The Massification Of Higher Education: A Comparison Of The UK Experience And The Emerging Ethiopian Response

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Abstract: This paper describes the expansion of the UK higher education systems since the national commission of inquiry chaired by Lord Robbins in 1962. It analyses the effects of the expansion in the UK on Government and institutional behavior and change. It documents how changes in the gender and ability profile of higher education, lower units of funding and increases in student/staff ratios (SSRs) led to the development of new ways of managing and new teaching, learning and assessment methods. It notes that HEIs were subject to more scrutiny (especially of quality) and more accountability as funding formulas and competitive systems of funding for research were introduced. Some HEIs failed and were taken over by neighboring institutions or closed. The survivors became more entrepreneurial and relied less on government funding. They competed for students of the grounds of quality and the services they offered. The accreditation of prior learning and interim qualifications enabled many disadvantaged and older students to enter higher education. The paper considers the extent that these changes may be paralleled in Ethiopia over the coming years. The paper draws on the data and findings of the *Report of the Higher Education Strategy Overhaul Committee of Inquiry into Governance. Leadership and Management in Ethiopia's Higher Education System* (HESO) that was produced by a national committee of enquiry chaired by the author. It concludes that the Ethiopian higher education system should prepare itself by:

- The speedy operational zing of the EHESI, QAA and National Pedagogic Resources Center;
- instigating changes to the philosophy and methods of teaching, learning and assessment;
- creating quality assurance systems focused on outcomes and backed by evidence;

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- achieving economies in other areas by rationalizing facilities, space, staff and automating and streamlining systems;
- preparing for possible financial instability by contingency planning and developing alternative sources of income;
- planning for the possibility of changes in the funding;
- developing more active and expert Boards;
- considering whether to prepare ladders of opportunity, through the design of a qualifications framework and the accreditation of experiential learning;
- developing marketing departments and processes to manage HEIs' image;
- developing professionalized administrative support services and personnel.

Introduction

All over the world, countries have been responding to the challenges of globalisation and the information age by expanding their higher education systems. In the developing world, countries like China and India have expanded their higher education rapidly, so that now more than 2 million students are enrolled in each country. Even countries with much smaller populations such as Egypt and Thailand have systems serving more than a million students (see Task Team on Higher Education and Society: 2000). Western Europe experienced a growth in student numbers some time before the less developed world and the UK was in the vanguard of this early expansion. Ethiopia is at the start of its own rapid growth in higher education (see for example, Teshome: 2003). This paper compares the experience of expansion in the UK and in Ethiopia, and looks at the likely effects on Ethiopian systems and structures to see what lessons may be learned from the Western European experience as typified by the UK.

This study draws on information and data collected during the recent work of the Higher Education Strategy Overhaul Committee of Inquiry into Governance, Leadership and Management in Ethiopia's Higher Education System (2004). The author was the Chair of the Committee of Inquiry.

The study also draws on visits undertaken by the author (with others) during the early part of 2004 to all six of the Ethiopian public universities; one of the institutions that became a university during 2004 and one that is due to

be upgraded un 2005; four of the private institutions that aspire to university status; and one higher education institution that is funded by a Ministry other than the Ministry of Education. During the visits to public sector institutions under the Ministry of Education, the author conducted a series of meetings with groups of senior managers, academic staff, and students. In two institutions she also met the VSO Higher Education Management Advisor. An agenda was provided for each of these meetings. In all but one of the visits she also met with a group of administrative managers and in all but two was given a tour of the site which included the library, IT facilities, student facilities, a typical classroom, a typical laboratory and other facilities. Where the institution was a multi-campus operation, these tours generally included visits to more than one site. In all institutions except two, the author also had individual meetings with the librarian, a science instructor and the IT center manager.

In the visits to the institutions not funded by the Ministry of Education, the author engaged in an agendered meeting with senior managers in three of the institutions and with middle managers in two of them. She was given a tour of the site in three of them.

Thus, the study draws on a total of 38 agendered meetings in 13 of Ethiopia's higher education institutions, observation of facilities in ten institutions and discussion with facilities managers in six institutions.

It also draws on the author's extensive knowledge and experience of the UK higher education system. This includes working as a senior and middle manager in four public sector higher education institutions, two at executive level, chairing the UK Management Forum of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers and membership of a variety of Government working parties. In addition, it draws on her work as a member of the senior management team of the Higher Education Funding Council for England: negotiating the service level agreement with the UK's Quality Assurance Agency, taking part in decision-making about national higher education strategy and funding; running a major funding project; and overseeing and analyzing the Strategic and other Plans of 11 higher education institutions with respect to strategic issues, finance, investment, estates, learning and teaching, widening participation, science equipment investment and links with the community and industry.

Ethiopia's Expansion Goals

Higher education has a central role in increasing and diversifying knowledge and competitiveness in global and knowledge-based market, as well as the protection of democratic culture and society. This role will be facilitated by the rapid and substantial investment in higher education that the Ethiopian Government and the World Bank and other donors have committed. Ethiopia requires a massification of its higher education system in order that its graduates might manage the processes of a civil society, oversee its economic and social development and provide the professional class of teachers, business people, health workers and so on that it needs. However, an increase in student numbers will not be sufficient to meet these requirements: the HESO study indicates that it also requires a step change in the quality and form of learning, teaching, research, publication and consultancy.

In 2003, the Ethiopian Government introduced far reaching reforms through the Higher Education Proclamation Number 351/2003 (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: 2003a). The Proclamation paved the way for a massification of the system and for it to move from extreme centralization towards institutional autonomy. This is to be achieved by various measures: a block grant based on a formula taking account of the numbers, level and subjects studied by students; more powers given to HEI Boards and institutions with respect to the hiring, reward and management of all categories and levels of staff; and HEIs given more independence with respect to determining their internal organizational arrangements. In addition, women, people with disabilities and those from deprived areas were to be advantaged through affirmative action.

The World Bank (2004) notes that before reform the Government routinely appointed presidents and vice presidents; all academic staff were civil servants managed by the Civil Service Commission rather than the HEI; line management budgets were allocated and increased incrementally irrespective of numbers of students or quality; additional income generated was deducted from budgets; and quality assurance was not an explicit concern. Institutions can now make their own decisions on each of these matters.

The Education Sector Development Program II and the Higher Education Capacity Building Program (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: 2002a

and 2002b) list the main components of the reform, including the expansion programme. These include:

- Increases in the enrolment in higher education (through the creation of new programmes, both under-graduate and post-graduate and new institutions)
- Improvement in the leadership and management of the sector – to facilitate this, the Ethiopian Higher Education Strategy Institute (EHESI) is to be established to 'guide overall reform activities' of sector.
- The means to ensure the quality and relevance of education and training programmes – to facilitate this, the Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency (QRAA) is to be established to accredit HEIs and undertake quality assurance at systems level.
- Improvement in institutional efficiency (through the training for top and middle management, the establishment of Pedagogic Resource Centres in each HEI and the requirement for HEIs to develop a student-centred curriculum and specific civics program)
- Provision of a legislative framework for the sector (through the Higher Education Proclamation)
- Private HEIs to educate a much higher proportion of students
- New programmes to be opened in teacher education, social sciences, engineering and technology, health, basic and plied sciences
- 150 managers and administrative staff trained and 6 international co-managers hired
- Cost sharing, the block grant system to be introduced and income generation expanded in HEIs and unit costs identified and adjusted
- Better remuneration for staff, research infrastructure, libraries, study quarters and recreational facilities to be achieved
- 500 staff to be trained on pedagogical skills and material preparation and over 2000 staff trained at Masters and Doctoral levels
- Over 800 expatriate staff to be recruited

Some of these have certainly been achieved: new program areas have been introduced and many more are planned. Some have been partially achieved: for example, a number of international co-managers have been hired, but not as many as were planned. From 1996 - 2003 undergraduate enrolments doubled to 18,000 in public sector higher education institutions. The private higher education sector expanded even more rapidly: growing from almost nothing in ten years to 21% of all tertiary learners. This has enabled higher education numbers to triple overall during this period

(Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: 2003b). Graduate programs are well established in three universities, Addis Ababa, Debub and Alemaya. Most other higher education institutions have established or plan to establish their own masters degree programs.

Despite these achievements, participation remained low in 2003 at 1% of school leavers and only 62 graduates per 100,000 Ethiopian people. Enrolments are planned to double again in the next 3 years (post graduate intakes are set to treble). The plan is to extend higher education through merging existing colleges into universities and opening new higher education institutions. Until a few years ago there were two public universities. In 2003 there were six. In 2004 two more have been established. Next year another will be added.

The World Bank (2004) recommends that HE expansion is rather steadier than the Government envisages: limited to 6% pa to keep it balanced with secondary, with enrollment expanding more slowly in early years, but continuing for a longer period. It warns that otherwise the 24% maximum share of education expenditure to HE may be grossly violated. It notes that the extent that this is affordable depends on whether GDP grows at 3% or 6% pa.

Expansion in the UK System

The expansion of higher education experienced by the UK was very large, but occurred over a longer time period than in Ethiopia. The first major period of expansion followed a National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education chaired by Lord Robbins in 1962. This report noted that only 4% of young people of school-leaving age went to university: 5.5% of young men and 2.5% of young women. The only other form of higher education was teacher training. At that time, it was debatable whether this form of education was truly higher education (for example, the entry qualifications were much lower than for university and the exit qualification was a certificate rather than a degree). However, if one does count teacher training as part of higher education, 6.25% of young people of school leaving age experienced higher education (Robbins cited in OxCHEPS: 2004). Robbins recommended that higher education be expanded and a rapid growth took place over the next ten years, followed by a plateau in the numbers. By the early 1980's the numbers of young people who entered higher education had risen to around 20% of the age range.

Between then and 2000, there was another great expansion of higher education. Dearing (1997) chaired a major Committee of Enquiry into higher education that reported the following changes between 1977 and 1997:

- The number of students in higher education doubled
- Public funding of higher education increased by 45% in real terms (i.e. after inflation was taken into account)
- The unit of funding per student fell by 40% in real terms
- The percentage of public funding devoted to higher education remained the same.

The Association of University Teachers notes that during the same period the SSR in higher education changed from 1:9 in the mid 1970s to an estimated 1:23, accompanied by a decline of 37% in academic pay relative to the rest of the workforce since 1981.

In 2003/4, in England 44% of young people went into higher education. This figure has increased from 41% of young people in 1999/2000. This means that around there are about 1.5 million students in higher education in the UK today, from a population rather less than that of Ethiopia and with a much smaller proportion of its population in the younger age bracket. This increase is set to continue. The UK Government has plans for 50% of young people to go into higher education by 2010 (BBC: 2004).

Despite there being no financial or other incentives for HEIs to recruit female students, their numbers have increased steadily. In 1970, female students were in the minority at every level. By 2003/4 the percentage of young women of school leaving age entering higher education was 47%, considerably higher than the percentage of young men. In 2002/3 females represented 58% of first year students on all higher education courses.

The UK system is unlike many others in that its expansion has been relatively steady from the 1960s to the present day. The system started as a bipartite one, with colleges of higher education and polytechnics funded and controlled through local authorities and universities funded by central government. The polytechnics and colleges of higher education were created to develop vocational training and education at higher education level, whether higher education certificate, diploma or degree. Gradually these institutions developed post graduate programs. They were able to offer such programs because the Council for National Academic Awards

had been set up to validate the awards offered by these institutions. This body did much to ensure equivalence in standards and appropriate curriculum, course development and review process. In 1992 (1994 in Wales), polytechnics were upgraded to universities and they and colleges of higher education left local authority control.

The UK system grew through a process similar to that in other European countries. Existing higher education institutions were expanded and a few new ones were created (generally by turning further education colleges, the equivalent of Ethiopia's TVETs, into higher education institutions and then upgrading the courses they offered). This expansion occurred especially in the polytechnics, which were able to offer education at a much lower unit price than universities. At the same time, the number of colleges of higher education decreased. They were not able to achieve the economies of scale that the polytechnics did and therefore, with the same unit funding, they became uncompetitive and were generally merged with a neighboring polytechnic (or later with a neighboring university).

The UK system did not follow some other common paths to achieving greater numbers of people educated to higher education level taken by other countries. It did not expand the private higher education sector. Up until recently, higher education in public HEIs was free to the students; therefore there was little advantage and many disadvantages to seeking private higher education. The UK also sent virtually no students abroad to study. The UK system was able to satisfy home demand by expanding its own operation.

The UK Higher Education System's Response to Massification

Neave and Van Vught (1994) described some changes in governance associated with dealing with the challenges of massification as moving from a state control to a state supervision model of governance. Unlike some of the rest of Europe, the UK had never had a 'command' system. HEIs have always had a fair amount of autonomy. In fact, prior to the expansion, they could be characterized as centered on the needs of the academic community rather than any other stakeholders. With the massification of the UK system, Government supervision actually increased through its various agencies, and in some areas amounted to control. The Government set up quasi autonomous agencies to achieve this: the funding councils and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). It began to control institutional behavior

through its relationship with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), which controlled the funding model for teaching based on a formula, and research based on volume and quality assessments. HEFCE partially funded the QAA and so set service level agreements determining some of the foci for the national quality assurance system.

In order to control quality in a massified system, the UK Government encouraged the QAA gradually to assume a range of powers. The QAA would visit to assess provision within institutions and award grades according to how well it met certain criteria. These grades were published in league tables and affected an institution's reputation and student recruitment. Gradually these criteria became more elaborated and included the specification of programs to include elements the Government, through the QAA, deemed desirable, certain forms of course documentation, review and reporting and so on. Because the QAA was partially owned by the institutions, and because its reviewers were drawn from HEIs, the individual criteria that it imposed were generally benign and appropriate. However, the accountability demands gradually expanded and became expensive and burdensome. For example, in 2002/3, institutions had to prove that they were meeting ten codes of practice covering matters such as the treatment of collaborative provision, external examination, disabled students, employability and so on. The focus on outcome and process meant that institutions did not merely have to abide by the codes, but prove that they had done so effectively. HEI also had to meet certain institutional criteria in relation to policy and practice that the QAA deemed desirable in areas including:

- procedures for approval, monitoring and review of academic programs;
- procedures for acting on the findings of external examiners, subject reviews, and other external scrutinies;
- overall management of assessment processes and any credit systems;
- management of collaborative arrangements with other institutions.

Institutions were expected to provide evidence such as:

- examples of implementation of institutional quality assurance procedures;
- examples of adherence to the precepts of the codes of practice*;*
- trends in quality assurance practices;

- possible problem areas for particular scrutiny at institutional level;
- examples of good innovative quality assurance practices.

With respect to subject level assessment, QAA reviewers looked at matters such as adherence to a nationally determined qualifications framework; benchmark statements determining skills and knowledge that should be included within the curriculum; communication between students and staff; curriculum content and student learning in relation to intended leaning outcomes; curriculum design; effective utilization of learning resources; assessment arrangements; the development of employability skills and so on (QAA: 2003).

It is likely that the QAA proved a valuable means of ensuring the massification of the system caused no slippage of standards, but in the end its methodology became too burdensome and had to be reformed (see PA Consulting: 2000).

In addition, the funding system gradually changed to ensure that HEIs adhered to Government policy. Funding Councils were set up in each of the constituent nations within the UK (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Funding for learning and teaching was allocated according to a formula based on the number of students recruited and continuing year to year, the subjects they studied, the level of study and the mode (part- or full-time). All teaching was funded through the same formula, wherever it occurred and whatever the quality ratings given to the subject department. The unit of funding was subject to 'efficiency gains' each year, which meant that it did not keep up with the rate of inflation and institutions had to decide whether to expand student numbers and maintain their spending power or to cut costs. Most expanded student numbers rapidly. The Government paid a reduced amount for each of these 'marginal students', unless they were recruited into subjects that the Government had decided to expand. In this way, government encouraged competition between HEIs for additional student intakes, achieved unit cost savings and encouraged HEIs to expand certain subjects at the expense of others.

The funding of HEIs was also used by Government, through its funding councils, to encourage other behavior that it considered desirable. Thus, in 2002/3, institutions could access additional funds to develop learning and teaching strategies, widening participation activity, human resources management, links with the community and industry and so on.

In contrast, research was assessed through a regular research assessment exercise that assessed the number of researchers within each subject department of each HEI that reached national and international levels of excellence. There was no test for relevance or match with Government priorities. Together with various other 'esteem indicators' and the amount of research funding achieved from other sources, the assessment of the output of individual researchers determined a score for each department that in turn established a unit of funding which was multiplied by the numbers of declared researchers. In this way, apparently objective funding was assured for the system and competition between HEIs for students and researchers was established.

The massification of higher education; the accompanying reduction in the unit of funding; and the instability of research funding led various institutions into financial difficulties. This meant that Boards had to be more proactive in their oversight of institutions and the funding councils' guidelines about financial probity became more elaborated and explicit.

Despite the efficiency gains achieved, the UK Government became concerned about the costs of the expanded system. Institutions were encouraged to become more entrepreneurial to generate additional income and students were required to pay fees for their tuition at the same time as their grants for living expenses were terminated. Institutions were also encouraged through the funding model to expand part-time enrolment and to introduce and promote a range of sub degree, post-Grade 12 programs (higher certificates and higher diplomas of various types) that the Government had concluded would be cheaper than the traditional three year, full-time degree. Eventually, a two year foundation degree was introduced. Interestingly, although part-time provision grew rapidly, sub degree programs and foundation degrees did not take over from bachelor degrees as the preferred qualification. However, they became useful in providing a ladder of achievement for part-time students and other non traditional who could take a certificated course, and have it 'count' in credit terms towards a degree. Post graduate courses also incorporated a similar ladder of achievement (post graduate certificates, postgraduate diplomas) which could 'count' in a similar way towards a masters degree or be an exit qualification in their own right. It is likely that such stepping off and stepping on qualifications encouraged many non traditional students to acquire degrees they would otherwise have not considered themselves capable of.

Certainly, the numbers of mature students in higher education expanded exponentially. By 1995 mature students (those entrants to undergraduate programs over 21 and to post graduate programs over 25 years of age) represented nearly half of all entrants (HEFCE, 1995). Since then, the numbers have continued to grow, in 2001, the numbers of those over 21 grew by 8.7% and those over 25 years of age grew by 3.4% over the previous year (UCAS: 2001); and in 2004 applicants in the 21-24 age range grew by 7.4% and those over 25 by 6.8% over the previous year (BBC: 2004).

In time, the Government became concerned that the funding model was encouraging a focus on research quality at the expense of teaching. HEIs would experience large increases or decreases in their research funding as a result of the periodic research assessment exercise. An increase or decrease in a department's research rating of only one point could have dramatic financial consequences. In contrast, HEIs received the same funding per student whether the quality rating for their teaching as high or low. This led to research being seen as high status in terms of academic staff career prospects and institutional kudos. To improve the status of teaching in the massified system, the Government set up another quasi autonomous institution, the Institute of Leaning and Teaching, and also funded subject centers across the UK to encourage the development and improvement of teaching in HEIs. Unfortunately, perhaps because the ILT had no effect on institutional funding and it possessed no sanctions for those individuals or institutions that failed to engage with it, it never fulfilled its early promise.

Effects of the Expansion on UK HEIs

Because of the need for efficiency savings, the expansion of higher education was not accompanied by a concurrent expansion of staff. This necessitated a dramatic change in learning and teaching methods. Institutions moved away from small tutorial and seminar work. The numbers of individual tutorials decreased dramatically, individual project supervision was achieved with many fewer contact hours and much more written general guidance for students. The average size of seminar classes rose dramatically and the number of hours devoted to seminars were cut sharply. Mass lectures became common. Lecturers began to develop interactive techniques that were suitable for lectures with over a hundred students. Student/teacher contact hours were cut dramatically and the students'

learning out of class became much more structured. Changes to the assessment system compelled students to become more independent in their learning and less reliant on their teachers. Personal tutorial systems focused on the individual were mostly replaced by more structured group opportunities to develop study skills and professional, non teacher-based support services for employment and personal advice. Modular handbooks and course guidelines largely replaced individual guidance of student choice by lecturers and provided the means to structure students' private study. Most courses began to have at least some modules or elements of modules on-line. After the initial investment in time and pedagogic training, this led to economies in tutor time. ICT investment became a priority and opening times of facilities expanded until most universities and college now have some or most of their ICT and library facilities open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Library expenditure grew as a proportion of the HEI budget and library space became a major investment priority. There was no concurrent expansion of library staff, so systems had to become increasingly automated.

These changes were accompanied by the development of education development centers within most HEIs. These provided training and support for lecturers and gradually it became common for newly appointed academic staff to be required to undergo training in pedagogic and assessment techniques as part of their induction programs. Quality assurance units were also set up to systematize processes. This heralded a move away from individualized systems of course development, assessment and design based on tutor or departmental preference, towards detailed institutional procedures that laid down assessment criteria, processes, course design processes and formats, course validation and review processes. Institutional quality assurance units oversaw more and more detailed procedures relating to matters such as employability, ICT and study skills and how they were mapped across the curriculum, provision for disabled students, equality of opportunity and so on.

Other systems and processes were becoming less staff intensive. Cost cutting required a number of adjustments. At the same time concerns were being expressed about the effect that expansion might be having on the quality of education. Government and its agencies responded by demanding much more accountability data about matters such as student progress, employment and the social background of students. These twin demands: more information and the need to cut overall costs, led to a systems and ICT revolution in universities and colleges. Administrative staff

were cut and information systems developed. Today, for instance, on-line enrolment of students is common, with students themselves checking and entering their personal details. The data on students' progress and results are almost exclusively tracked electronically and computers create lists of the names of student on particular modules or within particular teaching groups, mark lists and the paperwork for examination board meetings. Such systems also produce statistical information which are used by HEIs and the funding councils as the basis of various performance indicators

Space became a precious commodity as investment in building failed to keep up with student demand. Fewer organizations kept a majority of space for the exclusive use of faculties or departments: most space became part of the general pool. Timetabling of staff and space became automated: computers allocated space, students and instructors to courses and calculated instructor class contact time. The teaching day was expanded, so that classes would typically run from 9.00am to 9.00pm. This enabled more efficient use of staff and space resources. Office space was also at a premium so in some institutions, space norms for certain types of staff became established. This enabled a fair system of determining which staff categories of should share offices and how much personal office space each category of staff should be entitled to.

HEIs had always had powerful Boards of governors who were drawn from all sectors of society. These Boards gradually became much more proactive and assumed specific duties (for instance, assuring the assessment of risk in institutional activities). Local politicians were removed from Boards and replaced by industrialists, financier, lawyers and so on.

The increased size of higher education institutions and the new forms of governance had important implications for the management of higher education institutions. The increased size in terms of budgets and learners put more pressure on management. Vice Chancellors became more like corporate managers, they were far more than academic leaders, generally developing financial skills, and being the marketing face of the institution. Deans and heads of department were generally given considerable responsibility for budget supervision and human resource management. In this, they were supported by fully professionalized financial and human resource departments. The pay of HEI managers increased until the typical Vice Chancellor (the equivalent of a President) is paid around seven time

the amount for a basic instructor and a Faculty Dean is paid three or four times the amount.

As student demand for certain HEIs became close to saturation, marketing departments were set up and expanded to ensure a steady stream of applicants to the institutions.

Implications of the Experience of Expansion in the UK for the Ethiopian system

Of course, there are many differences between higher education in the developed world and that in a less developed country. For example, the UK has never had to face a health crisis such as HIV/AIDS that threatened its economy and social goals. Nevertheless, it is possible that there may be lessons to be learned from the UK experience about the pressures and changes that may be experienced in the future by HEIs in Ethiopia. The author suggests that HEI managers and policy makers at least consider the applicability of the UK experience of massification for their own actions.

Even in the UK, which enjoyed increasing GDP year to year, the unit of funding per student did not keep up with inflation. The authors suggest that Ethiopia's higher education system should make plans to protect themselves should they suffer the same fate. Even if stable unit funding in real terms could be provided, the supply of skilled labor to work as instructors and administrators in Ethiopia is likely to be insufficient to manage the system as it is presently organized. This means that it would be wise to prepare for such problems by taking action such as:

- Making changes to the philosophy of teaching to permit more student centered learning relying much less on direct instructor input.
- Developing an active National Pedagogic Resource Center and institutional Pedagogic Resource Centers to develop and disseminate new methodologies and approaches.
- Developing systems, procedures and processes to use teaching, office, ICT center and library space more intensively.
- A move of investment and expenditure away from other areas towards ICT, library facilities and books.
- The automation of a variety of systems and reductions in the staff to manage them.

The HESO Study indicates that Ethiopia's HEI managers have not yet addressed these issues.

Ethiopian HEIs would be wise to prepare for accountability for quality, relevance and standards. The question must be asked as to whether the new public sector universities in Ethiopia yet genuinely represent new institutions of university standing. Most have been created from existing colleges, and beyond a merger of these and an expansion of numbers, there appear to have been no criteria established and no test undertaken to ensure a qualitative change in quality, resources or staff qualifications which might be expected from a change (upgrading) of status. Ethiopian HEIs may need to invest in upgrading academic staff and facilities by cutting costs elsewhere. The Higher Education Proclamation enables this, but the HESO Study indicates that few HEIs have actual plans.

In addition, it is almost certain that HEIs will be held accountable for the quality, standards and relevance of their programs of study. They should look at their systems for assuring quality, standards and relevance and ensure that in future they assess inputs, processes and outcomes adequately. At present the HESO Study indicates that none has institutional systems that would stand up to the scrutiny of auditors. They will need to be able to produce evidence to assessors (and to their Boards) to answer questions such as: 'how does the senior management know that all students are marked without bias?', 'how do they know that the standards students achieve are comparable to those achieved in similar universities elsewhere?', and 'how do they know that the content and assessment of courses meets employment needs?'.

In addition, various supporting establishments have yet to be properly set up to support the university structure. In 2003 the Higher Education Proclamation (No.351/2003), established the Ethiopian Higher Education Strategy Institute (EHESI) and the Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency (QRAA). In addition, the National Pedagogic Resource Centre has been in existence for three years. These institutions in many ways parallel those established in the UK: the funding councils, QAA and ILT respectively. The Ethiopian Government should perhaps make their speedy and effective operation a priority.

It is likely that, once a formula has been developed for teaching and learning, the values within it will change. In addition, even experienced HEIs may find that the unexpected happens and that it has unfortunate financial consequences. HEIs could get ready for change by:

- planning for contingencies and surpluses to manage shortfalls in expected funding;
- identifying changes in the formula that would be beneficial and getting together with other HEIs to lobby for change;
- developing systems to ensure probity and responsibility as budgets are devolved;
- planning to develop alternative sources of income.

It is clear from the HESO Study that HEI planning for the funding formula is largely non existent.

It is possible that the costs of an expanded higher education system may encourage Government to consider the option of sub degree qualifications, building on Grade 12 study (say a higher certificate after one year of post and a higher diploma after two years) as an alternative to bachelor degrees for some students and also to consider post graduate certificates and diplomas, rather than masters degrees, for professional upgrading of some graduates. Such a range of qualifications, each embedded within a degree program, requires the creation of a qualifications framework and credit accumulation system. HEIs could think about whether they would consider such a development desirable, whether they should lobby for it, whether they should collectively design a credit framework, how they would integrate such qualifications into their existing programs and their possible value for attracting 'hard to recruit' students (see below). The HESO Study shows that few HEIs are considering such possibilities.

It is likely that Government in Ethiopia will succumb to the temptation, as has happened elsewhere, to develop a series of 'jam pot' funding initiatives to reward HEIs that meet certain priorities. Wise HEIs will have anticipated this and be ready with policies and practices that enable them to take advantage of these funds.

In addition, historical funding for research is unlikely to be a viable long term option. It is possible that there will come a time when research is funded according to some assessment of its quality, relevance and volume. HEIs,

especially those more recently established, should plan to take advantage of the opportunities this may bring.

In the longer term, it is possible that students will be admitted into higher education programs by individual HEIs. In this case, the Government is likely to control the process by requiring HEIs to meet quotas for subject and certain categories of student or face financial penalties. HEIs would be wise to prepare for this contingency by developing strategies to recruit to less popular subjects and by establishing links with potential students in 'hard to recruit' groups. They should also pay attention to raising their image and developing positive strategies for keeping themselves in the news. It will be equally important for them to influence key opinion formers in Government and elsewhere and to build positive links with industry. The development of a professionalized marketing and communication department may be key to success in this area. The HESO Study indicates that few HEIs have a marketing and communication strategy.

Ethiopia's managers will need to find ways of making time to reflect on the changes they are faced with and engage in 'what if' thinking. For example, they may need to develop systems of delegation and appoint professional assistants to take care of all routine matters and do the initial monitoring of delegation. In the UK, it is common for the equivalent of an Academic Vice President to have a graduate professional assistant to act as a kind of 'super secretary/personal administrator'. This person will read minutes of meetings, note what the manager as committed to doing and make sure that s/he has all the necessary documentation and is aware of any deadline a few days before. Before meetings, the professional assistant will brief the manager on any background material. S/he will go through the manager's mail and email and deal with routine matters, delete unnecessary emails, draft replies, collect together and summarize related documents and so on. S/he will check expenses, ensure requisition requests have gone through the correct processes and are added correctly etc, before passing forms on to the manager to sign.

Managers and Boards should routinely engage in scenario analysis. This will provide the evidence they use when they lobby to change events to suit the sector (e.g. the weightings within the funding formula). In the UK, the university lobby is well organized and very powerful. It is also the case that a massified system with more institutional autonomy creates a variety of institutional risks (financial, reputational, and so on) . This means that

Ethiopian Boards should think about the range of skills they will need and consider the increase in activity and systems that they should initiate.

Conclusions

Drawing on the experience of the massification of the UK higher education system, the question may be asked about what changes the Ethiopian system may expect over the next decade or so. It seems to the author that change will be faster and support systems will need to develop more rapidly in the more competitive world of the Twenty-First Century. It is unlikely that Ethiopia will have the 40 years that the UK enjoyed to achieve its 600-800% growth. It is also unlikely that Ethiopia experience the relatively indulgent resource climate that the UK system enjoyed until relatively recently. This means that Ethiopian higher education will need to develop it management, Boards, systems and attitudes much faster than was the case in the developed world. They are likely to be helped in this process by reflecting on the strategies and approaches adopted in countries such as the UK.

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