Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Developing an Equity Scorecard

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Why This Research Is Important
The Knowledge Economy

Higher education seen as a central site for:

- facilitating skills, knowledge and expertise essential to economic and social development in low-income countries
- generating research and analysis to improve effectiveness of government policy and services

A Political Economy of Participation in Higher Education

Lack of data on:

- Higher education, poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals
- How different structures of inequality intersect e.g. gender and socio-economic background
- Private higher education and widening participation
- Socio-cultural theory in the context of African higher education.
Higher Education and Poverty Reduction

Higher education may affect poverty by:

- raising the incomes of those with education
- fostering high level skills, knowledge and competencies, to promote economic growth.

Poverty increasingly perceived as capability, as well as material deprivation (Sen, 1997).
Mass Higher Education?

- Student enrolment worldwide:
  - 13 million in 1960
  - 82 million in 1995
  - 137.8 million in 2005

Interventions to Widen Participation

- Quota systems for:
  - deprived regions/schools (Ghana, Nigeria and Sri Lanka)
  - black students (South Africa)
  - marginalised groups, e.g. caste (India), ethnic group (Malaysia), indigenous peoples (Australia)

- Affirmative action programmes and scholarships for women (Uganda)
- Pre-sessional programmes for women (Tanzania)
- Changing aspirations of ‘non-traditional students’
  - ‘Aim Higher’ (UK)
Higher Education Capacity in Africa

- Africa has:
  - 54 countries
  - Over 700 million people
  - 300 universities

(Teferra and Altbach, 2004).
African Participation Rates in Higher Education

- 5% in Sub-Saharan Africa
- 5% in Ghana
- 1% in Tanzania
- 24% globally

(UNESCO, 2007)
Challenges Within the Higher Education Sector in Africa

- The rise of private higher education
- Management and governance
- Social inclusion v. expansion
- Policy implementation
- Over/under-representation by gender and social class (participation, service delivery and employment)
- Quality and relevance of the curriculum
- Brain drain
- Research capacity
- Languages and indigenous knowledges
- HIV/AIDS.
International Policies on Widening Participation in Higher Education

Policies targeted at:

- Increasing access to HE globally
- Widening access to HE for less privileged groups
- Reducing the gap between conditions in HE in ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ countries

- UNESCO (1995)
Criticisms of Widening Participation

- Lowers the value of HE
- Dilutes standards
- Creates unrealistic expectations for learners
- Overloads systems that are under-resourced
- Stigmatises ‘non-traditional’ students
- Leads to ‘diploma disease’ i.e. educational inflation.
Some Policies for Widening Participation in HE in Ghana

Botsio Committee (1959) recommended
- increasing access to university education for national development

University Rationalisation Committee (1988) recommended
- expanded access to higher education
- sustainable funding
- broadening tertiary education to include post-secondary education institutions
- greater access for students previously disadvantaged through poverty or gender

White Paper on Reforms to the Tertiary Education System (1991) recommended
- expanding access through private institutions
- cost-sharing and cost-recovery
Recent Policies for Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana

National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) Act (1993) established new institutions
- NCTE to advise on the development and financing of tertiary education in Ghana, and to recommend norms and standards
- National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations (NABTEX) to accredit tertiary institutions

Presidential Review Committee on Education (2002) recommended
- expanding access through distance education and information communication technologies (ICT)

- gender equity at all levels in education
- private sector development
- cost-sharing and revenue diversification
- establishing an Open University
Challenges to Widening Participation in Africa

- Triangle of family, school and community
- Micro-level decision-making
- Socio-cultural barriers
- Educating women perceived as unproductive
- Poverty
- Low participation rates in schooling
- Under-investment in HE
- Violence, war and disease
- HE as a public and private good. Cost sharing. Who pays?
- Access to what?

(Kwesiga, 2002; Morley et al. 2006)
Who is Participating?
Who is Participating in Ghana?

Higher Education in Ghana

- In 2005, GER for tertiary education rose to 5% (UNESCO, 2007)
- 34.3% of students in public universities are women (2006/7) (NCTE, 2007a)
- 41% of students in private universities are women (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- 10% of university students are enrolled in private institutions (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- Demand for public HE: 43% of ‘qualified’ applicants to public universities are new entrants (2006/7) (NCTE, 2007b)
- Cf: 75% of qualified applicants to private universities are new entrants (2005/6) (NCTE, 2006)
- The majority of HE students continue to be men from wealthy backgrounds
- Women’s participation is highest in Education, Social Sciences and Arts
- Women’s participation is lowest in Science, Engineering and Agriculture

BUT
- Where are mature students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds, found in the HE system?
Who is Participating in Tanzania?

![Chart showing the percentage of adults who completed higher education across different economic quintiles in Tanzania. The chart includes data for both males and females.]

Higher Education in Tanzania

- In 2005, GER for tertiary education was 1% (UNESCO, 2007)
- 30% of HE students are women (MHEST, 2005)
- 10% of university students are at a private university (MHEST, 2005)
- 36% of undergraduates at private universities are women (MHEST, 2005)
- Women’s participation is lowest in Commerce, Science and Engineering
- Women’s participation is highest in Law, Education, Medicine
- The majority of students continue to be men from wealthy backgrounds.

BUT
- Where are mature students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds?
What the Project is Doing
Methodology

- Examining the influence of social processes on differential participation in, progression through, and outcomes for under-represented social groups

- Quantitative methods:
  - international, national and institutional statistics
  - Equity Scorecard

- Qualitative methods:
  - analysis of policy documents
  - life history interviews with students
  - interviews with staff
Research Sites

Public Universities

- University of Cape Coast, Ghana
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Private Universities

- Central University College, Accra, Ghana
- Tumaini University, Tanzania
Quantifying Inequalities
What is an Equity Scorecard?

- A **Scorecard** provides quantitative measures of critical moments in complex processes.

- An **Equity** Scorecard compares these measures for different groups.

- Datasets can be explored in multiple ways;
What We Are Measuring

- Sociological variables e.g. gender, age, socio-economic status

In Relation to:

- Educational indicators e.g. access, retention and achievement

In Relation to:

- Programmes of Study e.g. medicine, management
- Institutional Sites e.g. public and private HEIs.
Scorecard 1: Public University, Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>% students women</th>
<th>% students ‘deprived schools’</th>
<th>% students women from ‘deprived schools’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSc Physical Sci</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Commerce</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Mgmt</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Ed (Primary)</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Scorecard 2: Public University, Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Equity Index (% women on prog/% women in uni)</th>
<th>Equity Index (% students from deprived schools / quota)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSc Physical Sci</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Commerce</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Mgmt</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Ed (Primary)</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings from the ESC

- Rates of participation for students from ‘deprived schools’ are low;
- Rates of participation of women from ‘deprived schools’ are extremely low;
- Women are clustered in Education and Business Management, and not in Science

Women make up 31% of the undergraduate population at UCC (UCC, 2006)
Scorecard 1: Admissions to 2 Degree Programmes at Univ B in Tanzania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>% admissions women (2007/8)</th>
<th>Equity Index</th>
<th>% admissions aged 30+ (2007/8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LLB (Law)</td>
<td>42.20</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>13.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B BA</td>
<td>42.10</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data source: Admissions to 2 programmes (Dataset 1, 2007)*

Enrolment in first degree programmes at Univ B (2005/6)

%F=40.9% (MHEST, 2006:2)
Scorecard 2: Admissions to Programmes at Uni A and Uni B in Tanzania, 2007/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Univ A</th>
<th>Univ B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%F</td>
<td>Equity Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Com / B BA</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB (Law)</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc Engineering</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Ed (Sci)</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Datasource: Admissions to 4 programmes (Dataset 1, 2007/8)

% F enrolment 2005/6 Uni A: u/g 37.2%       Uni B: u/g 40.9% (MHEST, 2006)
Findings From The ESC

- Rates of access for women in Law and Commerce degrees at this university are higher than the national average for women’s participation in HE.
- Rates of access for women in Law and Commerce degrees at this university are similar to their rates of participation in this university as a whole.
- Rates of access for mature students to Law and Commerce have been measured.

Women make up 30% of the undergraduate population at in Tanzania, and 36% of students at private universities (MHEST, 2005)
Illuminating the Statistics
Life History Interviews with Students

Soliciting data from 100 students per country on:

- enablers & barriers to participation;
- social and learner identities;
- how identities might influence educational choices;
- linkages between material, cultural, and social factors.
Why Life History?

- Participation in HE can be influenced by long-term factors in students’ lives
- Inequalities in participation in HE are evident throughout the lifecourse of participants and non-participants
- Opportunities in the early stages of education can play a key role in whether HE is an option
- Life history interviews can deepen understanding of how disadvantaged learners overcome barriers to participation, and how they negotiate their identity as learners in HE.

(Gorard et al. 2006; Reay et al. 2001; Archer and Hutchings 2000).
Interview Findings from Students in Ghana and Tanzania

- Gender (domestic duties, motherhood, non-traditional subjects for women)
- Agents of support (mothers and fathers, extended family, teachers, peers, colleagues)
- Influence of early years (schooling; urban/rural)
- Motivations for entering HE (career aspirations, escaping poverty)
- Decision-making process (strategic, delayed)
- Diverse experiences of HE (pedagogy, skills acquired, social networks, confidence, status).
Interviews with Staff

- 100 policy-makers per country:
  - in Ministries with responsibility for higher education
  - in national organisations with an interest in higher education / equity / poverty reduction
  - in the case study sites.
Preliminary Findings from Staff Interviews

- HE is critical to national development, but has been under-invested e.g. by the World Bank;
- Excluded groups include: women, rural communities, the poor, mature people, the disabled;
- Uneven engagement with policy and implementation gaps e.g. between international, national and institutional levels;
- Diverse recommendations for action e.g. affirmative action programmes, developing quality and standards of junior and high schools for all students; effective policy monitoring; support and facilities to retain, as well as attract ‘non-traditional’ students.
Working Towards...

- Constructing knowledge that can contribute to the democratisation of higher education.
Website

www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation
Acknowledgements

- ESRC and DFID for funding this 3-year project.
Some Questions For Your Consideration

- Why do you consider this research project to be important?
- What do you see as some of the major challenges?
- What do you think that the research team needs to take into consideration in the Ghanaian context?
- How can you support the project?
- What impact would you like the project to make? Who could benefit from the research findings? How can the research findings be applied and disseminated?

www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation
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