The Hurdles to Fostering Research in Tanzanian Universities

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Abstract
Universities across the world are normally called upon to be innovative and generate relevant knowledge to address context related issues afflicting society. This central role of universities notwithstanding, the involvement in research by African universities and academics has been minimal when compared with other universities and academics in other parts of the world. This raises the question of what is exactly happening in the region's universities regarding the development of research. As such, this study establishes the hurdles of developing university research in Tanzania, which directly falls within the wider expectations of developing a research culture in developing countries. The study involved higher education policy makers, senior university leaders and academic staff members who were sourced from four universities and two non-university institutions which oversee the Tanzania's higher education sector. Based on interviews and document analyses, the study has established various hurdles, ranging from cultural, political, structural to institutional. The study situates the hurdles and associated debilitating effects in the broader African and developing world context that share similar social, educational, political and economic characteristics to that of Tanzania. Additionally, the study adds to the existing body of knowledge on university research development in developing countries' higher education systems.

Key words: Research culture, knowledge valorisation, triple helix, higher education policy

Introduction
Universities across the world are normally called upon to be innovative and generate relevant knowledge to address context related issues afflicting society. This central role of universities notwithstanding, the involvement in research by African universities and academics has been minimal when compared with other universities and academics in other parts of the world (Abugre 2017; Cloete, Bunting and Maassen 2015). Proxy indicators for assessing research involvement and performance of universities such as number of publications, patents, researchers, royalties and spin-offs indicate that Africa lags far behind Europe, Asia and America. Africa is home to 15% of the world's total population, however it shares the lowest percentage of research-based publications and researchers than individual countries within Europe, Asia and America, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea and Brazil, with far smaller population sizes (cf., UNESCO 2015 pp.32-36).

The lesser involvement in research by African universities and academics adversely impacts the provision of quality education at various levels of education, when the issue of currency, relevance and availability of knowledge for the teaching and learning process are considered. Given the scarcity of reading resources, rote learning is a typical phenomenon in many African university classrooms, as students in lecture halls tend to jot down verbatim the professor's lecture, which they then try to memorise and frantically reproduce in their examinations (Abugre 2017; Brock-Utne 2003; Musiige and Maassen 2015). Additionally, the low level of involvement in research has contributed to the lack of adequate and current empirical knowledge to explain what kinds of initiatives, challenges and struggles that the region's universities experience regarding the development of university research.