the content and the methods of teaching in a bid to improve the quality of academic programs.

- (3) The University has to do everything possible to involve the private sector especially the local industry in the area of financing, through directly involving them in the university management. This can be achieved through marketing the University to all the stakeholders, and creating awareness that the University is faced with a great challenge and difficulties related to financing. A strong financial management committee that includes members from the private sector should be established to ensure efficiency in the use of the little available finances. The government together with the University and the private sector can design a policy that clearly defines the relationship between the two.

#### **5.4 Areas for further research**

Private sector participation and its influence on the quality of academic in the public universities require further research. To this effect, more research requires to be done not only in planning curriculum development and financing but also in other areas like:

- 1) The efforts put in place by public universities to further persuade and involve the private sector in university management.
- 2) Private sector participation in financing of public universities and its influence on the quality of education and research in public universities.
- 3) Private sector participation in the University budgeting and its influence on the quality of education in Public University education.
- 4) A replication of study could be done but defining the private sector as parents and students.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX ONE**

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DEANS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS**

##### **Beginning**

1. What is your academic background?
2. How long have you been the Dean of this Faculty/School/Institute?
3. What are your specific responsibilities and activities as head of this Faculty/ School/ Institute?
4. What has been your experience as a Dean to this Faculty/School/Institute?

##### **Planning**

5. How is the private Sector involved in the identification and prioritization of goals in the Faculty/School/Institute? What is their role in identifying the demand-driven courses?
6. Are there policies put in place to control or clearly define the role of the Private Sector and the academic authority in your faculty? What role has the private sector played in the area of research in this faculty?
7. How is the Private Sector involved in the development of faculty strategies? What are the efforts put in place to produce a relevant and dynamic graduate suiting both the local and the international job market?
8. What is the role of the private sector in monitoring and evaluation of the programs in this faculty? How is it involved in regular reviews and monitoring of the Faculty programs? How does this help in the general improvement of the quality of academic programs?

## **Curriculum development**

9. How is the private sector involved in decisions about the aims and objective of the curriculum? How often is the curriculum of the faculty reviewed? What is the role of the private sector in the curriculum review?
10. What is the role of the private sector in curriculum design and development? How does this influence the quality of the academic programs?
11. Does the Faculty normally invite guest speakers from the private Sector to come and teach or to talk to the learners about what they are expected of in the field?
12. How does the faculty carry out evaluation of the faculty programs? What is the role of the private sector in the evaluation process?

## **Financing**

13. What is the nature of the financial contributions from the private sector to your faculty i.e. donations, grants scholarships etc.? How sufficient is it?
14. Do these donations/grants/scholarships have strings attached? How does this influence the quality of the academic programs offered in the faculty?
15. How has the private sector met the faculty budget? With what percentage? How do you evaluate the role the private sector has played in your faculty?
16. How has the private sector supported the faculty in terms of research and publications? How has this influenced the nature and relevance of publications?

## **APPENDIX TWO**

### **MAKERERE UNIVERSITY PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. What is the role of the forum in the university?
2. Are you involved in the planning of the university?
3. If yes, at what stage and in what areas?
4. Do you participate in the curriculum development of the university?
5. Are there measures that the forum have put in place to improve the quality of Makerere University?
6. Is the forum in any way involved in the financing of the university?
7. Is there anything that we have not discussed that you would like to share with me?

## **APPENDIX THREE**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

- 1) What are the major duties of this Department?
- 2) How is the private sector involved in the planning of the University?
- 3) How is the private sector involved in curriculum development of the University?
- 4) To what extent/percentage does the private sector finance the University?
- 5) What is the nature of financial contributions does the university get from the private sector?
- 6) How is the private sector involved in the financing of research in the university? How does this involvement influence the quality and relevance of research?
- 7) What is the role of the private sector in the monitoring and evaluation of the academic programs in the university? How is the evaluation of the academic programs being done in the university?
- 8) How would you assess the local industry's participation in the university? What has been done by the university to market itself to the private sector especially the local industry?