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IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS IN THE PROVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: THE CASE OF UGANDA

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Abstract

The fundamental aim of forming a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is to improve the provision of public services generally and in terms of quality and accessibility in particular. Unfortunately, realizing this aim as effectively as desired has eluded many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This has particularly been witnessed in the higher education sector. Despite the existence of PPPs in this sector, the quality and accessibility of higher education has continued to fall short of stakeholder expectations in many Sub-Saharan countries, including Uganda. This implies that the PPPs formed in this sector have largely been ineffective. Accordingly, this paper uses descriptive and factor analysis to explore the causes of such ineffectiveness and how they can be addressed to avert it. The paper is divided in four parts. The first part focuses on the methodology used to come up with the paper; the second part is on the effectiveness of the PPPs in terms of quality and accessibility of higher education; and the third part is about determinants of this effectiveness and how they cause the ineffectiveness of the PPPs in Uganda's higher education. The fourth part is on how the causes can be addressed in order to improve the provision of higher education through PPPs.

Introduction

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) may be conceived of as cooperative ventures between the public and private sectors, formed from an amalgam of the resource capacity and expertise of each sector in order to provide a stronger base for delivering defined public services in a better, more efficient and effective manner. Essentially, they are arrangements in which the public and private sectors amalgamate resources with the sole aim of improving and increasing the provision of public services (Nishtar, 2004). Effective PPPs are therefore bound to result into improved and more public services than would have been the case when the private and public sectors are working independently of each other (Cheung, Chan and Kajewski (2009a); for they practically operate in a manner similar to the rationale of the Gestalt psychological principle that "the whole is more than the sum of its parts" (Morgan, King, Weisz and Schopler, 1999). However, the situation in Sub Saharan Africa appears to be the direct opposite in spite of the existence of PPPs in this region.

The provision of public services and utilities at the desired effectiveness measured in terms of equity, equality, quality and accessibility remains hard to pin down in many countries in Sub Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2008). This paper however, concentrates on only two measures: quality and accessibility. This is because quite a number of African countries are still grappling with the challenge of achieving the desired effectiveness in terms of the quality and accessibility of the health, education, electricity, housing, and

a host of other services and utilities delivered to the public (World Bank, 2008). In the education sector in particular, realizing these measures as desired in higher education is one of the critical challenges faced by most of these countries (World Bank, 2008).

Indeed, while sponsors of Sub Saharan higher education decry its quality in terms of failure to produce high level manpower skills and knowledge that relevant to underpinning the desired pace of socioeconomic development (Aliga, 2006); employers feel that it does not prepare its graduates enough to be in a position to effectively face the dynamic challenges and responsibilities of the workplace (Malick and Grisay, 2000). At the same time, higher education students express discontent about the instructional inadequacies with which they have to reckon in most of the Sub Saharan African institutions of higher learning (Munroe-Blum, 2004). As if that is not enough, a significant number of high school leavers intending to join higher education decry the limited intake capacity of these institutions because they (the institutions) deny them (the students) access to higher education, even when they (the students) have scored the required entry points (Bitamazire, 2008). This scenario has been witnessed in such countries as Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Niger, Angola, Chad, Sierra-Leon, Corte Devour, Central Republic of Africa and Uganda (Orszag and Kane, 2008).

In essence, the fore-described scenario indicates that higher education in Sub Saharan African countries is largely devoid of the desired quality and accessibility. The scenario continues to characterize this education even when many countries in Sub Saharan Africa have made attempts to establish Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) with a view of turning it around. In Uganda, for instance, PPPs were encouraged in higher education in the late 1990s when government was made to realize that total privatization of this education was not feasible in the prevailing economic conditions of the country (Bitamazire, 2008). Higher education service providers operating in the private sector recommended that they needed to work together with government in the planning, managing and funding of higher education so as to bring out the desired quality and accessibility (Kayongo, 2007).

Uganda government adopted the recommendation and encouraged the partnership under the watchful arm of the National Council of Higher Education (Bogere and Nabiruma, 2009). Government started to work together with private universities with a view of improving and expanding the provision of higher education as desired (Ibid). it offered to provide instructional materials and human resources to institutions pursuing science programmes. Government also promised to allocate funds to act as supplementary subventions to private institutions of higher learning. In a similar, the private sector pledged to work together with government to improve the quality and accessibility of higher education through establishing

and equipping more institutions of higher learning. However, little success has been achieved. As shown in the next section, the provision of higher education in Uganda has continued to be devoid of the quality and accessibility expected by stakeholders. This portrays the PPPs in this sub sector as having failed to achieve their anticipated effectiveness. The paper explores the factors explaining why this ineffectiveness exists with a view of coming up with ways by which it can be addressed.

A) Methodology

The methodology used to come with this paper involved a review of literature about quality and accessibility as measures of the effectiveness of the PPPs, on the one hand, and about the determinants of this effectiveness, on the other. The literature was then used to come up with two sets of questionnaires. One set contained close-ended items measuring determinants of the effectiveness of PPPs in higher education and was administered to 40 key officials selected purposively from the National Council of Higher Education, two private universities and two private randomly selected tertiary institutions located in Kampala district. The other set also contained close-ended items measuring the quality of higher education delivered by the selected private institutions and was administered to 123 students randomly selected from the four institutions. Informal interviews were also conducted with some of the selected key informants to get more information about some of the variables. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and factor analysis. The reviewed literature and the results obtained from the analysis of responses to the administered questionnaire and interview items are presented and discussed in a complimentary manner as shown henceforth.

B) Effectiveness of PPPs in Higher Education

Effectiveness refers to the degree to which set objectives, goals, or targets are achieved as expected (Ching-Yaw and Phyra, Keomony, 2007). The achievements may be defined in terms of quality improvements, accessibility, equity, equality, or any other measure (Joshi, Al-Mudhaki and Bremser, 2003). In this paper, the focus is on two measures, namely: quality and accessibility. This is because while different PPPs are formed to achieve different objectives, goals or targets, those in higher education tend to be established to improve the quality and accessibility of this education as the main objectives, among others (Bitamazire, 2007). The PPPs are therefore expected to register a certain degree of effectiveness as far as achieving these two objectives is concerned.

i) Quality of Higher Education

Generally, the quality of education is defined using two perspectives: a qualitative and a technical perspective (Malick & Grisay, 2000). The qualitative paradigm views quality as a value judgment ascribed to the educational services delivered to students. The judgment describes the extent to which the services meet students' expectations (Kayongo, 2007). It therefore indicates the level of contentment or satisfaction derived by students from the provided educational services and in respect of fulfilling held educational expectations (Tam Wai-Ming, 2008). In higher education, student expectations include acquisition of skills and knowledge needed to be competently productive, to be employable, and to pursue desired career development (Malick & Grisay, 2000). The educational services consist of both academic and non-academic services provided in form of lecturing, library and laboratory services, lecture room learning climate, and recreational and other upkeep services (Jamil, 1992; Kajubi, 1992). When the consumption of these services enables students to meet their expectations satisfactorily, the services are said to be of desired educational quality, as vice versa (Keirungi, 2005). This however, is not the case with higher education students in Uganda. As shown in Table 1, students are, on average, not sure or largely discontented with the skills and knowledge acquired from the country's higher education.

Table 1: Indices Analysis of Students' Judgement of the Quality of Higher Education in Uganda

Questionnaire items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The academic programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that make you as productive as you expect	123	1	4	2.32	1.821
The academic programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that make you employable after graduation	123	1	4	2.37	1.218
The academic programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that satisfy your career development needs as expected	123	1	4	2.34	1.448
The non-academic programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that develop your extra-curricula talents as expected	123	1	4	2.43	1.531
The extra-curricula programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that can make you as productive in society as expected	123	1	4	2.88	1.539
The extra-curricula programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that can make you as employable as expected after graduation	123	1	4	1.79	1.151
The extra-curricula programmes of your institution offer knowledge and skills that satisfy your career development needs as expected	123	1	4	1.94	1.008

Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: *Field Research*

Table 1 indicates that the response range included students who strongly disagreed (Minimum value = 1) and those who agreed (Maximum value = 4) to the various indicators of quality of education offered by the institutions of higher learning in Uganda. Notwithstanding this range, a careful look at the standard deviations reveals that they were all less than 2. This shows that most of the students did not significantly deviate in their responses to the various items. In fact, most of the mean responses were close to '2', the code that represented 'disagree' in the administered questionnaire. This shows that on average, most of the students disagreed. Therefore the qualitative perspective held by students reveals that the academic and non-academic programmes of the institutions of higher learning in Uganda were perceivably not offering knowledge and skills that satisfy the students' educational needs

as expected. As to why this is the case in spite of the existence of PPPs will be discussed later.

The technical perspective views educational quality in terms of the capacity of an institution to deliver educational services in accordance with the criteria prescribed by the concerned national technical body (Getler & Glewwe, 2002). For higher education in Uganda, this type of educational quality is prescribed and enforced by the National Council of Higher Education (Kayongo, 2007). The criteria include academic and non-academic standards that any institution of higher learning should observe in order to be approved of as an institution of higher learning. The academic criteria include adequate and comfortable lecture room space, desks, and seats in view of the number of enrolled students; laboratory furniture, equipment, apparatus and chemicals, which are enough for the number of users, adequate library space, facilities and services vis-à-vis the number of users and in terms of their updated-ness, and the ratio of at most 50 students to one lecturer (Kayongo, 2007; Getler & Glewwe, 2002). The non-academic capacity includes recreational, sports and upkeep facilities, equipment and materials available to facilitate the delivery of non-academic services to students (Kayongo, 2007).

Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry's (2004) view of service quality posits that when all the aforementioned educational facilities and adequately available, the institution is said to be delivering reliable, responsive, and assured educational services. By reliable, Zeithaml et al (2004) meant the ability of a service provider to deliver the promised service dependably and accurately. This can be established by looking at whether or not a service provider has the material and human resources necessary to provide the services satisfactorily and in an unflinching manner. By responsiveness of a service, these scholars meant the willingness of service providers to promptly deliver the services that match accurately with consumers' expectations. They defined service assurance as the knowledge, courtesy and ability of service providers to inspire trust and confidence in students that they will get the services whenever they need them.

Sadly, when the technical indicators of the quality of Uganda's higher education were investigated using students' perceptions (since students are the consumers of this education), it was discovered that they (the indicators) all fell short of expected satisfaction as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Indices Analysis of Students' Responses on the Technical Quality of Higher Education in Uganda

Questionnaire items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The institution has enough lecture room space	123	1	5	2.34	1.987
There are enough seats in lecture rooms	123	2	5	3.52	0.421
There are enough desks in lecture rooms	123	1	4	2.17	1.218
Lecture room space provides students with a comfortable learning environment	123	1	4	2.41	1.531
The seating arrangement in lecture rooms is not squeezed	123	1	4	2.58	1.234
The institution has a library	123	4	5	4.04	0.448
The institution's library is well-stocked with required library materials and information service equipment	123	1	5	2.73	0.531
The institution's library materials are up-to-date	123	1	4	3.18	0.539
The institution's library has an internet system	123	2	5	4.01	1.234
The installed internet system supports online study and research very efficiently	123	1	4	1.79	0.151
The institution's library has staff members who are committed to serving students	123	1	4	2.94	1.008
The institution has well-equipped science laboratories	123	1	3	1.07	1.101
The institution has enough lecturers	123	2	3	2.72	0.179
The institution's lecturers demonstrate masterly of what they are teaching	123	1	3	2.01	0.110
The lecturers are committed to teaching whenever they are expected	123	1	4	1.54	0.842

Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: Field Research

Table 2 indicates that on average, students' mean responses to most of the indicators were close to '2' or to '3', the codes that represented 'disagree' and 'not sure', respectively. This implies that most of the students either disagreed to or were not sure of the technical quality of their institutions. The expressed dissent or uncertainty indicates that students were uncertain or opposed to the idea that the technical quality offered by their institutions satisfied their educational needs. Even where they agreed (Mean close to '4') like in the case of the presence of libraries installed with internet systems, they expressed dissent or uncertainty about the idea that the libraries were well-stocked with required library materials and information service

equipment. If a person is uncertain about something, it implies that such a thing does not have any recognizable effect on the person. Practically, this means the person does not derive recognizable satisfaction from the thing. Therefore, the uncertainty expressed by students carries almost the same implication as the expressed dissent. In general thus, findings indicate that most of the students were not satisfied with the technical quality of their institutions. This shows that PPPs had not succeeded at improving the quality of higher education to desired levels.

ii) Accessibility of Higher Education

Accessibility of higher education is variously conceived. According Sánchez and Elena (2006), it refers to how easy or difficult it is to access higher education in terms of predetermined admission standards. That is, in terms of the required minimum entry points or scores. The set minimum entry points refer to the grade points that applicants should score in order to be admitted into higher education. These points vary from country to country and from one tertiary institution to another. They are usually determined according to the general advanced level school performance and in relation to the number of applicants received by an institution of higher learning vis-à-vis the institution's intake capacity (Muyimbwa, 2005). Clearly, the set entry points determine accessibility of higher education. Actually, the conducted survey revealed that the minimum entry points set for students applying to join higher education in Uganda denied many of them (the students) access to this education as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Indices Analysis of Students' Responses on Access to Higher Education in Uganda

Questionnaire items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The institution charges tuition and fees that affordable to all students	123	1	2	1.59	0.910
Students find it easy to obtain the minimum entry points required by Uganda's institutions of higher learning when admitting first year students	123	1	3	1.70	1.041
The institution is easily accessible to all students in terms of distance to their homes	123	1	3	1.94	0.967
The institution is easily accessible to all students in terms of their home regions or districts	123	1	3	1.09	1.009

Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: Field Research

Findings in Table 3 show that the mean response (Mean = 1.70) corresponding to 'finding it easy to obtain the minimum entry points...' was close to '2', the code for 'disagree'. The findings also show that the corresponding standard deviation (Std. = 1.041) was very small. This implies that on average, students did not deviate much in disagreeing that they found it easy to obtain the minimum entry points required by Uganda's institutions of higher learning to admit them into higher education. Accordingly, in spite of the existence of the PPPs, the set entry points continued to make it difficult for many students to access higher education in Uganda.

Access to higher education can also be viewed in terms of the extent to which this education is affordable in terms of cost (Scott, 2005). This view underpins the accessibility of higher education in terms of whether its intended consumers are able to pay for it in terms of the charged tuition and fees. Unfortunately, it has been observed that higher education in the developing world is still too expensive for most of those yearning for it to afford (Sánchez and Elena, 2006). Many high school leavers struggle to get the minimum points required to be admitted into higher education but fail to enroll because they cannot afford the charged tuition. This was reflected by the findings summarized in Table 3. While the mean response (Mean = 1.59) corresponding to the affordability of the charged fees by Uganda's institutions of higher learning was close to '2', the standard deviation (0.910) was very small. This implies that on average, students did not widely deviate in disagreeing to the affordability of these fees. This indicates that students were still finding it difficult to access higher education to the charged fees. This depicts the PPPs as being ineffective in this regard. The cause of this ineffectiveness is discussed in due course.

Accessibility of higher education can also be described in geographical terms. This paradigm considers the extent to which students intending to join higher education from different regions of a country find it easy to do so (Okwakol, 2005). It is about regional distribution of higher education institutions. The regions may be demarcated as districts, divisions, or provinces (Ibid). Fair accessibility of higher education is achieved in this regard when institutions of higher learning are distributed evenly across the regions. This, however, is not the case in Uganda. As shown in Table 3, students disagreed that higher education institutions were easily accessible in terms of regional distribution (Mean = 1.09, Std. = 1.009). This is unfair but it exists in spite of the existence of PPPs in Uganda! Why? Closely related to the geographical accessibility of a service is the kind of accessibility defined in terms of distance.

According to Cox (2000), the accessibility of a service in terms of distance refers to how far a service provider is from the consumers. It is measured in terms of kilometres or miles covered by consumers to reach the

service provider. The shorter the distance, the more accessible is the service. In Uganda, however, results in Table 3 indicate that students disagreed that higher education institutions were easily accessible from their homes (Mean = 1.94, Std. = 0.967). This implies that most of the students found it difficult to access these institutions in terms of distance. In fact, most of these institutions are located in central Uganda, implying that students from other regions have to reckon with great distances to access the institutions. For instance, moving from Kotido in the Northeastern part of Uganda to any Uganda university in the central region requires a student to cover a distance of over 312km! Clearly, there is virtually no fairness as far as distance-related accessibility of higher education in Uganda is concerned. Why does this situation prevail when PPPs, which are meant to alleviate it, are operational? The answer is discussed in the next section.

C) Determinants of PPP Effectiveness in the Provision of Desired Quality and Accessibility of Higher Education

The available literature indicates that PPPs operate like any other organizational entity and to be effective, they require not only resources needed to facilitate their operations and functioning but also good management and planning as well as an enabling operating environment (Nishtar, 2004). If any of these factors is unfavourable, it is bound to constrain the effectiveness of PPPs as well. Important to note is that the constraining effect of each of the factors is expected to be minimized so as to maximize the intended PPP outcomes, if each of the partnering sectors fulfills its share of the obligations bestowed upon it by the partnership (Ibid). Therefore, if the effect is not minimized or if the extent of minimization is too negligible to bring about the desired level of the partnership outcome, it is in order to investigate the underlying causes. Since the results presented in the previous section revealed that this was the very situation characterizing the PPPs in Uganda's higher education sector, it was in order to establish the causes.

The causes were established after delving critically into the definition of a PPP. The definition cited earlier implies that a PPP is formed to provide a combined resource base and expertise aimed at improving or increasing levels of public service delivery. Expertise refers to the proficiency or skilled knowledge used to perform a task at the desired efficiency and effectiveness (Glen, 2006). In the PPP paradigm, neither the public nor the private sector can claim a monopoly supply of all the forms and types of expertise required to provide public services as desired (Wettenhall, 2007). The sectors therefore need each other. When each contributes the type or form of expertise that it possesses in form of working together as a partnership, the resultant amalgamated expertise is much better and yields greater outcomes in terms of public service delivery (Baker, 2003). In most PPPs, the public sector tends to

contribute the required yet expensive technical expertise (Wamuziri and Clearie, 2005). The contribution tends to take the form of meeting the cost of hiring this expertise (Nisar, 2007).

In higher education, public sector expertise tends to be provided in form of planning the national framework for providing this education. This framework is meant to provide criteria for quality assurance, regulation, monitoring, and distribution of higher education in a country (Prabir, Bagchi and Seung-Kuk Paik, 2001). It also determines the minimum entry points that any applicant should have in order to be admitted into higher education (Jamali, 2007). Further, it sets the tuition structure which private higher educational service providers should adopt in order to provide the desired quality of education (Prabir, Bagchi and Seung-Kuk Paik, 2001). The public sector also provides expertise in form of hiring the skilled manpower needed to carry out the actual supervision and monitoring of the delivery of higher education for purposes of ensuring that educational services provided by institutions of higher learning conform to the set national standards (Ibid).

While the expertise provided by the public sector to determine quality standards for higher education and to enforce quality assurance through supervision and monitoring of this education has implications on the quality realized in this education, both the set minimum entry points and prescribed tuition structure have implications on the level of accessing this education. In general, literature indicates that the public sector can contribute to a PPP by availing the expertise needed to plan, supervise and monitor higher education in forming meeting the cost of hiring the required consultants, expatriates, professors, PhD holders, and other high caliber professionals. If the public sector or government fails in this regard, the partnership is adversely affected. Accordingly, a questionnaire administered to the selected officials included items that were intended to establish how Uganda's public sector performed in this regard. The analysis of the responses to the items led to results shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Indices Analysis of Officials' Responses on the Expertise Contributed by Public Sector to PPPs in Uganda's Higher Education

Root Statement: The partnership between government and private institutions of higher learning in Uganda is well facilitated by the expertise expected from the public sector in form of:	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Setting the minimum standards for approving an institution of higher education	40	4	5	4.42	0.155
Setting a framework for guiding regional distribution of higher education	40	1	4	1.85	1.096
Enforcing standards for quality assurance management in higher education	40	1	2	1.74	1.081
Determining funding structure that private institutions of higher learning should follow when charging tuition to higher education consumers	40	1	4	3.51	0.098
Setting levels of tuition that higher education consumers can afford	40	1	2	1.04	0.014
Ensuring that higher educational services are brought nearer to their consumers	40	1	2	1.13	0.021

Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: Field Research

The mean responses in Table 4 show that respondents agreed without much deviation that the PPPs in Uganda's higher education are well facilitated by the public sector expertise of the form of setting the minimum standards for approving institutions of higher education (Mean = 4.42, Std. = 0.155); and determining funding structure that these institutions should follow when charging tuition to higher education consumers (Mean = 3.51, Std. = 0.098). This is because the mean responses corresponding to these forms of expertise were close to '4', a code that represented 'agree' in the questionnaire. This implies that the public sector was doing well as far as its contributions of these forms to the PPP in Uganda's higher education were concerned. On the contrary, the mean responses further show that respondents disagreed without much deviation that the PPPs in Uganda's higher education were well facilitated by the public sector expertise of the form of enforcing standards for quality assurance management in higher education (Mean = 1.74, Std. = 1.081); setting levels of tuition that higher education consumers can afford (Mean = 1.04, Std. = 0.014); setting a framework for guiding regional distribution of higher education (Mean = 1.85, Std. = 1.096); and ensuring that higher educational services are brought nearer to their consumers (Mean = 1.13, Std. = 0.021).

The foregoing results imply that while the public sector was perceived as effective in setting standards for approving the worthiness of institutions of

higher learning to provide the desired quality of higher education and while the sector was doing well in terms of determining funding a structure that private universities had to follow when charging tuition, it was ineffective in the areas of enforcing the set standards and of ensuring that the institutions charged tuition and fees that were affordable to higher education consumers. As argued earlier, the failure to enforce the set higher education standards compromises the effectiveness of the PPPs in terms of achieving the desired educational quality. At the same time, the failure to come up with a funding structure that is affordable to higher education consumers also renders the PPPs ineffective in terms of increasing accessibility to this education. For it effectively implies that the institutions are allowed to determine their own funding structures, which prevent some high school students from accessing higher education.

In an informal interview with the commissioner for higher education, it was discovered that the National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) was mandated by the Ministry of Education and Sports to set the national quality assurance criteria for determining the minimum educational standards. It was also found out that NCHE actually determined a funding structure that prescribes at least Uganda shillings nine million per student per semester if the institutions were to provide the desired quality of education. However, no institution could dare charge such exorbitant tuition as this would imply making access to higher education extremely difficult for many students. As shall be shown later, most of the students come from poverty-stricken backgrounds and all operators of higher education institutions are aware of this fact. Therefore, while allowing the institutions to charge their own tuition fees may have its own limitations to accessing higher education; it turns out to be a better option given that the tuition they charge is much lower than the recommended tuition. Lowering the tuition further to affordable levels requires the public sector to increase its role in the funding of higher education rather than pulling out of it altogether through the privatization policy recommended by the World Bank and IMF.

It is important to note that public sector expertise tends to focus on higher education more at national than at an institutional level (Musaazi, 2005). It is therefore not sufficient as far as delivering the desired quality and accessibility of higher education is concerned. It needs to be reinforced by private sector expertise whose main focus is at institutional level (Ibid). It has been observed that while private sector expertise can be a source of advising government on improvements needed in the delivery of higher education (Bogere and Nabiruma, 2009), it mainly focuses on planning for the production, maintenance, supportive, and managerial systems that make up and support the educational service delivery process at a school/institutional level (Musaazi, 2005). This indicates that private sector expertise concentrates

on planning for actual provision of higher education.

Such planning is achieved through identifying and proposing the needed resources and infrastructure and how the resources can be mobilized to provide the desired quality and accessibility of higher education (Nabwire, 2008). The involved expertise focuses on carrying out institutional level programming and budgeting (Mordi, 2000). That is, coming up with programmes through which higher education can be delivered and the funding structure required to raise the resources needed to provide this education at the desired quality and accessibility. The conducted budgeting involves not only determining the instructional materials and physical infrastructure needed to provide the prescribed educational services to a specified number of students (Nabwire, 2008). It also focuses on proposing the tuition structure that can support an institution's efforts to effectively provide the desired quality and accessibility of education (Kayongo, 2007).

The foregoing observations suggest that private sector planning, programming, and budgeting expertise determines much of the intake capacity of higher education, and subsequently, its levels of quality and accessibility. The intake capacity tends to be determined in terms of student enrolment size admitted into institutions of higher learning (Buzindadde, 2000). However, while the size of student enrolment should ideally be determined based on the institutions' resource and infrastructural absorptive capacity (Ibid); many institutions in the developing world have tended to admit less or more than the optimum number of students, thereby compromising the optimal quality and accessibility of higher education (Le Wang, 2007). In fact, some institutions set higher while others lower than the nationally prescribed minimum points for admitting applicants into higher education. Practically, this has a dual effect on the quality and accessibility of higher education.

While institutions that set higher entry points may maintain their desired educational quality through admitting only the required number of students, they limit access to higher education since more students are left out (David, 2008). On the contrary, institutions that set lower entry points may compromise the quality of higher education by taking up more students than their intake capacity; but they increase accessibility to this education (Kahuku, 2008). It has also been observed that achieving the desired higher educational quality assurance through setting entry points has been compromised by the high demand for this education (Le Wang, 2007). Institutions of higher learning have been overwhelmed by large numbers of applicants, which have forced many of them to admit students beyond their intake capacity (Buzindadde, 2000). Consequently, most of the institutions have to work with the public sector if they are to maintain the desired quality in terms of expanding their educational infrastructure as desired. The

formation of PPPs is thus viewed as a means through which the public sector can support the private sector to improve and increase quality and access to higher education.

Not only does private sector expertise focus on planning for institutions of higher learning. According to Gerhard and Gördel (2006), it also offers the managerial or administrative competence and internal control proficiency required to deliver quality higher educational services. The private sector has actually been observed to be more efficient at managing the public service delivery process (Nishtar, 2004). This is because it exercises better internal control in its endeavour to reach out to the grassroots so as to understand public service needs and to respond to the needs in an effective way (Fepuleai, 2007). It also tries to be cost efficient because it has to achieve desired business competitiveness and return on investment (Van Horne, 1996). All these advantages imply that the private sector tends to be better than the public sector at managing the delivery of public services. When such managerial proficiency is contributed in form of a partnership, it definitely has to result into better delivery of public services, particularly in terms of quality and accessibility. In the light of these observations, attempts were made to find out the extent to which the private sector had performed as a contributor to the PPPs in Uganda's higher education. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Indices Analysis of Officials' Responses on Expertise Contributed by the Private Sector to PPPs in Uganda's Higher Education

Root Statement: The partnership between government and private institutions of higher learning in Uganda is well facilitated by private sector expertise of the form of:	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Administrative competence needed to efficiently manage the provision of education in institutions of higher learning	40	4	5	4.33	1.979
Planning for the needed institutional physical educational infrastructure	40	1	2	1.28	0.902
Budgeting for the needed human resources	40	1	2	1.30	0.887
Budgeting for the material resources needed by the institutions to provide the desired quality and accessibility of higher education	40	1	2	1.26	0.552

Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: Field Research

Findings in Table 5 indicate that on average, respondents agreed without much deviation (Mean = 4.33, Std. = 1.979) that the PPPs in higher education were well facilitated by private sector expertise of the form of administrative competence needed to efficiently manage the provision of higher education. On the contrary, the mean responses show that the respondents disagreed without much deviation that the PPPs were well facilitated by private sector expertise of the form of planning for the needed institutional physical educational infrastructure (Mean = 1.28, Std. = 0.902); budgeting for the needed human resources (Mean = 1.30, Std. = 0.887); and budgeting for the material resources needed by the institutions to provide the desired quality and accessibility of higher education (Mean = 1.26, Std. = 0.552). These results indicate that the private was perceived as effective only in terms of providing administrative competence needed to manage higher education. It was not effective in terms of budgeting for the resources needed to provide the desired quality and accessibility of higher education. The ineffectiveness implies that the private sector had not done enough to ensure that higher education was provided at the desired quality and accessibility.

Apart from being cooperative sources of expertise, PPPs are also viewed as arrangements that create a stronger resource base for provision of public services (Prabir, Bagchi and Seung-Kuk Paik, 2001). This is because they combine the resources of both the public and private sectors to make a bigger pool that provides stronger support to the delivery of public services. The combined resources tend to take the form of human, material, financial and physical infrastructural resources (Jamali, 2007). In higher education, human resources include professors, PhD holders, and lecturers holding masters or bachelors degrees (Roulla, 2002). Material resources take the form of instructional materials and facilities used by the lecturers to provide instruction and by students to learn as desired (Gwen, 2008; Tam Wai-Ming, 2008). Illustrations include library materials such as text and reference books, journals, manuscripts, computers, reading tables and chairs; lecture room facilities such as desks, seats, and laboratory materials such as science apparatus and chemicals (Roulla, 2002; Gwen, 2008). Physical infrastructural resources include the physical buildings established in form of classrooms, library, laboratory, and office buildings (Gibson and Brent, 2008).

PPPs ensure that the availability of each of the aforementioned resources is contributed by both the private and public sectors so as to improve, increase and maintain the desired quality and accessibility of higher education (Cheung, Chan and Kajewski, 2009a). Depending on the terms of the partnership, the public sector may contribute some of the resources in terms of tax concessions, paying salaries and allowances, building lecture rooms or providing block grants in form of supplementary finances or instructional

materials (Gwen, 2008). The private sector tends to contribute land, buildings, instructional materials, and funds for administration and personnel welfare using the charged tuition and fees. Clearly, when each of the two partners makes good of their respective share of the partnership, the resultant pool is much greater and results into better quality and expanded accessibility of higher education. Thus, when the public or the private sector fails to honour its part of the partnership, ineffectiveness is bound to occur as this effectively means that less than the desired quality and accessibility of higher education will be realized. On the basis of these observations, attempts were made to establish the situation pertaining to the PPPs in this regard as far as Uganda's higher education was concerned. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Indices Analysis of Officials' Responses on the Resources Contributed by the Private and Public Sectors to PPPs in Uganda's Higher Education

Root Statement: The partnership between government and private institutions of higher learning in Uganda is well facilitated by:	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Allocation of funds expected from government to help lower the tuition that would have been charged to higher education consumers	40	1	3	2.33	0.979
Allocation of funds expected from government to materially support the provision of higher education by private institutions of higher learning	40	1	5	3.58	0.502
Allocation of funds expected from government to hire human resources needed to plan for provision of higher education	40	1	4	3.90	0.687
Prompt disbursement of subsidies expected from government as supplementary budget to private institutions of higher learning	40	1	2	1.26	0.252
Prompt release of funds expected from government to materially support the provision of higher education by private institutions of higher learning	40	1	3	1.38	0.243
Prompt payment of human resources hired by government to help in the delivery of higher education services	40	1	3	1.63	0.355
Government hiring of experts for inspection and monitoring of private institutions of higher learning for purposes of ensuring that set national quality standards are followed as expected	40	1	2	1.20	0.391
Funding structure set by the private sector to support provision of higher education	40	1	4	1.61	2.339
Educational facilities and equipment mobilized by the private sector to support the provision of the desired quality of higher education	40	1	2	1.22	0.564
Mobilization of funds by the private sector to support provision of higher education	40	4	5	4.58	0.228
Private sector's hiring of all human resources needed to deliver higher education	40	1	2	1.49	0.151
Prompt payment of human resources hired by the private sector to help in the delivery of higher education services	40	2	5	3.55	1.005
Establishing of physical infrastructure needed to	40	1	2	2.13	0.229

facilitate the delivery of higher education services					
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Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: *Field Research*

The mean responses in Table 6 indicate two main views revealed by the officials about the resources contributed to the PPP between government and private institutions of higher learning in Uganda by both the public and private sectors. On the one hand, the mean responses show that the officials strongly agreed without much deviation that the partnership was well facilitated by the mobilization of funds needed by the private sector to support provision of higher education (Mean = 4.58, Std. = 0.228). The officials also agreed that this partnership was well facilitated by prompt payment of human resources hired by the private sector to help in the delivery of higher education services (Mean = 3.55, Std. = 1.005). They also agreed that the PPP was well facilitated by government allocation of funds to hire human resources needed to plan for provision of higher education (Mean = 3.90, Std. = 0.687) and to materially support the provision of this education (Mean = 3.58, Std. = 0.502). On the other hand, the mean responses and standard deviations corresponding to other items in Table 6 indicate that the officials disagreed to them without much deviation. For instance, the officials disagreed that the partnership between government and private institutions of higher learning in Uganda was well facilitated by prompt disbursement of subsidies expected from government as supplementary budget to private institutions of higher learning (Mean = 1.26, Std. = 0.252).

In general therefore, results in Table 6 imply that both the public and private sectors performed well on some indicators of mobilizing resources needed to support the effectiveness of PPPs in the provision of the desired quality and accessibility of higher education. However, the two sectors did not perform well on the indicators that were more critical to achieving the desired effectiveness of the PPPs. In particular, the private sector was ineffective not only in the mobilization of all the needed human resources but also in the establishment of the physical infrastructure and mobilization of all the instructional materials needed to facilitate the delivery of the desired quality and accessibility of higher education services. This was worsened by the failure of the public sector to promptly disburse or release the funds allocated to facilitate the PPPs in the delivery of the desired quality and accessibility of higher education. The public sector neither paid hired human resources promptly nor promptly disbursed the funds expected to materially support the provision of higher education. Accordingly, these results suggest that the ineffectiveness of the PPPs in Uganda's higher education is largely explained by government failure to promptly disburse the resources that it was expected to contribute towards supporting the partnership. The failure of

the public sector to promptly release resources to the PPPs in higher education signifies lukewarm commitment of this sector to the partnership. This has been explained by Mwenda (2009) to be a consequence of the shift in government funding priorities caused by political ambitions and conditions imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Apart from the effects of how each of the partnering sectors fulfils its share on the effectiveness of PPPs in terms of bringing about the desired level of higher educational quality and accessibility, the operating environment is also an important factor in determining this effectiveness. This environment comprises the served consumers, input suppliers, competitors, and lenders (Hurst and Reeves, 2004). In higher education, such environment tends to be quite unpredictable because the influences of educational service consumers, input suppliers, lenders, competitors from other sectors, and other factors are extraneous to the control of these PPPs (Gwen, 2008).

In particular, while a PPP may agree to a funding structure needed to deliver the desired quality and accessibility of higher education, the structure may turn out to be quite unrealistic when viewed in the light of the ability of higher education consumers to pay the prescribed tuition (Stanislaw, 2008). The developing world generally and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa in particular are engrossed in high levels of poverty (World Bank, 2000). According to Mwenda (2009), the per capita income in most of the Sub-Saharan African countries is less than one dollar, implying that the majority of the people leave below the poverty line. Consequently, the majority of the consumers of higher education are bound to be poor people, implying that they may not be in a position to afford a funding structure set to facilitate the provision of the desired quality of education. Could this be true of Uganda?

As if that is not enough, most of the lenders in the developing world and in Sub Saharan Africa in particular, tend to offer unbearable lending terms (Kasibante, 2000). Not only do most commercial banks and other lending organizations offer loans at exorbitantly high interest rates; they also require expensive collateral yet give short grace periods and unrealistic loan repayment periods (Kaggwa-Pafula, 2000). Moreover, although PPPs can afford the collateral that the lenders require of borrowers (simply because of the presence of government), the terms of partnership do not permit them to offer security for the loans needed by the private partners so as to boost the capital base needed to provide the desired quality and accessibility of public services (Bohnstedt, 2000). Consequently, PPPs in Sub-Saharan Africa end up operating in conditions in which they have need more funds to provide the desired quality and accessibility of public services yet they cannot increase their capital base through taking up commercial loans. It may be argued that government can borrow the funds and increase its contribution towards the partnership but this argument is untenable in the light of the fact that even the

public sector may make its initial contribution using borrowed funds (Martin, Reyna and Jorgensen, 2006).

The situation is aggravated by the fact that suppliers of higher educational inputs tend to offer the inputs at high prices, particularly in Sub Saharan Africa. This is because most of the higher education inputs are not manufactured locally but are imported from overseas countries. This implies that the prices of most of the inputs are sensitive to changes in foreign exchanges rates, which tend to be volatile in Sub Saharan Africa (Mutula, 2002). The inputs are also subject to all forms of import taxes such as custom duty and macroeconomic changes such as inflation (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2007/08). All these factors plus the locally incurred costs (transport, storage, etc) and the margin of profit added by the suppliers make higher education inputs too expensive for the PPPs to ensure that they are as available in higher institutions of learning located in Sub-Saharan Africa as desired. This compromises the level of quality and accessibility realized by the institutions. In the light of these observations, attempts were made to establish how the operating environment of the PPPs in Uganda's higher education affected their effectiveness. Results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Indices Analysis of Officials' Responses on the Effect of the Operating Environment of the PPPs in Uganda's Higher Education on their Effectiveness

Root Statement: The partnership between government and private institutions of higher learning is well facilitated by:	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sponsors of higher education consumers who can afford the tuition and fees charged by the institutions of higher learning	40	1	4	2.38	0.643
Prompt payment of tuition and fees charged by institutions of higher learning higher education by private sponsors higher education consumers	40	1	2	1.63	0.555
Affordable supply of inputs needed to support desired quality of higher education	40	1	2	1.24	0.514
A supportive commercial banking system in case the need for loan finance arises	40	1	2	1.20	0.791

Note: the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

Source: Field Research

The mean responses were close either to '1' or to '2', the codes for 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree', respectively. This indicates that on average, officials disagreed that the partnership between government and

private institutions of higher learning was well facilitated by sponsors of higher education consumers who could afford the tuition and fees charged by the institutions of higher learning (Mean = 2.38, Std. = 0.643). They expressed strong dissent to the idea that the partnership was well facilitated by prompt payment of the charged tuition and fees (Mean = 1.63, Std. = 0.555); affordable supply of inputs needed to support desired quality of higher education (Mean = 1.24, Std. = 0.514); and by a supportive commercial banking system in case the need for loan finance arises (Mean = 1.20, Std. = 0.791). This implies that the operating environment of the PPPs in Uganda's higher education was not supportive. It was therefore one of the factors that explain why these PPPs are ineffective as far as achieving the desired quality and accessibility of higher education was concerned.

In general, results indicate that the public and private sectors in Uganda are not doing enough to make good of their respective contributions to the PPPs in higher education, particularly in terms of resource mobilization. The findings also show that all the components of the PPPs' operating environment are not supportive. It is therefore not surprising that the PPPs are ineffective and need to be improved. To establish areas that are critical to the effectiveness of these PPPs and to which attention needs to be focused, factor analysis was conducted. It was carried out using the responses given by the selected officials to the determinants of the effectiveness of the PPPs in the provision of higher education. Results are shown in Table 8.

Table 1: Factor analysis Results on Determinants of the Effectiveness of PPPs in Provision of Higher Education in Uganda

Questionnaire items	Principle components				
	Government funding	Private sector funding	Government expertise	Private sector expertise	Operating environment
Root Statement: The partnership between government and private institutions of higher learning is well facilitated by the:					
Prompt disbursement of subsidies expected from government as supplementary budget to private institutions of higher learning	.910				
Prompt release of funds expected from government to materially support the provision of higher education by private institutions of higher learning	.902				
Allocation of funds expected from government to help lower the tuition that would have been charged to higher education consumers	.816				
Allocation of funds expected from government to materially support the provision of higher education by private institutions of higher learning	.770				
Allocation of funds expected from government to hire human resources needed to plan for provision of higher education in Uganda	.719				
Prompt payment of human resources hired by government to help in the delivery of higher education services	.666				

Government hiring of expert inspection and monitoring of private institutions of higher learning to ensure set national quality standards are followed by institutions of higher education	.606				
Funding structure set by private institutions to support provision of education		.741			
Educational facilities and equipment mobilized by the private sector to support the provision of the desired quality of higher education		.627			
Mobilization of funds by private sector to support provision of higher education		.604			
Hiring human resources needed to deliver higher education		524			
Prompt payment of human resources employed by the private sector to help in the delivery of higher education services		.506			
Establishing of physical infrastructure needed to facilitate the delivery of higher education services		.499			
Government expertise of the form of setting the minimum standards for approving an acceptable institution of higher education			.733		
Government expertise of the form of setting a framework for guiding regional distribution of higher education			.620		
Expertise expected from government in terms of enforcing standards for quality assurance management in higher education			.505		
Expertise from government in terms of determining funding structure that private universities should follow when charging tuition to higher education consumers			.540		
Expertise from government in terms of setting levels of tuition affordable to higher education consumers			.510		
Expertise expected from government in terms of ensuring that higher educational services are brought nearer to their consumers			.509		
Private sector expertise in terms of administrative competence needed to efficiently manage the provision of education in institutions of higher learning				.651	
Expertise expected from the private sector in terms of planning for the needed institutional physical educational infrastructure				.618	
Private sector expertise in terms of budgeting for the needed human resources				.558	
Private sector expertise in terms of budgeting for the material resources needed by institutions of higher learning to provide the desired quality of education				.563	
Sponsors of higher education consumers who can afford the tuition and fees charged by the institutions of higher learning					.738
Prompt payment of tuition and fees charged by institutions of higher learning higher education by private sponsors higher education consumers					.548
Affordable supply of inputs needed to support desired quality of higher education					.521
A supportive commercial banking system in case the need for loan finance arises					.501

Alpha	.718	.619	.568	.523	.503
% Variance Explained	36.05	27.34	12.44	10.54	10.33
% Cumulative Variance Explained		63.39	75.84	86.384	96.71

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Findings in Table 8 show that five principle components were extracted from the responses to the determinants of the effectiveness of PPPs in Uganda's higher education. These were identified as: government funding, private sector funding, government expertise, private sector expertise, and the operating environment of the PPPs. A careful look at the reliability coefficients (Alpha values) indicates that they were all greater than 0.5. This implies that all the components were reliable indicators of the determinants of this effectiveness. The cumulative variance indicates that the components explained up to 96.71% of the variation in determining the effectiveness of the PPPs. This implies that the components were responsible for much of the level of effectiveness registered these PPPs. The findings show further that individually, government funding was the most reliable (Alpha = 0.718) determinant and one that explained the largest variation (Variance = 36.05%) in the effect on the effectiveness of the PPPs. This was followed by private sector funding (Alpha = 0.619, Variance = 27.34%), then by expertise from government (Alpha = 0.568, Variance = 12.44%) and then by private sector expertise (Alpha = 0.523, Variance = 10.54%). The operating environment followed with a reliability coefficient of 0.503 and explained variance of 10.33%. These findings show that although the effectiveness of the PPPs is determined by the nature of all the five components, it is more influenced by government funding. Thus, government funding needs to be improved if the effectiveness of the PPPs is to be achieved as desired.

A careful scrutiny of the factor loadings reveals to most of the selected officials, prompt disbursement of subsidies expected from government as supplementary budget to private institutions of higher learning as the best indicator of public sector funding as a determinant of PPP effectiveness (Factor Loading = 0.910). Similarly, they showed that the funding structure set by private institutions to support provision of higher education was the best indicator of private sector funding (Factor Loading = 0.741). Further, setting the minimum standards for approving an institution of higher education as acceptable was the best indicator of public sector expertise as a determinant (Factor Loading = 0.733); yet administrative competence needed to efficiently manage the provision of education in institutions of higher learning was the best indicator of private sector expertise (Factor Loading = 0.651). The best indicator of the operating environment of the PPPs was revealed as the affordability of sponsors of higher education consumers to pay

the tuition and fees charged by the institutions of higher learning (Factor Loading = 0.738).

Conclusion

Findings show that although the ineffectiveness of the PPPs was explained by less supportive private sector funding, un-enforced government expertise, inadequate private sector expertise, and unsupportive operating environment, it was more explicated by poor government funding. The findings show promptness in government disbursement of subsidies to private institutions of higher learning was the most critical explanatory factor followed by the inadequate internal funding structure of these institutions, un-enforced standards set by government to approve of the institutions, and the failure of private higher education sponsors to afford the charged tuition and fees. The results therefore show that the desired effectiveness of the PPPs can be achieved by addressing each of these problems.

D) Recommendations

- 1) The government of Uganda should ensure that it promptly disburses the subsidies expected from it as supplementary budget to private institutions of higher learning.
- 2) Institutions of higher learning in Uganda should improve their internal funding structure not by increasing tuition and other fees but by negotiating with government to increase its funding to higher education and to release the allocated funds promptly
- 3) The government should not stop at setting quality assurance standards but should also enforce their observance by the private institutions of higher learning
- 4) The private sector should ensure that it mobilizes all the human and instructional resources needed to provide the desired quality and accessibility of higher education. This can be achieved if recommendations (1) and (2) above are adopted.
- 5) Government should improve the household incomes of the private sponsors of higher education through effective implementation of its poverty eradication programmes such as *Bonnagaggawale*. This will improve the affordability of higher education in terms of cost.

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