Deterrents to Collaboration in the Provision and Regulation of Cross-Border Higher Education in East Africa

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Abstract

Currently, many nations consider cross-border higher education (CBHE) as an effective strategy for providing higher education opportunities to all regardless of national boundaries, at a relatively low cost, and without irrationally compromising quality. Despite the nations being aware of the benefits of CBHE, there is still little evidence of significant collaborations among East African countries in this aspect. Accordingly, this paper interrogates the deterrents to collaboration in CBHE and their implications for sustainable higher education in the region. Besides the differences existing among East African countries, the paper suggests that countries and higher education institutions, in particular, should, inter alia, promote regional synergistic approaches for the provision and regulation of cross-border higher education to gain a prerequisite momentum for global competition.

Keywords: collaboration in cross-border higher education, East African higher education mobility, regulation of cross-border higher education

Introduction

Higher education is globally a scarce commodity but whose investment results in future financial and non-financial returns. In this regard, governments in East Africa and elsewhere in the world are motivated by the perceived social rate of returns in such investment in higher education (Knight & Liu, 2016; Odebero, Engel & Middell, 2015). One observable feature of the twenty-first century is the remarkable rise in the number of cross-border students, staff and programmes (Knight, 2017;

Moore & Lambert, 1996). Similarly, online delivery of education programmes has become widespread in many nations and there is a steady increase in the number of cross-border providers of higher education programmes (OECD, 2004). Similarly, massification of higher education has constrained many nations' capacity to provide access to higher education using conventional modes of delivery. In fact, there is an increasing number of students following programmes that are produced and managed outside the countries where they are offered. Consequently, the global changes in social and information technologies are compelling the introduction of new strategies and paradigms of education (Kim, Kim, & Ahn, 2010).

In general, various forms of cross-border higher education provide opportunities for improving the skills and competencies of students and boosting the regulation of the quality of domestic higher education of the receiving countries (Odebero, Engel, & Middell, 2015; Vincent-Lancrin & Pfotenhauer, 2012). For instance, domestically-provided programmes may work more strategically due to the inherent fear of losing potential students to the programmes run by foreign institutions. In consequence, higher education institutions are deliberately promoting innovative delivery systems and strengthening their collaborations with other institutions and nations in the provision and quality regulation and accreditation of their respective programmes (Uvalic-Trumbic, 2008). Indeed, the contemporary importance of international educational mobility induces the promotion of information sharing and the understanding of different institutional and national educational practices and systems. Nonetheless, a significant issue in programme mobility is who awards the course credits or final credential for the programme. Probably more importantly is whether the qualifications are credible for employment or lifelong learning in the receiving country and in other countries as well.

In the East African region, higher education interactions and co-operation originated from the pre-independence era when Makerere University College was the only higher education institution in the region serving students from Kenya, the then Tanganyika, and Zanzibar in East Africa as well as from the then Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, respectively) in central and southern Africa (Sanga, 2017). Later in 1963, university colleges were formed in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam as constituent colleges of the then University of East Africa that had been established during the era of independence of the four countries of Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Makerere College was the third constituent college of the University of East Africa. In 1970, the University of East Africa was dissolved and the University of Dar es Salaam,

Makerere University and the University of Nairobi were established as separate autonomous national universities for Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, respectively (IUCEA, 2008, 2011). In the same year, due to the need to maintain collaboration among these universities the Inter-University Committee (IUC) was established under the auspices of the first East African Community (EAC). The role of IUC was to facilitate contact and co-operation among the three universities (universities of Dar es Salaam, Makerere and Nairobi).

Furthermore, after consultations involving principal secretaries responsible for higher education in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, the vice chancellors of the universities in the three countries met in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1980 to discuss the future of the cooperation of their institutions (IUCEA, 2011). They agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) committing them to maintaining co-operation among their universities within the IUC framework. This MoU led to the transformation of the IUC into the current Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

The re-establishment of the East African Community on 30th November, 1999 created an opportunity through which to foster cross-border higher education officially more effectively in the signatory countries. Maviiri (2006) contends that, although there is a high level of interaction among the East African countries in higher education, they need more rigorous collaboration among themselves. Besides the campus public universities, Maviiri further implicitly affirms that, liberalisation and globalisation have compelled these countries to promote the role of private universities and distance education to meet the rapidly growing demand for higher education (Maviiri, 2006).

Educational export and import bring both advantages and challenges not only to the exporting nation but also to the receiving one. For instance, while exporting institutions and nations gain from expanding student enrolments and income through tuition fees, importing nations benefit by supplementing the domestic supply of education and they gain an educational alternative for their population (Sum, 2005). However, this phenomenon creates operational threats to the national quality assurance mechanisms responsible for, especially, higher education. When most of the imported programmes consist of higher education, the impact of low quality programmes upon the human resource and socio-economic development of nations may be significantly detrimental to the national higher education stake.

Purpose and Objectives

Cross-border higher education is one of the relatively new areas of study in developing countries. As such, it is quite rare to find empirical studies that address cross-border education and its related concepts, with East African countries no exception. This paper is a product of a study that was triggered off by a broad question: *How are individual institutions and nations constrained in establishing and managing mechanisms for the provision and regulation of both incoming and outgoing education programmes, students and staff?* The challenges individual institutions and nations face in their efforts aimed to foster the provision and regulation of CBHE appear overwhelming. Therefore, the paper analyses the factors that deter institutions and countries from effectively collaborating in the provision and regulation of cross-border higher education in East Africa.

Specifically, this paper seeks to illustrate the rationale for collaborative efforts in the provision and regulation of cross-border higher education; analyse the deterrents to collaboration in CBHE and their implications for sustainable higher education in East Africa; and suggest possible synergistic strategies in the provision of such cross-border higher education.

Cross-Border Higher Education in East Africa: Gains and Threats

Cross-border higher education (CBHE) is not only a phenomenon for developed countries but also for developing and emerging countries (De Wit, 2017). Literature indicates that the number of cross-border activities undertaken by institutions in developing and emerging countries is on the rise, hence illustrating the increasingly competitive power of higher education in emerging and developing countries.

Cross-border higher education refers to the movement of students, staff, knowledge, programmes, education providers, policies, ideas, curricula, projects, research and services across national or regional jurisdictional borders (Knight, 2007; Sanga, 2017). Yet, cross-border education is only one aspect of the complex process of internalisation. It may include higher education by public and private and not-for-profit or for-profit providers. UNESCO (2005), Knight (2017) and other literature clarify that CBHE encompasses a multiplicity of modalities in a continuum ranging from face-to-face to distance learning using a range of technologies, including e-learning.

The growth of cross-border higher education in East Africa is accelerated by many factors such as massification of higher education (Sanga & Mi-Lee, 2014), the inability of national systems to offer educational opportunities to all (Odebero, Engel, & Middell, 2015; Vincent-Lancrin & Pfotenhauer, 2012) and the global demand for internationally acceptable competencies of knowledge-based and technology-driven economies that escalate the need for relevant high-level skills. Cross-border higher education may involve a variety of forms such as franchising, online mode of learning, twinning programmes, branch campuses, and joint and dual degree programmes (Knight, 2007).

The co-operating institutions, teaching staff and students benefit from the cross-fertilisation of knowledge, skills and cultures, thereby fostering human understanding and improving manpower across borders. In addition, CBHE boosts national educational demands to attain an international dimension of research and teaching, which in turn can lead to institutional quality improvement. Njuguna and Itegi (2013) observed that such regional networks strengthen the benefiting countries' ability to compete in the global arena. This is particularly important in this globalisation era when we witness African countries being deeply engaged in pursuing Western-type of development, sometimes without factoring the issue of appropriateness to their respective local contexts.

Cross-border higher education creates opportunities for knowledge and technology exchange and transfer and the promise to penetrate new markets, and has the potential of stimulating competition for scarce resources, especially human capital (Knight, 2017; Odebero, Engel, & Middell, 2015). However, the practicality of knowledge and technology exchange is usually disturbing due to the inequalities that are likely to emerge between collaborators. In this situation, the role of governments becomes imperative in providing the necessary frameworks and procedures that harmonise and strengthen international bonds.

Cross-border higher education presents several threats both to the providing and receiving nation or institution. Although cross-border higher education generally offers an opportunity for choosing high quality courses, deep inequalities tend to exist between the collaborating countries. As Sanga and Mi-Lee (2014) have stated, few countries may dominate the global scientific system and, unfortunately, new technologies are basically owned by multinational academic institutions from developed countries, hence making most of East African countries dependent on the major academic superpowers.

The absence of collaborative regulation for admission, teaching, assessment and accreditation mechanisms entails quality risks such as selling and buying of fake degrees, which tend to create a negative impression of cross-border education. Against such a backdrop, some institutions decide to introduce courses both online and compulsory attendance mode for distance learners. Additionally, although it helps in capacity-building, human resource development, achieving practical and relevant education and professional training in a national context, cross-border higher education can constitute one of the manipulative political strategies (Knight, 2017) and economic devices towards fostering educational internationalisation and co-operation among nations.

Methodology

This paper presents findings drawn predominantly from the qualitative content analysis of data from documents and records related to admission policies, living and tuition costs of various higher education degree programmes in the selected countries. Documents belonging to the quality assurance agencies for higher education in the three countries: the Commission for Higher Education, Tanzania Commission for Universities and National Council for Higher Education for Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, respectively. Moreover, records for the Inter- University Council of East Africa were also deemed vital to supplement the data so collected.

Description of Study Area

The revived East African Community consists of the republics of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Nonetheless, this paper deliberately selected three countries—Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda—based on the assumption that they are the most influential cases within the community in terms of higher education systems. These three countries also happen to be members of the formerly dissolved East African Community and, more significantly, they have well-established and co-ordinated higher education systems within the Community. Though for some reasons, Rwanda is emerging to be one of the hotspots for higher education in this region, the cumulative reasons for picking the three countries justify their selection for study. After all, they have a long track record of co-operating not only in higher education but also other areas as well.

Rationale for Collaboration in the Provision and Regulation of CBHE

The history of collaboration in East Africa is traceable from the colonial period. These countries had and still have the goodwill to collaborate and work together. In fact, the current EAC is built on the philosophy whose framework compels establishing and expanding more solid collaborations in all socio-economic sectors including education. As such, there has been significant numbers of students' exodus crossing their country borders in search of higher education. Evidently, East African countries are presently experiencing a sporadic expansion of the number and enrolment levels in university institutions triggered by the rapid increase in the demand for higher education (Odebero & Middell, 2015). Likewise, the need for collaborative regional efforts for regulating education is imperative due to the steady growth of student mobility within the region. Furthermore, education has become a global commodity and, hence, there an overriding need to implement mechanisms that can foster protections and promote quality of international standards of cross-border higher education. In fact, for many reasons, collaboration appeared to be more desirable than operating as isolated entities. Subsequent paragraphs describe some rationales for collaboration in the provision and regulation of cross-border higher education.

Ideological motives

The core philosophy underlying the provision of distance education, cross-border higher education in this case, is the concept of opening up universal access to educational opportunities and resources, especially to less privileged people and segments of society. Institutions engaged in cross-border education tend to be pragmatic in their approach to inter-institutional co-operation and show a greater willingness to take risks to promote international collaboration and are open to modern approaches of delivery (De Wit, 2017). The same philosophy, widening access or democratisation of education, compels higher education institutions in East Africa to collaborate and reduce duplication in national efforts aimed to provide and regulate higher education. Countries and their respective higher education institutions are, thus, constantly embracing a global culture of attracting applicants to pursue higher education in their countries.

Academic motives

Collaboration enables institutions to expand their international dimension of their research, teaching and provision of other educational services. Knight (2004) argued for the essentiality of such expansion due to the growing inter-dependency among nations in addressing global issues such as terrorism, health, climate change and crime through collaborative research and scholarly activities. The international and inter-cultural aspects of curriculum and the teaching and learning process are also important in their contribution to the quality and relevancy of higher education (Knight, 2004). Thus, one prominent justification for the internationalisation of higher education is the preparation of graduates to be internationally knowledgeable and inter-culturally skilled so that they can live and work in more culturally-diverse communities globally.

Collaboration in the provision of higher education has the potential of improving the quality of education through sharing of learning materials, facilities, and approaches (Moore & Lambert, 1996). Moreover, through mutual quality regulation, institutions and nations open educational opportunities to a broader population of learners and educators. Risks and benefits for collaboration vary between sending and receiving countries, developed and developing countries and among students. However, it is generally acceptable that mutual implementation of quality regulation strategies minimises the imbalance between brain-wash and brain-gain, and exposes students and teachers to the latest educational technologies and practical insights and, hence, intellectual enrichment, broadening of cultural viewpoints in addition to forging meaningful international bonds. The similarity among East African countries in terms of economic, social, and cultural levels and standards has the potential of facilitating their mutual collaboration in various spheres including higher education.

Economic motives

Though academic mobility and education exchange across borders has long been a central feature of higher education, it has recently been recognised as a commodity or service to be traded on a commercial basis across borders. Knight (2004) contends that trade agreements through the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) have identified education provision as a profitable trade sector. Therefore, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, international educators were compelled to become more aware of new opportunities created, as well as potential risks that trade liberalisation could bring to higher education and, in particular, the international dimension.

Furthermore, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are significantly breaking territorial boundaries that have tended to characterise institutional education. Thus, institutions, which wish to become or stay competitive in the global economy, should consider regional and international collaboration as a means towards gaining reputation and financial power. Even when a cross-border educational activity is non-commercial in purpose, there is still the export value in the country's balance of payments in some ways (Maviiri, 2006). Of course, this will largely depend on the country's own strategies to reaping benefits from the beneficiaries. There is, however, a precaution pertinent to economic motives of regional collaboration. The struggle for survival tends to naturally transform higher education institutions into corporate institutions (Findler, Schönherr, Lozano, R., Lozano, D. R. & Martinuzzi, 2018). The consequence of which is the likelihood of diverting from the institutional core mission, vision, and goals.

Diplomatic motives

Many countries have realised the role of higher education in establishing and sustaining diplomatic relations by using the soft power rather than employing force. Soft power is reliant on the strength of ideas and culture to influence the friendship and disposition of others (Knight, 2004). Usually, institutions and governments in countries with well-developed higher education are taking initiatives to receive students from many developing countries. In fact, some universities in less well-developed higher education also seek relationships with other more prestigious institutions to raise the visibility in global rankings.

Bilateral and multilateral co-operation, even in the education sector, at the national level, tends to have diplomatic motives as well. For instance, nations may agree to establish international collaboration with the main goal of reducing trade barriers and increasing economic activity among themselves (Moore & Lambert, 1996). Moreover, collaboration helps to fight unemployment and promoting sustainable development, especially in developing countries.

Deterrents to Collaboration in the Provision and Regulation of CBHE in East Africa

Establishing and managing the provision and regulation of both incoming and outgoing educational programmes entail multiple constraints. Despite the strengths of mutual collaboration for the provision and regulation of CBHE, East African

countries face a number of challenges which deter the efficacy of the provision and regulation of CHBE. Whereas most of the deterrents are internal to the countries and the region (local and regional deterrents), others are externally oriented as described in the subsequent sections.

Influence of the Global North hegemony

In this context, the Global North consists of countries which are mainly former colonial powers and the Global South consists of formerly colonised countries, which include all the East African countries. Some authors classify the Global North as Developed Countries or First World Countries and the Global South as Developing Countries or Third World Countries. What is clear is that the regulation of higher education is increasingly becoming a global venture positioned in a field characterised by significant asymmetries (Ramirez, 2014). Belonging to countries of the Global South, higher education institutions in East Africa are predominantly prone to adopting uncritically approaches to the regulation of higher education applied in the Global North primarily because the diffusion of ideas and educational reform practices is progressively unidirectional—from the North to the South. Definitely, one is compelled to question who establishes 'global/international' standards for quality and who benefits from such diffusions from the Global North.

The most likely option of engaging in the implementation of cross-border higher education at a wider international perspective is for the East African countries to experience a widening gap between themselves as losers and the North as winners. For instance, the United States followed by Europe have been the main exporters of accreditation and educational regulation guidelines and standards (Jackson, Davis, & Jackson, 2010). As a result, there is an extrinsic desire of every institution to become a world class university, a phenomenon which is contentious but powerful and pervasive. In consequence, universities and other higher learning institutions are investing heavily in marketing and branding campaigns to acquire recognition and boost enrolments. Whether the internationalisation of regulation of higher education promotes collaboration and joint problem-solving or exacerbates competition and power struggles depends on an individual nation's preparedness for globalisation. Whereas the Global North seems to depict aggressive competition, the East African countries are typically passive recipients of global ideas from the North. Thus, under such global power differences between the North and the South, cross-border higher education can serve as a tool for perpetuating those differences instead of levelling the playfield.

Local and regional deterrents

1) Differences in key policies and systems of education
Despite the similarities that exist in many aspects, the general education systems and national educational philosophies of the three countries differ in certain fundamental aspects. These differences affect prospective students' smooth crossing of the borders for higher education. Sanga and Mi-Lee (2014) illustrate that, Tanzania and Uganda follow a 7-4-2-3 system comprising seven years of primary education, six years of secondary education (divided into four years of ordinary or lower secondary and two years of advanced secondary school) and at least three years of higher education.

On the other hand, Kenya follows an 8-4-4 system, which is eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education and at least four years of higher education. These differences have a direct repercussion on student exchange across these countries. Sometimes, students are compelled to do either a bridging programme or a matriculation examination before they are admitted to higher education studies in a neighbouring country. Under these circumstances, quality of education may mean different things to different institutions and partner countries.

Similarly, as mentioned in Odebero, Engel and Middell (2015), when the pressure from the World Bank compelled governments in Sub-Saharan Africa to privatise higher education, so did the demise of the middle level colleges begin as most of them have been collapsed into universities and constituent colleges. The consequence of collapsing of middle level colleges can be felt in the constriction of students' admission in higher learning institutions.

2) Diluted autonomy of higher education institutions and national regulatory agencies
Autonomy and the powers of national regulatory agencies are not uniform across these countries. Moreover, there is a notable proximity between universities and national structures of power which in East African situations has occasionally tended to curtail academic freedom and intellectual expansion among students and staff. Indeed, there are several cases of serious government encroachment on higher education recruitment and renewal of lecturers' contracts, higher education budgets, and institutions' administrative procedures in general (Sifuna, 2012). Sifuna (2012) also contends that, although the governments are gradually withdrawing from supporting higher education, their political influence on the management of higher education remains.

Additionally, the incongruity among national quality assurance systems creates another challenge. Kenya's Commission for Higher education (CHE), for example. prioritises the standards (provider's commitment, design of curriculum, instruction and course materials development, staff support, student support, evaluation and assessment, and advertising) and procedures for quality assurance of open and distance learning programmes (CHE, 2008). Tanzania's and Uganda's agencies, on the other hand, are silent on that. In fact, Tanzania and Uganda apply the same procedures and standards for both conventional and open and distance learning programmes.

3) Institutions' and nations' reluctance to support and promote CBHE

In some cases, institutions and governments are worried that student mobility and foreign education could lead to the displacement of local students by international students (Njuguna & Itegi, 2013). Likewise, cross-border higher education tends to cater for an affluent upper market, which explains why most of the students seeking it are privately sponsored. Implicitly, students from poor economic backgrounds are technically left out.

4) Misinterpretation of liberalisation policies of education

Liberalisation policies of education have resulted in a rapid proliferation of higher education institutions, especially private ones. As a result, nations are witnessing a huge increase in the launching of universities and transformation of existing non-degree offering colleges into universities. Arguably, some of these institutions are apparently not worthy of the name university. Coupled with massification, whereby the numbers of the students surpass the available infrastructure and facilities, effective management of higher education is definitely at the crossroads. The problem of degree mills has, thus, become one critical concern of higher education quality regulation agencies in this region.

Furthermore, due to the pressure stemming from competition for impressive university ranking, institutions may cheat and provide exaggerated data to regional and international agencies on what they offer so as to gain the desired recognition. This challenge is in line with Sum's (2005) view that higher education institutions are likely to provide exaggerated information about, for example, programme content and their delivery and claims on the local recognition of the same. Seemingly, pressure from ranking systems of universities and advocacy for global competition are factors also accelerating the provision of exaggerated data. In fact, every higher

learning institution is struggling to become *a world class university* literally by any means.

5) *Disparities in the levels of technology*

New technologies have been influential in increasing accessibility to education and have opened new avenues for cross-border education. Due to advances in ICT, collaboration in providing and managing quality higher education is, sometimes, regarded as irrelevant because ICT facilitates an unrestricted penetration of knowledge and technology across borders. In addition, East African countries have different ICT policies and certainly differ in the levels at which they have integrated technology in education. These differences may have some implication for the extent to which harnessing of the benefits of cross-border higher education are attainable. Reliable ICT infrastructure will normally create favourable environment for easy export and import of cross-border higher education.

6) *Poor co-ordination of roles played by various bodies for higher education*

Agencies of higher education regulation in the East African countries delineate the roles played by, for instance, the national governments, professional and academic bodies and student bodies too passively. This anomaly can be rectified by comparing with other international guidelines and standards such as guidelines and standards stipulated by OECD and UNESCO's joint guideline (Uvalic-Trumbic, 2008). This is a constraint because the regulation of education is a shared responsibility among many stakeholders ranging from student bodies to national governments.

Other deterrents include the unequal costs of higher education in East Africa. For instance, the significance presence of students from Kenya, Tanzania and elsewhere in Uganda's higher learning institutions is largely attributable to the relatively low cost of higher education in Uganda (Odebero, Engel, & Middell, 2015). Additionally, the duration of stay in a university may also deter efforts for collaboration because even when tuition fees are harmonised, the overall costs may vary due to differences in the duration of stay at a given university.

Prospects for Synergy in the Provision and Regulation of CBHE

Generally, the provision and regulation of cross-border higher education by single-country initiatives is cumbersome unless combined efforts from neighbouring countries are considered. Notwithstanding the deterrents discussed, East African

countries have vast opportunities which, if wisely harnessed, can allow CBHE to be more effectively provided and regulated within the region.

In 2005, the Inter-University Council for East Africa decided to embark on establishing an agency that would cater for issues pertaining to regulation of higher education within the region. This move was prompted by the global need to promote higher education benchmark internationally. National higher education regulatory agencies of the founding member countries collaborated in efforts aimed to actuate this idea. Consequently, the three East African higher education regulatory agencies—Kenya's Commission for Higher education, the National Council for Higher Education in Uganda and Tanzania's Commission for Universities—signed a memorandum of co-operation in 2006 in a bid to streamline and harmonise higher education accreditation, quality assurance practices and procedures in the region (Buchere, 2009). A harmonised regulatory system for East Africa, currently being developed, would help ensure standards and the comparability of cross-border higher education among member countries. Successful development of an East African Quality Assurance Framework will also serve as a yardstick to ensure that higher education graduates in member countries attain the skills and competencies needed to be relevant to and competitive for jobs in the region and globally.

The recent political will of the government leaders of East African countries to invigorate a strong East African Community provides a great opportunity for expanding collaboration in political, economic, socio-cultural, and, of course, educational sectors. Following this revival of the East African Community, many higher education institutions are intensifying their ties across the region. In other words, higher education institutions can seize this unique opportunity to work together and sustain their role as think-tanks within the region. More significantly, some top government leaders and educational experts have been passionately advocating for the harmonisation of the system of the provision and regulation of higher education in East Africa.

The most prominent public universities of East African countries (Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Makerere in Uganda and Nairobi in Kenya) have a long, shared and rich history. With their common history and multiple perspectives they can synergistically share their experiences to address the regional educational issues with the greatest amount of a collective voice impact. These prominent universities have the potential of providing leadership in offering high quality higher education

at a reasonably affordable cost and less 'restrictive residency model' (Chetro-Szivos, 2010) to promote cross-border higher education within the East African region. Based on their history and local dynamics, public institutions deserve to assume the leadership role in education sector despite the growing importance of private higher education institutions in this region.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The global trend of higher education programme and student mobility signifies the reality that the provision of cross-border higher education programmes is increasingly becoming imperative in East Africa. One key argument of this paper is that institutions and nations ought to begin focusing on institutional and regional collaborations before rushing to the fiercer global collaborations or competitions. Implicit in this argument is the need to strike a balance between localisation and regionalisation, on the one hand, and internationalisation or globalisation of cross-border higher education system, on the other. Nonetheless, member countries need to realise that, despite their many similarities, the goals of providing and regulating higher education should be relevant to respective country's circumstances in the first place. Moreover, the provision and regulation of cross-border higher education in East Africa requires assessment to determine the scope of conformity with other international guidelines and standards such as those stipulated by the Commonwealth of Learning, the OECD and UNESCO. After all, globalisation pressure presents a paradox when it comes to collaboration and competition. Thus, striking the balance between the need for collaboration and competition among institutions and nations is seemingly tricky for many educational leaders and managers. Finally, it is high time East African Community members implemented Article 102, especially clauses d, e, and g of the East African Community Treaty (East African Community, 2007, p. 76) which requires partner nations to:

- Develop such common programmes in basic, intermediary and tertiary education and a general programme for adult and continuing education in partner states as would promote the emergence of well -personnel in all the sectors relevant to the aims and objectives of the Community;
- Harmonise curricula, examination, certification and accreditation of education and training institutions in the partner states through a joint action of their relevant national bodies charged with the preparation of such curricula;
- Encourage and support the mobility of students and teachers within the Community.

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