



Review

Higher education and African development

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Abstract

This paper posits that, beginning from independence in the middle of the 20th century, African higher education was tasked with the responsibilities of shoring up the self-worth of Africans, opening up new employment opportunities, reorienting the lifelong learning direction of Africa and helping Africa to navigate through the different regimes of globalisation. This was the manner in which modern higher education was expected to meaningfully contribute to African development. The analysis run to check whether these expectations were met showed that none of these tasks was able to be accomplished because for the past two centuries of its existence on African soil, modern higher education has distanced itself from African communities. The paper therefore recommends that, since no development may be promoted without partnering with the communities, higher education should face up to its community engagement mission for once. A model was proposed by which this mission may be responsibly carried through.

Keywords: Higher education, development, Africa, community engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Although education did take place in its various oral forms during the pre-historic epoch (Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2002; Akinnaso, 1998; Hughes, 1997), it was after the invention of writing around 3500 BCE (Fisher, 2004) that the history of education began to be systematically compiled and monitored. Consequently, looking through the rear mirror, one may speak of human pre-historic education, ancient education and modern education. In all human societies and through all epochs, higher education is usually the last but the most valuable to evolve after the development of the various preparatory and youth educational schemes (pre-school, primary and secondary or as known by other concepts and terminologies in different societies).

A great value has usually been reserved to higher education not only because it admits and trains persons societies look upon as future embodiments of that which is good and which will ultimately renew and sustain society, but because it is the mould within which the highest forms of knowledge the human being is capable of, is created and dispensed.

In Africa, 'higher education' refers to a group of post-secondary educational institutions that is made up of colleges whose mandate is to train middle cadre

personnel and universities whose mission is to train high level manpower. Beginning from the 1980s and following world trend in this matter, there has been a slowing down in the establishment of colleges to the profit of universities. In fact many of the existing colleges on the continent have been upgraded to the status of university. This development has come to give greater pre-eminence to the university even though while few universities existed alongside colleges, the university has always been looked upon as the leading institution in continental development matters. Therefore and by implicit implication, 'higher education' implies university within the context of this discussion

The main objectives of the current article are first to highlight, the educational systems that have held sway in ancient and modern Africa and second to review the purpose and contribution of modern higher education to the development of Africa.

Educational systems in Africa

Two main systems of education have had the opportunity to be run in Africa South of the Sahara, namely, the

Traditional African Education and the Western system of education. A third system, the Islamic system of education was equally practised in Africa. However, if its impact on African socio-political structures and psyche was relatively significant in a section of pre-colonial Africa, its relevance became dimmed by the aggressive colonial campaign of Europeans that begun in the 19th century.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to significantly interact with Africans. As a result of their exposure to Islamic civilisation, they accumulated necessary mathematical knowledge and superiority to develop technological and maritime prowess early ahead of other nations. Therefore, while the whole of Europe had been hungry for raw materials to feed its industries, the Portuguese showed exceptional abilities to reach farther afield (even most difficult terrains such as Africa) than most European nations (Ross, 2002). Consequently, the presence of Portuguese in Africa was documented as early as the 1400s (Ross, 2002).

Although they were the first Europeans to set foot on African soil, the Portuguese did more of commerce than colonising (or they were beaten to the game of colonisation by other Europeans). Consequently, by the 19th century, when the map of colonised territories began to emerge, Portugal was thinly represented on this map. And since Western education was implanted into Africa through the instrumentality of colonisation, Portuguese educational system is little spoken about today in Africa. On the whole however, apart from the near absence of Portuguese language, Portuguese educational system is well represented on the continent through the general contents and structures of Western education system.

Western education system

The origin of Western education is traced back to ancient Greece. Although, it flourished in ancient Rome before spreading throughout the whole of Europe, its earlier roots are traced back to ancient Greece.

With the rise of the Macedonian Empire and the eclipse of the Greek states, the civilization of Greece stepped out of its national limitations and became the common civilization of all the nations on the shores of the Mediterranean (Boyd and King, 1972 p. 47).

What is today known as Western education was encapsulated in that ancient Greek civilisation that spread first to the Macedonian Empire and secondly throughout Europe. The spread of ancient Greek civilisation to Europe began between the 5th and 4th centuries BCE (Boyd and King 1972).

Between this beginning and our present times, Western education has gone through numerous stages of development and refinement and it has impacted life on many continents for good or for ill. For example, it has been used to spread the concepts of democracy,

economic growth and later human-centred development (Delors, 1998). It has equally been used to promote the educational concepts of 'learning to learn', 'learning to be', 'learning to live together' and 'learning to do' (Delors, 1998). The structure of Western education is mainly formal (rigidly segmented) although it has recently begun gradually to open up opportunities for more non-formal educational projects.

The story of Western higher education is necessarily traced back to the 'studia generalia' of the medieval period that drew learners in search of higher learning from all over Europe (The New Encyclopedia Britannica p. 165). From the medieval times till date, it has kept reforming itself and adjusting to all required changes. In the 19th century, it played a foremost role in the promotion of European Industrial Revolution and from the 20th century, it has been promoting the invention and application of various technologies the world over.

Traditional African education system

Traditional education is rooted in oral tradition. Its beginning may therefore be traced to the pre-historic era. It was impacted by the experiences of slavery and colonisation. However, these experiences did not significantly reform it. They rather pushed it underground. Consequently, Traditional African education lives on today side by side with Western education albeit, inconspicuously.

It is less structured and regimented than the Western education system. It may broadly be divided into home education, vocational education and education for social responsibility (Matsika, 2009; Omolewa 2001, 2007). Its clientele may be initially grouped according to specific age brackets, yet, age does not influence progress through the levels of traditional African education. Wisdom and the demonstration of innate intelligence do. Traditional African education is an education specifically designed to prevent joblessness within society as in the words of Omolewa (2001), unemployment is considered a crime within traditional African society. The actualisation of social cohesion, through the promotion of training for social responsibility, is another important aim of traditional African education. The training for social responsibility takes place at the tertiary level of that education system.

Development

A number of theories exist including Rostow's, classical, non-classical and the human development index theories that have been used to guide actions within the realm of human socio-economic development through the times.

Rostow (1960, 1962) outlines a 5-stage development theory. Stage 1 depicts a traditional society within which

the means of production are primitive and the produce is largely for subsistence purposes. Stage 2 depicts a scenario where both technology and transportation (two important variables in production) improve from a traditional outlook to a higher level and where the produce of society is large enough to allow for surplus production to be traded off. Stage 3 outlines a situation where society's economy grows through the execution of specific economic and financial strategies including increase in savings, increase in investments and heightened level of training of workers especially in the manufacturing sector. Stage 4 describes a scenario wherein the growth that began in stage 3 is now able to sustain itself through the recycling of the economic gains and through greater diversification of the economy both at the primary and secondary sectors. At this stage, imports of goods and services needed by society are expected to fall. Rostow's Stage 5 outlines a condition of mass consumption as the tertiary sector of the economy picks up fully and both government and the people aspire to a state of higher welfare.

Before Rostow, Adam Smith (1776) had taken the world by storm with his classical economic theory which in fact was the first economic theory known to the modern person. The classical economic theory held sway in the whole world for about two centuries before it was modified by neo-classical theorists in the 1970s.

The classical economic theory began its ascendancy after the fall from power of feudal Lords of Europe. Consequently, the need to reform society gave leeway to Smith (1776) and other classical theorists to propose a new social order. That new socio-economic order as proposed by classical economic theorists was that society was to be made of three strata, viz, "labourers", "landlords" and "capital holders". The labourers are the workers whose mental and physical energies are exercised or exploited for the purpose of bringing tangible transformation in society. Landlords are holders of large expanses of land that are usually needed for production of all kinds. Capital holders or capitalists own the money that can be disbursed to purchase the labour of the worker, the land and other services necessary for the actualisation of production. Under a social arrangement such as this, the labourer needs relevant skills, the landlord, productive land, and the capitalist, a lot of capital to remain functional and relevant within the kind of society advocated by the classical economic theorists. Aside the break-up of society into three strata, classical economic theorists did devise a number of concepts and strategies (wage, rent, interest, income, etc.) to keep society stable and working within the framework of their theory.

But then came the neo-classical theorists in the 1970s. Taking advantage of the passage of time which tends to alter both environment and the phenomena within it, the neo-classical economic theorists proposed reforms to the classical economic theory. These reforms

have become necessary as a result of the changes in ways of carrying on business and as a result of the exponential development experienced by the world in the area of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Consequently, neo-classical economic theorists proposed that, beginning from the middle of the 20th century, any society desirous of sustaining its development, must begin to emphasise 'resources', 'technology' and 'preferences' instead of 'land', 'capital' and 'labour' (Hoff and Stiglitz, 2010). Resources include natural resources (minerals, wood, water, etc.), money and other relevant materials. Technology refers to relevant machines and the knowledge to operate them while preferences refer to the choices and expressed desires of both society and individuals within it regarding preferred products. It is the view of neo-classical economic theorists that when resources, technologies and preferences are correlated in a logical and sensible way, not only would society develop, a development arrived at in manner such as this, would be sustainable. In line with the main arguments of neo-classical economists, a number of minor concepts propounded by classical economics were also altered. For example, while classical economics suggests that the price of a good is determined by the amount of money invested in producing it, neo-classical economics submits that the final price of a product depends on the value the customer places on the product (Clark, 1998).

At about the time neo-classical development theories were developing, a few thinkers have begun to note how heavily, theories and models of development were relying on capital formation to the detriment of environmental and human-centred considerations. Consequently a number of human-centred theories of development including the 'Index of Wellbeing' (Romanow, 2009), the 'Genuine Progress Indicator' (Hamilton, 1999), the 'Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare' (Daly and Cobb in 1989) and the 'Human Development Index' (ul Haq and Sen, 1990 in UNDP, 2011) theories were developed before the end of the 20th century and a little beyond.

Of all these theories, the Human Development Index (HDI) theory turned out to be the most successful as it was adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The HDI measures development through the extent to which a society may have schooled its population, the national standard of living, the national longevity index and the extent to which a society may have provided for lifelong learning for its people.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) project developed by the UN in 2000 was not flagged as a theory of development. Yet, in whichever human society the MDGs were met, global inequalities would have been challenged and more importantly, a sound foundation upon which to build further development would have been laid. From a careful study of the items making up the MDGs, can be derived theories of development. Meanwhile, the MDGs project seeks to reduce extreme

poverty, to increase the number of children in primary schools, to increase opportunities for gender equality and empowerment and to reduce child and maternal mortality. It also seeks to reduce the rate of HIV infection, to promote environmental sustainability and international cooperation by 2015 (MDGs Report, 2013). As a result of perceivable inability to meet some of the Millennium Development Goals come 2015, efforts are already afoot to plot post-2015 UN development agendas (Carin, Bates-Eamer, Lee, and Lim with Kapila, 2012).

Judging by the existing myriad of theories of development and noting the numerous national and international development projects through human history, it may be concluded that the concept 'development' is not an easy concept. It is a concept that is influenced by environmental and historical trends. It is therefore one phenomenon that needs to be thought through quite carefully, and strategies for its attainment drawn up with fine inner perspicacity. It is equally a phenomenon that is better conceptualised with the characteristics of the target beneficiaries in view. This way, the path that the process of development would follow would be less fuzzy and much clearer and development would proceed systematically. This is why an operational definition of development that is relevant both to the current discussion and to the context of Africa is enunciated here.

For the purpose of this discussion, development is conceived as a process of leading a people to rediscover themselves and their environment and to equip them with the skills for providing and managing their own livelihood while relying minimally on external help.

The operational concepts in this definition are 'process', 'knowledge' and 'skills' and the overarching philosophy underlying the definition itself is 'freedom' (of thought, of choice and of action).

Higher education and development

When the first reality of political independence swept through Africa in the 1960s, Africa's pioneer leaders made it clear that education was to be used as a reliable instrument of development. Within this continental education for development agenda, the role of higher education was not in doubt.

The role of higher education in development has been variously underscored (Sherman, 1990; Hoffman, 1996; Xabier, 1999; Levin, 2003; Saint et. al., 2003; Teferra and Altbach, 2003; Bloom et. al., 2005). Thus, upon independence in the 1950s and 1960s, many Sub-Saharan African countries had looked to higher education as a fundamental vehicle of economic and political development. In recognizing the potential of its tertiary education institutions as indigenous incubators of national progress and revitalization, these countries devoted substantial economic and human resources to

projects that demonstrated the priority of tertiary education (Hoffman, 1996). The recognition of, and emphasis on, higher education in these countries as a major part of the post-colonial national development project was not without basis. The higher education institutions were to help these new nations build up capacity to develop and manage their resources, alleviate poverty and close the educational as well as economic and political gap with the developed world. Universities, for instance, with their promise of local production of expertise and cadres of personnel to staff the public services, the professions and industry, were to serve national public interest by providing home-grown leadership to spur national development (Sawyers, 2003) (Ogom, 2007).

What then were the specific components of development that offered and still offer themselves as primary concerns to African higher education to address? They include the re-awakening of self-worth, the creation of employment opportunities within the African space, the sensitisation of both governments and populations on the need for lifelong learning and the conscientisation of both governments and populations on the need to embrace globalisation with an African sense of responsibility.

Self-worth

The experiences of slavery and colonialism have diminished the sense of self-worth of the African person to such an extent that s/he has come to lose not only partial knowledge but also faith in the bounties that exist in the environment within which s/he lives. The loss of self-worth is evident in many spheres including the disconnect existing between generations of Africans, between urban and rural Africa and the inability to manage the disorientation brought about by the experiences of both slavery and colonialism.

Employment opportunities

Traditional Africa was awash with myriad vocations and trade models. Many of these vocations and trade models have now been upgraded to the status of informal sector practices of modern African economy. However, as a result of lack of official support to this sector, it is either shunned or looked down upon by African youths who have managed to achieve some measure of success at either the secondary or tertiary levels of education.

Consequently, most of these youths that ought to have been gainfully employed in the informal sector of the economy are wasting away and in many cases offer themselves as catalyst for social upheavals if they are not the source of the many social ills plaguing the continent.

Lifelong learning

Even within the frame of Traditional African Education whose main objective was social cohesion, lifelong learning was both necessary and practised for the purpose of actualising the goal of education. However, a different kind of lifelong learning is the subject of this discussion. The objectives of lifelong learning in post-colonial Africa include the concepts of learning for the purpose of:

- i). continually upgrading traditional skills,
- ii). appreciating happenings outside national borders and,
- iii). preparing for and adjusting to the demands of the inevitable changes that are to come.

Globalisation

Colonialism, the imposition of Western development model and the current era of free trade are three main stages of the historical trajectory of the practice of globalisation (Arku and Arku, 2011). The Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) age of the 20th century would seem to be the fourth stage of this historical trajectory.

The concept of globalisation wherein human beings constitute themselves into a global market of ideas and goods and where each and everyone is able to shop and sell in accordance to his needs is a noble venture indeed. However, within the dual side of the equation (production and consumption) of the concept of globalisation, Africa is persistently and predominantly present at only one side (consumption) of the equation.

The developmental role expected of post-colonial African higher education was to address and lead to the solution of the issues highlighted in each of the four complexes. An analysis of the performance of African higher education since the 1960s should lead to the determination of whether or not African higher education has been able to acquit itself of the developmental role assigned to it.

Performance of higher education in post-colonial Africa

By 1960, the number of universities in Africa South of the Sahara could be counted on the tips of the fingers of the two hands, as they were less than ten (World Bank, 1988). Indeed a number of countries existed without a single university. However, the number of universities in Africa by 2012 has attained the threshold of 500 with Nigeria holding about 150 of them (AAU, 2013; National Universities Commission, 2013).

The analysis of the performance of African higher education is here carried out through the examination of the population of Africans that have access to higher

education and the extent to which it has carried out its developmental roles of reawakening African self-worth, opening up employment opportunities through training, promoting lifelong learning and contributing African ideas to the process of globalisation.

Access to higher education

During the first decade of independence (1960-70) some visible progress was registered in the area of primary and secondary education in terms of student enrolment and establishment of schools in most independent African countries (World Bank, 1988). However, little changed from the situation prior to independence in the area of higher education. However, by 1983, during which time primary and secondary school enrolment had quintupled and quadrupled respectively, enrolment in African tertiary institutions had more than doubled and the number of universities had gone up two-folds (World Bank, 1988).

Yet, a decade into the 21st century, it was found out that gross enrolment in African universities was only a paltry 7 percent (Tilak, 2009). This was the highest gross enrolment in 200 years of modern university education in Africa, the first university having been established in Sierra Leone in 1828.

Re-awakening of self-worth

The work and process of rekindling self-worth within the African individual is contingent upon some amount of contact between the academia and members of African communities. This sort of contact is provided for, through one of the three missions of the university (community engagement).

However, community engagement is the most neglected of the three missions (Teaching, Research and Community engagement) of the university in Africa. Hence the university has become widely referred to as 'Ivory Tower' shielding the African academic from the 'sordidness' of the African community. The following two submissions recorded in Nigeria during a community engagement project funded by the Association of African Universities (AAU) between 2009 and 2011 further highlight the disconnect existing between the African university and the African community:

i). *I did not know that people in the university also know the way of our forefathers! From time immemorial, our great grand parents have employed ash, domestic waste and other things to improve their agricultural growth and production. However, the combination you have taught us now surpasses anything we have known before. So, white people also practice our type of agriculture and use our African product!* (The oldest among the farmers, Farmer 1) (Culled from Biao, Akpama, Tawo & Inyang, 2011 p.65).

ii). *Is it government who sent you to help us? I know, you said you were from the university. This means the government of Nigeria is becoming better and better these days!....When are you going to come again to teach us new things that will give us more money?* (Farmer 3) (Culled from Biao, Akpama, Tawo and Inyang, 2011 p.65).

It has equally been remarked that *“as is often the case, the most dominant voices for university engagement emanate from countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), particularly the USA, Australia and countries in Europe”* (Preece, Ntseane, Modise and Osborne, 2012 p.12).

Therefore, the opportunity for carrying out this one developmental role has been effectively wasted by Africa’s higher education personnel.

Employment

As insignificant as is the number of students enrolled in African universities, and as low as is the number of graduates churned out of these universities (not all that are admitted, complete their programmes), it is precisely among these few university products that the highest unemployment figures are recorded. The Association of African Universities (AAU) put the rate of unemployment among products of African universities at about 60% (AAU, 2013).

A number of explanations have been advanced for this high rate of unemployment among a corps of persons who, by the 1960s, were viewed as potential saviours and repairers of the African social, economic, technological and political spaces. It has been posited that modern higher education curricula are incongruent with African social, technological and economic realities (Biao, 2012; Assie-Lumumba, 2006; Ogom, 2003; Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson, 1996). It has equally been stated that African higher education students are poorly trained (Kigotho, 2006) and that African higher education has been deliberately structured to spread ‘mal-development’ (Xabier, 1999).

However, the rate of unemployment among the graduates of African higher education has not always been this bad. Between the 1960s and the middle of 1980, most graduates of African higher education got employed filling the colonial positions that became vacant after the departure of colonial officers. A number of graduates equally filled newly created civil service positions and a few positions made available by multi-national organisations in the newly independent countries of Africa during the same period.

However, since education does not create employment and since the academia and the governments of Africa would not deliberately create jobs for which education would then train personnel, the

higher education-training-for-employment relationship stagnated a while and eventually collapsed.

Lifelong learning

The concept of lifelong learning is not foreign to the African. However, in order to re-orientate the discussion of lifelong learning and to demonstrate the rationale for a new orientation in the promotion of lifelong learning, academia-communities contact is the first step. As it was earlier submitted, that first step is yet to be taken.

It can therefore be concluded that one of the developmental role that the promotion of lifelong learning represents is equally yet to be discharged by the African higher education.

Globalisation

In the absence of any systematically organised learning to initiate the African into the tenets of globalisation, he has learnt much of this during the process of colonialism. However, the practice of globalisation has emphasised slightly different concerns (colonialism, spread of European socio-economic hegemony, free trade, gender philosophies, etc.) through the times.

African higher education was meant to facilitate the understanding of these changing faces of globalisation among African communities. This role could not be played again because the African academic would not link up with the community.

Additionally, the contribution of African academics to research and global discussion has been found to be abysmally low.

The volume of (research-sic) activity remains small, much smaller than is desirable if the potential contribution of Africa’s researchers is to be realized for the benefit of its populations. The challenges that the continent faces are enormous and indigenous research could help provide both effective and focused responses. The resources that are available in some countries are substantial, but they are not being invested in the research base (Adams, King and Hook, 2010).

The conclusion of this analysis is that, in its two hundred years of existence, African higher education neither demonstrated the capacity to enrol more than 7 percent of students qualified for higher education nor has it been able to carry through any one of the four developmental roles assigned to it.

The question remains why should a phenomenon that held so much promise for the progress of a continent at the dawn of political independence become so hopelessly redundant and non-functional? The answer is to be found in the three-period evolution of the concept of modern African higher education advanced by Ajayi et al. (1996).

In the mid-19th century, in the transition from the slave trade to the imposition of colonial rule, those who were asking for an African university saw the mission of the university as the mental liberation of the African from the shackles that slavery and religious dogma had imposed. Hence they wanted a secular university, emphasizing African and classical studies, science and technology. What they got were Fourah Bay College and Fort Hare. In the colonial period, they saw the mission of the university as the renaissance of Africa, emancipation from colonial rule and the establishment of African nations able to take their place in the 'comity' of civilized nations of the world. In the period of decolonisation, they saw the university as part of the effort to bring the nation into being, having the same mission as the nation, that is mental, economic and political de-colonization. After independence, the university people found that they were no longer the ones defining the mission: the state did and universities took their cue from that to define their role. It was the state that crystalized the mission as Development (Ajayi et al. 1996 p.187).

Inadequate development policies made African higher education to serve all but African interests all these centuries.

After independence, the university people found that they were no longer the ones defining the mission: the state did and universities took their cue from that to define their role. It was the state that crystalized the mission as Development (Ajayi et al. 1996 p.187).

It is not experts but politicians who decide what is best for society, for good or ill (Lulat, 2005, p.4)

A malaise rightly diagnosed is an illness half cured. From here should follow suggestions on the way forward.

Quo va dis?

The failure of the African higher education stems from its alienation from African communities. Being isolated and insulated from the very people it is set up to serve, African higher education could not but be lost. Its salvation lies in recognising the re-learning and re-education it has to embark upon before it may come out of its woes.

Consequently, if African higher education must rekindle self-worth within itself and all Africans, if it must open up new and additional employment opportunities to its graduates and if it must contribute its own to the pool of global knowledge, it must return and re-knot ties with the African community.

The way to achieve this return is through the path of university-community engagement. University-community engagement is a two-way process of identifying, analysing and solving problems bedevilling both the university and the community. It is therefore a partnership within which the community helps the university

to position/reposition itself in relation to its statutory responsibilities and missions and the university helps the community to renew and upgrade itself.

A community is a map of knowledge areas. On this map can be identified people that have grouped themselves according to the vocations they practice. Each vocation represents a knowledge area as practitioners of each vocation, having trained for the vocation, now detain specific know-how and skills that are unique to the vocation. Additionally, each vocation within the community parades its facilitators and learners. In this sense then, the community is a replica of a university, albeit in a larger sense as the community may perform other social and political duties not known to the university.

Under a condition such as this, university-community engagement can logically run at the level of knowledge areas. In other words, each university's department/faculty may identify within the community, areas of knowledge (banking, textile, humanities, etc.) compatible to it for the purpose of partnership. Figure 1 below shows the way in which an African community may compare with a university where the focus is vocations and their corresponding training opportunities. In other words, a university department of technology may partner with a community unit of tools making for the purpose of improving practice and contributing to mutual aid.

Within the frame of knowledge economy, no model may be more potent for the promotion of African development. This is because training, job creation and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are central to the concept of knowledge economy. ICTs may not be available within African communities yet; these can be gradually introduced through the process of university-community engagement.

Therefore, whether the objective is the re-awakening of self-worth within the African, the opening up of additional employment opportunities for the products of African higher education or the promotion of lifelong learning and globalisation, engagement with the African community remains the solution to bringing development through higher education.

With some support from government and higher education, community members can transform their living environment for the better. This achievement has the potential of shoring up the sense of self-worth of the achievers. Employment opportunities abound within African communities. These types of employment are not currently attractive to graduates because the authorities and higher education are yet to acknowledge them and mainstream them into national economies. The involvement of higher education with these types of employment is bound to add value to them and attract unemployed graduates towards them. One multiplier effect of the involvement of higher education with

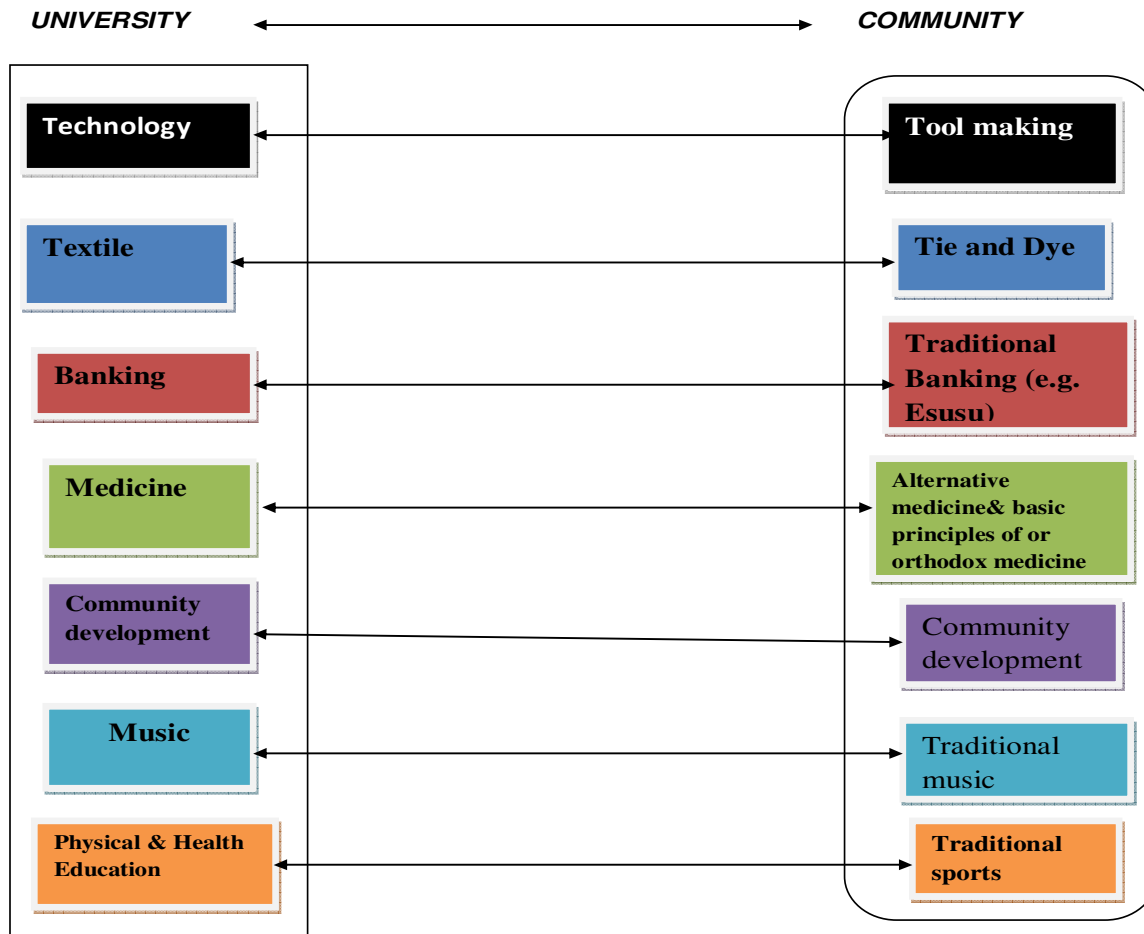


Figure 1. A Model of university-community engagement for the development of Africa

community based employment opportunities is that the teaching curricula of universities will be compelled to adjust and become more sensitive to realities back home than hitherto envisaged.

University-community engagement would have been given the opportunity to generate a uniquely African literature from which the global community would have been able to learn about Africa through the works of African researchers. Once started in earnest, university-community engagement would have become a continuous practice and it will eventually generate a form of lifelong learning that cannot but take into consideration current and global issues.

CONCLUSION

Modern higher education has a 200-year history in Africa. An examination of its performance has always proven that this segment of the African education system serves not the interest of Africa. A lack of political will and inadequate development policies have conspired to prevent the needed reform that is meant to reposition this

sector of the educational system to truly serve a large segment of Africa. Through a series of small academic-led workshops and round table discussions, the most effective techniques of revitalising Africa's higher education would eventually be uncovered. Meanwhile, partnership between African higher education and African communities constitutes the first step towards providing solution to higher education-community disconnect in the development process in Africa.

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How to cite this article: Biao I (2014). Higher education and African development. *Educ. Res.* 5(3):107-115