

## EXTERNAL CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES PROGRAMMES IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF UGANDA

Grace Lubaale  
Kyambogo University

---

### ABSTRACT

This study which ventures into the Challenges of Development Studies Programmes (DSP) in Contributing to the Development of Uganda attempted to unravel and establish the specific challenges of Development Studies Programmes offered at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) and Makerere University Kampala (MUK). Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed so as to provide the necessary triangulation for getting a more composite data to articulate better the findings. Further, a descriptive research design specifically a case study was adopted in order to secure in-depth data regarding challenges of DSP offered at UMU and MUK in contributing to the development of Uganda. The study used a sample size of 260 respondents using research instruments of a semi-structured questionnaire, interview guide, and check list. The study established challenges as; Unemployment, corruption, poverty, working environments, professional body, gender and young age of graduates and finally government policies. To overcome the aforementioned challenges, the study recommends quality teaching, think tank, policy formulation and forming a professional body. It is hoped that if implemented, DSP will be able to contribute a great deal to the development process of Uganda.

© Ideal True Scholar

**KEYWORDS:** development, development studies, external challenges, uganda,

---

### INTRODUCTION

Higher Education is a cardinal tool for development because it equips people with knowledge, values/attitudes and skills, plus professionalism that transforms society economically, socially, and politically thus attaining holistic development. However, Uganda presents a real paradox in relation to the contribution of DSP to her development. On one hand, while it was envisaged that DSP would be key to the development of Uganda through production of skilled human resource and research which would eventually lead to the creation of relevant knowledge, attitudes/values and skills for development, there are few empirical facts to augment that thesis. Despite the fact that over 25 universities in Uganda by 2015 were producing hundreds of graduates in various programmes of development studies per year, On the other hand, development indicators show that the effect is still low. For example existence of bad tendencies /vices such as corruption, poverty, inequalities, and unemployment which should have been greatly reduced if holistic development was taking place, just continued to persist. To make matters worse, empirical information to account for such a paradox were lacking. This directly suggests that there are challenges facing the programmes in producing graduates who are able to contribute effectively Uganda's development hence this study to unravel them and suggest recommendations to avert the deploring situation.

---

### METHODOLOGY

Using a case study and survey research design, the researchers studied 260 respondents from UMU and MUK, lecturers, employers and managers of university. The study principally targeted DSP graduates from UMU and MUK living and working in Uganda who graduates either with Bachelors, Masters or Doctorates degrees in development studies. The study revealed that UMU had produced 1025 graduates from (2000-2014). On the other hand, MUK had produced 1425 graduates from (2000-2014). Therefore in total, UMU and MUK have produced 2450 graduates out of which 1047 (42.7%) are males and 1403 (57.3%) are females thus females being the majority. Amin (2005) & Kaahwa (2008) support the use of 10% as sample size thus the study using 10% hence its application in this study (10% of 2450 study population = 245) respondents as sample population from the study population of graduates. Therefore a total of 245 graduates using snowball strategy, purposive, and convenient sampling methods were studied, 104 (41.8%) and 141 (58.2%) from MUK). This enabled the researcher to establish the performance of these graduates in the field. Further, to establish the relationship between their field of work performance and what they studied.

Using stratified sampling and purposive, 15 academic staff and university managers were studied because they are at the centre of curriculum innovation, design and implementation of DS, funding and regulation formation of the teaching –learning process of DSP

The self administered questionnaire and interview were used as main methods of data collection, although they were supplemented and complemented by the discussion guide and documentary review. Primary data were collected from the respondents while secondary data was obtained from the documentation review. The process of data analysis involved editing, coding, tabulation, and interpretation of data and eventual presentation of data in form of tables, percentages, and explanatory.

## FINDINGS

**Unemployment:** The results of this study reveal unemployment as a serious challenge to graduates of DS. Research findings reveal that 34 (17%) of the respondents are suffering from involuntary unemployment and this limits their ability to contribute to the development process because they have no opportunity to exercise their knowledge. The other 20 (10%) are suffering from voluntary unemployment in which they are at home particularly female graduates producing and raising children. Besides, their husbands or boyfriends are working and therefore they can buy everything at home. One graduate told the researcher that:

I had a job, where I was earning 500,000 Ugandan shillings, and contributing to the development process when I got married, my husband told me to stop working, raise his children and he will pay me 750,000 Ugandan shillings per month and I stopped.

In such circumstances, such graduates are unable to make effective contribution because of their attitudes and surrounding environment.

**Corruption:** One of the greatest challenges of graduates in Uganda's development process is corruption. In all this, the graduates find themselves consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly corrupt. As Lubaale (2012) refers to corruption as any behaviour contrary to the formal duties, obligations, agreements and rules /regulations for private interests. The study reveals how graduates find it difficult to make any possible change slightest they lose their jobs, demoted, hated by colleagues and supervisors, or even die. In addition, they may miss being served or promoted at a given point in time when they will be in need if they do not serve some people now at their point of need in unscrupulous manner. The town clerk of Kayunga district himself a graduate of DS on (24<sup>th</sup> September, 2007 at interview in Kayunga) said: "It is very difficult for a single individual like me to influence an "ill" system suffering from the cancer of corruption".

No wonder the corruption in the district to the extent of Inspector General of Government suspending the

Local Council (LC) V Chairperson from office and banning him from contesting for an elective office in the next five years because of alleged involvement in corruption. Further, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kayunga district said this regarding corruption:

This year 2009, I want Kayunga to be a no-corruption zone. If I get any civil servant engaging in corruption or embezzling government funds, he will be arrested and prosecuted because it has affected service delivery and pace of development (Researcher attended the function 03/01/2009 in Kayunga district).

By deductive philosophy, this implies a terrible situation in Kayunga district.

**Poverty:** The poverty situation in Uganda creates a challenge to graduates in the development process. The study revealed that 60% of the graduates come from low income families that can afford to sponsor them DS not bachelors of law and other related expensive courses because the fees structure at Makerere indicated that it was one of the cheapest courses at an average of 1,000,000 UGS per academic year. These graduates are poor and their families are expecting a lot once they get jobs, therefore they steal or become corrupt or do other related things in order to earn extra income while putting less of their development ideas in the institution.

**Working Environment:** The study reveals working environment which is characterised with governance limited in participation, following the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability. Further, there is also rigid administrative structures and restrictive traditions in various institutions. Such working environments are detrimental to graduates contribution to the development of Uganda. The Research reveals established routines in various institutions where these graduates work as difficult to change or add value and some graduates were complaining of the jobs they do. The job description is clear and no deviation from that, least you risk your job. This limits thinking, innovations and scholarship debates, trials or discoveries for more development. One graduate (interview 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008, Kampala) informed the researcher that:

Here am paid fairly well, I just report on duty from Monday to Friday that is 8:00Am – 5:00Pm, work as desk officer and go home. There is daily routine work thus limited thinking, innovation, scholarly debates, trials or discoveries. I

use less than 20% of the knowledge I studied at MUK.

Graduates under such employment situations revealed to the researcher that they are unable to make significant contribution to the companies/institutions where their work and eventually the nation's development process at large.

**Development Studies Professional Body:** The absence of a DS professional body with legal authority to monitor, advise, evaluate and issue licences to practice as a development worker with authority to withdraw it as the case with other professions like law, engineering and medicine has caused harm to the development of Uganda. The study feels that the professional body is important because graduates seek counsel from the body, work harder, avoid corruption and unethical conducts for fear of punishments or withdraw of the practising licence from the body. Absence of checks and balances from such a body gives them liberty to do they will at the cost of the development of Uganda.

**Age:** The results of this study indicate that the young age of the graduates partly affects their effective contribution. Out of 245 graduates, 19 (8%) respondents from UMU and 113 (46%) respondents were from MUK, thus a total of 132(54%) below the age of 29. Another 28 (11.5%) respondents were from UMU and 56 (23%) respondents were from MUK, thus a total of 84 (34%) in the age range of 30-39. Yet 12 (5%) respondents were from UMU and 11(4.5%) respondents were from MUK in the age bracket of 40-49. Only 6 (2.5%) respondents were from UMU above 50 years. Such graduates below the age of 39 are largely considered youth and therefore unable to sell their development ideas to elders who considered them very ambitious, too academic and suffering from adolescence.

One graduate at interview in Buikwe (23rd June, 2014) confessed that:

I went to Buikwe with clear development plans of promoting tourism and forestry in Buikwe and with basic ideas in agriculture with help of NAADS and other agricultural officer to transform some farmers from subsistence to commercial level which would increase their yields, incomes, and welfare. While presenting these ideas in the forum at the district, I was told that my ideas are not new and therefore I should go slowly or else I lose my stay. I insisted on my plans but found resistance, undermining and less support from elders and district officials.

These cases or instances are many in Uganda and partly accounts for the failure of graduates in the development process. In some cases, the graduates themselves are still young to appreciate their big role in nation building as graduates of DS and therefore take things lightly, besides their nationalism/patriotism is yet to develop.

**Gender:** Another salient yet great challenge of graduates is gender imbalance the study reveals. In total, UMU and MUK have produced 2450 graduates out of which 1047 (42.7%) are males and 1403 (57.3%) are females thus females being the majority. Taking cognisance of gender studies in which gender refers to the culturally constructed attributes/roles/functions of male and female. It is the interpretation of our biology by our culture of how we ought to behave as masculine and feminine (Mosse, 1994). Aware of the gender stereotypes that illustrates the gender pattern of male and female behaviours as determined by culture like men are public and women are private as well as gender roles which refer to particular behaviours, roles or functions which we do just because we are male or female or reflect/show our masculinity or femininity like in dressing, attitudes, personality, work; both within and outside home, sexuality, and family commitments (Mosse, 1994). For example men are bread winners and women are assisting.

With such a gender incongruity mounting to gender inequity in a patriarchal society like Uganda, with more graduates being female, little is expected in the development process. This is because women in general end up being swallowed up with family chores than nation building. For example, some of them are at home nurturing children not working or suffering from voluntary unemployment because of enjoying the care of their parents, or boyfriends or husbands. In some cases men (boyfriends or husbands) have told women (graduates) to stay at home and they will take care of all their interests. One respondent at (interview 12/10/2008 at Mbuya, Kampala) said this when the researcher asked her why she was not working:

I completed Development Studies in 2003 from MUK, immediately I got married and produced a kid, I got a job in Dokolo –Lira district as a Sub county chief but my husband told me not to go. I pleaded to go but he pleaded further and pledged to pay me the salary I was to earn in Dokolo and for the sake of my marriage, I stayed. Later I produced twins and since then, I have never worked.

Such cases or incidence were found and prevalent among the graduates which bear cumulative effect on the development process.

**Government Policies:** The results of this study indicate the limitations and gaps in the government's policies and programmes for national development. For example the government of Singapore had a clear national education ideology tailed towards sciences and engineering education as the major vessel for leading the country to development hence making a clear human resource planning needed for development (Lubaale, 2011). In the case of Uganda, DS graduates are being produced and the government has no clear work plan and programmes for them in order to harness their knowledge, values and skills or protecting them against exploitation.

### CONCLUSION

In the last 15 years, Uganda has witnessed unprecedented increase in DS enrolments and institutional growth to over 20 Universities offering DSP programmes. But it has been a growth without enough positive changes in curricular or response to socio-economic needs. This growth has made little positive contribution to the development of Uganda, as evidenced in existence of corruption, poverty, inequalities, and unemployment. Therefore DSP as delivered in the tertiary institutions today is facing numerable challenges whose origin is both internal (local) and external (global) and which undermine the delivery of quality education for development.

The study is hopeful that the above discussions enlightens stakeholders and if there is immediate and long-term implementation of the recommendations made below, tertiary institutions will be able to contribute tremendously to the development process of Uganda by:

- Producing quality DS graduates who will earn high incomes and contribute positively to Uganda's development in all sectors.
- Attract foreigners to either study because of quality education or invest because of quality labour hence more income to the economy
- Equip graduates with relevant global skills which will enable them work outside Uganda as expatriates or common people who in turn will bring revenue to the economy and learn more extra skills that might enhance Uganda's development.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

UMU and MUK must construct fully fledged buildings of DS each with offices, lecture rooms, lecture theatres, lecture seminar rooms and library. A well stocked library with a ratio 1:40 books per student and computer laboratory with a ratio of 1:5 students. There should be enough furniture, lecture

rooms, seminars, space and other facilities/equipment necessary for the teaching- learning process.

Teaching DS at UMU and MUK should be strengthened by picking a leaf from how DS is taught in developed centers. A case in point is the Manchester University where DS is undertaken by a variety of discipline areas and taught in several schools for example social sciences in areas like Economics, Sociology, Social Anthropology, and Politics as well as in Arts like Geography. The justification is that development is a multi-dimensional process of economic, political, social, institutional and cultural change and the study of development requires a multi-disciplinary approach, or more ambitiously, an inter-disciplinary approach (School of Social Sciences, 2010). This will enable UMU and MUK produce more informed graduates in a number of disciplines relevant to development.

A DS Think Tank (TT) be set up where students, lecturers, practitioners, consultants, government sector workers and the private sector meet every week or fortnight or monthly to brain storm and think about the past and present development practices, policies and ideologies so that they can develop more appropriate development policies, practices and ideologies for future development. This Think Tank should be used by the universities to publish new models of development, policies, ideologies and principles of the nation like the one-day international workshop on "Mobiles and Development" held on the 16 May 2007 at the University of Manchester (School of Environment and Development, 2007).

In the same way to strengthen learning, the alumni association of UMU and MUK must be well organized and strengthened so that they can keep sending papers, information and annually they are invited to share experiences right from what they were taught, what they practice and how they predict the future as it is done at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at Sussex. In all these forms, the development Think Tank is enriched at the benefit of students and lecturers, hence producing graduates relevant to society.

The study reveals various reasons graduates mentioned for joining DS programmes, 70% of which are weak reasons. Therefore regarding admission of students the study recommends that candidates be admitted for DS programmes following this criterion:

- (i) Merit of their academic performance
- (ii) Character for the profession
- (iii) Desire to contribute to the development process of Uganda
- (iv) Interests, commitment and passion to see Uganda develop in all sectors.

The challenge remains how to arrive at (ii), (iii) and (iv) criterion above. The study proposes developing a professional code of conduct of development professionals which will stipulate all the above hence people being aware of the professional requirements. Besides, universities should provide career guidance to primary and secondary school students and the general public about the profession requirements. Further, administer one Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test, two Emotional test, and three Professional test, four motivation and objective test both orally and written.

Academic staff of UMU and MUK in general including those of DS should be appointed and promoted following the criterion like: Quality of teaching and delivery; Involvement in developing new course units, courses, programmes, and curriculum review; Successful leadership in the university, supervision of research and publication plus commitment to the mission of the institution and professionalism. However, universities should totally discourage the use of intrigue, favouritism, nepotism, corruption, bribery, tribalism, religion and bending of regulations in appointment and promotions to fit individuals favoured by the management since this certainly kills the quality of Higher Education (HE) and morale of good staff.

A reasonable approach to tackle the teaching–learning process of DS is to use learner centred methods of teaching typical of group or class discussions, group or individual field work, group or individual project work, debates, field work or library based research, case studies, panel discussions, seminar presentations, demonstrations, role play, question and answer alongside lecturing, talk and chalk methods be employed. Further the study recommends that out of 100% time stipulated for studying a given course unit, 20% be devoted to lecturing by the lecturer/professor, 40% for dialogue teaching–learning process in which the lecturer becomes the facilitator and students participants. Another 20% of the time for field work based and research orientated learning as well as 20% for library based research and internet search. This will enable the teaching learning process to reflect the Higher Ordered Thinking Skills (HOTS) in order to produce philosophers/thinkers and research result oriented graduates.

The study recommends that universities should develop a policy and formula of withdrawing certificates from DS graduates found guilty of grave corruption and unprofessional conducts. This will certainly instil discipline, hard work and eventual development. In addition, universities should follow up their students for counsel, support, and encouragement, besides inviting them for none formal programmes relevant to their work.

The study recommends strengthening the Uganda Development Studies Association (UDESA) into a legal professional body that gives licences to DS graduates to practice and once found guilty by a competent body or court of law of corruption and unprofessional conduct, the licence to practice is withdrawn. This will cause more responsibility on the part of the graduate ethically and professionally to the benefit of Uganda's development.

## REFERENCES

- AMIN, M.E., 2005. *Social Science Research: Conception, Methodology and Analysis*. Kampala: Makerere University Printery.
- KAAHWA, A.M.G., 2007. *A Search Engine for Leaders, Communicators, Researchers and Educators*. Kampala: Sure Technical Association Ltd.
- KAAHWA, A.M.G., 2008. *Research Methodology Facts: Research proposals, Research reports, Project writing and management made simple*. Kampala: Sure Technical Association Ltd.
- AYRES, R., 1995. *Development Studies: An Introduction Through Selected Readings*. Kent: Greenwich University Press, Dartford.
- BERTRAND, R., 1961. *History Of Western Philosophy: It's Connection With Political And Social Circumstance From The Earliest Times To The Present Day*. London: Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
- BISHOP, G., 1985. *Curriculum Development: A Text Book for Students*. London: Macmillan Education Ltd.
- BOON, G.C. & GOPINATHAN, S. 2006. *The Development of Education in Singapore since 1965: Background paper prepared for the Asia Education Study Tour for African Policy Makers, June 18 – 30, 2006*. National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
- JHINGAN, M.L., 2003. *The Economics of Development and Planning*. MayurVihar: Vrinda Publications (P) Ltd. 36th edition.
- KASOZI, A.B.K., 2003. *University Education in Uganda: Challenges and Opportunities for Reform*. Kampala: Fountain publishers Ltd.
- KASOZI, A.B.K., 2009. *Financing Uganda's Public Universities: An obstacle to serving the public good*. Kampala: Fountain publishers Ltd.
- LIN, T.C. 2004. The Role of Higher Education in economic development: an empirical study of Taiwan case. *Journal of Asian Economics* 15 (2): 355–371.

Lubaale,G., 2012.*Tertiary Institutions: Theory, Practice and Opportunities. Cases of Makerere, Kyambogo and Uganda Martyrs Universities of Uganda in Delivering Quality Education for Development.* DudweilerLandstr:LAP Lambert Academic Publishing GmbH&Co.KG

Lubaale,G.,2011.*Higher Educational Programmes in The Development of A Nation: Cases of Development Studies Programames of Uganda Martyrs and Makerere Universities of Uganda.* DudweilerLandstr:LAP Lambert Academic Publishing GmbH&Co.KG

MAMDANI, M., 2007.*Scholars in the Marketplace; The Dilemmas of Neo-LiberalReform at Makerere University, 1989-2005.* Kampala: Fountain publishers Ltd.

MATERU, P., 2007. *Higher Education Quality Assurance in Sub-Saharan Africa: Status, challenges, opportunities and promising practices.* Washington, DC: World Bank.

MARGOLIS, E., 2001. *The hidden curriculum in Higher education.* New York: Routledge.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS., 2001. *The University and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001.* Kampala: Ministry of Education and Sports.

MOSSE, C.J., 1994. *Half the world, half a chance: an introduction to gender and development.* Oxford: Oxfam publishers.

MUKOKOMA, M.M., 2004. Educational Challenges in Uganda. In: KANYANDAGO, P. & MUGUMYA, L. (eds), *Celebrating 10 years of academic Excellence.* Masaka: ARDC, Uganda Martyrs University-Nkozi.

NDUHUKHIRE-OWA-MATAZE., 2003. *Growth and Mal development: Uganda's Experiences.* Uganda Martyrs University Press, Nkozi.

RODNEY, W., 1972.*How Europe under developed Africa.*London: Bugle-l'ouverture publications.

TODARO, M.P., 2006. *Economic Development.* Essex: Pearson Education Limited. 9th edition.

UNDP., 2005a. Human development report 2005; International cooperation at a crossroads: Aid, trade and security in an unequal world. New York: Oxford.

UNDP., 2005b. Uganda human development report 2005; linking environment to development: A deliberate choice. Kampala: UNDP.

WORLD BANK., 1995. *World Development Report 1995.* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

WORLD BANK., 2001. *Higher education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise.* Washington, DC: World Bank.

#### Websites

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER., 2007.*One-Day International Workshop on Mobiles and Development,* 16 May. <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/research/events/conferences/mobile.htm>[Viewed 29-3-10].