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Uganda: Schools That Dominated Government Scholarships

BY CONAN BUSINGYE, 3 JUNE 2012

Parents looking for a school for their child with the aim of getting a government scholarship need not look further. This year, the same schools that dominate O and A level exams have taken centre-stage.

Mengo SS, Namirembe Hillside, St. Mary's SS Kitende, Uganda Martyrs, Namugongo, Gayaza High School, Naalya SS and St. Anderea Kahwa SS in Hoima sent the most students to public universities on government scholarships.

Other schools include Buddo SS, Mityana SS, Makerere College School, St. Mary's College, Kisubi, Seeta High School, Jinja SS and Crested SS, a study conducted by Mwalimu reveals.

Ntare School and Trinity College Nabbingo also did well in the arts and humanities.

The traditional schools have always topped the list of students being admitted to public universities under the government scholarship scheme, but it should be noted that some private schools are gradually breaking into those ranks.

St. Mary's SS, Kitende topped business administration, development economics, medicine and surgery,

The school also topped the lists for pharmacy, fisheries and aquaculture, information technology, quantitative economics and environmental sciences.

Uganda Martyrs, Namugongo also led in a number of courses including civil engineering, electrical engineering and international business.

The analysis, which was based on the government admissions list for this year, noted that 300 schools dominated although Uganda has about 12,000 examination centres for secondary schools.

For close to half a decade, the Government has not been funding a number of arts course because they are not thought to be a priority to the country's development.

This has affected the girls, since a few of them study science combinations at A'level.

This is also reflected in the admissions for this year. Of the 2,521 candidates admitted, only 38% or 967 are female, with their male counterparts taking 62% or 1,554 slots. The same trend has gone on for years in all the public universities.

The Mwalimu study also confirms the general perception that several university graduates in the competitive professions, come from traditional schools.

For instance, Makerere University's graduation records over the last decade show that schools like St. Mary's SS, Kitende, Uganda Martyr's SS, Uganda Martyrs, Namugongo, Mt. St Mary's College, Namagunga, King's College Budo, Kawempe Muslims SS, and Gayaza High school lead in a number of science professions.

Students who apply on private sponsorship almost register the same strength of schools like on government sponsorship. Schools which were are leading on Government scholarship will most likely also lead in private admissions.

Save for this analysis, a number of students are expecting to be admitted through the private scholarship scheme.

More so, records at Makerere University show there is a 5 percent drop-out rate of government students, but this implies that almost all students who join university graduate.

However, there is a slightly higher number of students on private sponsorship who fail to graduate. This is partly attributed to problems with school fees.

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