

The Third Mission of Universities in Tanzania: Understanding the Needs and Expectations of the Society

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Outline

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Background



- This presentation is based on a mini study carried out about three years ago to kick off a larger and much wider Unidev. project on the changing roles of universities.
- Traditionally universities have only two major roles: teaching and knowledge generation (research).
- Universities are now increasingly urged to engage directly with the society – the so called “third mission” .
- The precursors to this can be traced back to two decades ago, involving few developed countries, but the wave is now swiping throughout the world

Background Cont..

- The wider Unidev. project is about understanding the third mission of universities.
- Especially its drivers and dynamics in different social and economic contexts.
- Major policy objectives is to make universities to be of better service to the society.
- The project involves 10 countries, Tanzania inclusive, and Coordinated by RPI, Lund University.
- Before turning into specific objectives and results of the mini study, we elaborate on the concept of the third mission as context for the study.

The concept of the third mission of universities



Definition

- Traditionally the role of universities was to a large extent, limited to teaching and the generation of new knowledge (research), disseminated in the form of codified knowledge (publications).
- To date Universities are increasingly being considered as direct instruments of social and economic development, especially in wealth generation.
- The new role of universities as entrepreneurs and direct contributors to social and economic development has been characterized as a *third mission* (Thorn, 2006).

The concept of the third mission of universities Cont.

Origin

- The concept is not new in the real sense. Since the inception of universities, more than a century ago, agriculture universities through their research has increased farmers income through their research on new varieties, disease resistant crops (e.g. land grants universities in the US, such as Iowa State University).
- However, the direct involvement of universities in social and economic development has recently taken a new turn. It is as subject of much debate and policy focus throughout the world.

The concept of the third mission of universities: Origin cont..



- What underpinned this transformation was the change that occurred in the nature and the process of innovation.
- With the emergence of new science-based technologies, such as biotechnology and ICT, university research that is cutting-age has come to play a greater role in industrial innovation.
- But codified knowledge cannot just be passed on, as any knowledge is combination of tacit and codified (the so called absorptive capacity, Cohen and Levinthal, 1989).
- This means that university researchers have to directly be involved in innovation, if their research has to contribute to it.

The concept of the third mission of universities: Origin cont.



- The direct involvement of university researchers was to a large extent in terms technology transfer activities and spin off-companies.
- Early indicators of this involvement came from US universities such MIT and University of Wisconsin
- It was to a large extent market driven.
- It later spread to other universities in the US and elsewhere in the world, especially after the passage of the Bay-Dole Act of 1980.
- This was seen as a third mission, and universities that embrace the three missions become 'entrepreneurial universities' (Etzkowitz ,1997).

The concept of the third mission of universities: Origin cont.

- As a result, universities are now assessed not only in terms of number and quality of students they produce, and amount and quality of publications, but also revenues from contracts, numbers of patents granted, number of spin-off firms produced (Laredo, 2007).
- According to Laredo whatever the country and the policymaker, the above are now the indicators.
- Given some HE policy directives, I think we can confirm claim by Laredo, even for Tanzania.

Major Objective and Rationale of the Study



- While for most developed countries the trigger for the third mission came from the market pull, for most poor countries it is believed to be a push from governments and donors.
- But what are the real societal needs that should be fulfilled by the university?
- The mini-study was focused in answering the above question, with two major objectives:
 - 1) To find out the society's needs and expectations on the third mission of the University.
 - 2) To find out the extent to which these needs have been fulfilled.

Methodology

- **General Study Approach**
 - Exploratory and qualitative in nature
- **Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**
 - Head hunting, with no systematic sampling procedures; targeting those in midlevel and senior positions in respective organizations.
 - **The following sample was involved:**
 - 18 respondents from the University (UDSM, SUA and Tumaini).
 - 24 from other constituencies in the country (Government, Political Parties, Business and NGOs).
- **Data analysis techniques**
 - content analysis.

Categories of Interviewees.

Category	Number of Interviewees
Government	7 (both local and central governments)
Business Community	7
University	18
Civil Society	6 (NGOs and Political Parties)
Total	42

Summarized Findings on the 3rd Mission – Societal Needs and Expectation



Government	Civil Society	Business	University
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Create new knowledge for the industry 2) Study local environment and identify wrong and improper practices, and provide advice 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participate in socio-cultural and economic debates e.g. University remained silent in about 15 years of privatization 2) Assist the industry 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Orient in solving social and economic problems facing the country. 2) Interact more with the business community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Produce knowledge 2) Translate knowledge into goods and services in every walk of life. 3) Bridge the gap between R&D and industry.

Summarized Findings on Societal Needs and Expectation Contd.



Government	Civil society	Business	University
<p>3) Ensure provision of knowledge relevant to changing technology</p> <p>4) Address problems encountered by the society in general</p> <p>5) Produce human resources</p>	<p>3) University should play a critical role and have critical voice on all industrial matters.</p> <p>4) Establish projects for the disadvantaged e.g. women</p>	<p>3) Should engage more on the dissemination of its research findings to industry and business in general.</p>	<p>4) participate in community outreach programs</p> <p>4) update information on new technologies</p> <p>5) Create educated human resources for the society</p>

Societal Perception on the Status of Linkage between University and the Industry



Government	Civil Society	Business	University
<p>Worked Well</p> <p>-None</p>	<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) Practical training otherwise very little exist</p>	<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) Consultancy services, but weak</p>	<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) Consultancy services</p> <p>2) PT</p> <p>3) Producing human resource</p> <p>4) Long list*</p>
<p>To some extent</p> <p>1) Consultancy, but quality poor</p>	<p>To some Extent</p> <p>1) ICT Training</p>	<p>To some Extent</p> <p>1) Cleaner production campaign.</p>	<p>To some Extent</p> <p>1) Research</p> <p>2) Product development,</p>

Societal Perception on the Status of Linkage between University and the Industry Contd.



Government	Civil Society	Business	University
<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) Consultancy being commercial rather than provision of expertise and therefore poor quality.</p>	<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) Demand driven research</p> <p>2) Advocacy for entrepreneurship for its graduates -still job seekers,</p>	<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) Relevance of knowledge</p> <p>2) Joint forum between university and business sector</p>	<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) Contribution to national debates, e. g the issue of energy crisis.</p> <p>2) Contribution to industry, because of its small size.</p>

Societal Perception on the Status of Linkage between University and the Society in General



Government	Civil Society	Business	University
<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) none</p>	<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) Socially useful projects, such as Mlimani City</p> <p>2)The role of REDET</p> <p>otherwise university is isolated from the public.</p>	<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) the role of REDET in politics</p>	<p>Worked Well</p> <p>1) Production of graduates in various fields</p> <p>2)Consultancy</p> <p>3)Democratization</p> <p>:The role of REDET</p>
<p>To some extent</p> <p>1)Extension service to farmers</p>	<p>To some extent</p> <p>1)Advocacy of university activities</p>	<p>To some extent</p> <p>1)None</p>	<p>To some extent</p> <p>1)Advice the Government on important policy issues.</p>

Societal Perception on the Status of Linkage between University and the Society in General

Cont..



Government	Civil Society	Business	University
<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) University should not wait for commissioned consultancies, but be proactive.</p> <p>2) Masons do more buildings than contractors</p>	<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) Provision of knowledge in non-traditional fields such as gender</p> <p>2) knowledge generated not relevant to societal problems solving .</p>	<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) University influence on policy making, especially for the private sector.</p> <p>2) Publications not relevant to the business sector</p>	<p>What did not Work at all</p> <p>1) There is no organized strategic thinking on key issues facing the nation.</p>

Summary and Some Concluding Remarks.



- Society in general seem to be dissatisfied with the role our universities are/should be playing. Government seem to be the most dissatisfied.
- Consultancy seem to be an overriding activity of a university for the industry, but quality poor
- Strange that it is only the university and the government who realizes role of universities as source of trained human resources. Where do university graduates go?
- Needs and expectations of the society are so diverse and a lot is expected from the university. Important question is whether the university should be doing all these.

Summary and Some Concluding Remarks: Important concluding questions



- What should be the third mission of Universities in Tanzania, and how should it be determined. This is important in developing indicators for evaluating performance of our universities.
- All categories of respondents believe the role of a university is to help the industry. What should be the specific role of University? Especially because currently little exist in terms of linkage between the university and the industry? There are also other players, such as public R&D organizations.

Thank You very Much for Your Attention