



*Higher Education and National Development: The
Response of Higher Education Institutions in Malawi*

(2000–2010)

By

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DECLARATION

I, Felix Benson Mwatani Editor Lombe, hereby declare that this Doctor of Philosophy (D.Phil.) thesis entitled *Higher Education and National Development: The Response of Higher Education Institutions in Malawi (2000–2010)* is my own work and that I have not previously submitted it, in part or in its entirety, at any university for a degree or examination. All sources that I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of reference.

Felix Lombe

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____



DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this piece of work to the Almighty God for enabling me to get this far in my academic itinerary. There are three people whom the Almighty God has been using to inspire me even when my inner person doubted my inert potential: my sweetheart, Lizzie Chimala; my mum Editor Lombe; and, my uncle Castings Lombe. Both Lizzie and mum have forgone numerous material pleasures just to keep me undisturbed in my academic endeavours. My uncle Castings on the other hand challenged me never to be contented with any qualification in life starting from the time when I was only eleven. He might have been saying this out of parental obligation but nineteen years down the line, I would want him to realise the impact that his words have had on me. I am thankful to God for keeping these three people alive until today to witness the impact of their selfless moral and material support. I partly dedicate this thesis to them.



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The discipline of acknowledging others in academic exercises rightly deters candidates or authors from excessively monopolising the cake of success. It checks them against the temptation of exaggerating and aggrandising their abilities. This academic journey has now left me much indebted to more people than before. However, it will be a gross moral error if I do not mention some of them here. This thesis would have been impossible if it were not for the selfless guidance and brilliant mentorship of my supervisor, Professor Jimi Adesina. One of the greatest things that can happen to a doctoral candidate is to find himself or herself being supervised and promoted by a scholar whom he or she esteems highly. Professor Adesina constantly kept me at the edge of my chair as he advised me to be always sure of what I write and be able to provide “irrefutable” evidence on any line of thinking that I want to advance or subscribe to.

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Studying in a foreign land is emotionally challenging as one has to come to the terms with the absence of one’s family. I had less of such emotional stress because of my Malawian colleagues

who provided the “country-men warmth” throughout the entire study period. My close friend, the late Stonard Kanyanda, who succumbed to a stroke attack at the time of writing of this thesis, stands out conspicuously. In him I had a friend in need and indeed.

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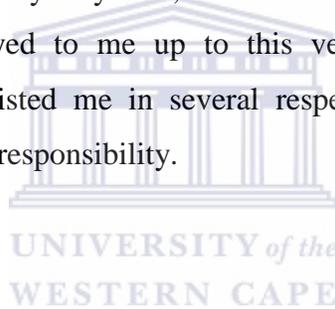


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACCA	-	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
AfDB	-	African Development Bank
AFRODAD	-	African Forum and Network for Debt and Development
AICC	-	African Institute of Corporate Citizenship
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APRU	-	Agricultural Policy Research Unit
BBA	-	Bachelor of Business Administration
BIU	-	Blantyre International University
CARD	-	Centre for Agricultural Research and Development
CBA	-	Cost-Benefit Analysis
CCAP	-	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
CDSS	-	Community Day Secondary School
CERT	-	Centre for Educational Research and Training
CFSC	-	Centre for Social Concern
CIMA	-	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
CLS	-	Centre for Language Studies
CoM	-	Malawi College of Medicine
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	-	Centre for Social Research
CUNIMA	-	Catholic University of Malawi
DEVPOL	-	Development Policies
DFID	-	Department for International Development
DPP	-	Democratic Progressive Party
DRC	-	Democratic Republic of Congo
DVC	-	Deputy Vice Chancellor
EAC	-	Evaluation and Accreditation Committee
ECM	-	Episcopal Conference of Malawi
EFA	-	Education for All
ESIP	-	Education Sector Implementation Plan
EU	-	European Union
FCR	-	Food, Clothing and Roof
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
FOREX	-	Foreign Exchange
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GCSE	-	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNI	-	Gross National Income
GNP	-	Gross National Product
GTZ	-	Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit
HDI	-	Human Development Index
HE	-	Higher Education
HEA	-	Higher Education Attainment
HEI	-	Higher Education Institution
HES	-	Higher Education System
HIPC	-	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HPI	-	Human Poverty Index

ICA	-	Investment Climate Assessment
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
IDA	-	International Development Association
IGCSE	-	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
IHS	-	Interpreted Household Survey
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
ISD	-	Institute for Social Development
KCN	-	Kamuzu College of Nursing
LIC	-	Low Income Country
LMS	-	Labour Market Survey
MA	-	Master of Arts
MANEB	-	Malawi National Examinations Board
MAU	-	Malawi Adventist University
MBA	-	Master of Business Administration
MBCS	-	Malawi Business Climate Survey
MCCCI	-	Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry
MCP	-	Malawi Congress Party
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goals
MGDS	-	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MEGS	-	Malawi Economic Growth Strategy
MHC	-	Malawi Housing Corporation
MMR	-	Maternal Mortality Rate
MoEST	-	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MPRSP	-	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
MSc	-	Master of Science
MSCE	-	Malawi School Certificate Examinations
MTEF	-	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MZUNI	-	Mzuzu University
NEC	-	National Economic Council';
NESP	-	National Education Sector Plan
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NIP	-	Neo-Institutional Approach
NSO	-	National Statistical Office
ODA	-	Overseas Development Assistance
PAEC	-	Public Accountants Examination Council of Malawi
PAP	-	Poverty Alleviation Programme
PAS	-	Political and Administrative Studies
PhD	-	Doctor of Philosophy
PIF	-	Policy and Investment Framework
PUSLT	-	Public University Students Loan Trust
QECH	-	Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital
R&D	-	Research and Development
RDA	-	Resource Dependency Approach
RISDP	-	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
SADC	-	Southern Africa Development Community
SAL	-	Structural Adjustment Loan
SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Programme
SDA	-	Seventh Day Adventist
SOUM	-	Share World Open University of Malawi

SPSS	-	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
SSA	-	Sub-Saharan Africa
TEVETA	-	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority
TFP	-	Total Factor Productivity
TNC	-	Trans National Corporations
UDF	-	United Democratic Front
UEE	-	University Entrance Examinations
UIL	-	University–Industry Link
UMSU	-	University of Malawi Student Union.
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	-	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children Fund
UNIL	-	University of Livingstonia
UNIMA	-	University of Malawi
USA	-	United States of America
USAID	-	United States of America International Development Agency
UWC	-	University of the Western Cape
VC	-	Vice Chancellor
VP	-	Vice President
WASHTED	-	Centre for Water, Sanitation, Health and Appropriate Technology Development



KEY WORDS

Malawi

Education

Higher education

Higher education system

Higher education institutions

Education policies

State

Development

Development policies



ABSTRACT

Theoretically, the role of higher education in national development has become clearer than before, while empirically the evidence is overwhelming. Elsewhere in the world, countries that have made tremendous strides in both social and economic development invested heavily and strategically in higher education. In Malawi, the role of higher education in national development has always been recognised by development policies since independence in 1964. However, with the exception of the first 15 years of independence, Malawi's development path has registered abysmal results both on the social and the economic fronts despite undergoing significant socio-economic and political reforms. Malawi remains one of the most underdeveloped countries whether judged by Gross National Product (GNP) per capita, the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) or the Human Poverty Index (HPI). One of the factors that is considered as having contributed to low levels of development is the performance of education systems (primary, secondary and higher education) (World Bank, 2009).

It is against this background that this study sought to examine how Malawi's higher education institutions (HEIs) have responded to their roles as prescribed by the national development policies with a focus on the period between 2000 and 2010. Four questions guided the study: i) what specific roles do national development policies define for HEIs to ensure that higher education contributes to national development? ii) To what extent are these roles performed by HEIs in Malawi? iii) What factors determine the performance of HEIs in their expected roles? iv) What pattern of response to their (HEIs') expected roles can be identified?

Theoretically and analytically, the study was informed by the two perspectives of the open systems theory, namely the resource-dependency approach and neo-institutional approach. These two approaches contend that actions by organisations are limited and influenced by various pressures and demands emanating from their internal and external environments and that organisations often respond accordingly in order to survive. Methodologically, the study employed a mixed-method design (of qualitative and quantitative) with a dominant usage of qualitative methods. A multiple case study approach was used in which data were collected through unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews and documentary review. For qualitative data, the analysis was done using a text method while quantitative data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel to provide simple descriptive analysis through charts, tables and graphs.

Overall, the study found that Malawi development policies expect HEIs to enhance access, equity, relevance, efficiency and quality of higher education as a way of ensuring that higher education contributes to the national development project. However, the study identified several patterns of response by HEIs (towards these expected roles) that tentatively explain the sub-optimal contribution of higher education in national development. These patterns of response include: inclination towards responding to the politically sensitive crises in the higher education system (for public HEIs) and profit-compatible roles (for private HEI); use of sub-standard resources and methods antithetical to genuine teaching and learning; duplication by private HEIs of the “soft” roles being undertaken by public HEI; the abandonment of some of the HEIs’ original ideals and founding pledges, which are compatible with national development roles; and substitution of long-term coherent academic planning by short-term survival strategies.

The study presents a number of implications, lessons and recommendations in the area of higher education and development. These include: the need for the government to recognise the importance and impact of intra-sectoral linkages in the entire education system on the performance of HEIs; the need to enforce the effective participation of private and public HEIs in national developmental project by establishing a proper regulatory framework; the need to enhance regional and internal collaboration among universities if they are to effectively respond to national roles; the need to reduce marginalisation of HEIs by maximising efforts that create linkages with the productive sector; the need to devise a robust public financing mechanism that broadly deals with issues of equity, relevance, quality and access of higher education; and the need to match education investment priorities and sequencing with development policies.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction and Chapter Overview

The shift in ruling ideas during the 1960s and 1970s on the key determining variables of national development visibly pushed higher education close to the centre stage of national development debate. Whereas development was, before the 1960s, seen as a dependent variable of natural resource endowment, capital accumulation and quantity of labour only, the addition of 'human capital' or level of skills to the development equation directed the attention of policy makers towards the area of education in general and higher education in particular (Teichler, 1988). Accordingly, during the 1960s and 1970s, the development of higher education was viewed as a national priority across much of developing world (Chapman & Austin, 2002). In support of emerging nations' priorities, national government and international organisations accordingly made substantial investments in higher education throughout the developing world (Chapman & Austin, 2002). According to Chapman and Austin (2002:5) this commitment, however, waned in the 1980s and 1990s for three major reasons. First, higher education investments in the 1960s and 1970s failed to yield expected "pay-offs" in some parts of the world; second, in many countries higher education institutions (HEIs) remained "detached" from domestic problems; and third, elementary and secondary education were seen to have higher rates of return. Resultantly, the role of higher education started to be confined to the development of mental culture or idealistic functions as opposed to practical or utilitarian functions (Williamson, 1979).

However, the mounting empirical evidence from "success stories" across the world has meant that the importance of higher education in development is no longer a serious controversy (Pillay, 2010a). Furthermore, as Chapman and Austin (2002:6) observe, "the forces of economic globalisation have changed the knowledge and skills needed (by the country's workforce) to compete effectively in the modern economy." The notion of dualism in higher education's objectives where mental culture and practical utility or idealistic and utilitarian functions were seen as separate is thus now hard to sustain while the distinction is no longer easy to elucidate. Although there have been some concerns by different scholars on the size of the "yoke" of the utilitarian role on higher education (Thorn & Soo, 2006; Mawditt, 1998), it is now irrefutable that higher education can enhance national development from both an idealistic and utilitarian

perspective (Pillay 2010a; UNESCO, 1998). Consequently, national policies throughout the world continue to recognise the role of higher education in national development and are trying to align higher education to the development agenda (Pillay, 2008; Gornitzka & Maaseen, 2000; Teichler, 1999; Neville, 1998).

In Malawi, the role of higher education in national development has always been recognised in development policies since independence in 1964 (Pryor, 1990; Malawi Government, 1964a, 1971, 1987, 1994a, 1998a, 2002, 2004, 2006). However, with the exception of first 15 years of independence, Malawi's development path as will be shown later in this thesis registered abysmal results both from the social and the economic front despite undergoing significant socio-economic and political reforms (Chinsinga, 2007). Malawi's economic growth rates between 1979 and 2007 were consistently low while the social indicators either worsened, remained stagnant or improved minimally (Chinsinga, 2007). Malawi still remains one of the most underdeveloped countries whether judged by Gross National Product (GNP) per capita, the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) or its Human Poverty Index (HPI). One of the factors that is considered as having contributed to both the low economic growth levels as well as low performance on the social front during the 1979 to 2007 period is the performance of education systems (primary, secondary and higher education systems) (World Bank, 2009).

It is however obvious that, within the higher education system, among the key players are the higher education institutions (HEIs) (Chapman & Austin, 2002). It is for this reason that the main objective of this study is to examine how Malawi's HEIs respond in practice to national development policies. The essence is to identify and analyse the common pattern of response by the HEIs in their implementation of national development policies which could tentatively explain the minimal contribution by higher education to development. The study confines itself to available data from the year 2000 to 2010. The main objective of the study is operationalised by: i) identifying the expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national development; ii) assessing the performance of HEIs vis a vis their expected roles; iii) identifying and analysing the determinants of HEIs' performance in their expected roles; and, iv) identifying and analysing the pattern of response by Malawi's HEIs to the policy-expected roles.

The study is premised on the theoretical and practical nexus between higher education and

development in general (Becker, 1964; Mincer, 1974; Mankiw, 1992; Levin & Kelly, 1994; World Bank, 1994; Martin, 1995; Elson & Cagatay, 2000). However, although it subscribes to the nexus between higher education and development, it does not treat the relationship between the two as automatic but rather as a causal relationship whose feasibility and materialisation depends on a number of factors and preconditions. The extent to which HEIs produce or fulfil the preconditions needed for development is determined by their external and internal environments (Mosha, 1997). To that effect, the study subscribes to the open systems theory in which the HEIs are treated as organisations whose ability to respond to and mode of response towards national development policies depends on the nature of their interaction with both the internal and external environment (Gornitzka, 1999).

The HEIs' sample for the study comprised seven universities. In Malawi, although no national policy document clearly gives a succinct and precise definition of higher education institutions (HEIs), it in essence implies the gamut of government accredited universities. HEIs are not used synonymously with tertiary education institutions. The former is used to connote *only* government accredited private and public *universities*. The latter on the other hand embraces primary and secondary teacher training, technical education, university education and other post-secondary professional institutions (Malawi Government, 1998a:6). Thus although some technical and vocational schools offer accredited diplomas and certificates similar to those offered by some universities, they are not considered as HEIs. The current 2008–2017 National Education Sector Plan (NESP) consistently treats teacher education, vocational and technical education differently from higher education (Malawi Government, 2008a). Under the higher education sections, reference is only made to education provided by accredited private and public universities (Malawi Government, 2008a). Using this categorisation, Malawi has only eight HEIs, two of which are public while the remaining six are private. The six private universities are still in their infancy in terms of enrolment levels, staffing levels and range of degree programmes offered. With this small sample, it was practical and feasible on the part of this researcher to use all the institutions for the study. However, the eighth HEI had just been accredited during the fieldwork of this research and was consequently not included. Its exclusion could also not significantly affect the validity of the conclusion drawn from the remaining universities. In this regard, only seven institutions were included.

The rest of the chapter is intended to provide a general background to the study. It starts by giving economic and social overviews of Malawi in order to put Malawi's development agenda in a broader context. This discussion will be followed by a discussion of how the development agenda has been championed in Malawi's development policy alongside higher education institutions' expected role in national development. The aim is to demonstrate how Malawi's national development policies have been articulating the link between development and higher education. Thereafter, a problem statement and research objectives will be presented, followed by the definition of key terms used in the study. This chapter will end with an outline of the thesis.

1.2 Setting the Context: Malawi's Economic and Social Overview

Any meaningful attempt to fully understand and analyse Malawi's current problems of development and its link to education in general and higher education in particular has to be situated within the current and previous economic and social landscapes.

1.2.1 Economic Context

Malawi's economic landscape and its performance since independence attest to the fragileness of the economy. Malawi is a small land-locked country, densely populated with 13.1 million people living within 118 000 square metres of land out of which a fifth contains water (Malawi Government, 2008b). Table 1.1 overleaf gives a summary of key macroeconomic performance indicators and their trends.

Table 1.1: Selected Macroeconomic Performance Indicators and their Trends between 1964 and 2010

Indicator	1964– 1979	1980– 1989	1990– 1994	1995– 1999	2000– 2004	2005– 2010
GDP Growth (%)	5.9	2.0	0.6	4.0	1.3	7.0
Share of agriculture in GDP (%)	39.6	36.6	33.4	36.9	39	39
Share of Manufacturing sector in GDP (%)	12	13.5	14.0	8.0	9.0	13.0
Manufacturing Growth Rate (%)	11	3.6	1.7	-1.1	0.1	0.8
Share of Service and other in GDP (%) ¹	18.6	14.2	13.3	14.1	9.0	12.8
Export Growth Rate (%)	4.0	6.0	3.0	3.2	1.0	4
Import Covers (in Months)	3.1	1.4	3.0	4.3	1.6	1.4

Source: Computed from MEJN (2009, 2010), World Development Reports (Various Reports), Malawi Government (2002; 1983; 1988), Esser et al (2005) Chirwa & Zakeyo (2003), Chipeta (2004), Pryor (1988), McMaster (1974), World Bank (1982), Arrehag, et al (2006).

As can be seen from the table above, the largest share of GDP comes from agriculture in which the smallholder sector contributes 70 per cent of the total output (Chirwa & Zakeyo, 2003:6). Ironically, 175 inhabitants occupy one square kilometer of arable land, putting Malawi as one of most densely populated countries in Africa (Malawi Government, 2008b). Ironic also is the fact that, despite having one short rainy season (of four to five months), farming is predominantly rain-fed. Within the agriculture sector, there are limited products, with maize dominating and grown by about 80 per cent of smallholder farmers (Kaluwa, 2010). The main exports are consequently agricultural raw materials. Tobacco continues to be the main export (which alone contributes over 65 per cent of the value of exports) followed by tea and sugar, along with a range of other food crops (Kaluwa, 2010) – despite the international anti-smoking campaign. Malawi’s overdependence on tobacco as the main export makes it one of the highest levels of export dependence on a single commodity in the world (Kaluwa, 2010). In total, the agricultural sector accounts for over 82 per cent of its total foreign exchange earnings (Kaluwa, 2010; World Bank

¹ This excludes Utilities, Construction, Distribution, Transport, Communication and Financial Services.

& Malawi Government, 2006). About 80 per cent of the national employment comes from agriculture, making it not only an important springboard for any industrial efforts in Malawi but currently also the key source for the country's economic development. Ironically, despite the majority being employed in the agriculture sector, only 40 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – estimated at US\$ 4.05 billion – comes from agriculture (MCCCI 2010). This is so because the yields for the main crops have always been below 50 per cent of the potential levels (Chirwa & Zakeyo, 2003). The main reasons for low productivity include the small landholding size which discourages the adoption of agricultural productivity-enhancing technologies as well as the erosion of soil fertility (Chirwa & Zakeyo, 2003). Table 1.1 above shows the trend in the contribution of agriculture to the GDP.

Telecommunication, transport, financial service, construction and manufacturing – in that order from highest – have been contributing to the other share of GDP. Unsurprisingly, the manufacturing sector only employs less than two per cent of the labour force (AfDB, 2009). The sector has not been grown to its optimal levels because of, among other reasons, foreign exchange (forex) shortage situation and persistent power shortage. The economy is also characterised by high import levels. Imports alone account for 42 per cent of the GDP making it one of the highest in the world (in terms of imports per centage in GDP) (Kaluwa, 2010). As a result, gross foreign reserves in months of import cover have been below the recommended three months since 2006. In September 2009, forex reserves were sufficient to cover only one month of imports (Kaluwa, 2010). The country despite experiencing a steady increase in exports continues to be a net importer.

As can be seen, the GDP growth pattern appears to resemble that of most sub-Saharan African (SSA) states trend displaying significant growth rates between 1964 and 1979 (Harrigan, 2003). The high growth period between 1964 and 1979 resulted from a development policy that was clear and consistently pursued, “but unsustainable in the long run” (Booth *et al.*, 2006:5) This high growth period was founded on export agriculture where the government promoted estate sub-sector and promoted the “exploitation” of smallholder farming which was only used for food production and cheap labour supply to the estates. The agricultural strategy was backed up by the 1967 Land Act which declared that all customary land was vested in the state president (Sahn & Sarris, 1992). As observed by Chinsinga (2002), the 1967 Land Act was designed to reinforce the

past colonial agricultural strategy that distinguished estate farming from smallholder agriculture. These two sectors differed in terms of landholding sizes and the types of crop which they could grow. Those engaged in estate farming were at liberty to cultivate a variety of crops without limit while smallholder farmers were legally prohibited from producing cash crops such as burley, tobacco, tea and sugar. Furthermore, the 1967 Land Act created the land market in which transferability of land was only one way: from the smallholder farmers to the estate sector, often with only a small compensation. Unsurprisingly, estate agriculture grew at annual average of over 17 per cent while the smallholders grew at around three per cent (Harrigan, 2003).

Government policies also afforded estate farmers preferential access to credit (Harrigan, 2003) through the state monopoly in the state marketing board ADMARC, which channeled profits into the estate sector through numerous farm inputs subsidies (Harrigan, 1991; Harrigan, 2003; Kydd & Christiansen, 1982). Smallholder income was supplemented by remittances from migrant labour largely in South Africa and Zimbabwe (Booth *et al.*, 2006). During this period, the condition of transport infrastructure was relatively good and 95 per cent of Malawi's exports were routed via the Mozambican ports of Nacala and Beira (World Bank, 2009).

Between 1980 and 1989 Malawi registered a low GDP growth rate of two per cent, resulting in the decline of the GDP per capita to become one of the lowest in Africa. The oil price shocks set in motion the deteriorating trade of terms and by 1981 the terms of trade had collapsed by 25 per cent (World Bank, 2009a:4). At a time when the commodity prices were falling, the demand for migrant labour in South Africa went down, consequently reducing remittance incomes of Malawian households (World Bank, 2009). Civil war in Mozambique (1985–1992) damaged transport infrastructure and blocked the ports of Nacala and Beira, raising transport costs. In addition, the 1980/81 drought, the high financial losses of ADMARC and other parastatals – exacerbated by poor sequencing of price and market liberalisation – resulted in the steep decline of living standards between 1979 and the late 1980s (Harrigan, 2003). Moreover, the repayment of some of the foreign loans that were obtained in the 1960s and 1970s became due which meant a considerable increase in debt repayments (Mkandawire, 1999).

In a bid to regain the lost economic glory, the government sought the intervention of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This was an action which saw Malawi taking

the lead ahead of other SSA countries in implementing the IMF's stabilisation package, aimed at restoring external sector balances through exchange rate management reforms and balance of payment support as well as the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). These interventions were meant to liberalise the economy, broaden and diversify the production base towards non-primary products and allocate resources more productively through the Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs).² The first stabilisation programme was carried out with the assistance of the IMF's Extended Fund Facility and Stand-by Credit in 1979.³ The World Bank's SAP on the other hand took off through the 1981's SAL and was proceeded by two more SALs in 1984 and 1986 (Chisala & Mthindi, 1990; Chilowa & Chirwa, 1997).⁴ As has been the case with other SSA countries, within this period there were frequent policy u-turns and inconsistencies as a result of frequent clashes between government policy preferences and contrary but shifting donor approaches (Booth *et al.* 2006).

The SAPs did not achieve the intended purpose (Mkandawire & Soludo, 1999) although apologists for these programmes argue that they would have produced results had they been fully implemented (Munthali, 2002). For example, the manufacturing sector annual average growth rate declined to 3.6 per cent compared to the pre-SAP of 12 per cent (Munthali, 2002). Several other reviews have also shown that SAPs laid heavy social burdens on the vulnerable groups in the society such as women and children, as few resources were available for social services and sectors (Kaluwa *et al.*, 1992; Chipeta, 1993; Chilowa & Chirwa, 1997; Chirwa & Chilowa, 1999). For example, the closure of 'noneconomic' ADMARC markets contributed to widespread food insecurity among the poor (Chirwa & Chilowa, 1999). On the other hand, by 1985 inequality had risen from the late 1970s Gini coefficient of 0.518 to 0.599 (Pryor, 1988:54).

² Structural Adjustment Lending means a 'series of discrete lending operations to provide quick disbursing balance of payments support to a country which is prepared both to formulate and to reach agreement with the (World) Bank on a structural adjustment program (AFRODAD, 2007:13).

³ The aim was to deal with the worsening budgeting deficits (AFRODAD, 2007).

⁴ These adjustments involved raising the produce prices of smallholder farmers to promote exports, eliminating consumer price and fertiliser subsidies, exchange and interest rate adjustment, higher fees for public utilities and services, cuts in public expenditure, shifts in public investments away from transport and government buildings towards agriculture, health, and housing; and in the agriculture sector a shift from the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP) towards agricultural research and extension (Chisala & Mthindi, 1990).

Between 1990 and 1994, some agricultural reforms were made that saw the dismantling of many of the constraints imposed on smallholders by the estate-led model. The repeal of the Special Crops Act made it legal for smallholders to grow export crops, bringing about a dramatic shift in the agricultural sector. However, growth was volatile in the face of increasing macro-instability and exacerbated by various external shocks such as droughts in 1992 and 1994, the increased influx of Mozambican refugees, and the suspension of all Western non-humanitarian aid in 1992/3 due to governance concerns (Harrigan, 2003). In this phase, income distribution continued to worsen, and by the end of 1994 Malawi's Gini coefficient had risen to 0.62 – becoming the third highest in the world after Brazil and Namibia (Booth *et al.*, 2006:5) while inflation rose to 83 per cent (World Bank, 2009:4).

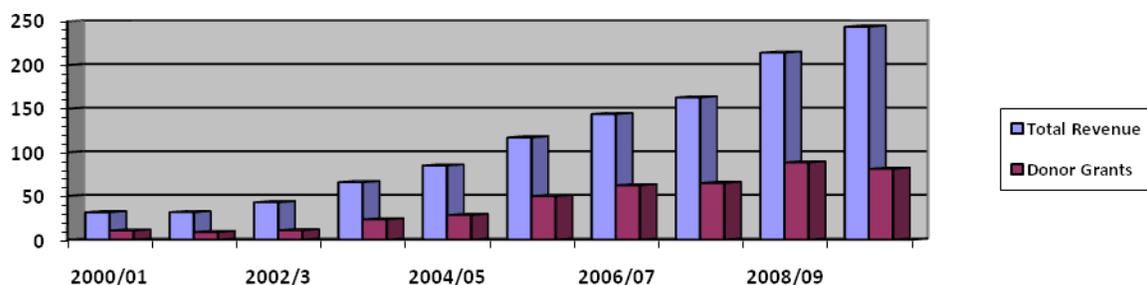
The period between 1995 and 1999 saw the GDP picking up partly because of the resumption of bilateral and multilateral aid inflow. However, this was temporary as the succeeding period between 2000 and 2004 registered an annual growth rate of 1.3 per cent, far below the population growth rate of 2.5 per cent at the time (Booth *et al.*, 2006:5). However, despite the continued falls in the terms of trade, growth and exports began to recover in 2003, and by 2007 GDP per capita had regained its level achieved in 1979 (World Bank, 2009). In essence, this means that the recovery took 28 years!

The average growth rate of seven per cent between 2005 and 2009 was volatile as it was largely based on agriculture. For instance, in 2011, Malawi's tobacco earnings declined from US\$450 million (K68.4 billion) in 2010 to US\$242 million (MK38.8 billion) (Sande, 2011).⁵ Considering that fuel imports rose from \$180 million (K27.3 billion) per year in 2010, to \$300 million (K45.6 billion) per year in 2011 (Malawi Government, 2011), tobacco earnings could therefore only enable the country to import 85 per cent of its fuel requirement. Up to now (2012) there have been huge trade deficits which perpetuate the foreign exchange scarcity in the country. However, until 2011, balance of payment (BOP) difficulties and budgetary deficits have always been largely offset by significant donor grants and government borrowing. It is actually estimated that, between 2000 and 2006, donors provided about 80 per cent of the country's development budget and close to 50 per cent of recurrent expenditure (Sahely *et al.*, 2005). The estimates for the

⁵ Calculations based on the exchange of US\$ 1 = K152 which was the official exchange rate at the time of data analysis.

2010/2011 national budget show that, out of the total MK 310 billion, MK85 billion came from donors (Malawi Government, 2011). Figure 1.1 below shows the trend in terms of volumes of donor grants⁶ as a proportion of total government revenue between the years 2000 and 2010.

Figure 1.1: Proportion of Donor Grants to Total Government Revenue (Billion Malawi Kwacha)



Source: Computed from Annual National Budget Statements and National Expenditure Reports for the period between 2000/01 and 2010/11 financial years.

1.2.2 Social Context

The economic picture presented in the previous section is equally reflected in the social development side. Poverty for instance has been a conspicuous feature of the majority of Malawians since independence in 1964 as shown in Table 1.2.

⁶ Donor grants include: i) general budgetary support which is a form of programme aid whereby overseas development assistance (ODA) that is not linked to specific project activities is channeled directly to partner governments – who apply their own allocation, procurement and accounting systems; ii) sector budget or dedicated grants which are grants made to government with restrictions only as to the sector in which the funds are spent, but not the specific activities; and iii) project support which is support earmarked to a particular sector or set of activities within the government budget.

Table 1.2: Poverty Trend in Malawi Since 1964

Indicator	1964–1979	1980–1989	1990–1994	1995–1999	2000–2004	2005–2010
Poor (%)	58.7	62	62.5	56.7	53.9	47.8
Ultra-Poor ⁷ (%)	26.1	27.3	24.1	23.6	23.1	22.0

Source: Computed from MEJN (2010), Ellis et al (2002) Malawi Government (1994a; 1994b; 2001; 2005; 2007; 2008b).

Despite the obviousness of poverty, the autocratic nature of politics between 1964 and 1994 did not permit poverty reduction to be a realm of lively debate and active discussion by stakeholders. Although poverty reduction does not automatically take place when there is active debate around poverty, the fact that there was no policy space on poverty reduction resulted in a situation where there was no clear consensus on what constituted poverty. The official ruling party⁸ then championed the basic-need approach under the FCR doctrine aimed at providing sufficient food, adequate clothing and a roof that does not leak (Mhone, 1992). The ruling party's position was that as long as people had food and clothing and lived in houses that did not leak, poverty was absent (Mhone, 1992). It should however be quickly noted that despite government's emphasis on the productive sector as discussed in the previous section, there were also some improvements in social welfare between 1964 and 1979. For example, infant mortality declined from around 200 per 1 000 in 1964 to around 130 in 1975, and per capita daily calorie intake increased from 2 250 in 1964 to 2 400 in 1975 (Booth *et al.*, 2006:6). However, as Booth *et al.* (2006:6) observe, "the intra-sectoral bias meant that income distribution was highly unequal and worsening". For example, in the late 1970s, the Gini coefficient rose to 0.518 from the late 1960s' Gini coefficient of 0.456 (Johnson & Magnac, 1989).

As shown in Table 1.2 above, the levels of poverty rose between 1980 and 1989 from 58.7 per cent to 62 per cent while the population that was ultra-poor also went up from 26.1 per cent to 27.3 per cent. According to Kaluwa *et al.* (1992) this was because of recession and curtailment of consumption as well as other measures undertaken under the stabilisation and adjustment

⁷ Calculated as those who are below minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

⁸ Between 1964 and 1994 Malawi was under the despotic rule of Kamuzu Banda and his Malawi Congress Party (MCP) which was the only constitutionally allowed political party in the country.

programme discussed earlier in this chapter. During the period, the prices of basic commodities, especially food, increased while government expenditure on basic services went down (Kaluwa *et al.*, 1992). At the same time, real wages and employment declined especially among the low-income households (Kaluwa *et al.*, 1992).

Following the 1994 introduction of political pluralism, a renewed “rhetoric” currency towards poverty alleviation emerged. The first democratic government set poverty alleviation as its agenda. Since then, poverty alleviation has been a podium anthem of politicians and the state machinery. Many studies have been carried out since the pioneering situation analysis in 1993 and although these studies have varied in scope and focus, their conclusion is strikingly the same: poverty in Malawi is widespread, deep and severe. As shown in Table 1.2, from 1995, although poverty levels have been declining, close to half of the population (47%) still live in poverty. As can be seen in the table above, the segment of the population which is ultra-poor has hovered between 22 and 24 per cent from 1990, indicating little progress.

As would be expected, the high poverty level is also impacting negatively on the progress of other social indicators. The Malawi Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment Report of 2006 observes that poverty in Malawi is manifested through high mortality rates, low life expectancy, malnutrition and a high HIV/Aids prevalence rate (Malawi Government/World Bank, 2006). Malawi’s social indicators are generally amongst the least impressive in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. Table 1.3 overleaf summarises the indicators against 1980 status and SADC averages.

Table 1.3: Summary of Malawi's Social Development Indicators in 1980 and 2009

Indicator	Measurement Outcome (1980)	Measurement Outcome (2009)	SADC Average (in 2009)	Position in SADC (from the best country) in 2009
Population with access to safe water	54%	76%	84.6	6
Income Inequality In terms of Gini Coefficient	0.5	0.39	0.52	7
Malnutrition Rate	24.0	49%	33%	14
HIV/Aids Prevalence	–	11.9%	6.7%	9
Life Expectancy at Birth	44.2	52.4 years	52.5	6
Total Fertility Rate	7.6	5.6	4.7	8
Under Five Mortality	201	122 per 1 000 live births	131	9
Infant Mortality	130	89 per 1 000 live births	66.5	10
Maternal Mortality	632 ⁹	807 deaths per 100 000 live births	560	11
Population not likely going to reach 40	–	32.6%	32.9%	9
Adult literacy rate	25%	69%	75%	10
Social Composite Index ¹⁰	–	39.0	51.6	14

Source: Computed from Booth *et al* (2006), McAuliffe (2010), Hogan *et al* (2010) UNDP 2009 Human Development Report; MEJN (2010).

Compared to the 1980 period (for which reliable data are available), the status of indicators has not significantly changed as shown in Table 1.3 above. Almost 30 years down the line, there have not been significant improvements except on the malnutrition rate and adult literacy levels. With

⁹ McAuliffe (2010), Hogan *et al* (2010).

¹⁰ Social Composite Index is a new index by the World Bank which takes into account demographic dependency, malnutrition rate, the child mortality rate, the HIV/Aids prevalence rate, the adult literacy rate, and the urbanisation rate. At that scale, Malawi, with the index of 39, is the SADC country with the most difficult social context.

regard to maternal mortality rate (MMR), Table 1.3 above shows that the situation has actually worsened. The table shows that Malawi is also performing worse in maternal mortality, infant mortality, under five mortality and malnutrition levels relative to SADC averages. In these indicators, the countries that are below Malawi are either just recovering from war (Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Mozambique) or are currently embroiled in deep political crises (as in the case of Zimbabwe). As it would be expected, the country's track record with regard to HDI has been "quite damning" (Chinsinga, 2007:8). Malawi dropped in its HDI ranking from position 138 in 1990 to position 153 in 2010 (out of 178 countries).¹¹ This underlines a steady decline in healthcare delivery, education, economic growth and general living standards.¹²

1.3 Higher Education in Malawi's Development Policy Trajectory

This section aims at exploring how Malawi's development policies have been acknowledging and articulating the link between higher education and development since independence. The first section covers the period until 1998 while the next section covers the period from 1998 to 2006, the period in which most of the applicable national development policy documents for the study's period of 2000–2010 were introduced.

1.3.1 Between Independence and 1998

Traditionally, the history of development policy for Malawi starts with Gwelu Plan Number 2 which encompasses development plans conceived by the founding president, Kamuzu Banda, in the late 1950s when he was in Gweru prison in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Apart from the three development projects which were prominent in the plan (moving the capital city from Zomba to Lilongwe; construction of the lakeshore road; and construction of the railway spur to the Mozambique border), the idea to establish the first national University of Malawi was also hatched. The inclusion of the establishment of the university in Gweru 2 was to enable the nation to solve its acute shortage of educated cadres and create a leadership elite that would drive the economy (Pryor, 1990). Most of these plans were incorporated in the first long-term Development

¹¹ UNDP Human Development Report (from 1990 to 2010).

¹² HDI Index is calculated using three dimensions: health, education and living standards. It aggregates scores on four indicators, namely life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling and GNI per capita income (UNDP 2010).

Plan which covered the period between 1965 and 1969. This plan replaced the colonial government's 1962–1965 Development Plan. On education, the plan advocated for the expansion of higher education in order to provide skilled personnel in both the public and private sectors of the economy and to stimulate and encourage industrial development (Malawi Government, 1964a). This was to be achieved through the establishment of the University of Malawi as proposed in Gweru Plan Number 2 with financial support from the former British colonial power (Pryor 1990).

The succeeding Statement of Developing Policies, 1971–80 (DEVPOL I) laid emphasis on the productive sector, mainly agriculture. DEVPOL I noted that the factors of production with which Malawi was relatively well endowed were land and labour, while factors that were in short supply included capital and high-level skills (Malawi Government, 1971). Consequently, the plan provided for the expansion of secondary, technical and higher education as a means of widening the bottlenecks created by lack of skills – at the expense of greater attention to primary education (Malawi Government, 1971).

In 1988, DEVPOL II 1987–1996 replaced DEVPOL I. The plan laid similar emphasis on productive sector such as agriculture, communication and transportation. However, since the plan was developed during the period when Malawi was implementing the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) championed by the World Bank and IMF, it (unlike DEVPOL I) called for more private participation in agricultural marketing and flexible exchange rate policy. The plan however continued to place an equal recognition of higher education's role in the creation of human resource needed for industrial development and economic growth and it viewed higher education as a “vehicle” for achieving economic aspirations of the nation and for “furthering effective economic independence” (Malawi Government, 1988:104).

When multiparty politics was introduced in 1994, the United Democratic Front (UDF) government came up with a Poverty Alleviation Policy Framework which guided the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP). PAP was an offspring of Social Dimension of Adjustment (SDA) which was born out of the need for adjustment with a human face after the disillusionment with the SAPs in the early 1990s. At the international level, the adoption of PAP in Malawi can also be traced to the forceful return of poverty to the international development agenda evidenced by the

inauguration of Human Development Report by the UNDP in 1990 and World Bank's 1990 and 2000 World Development reports which focused exclusively on the state of poverty in the world. Although, arguably, the attention of the document was more on poverty reduction than economic growth, the framework acknowledged low levels of education as a cause of poverty and therefore pledged to raise the productivity of the poor as one of the objectives through widening access to education (Malawi Government, 1994a). Despite placing emphasis on primary education this time around, the role of higher education in poverty alleviation was not skipped (Malawi Government, 1994a). However, PAP's impact was minimal (Chinsinga, 2002; Jenkins & Tsoka, 2003).¹³

1.3.2 Between 1998 and 2006

In the late 1990s, government championed the process of developing a long-term vision for the country with the aim of enhancing development by reaching consensus on a set of national development goals. Launched in the year 2000, Vision 2020 contains recommended policies and strategies for achieving such aspirations. It visualises Malawi as “a God-fearing nation, secure, democratically mature, environmentally sustainable, self-reliant with equal opportunities for and active participation by all, having social services, vibrant cultural and religious values and a technologically driven middle-income economy” by 2020 (Malawi Government, 1998b:iv). Vision 2020 outlines key aspirations of the nation in its path towards sustainable development. These include developing the agriculture and manufacturing sectors, developing the business culture amongst Malawians, developing the human resource, achieving Science and Technology led growth and achieving equitable income distribution. In order to realise these aspirations, Vision 2020 mentions higher education as a key instrument.

In the year 2000, Malawi reached the decision point¹⁴ of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries

¹³ Chinsinga (2002, 2003) argues that this was due to the thin allocation of resources to many sectors, and to the institutional set-up of the programme which sidelined the participation of the poor and which did not provide for a clear linkage between various actors on the matrix of the programme as well as the lack of accompanying agrarian reforms that would address the land issue. Jenkins and Tsoka (2003) on the other hand observe that the policy framework itself did not have concrete plans on how, by how much or when poverty would be reduced. What the framework did was to identify groups that were thought to be poor and policies that were considered more pro-poor.

(HIPC) initiative. As conditionality by the IMF for debit relief, Malawi was compelled to come up with the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) in 2002. The main aim of the MPRSP was to reduce poverty through economic growth and empowerment of the poor (Malawi Government, 2002). The MPRSP recognises that an “educated population leads to increased productivity, better income distribution and a generally improved standard of living” (Malawi Government 2002: xii). It labels higher education as an instrument for “supporting scientific and technological improvement and social development” (Malawi Government, 2002:54). As of 2005, Malawi was actually one of the three countries, (out of all African countries in which PRSP were drawn) in which their PRSPs recognised the role of higher education in poverty alleviation (and ultimately social development and economic growth)¹⁵ (Bloom *et al.*, 2006b).

Two years later, it was recognised by many stakeholders, especially those in the private sector, that the pillar of economic growth in the MPRSP did not clearly articulate issues of sustainable economic growth and the role of the private sector. It was observed that policies to fulfil this strategic objective were insufficient to achieve a sustained annual economic growth of at least six per cent required to reduce poverty by half by the year 2015 (Malawi Government, 2004) This led to another policy document called the Malawi Economic Growth Strategy (MEGS) in 2004, developed in response to the inability of the economy to register positive rates of growth (Malawi Government, 2004). MEGS equally recognised the role of higher education, especially in the provision of technical and vocation skills, which it noted as seriously hindering the development of the private sector.

In 2006, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) led government produced another policy document called the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) to be an overarching medium-term strategy from the 2006/2007 to 2010/2011 fiscal years, designed to attain the

¹⁴ Decision point is reached when a country’s debt is deemed unsustainable even after the full use of traditional debt relief mechanisms. At the decision point, creditors commit to providing sufficient amounts of debt relief to ensure that the countries’ debt is reduced to levels deemed ‘sustainable’. However, the debt is not actually cancelled until ‘completion point’. Once countries have passed decision point, they are required to establish a further track record of good performance under IMF/World Bank supported programmes before they reach completion point. Malawi reached the completion point almost six years later, on 1 September 2006.

¹⁵ The other countries were Zambia and Cameroon (Bloom, *et al.*, 2006b).

nation's Vision 2020 (Malawi Government, 2006a). The main thrust of the MGDS is to “create wealth through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development as a means of achieving poverty reduction” (Malawi Government, 2006a: iii). The MGDS framework has five thematic areas, namely sustainable economic growth; social protection; social development; infrastructure development and improving governance. In 2009, the government added three more priority areas, namely youth development, climate change, and education, science and technology (Wa Mutharika, 2009). The MGGS recognises higher education as a “catalyst for socio-economic development, industrial growth and an instrument for empowering the poor, the weak and the voiceless” (Malawi Government, 2006a:50).

In summary, it is possible to isolate the various ways in which higher education leads to development as proposed by the national policies from 1998 as shown in Table 1.4 below.

Table 1.4: Summary of the Roles of Higher Education in Development According to Malawi's Policies

How Higher Education Leads to Development	Policy Document that provides the link
Developing manufacturing	Vision 2020, MGDS
Developing business culture	Vision 2020
Developing agriculture	Vision 2020
Enhancing equitable income and social development	Vision 2020, MPRSP
Enhancing worker productivity	MPRS
Improvement of vocation and technical skills	MEGS

Source: Summarised from Malawi Government (1998b; 2002; 2004; 2006a), Wa Mutharika (2009).

The above expected impact of higher education on national development appears aligned to the key constraints in Malawi's developmental aspirations. These are weak performance by the manufacturing sector and agriculture as well as dismal social development levels (manifested in poverty levels) as identified by the World Bank's (1995) Policy Analysis Initiative which drew experts from government (of Malawi), the civil society and the private sector. Through this initiative, the Strategic Planning and Analysis Section of the National Economic Council (NEC)

came up with the development options of promotion of manufacturing industry, agriculture and social development. These interventions were identified and evaluated using an analytical model – called the Threshold 21 Model – which allows the government to project future trends in various indicators in an integrated and multi-sectoral analytical model (World Bank, 1995).

The first development scenario focuses on interventions that can promote agriculture. The second option focuses on the promotion of manufacturing industry and its exports while the third option is the social development scenario which focuses on improving the social status of Malawians.

The World Bank (1997:5), in its paper “Accelerating Malawi’s Growth: Long Term Prospects and Transitional Problems” also came up with the same options. All the approaches were found to be necessary as well as complementary to each other (World Bank, 1997). Through observation of the poverty reduction potential of economic growth in Malawi – through the growth elasticity of poverty – the World Bank (1997) found that Malawi’s poverty has a low growth elasticity. This means that poverty levels are not responsive to economic growth levels. This implies that inequality gaps will widen with each growth level and the rising inequalities will in turn undermine the growth potential (World Bank, 1997). Thus social development that enhances equal distribution of assets (such as through skills) is the key variable to economic growth’s impact on overall development. However, social development’s impact on economic sector is only felt in the long term. With regard to the manufacturing sector, its impact on the economic growth will to some extent depend on domestic demand generated by agriculture (World Bank 1997). However, agriculture does not perform well in any of the non-agriculture sectors. In other words, focusing on agriculture alone cannot create necessary changes in the other sectors of the economy.

In view of the preceding discussion, it can therefore be quickly observed that the above tasks are not the monopoly of higher education. Several national institutional actors have their own role to play. However, as was earlier discussed, key players within the higher education system are the higher education institutions (HEIs). The overall performance of HEIs in any policy role therefore largely determines and defines the performance of the entire higher education system. However, for HEIs to make ultimate contributions to national development as intentioned by the policies, there should be specific policy roles that they are supposed to undertake. These roles are often

contextual (Chapman, 2002). It is how HEIs undertake the specific policy-prescribed roles that significantly defines the levels of HEI's response towards the national development agenda (Amonoo-Neizer, 1998) (as outlined in the Table 1.4 above in the case of Malawi).

1.4 Research Problem

Poverty and general levels of underdevelopment have from independence in 1964 been posing a united formidable challenge to Malawi. The pace of progress against the two societal ills has evidently been slow, with both social development and economic indicators still dismal (Chinsinga, 2007). National development is however often an outcome of at least three key factors: “long term social policy aimed at improving equity, and guaranteeing inclusion”; economic growth that generates quality employment in adequate quantities (May, 2006);¹⁶ and “the reduction of structural heterogeneity of production sectors” that narrows down the “productivity gap between different economic activities and different economic agents” (Ocampo, 2002:402). Thus, although not sufficient conditions on their own, economic growth, equity and inclusion as well as low structural heterogeneity levels are necessary conditions for meaningful national development (May, 2006; Loayza & Raddatz, 2010). These factors can also be complementary. For example, at both microeconomic and macroeconomic levels, social development outcomes have beneficial effects on economic growth (Loayza & Raddatz, 2010) since “economic growth that is oriented towards social equity and redistribution ensures the sustainability of growth” (Adesina, 2007:5).

In development studies literature, the role of higher education in economic growth, poverty reduction, equity and inclusion as well as reduction of structural heterogeneity (and ultimately national development) has been increasingly recognised (Schultz, 1961; Willaimson, 1979; Postlethwaite & Thomas, 1980; Teichler, 1988; Tilak, 2003; Loening, 2005; Pillay, 2006; Bloom,

¹⁶ Growth can specifically help the poor people when it creates jobs in especially in the high labour-absorbing sectors of the economy such as agriculture, construction and clothing and textile manufacturing. Besides, growth can also help the chronically poor (meaning those who are trapped in poverty and unable to improve their position through their won efforts) through the greater revenue collected by the state through taxation which can be used for increased social spending and on further improvements to infrastructure utilised by the poor for production and reproduction. With growth, such expenditure can be increased without the cost of increasing the budget deficit (May, 2006).

et al., 2006a; Sachs, 2001; Hendricks, 2007; Jimenez & Patrinos, 2008; Pillay, 2010a). Empirically, the ‘developmental states’ of East Asia¹⁷ owe a substantial part of their success story to their higher education systems (Maksymenko & Rabbani, 2011; St. George, 2006; Lee, 2010).

In Malawi, the preceding sections show that almost all Malawi’s development policies in the post-independence era have been recognising the role of higher education in national development. Ironically, 47 years down the line, the performance of higher education system (and the entire education system in general) is rated as one of the key constraints to national developmental aspirations. From the economic front, the slow recovery (28 years) of economic growth in Malawi alluded to in section 1.2.1 is partly attributed to the performance of higher education system.¹⁸

The growth diagnostic approach of Hausmann, Rodrik and Velasco (2005) – a methodology for identifying the principal obstacles to an economy’s optimal rate of capital growth and constraints most binding on the marginal investment, and therefore whose relaxation would have the largest impact on growth through the investment channel – by the World Bank (2009b) found that Malawi growth for the past 30 years has partly been constrained by the performance of the education system (inclusive of the higher education sub-sector).

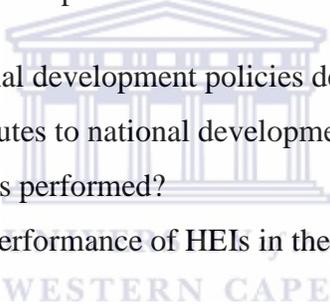
The World Bank’s observation is confirmed by various annual Malawi Business Climate Survey Reports. Between 2005 and 2009, the performance level of higher education system in its expected economic roles was rated as one of the major obstacles to doing business in Malawi (MCCCI, 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009). In addition, the 2010/2011 Global Competitive Index (GCI) ranks Malawi 125 among 139 economies putting it in the bottom 10 per cent partly due to the performance of higher education (AfDB, 2011). Chipeta (2004), using a growth accounting framework and cross-country regression, found that the contribution of education to GDP between 1960 and 2000 was relatively weak as compared to other SSA countries. He found that the average contribution of education to the GDP was 0.19 per cent against the average SSA contribution of 0.25 (Chipeta 2004:57).

¹⁷ These are Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea

¹⁸ Other factors include overreliance on tobacco as the main export, exchange rate regime, macroeconomic instability and low import elasticity which displays low marginal propensities to invest (World Bank, 2009).

On the social front, most of the social development indicators such as poverty levels, income inequality, malnutrition rate, HIV/Aids prevalence, life expectancy at birth, total fertility rate, under-five mortality and infant mortality, as well as maternal mortality, are seen to be equally negatively affected by the country performance levels of primary, secondary and higher education subsectors (Malawi Government, 2002; 2006a).

Thus, despite consistent recognition of the role of higher education by national development policies, the contribution of the higher education system to national development is still considered suboptimal. It is for this reason that this study sought to examine how Malawi's HEIs – the key actors in the higher education system – in practice respond to national development policies. Is there a pattern of response by HEIs which can be identified and which tentatively explains the sub-optimal contribution of higher education to national development? To meaningfully tackle this question, it is important to answer the following questions:

- 
- i) What specific roles do national development policies define for HEIs in order to ensure that higher education contributes to national development as outlined in Table 3 above?
 - ii) To what extent are those roles performed?
 - iii) What factors determine the performance of HEIs in their expected roles?

1.5 Study Objectives

In line with the above problem statement, the study pursued the following main and specific objectives:

1.5.1 Main Objective

To examine how HEIs in Malawi respond to national development policies.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

In line with the research questions presented in the problem statement, the following specific objectives were pursued in the study:

- i) To identify the expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national development.
- ii) To assess the performance of HEIs in their expected (or defined) roles.
- iii) To identify and analyse the determinants of HEIs performance in their expected roles.

- iv) To identify and analyse the pattern of response by HEIs towards national development policies.

1.6 Conceptual Clarifications

This study makes frequent references to a number of key terms. Key terms used in this study are: economic growth; development; national development policies; higher education and higher education institutions; higher education system; and state. For purposes of clarity in their usage, it is important that their definitions are provided.

- *Economic Growth*: refers to the steady process by which the productive capacity of the economy is increased overtime to bring about rising levels of national output (either goods or services) called Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and national income called Gross National Income (GNI) (Todaro & Smith, 2009; Jain, 2006). Economic growth is usually measured in real terms, meaning that inflation is adjusted to net out the effect of inflation on the price of the goods and services produced. While real GDP provides a good measure, it is always important to measure economic growth in terms of per capita income (average income per person in a country) as it is possible for per capital income to be declining while the GDP is rising, especially when population growth rate surpasses GDP growth rate. However, even the per capita increase only shows average measures but does not tell the distribution pattern of the national income. This means that, as an indicator of economic performance, economic growth does not tell the extent of income equality.¹⁹
- *Development*: on the other hand transcends economic growth as it encompasses how national income is shared and how growth impacts on the welfare of citizens. Sen uses a short but rather maximalist definition which sees development as the expansion of human capabilities – where capabilities imply ability to attain useful “*functionings*”; that is, a set of what a person does (or can do) (1985, 1999). On the hand, Coetzee *et al* (2001:120) define development as

¹⁹ Economic growth therefore differs significantly with economic development. The latter encompasses economic growth as well as other three competing aims namely: stability of currency, equilibrium of foreign trade and a high level of employment. It is clear that every national economy in the world hardly achieve these four goals at the same time. High rates of economic growth for example cannot normally be realised without inflation and unemployment. Vice versa, the stability of currency as the main aim of economic policies often leads to stagnation or depression with lack of jobs and decrease of wages (Schneider, 1997).

“the connotation of favourable change moving from worse to better; evolving from simple to complex; advancing away from the inferior, a form of social change that will lead to progress, the process of enlarging people’s choices, acquiring knowledge, and having access to resources for a decent standard of living”. Todaro (1987:85) is explicit when he defines development as “a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and eradication of absolute poverty”. According to Ocampo (2002) and Todaro and Smith (2009), development aims at accomplishing three objectives: increasing the availability and widening the distribution of basic life goods; raising the levels of living; and expanding the range of economic and social choices. White (1998:20) defines development as the process that generates “higher material standards of living” which is achieved through economic growth and alleviation of poverty, “correction of glaring inequalities of social condition and provision of personal security and safety”. A consolidation of these definitions means that development entails improvements in economic growth, social conditions, security and safety as well as reduced poverty and inequality. In its simplest form, development therefore means economic growth plus structural transformations (that is, political and social empowerment which include citizenship rights, access to services and opportunities and a decent standard of living). In the absence of structural transformation, there cannot be development even though there may be economic growth (Handoussa, 2007).

- *National Development Policy* is a type of public policy. Public policy is “a public sector statement of intent, including sometimes a more detailed programme of action, to give effect to a selected normative and empirical goals in order to improve or resolve perceived problems and needs in society in a specific way, thereby achieving desired changes in that society” (De Coning & Wissink, 2011:7). To that effect, a national development policy can be defined as public policy aimed at guiding the state and non-state actors in executing interventions aimed at improving levels of development for a country and its people (Peacock, 1980). It should however be noted that a policy can also be what the government chooses not to do (Birkland, 2011). For example, where government has not declared a right to education, health, housing, economic activity and living wage in its constitution or official documents it can be assumed that the implicit policy is that there is no right to these things (Birkland, 2011). In this study, development policies imply those policies are officially articulated in the policy documents.

- *Higher education institutions and higher education:* The definitions of higher education and higher education institutions depend on each other. In other words, what is regarded as a higher education institution will determine what is higher education and vice versa. Abdalla (1977:32–33) defines higher education institutions (HEIs) as “the source of highly trained manpower which offer post-secondary education and training courses and programmes of instruction in technical and vocational subjects and practical fields of work, all geared to producing middle grade technicians”. This definition is clearly broad. While in some countries (such as Botswana and Egypt), HEIs refer to all post-secondary education institutions (Pillay, 2010b), in some countries (such as Malawi and South Africa) it refers to universities. Where only universities are labeled as HEIs, the common tradition has been to differentiate between them from other institutions (Assié-Lumumba, 2006). The notion of academic versus vocational or technical institutions is often used as basis for such differentiation. Universities in this regard are seen as being oriented towards the academic while other institutions are seen as leaning towards vocational and technical specialisations (Assié-Lumumba, 2006). However, even this differentiation is problematic because there have been universities whose names and educational missions have suggested a focused specialised (such a university of agriculture, university of technology and university of medicine) (Assié-Lumumba, 2006). The definition of higher education institutions therefore differs from one country to another. In the case of Malawi, HEIs as was already presented in section 1.1, HEIs imply to universities accredited by the government. Thus, in Malawi, higher education implies education provided by government accredited universities (either private or public, secular private or religious private universities).
- *Higher education system* refers to “the web of public and private higher education institutions, governing bodies, and individuals as well as the formal/informal rules that hold the web together” (World Bank, 2000:46). It therefore consists of three elements: the individual HEIs including their facilities, students, physical resources, missions and strategic plans; the organisations that are directly involved in financing, managing or operating HEIs, comprising a range of both private and public bodies; and, the “formal and informal rules that guide institutional and individual behaviour and interactions among the various actors” (World Bank, 2000:46).
- *State:* means a set of institutions comprising government decision-making structures, decision-

enforcing organs, decision mediating agencies and decision-informing bodies (Offe, 1973; Easton, 1981; Held, 1989; Torres, 1998; Matlosa, 2005, Migdal, 1988, Rueschemeyer & Evans 1985). The state includes the government, public and semi-public corporations and the legal system (Collier, 1979:403). Thus as observed by Skocpol (1979) although the state involves the workings of the government, it goes beyond the government. Unlike government, the state comprises permanent institutions which do not change irrespective of change of governments over time. The state therefore includes three arms of government (judiciary, executive and legislature), the bureaucracy, national defence force, the police, government ministries and semi-public institutions such as (such as revenue, water and electricity agencies). In this regard, the state possesses an administrative and legal order.

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

In addressing the main and specific objectives, the study has been organised along the following chapters:

- *Chapter 1: Introduction and Background:* this chapter provides an introduction and background to the study. The problem statement, research objectives for the study and study chapter outline are also presented in this chapter.
- *Chapter 2: Higher Education and National Development Nexus: A Literature Review:* As a way of contextualising the role of higher education in national development this chapter essentially focuses on the Theory of Human Capital and its different versions, specifically with the aim of understanding how the causal relationship between education and development is explained by different versions of the theory. The chapter also discusses paradigmatic shifts in the ruling ideas on the relationship between higher education and national development as well as a presentation of critical issues and variables that determine the impact of higher education on development.
- *Chapter 3: Development Policies and Higher Education Institutions' Response: An Analytical Framework:* the chapter is intended to provide an analytical framework for examining how HEIs respond to national policies and the general factors that affect how HEIs respond to their expected roles.
- *Chapter 4: Research Design and Methods:* this chapter provides a detailed explanation of the

research designs, sources of data, types of data, data collection instruments, data analysis techniques and presentation of research phases.

- *Chapter 5: Expected Roles of Higher Education Institutions in Malawi's Development:* this chapter identifies the expected role of HIES (as espoused in Malawi's national policies) as purposed in the first objective of this study. The chapter also presents a performance assessment framework of the HEIs expected role by assigning performance indicators for the each of the expected roles.
- *Chapter 6: Performance of Malawi's Higher Education Institutions in their Policy-expected Roles:* using the indicators developed in the chapter five, this chapter assesses the performance of Malawi's HEIs in their expected roles as intended by the second objective of this study.
- *Chapter 7: Determinants of HEIs Performance in Malawi:* using the analytical framework presented in chapter three, this chapter identifies and analyses the factors that determine and influence the performance of Malawi's HEIs presented in chapter six. In so doing, the chapter accomplishes the third objective for the study.
- *Chapter 8: The Pattern of Response by Malawi's HEIs Towards Policy-expected Roles:* using the level of performance by HEIs presented in chapter six and the factors that influence the response of HEIs discussed in chapter seven, this chapter identifies and analyses the pattern of response by Malawi's HEIs towards their expected development roles.
- *Chapter 9: Summary, Implications, Contribution and Conclusion:* in this chapter a summary of study findings is made. It also draws implications and tentative generalisations for the response of Malawi's HEIs towards national development policies. The chapter also presents theoretical and empirical contributions of the study as well as suggested areas for future study. The chapter also provides concluding remarks for the whole study.

CHAPTER TWO: HIGHER EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT NEXUS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

As a way of contextualising the role of higher education in national development, this chapter essentially discusses the Theory of Human Capital and its different versions. Through the discussion, the chapter will elucidate how the causal relationship between education and national development is explained by different schools of thought. This will be followed by an examination of paradigmatic shifts in the ruling ideas on the role of higher education in development. Thereafter, the chapter will discuss the relevance of higher education in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) economies by examining different evidence as provided by literature. This will be followed by a presentation of critical issues and variables that determine the impact of higher education on national development. The rationale for identifying the variables will be to appreciate (in Chapter 3) the processes through which HEIs produce the variables. The chapter however starts with a discussion of famous modernisation theory in order to establish the prominence, if any, accorded to education in national development agenda by the theory.

2.2 The Role of Education in Development: Omissions in Modernisation Theory of Development

Following the Second World War, there was a growing interest in the poor nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America about the causes of the differences in the levels of their development and those of industrialised nations which were at one point also backward, underdeveloped and largely agrarian. Urgency was therefore needed to provide an analytical tool of how economic growth in the agrarian economies of poor nations could match the ‘modern’ economic structures of the European states (Todaro & Smith, 2009). Unfortunately, the quest for answers by poor nations caught economists, as Todaro and Smith (2009) put it “off guard” and had therefore to rely on the recent experience of the Marshal Plan under which the United States of America (US), through its technical and financial assistance to the war-torn Europe helped to rebuild and modernise Europe’s economy in a matter of years (Todaro & Smith, 2009).

Dubbed Modernisation Theory, it was specifically developed in the 1950s and 1960s, after the

decolonisation and it built on Durkheim's and Weber's ideas of traditional and modern societies (Mier, 1995). It was therefore intended as an alternative to Marxist theories of development (Mier, 1995; Martinussen, 1999). The theory argued that there was a need for sustained development akin to the Western pattern through capital injection. Emphasis was on Western industrialisation pattern as a way to making the newly independent Third World states move from their state of underdevelopment to developed countries.²⁰ The theory believed that poverty could be explained in terms of traditional systems and backward economy. It asserted that the people were poor "because of their dependence on subsistence agriculture, traditional methods of production and primitive technology, which coupled with a conservative outlook and natural apathy, had resulted in economic stagnation" (Hardiman & Midgley, 1982:52). The theory viewed economic growth and modernisation of traditional institutions as solution to poverty (Kotze, 1995).

Modernisation theorists therefore did not consider education as an input to production and therefore an important element in economic growth which they equated with development. For example, in the early 1950s two economists, Sir Roy Harrod of England and Evesy Domar of the USA, separately but concurrently developed what is now called the Harrod-Domar growth model in which domestic savings and foreign savings (aid and foreign direct investment (FDI) were regarded as the determinants of capital accumulation which in the end increases GDP.²¹ In 1954, Arthur Lewis came up with what is now called Lewis's two-sector model in which it was argued that underdeveloped countries consisted of two sectors: a traditional overpopulated rural subsistence sector characterised by surplus labour with zero marginal labour productivity and a high productivity modern urban industrial sector into which labour from the subsistence sector is gradually transferred. According to this model, the process of labour transfer from the subsistence sector to the industrial sector is what explains the growth of output and GDP (Todaro & Smith, 2009).

²⁰ It should be noted that politics of the Cold War at this time was also a reason for major emphasis on the Western pattern (Todaro & Smith, 2009)

²¹ During the Cold War, Modernisation Theory with its capital constraint emphasis therefore provided a justification and 'opportunistic tool' for justifying massive transfer of capital and technical assistance from the developed to the less developed nations (Todaro & Smith, 2009:114).

Thus, as in the Harrod-Domar model, Lewis's two-sector model did not consider education as input for development. In 1956, Robert Solow came up with what is called the Solow growth model which essentially built on the Harrod-Domar model but added labour as a second variable in economic growth and technology as an independent variable. According to the Solow growth model, GDP growth results from one or more of the three factors: increase in labour quantity and quality, increase in capital and improvements in technology (Todaro & Smith, 2009). While the Solow growth model gives recognition to improvements in technology and increase in labour quality, it equally skipped education in his model although largely technological improvements and improvement in the quality of labour emanate from education (Nelson & Phelps, 1966).

Later an American historian, Walt Rostow, in his 1960 treatise "The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto" came up with a model in which he argued that societies had to go through five stages of development. These were the traditional stage, preconditions for take-off into self-sustaining growth, the take-off, the drive to maturity and the stage to high mass consumption (Rostow, 1960). Unlike Marxist economic determinism, Rostow's treatise did not assume that the worlds of politics, social organisation and culture were a mere superstructure built upon and derived uniquely from economy. In Rostow's reasoning, advanced nations had all passed through the stage of take-off into self-sustaining growth while underdeveloped countries were still either at the traditional or the preconditions stage (Rostow, 1960). One key strategy for a take-off was massive capital investment in industrial development and the "introduction of modern technology on market principles which would create high rates of economic growth, utilisation of labour, wage employment and ultimately reduction in poverty" (Kotze, 1995:37). Just as in the Solow growth model, Rostow's treatise does not explicitly mention education as a cause of developments in the stages.

However, Modernisation Theory in general and its derivative growth models have serious weaknesses. Two weaknesses that emanate from the theory's failure to explicitly recognise the role of education will be discussed.

First, while savings and investment are necessary conditions for accelerated rates of economic growth, they are not sufficient conditions. It is now widely acknowledged that the Marshal Plan, on which the neoclassical theories based some of their arguments, worked for Europe because the

European countries receiving aid had, among other prerequisites, the necessary human infrastructure such as a well-trained workforce, an educated and highly skilled labour force and the managerial competence to convert new capital effectively into higher levels of output (Todaro & Smith 2009).²² Rostow's and Harrod-Domar's models wrongly assumed the presence of these factors in underdeveloped countries.

Second, the implicit connotation of a trickle-down effect, where high economic growth leads to distribution of wealth in the society and consequently reduction in poverty levels, is a widely admitted economic fallacy (Adesina, 2007). Economic growth is a necessary but insufficient precondition for economic development and a therefore a clear distinction needs to be drawn between the concepts of economic growth and development (Adesina, 2007). In the late 1960s, scholars began vehemently to challenge the notion that development could be measured purely in terms of economic growth without deliberate measures to ensure distribution of wealth.²³ It was argued that, although national income of countries increased, the benefits of growth could not include the poor (Kotze, 1995). The debate re-emerged with force in the late 1980s and early 1990s in response to the adverse socio-economic impact of the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) (Adesina, 2007).

Granted that economic growth needs to be accompanied by robust distribution of wealth in order to ensure overall development, the role of education which as will be discussed later in this chapter is paramount in ensuring distribution of wealth, stands out conspicuously. Thus, failure to recognise the distinction between economic growth and development by the modernisation theory

²² Other factors include the physical structures and institutional conditions such as the well-integrated commodity and money markets, highly developed transport facilities (Todaro & Smith, 2009)

²³ The experience in the 1960s that growth was not producing equitable distribution led the UN to launch in 1970s its *Second Decade of Development*, concerned with distribution, poverty reduction in the context of growth. In anticipation of the launch, the ILO launched its *World Employment Programme (WEP)* in 1969. An important aspect of this was the ILO Mission to Kenya (led by Has Singer, and Richard Jolly). The report of the mission re-centred the issue of redistribution in the context of economic growth. It influenced Robert McNamara's World Bank, which launched its *Redistribution with Growth* programme in the 1970s. It should however be noted that the debate on whether development can be measured in economic growth without simultaneous focus on development is much older than the 1960s. For instance economist Gunnar Myrdal have made such argument centre pieces of his works since the 1930s.

could partly explain the theory's lack of explicit emphasis on education.

2.3 Rethinking the Role of Education in Development: Human Capital Theory and its Versions

The birth of Human Capital Theory, which emerged from the new growth models of Modernisation thought, sought to explain the factors that determine the rate of growth of GDP and development levels that were left unexplained and exogenously determined by Modernisation Theory of development. Unlike the Modernisation Theory discussed in the previous section, Human Capital Theory explains investment in human capital as a dominant source of economic growth (Todaro & Smith, 2009) and social development (Ranis *et al.*, 2000). Since the seminal works by Schultz (1960) and Becker (1964), the Theory of Human Capital has been presented in various versions. However, all the versions recognise human capital as a key variable in development. The point of divergence by the different versions seems to be on how education does this.

2.3.1 Education and Productivity of Workers

In his first systematic articulation of Human Capital Theory through his presidential address to the American Economic Association in 1960 on the theme “Investment in Human Capital”, Theodore Schultz argued that education was not to be viewed as a form of consumption but as a productive investment (Schultz, 1961). He posited that education does not only improve the individual choice available to mankind, but that an educated population provides the type of labour force necessary for economic growth (Schultz, 1961). A year later Edward Denison in his treatise “The Sources of Economic Growth in the United States and the Alternatives before Us” (1962), authenticated Schultz's claim by observing that over the period 1929–57, education had been responsible for 23 per cent of the growth in US national income (Denison 1962).

The early version by Becker (1964) suggests that education or training raises the productivity of workers by imparting useful knowledge and skills, hence raising workers' future income by increasing their lifetime earnings. In his work, Becker (1964) made an important distinction between general and specific investments in human capital. He argued that, if the skills a worker acquired through on-the-job training are general, the wage on the external labour market will

reflect the full marginal product from this training. In other words, workers capture the entire return from their general human capital in a competitive labour market (Becker, 1964). Conversely, training in perfectly specific skills has no effect on the worker's productivity in other firms and the wage that an employee could get elsewhere would thus be independent of the amount of training he received (Becker, 1964). In other words, while the returns to specific training can be realised only in an ongoing relationship with the training firm, general training increases the productivity of a worker in many firms besides those providing it. Becker then concludes that employers will share the returns and the cost of investments in firm-specific skills with their employees, while in a competitive labour market firms will not invest into general skills of their employees due to their inability to collect the returns from such investments (1964). Accordingly, workers will pay the full cost of general training (Becker, 1964).

Becker's version is however not devoid of shortfalls and points of criticism. First, other scholars have argued that higher earnings of educated workers simply reflect their superior ability acquired during the process of education, rather than through skills and knowledge. For example, Ranis *et al* (2000) argue that education performs a signalling function, distinguishing among people of different innate ability and the potential productivity of workers rather than raising productivity. Thurow (1975) maintains that productivity is largely characteristic of jobs rather than of workers and that employers basically use education credentials to select workers because better-educated workers can be trained for specific jobs more quickly and at a lower cost than their less-educated peers. Miller (2010:200) calls this a "credentialism model", implying that institutions and universities act as "credential mills" and that they sell a "certification of learning which is then used in the wider economy usually as way of gaining entry to particular employment markets" (2010:201).

Second, even if education was accepted to be an enhancing element of productivity, it is naïve to assume that individuals who are productive necessarily obtain better wages than individuals who are not. This assumption, as Souto-Otero (2010:401) observes, "ignores the fact that salary is loosely related to productivity and that the rewards obtained in the labour market are to do with the labour value of a profession rather than productivity". This is confirmed by Medoff and Abraham (1981). It is also confirmed by the 2008 financial crisis (Toynbee & Walker, 2008). Philippon and Reshef (2009) found that, between the early 1990s and 2006, rents rather than

productivity accounted for 30 to 50 per cent of the wage differential between the financial sector and the rest of the private sector. Souto-Otero (2010) identifies three scenarios to illustrate the point that productivity (assumed to emanate from education) does not translate into high earnings. In the first scenario which he call “*noocracy*” (the rule by those who have knowledge or are wise) education is all what matters to rise to the top of the income ladder. In the second scenario, called “*noo-plutocracy*” (rule by the wise and the wealthy), there is no increase in earnings due to high levels of education. Consequently most people opt out of school. In the “*noo-tychocracy*” (rule by the wise and lucky), there is also no increase in earnings due to education but people do not opt out of school due to hope for future prospects (Souto-Otero, 2010).

Third, some scholars have argued that productivity depends on extraneous factors such as the organisation of production, the extent of discretion, participation in decision making, responsibility sharing, and information available to employees, which affect employees’ utilisation of their ability to act (Levin, 1987; Souto-Otero, 2010). Levin and Kelley (1994) suggest that education can improve productivity only if complementary inputs exist, which include training, contract terms, and management practices. Hall and Jones (1999) on the other hand contend that differences in capital accumulation, productivity, and therefore output per worker are fundamentally related to differences in social infrastructure across countries such as institutions and government policies that determine the economic environment, within which individuals accumulate skills and firms accumulate capital and produce output. Martin (1995) also observes that productivity studies are limited in inter-job comparability, and further that workers’ productivity outcomes are dependent on other factors unrelated to education such as availability of land, factor inputs and credit. Lack of these conditions would cause loss in production.

Fourth, the productivity approach has been quashed for its “aggregation bias” where average years of schooling raise human capital by an equal amount regardless of whether a person is enrolled in primary, secondary or tertiary school (Loening, 2005:16). Furthermore, the method also seriously neglects the aspect of education quality (with cognitive skills and performance in standardised tests as proxy measures) on productivity by assuming an average student in Zambia or Mozambique gains the same amount of knowledge in any year of schooling as an average student in Japan or South Korea. Hanushek and Wößmann (2007) fault the method for implicitly assuming that all skills and human capital formation come from the formal schooling system,

negating the effect of other factors such as family and peers that also have an impact on productivity. In addition, as observed by Maksymenko and Rabbani (2011), since there is no real measure of measure of human capital, the tendency has been to rely on proxies such as investment in education, primary, secondary or higher education enrolment ratio, literacy rates and average years of schooling. In the view of Maksymenko and Rabbani (2011) these variables omit a health component of the human capital variable. This view corroborates an earlier observation by Behrman (1991) who argues that the impact of education on productivity is overestimated as it overlooks the impact of health on human capital. Consequently, they argue for a human capital index that incorporates the health variable as well as all types of investment that human beings undertake in order to increase their future wellbeing and production potential (Maksymenko & Rabbani, 2011).

2.3.2 Education and Earnings

Mincer (1974) attempted to strengthen the Human Capital Theory by coming up with an analysis of returns to education on individual workers. He argued that, since education delivers economic benefits to individuals, we can also conclude that it brings benefits to nations which are groupings of individuals. Mincer looked at individual earnings as a function of years of education and also other factors such as age and experience and found that for white males not working on farms in the USA, an extra year of education raised the earnings of an individual by about seven per cent (1974). He further observed that returns to education were high for early stages of education as compared to later stages (Mincer, 1974).

However, some scholars have argued that Mincer's analysis overstates the return to society from investing in extra education for an individual as it ignores the cost of providing the education, the loss of earnings resulting from time spent being educated and the fact that the benefits of education may decay with age and certainly disappear once an individual retires from the labour force (Stevens & Weale, 2003). Second, the analysis might be taken to imply that everyone is homogeneous when in the real world the benefits of extra education are obviously different for different individuals (Stevens & Weale, 2003). Finally, Mincer's version makes an assumption that all years of education generate an equal rate of return to the student. In other words, he implies that kindergarten is just as important as a year of college, which is a very difficult

argument to sustain in the empirical world.

Mincer’s version of human capital theory resembles the one which Psacharopoulos came up with. Using a cost-benefit analysis method, Psacharopoulos (1994) provides an international survey of rates of return to education covering 78 countries. The returns to primary education ranged from 42 per cent per annum in Botswana to only 3.3 per cent per annum in Yemen. The largest return for secondary education was 47.6 per cent per annum in Zimbabwe, falling to only 2.3 per cent in the former Yugoslavia. For tertiary education, the range was narrow, between –4.3 per cent per annum in Zimbabwe and to 24 per cent per annum in Yemen. Psacharopoulos (1994) quotes the following returns by income level:

Table 2.1: Rate of Returns to Education

Income Band (Measured in 1985 US\$)	Rate of Return (% Per Annum)		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Low Income (<\$610)	23.4	15.2	10.6
Lower Middle Income (\$610–\$2449)	18.2	13.4	11.4
Upper Middle Income (\$2500–\$7619)	14.3	10.6	9.5
High Income (>\$7619)	Na	10.3	8.2
World	20.0	13.5	10.7

Source: Adopted from Psacharopoulos (1994).

As shown in Table 2.1 above, Psacharopoulos (1994) observed that rates of return were positive but falling with each level of education and also that they were decreasing with the income of the country concerned. However, contrary to Psacharopoulos’s observation, Schultz (2004) found that the rates of return for SSA (low-income countries) increase with the level of schooling. Similar results were obtained for Rwanda by Lassibille and Tan (2005) and Ewoudou and Vencatachellum (2006) for Cameroon. Schultz’s (2004) observation in Malawi is confirmed by Chirwa and Matita’s (2009) study which observed that returns were lower for primary education and higher for higher education. They found that the rate of return for primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and university education was 5.1 per cent, 9.4 per cent, 15.4 per cent and 66 per

cent respectively (Chirwa & Matita, 2009:15). The high rate of return to education in low-income countries (Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa) is possibly a result of relative scarcity of human capital as compared to high-income countries.

However, several scholars have cautioned against using the cost-benefit analysis (CBA) as a method for computing rate of returns to education as it has serious flaws. First, as Jimenez and Patrinos (2008) argue, CBA usually focuses on private returns and hardly factors in social returns to education.²⁴ They observe that “while it has been relatively straightforward to obtain estimates of the private returns to education, credible estimates of social returns, which are necessary for public investment analysis, remain elusive” (Jimenez & Patrinos, 2008:12). They observe further that “the benefits of education may [also] extend to others beyond the individual student” (Jimenez & Patrinos, 2008:12). These externalities, according to Wolfe and Zuvukas (1997) may include social equity, strengthening national cohesiveness, reducing environmental stress through effect on fertility and population growth and reducing crime rates. Rauch (1993) finds higher social returns (9.1%) compared to private returns (4.8%). Second, as Jimenez and Patrinos (2008) again observe, CBA wrongly assumes that the public sector is the sole financier and provider of education.

2.3.3 Education and National Output

A third version of Human Capital Theory compares the output per worker (or initially because of data constraints output per capita) in a number of different countries based on secondary enrolment levels. A key proponent of this version is Mankiw (1995) who, drawing on earlier work by Mankiw *et al* (1992) maintained the two categories of labour: educated (those with secondary education) and uneducated. This approach is subscribed by Barrow *et al* (1995). Mankiw (1995:295) argues that there is a strong relationship between income levels and secondary enrolment ratios and that savings in physical and human capital can explain as much as 78 per cent of the per capita income differences among nations. Mankiw (1995) presents two key

²⁴ Social returns imply the benefits that accrue to a society as whole minus the cost that the whole society incurred in supporting the schooling of a particular individual, while private returns imply benefits that accrue to an individual minus the costs that he or she incurred as an individual (or his or her parents and guardians) in the course of schooling.

arguments. First, countries with the same technology could have different incomes because of human and physical capital accumulation. Second, he argues that human capital does not move across countries as physical capital. Thus if poor countries' poverty is explained by their low human capital, it follows that investors will be unwilling to invest in these countries since there is no skilled workforce. He argues that this explains why capital flows go to rich countries rather than to poor countries (Mankiw, 1995).

However, Mankiw's version has some flaws. First, as observed by Easterly (2002), secondary education is a very narrow measure of education attainment. Second, Mankiw (1995) makes a mistake of explaining big differences in income across countries with what Easterly (2002:80) calls a "minor ingredient". By assuming that capital flows would equalise rates of return to physical capital, Mankiw (1995) implied that human capital was the only variable that explains different rates of income returns across countries. Arguably, as observed by Easterly (2002), if a poor country is poor because of lack of skills, then few skilled workers must be earning very high salaries. Ironically, the situation on the ground for most countries is different. For instance, while there are more skilled labourers in the USA than in India, wages for skilled labourers are higher in the USA than in India (Easterly, 2002).

2.3.4 Education and "Complementarity"

Lucas (1988) advances the concept of "complementarity" and dynamic feedback to advance the Theory of Human Capital. According to Lucas (1988), complementarity arises when one's investment increases the return (monetary and/or psychic) to another person's investment. He argues that the productivity of any worker is enhanced not only by his or her individual level of skill but also by the average skill level among fellow workers. Put differently, productivity of individual workers depends on the existing stock of ideas and the number of people who are devoting their time to the accumulation of ideas. Since productivity depends on the available stock of human capital, Lucas argues that there may be an important role for government to play by, among other policies, subsidising education so that the level of human capital may be increased. By dynamic feedback, Lucas (1988) implies the ability to learn new things because of the knowledge that we already have. He argues that, as people learn more, it becomes easier to acquire further knowledge and skills that will in the end enhance their productivity (Lucas, 1988).

2.3.5 Education and Worker's Efficiency

Nelson and Phelps (1966) present the Theory of Human Capital differently from others by focusing on its effect on efficiency of the workers in production of goods and services. Nelson and Phelps argue that education (or rather lack of it) is important as an explanation of why countries might fail to use best-practice technology. They argue that the major role of human capital is not to increase the productivity in existing tasks but to enable workers to cope with change, disruptions and especially new technologies (Nelson & Phelps, 1966). Nelson and Phelps's argument is based on a situation in which there is a single technological frontier on which efficient economies can perform while those without adequate education are doomed to produce inefficiently, in the interior of the production-possibility set rather than on its frontier (Nelson & Phelps, 1966). Put differently, the 1966 Nelson-Phelps approach claims that human capital works through its ability to innovate or to facilitate the adoption of technology. It relates to the stock of human capital through two ways: directly through the effect of human capital on a country's ability to innovate and indirectly through its ability to facilitate the adoption of technology (Nelson & Phelps, 1966). The discovery of an innovation, undertaken by profit-maximising individual firms or by the state, raises productivity and becomes the source of long-term growth. According to this approach, increase in human capital will be associated with a permanent increase in the growth rate (Nelson & Phelps, 1966).

More recent endogenous models have supplemented Nelson-Phelps version by analysing the key determinants of Total Factor Productivity (TFP) growth rate and how human capital affects these factors. Aghion and Howitt (1992) and Romer (1990) (quoted in Marotta *et al.*, 2007) show that the main determinants of TFP growth are innovation, research and development (R&D) and technological progress. According to these authors, individual firms produce technological knowledge which initially is private to the firm but subsequently spills over to the rest of the economy as it can be copied at almost no cost by any number of firms, becoming social knowledge (Marotta *et al.*, 2007). Thus, when a firm is not able to innovate on its own, it can benefit from research findings of firms that are in the same industry. However, as Cohen and Levinthal (1989) suggest, utilising the public domain knowledge can only be of minimal cost if firms have the absorptive capacity for the new external knowledge. This absorptive capacity is usually determined by the quality of human capital and R&D in the recipient organization. On the

other hand, GDP growth rate can rise if firms are able to produce new products which demand that firms must have the capacity to innovate and conduct R&D. These two also depend on the level of skilled workers. Put differently, advanced human capital enhances economic growth by raising TFP through its positive impact on companies' innovation and R&D as well as increasing firms' or individuals' ability to absorb new knowledge and technologies.

The Nelson-Phelps approach has some empirical backing. For instance, some studies show that more educated farmers are more likely to adopt new technologies and seeds. A study by Selowsky (1981) revealed that cognitive achievement led to higher productivity than in those without basic cognitive levels in Kenya, Tanzania and Pakistan. In Thailand, studies by Schultz (1975) and Rosenzweig (1995) showed that farmers with four or more years of schooling were three times more likely to adopt modern technology than those without. Similarly, in Nepal, a study by Birdsall (1993) showed that completion of at least seven years of schooling increased productivity in wheat by over a quarter and in rice by 13 per cent because of the individual's ability to adopt new technology.

2.3.6 Education and Social Development

The social development version of Human Capital Theory looks at the impact of education on development *via* social development measurements. Elson and Cagatay (2000) for example argue that high levels of schooling for women reduces the fertility rate which reduces population growth rate and raises per capita income. According to McMahon (1999), the fertility rate declines because education raises the capacity of females to enter the workforce and other human-capital-intensive activities. Since their time is more valuable in these pursuits, "time is shifted away from having more children which is time intensive" and "an economic liability" (McMahon, 1999:82). Education also improves females' understanding of biology and enhances acceptance and correct application of birth control methods and also delays marriages, all of which reduce fertility rates (McMahon, 1999). Lower population growth not only increases per capita income but also puts less stress on public resources for social services such as health and education (McMahon, 1999). Education also helps individuals learn to practise good health habits which increase their productivity. The Global Campaign for Education (2005) and ActionAid International (2006) for instance, observe that young women with a primary education are twice as likely to be AIDS-free

than those without primary education. The education of women is also considered as being related to the health of children and the consequent reduction of infant and child death rates (Caldwell, 1986).

Directly, education can also lead to reduction of inequality (Chinery *et al.*, 1974). Ocampo (2002) observes that education alters the distribution of income by making it more equal. Using a reasonably recent data set (2003–2007) from a sample of 74 developed and developing countries, Vu and Mukhopadhaya (2011), observe a negative impact of inequality on economic growth. They observe that a decrease in income inequality leads to expansion in economic growth and vice versa, especially for developing countries (Vu & Mukhopadhaya, 2011). Their results corroborate earlier studies by Alesina and Rodrik (1994) and Aghion, *et al* (1999) in which a decrease in income inequality stimulated economic growth. With low inequality, economic growth leads to poverty reduction in developing countries as argued by Sachs (2001).

2.3.7 Education, Social Cohesion and National Unity

According to Adesina (2007) education plays an active role in efforts aimed at creating national unity and social cohesion. Adesina (2007:9) observes that, soon after obtaining independence, education helped in the nation-building agenda in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) states as it developed a “new generation committed to the nation-state rather than ethnic or the regional.” He observes that in countries such as Malawi, Tanzania, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria secondary and university schooling brought together young people of different ethnic and regional backgrounds. In this way, their shared experience helped in developing a “trans-ethnic leadership corps” (2007:10.) However, Ocampo (2002) observes that for education to meaningfully contribute to social cohesion and national unity there must be equal opportunities beyond schooling mainly in the labour market.

2.3.8 Education and Governance: Impact on Democracy, Human Rights, Political Stability and Crime

According to McMahon (1999:93), education “contributes both directly but also indirectly through the effects of per capita income growth, to democratisation, improved human rights and political stability.” Huber *et al* (1993) argue that education enlarges the working and middle

classes and facilitates their self-organisation, thus making it more difficult for elites to exclude them politically. Educated people value their improved economic status, their hard-won civil rights and their democratic freedoms (McMahon, 1999). It is further argued that educated people with “access to modern media communications are often better able to be informed about what is going on, to speak more articulately, and to some extent cooperate with industrial interests to be more economically influential in strengthening their political rights” (McMahon, 1999:94). In that respect, the benefits of investing in education accrue to both those who invest and those who do not invest. At university level, the content of higher education, especially a “curriculum that develops language and civic skills, is influential in shaping participation (by students and graduates) in democracy” (Hillygus, 2005:25). In his analysis of some OECD, Latin American and SSA countries, McMahon (1999) found that, apart from higher per capita income and lower military expenditure, the major determinant of democratisation in these countries is higher secondary education enrolments especially after a 12-year lag.

For human rights levels, he found that, besides higher per capita income, lower military expenditure and democratisation and higher secondary education enrolment rates are crucial (McMahon, 1999). On political stability, he observed that both high secondary and primary enrolment rates are associated with greater political stability.²⁵

Education literature also shows that education indirectly leads to reduced violent crime (measured by homicides and property crime). Literature suggests that property crime increases as economic growth occurs and that most crime is committed by young men in their teenage years and before the age of 25 (Witte, 1997 quoted in Behrman & Stacey 997). Among these offenders, empirical evidence shows little impact from years of schooling (McMahon, 1999). However, most of the crimes often occur in communities with a larger number of unsupervised teenagers (Witte, 1997, quoted in Behrman & Stacey, 997). McMahon (1999) observes that unsupervised teenagers are often found in communities with the lowest secondary school gross enrolment rates. He therefore argues that greater retention in secondary school provides better supervision for teenagers and opportunities “for more constructive peer-group formation” (McMahon, 1999:142). Put differently, the higher percentage of teenagers under supervision in secondary schools reduces

²⁵ Other factors include per capita income, military expenditure, communications, social security expenditure, urbanisation and democratisation (McMahon, 1999).

violent property crime rates more significantly than they would have been with the same level of economic growth (McMahon, 1999).

Education, especially higher education, further enables the country to nurture governance and leadership skills, and therefore provides countries with the talented individuals needed to establish a policy environment favourable to development (Swyngedouw, 1999; Bloom *et al.*, 2006b). It is also accepted that the setting up of robust and fair legal and political institutions and making them a part of a country's fabric partly calls for advanced knowledge and decision-making skills (Bloom *et al.*, 2006b).

2.4 Paradigmatic Shifts in Ruling Ideas on Development–Higher Education Nexus

Since the role of education in development up to this juncture has been discussed in its totality (that is, primary, secondary and higher), it would be proper to examine how the role of higher education alone has been espoused in different periods since the time when education began to gain central position in development debates. While education as a whole is recognised as a pillar for development, the contribution of the higher education level has always been considered the least of the three levels (primary, secondary and higher education) according to a sample from a considerable number of studies (Psacharopoulos, 1973; Loening, 2005; Martin, 1995; Petrakis & Stanakis, 2000; Papageorgiou, 2003; Gemmel, 1996). Between the early 1970s and late 1990s, several writings argued that there was an 'over-investment' in higher education and that higher education in developing countries was slowing national development as more productive investments elsewhere were being foregone (Becker & Lewis, 1993). The most influential advocate of the "over-investment" hypothesis was a World Bank economist, George Psacharopoulos (1973), who advocated for redirecting to primary education, arguing that higher education's contribution to development was almost negligible when compared to the contribution by primary education. The argument that higher education's role in development is almost negligible has usually been based on calculations that reveal that social returns to higher education are lower than private returns (Psacharopoulos, 1973). In his "updated" version of the 1973 work, "Returns to Education: A Further International Update and Implications" Psacharopoulos (1987:586) found that average social rates of return in the late 1970s and early 1980s for higher education were 9 per cent, 13 per cent and 16 per cent for North America and

Europe, Asia and Latin America respectively. On the other hand, average private rates of return were 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 32 per cent for North America and Europe, Asia and Africa (Psacharopoulos, 1987). Pritchett (1996) and Psacharopoulos (1988) used cross-national econometric measures and theories to emphasise investments in basic education and advocate cost recovery on higher education in Africa.

A host of authors have directly and indirectly supported the “over-investment” hypothesis. In his study of the “Effects of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education on Economic Growth in Guatemala” over a period of 50 years, Loening (2005) found that secondary education was the main determinant of growth. Loening further observed that primary education provides individuals with basic cognitive skills that enhance productivity in the production of final goods while secondary education facilitates the absorption of new technologies, and enables individuals to contribute to the production of knowledge (2005). This observation is also supported by earlier works by Ranis *et al* (2000) and Papageorgiou (2003).

In developing countries, the role of higher education in development is said to be not very important according to some studies. Petrakis and Stanakis (2002) for example, in a cross country regression, observed that the link between education and growth varies with respect to a country’s level of development and that primary education was important for less-developed countries while higher education was more critically needed in industrialised countries.

The “over-investment” hypothesis was quickly subscribed to and repeatedly emphasised by the World Bank between the mid 1970s and early 2000s. As a dominant player in the development policies of Third World countries, the World Bank’s subscription to the ‘over-investment’ hypothesis had a dramatic effect on the volume of resources committed towards higher education by both the bank and the governments of developing countries.²⁶

²⁶ It is however difficult to say what influence these studies had on the assistance programmes of other donors. Eisemon & Kourouma (1994) observe that support for university development was already declining before “over-investment” in higher education was accepted as an established development fact. Coleman and Court (1992:17) for example observe that “by 1970 the number of universities in (US)AID programs declined to 66, by 1974 to 18 and by 1978 to only 10” (sic). They further observe that in 1975, the British government issued a White Paper proposing a shift “from helping universities to helping with vocational training and other aspects of education

The World Bank considered higher education in Africa as a “luxury” and not an indispensable tool for development (World Bank, 1980, 2004), openly preferring more investment in primary education and infrastructural development. In 1974, the World Bank openly started the process of emphasising the supremacy of primary and basic education and it argued for the raising of the proportion of educational lending to basic education sector from 11 per cent to 27 per cent and, in consequence, reducing the proportion of money going to higher education from 40 to 30 per cent (World Bank, 1974). Its 1974 Education Working Paper criticised the disproportionate allocation of educational resources to secondary and higher education at the expense of basic education which the bank considered a more efficient and equitable investment (World Bank, 1974). In the 20 years that followed, lending to basic education was significantly raised while lending to higher education was dramatically reduced to almost 30 per cent (Banya & Elu, 2001). The 1980 Education Policy Paper of the World Bank’s policy for investment in education focused on equity issues and on expanding access to basic education within the framework of measures to promote cost effectiveness and external efficiency. At its meeting with Vice-Chancellors of African universities in Harare in 1986, the World Bank repeated its stance that higher education in Africa was a luxury and that most African countries were better off closing universities at home and training graduates overseas (Banya & Elu, 2001). The 1988 Education Sector Policy Paper, “Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization and Expansion” further down-played the role of higher education in developing countries. The 1990 Education for All (EFA) declaration and the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) declaration further reinforced the World Bank’s higher levels of commitment to primary education as opposed to other higher education.

The World Bank’s support of the overinvestment hypothesis and its resultant reduction of the support towards the higher education sub-sector should however be seen and analysed within the broader context of the global economic crisis between the mid 1970s and mid 1990s. In this period, the World Bank championed Structural Adjustment (SAPs) as a panacea for the economic woes of developing countries. As observed by Assié-Lumumba (2006), it is the reliance of Africa

which are closer to the grassroots” (Coleman & Court 1992:18). In the same year (1975) Eisemon & Kourouma (1994:280) also observe that the Rockefeller Foundation began phasing out support for university development, “an activity in which it had been a leader for almost a half century”.

states on the World Bank which led them to unwillingly neglect higher education. Mkandawire and Solido (1999) argue that the education policy of the World Bank was a deliberate effort meant to dismantle and restructure the higher education sub-sector which the bank perceived from both functional and market point of view as inefficient and unproductive. In the World Bank's view, the cost of management of higher education was too high while its monetary returns were limited (Assié-Lumumba, 2006). The World Bank argued that the high cost of higher education could not be sustained in the face of the 1980s economic crisis. However as observed by Assié-Lumumba (2006:70), the:

“popular criticisms directed at the World Bank and its philosophical assumptions (had) not consistently or fundamentally influenced the African states' policy choices, their political behavior or their deontology. Indeed despite the controversial nature of those programmes and the considerable resistance from many states, for several years before adopting them, as of 1996, more than thirty-five African states of different ideological stands had partially or fully adopted them.”

One such country where the World Bank's SAPs and its led-education reforms were substantially implemented is Malawi. The full details of the reforms and their consequences on the higher education sub-sector have been presented in section 7.2.2.1 of this study.

Research works by Bloom *et al* (2006a) and Tilak (2003) however sternly questioned the methodologies for analysis and the basis for conclusion of studies on rates of return to which the World Bank subscribed. Tilak (2003) argued that the methodological conceptions focused on econometric indicators while ignoring social aspects in development processes. He observes that the World Bank's subscription to the 'over-investment' hypothesis and its neglect of higher education “followed general assumption supported by thin empirical evidence that higher education has no significant effect on economic growth, equality, poverty reduction and social development in developing countries” (Tilak, 2003:1).

The “over-investment” hypothesis in both developed and developing nations has also been rejected by some scholars. Using the example of the USA, Berger (1988) and Murphy and Welch (1989) found that, although there was an initial downward trend in rates of return in the period

under Psacharopoulos's measurement, there was an upward trend in the late 1980s. Second, as pointed out by Baumol *et al* (1993), the "over-investment" hypothesis does not take into consideration the innovations taking place in other sectors as a result of higher education.

In Africa, Bloom *et al* (2006b) see a strong causal relationship between higher education and economic growth. They argue that countries that have made significant advances in higher education (such as Mauritius and Egypt) have consistently registered higher economic growth rates unlike those countries where higher education is not expanded (such as Ethiopia, Madagascar, Senegal, and Tanzania). They argue that, although there are no readily relevant processed data, these countries' efforts to improve and expand higher education could explain the possible relationship between those efforts and economic growth. Bloom *et al* (2006b) also argue that Sub-Saharan Africa's production level is 23 per cent below its production possibility frontier because of a shortfall in human capital. In their estimation, by raising the stock of tertiary education by one year, these economies could raise their growth by an average 0.24 per centage points (from an increase in factor inputs), and by an additional 0.39 per centage points through an increase in productivity (Bloom *et al.*, 2006b). Mamdani (2008) equally dismisses the overinvestment argument. However, unlike Bloom *et al* (2006b) and Tilak (2003), Mamdani (2008) agrees with the World Bank's concern that the post-colonial university in Africa partly ignored the equity front as it was duplicating an expensive colonial model for training a narrow and privileged elite.

Of late there has also been increasing uncontested recognition and evidence supporting the role of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa's economic growth by the World Bank. The World Bank has finally come out openly in acknowledging the role of higher education in development and has relaxed its repeated stance against 'overinvestment' in higher education. In its 2009 report, "Accelerating Catch-up: Tertiary Education for Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa" the World Bank called for a more serious attention towards higher education. It recognises that "increasing societal welfare depends upon a nation's economic competitiveness and upon its associated capacity to produce skilled workers and apply knowledge in order to meet this challenge" (2009:51). The World Bank now agrees openly that the production of skilled workers demands investing effectively in higher education.

Ironically and surprisingly however, the draft new World Bank Education Strategy 2020 titled “Learning for All: Investing in People’s Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development” is casting doubts on whether it will still consider higher education as an imperative in developing countries especially those from SSA. The yet-to-be-launched strategy proposes financing priorities according to the income category of countries. Countries will be grouped according to income levels as low-income countries, middle-income countries or fragile states. Under low-income countries, priority will be on supporting expansion of access of primary education specifically, for those countries that have not met the MDGs, providing additional US\$750m in grants and zero-interest loans for basic education over the next five years (World Bank 2010a). By implication, this categorisation could make it difficult for low-income countries (many of them from SSA) to access more resources for higher education as these are priorities under middle-income countries. There is nevertheless some increasing observable acceptance of the role of higher education in developing countries in most of the World Bank’s recent documents.

2.5 Higher Education and Overall Education Development

The previous sections have shown that the link between education and development besides higher education manifested in primary and secondary education. The importance of both primary and secondary education in development is widely documented. Literature, however, shows that higher education has a crucial role in the development of overall education system especially on primary and secondary education sub-sectors.

As observed by Fafunwa (1977), faculties, institutes and departments of education play a greater role in pre-school, primary, and secondary education through the participation of staff members in conferences, seminars, task forces, and committees on curriculum development of these lower levels. For example, in the early 1970s, the University of Ife’s Department of Adult Education introduced a functional literacy programme in the local language (Fafunwa, 1977). Through the programme, 30 farmers and their wives were in each three-month period being trained to read and write (Fafunwa, 1977).

In many countries, university staff members are involved in conducting surveys in primary, secondary or teachers’ education problems. Besides this, many education institutes are also involved in organising in-service courses for teachers at primary, secondary and teacher

educational levels. Ngobi *et al* (2011) give an example of how the University of Kyambago in Uganda has been at the forefront in organising secondary school teacher education and professional development training. The university provides both pre- and in-service training education for secondary school teachers in 19 different programmes. Similarly, during the 1971/72 academic year, the Faculty of Education at the University of Addis-Ababa was charged by the government to develop an accelerated Science teacher training programme to help solve Ethiopia's chronic shortage of secondary school Science teachers (Fafunwa, 1977). The programme drawn up by the faculty sought to give strong emphasis to Ethiopia's problems especially in the area of agriculture. During the same year (1971/72), the Universities of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (with the collaboration of USAID and the California State Polytechnic College) established a four-week programme for primary school headmasters in Gaborone. This was aimed at helping the ministries of education in these countries to improve the quality of instruction, improve administration practices, and encourage curriculum development in the primary schools.

Thus, besides its direct impact on development, higher education can enhance national development through its role in the development of primary, secondary and technical education.

2.6 The Relevance of Higher Education to the African Socio-economic Context

The economies of many developing countries, especially those in SSA, are predominantly agricultural and extractive with dismal performance in agricultural productivity and manufacturing. The impact of these two, coupled with low social development levels, mounts large constraints to development in the SSA region. In Malawi, various studies have pointed to the observation that key constraints to Malawi's development include, among others, low agricultural productivity (which limits the contribution of agriculture to the GDP), low export base (because of the weak performance by the manufacturing sectors) and high population growth and poverty levels (which also exert the pressure on land). The constraints have been identified by the Malawi Government (1998b, 1999) through the Vision 2010 Initiative (World Bank, 1995) in the Malawi Agricultural Sector Memorandum and the Policy Analysis Initiative respectively which drew experts from government, the civil society and the private sector. Consequently, any policy intervention by the government aimed at promoting Malawi's development needs to focus

on these three areas.

Consistent with the above observation, different scholars have advocated for three complementary development options for Malawi and other SSA countries. These are improvement of agriculture productivity, promotion of manufacturing industry and exports and social development (World Bank, 1997:5). Given the above background, how relevant is higher education to these three development options? The three sections below address the causal link between higher education on the one hand and social development, agricultural development and manufacturing on the other hand, drawing mostly on empirical evidence and arguments made by scholars.

2.6.1 Higher Education and Social Development

Although the majority of studies on the contribution HE to economic growth focus on pure economic indicators, direct tangible contributions of HE to social development are equally conspicuous. Tilak (2003:11) observes that:

“higher education has a very significant role in the development of the societies – in terms of economic development, human development, gender-biased development, improvement in health, life expectancy, and reduction in fertility, infant mortality and poverty.”

Table 2.2 overleaf gives a summary of the relationship between higher education and social indicators.

Table 2.2: Coefficients of Correlation between Higher Education and Social Development Indicators

Between	N	GER (around 1990) [54]	HEA (Latest year) [34]
And			
Human Development Index	49	0.60309	0.55183
Gender Development Index	42	0.63454	0.55238
Gender Empowerment Index	11	0.60562	0.65397
Life Expectancy	54	0.52611	0.54091
Infant Mortality rate	50	-0.46108	-0.46099
Total Fertility Rate	54	-0.56698	-0.47447
Poverty (international)	15	-0.56614*	-0.29956+
Note: Figures in [] refer to number of valid countries for which data are available; N: number of observations; r: coefficient of correlation Poverty (International): % of population below the line of income poverty of \$1 * statistically significant at 5% level; + not significant even at 10% level; all others are significant at 1% level.			

Source: Adopted from Tilak (2003).

According to Tilak (2003), life expectancy and infant mortality as indicators of the human development index have a significant relation to higher education. In his observations, higher education reduces infant mortality rates because people with higher levels of education are more aware of the need for preventive healthcare (Tilak, 2003). Tilak (2003) also observed a significant relationship between higher education and human development index as well as gender development index. He also observed that higher education attainment (HEA) reduces fertility rates on two fronts. First, it brings some attitudinal changes on the importance of reducing fertility in order to enhance development. Second, HEA hampers high fertility rates as it prolongs study periods, leading to delayed marriage and consequently reducing fertility rates. Tilak (2003) based his argument on Japan and South Korea. The two countries have the higher levels of HEA and

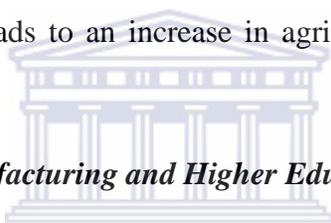
low fertility levels of 1.4 and 1.5 respectively. In contrast, Cambodia and Nepal have lower HEA rates (less than one per cent of the total population) with corresponding fertility rates of 5.3 and 4.8 respectively.

Tilak (2003) also observes a negative relationship between poverty and gross enrolment ratio (GER) into higher education. As shown in Table 2.2 above, the statistically significant coefficient confirms that an inverse relationship exists between poverty and GER. A study carried out by Verner (2004) in Paraiba, Brazil for the World Bank on the role of education in poverty reduction revealed that poverty levels of the educated, especially those who attained higher education qualifications were very low as many of them were able to get highly remunerated jobs. Tilak (2003) observes that HEIs also help in reducing poverty through community engagement projects that deliberately improve the skills of the local communities (Tilak, 2003).

2.6.2 Higher Education and Enhanced Agricultural Productivity: The Land-Grant Model

The modern HEIs with their mix of teaching and research functions were the brainchild of the Prussian educated philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt, who in 1810 became the founding father of the University of the Berlin which put into practice his ideas and became a model for other universities in Europe and the United States (Yusuf, 2007; Stiller, 2005). For 600 years before Humboldt, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were used only as training grounds for lawyers, administrators, engineers, clerics and other professionals. As Yusuf (2007) observes, the majority of HIEs devoted themselves to teaching and depended on their graduates to diffuse and apply knowledge. Stiller (2005:256–66) refers to the traditional teaching method and basic research roles of universities as “Mode 1”. Only a few universities were formally engaged in research. Consequently, as Yusuf (2007) further observes, most technological advances (such as those in railways) were the result of applied research done by firms. In the post-Humboldt era, two additional roles were acquired: that of conducting basic research to advance knowledge and that of contributing to the application of knowledge (Yusuf, 2005). However, it was towards the end of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century that the paradigmic shift to the Mode 2 gained currency. According to Gibbons *et al* (1994), Mode 2 universities are characterised by their additional roles of research and the facilitation of the diffusion of knowledge for application in national and international development.

A classical example of Mode 2 HIE was conceived by the Morrill Act of 1862 and 1890 in the USA (McDowell, 2003). Known as Land Grant colleges of agriculture, government provided funding in form of state land (McDowell, 2003). A distinct feature of the Land Grant colleges was their mission in teaching and research on agriculture while not ignoring other definite functions of universities. From 1920 to the end of the Second World War, the transition to the science era in the American agricultural sector sustained the success of the Land Grant colleges (Huffman & Evenson, 1993). According to Kuhn (1970) and McDowell (2003), scientists of the Land Grant colleges engaged in solving problems at the time by increasing skills that provided answers to practical needs of farmers thereby enhancing agricultural productivity. Research was in this respect poised towards improving and diversifying farming methods and agricultural outputs. A study by Lin (2004) equally confirms the importance of higher education in the enhancement of agricultural productivity. Lin (2004) found that a one per cent increase in the number of engineering or natural resources leads to an increase in agricultural output by 0.15 per cent in Taiwan.



2.6.3 Technology, Industrial Manufacturing and Higher Education

The link between higher education and manufacturing is well documented (Jones *et al.*, 2005; Bloom, 2005; Wolff & Gittlemen, 1993; Meulester & Rochat, 1995). Bloom (2005:24) argues that East Asian developmental states (or tigers as they are often called) have been able to boost their export levels of manufactured goods because of their high-performing higher education systems. The famous Wood model by Wood (1990, 1991, 1992, 1994), forcefully illuminates the link between higher education (and the resultant high skills of the population) and levels of manufactures for domestic consumption and exports. Wood (1992) argues that, by increasing the level of the labour force's skills (through higher education), developing countries like Malawi can enhance the levels of manufactures in general and skill-intensive manufactures in particular. He argues that the level of manufactures relative to the GDP depends on the ratio of graduates to non-graduates in a country (Wood, 1992). In testing the relevance of the Wood model to South Africa, Ismail (1995) found a correlation of low levels of higher education attainment and its low levels of higher-value-added type of manufactures (such as machinery and transport equipment) compared to South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico and Brazil whose levels of higher education

attainment and manufactures were significantly higher than those of South Africa.²⁷ In a study aimed at examining the effects of concentration in different disciplines in Taiwan, Lin (2004) found that higher education played a strong role in the levels of manufactures. It was found that a one per cent increase in higher education stock (defined by the number of graduates) led to a 0.35 per cent rise in industrial output.

Pillay (2008) summarises the three routes in which higher education boosts the industrial manufacturing profile of a country. The first route is where new science-based industries which depend greatly on the research university for various kinds of support, proactive technology, and establishing an identity for the new industry are created. The second route is where industries relocate to a region or country because of the presence of research intensive university which provides local the manpower needs of the relocating firms through the students, staff population and graduates. Bloom (2005:24) cites major foreign firms such as IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle and Sun Microsystems which have been attracted to India because of its supply of highly educated computer graduates. Charles (2003) equally argues that countries with highly education populations are better positioned to attract foreign capital than those with a small number of highly educated people. The third route is where existing less technologically based industries become more advanced technologically because of the links that they maintain with HEIs (Pillay, 2008). These HEIs contribute to the technical problem-solving activities by way of contract research and consulting services as well as development of industry-relevant degrees. This is also done through the relevantly trained manpower provided by HEIs (Pillay, 2008). This route is confirmed through a study by Bartel and Lichtenberg (1988) which found that more educated individuals are able to come up with innovations and absorb new technology quickly.

According to Charles (2003), globalisation and increased trade competition have highlighted the

²⁷ Using comparable data for 1989, Ismail (1995) observed that the level of manufactures for South Africa was at 3 per cent, against 38 per cent, 27 per cent, 24 per cent, and 20 per cent for South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico and Brazil respectively. This, in his observation, resonated well with South Africa's 1989 tertiary level attainment of 1.6 per cent) against 4.8 per cent, 1.9 per cent and 4.4 per cent for South Korea, Brazil and Mexico respectively. Although Malaysia's higher education attainment level was at 1.3 per cent (less than South Africa), its secondary attainment level was higher than South Africa and in Ismail's analysis this continued to have a positive effect on Malaysia's level of manufactures.

strategic role of science and technology in developing a competitive advantage in the manufacturing sector. A host of other authors have also argued that globalisation has enhanced the need for new technologies through innovation systems. As noted by Yusuf (2007), models of indigenous economic growth have underscored the central contribution of knowledge accumulation to GDP growth. Berger (2005) argues that codified industrial technologies are facilitating entry into the global market and innovation has therefore become the only survival strategy for global manufacturing firms. But, although globalisation has increased the need for innovation and consequently strong incentives for investment in research and development (R & D), two factors have brought HEIs to the centre of innovation in the industrial manufacturing equation. First, as the technological frontier is pushed outward, the cost and the complexity of technologies continue to increase, and many new technologies are materialising at the intersection of several disciplines or sub-disciplines (Foray, 2007). Consequently, costs are rising and many firms are finding the independent pursuit of projects much more difficult (Yusuf, 2007). Second, in the words of Yusuf (2007:5), technology remains “tethered” to basic science where further advance at certain point becomes impossible without “scientific breakthroughs” that may loosen or eliminate particular constraints. While in the past basic research was done by individuals working independently in firms, the need to control costs and market failure, as observed by Thorn and Soo (2006) and Berryman and Drabek (2002), has brought in the involvement of HEIs.

The World Bank (2009b) argues that, with the increasing pace of globalisation, there is a need for HEIs especially in SSA to venture into the new role that calls on them to become more actively integrated actors within the emerging national innovation systems. As observed by Stiller (2005) and David (1997), the global knowledge economy with its demand for innovation has brought HEIs into the full limelight where they are not just creators of knowledge but also major agents in the manufacturing sector.

In summary, the above three sections have shown that higher education is relevant to SSA’s key development options. However, what has not been illuminated up to this stage is the nature of prerequisites (or variables that are essential) for higher education’s positive and maximum impact on development. The next section undertakes this task.

2.7 Key Issues and Variables in the Relationship between Higher Education and Development

There is an emerging consensus regarding the key issues which are crucial and need to be addressed in order to ensure that higher education in developing countries is able to contribute to development. These also relate in the main to the key challenges that many developing countries are facing. These include access and equity as well as quality and relevance. The sections below examine these challenges in detail.

2.7.1 Access and Equity

Access to higher education entails the magnitude of opportunities available to attain higher education qualifications. It is very difficult to obtain a measure of access in Africa given data and definitional challenges. As observed by Pillay (2010b), in some countries (such as Botswana and Egypt), higher education refers to all post-secondary education while in South Africa it refers only to university education. In this regard, comparing gross enrolment ratios (GER) might be inappropriate. That notwithstanding, there is evidence that access to higher education is still low in SSA both in absolute and relative terms. Teichler (1999) also observes that access to higher education in developing countries is still low for large sections of people as compared to developed countries. In SSA, despite tripling tertiary enrollments over the past 15 years, the regional enrollment ratio for tertiary education currently stands at only five per cent (World Bank 2009b:71). Of the 23 SSA countries for which data are available, only Mauritius, Nigeria and South Africa have a GER in double figures (Pillay, 2010b:3) with GER ranging from 0.4 per cent (for Malawi) to 34 per cent (for Mauritius) (Pillay, 2010b:3). These SSA higher education enrollment ratios are the lowest among the eight major geographical regions of the world (Pillay, 2010b). Thus, despite the recent gains achieved in expanding access at all educational levels, few would argue that these enrollment levels are adequate for future development.

Equity on the other hand entails the extent to which opportunities to participate in higher education are available to groups with various socio-biographic and socio-economic backgrounds as well as to people across all regional, racial and gender divides. The OECD (2007, quoted in Dias *et al.*, 2010) defines equity as fairness which implies ensuring that personal and social circumstances should not be an obstacle to achieving educational potential, and as inclusion

which implies ensuring basic minimum standards of education for all. High levels of inequality in SSA are determined by gender, socio-economic status and region (Dias *et al.*, 2010). It has been observed that in SSA a student from the lowest socioeconomic quintile on average has 15 times less chance of entering a university than one from the highest quintile (Brossard & Foko 2007). In Chad, 92 per cent of university students come from the top quintile (World Bank, 2007). In Burundi, the two per cent of students who attain higher education benefit by 40 per cent of education sector expenditures (World Bank, 2007). In Lesotho, the top quintile of students receives 47 per cent of the education budget (World Bank, 2005). Often in these instances, as Pillay (2010b:10) observes, “public funding mechanisms act to exacerbate such inequalities by providing free higher education to the ‘best’ students who come from these wealthiest households”.

Besides the socio-economic class, inequalities are also evident in favour of urban students and in favour of males. Pillay (2010b:3) further observes that “(w)here women have managed to enter higher education in SSA countries, their participation is often concentrated in so-called traditional women’s disciplines such as the humanities and education, rather than in commerce, engineering and science”.

Expanding access and equity to higher education is often based on the argument that higher education contributes to social inclusion and better lives and therefore all citizens should have equal opportunities in relation to higher education (Dias *et al.*, 2010). Thus, having more students in higher education would lead to more equality of opportunity as well as more economic and social benefits in the sense of higher overall returns for the society as a whole (Dias *et al.*, 2010).

It is in this regard that different scholars have argued that SSA universities should undertake expansionist measures as a way of fast-tracking national development, (Bloom, 2005; De Ferranti *et al.*, 2002). Bloom (2005:22) observes that globalisation is exposing a fundamental contradiction in the approach of many international organisations and national governments “where on the one hand, education is said to be essential and on the other hand, the most advanced type of education is neglected”. Within the SSA, the neglect is severely experienced by people who have multiple disadvantages due to poverty, gender and disability among other factors. Mosha (1997) similarly observes that access and equity in low-income countries is a

challenge because of high poverty levels and income inequalities. However, as noted by Subotzky (2005:128) the “global-market oriented neo-liberalism” is constraining the process of scaling up higher education enrolments rates in both developed and developing countries. He contends that a global market neo-liberal orientation for higher education will not sufficiently meet the development targets and goals of developing countries. He argues that development challenges of Africa in particular make it impossible to strictly follow neo-liberal market oriented higher education (Subotzky, 2005). Greene (2008), the World Bank (1999) and Mathews and Hu (2007) however observe that high levels of university graduates are partly behind the East Asian region’s economic success story. To that effect, Bloom argues for increased expansion of higher education through distance learning and increasing access especially for women who, he argues, are the key in poverty reduction and economic growth (2005).

2.7.2 Quality

Quality is the one of the elusive concepts to measure. However, when used in the context of higher education, it implies a high level of excellence in performance in realising the given missions and goals of HEIs which often are (or are supposed to be) a reflection of general expectations of the major stakeholders, namely the students, employers, community and other agencies or bodies that support HEIs. Subotzky (2005:135) admits that under conditions of scare resources, “equity is (always) in tension with efficiency and excellence”. He consequently advocates for increased access and equity which should be matched with efficiency and quality if higher education is to lead to accelerated economic growth rates (Subotzky). Mosha (1997) argues that quality is an essential aspect in higher education because it markets the products of the institution (mainly graduates) and enhances their employment opportunities. Quality also ensures that top-class leaders needed in social, economic and political development are produced (Mosha, 1997).

In their deeply researched paper, “The Role of Education Quality in Economic Growth”, Hanushek and Wößmann (2007), using data on international comparisons of cognitive skills and performance in standardised tests (proxies for quality) found that educational quality has a greater impact on economic growth than mere school attainment. Hanushek and Kim (1995), using international student achievement tests, also find a statistically and economically significant

positive effect of the quality of education on economic growth in 1960 to 1990 that significantly dwarfs or almost nulls the association between quantity of education and economic growth. Hanushek and Kimko (2000) also found that adding educational quality to a base specification including only initial income and educational quantity boosts the variance in GDP per capita among the 31 countries in their sample from 33 to 73 per cent. Adding his voice to the access-quality balance is Fox (2002) who, in his work “The Massification of Higher Education”, argues that the debate on the access should be matched by the debate on what today’s students are being given access to. He argues that *massification* of higher education should be equally matched with quality (2002).

2.7.3 Relevance

The relevance of higher education is reflected on the suitability of the impact that its graduates make in relation to the requirements of the world of work, no work, industrialisation and socio-economic development in general (Mungai, 1997). Amonoo-Neizer (1998) observes that rising graduate unemployment, inadequate performance on the job and weak research production brings the relevance of universities into question. Mungai (1997) observes that the world of no-work is expanding in Africa and it is this world which is absorbing a number of youth who drop out of the educational institutions. It is in this regard that higher education is also called to be of relevance to the world of no-work if it is to contribute towards development.

Furthermore, higher education is expected to be relevant by confronting salient issues of humankind such as peace, sustainable ecological development and international cooperation based on mutual respect, democracy and cultural enhancement if it is to add value to development (UNESCO, 1997).

Besides its expected relevance in the world of no-work and salient issues of mankind, higher education is also increasingly being called to be relevant to the needs of the industrialisation process. It is argued that HEIs need to be of relevance to the industrialisation process by producing graduates who have entrepreneurial skills and innovative skills needed on the job as well as those that can help in creation of jobs.

Hendricks (2007) observes that development cannot be enhanced if demand for skilled labour is

not matched by the supply of skilled labour. In his analysis of education, employment and development in Southern Africa, Bloom argues for the need to link relevant educational curricula to “an unfolding process of economic development” (2005:121) as a way of increasing demand for labour. Bloom (2005:30) observes that “existing curricula [in developing countries] are often out of date and ill-suited to the demands of twenty-first century society”. Emphasising further the relevance of curriculum, Williamson (1979:19) observes that the problem of underdeveloped countries is that they “produce educated people for whom the economy has no conceivable use.” Several other authors have also underscored the importance of relevance in SSA. A survey in Nigeria and Ghana revealed that graduates were weak in problem solving, business understanding, computer use, communication, and teamwork skills (World Bank, 2006; Boateng & Oforo-Sarpong, 2002). Oni (2005) and Taffera and Altbach (2003) also found that mismatches between the education provided and capabilities required in the job market reportedly contribute to high graduate unemployment in some countries (35 per cent in Mauritania and 17 per cent in Nigeria). As Chandra *et al* (2007) add, industries also complained that in cases where graduates do succeed in obtaining employment, the first thing that their employers often have to do is provide them with extensive in-house training before they can be productive on the job, which raises costs and reduces competitiveness. Consequently, as noted by the World Bank (2002), employers value higher order skills such as finding, analysing and applying knowledge instead of passive subject knowledge.

Mathews and Hu (2007) give an example of East Asian universities which played a crucial role in training high-class personnel needed to take up industrial challenges. In her 2008 treatise, “The Origins of the Developmental State in Taiwan: Science Policy and the Quest for Modernization” Megan Green gives an account of how relevant skills imparted by HEIs worked in boosting economic development. Bräutigam (1994:120) observes that the Taiwanese universities “did not provide the training demanded by society, but rather channelled students into educational streams needed by the economy”. She observes further that whereas Taiwan had 767 enrolments in engineering per 100 000 population by 1985, the comparable average figure was only nine for the 13 African countries for which similar data existed (Bräutigam, 1994:120). This is despite the fact that in both cases deficits in engineers were conspicuous.

However, relevance regarding the skills for graduates especially on the job has attracted

interesting contribution by scholars with many advocating for general and flexible skills as opposed to specific skills. Those who are advocating for a ‘generalist’ approach advance at least three reasons. First, it is generally assumed that specialised knowledge is now becoming obsolete more quickly than in the past (Teichler, 1999). Second, a growing number of professions and of positions within enterprises and public agencies is not clearly demarcated but rather based on knowledge deriving different disciplines. It seems more difficult for higher education to prepare specifically for these positions (Teichler, 1999). Third, mass access to higher education, employment problems in general as well as the dynamic changes in the economy are likely to “elicit mismatches between skills of graduates and the demands of the employment system” (Teichler, 1999:300). In that regard, professional scarcity amidst the employment crisis (Fursterberg, 1997, quoted in Teichler, 1999:300) calls for a de-emphasis of specific skills. It is argued that flexible and generally educated persons are expected to be less disappointed about the ‘frictions’ and adapt more easily to job tasks which are not anticipated in advance (Teichler, 1999:300).

However, there is also an increasing level of caution against a “generalist” approach of higher education in ensuring relevance. Those that have opted for a “specialist” approach argue that an in-depth study in a given field is still considered a solid basis for professional preparation, especially in areas of science and engineering (Teichler, 1999). Furthermore, as Teichler (1999:301) observes, “fostering the ability to transfer knowledge from the world of learning, science and scholarship to the world of professional work is widely viewed as an increasingly important task of higher education which cannot be met simply by fostering general key competencies”. In view of the above, it can be argued that what is needed is to balance the two (general skills and special skills) if relevance of higher education is to be maximised.

2.8 Summary of the Literature Review

In summary, it can be argued that the coming of Human Capital Theory has helped to fish out and illuminate a key variable of development skipped by modernisation theory and its derivative growth models. The Human Capital Theory introduced one of the key factors in development, human knowledge, which was ignored in other development theories. However, despite the appealing side of Human Capital Theory and its various versions, there are methodological problems and

contentious issues regarding the ideal measurement of the contribution of education to human beings (Fagerland & Saha, 1983). This problem emanates partly from the conflicting versions about the manner in which education enhances development. Implicit also in the theory is an assumption that, after all the known inputs to development have been explained, “much of the unexplained variance represents the contribution of human capital, of which education is seen as most important” (Fagerland & Saha, 1983:18). Other factors such as health of the individuals also contribute to the quality of human capital. Even when human capital is accepted as a key ingredient of development, other factors such as economic, political and social systems and how they favour or discriminate against certain strata in society are important in national development (Fagerland & Saha, 1983).

However, when combined, the various versions of human capital theory are very useful and come near to providing a clear and comprehensive causal relationship between education and development. The consensus that is also emerging is that different levels of education have different effects on development. Contrary to ruling ideas prior to the late 1990s, the relevant role of higher education to development in developing countries is becoming evident and is being centrally recognised.

That notwithstanding, it is important to be cautious about the fact that education alone (let alone higher education) does not explain the unexplained variance when other factors are recognised by other development theories that have been discussed in this chapter. The ability of education to fully contribute towards development depends on other extraneous factors such as economic institutions and systems and political and legal landscapes.²⁸

Nevertheless, the foregoing literature has shown that there are key issues and variables that need to be in place if higher education in developing countries (including Malawi) is to contribute towards national development. These are access, equity, quality and relevance. These also happen to be key challenges of higher education in Malawi and other developing countries. Where access, equity, quality and relevance are in place, there is ample evidence that higher education can enhance development.

²⁸ A further elaboration and discussion of this point has been provided in chapter three of this thesis.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown that higher education and development are linked. It has shown that higher education can enhance development if there is equity, access, relevance and quality in higher education. The chapter has shown that higher education enhances development through its impact on worker productivity, specialisation, entrepreneurship, innovation, FDI, and social development. Together with secondary and primary education, higher education also ensures social cohesion and national unity, democracy, human rights and political stability. The next chapter will present an analytical framework that was used to guide data collection and analysis.



CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS' RESPONSE: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter discussed different versions of Human Capital Theory and relevant literature relating to higher education and development. In this chapter a framework for analysing and discussing how HEIs respond to development policies will be developed and presented. This framework is developed by providing two perspectives for understanding the factors that determine how HEIs respond to national policies. These are theoretical and empirical perspectives. Thereafter, a diagrammatic analytical framework will be presented and discussed followed by discussion of how the specific objectives were operationalised using the framework.

3.2 Higher Education Institutions and their Response to National Policies

3.2.1 A Theoretical Perspective of Determining Factors

There is a general agreement among social scientists that an organisation does not and cannot exist in a vacuum but has to interact with the environment for achieving its objectives (Gornitzka, 1999). This implies that organisations are to an extent dependent on their environment for critical resources such as raw materials, personnel and monetary resources among others. This is the view often associated with the open systems theory developed in the 1950s and 1960s based on the work of theoretical biologists (Raffée, 1989 and Schanz, 1993 quoted in Sporn, 1999). In analogy, the open systems theory builds on the principle that “organisations like organisms are ‘open’ to their environment and must achieve an appropriate relationship with that environment if they are to survive” (Morgan, 1986:44–45). In the open systems theory, organisations are defined as “set off in dependent but related subsystems embedded in the environmental suprasystem” (Sporn, 1999:39). There are many approaches in the study of organisational (HEIs in this case) change and stability based on the open systems theory, some of which include contingency, strategic choices, resource dependency, population ecology, neo-institutional and network organisation approaches (Sporn, 1999). These approaches have generated several concepts such as openness, homeostasis, entropy, structure, function, differentiation, integration, requisite variety, equifinality, and system evolution (Morgan, 1986). For the scope of this thesis, three concepts are useful, namely openness, homeostasis and evolution.

The idea of openness stresses the “relationship between the environment and the internal functioning of the system characterised by a continuous cycle of input, internal transformation, output and feedback” (Sporn, 1999:37). The concept of openness thus conveys the notion of connection with the environment and the goal to match its demands (Sporn, 1999). Homeostasis refers to “self-regulation and ability to maintain a steady state by constantly seeking an equilibrium between the system [of the organisation] and its environment” while evolution refers to the “ability of the systems to move to more complex forms through differentiation and integration” (Sporn, 1999:38). There are two approaches of open systems theory that are relevant to three concepts of openness, homeostasis and evolution in the context of this study. These are the resource-dependency approach and the neo-institutional approach. These two approaches share two basic assumptions, namely that organisational choice and action are limited by various external pressures and demands; and that the organisations must be responsive in order to survive (Gornitzka, 1999).

3.2.1.1 Resource Dependency Approach

Resource-dependency approach (RDA) shares the assumption of an open systems theory that organisations are flexible and that their action is taken in response to the environment but the environment is not affected by organisational action (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). In this case, organisations are seen as reactive: if a change in the environment threatens critical resource relationships, an organisation will adapt to the prevailing “repertoire” of “exchange relationships in order to arrive at an equilibrium that guarantees a continuous flow of the critical resources” (Gornitzka, 1999:7).

A resource dependency perspective starts from a similar view and denies viewing organisations as essentially self-directed and autonomously pursuing their own ends “undisturbed by their social context”. However, the perspective introduces arguments that are different from a simple view of environmental determinism. As Gornitzka (1999:7) observes, the approach “relies heavily on a political view of inter- and intra-organisational interaction, and the theory departs from the open systems theory in its emphasis on how organisations act strategically and make active choices to manage their dependency on those parts of their task environment that control vital resources”. This implies that organisations have a major capacity for change but that their response to the

demand of the environment is not automatic and passive (Gornitzka, 1999). Three key arguments set RDA as unique.

First, organisations are not self-sustaining and are usually in a position of interdependence (Sporn, 1999). The focal organisation also controls resources that other organisations need (Gornitzka, 1999). As Pfeiffer and Salancik (1978:53) add, “the potential for one organisation influencing another derives from its discretionary control over resources needed by other and other’s dependence on the resources and lack of countervailing resources and access to alternative sources”. In that respect, organisations should not be viewed as powerless entities “totally malleable according to external demands” (Gornitzka, 1999:8). Thus the underlying model is that of influence and countervailing power: the greater the power of external stakeholders the greater the environmental determinism, whereas greater organisational power suggests greater capacity for organisational choice (Hrebiniak & Joyce, 1985).

The second distinct argument introduced by the resource dependency perspective is that organisations have other options apart from complying with external demands (Gornitzka, 1999). As observed by Sporn (1999:26), organisations can “attempt to alter the environment so that it fits the organisation’s capabilities.”

Third, environments should not be treated as ‘objective realities’ because they become known through the processes of enactment. This implies that how the context of an organisation is defined depends on how it is perceived, how aspects are given attention and how the context is interpreted (Gornitzka, 1999). As Gornitzka (1999:8) adds, “how organisations learn about their environment and attend to it and how they select and process information to give meaning to their environments are all important aspects of how the organisation affects its actions”. Furthermore, most organisations operate in complex environments in which there are competing demands (Gornitzka, 1999). Thus organisational participants “scan the relevant environment, searching for threats and opportunities with the goal to find the most favourable and profitable solution” (Sporn, 1999:46).

3.2.1.2 Neo-Institutional Approach

Whereas RDA suggests that firms make “economically rational choices that are shaped by the

economic context of the firms”, the neo-institutional approach (NIA) argues that organisations “make normatively rational choices” that are shaped by the social context of the organisation (Oliver, 1997:700). The neo-institutional approach departs from the premises that organisations operate in an environment dominated by rules, requirements, understandings and taken-for-granted assumptions about what constitutes appropriate or acceptable organisational forms and behaviour (Scott, 1987; Oliver, 1997). The approach argues that the adoption of policies and programmes by organisations is determined by the extent to which the measure is institutionalised – whether by law or by gradual legitimisation (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). In this approach, as Gornitzka (1999:9) observes, “organisations are seen to combine conformity to external environment with organisational stability”. In this respect, a neo-institutional perspective will emphasise the stability of organisations and the barriers to change that exist within organisations (Gornitzka, 1999).

Neo-institutionalists such as March and Olsen (1989) have given special attention to the later and have demonstrated how deliberate attempts at organisational change are frustrated by organisational resistance, whereas most changes in organisations are the result of relatively stable routine responses that relate organisations to their environments (March, 1988). According to Gornitzka (1999:9), “this version of the neo-institutional perspective would particularly question the extent to which organisational change is the outcome of reform”. As March and Olsen (1984) observe, well-developed institutions with stable values, interests, perceptions and resources exhibit inertia or friction when faced with efforts at reform.

The NIA highlights evidence that organisations operate chiefly in routine, unreflective, constrained modes (Levy, 1999). These modes lead to extensive copying which DiMaggio and Powell (1991) refer to as institutional isomorphism. Sporn (1999:52–53) defines isomorphism as a “constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions.” Institutional isomorphism therefore pertains to “forces pressing communities [or organisations] towards accommodation with the outside world” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991:66). Using the concept of institutional isomorphism, NIA subscribes to the argument that there is often a process of convergence that yields similarities amongst organisations (Levy, 1999).

According to DiMaggio and Powell's formulation, there are three mechanisms of institutional isomorphism, namely "coercive", "mimetic" and "normative" (1991:67). Coercive isomorphic pressures are caused by both "formal and informal pressures exerted on organisations (universities in this case) by other organisations upon which they are dependent" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991:67). Usually, with coercive pressures policy implementation becomes a condition of "economic resources" (Radaelli, 2000). The state is often regarded as a chief coercive force as it has the ability to impose a legal environment on HEIs (Levy, 1999:20). The state is also a dominant financial source and can use its financial muscle to attach strings to funds (Levy, 1999). Mimetic isomorphic processes result from imitation due to uncertainty (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Mimetic isomorphism would therefore arise where higher education institutions, unclear on what to do, decide to copy organisations they regard as successful (Levy, 1999). Finally, normative isomorphism occurs due to an "increased consensus among an increasingly unified policy community on the appropriateness of particular ways of working" (Lodge, 2002:48). In the context of higher education, normative isomorphism would therefore occur where professionals (such as professors and administrators) feel clear about what to do but this is due to their prior socialisation to dominant norms. In the words of Levy (1999:19), normative isomorphism involves "mimicking of established norms".

3.2.1.3 Relevant Strands in the RDA and NIA

Despite the differences in the areas of emphasis, it is possible to pull together some threads from the two approaches that would be relevant in identifying the critical variables that empirically can help in understanding the determinants of performance by Malawi's HEIs.

First, according to RDP, intra-organisational factors such as the role of organisational leadership and internal power distributions affect how organisations react and interact with their environments. As Pfeiffer and Salancik (1978:261) put it, "the context of control within the organisation intervenes to affect the enactment of organisational environments". Since coping with "critical contingencies" is an important determinant of influence, subunits will seek to enact environments to favour their position (Salancik, 1978:261). Thus the combination of a focus on external control and internal power dynamics is the key to understanding how HEIs respond to policies.

Second, RDP implies that, in order to understand HEI's response to policies, it is not enough to investigate the 'objective' resources' dependencies but also how HEIs perceive their environments.

Third, NIA posits that changes that are "compatible with an organisation's institutional identity or culture can be responded to in a routine and non-upsetting manner" (Gornitzka, 1999:10). Accordingly, for organisations to change as a result of government initiatives or policies, a "normative match" is necessary – that is, congruence between the values and beliefs underlying a proposed programme or policy and the identity and traditions of the organisation (Gornitzka, 1999:10).

Finally, DiMaggio and Powell's (1991) formulation of isomorphism implies that an understanding of how HEIs respond to policies should be located within the broader realm of coercive, mimetic and normative forces in the organisation and those around it.

3.2.2 An Empirical Perspective of Determinants of HEIs' Response to National Policies

The theoretical perspective of the determinants of HEIs' ability and level of response to higher education policies is also supported empirically by a number of studies. Congruent to the above theoretical perspective, studies have found that HEIs' response to national policies is dependent on their internal environment and external environment. These two factors are discussed below.

3.2.2.1 Internal Environment

According to the European Commission Directorate-General for Research (2005), HEIs' response to government policies depends on changes in their internal environment of 'building blocks' which include social structure, participants and goals and infrastructures.

Social structures according to Scott (2001:17) refer to "the patterned or regularised aspects of the relationships existing among participants in an organisation". In higher education institutions, important elements of the social structure include the organisation of the main tasks of the institution, the division of power and authority across different levels, and the level of loosely-coupledness (European Commission Directorate-General for Research, 2005).

The important aspects of social structure relevant to this thesis are therefore governance structures

which De Boer (2002:44) regards as a “set of rules concerning authority and power related to the performance of a university’s activities directed towards a set of common goals”. Governance structures reflect the way an organisation divides and integrates responsibility and authority. Mainly, the dimensions that are taken into account include centralised versus decentralised decision making. Gornitzka (1999:12) observes that HEIs often tend to be “bottom-heavy” (Gornitzka, 1999:12) or too decentralised. There is a high degree of structural differentiation, where “each department is a world in itself” which in turn can be understood as a consequence of the low degree of functional dependence that exists between different organisational sub-units (Gornitzka, 1999:12). Consequently, the potency of collective action at an institutional level is low and there is generally a strong diffusion of power in decision making. This leaves a weak role for institutional leadership (Cohen & March, 1974). This also affects the extent to which co-ordinated response and change by HEIs is possible and likely (Gornitzka, 1999). Governance structure also hinges on how the rector is appointed (elected or appointed) and the degree of external stakeholder participation in the running of the university (European Commission Directorate-General for Research, 2005). Thorn and Soo (2006) observe also that merit-based and transparent career structures provide professional opportunities and high personal motivation, and they retain quality staff. They also argue that an academic environment that rewards independent research with industry as opposed to merely the number of publications and citations also enhances the quality of higher education. Internal environment also determines quality through its effect on internal efficiencies (in terms of students’ drop-out, repetition and graduation rates (Thorn & Soo, 2006).

Organisational participants on the other hand are those “individuals who, in return for a variety of inducements, make contributions to the organisation” (Scott 2001:19). In the context of higher education, the main types of participant are what Clark (1983) calls the “four estates” that constitute the inner ring, namely students, academics, non-academic staff and external representatives. The quality and the organisation of these four estates determine the degree of HEIs’ performance towards the policy goals. These estates have an effect on quality, equity and accessibility of higher education. Mosha (1997) observes that where the quality of students entering the system is poor the output of the university will also be poor.

External representatives (mainly parents, private companies and foundations) on the other hand

have a role to play in the financing of HEIs. Various authors have observed that the lack of financial resources to support HEIs is a key barrier to quality, equity and access (Mwapachu, 1995; Mosha, 1997; Amonoo-Neizer, 1999). The World Bank (2009b:72) has however observed that, on average, SSA countries now spend 18.2 per cent of government budgets and 4.5 per cent of GDP on education. As it rightly comments, these are not insignificant shares, as in some cases some countries have even surpassed the targets recommended by the Fast Track Initiative. These nations also devote an average of 20 per cent of their education budgets to tertiary education, a proportion that borders on the high end of what the World Bank (2009b) accepts as “good practice”. However, considering that in developing countries there is both intra and inter-sectoral competition for public resources, it is now widely recognised that support of parents and private organisations in funding higher education can boost quality, access and equity in higher education.

Goals on the other hand are “conceptions of desired ends that participants attempt to achieve through their performance of task activities” (Scott, 2001:20–21). In HEIs, goals relate to the mission of higher education in general and that of the specific organisation. The closer the organisational goals are to the policy intent, the more likely it is for HEIs to perform in line with the policy goals (Cerych & Sabatier, 1986). In other words, “the normative foundations of a policy are of importance to unravel, since they relate to the issue of whether there is a normative match between a specific government initiative and the values and identities of institutions a policy is targeted at” (Gornitzka, 1999:19) For a normative match to occur, it is also necessary that there should also be a congruence between HEIs and government’s perspective on policy problem and policy theory.²⁹

Finally, internal inputs also comprise availability and quality of infrastructure, quality and availability of teaching and learning facilities (Holm-Nielsen, 2005; Thorn & Soo, 2006; Salmi & Hauptman, 2006; Subotzky, 2005; Fox, 2002; Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007; Hanushek & Kim, 1995; Hanushek & Kimko, 2000). These have an effect on the quality as well as accessibility of

²⁹ Policy problems: this entails what constitute the societal problem that the policy is to redress as well as the conditions that have been identified by people in and around government as the main policy issues and the problems (Gornitzka, 1999) while a policy theory means ‘the total of causal and other assumptions underlying a policy’ including its normative framework, that is, policy ideology (Hoogerwerf, 1990:286).

higher education. Thorn and Holm-Nielsen (2005) found that infrastructure and internal transparent governance of the HEIs have enhanced the ability of OECD countries in retaining talented researchers. They observe that OECD countries are attractive to scholars from the entire world because of the research infrastructure (laboratories and other facilities) which gives important professional opportunities.

3.2.2.2 External Environment

HEIs according to Mosha (1997) and Hall (1997) are externally affected by demographic, political, economic and legal conditions. These conditions exert influence on the operations of HEIs (Sporn, 1999).

- *Demographic conditions* largely imply “the number of people served and their age and sex distribution” (Hall, 1977, quoted in Mosha, 1997:16). In the context of higher education, the interest is also on aspects such as the number of school leavers; enrolment patterns in primary and secondary school between males and females; between the rich and the poor; between the urban dwellers and rural dwellers; and between people from different geographical regions of the country. These aspects exert pressure on and determine the participation pattern in higher education (Mosha, 1997). As observed by Mosha (1997), the rapid expansion of primary and secondary education has resulted in the production of more school leavers who are in turn putting pressure on universities to admit more students. In other words, there are more social demand forces. Similarly, gender disparities in secondary school have repercussions on participation pattern in higher education (Mosha, 1997).
- *Political conditions* are the ones which bring new laws, regulations and philosophies that affect higher education. The political culture, policy environment of higher education and level of state control and interference in the running of HEIs are factors which impact positively or negatively on the attainment of quality (Mosha, 1997).
- *Economic conditions* on the other hand determine the amount of resources available towards higher educations. For example, Varghese (2010) found that the USA, Italy and Britain reduced their budgetary support towards higher education public institutions during the 2008 global economic crisis while the East Asian states undertook drastic budgetary allocation cuts during the 1990s Asian crisis.

- *Legal conditions* deal with laws and regulations that guide and govern HEIS. It is observed that statutes that established HEIs in the 1970s and 1980s are in most instances inadequate and outdated to guide operations effectively (Mosha, 1997). Consequently, new statutes are being enacted in both developing and developed countries to regulate and guide the operation of HEIs. Thorn and Soo (2006) further observe that the expansion of higher education caused by private institutions has created a need for a robust legal framework in many SSA and Latin American countries.

In the context of higher education, political, legal and economic conditions that affect HEIs predominantly fall within the control, jurisdiction and influence of the institution of the state and its apparatuses. It is in this respect that the relationship between the state and HEIs largely determine the mode and the extent to which the above factors will exert their influence on the performance of HEIs (Verspoor, 1993). Similarly, non-state actors also play a big role especially in determining the economic environment of HEIs (Mosha, 1997). The linkages between HEIs and the productive sector or industries therefore also determine the resource capacity of HEIs. This is so because, apart from the state, one of the key players is the productive sector or industry (Mosha, 1997). The next sections will therefore discuss the state–HEI relationship as well as HEI linkages with the productive sector and how the two relationships affect the performance of HEIs.

3.2.2.2.1 State–HEI Relationship Models and the Response of HEIs to Policies

State–HEI models refer to different approaches to the national government’s control of and steering of higher education institutions as well as to the context of policy processes (St. George, 2006). Different types of relationship between state and HEIs facilitate or constrain the response of HEIs to national policies or the implementation of their expected roles. An important feature of the state in its relationship towards HEIs is its ability to enact and apply policy instruments on HEIs.³⁰ There are at least four instruments at government’s disposal, namely nodality, authority, organisation and treasure (Hood, quoted in Gornitzka, 1999). Nodality refers to the central position of government in “societal communications and its ability to send out information which it judges to be necessary or relevant” while authority refers to the ability of governments to issue

³⁰ According to Gornitzka (1999:19) policy instruments imply “how and by what means government pressures are to conform to policy programmes being exerted.”

binding laws “that formally restrict the behaviour of the targeted subjects” (Gornitzka, 1999:19). Organisation refers to the public bureaucracy and its ability to implement programmes and monitor the environment, while treasure refers to government’s control of resources (money) (Gornitzka, 1999). By using its treasure (or money) in form of public or state funding, three goals in higher education can be achieved, namely:

- i) “Increasing access to, and equity in tertiary education measured by increasing overall participation rates for students of a traditional enrolment age who enter a tertiary education in the year following their graduation from secondary; expanding the number of and range of lifelong learning opportunities for older students and distance learners; reducing disparity rates between students from low and high backgrounds as well as other important dimensions of equity such as gender and racial/ethnic groups; increasing private sector investment and activity in the provision and support of tertiary education activities.”
- ii) “Increasing the external efficiency of the tertiary education system by improving both the quality of education provided and the relevance of programmes and of graduates in meeting societal and labour markets needs.”
- iii) “Improving the internal efficiency and sustainability of tertiary education system by reducing or moderating the growth over time of costs per student and improving how resources are allocated both among institutions and within institutions; and decreasing repetition and raising the rates of degree completion.” (Salmi & Hauptman, 2006, quoted in Pillay 2010:223–224).

The character of the relationship between HEIs and the state essentially defines the scope of and room for manoeuvre as well as the possible repertoire of HEIs’ response (St. George, 2006). The character of the relationship also epitomises “the nature of state encroachment” on HEIs (St. George, 2006). There are different typologies of the model with state-centric and neo-liberal model standing at the extreme opposite ends of the continuum.

3.2.2.2.1.1 State-centric Model

This model is based on the characteristics of countries which have adopted the Asian model of economic development (in particular examples of Singapore, China and South Korea) as well as the model of what was the Soviet Union (St. George, 2006). As observed by St. George (2006), “the governments of these countries have been using deliberate systems of regulations and

incentives to expand the higher education sector and to produce graduates in perceived areas of need: science, technology, engineering and scientific research linked to development, and to the needs of local (and emerging) industries”. In short, “the higher education systems have been developed in tandem with their industrialisation policies demonstrating many of the characteristics of planned economies, with fixed growth rates target and manpower forecasting aligned to intended growth patterns” (Singh, 1991:398). The statist model is underpinned by belief in the importance of education as a driver of development and, as St. George (2006:596) further adds, it “demonstrates particular views of the desirable level of funding for different levels of education and for different branches of study, as well as the values and ethics that should underpin what is taught”.

3.2.2.2.1.2 Neo-liberal Model

This model is based on the writings of theorists from the World Bank. The World Bank is also a major consumer and propagator of this model (St. George, 2006). The model also draws heavily from the practical examples of the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand (St. George, 2006). Unlike the statist model, it concentrates on reducing the role of government in higher education and creating a market for individual institutions to compete against each other (St. George, 2006). ECLAC-UNESCO (quoted in Riddell, 1996:1361) aptly summarises the concerns of neo-liberal advocates:

“The educational function of the future cannot be carried out through a routine, hierarchical structure, with teachers who think like civil servants and a society which is indifferent to the education system’s financial needs. Autonomy, administrative responsibility, experimentation and close links with the community should be the features of all the places where education process is carried out.”

The World Bank (2002; 86) adds another critical perspective to the neo-liberal model by arguing that:

“(t)ertiary education institutions and the entire tertiary systems must become increasingly agile in responding to changes in the labour market. A diverse system that includes a strong set of private providers and autonomous public providers of tertiary education affords the necessary flexibility.”

The neo-liberal model thus calls for higher levels of competition among education, less government intervention, increased non-government sources of funding and decentralisation of management away from the state, and is in favour of individual institutions and the introduction of performance indicators to analyse the production of institutions (St. George, 2006),

Table 3.1 below summarises the key features of the two models along the key issues of finance, administration, curriculum, and marketing innovations.

Table 3.1: Models of State-HEIs Relationship and their Features

Issues	State-centric Model	Neo-liberal Model
Beliefs about Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State direction is the most efficient means of achieving desired outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free market competition will produce the most efficient use of educational resources
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principally state funded or state directed funding Funding allocated according to state development priorities or based on historical levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive bidding among universities for finance Use of performance output indicators to allocate finance Large number of private institutions Significant proportion of non-state finance
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State with important or deciding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level of decentralisation of

Issues	State-centric Model	Neo-liberal Model
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> role in areas such as appointing teachers, deciding curriculum, awarding degrees, enrolment • Existence of ‘peak’ universities that offer guidance to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsibilities to individual universities or even teachers • Use of performance indicators as a management tool • Creation of extra-state bodies to supervise particular issues
Curriculum and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State with high level of influence on curriculum • Curriculum changed with difficulty requiring higher levels of approval • State (or peak university) control of entrance examination • Emphasis on quantity of knowledge and memorisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive teaching and problem solving • Emphasises competition in class • Use of credit system/student choice in the curriculum • Curriculum decided at lower levels of higher education structure, perhaps even by teacher
Marketing Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum emphasises respect of authority and status quo • State-directed research programmes in areas of perceived need • State directs application of research and innovation in economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State provision of competitive funding for research in priority areas • State provision of competitive funding to facilitate linkage between industry and tertiary institutions.

Source: Adopted from St. George (2006.)

The table above does not suggest that any particular higher education will fall squarely in one of those categories. As St. George (2006) observes, within one country, fully state-funded universities often exist side by side with private universities. In practice, one country may also display a combination of options as presented in the table above.

3.2.2.2 University–Industry Links (UILs)

UILs' or HEIs' links with the productive sector have a strong effect on the relevance and quality of higher education. UILs have been proved to be essential in the functioning of an effective national innovative system. Soete (2007:33–34) identifies four factors that are essential for the functioning of a national innovation system. These are social and human capital; research capacity of the country; technological performance of the country; and the absorptive capacity (of new technologies) by the economy. This, as observed by Yusuf (2007), implies that HEIs, together with the government and the business sector – or the triple helix as Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (1997) call them – are the key players in the national innovative system. Through the support of the industries and the state, research can be enhanced at university levels.

Research has a critical role on relevance. Shabani (1997) argues that research plays an important role in improving the relevance of higher education. Mwapachu (1995) argues that research is the fulcrum of academia. The research for truth, advancement and refinement of knowledge is one of the key objectives of HEIs. Research is also instrumental in providing basic data for problem solving. Mosha (1997:21) argues that, without research, “teaching is like cultivating a ‘shamba’ until it ceases to be productive because no fertiliser is injected”. He argues further that research acts as a “springboard for innovation and subsequent development and is the hub of and stimulus for any kind of scientific action” (Mosha, 1997:21).

However, research alone is insufficient in the innovative system unless it is fed into the technological and innovative processes of industries. This is partly supported by a number of studies which found that research alone was insufficient in innovative processes. In a study conducted in the early 1980s in the USA, 650 R&D managers reported that university-based research was much less important in recent technical advance in industry and that most academic research did not provide pilot interventions, except that it only fostered broad technical understanding (Wolfe, 2005). A study conducted by Carnegie Mellon University in 1994, found that firms drew less from research of universities for their new product and process innovations (Wolfe, 2005). It was however observed that where universities partnered with the firms the results of research were feeding directly into new innovation (Wolfe, 2005). It is for this reason that education economists such as Thorn and Soo (2006), Yusuf (2007) and Marotta *et al* (2007)

argue for enhancement of university–industry links (UILs) as a strategy for enhancing national innovative system and technological development (besides their effect on quality, access and equity of higher education).

Traditionally, UILs cover a range of diverse realities in both teaching and research, including student placement schemes, staff exchanges, consultancy services, continuing professional development and joint R&D, as well as small enterprise development and the creation of spin-off enterprises³¹ for the joint commercialisation of R&D products. Although Yusuf (2007) is quick to admit that current outputs of technologies emanating from UILs are relatively lower, he argues that such UILs are increasing becoming useful in both developed and developing countries due to external economic pressures (Martin, 2000; Yusuf, 2007). In a study that investigated the link between firm innovation and its interaction with research centres and universities in Chile and Colombia, Marotta *et al* (2007:i) found that collaboration with university and research institutions was associated with an increase in the probability of introducing new products in Chilean and Colombian firms by 29 and 44 per cent, respectively. These results confirm earlier findings by Mark *et al* (2006) who found that collaboration with universities in Chile increases the propensity of a private enterprise being involved in patenting by 35 per cent and product innovation by 30 per cent. Marotta *et al* (2007:4) argue that UILs can contribute to a firm’s absorptive capacity because such relationships can strengthen information channels and ‘thicken’ the knowledge flow. Stiller (2005) similarly observes that university researchers can enhance the absorptive capacity of firms as they are capable of interpreting and applying the new knowledge generated from research. He posits that the role of universities is to “further interpret, massage, reinterpret and suggest application of the new information coming from the university” (Stiller, 2005:267). Thus through links with universities, the industrial innovative performance, research capacity, human capital development and absorptive capacity of firms and the whole country can be boosted. At firm level, Marotta *et al* (2007) found that the innovative capacity for Chilean and Colombian firms was equally determined by UILs, human capital and R&D.

Although UILs are usually discussed in the context of highly innovative sectors, they are also increasingly becoming important in natural-resource-based economies such as those of SSA, Asia

³¹ Spin-off companies are created by university staff or postgraduate students to commercialise R&D products.

and Latin American (Tunzelman & Acha, 2005). Thorn and Soo (2006) posit that UILs can play a role in ensuring that value is also added to traditional products. They argue for the need for universities in the natural-resource-based economies to identify scientific and technological options that are unique to their industries (Thorn & Soo, 2006). This, according to Mansfield (1994:111), is important because agricultural technology generally “cannot be transferred from one region to another; it ordinarily must be adapted to the relevant soil, market and climatic conditions by local agricultural R&D”. Mansfield (1994) found that between 1978 and 1986, UILs in agriculture accounted for more than a 50 per cent increase in the social returns. Based on 159 estimates of the returns to agricultural R&D, most of which pertain to developing countries, Evenson (1989) concluded that returns to agricultural R&D are bigger than those from industrial R&D.

However, just as with other industries, agricultural research alone cannot significantly culminate in enhanced social and economic returns. In developing countries, returns to agriculture research are said to be low because, as Mansfield puts it, there are “problems at the crucial interface between researchers and the potential users of their research”. Rosenberg (1990) gives an example of how India’s well-funded research projects in agriculture resulted in minimal returns because of a lack of interface with potential users of the product. In Rosenberg’s (1990:112) words, the innovation process was wrongly “visualised as a linear process” where the research outcome would automatically culminate in innovation, without serious involvement of the potential users. In contrast to South Korea, the government made investments in the interface between research centres and firms through tax incentives for firms that make innovations in export crops (Ranis, 1990). This resulted in increased agricultural productivity (Ranis, 1990).

Besides boosting innovation, UILs also enable HEIs to impart the relevant human capital skills needed in the various industries as they act as a feedback loop for the performance of graduates in the world of work (Martin, 2000)

However, other scholars have warned against the possible danger of HEIs defecting from their primary missions through the UILs (Feldman & Desrochers, 2004; Wolfe, 2005). Other skeptics of the UILs also see a conflict of interest between universities and industries. Thorn and Soo (2006:6) for example contend that universities and industries have “fundamentally different

missions, values, and cultures, and face different financial and temporal constraints”. Dasgupta and David (1987, quoted in Thorn and Soo, 2006:6) also argue that, in academia, “open scrutiny of research results, techniques and methodologies by peers is considered a critical element in upholding the high quality standards and that university researchers engage in long-term projects that are expected to push the knowledge frontier forward by making results available” whereas firms on the other hand “tend to focus on short-term, specific research activities and have an interest in concealing new knowledge from potential competitors at least until the research is evaluated and a patent application has been filed”. In the words of Thorn and Soo (2006:17), the dilemma of UILs is that “academics are rewarded for publishing results while companies have an interest in gaining a first mover advantage by concealing new knowledge from potential competitors”. Cho and Bero (1996, quoted in Thorn & Soo, 2006) also bemoan the tendency among researchers who cooperate closely with industries of publishing results which are favourable to their sponsors. This consequently may distort and lower the quality of research and diminish public perception of and trust in universities and their researchers.

However, advocates of UILs contend that the conflict of interest between universities and industry can be managed by among other things agreeing on the maximum time span that may constrain a university researcher to withhold publication, setting employment conditions which should indicate the tasks of academic staff and the time they are expected to spend on teaching and research and obliging researchers to disclose financial interests when applying to certain public research funding as is the case in the USA (Polonski, 2000; Cho *et al.*, 2000) .

3.3 Analytical Framework for the Study

The discussion in this study so far has shown that HEIs’ response to national policies is dependent on or determined by internal and external environments. The internal factors include the social structure, participants, goals and infrastructures of the organisations. The external factors include, among others, the economic, political, demographic and legal environment which are often determined manifested through the relationship between the state and HEIs as well as the linkages between the HEIs and industry or the productive sector. The effect of these factors on HEIs determines HEIs’ ability to ensure that there is equity, access, quality and relevance in higher education. When higher education is relevant, equitable, accessible and of good quality, literature

shows that it leads to national development through its impact on the following:

- *Increasing worker productivity*: The link between education and productivity of workers was discussed in section 2.3.1 of chapter two. Although the direct link remains contentious, and considering also that there are extraneous factors that determine the productivity of workers (Levin, 1987; Martin, 1995), it can be concluded that through education workers are endowed with useful knowledge and skills (Becker, 1964) that enable them to possess signals or credentials of their potential productivity compared to others (Ranis *et al.*, 2000; Miller, 2010). This in the end enables them to have their income rise over the years of their working life (Becker, 1964; Mincer, 1974). Directly, especially in agricultural based economies, higher education can raise the productivity of farmers. As was discussed in chapter two, scientists of Land Grant colleges engaged in solving problems at the time by increasing skills that provided answers to practical needs of farmers, thereby enhancing agricultural productivity (Kuhn, 1970; McDowell, 2003). Ultimately, research resulted in improved and diversified farming methods and agricultural outputs of the farmers.
- *Innovation*: Globalisation has increased need for innovation and consequently strong incentives for investment in research and development (R&D). This has in the end brought HEIs into the equation for two reasons. First, as the technological frontier is pushed outward, the cost and complexity of technologies goes on mounting, and many new technologies are materialising at the intersection of several disciplines or sub-disciplines (Foray, 2007). Consequently, costs are rising and many firms are finding independent pursuit of projects much more difficult (Yusuf, 2007). Second, technology remains “tethered” to basic science where further advance at a certain point becomes impossible without “scientific breakthroughs” that may loosen or eliminate particular constraints (Yusuf, 2007:5). Thus higher education has the potential to process the break-through in innovation needed by the industries to remain competitive in the global market.
- *Entrepreneurship and creation of jobs*: A study by Bloom *et al.* (2006c) established a positive correlation between higher education and entrepreneurship. Using the Babson College’s Global Entrepreneurship Monitor’s Total Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) Index, which uses information from 17 countries to measure the share of adults involved in new firms or start-up activities, Bloom *et al.* (2006c) found that individuals with higher education levels were more

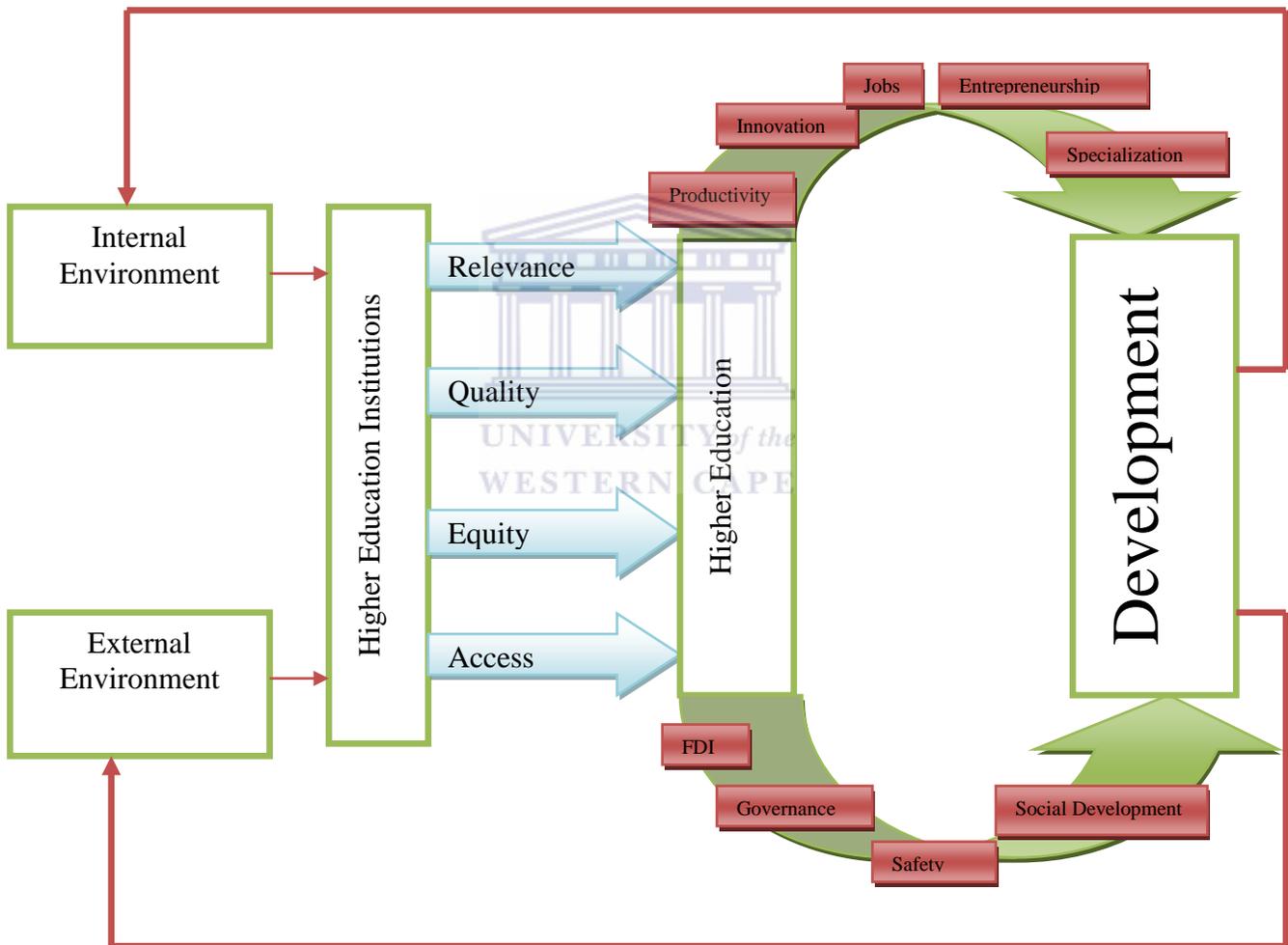
likely to engage in entrepreneurial activity. They found that more educated entrepreneurs created larger numbers of jobs than less-educated entrepreneurs because the intensity of entrepreneurial activity was high for entrepreneurs with higher education than those who were less educated (Bloom *et al.*, 2006c). By imparting skills that are relevant to the needs of the economy, higher education enhances the creation of more jobs as those who are trained are readily absorbed by the industries as attested by the case of Taiwan (Bräutigam, 1994).

- *Attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI)*: In chapter two, it was observed that quite often (besides the potential market) industries relocate to a region or country because of the presence of a research-intensive university which provides the local personnel needs of the relocating firms through the students, the staff population and the graduates. Bloom (2005:24) gives the example of major foreign firms such as IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle and Sun Microsystems which were attracted to India because of its supply of highly educated computer graduates (Bloom, 2005).
- *Enhancement of social development*: In chapter two, it was observed that, among other things, higher education for women reduces the fertility rate (because of prolonged education) which reduces the population growth rate and raises per capita income (Elson & Cagatay, 2000). It also enables citizens to embrace good health habits which increase their productivity and their lifespan and reduce infant mortality (Tilak, 2003; Global Campaign for Education, 2005). By training physicians and other health workers, higher education also improves society's health, raising productivity at work (Bloom *et al.*, 2006a). Higher education also reduces the gender imbalances between men and women in their participation of political, social and economic affairs (Tilak, 2003). It also reduces poverty and inequality (Chinery *et al.*, 1974; Sachs, 2001).
- *Improvement of governance and safety of the country*: Higher education, according to the discussion in chapter two, plays an active role in efforts aimed at creating national unity and social cohesion (Adesina, 2007). Higher education also has a positive impact on promotion of human rights, consolidation of democracy, enhancement of political stability and reduction of crime (McMahon, 1999). By nurturing governance and leadership skills, higher education also provides countries with the talented individuals needed to establish a policy environment favourable to growth (Swyngedouw, 1999; Bloom *et al.*, 2006b). It is also accepted that the setting up of robust and fair legal and political institutions and making them a part of a country's fabric partly calls for advanced knowledge and decision-making skills (Bloom *et al.*

2006b; Charles and Benneworth, 2001).

Diagrammatically, the relationship between the environment of HEIs' impact on quality, equity, access and the relevance of higher education, as well as the ultimate impact on development through the above outcomes, can be simplified and depicted as shown in Figure 3.1 below:

Figure 3.1: Higher Education Institutions and Development Linkage



Source: Modified from Bloom et al (2006b) Framework.

In Figure 3.1 above, internal and external environments exert their impact on HEIs which in turn results in equity, relevance, access and quality of higher education. It is the equity, relevance,

quality and access of higher education which ultimately enable higher education to result in national development through increasing worker productivity, innovation, entrepreneurship and creation of jobs, attraction of FDI, enhancement of social development and improvement of governance and safety of the country.

It should however be cautiously noted that the relationship between higher education and economic growth is not a one-way linear relation with higher education only impacting on development. It is also a reverse relationship with development impacting on higher education through the internal and external environments of HEIs as shown in the figure above.³² Although the study dwelt so much on the higher education–development route, the reverse relationship was partially observed in the study findings as will be presented in Chapter seven.

Figure 3.1 above is therefore an open-systems theory framework (combining resource dependency and neo-institutional approaches) which has been contextualised to help in the examination of how HEIs in Malawi respond to national development policies. The actual operationalisation of the study objectives using the above framework is further detailed in the section below.

3.3.1 Operationalization of the Study Objectives Using the Analytical Framework

As presented in chapter one, the specific aims of the study are to identify the expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national as espoused in the national policies; assess the performance of HEIs as defined by the policies; identify and analyzing the determining factors of HEIs' level of performance in their defined roles, and; identify the pattern of response of response by HEIs towards the expected roles. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the first objective is exploratory in nature and does not require a predetermined theory at this stage. The same applies for the fourth objective. This chapter thus only present an analytical framework for investigating the second and third specific objectives of this study.

3.3.1.1 Measuring Performance of HEIs

The second objective of the study involved assessing the performance of HEIs in their expected roles. According to Radnor and Barnes (2007) performance measurement is the act of

³² Levels of development for example determine the amount of budgetary resources allocated to higher education as well as the ability of households to spend their (after-tax) income on higher education (Ranis *et al.*, 2000).

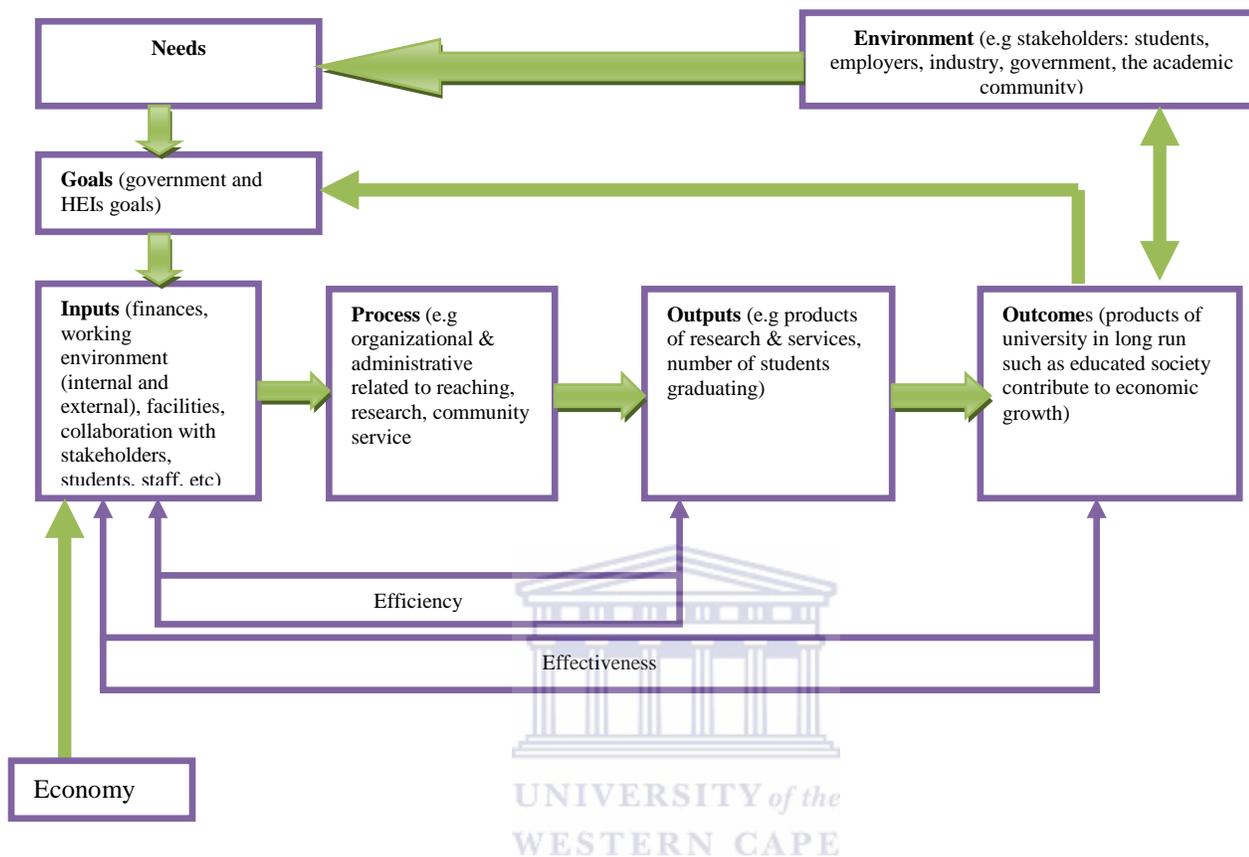
quantifying, either quantitatively or qualitatively, the input, output or level of activity of an event or process. Measuring performance entails the presence of appropriate performance indicators. According to The UNESCO (quoted in Vlăsceanu *et al.*, 2004, p. 39) performance indicators refer to:

“a range of statistical parameters representing a measure of the extent to which a higher education institution or a programme is performing in a certain quality dimension. They are qualitative and quantitative measures of the output (short-term measures of results) or of the outcome (long-term measures of outcomes and impacts) of a system or of a programme. They allow institutions to benchmark their own performances or allow comparison among higher education institutions”.

As put by Bunting and Cloete (2004), “what distinguishes a performance indicator from an “ordinary” indicator is the former is used as “an assessment of goal-attainment”.

Using Figure 3.1’s diagrammatic analytical framework of the open systems theory, a criterion for measuring performance (on the HEIs expected roles) was developed. This study opted for the three “Es” criterion based on ‘input-output model’ of the open systems theory in which higher education institutions are seen as systems that use inputs and processes to achieve outputs and outcomes. These three “Es” are the economy, efficiency and effectiveness considerations (Holloway, 1999; Wyman, 2003). The economy consideration is concerned with the input of resources and with ensuring that those resources are obtained at the lowest possible cost while the efficiency consideration which is concerned with how much output is achieved for a given level of input at a specified level of volume and quality (Holloway, 1999). The effectiveness consideration on the other hand is concerned with the extent to which services confer the benefits which they are intended to confer (Holloway, 1999). The relevance of input-output model in this study was its ability to recognize the internal and external environment as sources of inputs for the performance of HEIs (Morgan, 1986) as presented in Figure 3.1. The simplified input-output diagrammatic model for measuring the performance of HEIs informed by Figure 3.1 is depicted in Figure 3.2 overleaf.

Figure 3.2: Input-Output Model for Assessing the Performance of HEIs



Source: Modified from Bouchaert & Halligan (2008).

The above input-output model also conforms with a performance assessment criterion presented by Teichler and Winkler (1994:133) which recommends a consideration of three areas when assessing the performance of HEIs:

- i) Preconditions and resources in the HEIs under assessment
- ii) The process within the HEIs
- iii) The results, either “closely aligned upon the goals originally intended (output) or their more complex effects (outcomes or impacts).”

This study thus used the input-output framework in Figure 3.2 in assessing the performance of HEIs in their expected roles.

3.3.2 Identifying the Determinants of HEIs Performance According to the Analytical Framework

The third specific objective of the study (identifying determinants of HEIs level of performance in Malawi) was operationalized using the framework provided in Figure 3.1 and 3.2 above. The inductive nature of the study did not warrant any testing of hypothesis. The researcher had no full prior knowledge of the expected roles. However, what was done using the frameworks in Figure 3.1 and 3.2 was to ascertain whether there were factors within both the internal and external operating environment of HEIs which had an impact on the outputs and partly on outcomes. In trying to identify the possible impact of HEIs internal environment on HEIs' performance, the following questions were teased out in line with the discussion previously provided in this chapter:

- 
- What are the goals of the HEIs?
 - How congruent are the goals of HEIs to their policy expected roles?
 - How does the level of congruency affect their performance?
 - How do HEIs view the causal dynamics of the problems sought to be addressed by the policy?
 - What values and beliefs underlie the policies? How do those values and beliefs match and mismatch the values of HEIs to which the policies are targeted at?
 - In case of a mismatch, to what extent does it affect the response of HEIs to the policies?
 - What is the operational structure of HEIs?
 - How centralised and decentralized are they?
 - How and to what extent does the centralization/decentralization affect the performance of HEIs?
 - Who are the key participants in the HEIs?
 - What is the quality of the participants?
 - To what extent does the quality of participants affect the performance of HEIs?

In the chapter, external factors such legal, political, economic and demographic factors were discussed as some of possible determinants of HEIs performance besides the state-HEIs

relationship and the HEIs relationship with the productive sectors (UILs).

In detecting the possible impact of external environment the following questions were instrumental:

- Do legal, political, economic and demographic factors affect the performance of HEIs?
- If so how and to what extent?

On the state-HEIs relationship and the possible impact, the following questions were instrumental:

- What is prevailing model of state-HEI relationship?
- How are the specific tenets of the model of the relationship affecting the performance of HEIs in their expected roles?
- What policy instruments does the state use to ensure HEIs conformity to the policies?
- Are there rewards and sanctions/punishment given by the state on those HEIs who conform and fail to conform to policies?
- Are the policy instruments effective in ensuring compliance to the expected roles?

The possible impact of UILs or the links with the productive sector on HEIs on the other hand was detected by asking the following questions:

- How do HEIs relate with industries?
- What type of linkages and levels of linkages are there?
- To what extent are the levels, presence or absence affecting the performance of HEI?
- Are there constraints in effective linkages between the HEIs and the industry? If so, what are they?

3.4 Chapter Summary

Using two theoretical approaches namely resource-dependency approach (RDA) and neo-institutional approach (NIP) the chapter has demonstrated that organizational choice and action are limited by various external and internal pressures and demands; and that the organizations must be responsive in order to survive. The two approaches have shown that intra-organizational

factors such as social structures (or leadership and internal power distributions), organizational participants, goals and infrastructures internally affect the performance of HEIs. The two approaches have also shown that external factors namely the legal, political, economic and demographic factors also affect the performance of HEIs. The chapter has shown the external factors exert their impact through the nature of the relationship between the state and HEIs as well as the relationship between HEIs and the productive sector. The chapter has shown that in order to understand HEIs response to policies, it is not enough to investigate the ‘objective’ resources dependencies but also how HEIs perceive their environments. It has also shown that for organizations to change as a result of government initiatives or policies a “normative match” is often necessary – that is congruence between the values and beliefs underlying a proposed programme or policy and the identity and traditions of the organization. Lastly, the chapter provided an analytical framework through which the second and third objectives of the study were operationalized. The next chapter describes the research methodology that was used in this study.



CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the research methods used in the study. It essentially includes the examination of the broad methodological orientation as well as data types and data collection methods, as well as techniques employed in the data analysis. The chapter also explains the procedures followed during fieldwork and the analysis of data. The chapter concludes with the discussion of ethical considerations and guidelines followed in the gathering of data.

4.2 Research Design

A research design is generally described as a plan or “blueprint” of how the researcher intends conducting research (Mouton, 2001). Berg (2001) defines a research design as a road map used for planning when undertaking a research study while Yin (1994:20) defines a research design as a “logical plan for getting from here to there where ‘here’ is the initial set of questions to be answered by the participants and ‘there’ is some set of conclusions derived from the findings”. According to Mouton (2001:72), designing social research “requires a researcher to map out strategies or a research design he or she will be using as guiding tools for enabling him or her to get the most valid results for the problem being investigated”.

In social research, there are two distinct approaches: qualitative or quantitative. The major differences lie in their respective philosophical and methodological orientation. From a philosophical point of view, the two approaches differ in their claims to knowledge (Creswell, 2003). For qualitative-oriented “research paradigms” as Reichardt and Cook, (1979:10) call them, knowledge is “conjectural”, meaning that it is hardly feasible to establish absolute truths. A quantitative paradigm, however, sees social reality as something objective and measurable. For this reason, quantitative research paradigms are premised on ‘logical positivism’, since researchers are pre-occupied with seeking facts or causes of a social phenomenon and they have very little regard for what Reichardt and Cook (1979:10) call “subjective states of individuals”. In other words, knowledge has to be observed and empirically verified. Quantitative approaches are therefore deductive in that a researcher starts with a theory (or set of theories), formulates hypotheses, collects data to verify or ‘falsify’ those hypotheses and then makes any necessary revisions to the theory or theories that he or she started with (George & McKeown, 1985; Boulton

& Hammersley, 1996; Creswell, 2003; Becker & Bryman, 2004; Auriacombe, 2009).

In qualitative research design, knowledge is regarded as socially constructed, implying that meanings are construed or crafted by individuals as they constantly engage in the world they are interpreting (Creswell, 2003). For this reason, the views of participants matter in the issue being studied. Qualitative research design is therefore always exploratory and inductive.

In terms of research methods used, quantitative research paradigms advocate for quantitative methods in both data collection and analysis. They include experimental research, survey research using structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions, and statistical analyses among others (Becker & Bryman, 2004). In contrast, those who adopt qualitative research designs make use of qualitative research methods such as participant and non-participant observations, field interviews (formal and/or informal) using open-ended semi-structured or unstructured questions, and case studies. Qualitative data consist of written texts of various forms including published and unpublished documents, transcribed audio and video recordings and field notes, for example. (Boulton & Hammersley, 1996). Methods of analysing qualitative data are also diverse. They include those that are mainly concerned with text analysis such as grounded theorising (Auriacombe, 2009) as well as qualitative data analysis methods such as 'process tracing' (George & McKeown, 1985). In this study, a mixed approach – which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative designs – was followed for reasons explained in the next two sections.

4.2.1 Adoption of Mixed Design: Rationale

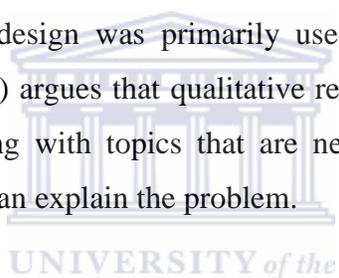
Creswell (2003) provides three criteria that can guide researchers in deciding the nature of the qualitative design. These criteria include the nature of the problem being investigated, personal experiences of the researcher and the type of audience.

4.2.1.1 Nature of the Problem

Certain research questions or problems lend themselves more amenable to one particular approach than another. From the outline of objectives given above, this study was not fit for an approach with fixed and pre-determined answers. This was more evident in the first, third and fourth specific objective. The study therefore needed going beyond the data to develop ideas. With the

minor exception of the first specific objectives, the other three entailed relying partly on participants' perspectives. There was hence a need for an approach that would appreciate participants' perspectives in that respect. In this vein, the nature of engagement and interaction with both data and respondents needed to be flexible. This further necessitated the need for a research approach that was iterative, meaning that the data-collection method and research questions needed to be adjusted where suitable to what was being learnt from participants and data. In this case, a hypothetical-deductive approach (where a researcher enters the field with a predetermined theory) was not appropriate.

The most suitable approach in view of the above was therefore a hypothetical-inductive approach where the research helps in theorising new substantive frameworks and brings new perspectives to the conventional ideas on how HEIs respond to their roles as prescribed by the policies. It was for this reason that a qualitative design was primarily used in the operationalisation of the research objectives. Creswell (2003) argues that qualitative research methods are better suited in studies that are exploratory, dealing with topics that are new, or where existing theories are limited in the extent to which they can explain the problem.



Second, this researcher argues that the concept of HEIs' response to their national development role is value laden to some extent and therefore its conceptualisation can better be understood using qualitative methods. Third, as will be shown later in this chapter, sources of data included not only interviews but also texts such as policy, strategies, legal and programme documents and reports, which demand a qualitative approach in both data collection and analysis. Finally, personal experience of the researcher did influence the choice of the research design as it was partly built on his personal experience in working in the area of capacity building for higher education (and other social sectors) in Malawi.

However, it is also clear that the operationalisation of the second objective (an assessment of the performance of HEIs in their expected roles) needed some quantification of variation and relationships as well as comparisons of magnitude, trends and frequencies of statistics for purposes of illustration and backing up the description and interpretation of qualitative data. Accordingly, the study partly used the quantitative approach. This therefore means that the study

employed a mixed approach with qualitative methods being predominant while quantitative method was secondary.

4.3 Research Methods

Research methods refers to the methods of identifying, collecting, condensing, organising and analysing data in the process of undertaking research in social science (Mouton, 2001). It therefore focuses on the research process itself and the kind of tools used and procedures followed.

4.3.1 Multiple-Case Study Approach

In line with the iterative nature of the study, a case study approach was chosen. As observed by Yin (1994) and Eisenhardt (1989), case studies are relevant when the aim is to develop a theory and to provide descriptions. He observes that questions of “how” and “why” are best suited for the case study approach where the logic is based on the assumption that context and phenomenon are tightly linked and should be treated together (Yin, 1994). In this study, the main aim was to analyse how HEIs in Malawi respond to national development policies. Establishing or identifying the exact nature of the pattern of response by HEIs entails generating what Sporn (1999:79) calls a “novel theory” (of how HEIs respond to development policies) through insights provided by evidence or data. According to Eisenhardt (1989), the advantage of using empirical evidence is that it gives birth to a theory that is rich in detail. This study used multiple case studies (seven HEIs) using multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data. The rationale for using multiple case studies is the ability to provide more compelling and robust results (Sporn, 1999). In the case of this study, it was considered insufficient to use only one HEI as a basis for establishing the pattern of response by all HEIs in Malawi.

4.3.2 Selection of Higher Education Institutions in the Study

As indicated in chapter one, although no national policy document clearly gives a succinct and precise definition of higher education institutions (HEIs), it nonetheless implies the gamut of government-accredited public and private universities. Using this categorisation, Malawi therefore has only eight HEIs where two are public while the remaining six are private. Of the six private universities, four are religious for-profit universities while the remaining two are secular for-profit institutions. The six private universities were established between 2000 and 2010. The

six private universities are therefore still in their infancy in terms of enrollment levels, staffing levels and range of degree programmes offered. With this small sample, it was therefore practical and feasible on the part of the author to use all institutions for the study. However, one of the religious private universities had just been accredited during the time when the study was in its final stages. It had just released its first intake and it was therefore decided to exclude it as it had no substantial records (as data) for the usage of this study. Consequently, data for the study on HEIs were collected from the seven institutions (two public HEIs and five private HEIs). The exclusion of the newly registered HEI could also not significantly affect the validity of the conclusion drawn from the performance of the remaining universities.

4.3.3 Choice of the 2000–2010 Period

The choice of the 2000–2010 data period for examining how HEIs respond to national development policies was not arbitrary. It was essentially based on two factors. First, data for the period before 2000 are scanty due to poor management information systems. Key documents on HEIs that would contain the needed data are both scattered and missing. Making the analysis from the few available data sources would have rendered the conclusions of the study largely invalid and shaky.

Second, opting for an earlier period (say before 2000) would have meant the exclusion of all private HEIs since all private HEIs were established and accredited after 2000. Using pre-2000 data would have meant drawing conclusions based only on public HEIs' data.

4.3.4 Sampling Methods and Research Participants

A sample means “a special subset of a population observed in order to make inferences about the nature of the total population itself” (Babbie *et al.*, 2008:203). Sampling is therefore the process of selecting a small group of people from a large group. Theoretical, purposive and snowball sampling methods were used in this study. Theoretical sampling is the method used when getting information from a sample of the population that the researcher thinks knows most about the subject (Walliman, 2006). Using the theoretical sampling method and guided by the analytical framework provided in chapter three, the following categories of research participants were identified:

- i) direct actors responsible for actual running and functioning of HEIs;
- ii) those responsible for the formulation and reinforcement of national development and higher education policies, strategies and programmes;
- iii) those responsible for supporting the formulation of national development and higher education policies, strategies and programmes that target HEIs;
- iv) experts in the higher education and development interface; and,
- v) representatives of external private sector actors.

The above categories also suitably fitted the common categories of respondents involved in evaluation-oriented studies for the performance of higher education. According to Teichler and Winkler (1994), statements by (direct and indirect) actors and experts are often important in evaluation-oriented studies. Table 4.1 below gives an overview of the categories and number of respondents

Table 4.1: Overview of Respondents

Type of Institution Category	HEIs	Government departments	Semi-autonomous government agencies	International development partners	Civil society organisations & think tanks	Private sector agencies	Total
Running of HEIs	36						36
Formulation and reinforcement of development and higher education policies		4	3				7
Supporting formulation of national development and higher education policies				4	3		7
Experts				1	8		9
External actors			1			5	6
Total	36	4	4	5	11	5	65

Source: Author's Own Summary.

The above categories were in line with the operationalisation of the study objectives. The choice of these categories was also informed by the desire to obtain diverse but well-informed perspectives regarding the topic and study objectives under investigation. For example, the inclusion of those responsible for the running of HEIs was purposed to appreciate how they understand and translate in practice the development role placed on them by national policies as well as to appreciate the nature of factors that constrain (or challenge) or facilitate the response of their HEIs to their prescribed role. Experts on the other hand were included to provide informed analysis of the issues pursued in the second, third and fourth specific objectives. The inclusion of experts also provided opinions and perspectives on the tentative conclusions drawn by the researcher. The inclusion of those that support the formulation of national development and higher education policies was meant to appreciate their perspectives on the performance of HEIs especially in reference to the prescribed roles. Their inclusion was also meant to appreciate their perspective on the challenges that HEIs face as well as their perspectives regarding the general pattern of response by HEIs towards the policies.

Those responsible for formulation and reinforcement of higher education policies were also included for them to give their perspective of the performance of HEIs in their expected roles. They were treated in this study as representatives of the state machinery. They were therefore also expected to provide follow-up clarification of responses given by HEIs (especially at a later stage in the fieldwork when the relationship between HEIs and the state emerged as one of the factors constraining the complete fulfilment of HEIs' expected roles). Similarly, private sector actors were included in order to appreciate their perspective on the linkages between the productive sector (or industries) and HEIs and the challenges faced.

The respondents in the above categories were identified from the seven universities, government departments, semi-autonomous government agencies, international development partners, civil society organisations and private sector agencies. Within these institutions, the researcher used purposive (or judgemental) sampling. This is the method in which a researcher uses his or her own judgement in the selection of sample members based on specialist knowledge that sample members are deemed to possess (Babbie, 2008; Walliman, 2006). For example, while theoretical sampling enabled the researcher to come up with a category of those responsible for the running of HEIs, it was purposive sampling which aided the researcher to identify registrars, rectors and

directors of research institutes and some deans of faculties as respondents with HEIs.

The researcher supplemented theoretical and purposive sampling methods with snowball sampling. In snowball sampling, members of the target group are asked to provide information about other people who would be in a position to provide further information. The researcher used snowball sampling to identify other key respondents in the category of those who support the formulation of policies at national level, especially the international development partners. Using this method for these categories was important as the researcher's knowledge of key potential respondents in these categories was admittedly hazy.

As shown in Table 4.1 above, there were 65 respondents drawn from different types of institution (See Annexure 1: List of Respondents). However, it was impossible to get an equal number of respondents for each category. Notwithstanding the fact that from the onset the study did not intend to have equal representation from the above categories, one reason explains the variations. There were significant differences in the sizes of the categories. For example, the category of those responsible for running of HIEs was the biggest as it was, among others, composed of rectors and registrars of the seven universities as well as directors of research institutes. Besides, due to the federal nature of the University of Malawi (UNIMA) which has five constituent colleges, it was imperative to have principals and registrars from the three big colleges of UNIMA included in the sample.³³ On the contrary, the category of those responsible for formulation of development and higher education policies was represented by few respondents as, at the time of the field work, Malawi had no council for higher education. Respondents in this category were drawn from the Department for Higher Education (in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) and Department of Public Service Management (in the Office of President and Cabinet) which have the mandate to oversee the implementation of policies, as well as the National Science and Technology Commission and the National Council for Industrial Research and Technology whose roles, among other things, are to regulate and promote the implementation of research activities by universities and other agencies or individuals.

³³ These colleges are Chancellor College, Bunda College of Agriculture and the Polytechnic.

4.3.4.1 Inherent Limitations of the Sampling Techniques

At the onset, the researcher was aware of the limitations of the purposive and snowball sampling techniques that the study used. Some of the limitations are, first, that purposive sample at times is not statistically representative. This may affect the extent to which the findings can be generalised to other cases as already highlighted above. As noted by Stake (1995:4), “participants selected through purposive sampling are unlikely to be a strong representation of others”. However, as observed by Richie *et al* (2009:78) “the (purposive) sample is not intended to be statistically representative, the chances of selection for each element are unknown but, instead, the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of selection”. The second criticism leveled against purposive selection is that it can be prone to “versions of selection bias that concern statistical researchers” (George & Bennett, 2005:22). This could be so as purposive sampling gate-keepers “may direct the researcher to certain interviewees while avoiding others knowingly or unknowingly” (George & Bennett, 2005:21).

For snowball sampling, there are two main concerns against the method. First, since new samples are generated through existing ones, it can limit the diversity of the study’s informants (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Second, it can “lead to under-representation of those types of people who are not tied into the social network” (Pole & Lampard, 2002:36). Despite these limitations, purposive and snowball sampling techniques have been seen to be central in qualitative research (Silverman, 2002). Moreover, “which methods and techniques are most suitable for which research depends on the research problem and its purpose” (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2002:85).

4.3.5 Data Collection Methods

The study employed a mixed approach with qualitative methods being predominant while the quantitative method was secondary. Accordingly, mixed methods (with qualitative being paramount) were chosen so that they might conform to the research design adopted in this study. Ngadlera (2005), Mangi (2002) and Rubin and Rubin (1995) commend qualitative methods for being flexible and easily applicable in situations that necessitate the changing or rephrasing of the questions to suit both the interest of the interviewer and interviewees. In the study, it was important to appreciate the views, opinions, perceptions and assessment of some respondents as well as of the used reports or documents. All this entails that answers from the respondents and

emerging themes from the documents could not be predicted and predetermined. The researcher therefore needed to use open-ended guiding questions to obtain data and this is usually a qualitative method. Finally, although there were some guiding questions, the researcher needed to deeply probe some of the specific issues mentioned in the answers given by respondents. This meant that there was a need for rephrasing and reformulating some questions. Such flexibility could only be achieved through qualitative data-collection methods.

However, as stated in section 4.2.1.1, in operationalisation of the objectives there was some need for quantification of variation and relationships as well as comparisons of magnitude, trends and frequencies of some statistics for purposes of backing up the description and interpretation of qualitative data. Such quantitative data were available in several official records. Accordingly, the data collection methods also targeted the quantitative data. For this reason, the research used two methods: interviews (unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews) with the 65 respondents summed up in section 4.3.4 and documentary review (literature review and document analysis or focused synthesis). The two methods (interviews and documentary review) were meant to provide data for each of the four specific objectives. These methods are explained further in sections below.

4.3.5.1 Interviews

A significant number of questions that were intended for respondents were open ended as they required probing. The objective was to get opinions, perceptions and assessment of respondents. Interviews with respondents was therefore the most appropriate method of posing these open ended questions as also confirmed by Hussey and Hussey (1997) and Flick (1998). Besides, it is through interviews that opinions and assessment of respondents could be significantly elicited. Interviewing was therefore viewed as an appropriate method in this study because of its ability to explore respondents' experiences, views and perceptions of various higher education policies and their (policies') expectations on HEIs. The study employed both unstructured and semi-structured interviews guided by the main interview guide presented in Annexure 2 of this study. It is however important to note here that this study has benefited from the author's own practical experiences. For one and a half years (2009–2010) the author worked as a Parliamentary Liaison Specialist with the European Union Capacity Building Programme whose aim was to build the

capacity of local organisations so that they could influence government policies and strategies. These years were insightful as he was able to interact with a variety of actors in this field representing various societal strata on the sides of education policy formulation, implementation and support.

4.3.5.1.1 Unstructured Interviews

The unstructured interview is a type of interview researchers use to obtain an understanding of the participants' point of view of a situation (Greeff, 2005). Open-ended questions, with participants providing responses in their own words, are normally used. Unstructured interviewing was considered to be a useful and appropriate method for gaining an understanding of the experiences, opinions and assessment of some participants. Additionally, it is appropriate to use unstructured interviews because they provide the researcher with the opportunity to test his or her understanding of the topic under investigation, while creating opportunities for a new understanding to develop. Besides, unstructured interviews provided a preliminary step towards the development of a relatively well-structured interview schedule and the framework for analysis. Study aims and objectives preceded the unstructured interviews. In the use of unstructured interviews, participants therefore responded to several broad questions aligned to the study objectives. Accordingly, the questions posed to these people were those which were exploratory in nature and which, (if the need be) could later be followed-up with the same respondents or different respondents through semi-structured interviews (discussed below).

4.3.5.1.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Although they appear similar to unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to follow up ideas, to probe responses and investigate motives and feelings (Bell, 1987). As Green (2005) equally observes, semi-structured interviewing is more appropriate when one is particularly interested in pursuing a specific issue. The advantage of this method in the study was that it is a systematic and comprehensive way of delimiting the issues to be discussed in the interview (Green, 2005). Second, it also ensures that information about the same issues is obtained from a number of people, unlike the unstructured interview where each interview may be unique (Green, 2005). In this study, semi-structured interviews were considered to be appropriate in eliciting specific follow-up information from some participants. Semi-structured interviews

were appropriate in soliciting follow-up answers (based on tentative conclusions and responses of unstructured interviews) from some of the respondents listed in Annexure 1. Semi-structured interviews therefore enabled the researcher to follow-up on the claims, perceptions and opinions of different groups of respondent with the other or same groups.

4.3.5.2 Documentary Review

In reviewing the performance of higher education, there was a partial need for recorded statistics (although in some cases such facts had not been properly recorded and were orally presented to the researcher). Such historical knowledge could not be gained through interviews but through documentary review. Documentary review is a review of written materials that contain information about the topic under investigation (Strydom & Delport, 2005). There are two sources of documentary review: primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are the original written materials such as population statistics and temperature while secondary sources are those materials that are derived from someone else's interpretation of primary sources such as official documents, personal documents, mass media, archival materials and research reports (Walliman, 2006). Secondary analysis means the re-analysis of the existing data by another researcher who had a different or slightly different aim from that of the primary analysis (Strydom & Delport, 2005). This study used both primary and secondary sources. Within the secondary analyses, the study particularly used focused synthesis which, as defined by Majchrzak (1985:59), involves a "selective review of written materials and existing research findings relevant to the particular research questions". Examples of focused synthesis include reviews of policies, strategies and programmes. In the operationalisation of research objectives, the study also benefited a lot from focused synthesis. (See Annexure 3: List of Documents Reviewed). Documentary sources (especially government polices) were largely useful in providing data on the expected roles of HEIs (as purposed by the first objective). Documentary review was also helpful in triangulation of some findings.

4.3.5.2.1. Inherent Limitations of Documentary Review

It is admitted here that, not unlike other methods of data collection, documentary analysis is not devoid of limitations which the researcher was not unaware of at the beginning. According to Pershing (2002) some of the shortfalls include:

- Documents in their creation may have been adjusted or selectively edited to make an organisational record look good and this can be misleading at times.
- Some documents may be inaccurate or out of date.
- Some employees may alter their work if they are aware that documents they produce are being analysed.
- Some documents may be difficult to access, if restricted to authorised staff or if recordkeeping procedures have changed over time.
- Documents are limited to a historical focus.

4.3.6 Data Analysis

The qualitative nature of most data gathered naturally required qualitative data analysis (Potter, 1996; Babbie *et al.*, 2001; Nsewa, 2005). Of the diverse qualitative data analysis methods that are in use, this study used the ‘text method’ analysis informed by the works of Neuman (2003), Creswell (2003) and George and McKeown (1985). With regard to text analysis, a method called ‘grounded theorising’ was employed. The choice of grounded theory approach was based on its ability to develop theory (of how HEIs respond in Malawi) based on data and evidence.

Methodologically, grounded theory involved production of transcripts of interviews, identification of analytic categories that emerged from the text and linking up those categories to the theoretical framework. In the words of the original framers of this approach, grounded theorising begins by “focusing on an area of study and gathering data from a variety of sources, including in-depth investigation of literature concerning theory and documentary sources as well as interviews” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967:2–9). Data collection in its initial phases is based on research questions and later on requirements of theoretical sampling (Sporn, 1999). Once gathered, the data were analysed using coding procedures. In this study, the analytical categories were built around the themes that were identified in the theoretical framework, interview questions and documentary review. This approach was therefore not used only in analysing the transcribed interviews but also the various secondary sources of data. The process of data collection based on the emerging theory was a continuous process (as demanded by grounded theory method) until no additional data were found to enrich the theory or until data saturation point was reached.

For quantitative data, the study used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel to undertake simple descriptive analysis through charts, tables and graphs.

4.3.7 Reliability, Validity and Verification of Data

Trustworthiness in any academic research is important. At the very onset, it was the intention of the researcher to undertake a reliable and valid research exercise. Before coming up with a schedule of interviews, an extensive and intensive literature review was done and a variety of interview guides were examined to determine whether the existing instruments could be used to gather the necessary information for the study. The development of study documents received substantial guidance from the study supervisor and colleagues in the same field of study.

After data collection, the researcher enhanced the reliability and validity of data and conclusions through two methods: triangulation and reflexivity. Triangulation means checking evidence against several sources wherever possible, and can be achieved using several methods of data collection and by studying several cases, both of institutions and of individuals within institutions (Pennycuick, 1992). In triangulation, the researcher was guided by the following question: has there been sufficient triangulation of raw data leading to analytical statements? What is the degree of relationship between conclusions drawn and the data upon which they rest?

Reflexivity on the other hand involves the researcher in thinking about the research while it is in progress in such a way as to regard their (researcher's) own thoughts as forming part of the data. The researcher's previous experience in the field also influenced the collection and analysis of data. Thus a reflexive stance implies awareness of the researcher's own view and the effects that these might have. As disclosed in section 4.2.1.1, the researcher had partial experience in the field of education policy implementation by HEIs and it was therefore important for him to do some reflexive thinking to prevent his prior biases from heavily influencing study conclusions.

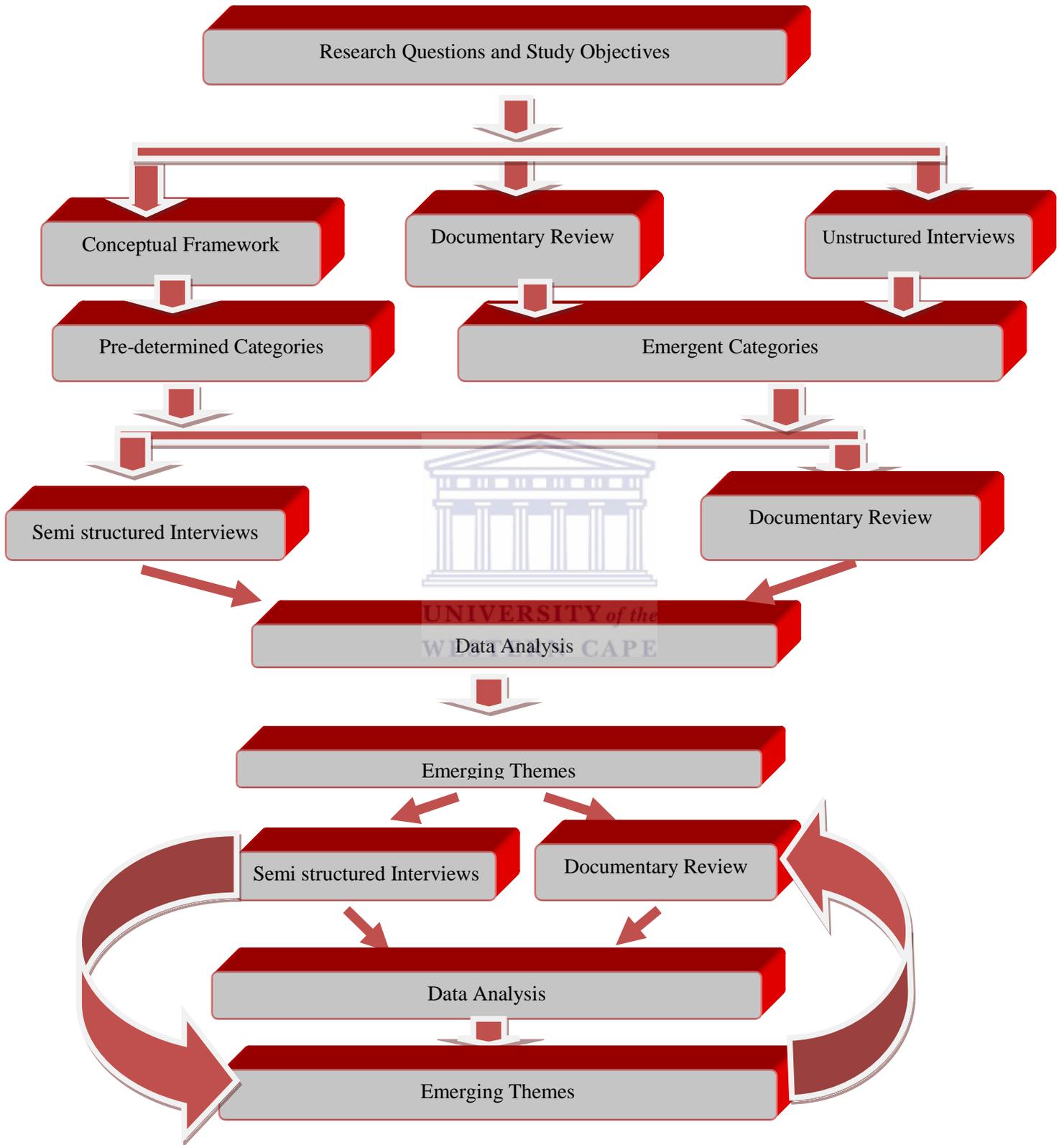
Finally, with regard to verification of data, this was made possible through a careful storage of various documents that contained data for the study. For interviews, the researcher used a voice recorder. This guaranteed the accuracy of analysed data as it provided an opportunity for data to be verified for accurateness by going through the same data more than once.

4.3.8 Research Phases and Processes

In line with the grounded theory method which was used for the analysis of qualitative data, this research was conducted in the phases as depicted in Figure 4.1 overleaf:



Figure 4.1: Diagrammatic Depiction of Research Phases and Processes



Source: Author's Own Depiction.

As can be seen from Figure 4.1, at the very start of the research there were some research questions and study objectives which guided literature review and research design. The research questions therefore culminated in the development of a conceptual framework for the study. They also provided guidance for the preliminary documentary review and unstructured interviews.

The development of a conceptual framework involved an extensive review of the literature and the development of an analytical framework that would guide the investigation and analysis in the study. This phase dwelt much on how higher education and development are linked and the factors that explain how HEIs respond to their expected roles. Documentary review and interviews on the other hand involved preliminary gathering of relevant data as guided by the study objectives.

As shown above, the development of a conceptual framework for the study resulted in predetermined categories while documentary review and interviews resulted in emerging categories which were not predetermined from the onset. Predetermined categories and emerging categories were followed by semi-structured interviews and a second round of documentary review. The two phases were followed by initial data analysis. After initial data analysis, emerging themes were further followed by documentary review and semi-structured interviews. These two were again followed by data analysis. The process of data analysis followed by documentary review and semi-structured interviews (to identify emerging themes) was repeated until data saturation point was attained as shown in the figure above. In other words, this process was repeated until new data and subsequent analysis were not bringing any new results. Before each session of data analysis, data triangulation was done in order to ensure validity of data as discussed in section 4.3.7.

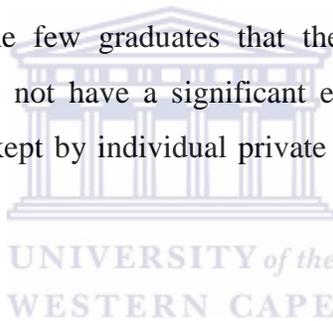
4.3.9 Limitations

The first challenge encountered in this study was experienced during the data collection. It was observed that most HEIs covered in this study had not yet established management information systems. Consequently, some data were not adequate and in some cases were completely absent. In selected cases of this nature, the researcher had to use undocumented oral records presented by various interviewees. The researcher however exercised great caution in many instances as the strength of findings on the second objective (measuring the performance of HEIs in their expected

roles) depended so much on the validity of data and statistics on the indicator.

Second, there were also instances in which the researcher needed to crosscheck the actual expenditures by HEIs on various items, activities and initiatives. It proved difficult to get all the expenditure reports from HEIs, especially private ones. To make up for this shortfall, the researcher used the available expenditure reports and budgets as proxy for the actual expenditures.

Finally, in analysing the relevance of higher education in Malawi, the study predominantly relied on the latest higher education tracer study which was done in 2009. The 2009 tracer study excluded the 2008 and 2009 graduates. The implication of this was that those private universities that had started producing graduates in this period (such as the Catholic University of Malawi, Share World Open University, Malawi Adventist University and Blantyre International University) were excluded from the tracer study whose findings informed the analysis of this research. However, considering the few graduates that these universities have so far, their inclusion in the tracer study could not have a significant effect on the findings. Besides, the researcher used the tracer records kept by individual private HEIs on the employability of their students.



4.3.10 Ethical Considerations

Conducting and reporting scientific investigations that have an academic touch requires adherence to three types of consideration, namely academic ethical considerations, ethical considerations regarding the subjects and professional ethical issues. In order to conform to academic ethical considerations, the study was conducted after the University of the Western Cape's (UWC) Institute for Social Development (ISD), Arts Faculty and Senate had approved this study proposal. The researcher also ensured that data in the study were reliable and valid by providing references for all references used in the study.

With regard to ethical considerations on the subjects, the researcher endeavoured to obtain written prior permission from organisations and bodies from which some respondents came, clearly explaining the objectives of the study. The written permission was accompanied by the backing of an introductory letter from the researcher's department (ISD) (See Annexure 4: Letter Seeking Permission for Interview & Annexure 5: Introductory Letter). Participation in the research was

voluntary, with no form of coercion used against participants. The researcher also endeavoured to do a verbatim repetition of the objectives of research in general and the interview in particular to all who were interviewed. For every tape-recorded interview, the researcher obtained consent for the use of the recording device from all the interviewees. The researcher also reminded the interviewees of their right to stop the recording at any point when information considered sensitive was being presented.

On professional ethical considerations, the researcher also pledged to make final results of the findings available to all the different bodies which were active in the realisation of the research apart from the University of the Western Cape. This was so because the researcher understood that, although the product that emerged from the research was an academic thesis aimed at meeting the requirements of a Doctor of Philosophy (D.Phil.) degree, the findings were also of interest to some respondents and their organisations.

4.4 Epistemic Boundaries

The study was confined within some epistemic parameters. First, it has to be made clear that this study was not intended to measure the contribution of HEIs towards national development in Malawi in GDP terms or social and political measures. It only examined how HEIs respond to development policies through the roles that are placed on them by the policies. Although by implementing the development policies they may ultimately be contributing to national development, this study had no intention to measure or assess the actual contribution made by these HEIs. Such an exercise would have demanded a separate study.

Second, the study recognised the fact that development is a derivative of so many variables which in turn are also dependent variables of other variables. Consequently, a comprehensive analysis and understanding of development ideally requires an eclectic and multidisciplinary approach in which all the variables of development would be examined. For example, several studies have found economic institutions (where the type of institution is determined by the protection against expropriation and openness to international trade) to be a fundamental cause of the differences in development level rates across countries (Acemoglu, 2001; Robinson, 2005; cited in Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007). Other than economic institutions, the levels of income (in)equality have a significant effect on national development. For Malawi, there are also other equally important

variables such as transport and infrastructural bottlenecks, crime and physical insecurity as well as the weak investment policy framework for private sector investment (World Bank, 1997). The 2010 Malawi Business Climate Survey (MBCS) report by the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI) cites electricity power failure, costs of finance, exchange rate policy, tax regime, corruption and lack of transparency of rules and regulations as other challenges (MCCCI, 2010). The current development challenges also call upon the increasing levels of external assistance at least in the short term (Malawi Government, 2011).

To that effect, education (and the role of its actors in particular) enters the development equation as one of the myriad variables that exert their impact on national development. Even when education is considered in isolation, a further categorisation of this variable into primary, secondary and higher education and their respective impacts on development is usually the case. In trying to examine how HEIs respond to national development policies, no insinuation was made about the insignificance of these other factors and neither did the study negate the effect of these factors and the role of other actors in Malawi's development scenarios. The epistemic design of this study partly held these other factors constant for purposes of deeper analysis of higher education variables which was the thrust of the study. An analysis of these other variables was treated as beyond the scope of this study. However, where the holding of these factors was relaxed, the intention was to make an extended analysis of the variable in question.

Third, when higher education is extracted from the rest of the other variables, its ability to explain development, especially within a multi-disciplinary field of development studies, thrives on its usage of history, economics, political economy and demography, among other disciplines (Martinussen, 1999). Thus the epistemological approach in this study was eclectic but specifically conforming to development studies. For example, although the study is not a historical treatise, some historical data have been used in the study for purposes of establishing and understanding some trends.

Fourth, although the study was intended to examine how HEIs in Malawi respond to national development policies, the study did approach this exercise as one would have done in a classical policy implementation study, following around a given policy framework from formulation and implementation to the effects of the policy in question, assuming a linear casual claim of events.

The focus was rather on policy initiatives as inputs into organisational change processes at an institutional level.

Finally, although the first specific objectives intended to identify the expected role of HEIs in Malawi, this study took a normative approach to articulated roles and did not attempt to critically question the validity or the appropriateness of the expected roles to Malawi's development challenges. In other words, the study did not seriously interrogate whether the specific prescribed role would really enable the HEIs to contribute towards Malawi's development. Doing so would demand a separate study devoted to the critical analysis of the problems and strategies articulated in the policies. The study only examined the performance of HEIs in their policy defined roles.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has described the research design and methodology of the study. It has shown that the design of this study was a mixed design with both qualitative and quantitative designs. It has also shown that the main methods of gathering data for the study included unstructured and semi-structured interviews as well as documentary review. The chapter also discussed how data were analysed. The chapter has discussed the phases that the study went through as well as ethical considerations that were made in the course of the fieldwork. Finally, the chapter has provided epistemic boundaries within which the research objectives and processes were confined. The chapter that follows presents the findings of the first objective which pertains to the expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national development.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPECTED ROLES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI'S DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Chapter Overview

Through the research methods presented in chapter four, this chapter presents the findings from the first objective which was to identify the specific expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national development as espoused in the national policies. The chapter starts by providing an overview of HEIs covered in this study and will then proceed to discuss what the different policies expect from HEIs. The chapter also assigns performance assessment indicators or variables on the expected roles.

5.2 Background Information for the HEIs

Seven HEIs were included in this study. These are the University of Malawi (UNIMA), Mzuzu University (MZUNI), Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA), Malawi Adventist University (MAU), University of Livingstonia (UNIL), Blantyre International University (BIU) and ShareWorld Open University of Malawi (SOUM).

UNIMA is a public institution created by the 1964 (Nyasaland) Provincial Act. The Act was amended in 1974 and 1998. It was established against a background of conspicuous neglect of secondary and higher education by the British colonial masters. This is evidenced by the fact the British administration first opened a government secondary school in 1941, 50 years after Malawi became a British protectorate (Pachai, 1967). Although few secondary schools were opened just prior to independence in 1964, very few students qualified for entrance to higher education, which was available only outside the country (Morton, 1975; Holland, 2010). Consequently, when Malawi attained independence from Britain in 1964, it had a handful of graduates and other highly qualified personnel. To that effect, UNIMA was initially established in order to accelerate the training of high level manpower to meet demand and correct the imbalance in the new nation's education system (University of Malawi Provincial Council Act, 1964).

The key objectives of the University of Malawi (and its constituent colleges) are spelt out in sections 5, 6 and 7 of the 1998 Act. According to section 5 of the 1998 University of Malawi Act:

“(t)he objects of the University shall be to advance knowledge and to promote wisdom and understanding by engaging in teaching and research and by making provision for the dissemination, promotion, and preservation of learning; by engaging in such university education and research as is responsive to the needs of Malawi and the whole world; and by offering, within the limits of its resources, to persons suitably qualified academically and who, in the opinion of the Council, are able and willing to benefit from the facilities offered by the University, an education of high university standard”.

Section 6 lists the functions of the University which are:

- a. to encourage the advancement and dissemination of learning and research;
- b. to engage in such university education and research as is responsive to the needs of Malawi and the whole world;
- c. to provide facilities for higher education, for research and for the advancement of knowledge in such branches of learning and study and for such persons, whether members of the University or not, as the Council may from time to time determine; and,
- d. to award and confer Degrees and Diplomas, and other academic distinctions, including Honorary Degrees and distinctions.

Section 7 of UNIMA 1998 Act further provides that the “University may, as determined by the Council from time to time, provide specialist training in such subjects as may be deemed desirable for such purposes as the Council may determine”.

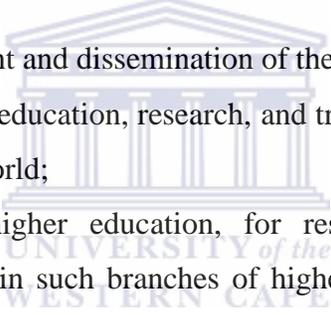
Similarly, MZUNI as a public university was also created by an Act of Parliament in 1997 as Malawi’s second public university, taking over the premises of what used to be Mzuzu Primary Teachers College (in Mzuzu), after the government noted an insatiable demand for higher education. Hatched by former President Bakili Muluzi, the idea to establish this second public university was aimed at “training more graduates secondary school teachers to compliment the output of graduates from the University of Malawi”.³⁴ It admitted its first students in 1999.

³⁴ COMESUN (1996:vii).

Mzuzu University is governed by the 1997 Mzuzu University Act. According to section 5 of the Act:

“(t)he objects of the University shall be to advance knowledge and to promote wisdom and understanding by engaging in teaching, research and training by making provision for the dissemination, promotion and preservation of learning; by engaging in such university education, research, and training as is responsive to the needs of Malawi, Africa and the whole world, by offering an education of a high university standard; and by providing complementary services to meet the technological, social and economic needs of individuals and communities in Malawi”.

Section 6 of the 1997 Mzuzu University Act lists the expected functions as:

- 
- a) to encourage the advancement and dissemination of the learning and research;
 - b) to engage in such university education, research, and training as is responsive to the needs of Malawi, Africa and the world;
 - c) to provide facilities for higher education, for research, for training and for the advancement of knowledge in such branches of higher learning and study and for such persons, whether members of the University or not, as the Council may from time to time determine; and,
 - d) to award and confer Degrees and Diplomas, and other academic distinctions, including Honorary Degrees and distinctions.

Section 7 of 1997 Mzuzu University Act further provides that the “University may, as determined by the Council from time to time, provide specialist training in such subjects as may be deemed desirable”.

CUNIMA on the other hand is a religious for-profit private university. It is owned and run by the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) which is a grouping of all Catholic Church dioceses in Malawi and is composed of bishops from these dioceses.³⁵ It was established in 2004 and accredited in 2006. It operates from what used to be Montfort Primary Teachers College in

³⁵ These are Chikwawa, Mangochi, Blantyre, Lilongwe, Dedza, Zomba, Mzuzu and Karonga

Chiradzulu district of Malawi's southern region. Montfort Primary Teachers College was owned by ECM but was run by the government through a grant-aided school system.

MAU is also a religious for-profit private religious university owned and operated by the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church in Malawi. The university is operating from Lake View in Ntcheu district from what used to be the campus for Seminary and Lay Training Centre for training SDA Church ministers between 1980 and 2002. In 1999, the church decided to start offering full fledged four-year degree programmes. This was started a year later in 2000. However, in 2002, it was temporarily closed following its initial failure to fulfil the affiliation requirements with Solusi and the University of East Africa Baraton (EUAB) in Zimbabwe and Kenya respectively. It was re-opened in 2004 and successfully got affiliated with the UEAB. It was however officially accredited by the government of Malawi in 2007.³⁶

Another religious for-profit religious university is UNIL which was established in 2003. It is owned by the Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), a Church which was found by Robert Laws in 1875 and named in honour of Dr. David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary, educator and physician who opened up Africa by exposing slave trade and imploring others to bring Christianity, commerce and civilisation to Malawi and other parts of Africa. It was accredited in 2008. The university occupies what used to be Livingstonia Secondary school – then a grant-aided secondary school but owned by the Livingstonia synod. UNIL's structure includes Ekwendeni College of Commerce, Nursing School, and Theological Colleges whose premises are away from UNIL's main campus. The programmes offered by these colleges have not yet been accredited. The colleges are also run separately by the principals. In this study, these three colleges were excluded in UNIL's data collection, presentation and analysis.

BIU on the other hand is a secular profit-oriented private university. It was established in 2008 but was accredited by the Government of Malawi as an institution of higher learning in June 2010.³⁷ Currently, it is operating from rented premises (Tikumbe Building) in Naperi township of Blantyre District. It is owned by the Chanthunya family.

³⁶ Interview with MAU Registrar.

³⁷ Interview with BIU Registrar.

Finally, SOUM is also a secular profit-making university owned by a group of individuals. It was established in 1994. Initially, it ran programmes for the Cyprus Institute of Marketing. The programmes that were offered included business administration, marketing and mass communication. In 2006, it started offering its own degree programmes. However, it was only officially accredited in 2007. It operates from three campuses in Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu. All premises in Mzuzu, Lilongwe and Blantyre are rented. SOUM continues to offer programmes of Association for Business Administration, Cyprus Institute of Marketing and other bodies. However, in this study, data collection and analysis was confined only to the accredited programmes, their costs and operations, as well as other related variables.

5.3 The Role of HEIs in Malawi's Development According to National Policy Documents

There is no specific policy which is exclusively devoted to the general expected role (and development role in particular) and standards in both the private and public universities. The study however sought to appreciate the expected roles of HEIs in national development primarily from broad national development policy documents by examining the sections that are directly or indirectly linked to higher education. The study also examined the education sectoral policies applicable in the period under review in order to appreciate further the roles that are prescribed for HEIs in the development agenda of the country. Since this study focused on the period from the year 2000 to December 2010, it confined itself to the officially promulgated and used (or meant-to-be-used) policy in this period. The documents that were reviewed under national development policies include:

- Malawi Vision 2020 (1998),
- Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) (2002),
- Malawi Economic Growth Strategy (MEGS) (2004)
- Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) (2006a).

At education sectoral level, the study used the:

- Education Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for Education in Malawi (1995–2005)
- National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008–2017.

Besides the above two education sectoral policies, the study also used the objectives of UNIMA and MZUNI presented in section 5.2 to appreciate the specific roles placed on the two HEIs.

6.3.1 Broad National Development Policies

As discussed in chapter one, Vision 2020 articulates four national aspirations which are linked to higher education. The first aspiration is achievement of sustainable economic growth and development through boosting of the manufacturing sector, developing agriculture and developing the business culture (Malawi Government, 1998b). Under the development of the manufacturing sector, Vision 2020 presents “undertaking human resource development aimed at establishing and institutionalising creativity and design in schools at all levels” as one strategic option (Malawi Government 1998b:18). In order to develop agriculture, the document proposes the improvement of agricultural technology as one of the options (Malawi Government, 1998b). Under the development of business culture, Vision 2020 proposes “introducing entrepreneurship training at primary, secondary and tertiary education levels” as one of the strategic options for boosting economic growth and development (Malawi Government, 1998b:29).

The second aspiration is the development of human resources in order to enhance economic growth. To achieve the aspiration, Vision 2020 argues for the improvement of tertiary education by:

- (a) increasing access in the university by reviewing conditions for admission to allow more of those that can afford to pay and providing scholarships to those in need;
- (b) encouraging individuals and organisations to establish private universities and tailor their courses to acceptable standards;
- (c) improving quality by diversifying university programmes to serve clearly identified areas of human resources needs;
- (d) introducing more postgraduate programmes;
- (e) improving equity by paying special attention to the enrolment of women and students with special needs;
- (f) decentralising the management of the University (UNIMA);
- (g) reviewing the University Act (for UNIMA);
- (h) improving the financial performance of the University (of Malawi) (Malawi Government,

1998b).

The third aspiration is the achievement of science and technology-led growth. One key strategy for this aspiration is the achievement of “effective Science and Technology”. To achieve this, the document proposes “expanding and encouraging education and training in Science and Engineering” as well as “encouraging the establishment of private S&T (Science and Technology) oriented training institutions” (Malawi Government, 1998b:12).

The final aspiration is the achievement of fair and equitable income distribution as a way of enhancing social development. Vision 2020 identifies the reduction of gender inequality as one of the strategies for realising this aspiration. However, in order to undertake this strategy, the document proposes “increasing access to quality education [by] more targeting on women.” (Malawi Government, 1998b:17).

MPRS on the other hand recognises that an “educated population leads to increased productivity, better income distribution and a generally improved standard of living” (2002: xii). It also recognises higher education as an instrument for “supporting scientific and technological improvement and social development” (Malawi Government, 2002:54). It argues for efforts aimed at improving quality (increasing teaching and learning materials and revising the curricula, to incorporate cross-cutting issues, practical skills and entrepreneurial culture), relevance, access and equity (through increasing the participation of girls and those with special needs). It also argues for the reformation of administration at tertiary level (and all levels) to reduce the fiscal burden by introducing cost recovery and encouraging the involvement of the private sector, together with targeted bursary schemes (Malawi Government, 2002).

Apart from human capital development, MPRS also cites some other cross-cutting issues and strategies, one of which is low science and technology. It observes that:

“(t)he low content of science and technology in national economic development programmes is a barrier to economic growth and therefore exacerbates poverty. Therefore, the MPRS will improve the capacity and capability of the national system for science and technology, intensify promotion and transfer of technologies to key livelihood systems and

increase investment in research and development”. (Malawi Government, 2002: xvi)

Unlike its forerunners, the Malawi Economic Growth Strategy (MEGS) is very brief on its expectations from HEIs. MEGS recognises a low human development base as a hindrance to economic growth and argues for the role of HEIs in economic growth through its provision of technical and vocational skills. This, according to MEGS, will also enhance the human capacity to facilitate effective research in irrigation technology (Malawi Government, 2004).

Finally, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) has five thematic areas, namely: sustainable economic growth; social protection; social development; infrastructure development and improving governance (Malawi Government, 2006a). Under the sustainable economic growth theme, one key strategy promulgated in the MDGS is the improvement of the manufacturing sector. To achieve this, it proposes the improvement of quality and productivity of labour and enhancement of skills through science and technology (Malawi Government, 2006a). Under MGDS, social development is considered as an end in itself as well as a means for achieving overall national development. The MGDS expects higher education to enhance social development. It specifically expects HEIs to “provide high quality professional training in all fields” by:

- increasing undergraduate enrolment by 40 per cent;
- increasing post graduate enrolment ratio to 10 per cent of the undergraduate student population;
- increasing to 35 per cent female enrolment by 2010;
- improving curriculum to respond to national needs.

In 2009, the government added three more priority areas, namely youth development, climate change, and Education, Science and Technology (Wa Mutharika, 2009). With regard to Education, Science and Technology, the government recognises them as the “linchpin of any national socio-economic development” (Wa Mutharika, 2009:12). Government pledges to “conduct a curriculum review for higher education to ensure *relevance of programmes*³⁸ to the

³⁸ Emphasis mine.

labour market requirements” (Wa Mutharika, 2009:14).

5.3.2 Educational Sectoral Policies

Besides the above broad-based national development policies, two general education national policies were also reviewed. These are the Education Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for the period (1995–2005) and the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008–2017.

PIF asserted that an “increased investments in education can yield broad economic and social benefits” (Malawi Government 1998a:2). To achieve this role effectively, PIF prescribes that higher education must:

- be equally accessible to all people;
- have a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of the individual and the society;
- be efficient and effective;
- involve community and other stakeholders (Malawi Government, 1998a).

The plan specifically aimed at:

- increasing access to educational opportunities for all Malawians at all levels of the system;
- ensuring that Malawi’s education system does not intensify existing inequalities across social groups and regions;
- maintaining and improving the quality and relevance of education;
- developing an institutional and financial framework that will sustain Malawian schools and students into the future; and,
- intensifying financing pathways and strengthening of financial managerial capacity within the education sector and at all levels.

Furthermore, in order to enhance higher education *access*, PIF pledges government’s support for the establishment of private institutions of higher learning (Malawi Government, 1998a).³⁹

In 2008, PIF was replaced by the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) which is expected to run until 2017. The vision of the education sector as championed by NESP is to make (the

³⁹ Emphasis mine.

education sector) “to be catalyst for socio-economic development and industrial growth” while its mission is “to provide relevant education to the Malawi nation” (Malawi Government 2008a:ii). It sets the mandate for the education sector as “to promote education in Malawi irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, religion or any other discriminatory characteristics” (Malawi Government, 2008a: iii) To realise the vision and its mission, and in accordance with these strategic priorities, the education sector has defined three thematic areas of intervention during the ten-year period of the current National Education Sector Plan (2008–2017), namely:

- expand equitable access to education to enable all to benefit;
- improve quality and relevance of education;
- improve governance and management of the system to enable more effective and efficient delivery of services (Malawi Government, 2008a).

5.3.3 Summary of Malawi HEIs’ Expected Roles in National Development

Table 5.1 below summarises the expected roles of HEIs as espoused in the above reviewed national development policies (and backed by education sector policies) and the challenges intended to be dealt with.

Table 5.1: Summary of the Expected Roles of Malawi’s HEIs in National Development

Expected Roles	Targeted Challenge	Policy
Provision of entrepreneurial training, technical, vocational and practical skills	Relevance, Quality	Vision 2020, MPRS, MEGS
Expansion of training in Science and Engineering	Relevance	Vision 2020, MPRS
Enrolment of special groups of people by paying special attention to the enrolment of women (to be at 35%) and students with special needs;	Access & Equity	Vision 2020, MPRS, MGDS
Diversification of university programmes to serve identified areas of human resources needs	Quality & Relevance	Vision 2020

Expected Roles	Targeted Challenge	Policy
Improving financial performance of the university	Efficiency, Access	Vision 2020
Reviewing conditions for admission to allow more of those that can afford to pay	Access	Vision 2020, NESP
Provision of targeted scholarships to those in need	Access, Equity	Vision 2020
Tailoring of courses in private HEIs to acceptable standards	Quality, Access and relevance	Vision 2020
Improving governance and management of the university	Fiscal burden, Efficiency and Effectiveness	Vision 2020, MPRS, NESP
Undertaking curriculum review	Relevance, Quality	MGDS
Involving private sector in the financing of higher education	Fiscal burden, Access, Quality	MPRSP
Increasing teaching and learning materials	Quality, Relevance	MPRSP, MGDS
Increasing undergraduate (by 40%) and postgraduate enrolment (to be 10% of total enrolment)	Access, Quality and Relevance	MGDS, Vision 2020
Increasing access	Access	PIF, NESP
Reducing inequalities across social groups and regions	Equity	PIF, NESP
Improving quality	Quality	PIF, NESP
Improving relevance	Relevance	PIF, NESP
Introducing cost recovery	Fiscal burden, Access, Quality	MPRS

Source: Own Summary from Malawi's Development and Education Policies.

There are two important observations that can be made from the above summary. First, both the national development and education sectoral policies are poised towards dealing with the key challenges – relevance, equity, access, quality and efficiency in the higher education system –

which are seen as stumbling blocks which if dealt by HEIs can ensure that higher education is optimally contributing to national development. These challenges are however also generally prevalent in the SSA region as confirmed by several studies (World Bank, 2009; Bollag, 2004; Banya, 2001; El-Khawas, 2001).

Second, it is clear that while the whole gamut of HEIs is generally the targeted audience of the above listed roles, there are other roles which are explicitly leveled on public HEIs. In the Vision 2020 for example, the improvement of governance and financial management of the university is a clear reference to the University of Malawi. This so because at the time of when Vision 2020 was being drafted only UNIMA was fully operational while MZUNI was yet to embark on teaching. However, where similar expected roles are outlined in the policies that came after 2000 such as MPRS (and which hinge in fiscal burden as well), the other implied HEI apart from UNIMA is MZUNI. UNIMA and MZUNI are also the targeted actors of the expectations which have explicit numerical targets especially on the enrolment of women, increase in undergraduate and post graduate enrolments (targeted at 35 percent of total enrolment, 40 per cent increase and 10 per cent of total enrolment respectively by MGDS). The policies do not indicate the basis for the set figures and the respondents responsible for policy formulation could also not clarify the basis of the targets. Other than these numerical targets set on public HEIs, the other expected roles on both private and public HEIs are not accompanied by targets.

In the case of UNIMA and MZUNI, there is an additional component or strategy of research (besides teaching) which is emphasised in the UNIMA (1998) Act and the MZUNI (1997) Act. Section 6 (a-d) of both Acts are exactly the same in terms of wording and they all talk of advancing research to meet the needs of Malawi. However, the unique role placed on the two HEIs is that of providing facilities for research to both members of the universities and non-members as long as the “Council may from time to time determine”.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ UNIMA (1998) Act and MZUNI (1997) Act Section 6(d) (in both cases).

Thus, in summary, the above expectations are implicitly assigned to HEIs as follows:

Table 5.2: Summary of Expected Roles in National Development on Public and Private HEIs

Expected Role	Targeted HEIs
Provide entrepreneurial training, technical, vocational and practical skills	All
Expand training in Science and Engineering	All
Enrolment of special groups of people by paying special attention to the enrolment of women (to be at 35%) and students with special needs	Public HEIs
Diversify university programmes to serve identified areas of human resources needs	All
Improve financial performance of the university	Public HEIs
Review conditions for admission to allow more of those that can afford to pay	All
Provide targeted scholarships to those in need	Public HEIs
Tailor courses in private HEIs to acceptable standards	Private HEIs
Improve governance and management of the university	Public HEIs
Undertake curriculum review	All
Involve private sector	Public HEIs
Increase teaching and learning materials	All
Increase undergraduate (40%) and postgraduate enrolment (to be 10% of total enrolment)	Public HEIs
Increase access	All
Reduce inequalities across social groups and regions	All
Improve quality	All
Improve relevance	All
Introduce cost recovery	Public HEIs
Advancing research by making research facilities available	Public HEIs

Source: Author's Own Summary from National Development and Education Policy Documents.

5.4 Identifying the Performance Assessment Framework: The Question of Performance Indicators

Having identified the expected role of Malawi's HEIs, the next critical stage of this study was an identification of appropriate performance indicators. It was important to identify performance indicators because the above expected roles of HEIs are not accompanied by performance indicators either in the annexure of the policy documents or in separate documents. The only exception is on the enrolment of women, increase in undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments (targeted at 35, 40 and 10 per cent respectively by MGDS). Within the responsible government departments, it emerged clearly that there are no performance indicators nor separate monitoring frameworks for the above prescribed roles of HEIs. The only exception is NESP which is accompanied by the Malawi Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP) for 2009–2013. The prescribed targets in ESIP are however only levelled on UNIMA and MZUNI. These include increasing library, reading and academic materials by 25 per cent in each year (to ensure quality of education); mainstreaming non-residential students into loan schemes (to ensure access and equity); and reducing public funding by 5, 10 and 20 per cent respectively for the 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 financial years respectively (as a proxy of increased private financing) (Malawi Government, 2009a). However, this study could not capture them because, although its implementation was supposed to start in 2009, the document had not been officially adopted as of January 2011 and operations were therefore not aligned to it.⁴¹ Put differently, the sector was still operating without numerical targets or a performance assessment framework both for public HEIs and private HEIs as of end 2010.

In developing the performance indicators, the study was guided by the input-output model of the three Es presented in chapter three. Using the model, the performance indicators for the above expectations were isolated – guided also by the writings of several authors (Teichler & Winkler, 1994; Holm-Nielsen, 2005; Thorn & Soo, 2006; Salmi & Hauptman, 2006; Subotzky, 2005; Fox, 2002; Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007; Hanushek & Kim, 1995; Hanushek & Kimko, 2000; Mosha, 1997; Amonoo-Neizer, 1998, World Bank, 2009).

⁴¹ Interview with the Planning Officer in the MoEST.

Table 5.3: Performance Indicators for HEIs' Expected Roles

Policy Expectation on HEIs	Performance Indicator
Provide entrepreneurial training, technical, vocational and practical skills	Number and increase in the number of entrepreneurial and vocational courses and degree programmes offered in the period under review Increase in the number of entrepreneurial and vocational degree programmes Participation rates and trends in entrepreneurial, technical and vocational courses
Expand training in Science & Engineering	Number of Science Degree Programmes Increase in the number of science programmes versus other programmes Expansion in the Enrolment levels in sciences
Enrolment of special groups of people by paying special attention to the enrolment of women (35% for public HEIs) and students with special needs	Participation rates (and changes in the trend) of females versus males over the years Participation rates (and changes in the trend) of disabled people over the years
Diversify university programmes to serve identified areas of human resources needs	Number and type of new degree programmes introduced over the years.
Improve Financial Performance of public HEIs	Changes in the range of financing mechanisms over the years Funding levels generated by HEIs other than subventions (for public HEIs) Expenditure patterns on core versus non-core activities Efficiencies in terms of student lecture ratio, unit cost
Review conditions for admission to allow more of those that can afford to pay	Level of stringency in the admission criterion in public HEIs Availability of component of life-long learning in admission criteria
Provide targeted scholarships to those in need	Number of scholarships provided and social status of beneficiaries over the years
Tailor courses in private HEIs to acceptable standards	Availability of teaching and learning materials in HEIs
Improve governance and management of the University	Involvement of key stakeholders in the running of HEIs Prevalence of strategic planning and implementation
Undertake curriculum review	Frequency of curriculum review between 2000 and 2010
Involve the private sector	Level of private sector participation in financing and running of HEIs Funding levels generated by HEIs other than fees (for private HEIs) and subventions (for public HEIs)
Increase teaching and learning materials	Availability and levels of teaching and learning facilities Expenditure pattern and trend in all HEIs on teaching and learning facilities
Increase undergraduate enrolment (by 40%) and postgraduate enrolment (to be 10% of total)	Increase in undergraduate enrolment since 2000 Postgraduate enrolment rate out of total Increase in postgraduate rate out of total

Policy Expectation on HEIs	Performance Indicator
enrolment)	
Increase access	Levels of increase in enrolment rates in both undergraduate and postgraduate Mode of study (i.e full time, part time, distant learning)
Reduce inequalities across social groups and regions	Affordability of the tuition fees Admission criteria in HEIs Availability of affirmative action in admission Enrolment patterns (in terms of sex, geographical locations, income band) Graduation patterns (in terms of sex, geographical locations, income band)
Improve quality	Availability and quality of TL materials and infrastructure Screening levels of students entering the HE system Quality of staff in HEIs (in terms of qualification and academic seniority). Drop-out rates over the years Repetition rates over the years Graduation rates over the years External efficiency over the years
Improve relevance	External efficiency (in terms of time between completion and graduate date External inefficiency in terms of graduate employability Graduates' satisfaction with their jobs External efficiency in terms of skills' relevance to the economy and enrolment patterns in those programmes Satisfaction of students with their degrees) Levels of Research (see below). Types of UILs taken Depth of UILs
Introduce cost recovery	Cost-Sharing levels between students and the university
Advance research	Number of postgraduate degree programmes offered Rates of postgraduate enrolments over the years Availability of research facilities to the public (for public HEIs) Research funding generated over the years Research activities by academic staff in HEIs

Source: Author's Own Summary.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has identified the expected roles of HEIs in Malawi's development as articulated in the national development policies as well as education sector policies. It has shown that the policies expect the HEIs, among other areas, to expand training in Science and Engineering, promote the enrolment of women and students with special needs; diversify the programmes to serve identified areas of human resource needs; tailor the courses to acceptable standards;

improve governance and management of the university; undertake curriculum review; and increase undergraduate and postgraduate enrolment. In undertaking these roles, HEIs are expected to deal with challenges of equity, efficiency, relevance, quality and access of higher education in Malawi. Guided by the input-output model derived from an organisation system's theory in chapter three, the chapter also compiled the performance indicators useful for assessing the performance of HEIs in their expected roles. The next chapter presents findings of HEIs' performance (between 2000 and 2010) in their expected roles.



CHAPTER SIX: PERFORMANCE OF MALAWI'S HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THEIR POLICY-EXPECTED ROLES

6.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter identified the expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in the national development agenda of Malawi as defined by the national development policies (and backed by the education sectoral policies). Using the indicators developed in the previous chapter, this chapter will now present findings on the assessment of the performance of Malawi's HEIs in their expected roles as was purposed in the second objective of this study. The findings have been grouped into seven themes: the programmes offered by the HEIs; quality dimension; accessibility and equity; financial performance; internal efficiency; research; and, relevance.

6.2 Programmes on Offer: "Soft" Fields Orientation and Narrow Range

As presented in the previous chapter, HEIs in Malawi are expected to boost the provision of Entrepreneurial Training, Technical and Practical Skills; expand the training of Science and Engineering and diversify the programmes to serve identified areas of human resource needs. These HEIs are University of Malawi (UNIMA), Mzuzu University (MZUNI) which are public universities and Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA), Blantyre International University (BIU), ShareWorld Open University Malawi (SOUM), University of Livingstonia (UNIL) and Malawi Adventist University (MAU) which are private universities. All these HEIs are general universities with no indicated specific focus or specialisation in terms of programmes offered. The only exception is UNIMA's five constituent colleges which originally were meant to focus on and specialise in certain disciplines. These are the Polytechnic (Technical related Science subjects), Bunda College of Agriculture (Agriculture), Kamuzu College of Nursing (Nursing) College of Medicine (Medical Sciences) and Chancellor College (Liberal Arts, Law and Administration). However, over the years, the line of specialisation appears to be getting increasingly blurred, with each college offering some of the programmes offered by sister colleges, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

Malawi's HEIs in total offer 19 core disciplines. These are Agriculture, Development Studies, Environmental Science, Education, Theology, Humanities, Law, Pure Science, Social Science,

Nursing, Applied Sciences, Built Environment, Commerce, Media Studies, Engineering, Medicine, Health Science, Information Technology and Hospitality and Tourism Management. Between 2000 and 2010, Malawi's HEIs have been offering these programmes in these disciplines as shown in Table 6.1 below. (The full list of specific programmes offered by each HEI is shown in Annexure 6: Programmes Offered by Malawi's HEIs).

Table 6.1: Fields of Study offered by Malawi's HEIs

Public HEIs		Private HEIs				
UNIMA	MZUNI	MAU	CUNIMA	SOUM	BIU	UNIL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Development Studies • Environmental Science • Education • Humanities • Law • Pure Science • Social Science • Nursing • Applied Sciences • Built Environment • Commerce • Media Studies • Engineering • Medicine • Health Sciences • Information Technology • Theology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Health Sciences • Information Science and Technology • Hospitality Management • Environmental Science • Theology • Medicine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theology • Education • Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Social Sciences • Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce • Information Technology • Social Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education

Source: Author's Own Summary from HEI's Data.

The table above shows that private HEIs offer only five of the total 19 disciplines.⁴² These are Theology, Education, Social Sciences, Commerce and Information Technology. Education and

⁴² SOUM was at the time of research for this study offering MBA, HIV AIDS and Mass Communication although these degree programmes had not been yet accredited. In this study unaccredited programmes as well as enrolment figures in those programmes were excluded to ensure that analysis was only made on government-accepted programmes. This approach is also in line with government's computational system in which enrolment figures in unaccredited programmes are not included in its official records as confirmed by the interview with the Planning Officer in MoEST.

Commerce are offered in four of the private universities. None of the programmes offered by HEIs are absent in public HEIs. In essence this means that since the time they started operating, HEIs have been offering the programmes that are already being offered by public HEIs.

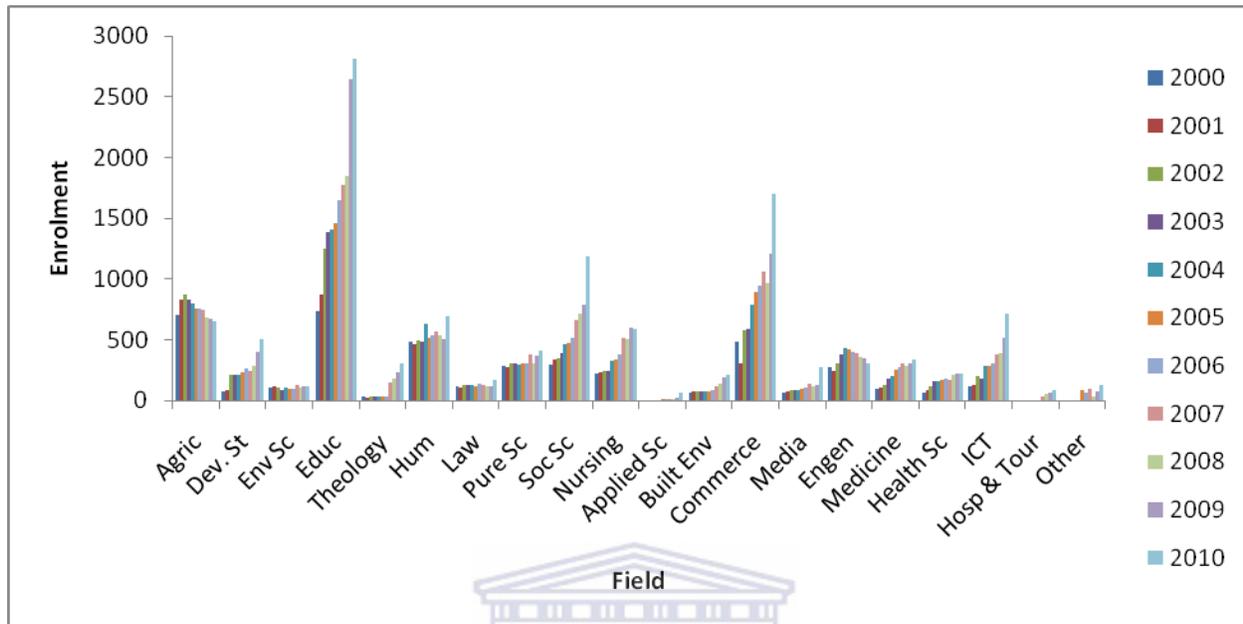
A closer look at the programmes offered by private HEIs reveals a tendency of avoiding “hard” fields such as Pure Science, Applied Science and Engineering and concentrating on “soft” fields.⁴³ So far, none of the universities plans to introduce Applied or Pure Sciences, Medicine or Engineering. The high cost of establishing and offering such programmes was cited by all HEIs as the main reason.⁴⁴ The accreditation process would normally require the availability of qualified staff in these fields as well as adequate facilities.

However, while the emphasis is placed on Science, Technical and Engineering programmes, the national policies also expect HEIs to diversify the programmes on offer by introducing of other programmes as well. Ironically, across all the HEIs there is a duplication and heavy concentration of Education programmes with the exception of BIU and SOUM. Given the acute shortage of secondary school teachers in Malawi (World Bank, 2010b), such duplications may not be negative. However, there are no data that clearly give a picture of how many education graduates are teaching and therefore it is difficult to justify this duplication strongly across HEIs. The concentration of enrolment in education versus other subjects is depicted in Figure 6.1 overleaf. (See also Annexure 7: Categorisation of Fields and Annexure 8: Trend in Enrolment Levels in Different Fields of Study).

⁴³ Interview with Executive Director for LEG.

⁴⁴ Interviews with SOUM, CUNIMA, UNIL, BIU and MAU Registrars.

Figure 6.1: Enrolment Trend in Malawi’s Fields of Study⁴⁵



Source: Author’s Own Depiction from HEI’s Data.

Agriculture has always been the second but has been decreasing since 2003 and had at the time of this study been replaced by Commerce. The rising enrolment in Commerce is propelled by private HEIs which are offering programmes in this field. All HEIs offering the field of Commerce offer degree programmes in Business Administration and Accounting. Just as with Education, it is very difficult to determine if there is a saturation of graduates in Commerce at this level. However, Business Administration and Accounting are also the fields of study which a total of over 120 private business colleges are offering at diploma level and whose international board qualifications are rated slightly the same and in some cases above the degrees offered by the HEIs in Malawi (Lombe, 2011). Given a significant contribution already made by the local private

⁴⁵ Enrolment trend in various fields as depicted in Figure 6.1 above was not based on the names of faculties under which the programmes are offered in the respective HEIs. Doing so would have been difficult because across the HEIs, the same programmes were seen to fall under different faculties while different degree programmes were seen to fall under similar faculty names across the HEIs. For that reason, the compilation of enrolments in various fields was done by grouping programmes with similar focus in one field irrespective of whether in the HEIs they fall under the faculties that bear the field’s name or not.

business colleges in the two programmes (Lombe, 2011), the concentration by the HEIs in Commerce may not be fully desirable considering also the HEIs' expected role of diversifying the fields of study in Malawi.

The slow reduction in Agriculture's enrolment is ironic given the national policy objective of boosting agriculture. Enrolment in Engineering has also been declining since 2006. An examination of the enrolment within Electrical, Civil and Mechanical Engineering programmes shows that enrolment in Mechanical Engineering has been the lowest (with an average of less than 15 per cent of total Engineering enrolment). Given the policy goals of enhancing economic growth through manufacturing and agriculture, the declining trends in Engineering (Mechanical Engineering in particular) contradict the policy intentions. While Pure Sciences have registered some increase, the rate of increase is far lower than that registered in Education, Commerce, Social Sciences and ICT. Similarly, Applied Sciences is still registering insignificant levels.

Nevertheless, given the national policy emphasis on infrastructural development, increase in the enrolment of field of Built Environment is a positive direction. However, relative to other fields, Built Environment is still one of the lowest in terms of enrolment figures. As shown in the figure, Social Science has registered a rising trend largely due to CUNIMA which offers three programmes (Political Leadership, Anthropology and Social Work).

Going by the programmes that are on the cards, none of the private HEIs has plans to introduce new programmes other than the ones currently offered by other institutions. CUNIMA intends to be offering Nursing while SOUM is awaiting the accreditation of its HIV/Aids and Mass Communication⁴⁶ (programmes which are currently being taught by SOUM). UNIL is in the process of introducing ICT, Law and Environmental Science programmes.⁴⁷ MZUNI on the other hand plans to be offering Commerce, Law, Diplomatic Studies, Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences in the near future when the human resource constraints are addressed (MZUNI, 2006). With the exception of Diplomatic Studies to be offered by MZUNI and HIV/Aids by SOUM, the rest of the programmes planned to be offered by the private HEIs as well as MZUNI are already being currently offered by other HEIs.

⁴⁶ Interviews with SOUM Registrar and CUNIMA VC.

⁴⁷ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

The low concentration by HEIs in Pure Sciences, Applied Science, Technical and Engineering programmes seems to be offset by UNIMA (Chancellor College and Polytechnic). The Polytechnic is the only institution within UNIMA that is offering Engineering and Technical Studies while Chancellor College is the only institution within UNIMA as well offering Pure Science Programmes. Within UNIMA, the Polytechnic was at the time of this study intending to offer separate degree programmes in Engineering with distinct specialisations in Water and in Transportation, Industrial Engineering, Energy Engineering, Automobile Engineering, Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering. Besides these Science Programmes, Chancellor College and Polytechnic were planning to offer Gender Studies (at Master's level) and Commercial Law (at Bachelor level) respectively.⁴⁸ At the time of this study, none of the HEIs was offering these programmes.

It is however important to note that, whereas MZUNI introduced the rest of its programme apart from Education in the period between 2000 and 2010, UNIMA introduced Political Science, Journalism, Media and Development, Master's degree in Development Studies (Chancellor College), Bachelor degrees in Land Surveying, Land Economy, Physical Planning (Polytechnic), Master's degree in Public Health (CoM), Master's in Midwifery (KCN), Master's in Medicine (Pediatric) and Master of Business Administration (Polytechnic). The rest of the UNIMA programmes were introduced in the immediate post-colonial period. While MZUNI's pace at introducing new programmes could be ascribed to its newness and the room that it has for expansion (as it became operationally functional in 1999 as opposed to UNIMA's 1965), it is important to quickly note that some of UNIMA's programmes that were introduced in a similar period have been silently discarded. These include Media and Development (both for Bachelor's and Master's at Chancellor College), Gender and Development (Bunda College at Bachelor's level) and Community Nursing (Bachelor's at KCN).

Within UNIMA there is also an irony of duplications in fields offered by the constituent colleges. Education, Law, Environmental Science and Development Studies are each offered by two of UNIMA's colleges. The tracer studies so far do not suggest the saturation of any field, and thus the duplications may not be too harmful at this level. However, given the low enrolment levels in

⁴⁸ Interviews with Chancellor College and Polytechnic Principals.

many Science subjects within UNIMA (as will be discussed later in this chapter) removing such duplications, either by leaving one college to offer a specific programme or by reducing over-concentration (mainly in education) could somehow create space for the enrolment expansion of Science and Engineering related subjects – considering that total UNIMA enrolment is rising slowly.

The narrow range of programmes offered by Malawi's HEIs is worse off at postgraduate level. In Malawi, postgraduate programmes are only offered in the fields of Education, Humanities, Science, Social Science, Agriculture, Development Studies, Public Health, Medicine, Nursing, Commerce (for UNIMA) as well as ICT and Theology (for MZUNI). None of the private HEIs is offering postgraduate programmes. At postgraduate level, as will be discussed in subsequent sections, it was also observed that a number of programmes lined up are not offered on a regular basis and are often offered in cohorts whose duration is not fixed. The duration of the cohort depends on how long the students in that cohort take to finish which, as will be discussed later, takes an average of four years and six years respectively for Master's and PhD students. Even where a cohort has completed, subsequent intake may take place after more than two years as in the Master's in Agronomy, History, Philosophy and Education Policy and Leadership. Practically, this means that, while postgraduate training is already offered in few disciplines and programmes, the accessibility of those programmes is not regular in Malawi.

6.3 Quality Dimension

Quality, as was discussed in chapter two, is one of the elusive concepts to measure. When used in the context of higher education, it implies a high level of excellence in performance in realising the given missions and goals of HEIs which often are (or are supposed to be) a reflection of general expectations of the major stakeholders, namely the students, the employers, the community and other agencies or bodies that support HEIs. In the national policies, HEIs are expected to tailor their courses to acceptable standards, undertake curriculum review, increase teaching and learning materials, improve the quality of students entering the university, boost the quality of staff, reduce drop-out and repetition rates, increase graduation over the years and enhance external efficiency. Quality of students admitted in the universities has been discussed in admission section of this chapter while drop-out, repetition and graduation rates have been

discussed the efficiency section of this chapter as well.

In public HEIs, quality of education is taken as given and there is no monitoring mechanism by the government. In private HEIs, the process of ensuring that programmes are of good standard is handled by the Evaluation and Accreditation Committee (EAC) of the government. EAC looks at three factors when accrediting and revolving the accreditation of private HEIs, namely quality of infrastructure, resources (such as books and laboratory equipment) and qualification and experience of academic and key support staff (it requires 60 per cent of the lecturers to be holders of at least Master's degrees).⁴⁹ The EAC then makes a recommendation to the Ministry of Education which finally accredits the private HEI either fully or partially.⁵⁰ Private HEIs are supposed to adhere to the same standards of their initial accreditation, namely infrastructure, resources and well-qualified lecturers. Monitoring of these standards is a continuous process.⁵¹ However, every five years, private HEIs are supposed to undergo a "rigorous" screening and evaluation process and the licence can be revoked if the EAC decides so.⁵² In a situation where the private HEI decides to introduce new programmes, the process of accrediting the private HEI to offer these programmes is the same as the one outlined above.⁵³ In almost all the private HEIs, the details that they present to the EAC differ significantly with the actual situation on the ground in terms of staff, infrastructure and resources – especially once the accreditation status has been granted.⁵⁴ This problem has been reinforced by the fact that although monitoring is supposed to be on a continuous basis, the EAC does this irregularly and often under political directives, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

In terms of classrooms, all the private HEIs have currently enough space to accommodate all students. However, since SOUM and BIU use accommodation houses, the closeness of the rooms

⁴⁹ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

⁵⁰ Full accreditation takes place when all the degree programmes that the HEIs applied for accreditation are accredited while partial accreditation takes place when only one or some of the programmes have been accredited while still waiting to meet the requirements in other programmes.

⁵¹ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

⁵² Interview with the Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

⁵³ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

⁵⁴ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

to each other makes it at times challenging due to the echoing of sound. UNIMA and MZUNI on the other hand have been experiencing increasing shortages of class space over the years. Within UNIMA, this has been frequently experienced by Chancellor College, Polytechnic and Bunda College whose enrolments have been rising more in relation to KCN and CoM. Between 2006 and 2010, Chancellor College had to use an entertainment complex (the Great Hall) to host the Mathematics 101 module (for first-years).⁵⁵ Within UNIMA, some colleges have a shortage of chairs and desks for students and students have been learning while standing.⁵⁶

The problem of class space is more prevalent at MZUNI, due to the original design of the university (it was a primary teachers' college at first). In 2010, MZUNI had to use Luwingu Youth Centre Complex as extra space for its students.⁵⁷ Office space problems are also prevalent in MZUNI and UNIMA with an average of three academic staff members sharing one office in both cases.⁵⁸ In private HEIs, on average, four academic staff share one office.⁵⁹

However, there are shortages of key learning and teaching resources in both private and public HEIs as revealed in the table below:

Table 6.2: Summary of Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials in 2010

	UNIMA	MZUNI	UNIL	SOUM	MAU	CUNIMA	BIU
Number of students for each computer	83	76	62	53	73	58	67
Total printers available to students	15	5	None	None	1	1	1
Total photocopiers available to students	9	3	None	None	1	1	1
Internet accessibility for students	30mts/wk	15mts/wk	None	None	None	5mts/wk	None
Students per main text book	94	101	150	120	161	162	156
Number of subscribed journals	24	12	None	None	None	None	None

⁵⁵ Interview with Chancellor College Assistant Registrar.

⁵⁶ Interviews with Principals from Polytechnic, Bunda and Chancellor College of UNIMA.

⁵⁷ Interview with MZUNI Registrar.

⁵⁸ Interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI Registrars.

⁵⁹ Interviews with registrars of MAU, CUNIMA, SOUM and BIU.

	UNIMA	MZUNI	UNIL	SOUM	MAU	CUNIMA	BIU
Period to access a journal after its publication	1.9 yrs	2 yrs	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Percentage of available laboratory equipment out of total needed	29	17	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Common form of reading materials	Photocopies	Photocopies	Class notes				
Percentage of available prescribed books out of total needed	31	27	13	17	21	20	12

Source: Author's Own Computation from HEIs Data.

The above table shows low number of computers, printers and photocopiers available to students. In some HEIs (UNIL and SOUM), there were no printers and photocopiers available to students at the time of this study. At UNIL, students have at times to travel for about 50 kilometres to the nearest trading centre to type and print their assignments.⁶⁰ Internet accessibility to students is also minimal amongst public HEIs and almost absent for all private HEIs except CUNIMA. There is also a critical shortage of prescribed textbooks to students. None of the private HEIs subscribes to journals while UNIMA and MZUNI subscribe to 24 and 12 journals respectively. It takes 1.9 years before UNIMA gets hold of the latest journal while MZUNI takes two years. At MZUNI and UNIMA where Science subjects that need laboratories are taught, only 17 and 29 per cent of the equipment was available at the time of this study respectively. In the department of Mechanical Engineering at Polytechnic, lecturers had to use their private vehicle engines for three years (between 2001 and 2004) when teaching their students.⁶¹ In all the HEIs, the available prescribed test books constitute less than 35 per cent of the prescribed text books that the lecturers prescribed and asked the responsible sections to procure. Put differently, students in all HEIs have no access to and are unable to read 65 per cent of the books that they are supposed to read under ideal circumstances.

Of equal concern is the rate at which the above availability of teaching and learning materials has been improving between 2000 and 2010 as shown in Table 6.3 below.

⁶⁰ Interview with UNIL Student Union Chairperson.

⁶¹ Interview with Polytechnic Registrar.

Table 6.3: Summary of the Rate of Average Annual Improvement in the Availability of Teaching and learning Materials (in %) ⁶² in Malawi's HEIs ⁶³

	UNIMA	MZUNI	UNIL	SOUM	MAU	CUNIMA
Reduction in the number of students for each computer	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%	7%
Increase in total printers available to students	4%	3%	NA	NA	0%	0%
Increase in total photocopiers available to students	2%	3%	NA	NA	0%	0%
Increase in internet accessibility for students in terms of time	4%	5%	NA	NA	NA	0%
Reduction in number of students per main text book	-3%	-5%	-10%	-9%	-12%	-6%
Increase in the number of subscribed journals	0%	2%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Reduction in time period to access a journal after its publication	-4%	1%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Increase in the available laboratory equipment out of needed total	0%	5%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Increase in available prescribed books out of the needed books	2%	3%	4.5%	9%	6%	11%

Source: Author's Own Computation from HEI's Data.

The above table shows the low improvement levels in the availability of computers, printers and internet access as well as prescribed text books over the period. In other words, the availability of levels of teaching and learning materials presented in Table 6.2 has not been registering significant improvements in the period under study. With regard to the number of students per

⁶² The average improvement for UNIMA and MZUNI are calculated from the year 2000 as a base year while those for the private HEIs are calculated with the respective years in which they were established as base year.

⁶³ BIU has been excluded because it was opened in 2010 and therefore the study could not calculate the rate of improvement since the cut-off period of the study was also 2010.

main text books, the situation has actually been deteriorating since the number of students for each text book has been increasing in all HEIs. For UNIMA, the length of period it takes for it to have access to a new journal edition has in practice lengthened.

With regard to staffing, the capacity evidenced by qualifications shows remarkable differences between private and public HEIs as shown in Table 6.4 below:

Table 6.4: Number of Academic Staff Members and their Qualifications

College	Qualification						Total
	PhD	PhD (in %)	Master's	Master's (in %)	Bachelor	Bachelor (in %)	
Bunda	42	31.5	55	41.3	36	27.1	133
Chancellor College	52	22.2	122	52.1	60	25.6	234
College of Medicine	30	24.1	47	37.9	47	38	124
Kamuzu College of Nursing	7	11.2	35	56.4	20	32.3	62
The Polytechnic	18	8.8	108	53.2	77	37.9	203
UNIMA TOTAL	149	19.7	367	48.5	240	31.8	756
MZUNI	22	16.4	66	45.8	57	37.8	145
CUNIMA	3	12.5	15	46.8	17	40.7	35
SOUM	1	2.8	12	34.2	22	63	35
BIU	1	8.6	7	30.4	18	61	26
UNIL	1	5.5	9	16.6	18	77.7	28
MAU	2	9	7	32	13	59	22

Source: Author's Own Computation from HEI's Data.

Table 6.4 above shows that almost one third of the academic staff at UNIMA and over one third at MZUNI are holders of first degrees while slightly less than half in both cases have master's degrees. Given the policy goals of increasing both postgraduate and undergraduate enrolment, it is obvious that such levels of staff qualifications compromise the quality aspect of higher education. While holders of first degrees have been given core teaching tasks in order to make up for the shortfalls in holders of PhD and Master's degrees, almost half of the first degree course holders do teach some modules in both first and final year classes. Given the fact that 80 per cent of those recruited with first degrees have never worked anywhere (they are often recruited directly after graduating), their full involvement in teaching may have some negative effects on the quality aspect in terms of research and graduate output. The quality aspect within UNIMA is further

compromised by the low numbers of PhD holders in its constituent colleges with Polytechnic and Kamuzu College of Nursing having less than 15 per cent PhD holders among the total academic staff members.

For private HEIs, over 50 per cent of their staff members are holders of first degrees while less than 50 per cent are holders of Master’s and less than 10 per cent holders of a PhD (the exception being CUNIMA only). This, as in the case of UNIMA and MZUNI, depicts significant compromises on the quality of education in the private HEIs. The quality aspect is compromised further by the fact that over 30 per cent of the Master’s holders in these private HEIs are adjunct lecturers drawn from UNIMA and MZUNI where they are currently engaged as full-time employees.

Within the HEIs, there are low numbers of senior academics as depicted in Table 6.5 below.

Table 6.5: Number of Academic Staff According to Seniority

Name of HEI	Professors	In %	Associate Professors	In %	Senior Lecturers	In %	Lectures	In %	Assistant Lecturer	In %	Total
UNIMA	36	4.7	34	4.4	116	15.3	330	43.6	240	32	756
MZUNI	10	6.8	7	4.8	29	20	42	28.9	57	39.5	145
CUNIMA	1	2.8	3	2.2	8	5.5	13	37.1	10	52.6	35
SOOM	1	2.8	0	0	3	8.5	16	45.7	15	43	35
BIU	0	0	0	0	2	7.6	14	53.8	10	38.6	26
UNIL	1	3.5	0	0	5	17.8	15	53.5	7	25.2	28
MAU	1	4.5	1	4.5	3	13.6	7	31.8	10	45.6	22

Source: Author’s Own Computation from HEIs’ Data.

The percentage of senior academicians from senior lecturer to full professorial level is evidently

low in all the HEIs where less than one third is composed of senior academics. For UNIL, SOUM, CUNIMA and MAU, the sole available professors are vice chancellors. In practice, the above table shows that a majority of academic staff are junior members (lecturers and assistant staff associates) – constituting over two thirds of the total number of academicians.

With regard to curriculum review, the process has not been frequent and regular. Within UNIMA, there has been conspicuous absence of curriculum review (and revision) for degree programmes. With the exception of the major curriculum review which took place soon after the ushering in of multiparty democracy in 1995 and in 2008 (for Social Science and Law), other fields have not formally reviewed the curriculum. The same has been the case for MZUNI programmes which were introduced in the early 2005. Although in both HEIs there is a five-year period required for such reviews, this has not been the case on the ground. Given the policies' prescription to review the curriculum, such neglect of the curriculum review aspect runs counter to the prescribed requirement by the HEIs to make higher education relevant to the economic needs of the country. For private HEIs, although they have no policies on the curriculum review, the trend in all of them is that the responsible lecturer in conjunction with the head of department can decide what should be taught. However, this arrangement would have been ideal if most of the academic staff in these private HEIs were senior academicians, since seniority is often a proxy of extensive experience and high conversance in the field of study.

6.4 Accessibility and Equity

According to policies, Malawi's HEIs are expected to enhance access to higher education by increasing undergraduate enrolment (by 40 per cent for the public HEIs) and postgraduate enrolment (to be 10 per cent of total enrolment for public HEIs).

On the equity front, the HEIs are expected to ensure that more women are admitted (targeted at 35 per cent for the public HEIs), that those with special needs are admitted, that those in need are provided with scholarships, and to ensure that there are no inequalities along social, income and regional divides.

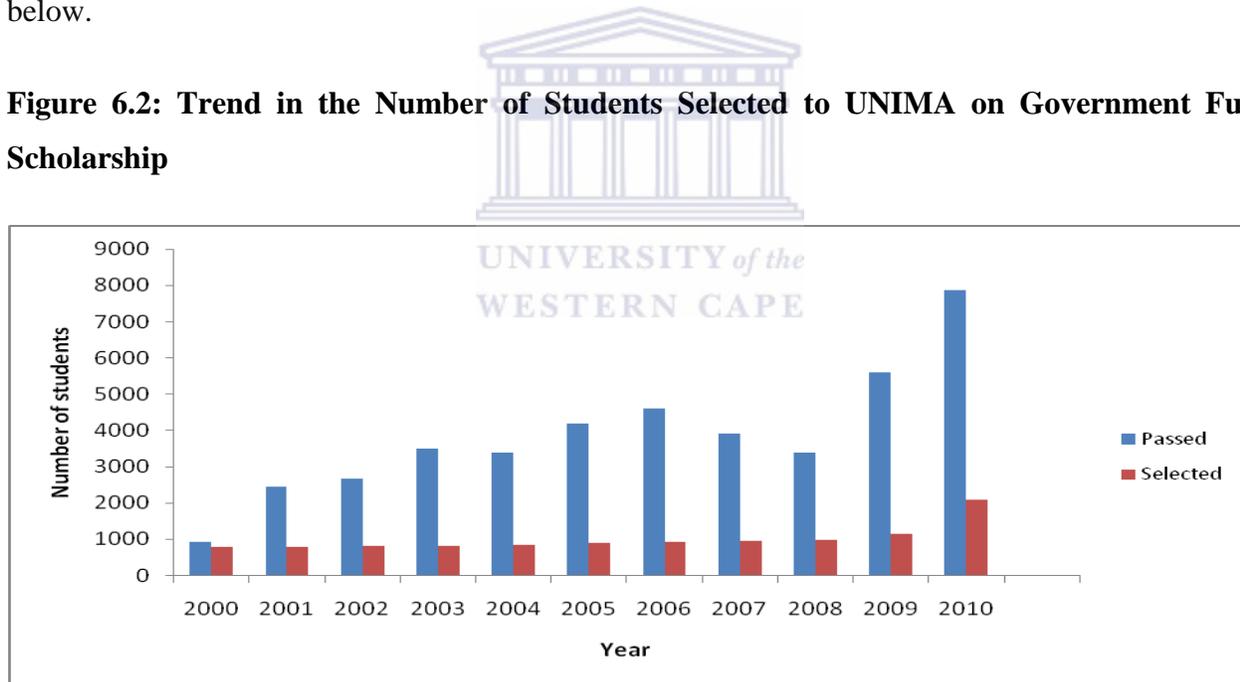
6.4.1 Admission Policies: Quantity, Equity and Quality Balance Challenges

Admission policies for the HEIs vary from one university to another. However, in general, one

observes more strenuous caution by UNIMA and MZUNI on the quality of their selected students than by the private HEIs. On the other hand, the admission policies of private HEIs facilitate expansion more than the public HEIs.

Until 2010, UNIMA selected its residential students purely on merit. Entry into UNIMA is attained upon passing University Entrance Examinations (UEE). To qualify for the entrance examinations, students are required to have a minimum of six credits (including English) at Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examinations in subjects relevant to the faculty in which they intend to enroll.⁶⁴ MSCE grades and the results of the aptitude test each contribute 50 per cent to the selection process. Selection for each college on government scholarship was until 2010 dependent on the bed space that was available in the college. Consequently the number of students on full government scholarships has been significantly low as shown in Figure 6.2 below.

Figure 6.2: Trend in the Number of Students Selected to UNIMA on Government Full Scholarship



Source: Author's Own Depiction from UNIMA Data.

⁶⁴ At MSCE, grades in each subject are symbolised by points between 1 and 8. 1 point represents the highest grade while 8 points represent the lowest grade. 9 points represent a fail. 1 and 2 are distinctions, 3–6 are credits while 7 and 8 are passes. Overall performance is often symbolised by the aggregate points in the best six subjects, Since the total points in the best six subjects represent the overall performance, it follows that somebody who has a total of 17 points has done better than somebody with a total of 18 points or above.

Between 2002 and 2009, those who qualified but were not chosen by the centralised selection system could be selected at the college level as non-residential students.

The College of Medicine administers its own aptitude test for those MSCE graduates who want to enrol in the pre-med programme. Those with A-Level qualifications enrol directly into the degree programme both in all colleges. In 2010 the university introduced the ‘equitable system’ of selecting candidates to public institutions of higher learning including UNIMA. Under this system, the top ten candidates from each district are offered places first and the rest are selected based on both merit and the size of the population of their districts.

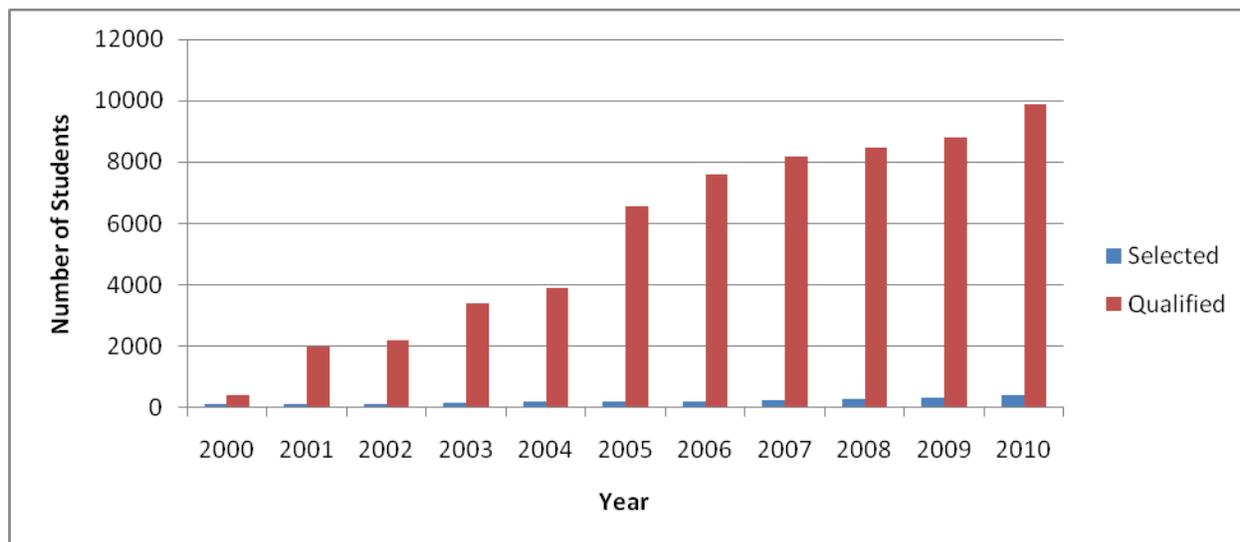
Until 1995, UNIMA was selecting students into its colleges without entrance examinations. However, rampant reports of cheating at MSCE examinations forced UNIMA to “screen” the prospective students.⁶⁵ Despite the cost implications of administering university entrance examinations, the system is said to be effective in reducing the number of students who are asked to withdraw by the university on the grounds of low academic performance.⁶⁶ With entrance examinations being administered only in the three cities, it was acknowledged that the system partly precludes qualified but poor students (who cannot afford to pay for transport to these centres and lodging fee) from sitting for the examinations.

Unlike UNIMA, MZUNI does not administer entrance examinations to aspiring students. To be admitted for degree programmes, students are supposed to have not more than 30 points in the best six subjects obtained not earlier than the previous three years and obtained in not more than two sittings (MZUNI, 2000). Students are also supposed to have credits in specific subjects deemed necessary for the chosen degree programme (MZUNI, 2010). However, the competition is stiff also at MZUNI and in most cases those who have made it are students that have on average less than 25 points. The number of offered scholarships at MZUNI is significantly lower compared to the number of students that apply and qualify. Figure 6.3 below provides the picture.

⁶⁵ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

⁶⁶ UNIMA students who underperform can either repeat once (if they have not scored less than 30% in the module) or be withdrawn and cannot be enrolled even if they have resources to do so. They can also not be enrolled in any other UNIMA College or in MZUNI.

Figure 6.3: Number of Students Selected to MZUNI on Government Full Scholarship



Source: Author's Own Depiction from UNIMA Data Sources.

The equitable system of selecting students to public institutions has also been followed at MZUNI from 2010. MZUNI's system is based on the need to avoid costs for administering the examinations. MZUNI's admission policy, however, has been criticised for creating enough room for regional biases as for the past ten years over 50 per cent of students admitted have been from the Northern region.⁶⁷

In both MZUNI and UNIMA, there is however an element of academic exclusion especially affecting students who underperform academically. In both HEIs, students who underperform are withdrawn by the HEIs and even when they have resources to pay on their own, they cannot be allowed to repeat. The two HEIs do not also admit students withdrawn on academic grounds from the other HEIs. Even within UNIMA's constituent colleges, a student cannot be readmitted if he or she was withdrawn from another UNIMA college.

For MAU, although it is a church university, admission is open to both SDA and non-SDA members subject to the availability of space and the applicant meeting the "academic and character requirements of the University and willingness to cooperate with the University

⁶⁷ Interviews with Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education (CSCQBE) Executive Director and Link for Education Governance (LEG) Executive Director and Director of Monitoring.

policies” (MAU, 2010:4). The applicant should also be “comfortable to observe, respect and abide by the SDA values, ideals, lifestyle in its religious, social and cultural atmosphere” (MAU, 2010:4). Enrolment into BA (Theology), BA (Religion) and Bachelor of Education is upon an applicant having a credit in English plus at least four other subjects (a total of five) in his or her Malawi School Certificate or GCE. For Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), an applicant must have a credit in Mathematics and English plus at least three other credits. The prospective students are first shortlisted before undergoing interviews. The idea of administering interviews is to ensure that those students admitted have the required writing proficiency levels.⁶⁸ This selection process is also said to be advantageous as it ensures that the enrolled students have respect for SDA rules.

Similarly, admission to CUNIMA is open to students of all faiths as long as they are willing to “respect freedom of thought and expression within the Catholic ethos” (CUNIM, 2010). Applicants must have an MSCE certificate with credits in English Language or Literature or its equivalent with an aggregate of not more than 30 points in the best six subjects obtained in not more than two sittings to be eligible for consideration for entry into CUNIMA (CUNIMA, 2010). However, applicants with more than 30 points can be admitted after going through the bridging programme which runs for six months (CUNIMA, 2010). Applicants for the Bachelor of Science in Education Programme should have an additional credit in Mathematics (CUNIMA, 2010). All applicants at MSCE level are required to sit for University Entrance Examinations. The selection process is based on a combination of MSCE and University Entrance Examinations using a predetermined formula. Applicants with A Level or Diploma qualifications may be exempted from the University Entrance Examinations if the results are deemed to be satisfactory for the programme applied for (CUNIMA, 2010). CUNIMA’s admission policy is also against the background of reported cases of cheating at MSCE examinations.⁶⁹

UNIL also has an open admission policy to students of all faiths. To be admitted, students sit for entrance examinations. A student must have a full MSCE with five credits including English.⁷⁰ In

⁶⁸ Interview with MAU Registrar.

⁶⁹ Interview with CUNIMA Registrar.

⁷⁰ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

the case of UNIL, although the system is aimed at screening prospective students, the government feels it has in actual practice been manipulated to favour students from the northern region alone. The government cites that the majority of the students selected are from the northern region (Nyasa Times, 2010). UNIL however argues that the trend has been caused by its being shunned by students from other regions to attend this northern region based university because of the distance and remoteness of its location.⁷¹

At BIU, students can either be admitted as distance learners or full time and students can enroll in either the first or second semester (BIU, 2010). A student must have the following to be admitted at BIU:

- Malawi Certificate of Secondary Education (MCSE) with three related credit passes;
- International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) / General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) / Ordinary Level with three upper level passes;
- Advanced (A)- Level with at least one 'A' grade pass;
- Work or business experience of three years or more for those who want to study as mature entry students (BIU, 2010).

Admission to SOUM on the other hand is based on consideration of individual academic attainment with experience and recommendations. A student must however have a full MSCE or its equivalent with credit passes in English and Mathematics and any one Science subject and acceptable passes in another three MSCE subjects (SOUM, 2010).

Thus relatively, admission requirements are stringent for UNIMA and softer for secular private HEIs which just demand at least three credits. UNIMA as well as CUNIMA, UNIL and BIU administer examinations as a way of screening students. Given the widely reported rampant cheating at MSCE examinations (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into MSCE Results, 2000), such screening process is justifiable and does ensure the quality of admitted students. For UNIMA, the very low number of repeaters as will be discussed later is an outcome of the rigorous screening process at MSCE. However, although UNIMA's admission requirements are the most stringiest (as student are supposed to have six credits including English) the trend for the past ten years show that an average of 91 per cent of those who sit the entrance examinations pass the

⁷¹ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

examinations as shown in Table 6.6 below.

Table 6.6: Trend in the Number of Students Passing UNIMA Entrance Examinations

Year	Total Number Sitting	Total Number Passing	Per centage Pass Rate
2010	9 700	7 878	81%
2009	6 203	5 600	90%
2008	3 653	3 400	93%
2007	4 259	3 901	91%
2006	4 963	4 601	92%
2005	4 333	4 190	96%
2004	3 816	3 400	89%
2003	3 668	3 510	95%
2002	2 817	2 660	94%
2001	2 573	2 439	94%
2000	1 217	917	75%

Source: Author's Own Summary and Computation from UNIMA Data Sources.

The above table means that over 90 per cent of those that qualify for UNIMA entrance examinations might as well go straight into UNIMA. Viewed from this perspective, it can be argued that UNIMA's criteria for short-listing eligible candidates (six credits) are almost enough for straight admission into university. Given the challenges that students from poor rural families have been facing to secure transport and pay the application fee, it can be argued that the administering of entrance examinations by UNIMA has a negative effect on equity as it excludes the poor families. Given also that the administering of entrance examinations does not add any significant value to quality aspect (as many of them are suitable enough to go straight to university) removing entrance examinations will only have a negligible effect, if any, on quality of students selected to UNIMA. Similar analysis, however, could not be made for other private HEIs that administer entrance examinations due to lack of appropriate data.

As has already been observed, College of Medicine (CoM) administers its own entrance examinations. While such an arrangement is aimed at selecting the most suitable candidates for entrance examinations, it is important to observe that UNIMA overall entrance examinations and

CoM examinations often take place in a space of not more than three weeks, and most of the students who sit for CoM examinations often also sit for UNIMA examinations as results from each examination are often not out by then. Since almost all students who make it to CoM make it to UNIMA, there are often unoccupied places of over 50 students who are admitted to CoM in the other UNIMA constituent colleges. Ideally, such occurrences of “double admission” would be corrected through the admission of those who are on the waiting list – a system which UNIMA does not have. Thus UNIMA’s efforts to increase access are in a way hampered by its own admission system.

Conspicuously absent in both UNIMA and MZUNI is the component of life-long learning. For both UNIMA and MZUNI, admission is purely based on academic performance at MSCE or its equivalent. It does not incorporate experience and prior learning of prospective students. Even for mature entrants (those who start from second or third year), the strength of MSCE is still a key criterion. In this way, undergraduate admission is only for people who have recently obtained MSCE. In fact, in both cases, the requirement is that an MSCE or its equivalent should be obtained in not more than two sittings. These sittings should also be made only in the previous two years and not before. This goes against the goal of increasing access and equity as it implies that those who qualify but for some reasons have not immediately been enrolled in UNIMA remain excluded. Private HEIs do not have the time specifications of the year for which MSCE was supposed to be obtained. There are also no limitations to the number of MSCE sittings. This partly provides an opportunity for those who obtained their MSCE or equivalent many years back and are still interested.

However, with the exception of BIU in which the enhancement of life-long learning is an objective, and of SOUM, all the other HEIs do not consider work experience as a requirement for admission. Work experience is only used as a minor requirement for some of UNIMA’s and MZUNI’s postgraduate programmes. This means that there is an entrenched exclusion of life-long learning in public HEIs as well as all religious private HEIs. This goes contrary to the goal of access and equity as championed in the national and education sector policies.

As was presented earlier on, from 2010, UNIMA and MZUNI started selecting students using a partial quota system in which each district is given ten places. Given the dominance of some

districts and low participation rates by some districts especially in the Eastern Region and Shire Valley (due to cultural reasons and historical neglect of education investment by the early missionary settlers and the postcolonial governments)⁷² such a policy reinforces access and equity. For UNIMA this entails that 280 students out of 2008 who were admitted in 2010 benefited from this system. This translates into 13 per cent of 2010 first year intake. This figure is significantly low when considered against the possible space for increment that is there. Doubling it to 20 per district would still leave almost 75 per cent of the UNIMA places competed for purely on merit – assuming the intake remains stagnant at 2010. In private HEIs, the ability to pay the fees, apart from meeting other prerequisites, is a determining factor for student admission. This is so because, as will be discussed later, the dominant source of income for private HEIs is student tuition fees. Consequently, employing a quota system, although desirable, would be a challenge.

Although UNIMA and MZUNI have different admission criteria (with the one similarity of the quota system), there have been annual cases of double intake by the two universities between 2000 and 2010. A manual check on intake sheets shows that a total number of 220 students who were offered places at MZUNI were later offered places by UNIMA between 2000 and 2010. While it was difficult to determine whether they had all gone to UNIMA, the obvious implication is that a total of 220 places were unutilised both at MZUNI and UNIMA. This complication results from the fact that UNIMA and MZUNI administer their intakes at the same time and that each one of them has no second selection or waiting list system to provide for these eventualities.

For the religious private HEIs, the non-discriminatory policy of other faiths is having a positive impact on the ground as at CUNIMA, only 50 per cent of the first-year students in 2010 were Catholics while for UNIL, 53 per cent were members of the CCAP Church.⁷³ Although these rates appear significantly high, it is also important to bear in mind that the Catholic Church and the CCAP are the largest and second largest denominations in that order of size. However, there appear to be low admissions of students from faiths other than SDA at MAU as non-Adventists account for less than 20 per cent of total first-year students.⁷⁴ Although admission is also open to

⁷² This has been discussed in detail in section 7.2.1 in the next chapter.

⁷³ Calculations from first-year students' bio-data for CUNIMA and UNIL.

⁷⁴ Calculations from first-year students' bio-data for MAU.

students of all faiths, it was noted that the prescribed lifestyle for students (such as compulsory vegetarian diet, devotions and strict observance of the Sabbath) by the MAU makes it hard for non-SDA members to cope and possibly deters members of other denominations.⁷⁵

With the exception of UNIMA, all the other HEIs have no affirmative action policy for the enrollment of women or people with physical disabilities. Although the study could not establish the exact number of the potential students with special needs, only 10 people (six blind and four wheel chair users) had access to UNIMA. In a similar period, UNIMA could not admit 15 students as it did not have infrastructure suitable to provide for their physical disabilities.⁷⁶

6.4.2 Mode of Study

With the exception of SOUM, the mode of studying for other HEIs is full time over weekdays. This precludes the working class who would want to be admitted. This gap is made worse by the fact that, with the exception of BIU, there is no option of distance learning for other HEIs, thereby making both accessibility and equity for the prospective adult scholars a problem

All programmes offered by UNIMA, CUNIMA, MAU and UNIL are full time. BIU offers its programmes through both distance learning and full-time study. MZUNI's programmes are all full time with the exception of some courses in its Education programmes which are offered as block courses in its distance learning programmes. Chancellor College also offers its Law Diploma on block mode. SOUM's programmes are offered largely over the weekends to cater for the employed category of students who are in a majority. All programmes are offered directly by the individual HEIs. However, MZUNI also has an affiliation scheme which allows other institutions that are affiliated to MZUNI to "offer courses of study together with such examinations and assessments as are deemed appropriate, leading to specified degrees diplomas or certificates" by MZUNI (MZUNI, 2001:5) . However, at the time of this study, no other university, within and outside the country had been granted an affiliate status to offer MZUNI courses.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Interview with MAU Registrar.

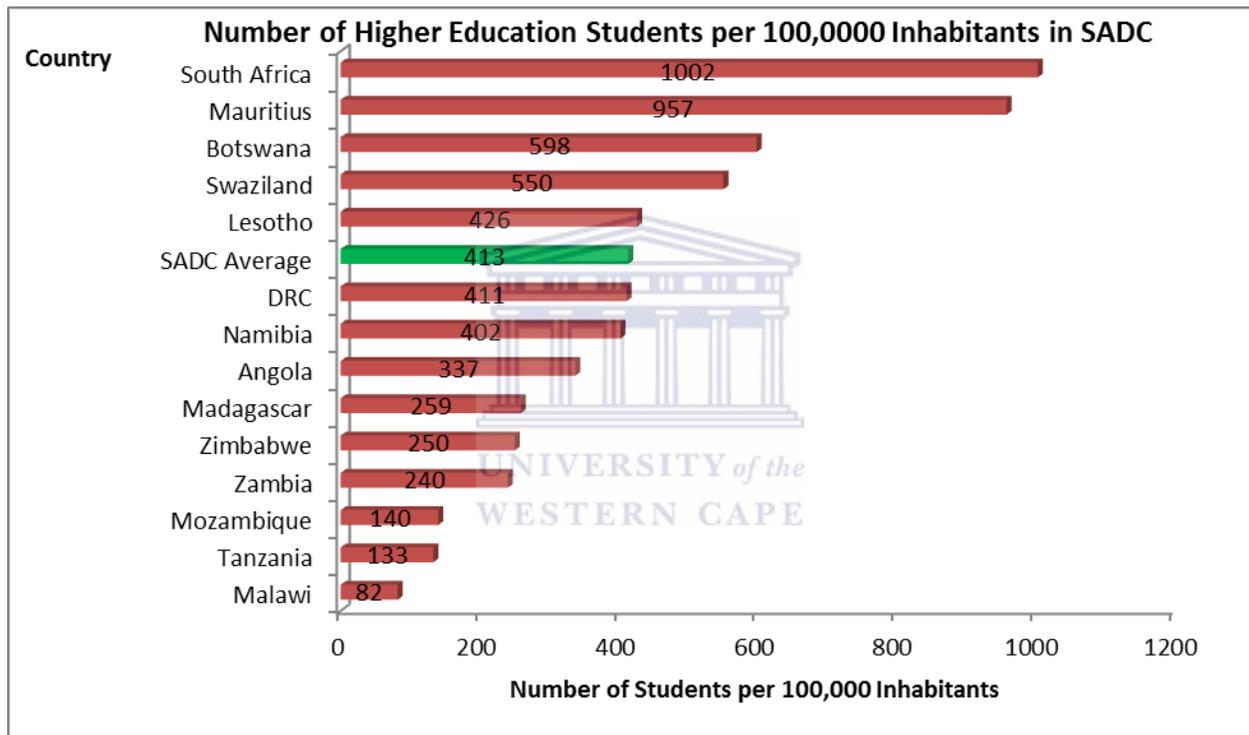
⁷⁶ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

⁷⁷ Interview with MZUNI VC.

6.4.3 Enrolment Levels, Patterns and Trends

There have been mixed trends, patterns and levels of enrolment. At the end of the 2010 academic year, total enrolment in Malawi’s HEIs was 11 497. With a population of 13.1 million people, this means that there are only 87 people enrolled in Malawi’s HEIs for every 100 000 people. At 87 Malawi has the lowest enrolment level in the SADC region as shown in Figure 6.4 below.

Figure 6.4: Number of Higher Education Students per 100 000 inhabitants in SADC in 2010⁷⁸



Source: Author’s Own Computation and Depiction from World Bank (2010), UNESCO (2011) and SURUA 2012.

⁷⁸ It should be cautiously noted and admitted that South Africa’s and Botswana’s enrollment levels are not only composed of local students but also include a significant number of foreigners. In South Africa for example, according to the South African Council on Higher Education Monitor (2009), there were over 53 000 foreign students in 2006 representing seven per cent of total enrolment. However, since enrolment levels per 100 000 inhabitants signify each country’s capacity for HEIs to meet the demand for education from its citizens, the low levels in Malawi are cause for policy concern.

As shown in the table above, Malawi also does not come close to Tanzania. However, there has been a significant increase in total enrolment levels between 2000 and 2010 as shown in Figure 6.5 below. On average, total enrolment in both public and private HEIs has increased by 10.7 per cent per annum which implies that the enrolment will almost double almost in the next seven years (6.8 years)⁷⁹ assuming the current 10.7 average annual increment is maintained.

Figure 6.5: Trend in Malawi’s Higher Education Enrolment



Source: Author’s Own Depiction from HEI’s Data.

Relatively, Malawi’s increase in annual enrolment fares well above many SADC countries as

⁷⁹ This has been calculated as follows:

$$t = \frac{\text{Log } 2}{\text{Log } (1+r)}$$

Where $t = \text{time (number of years)}$

$r = \text{rate of increase}$

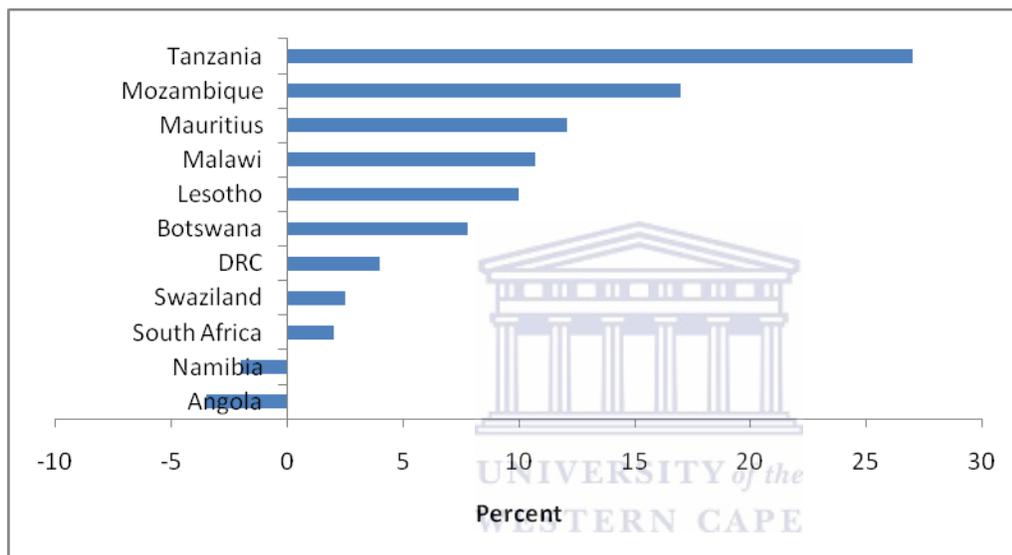
$$t = \frac{\text{Log } 2}{\text{Log } (1 + 0.107)}$$

$$t = \frac{0.301}{0.044}$$

$$t = 6.8 \text{ years}$$

shown in Figure 6.6 below.

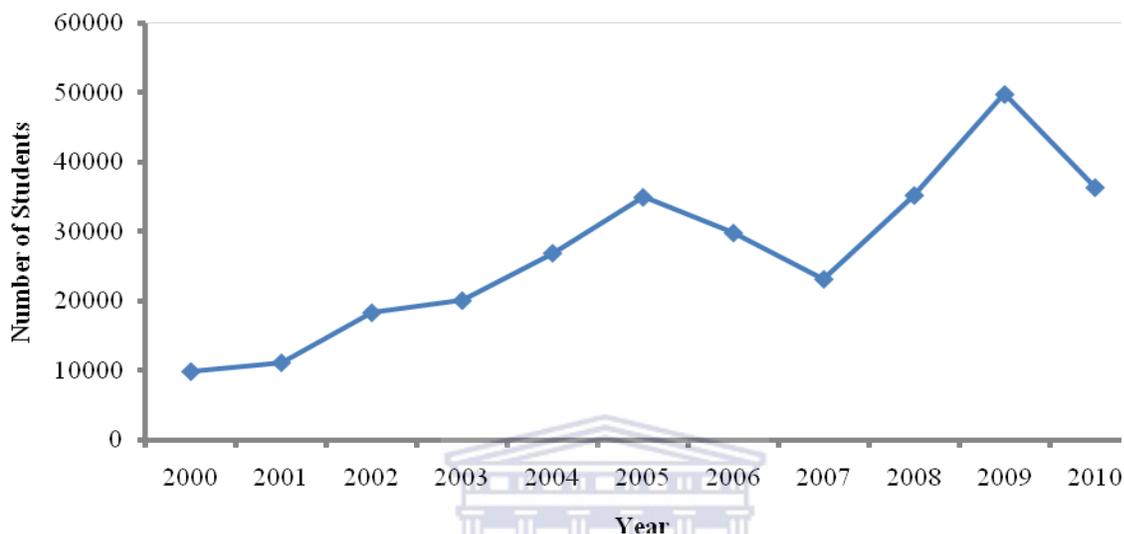
Figure 6.6: Comparison of average annual change of enrolment per 100 000 inhabitants between 2000 and 2010 in SADC Countries (except Zambia)



Source: Author's Own Depiction from World Bank (2010), UNESCO (2011).

However, seen from an internal perspective, the change in enrolment levels shown in Figure 6.6 is not significant enough. The enrolment shown in Figure 6.5 determines the increase in the capacity of HEIs to absorb those who have successfully completed their MSCE and their equivalence. Over the years, the number of students passing their MSCE has been increasing as shown in Figure 6.7 overleaf.

Figure 6.7: Number of students passing MSCE between 2000 and 2010



Source: Author's Own Depiction from MANEB Annual Reports.

The above figure confirms a corresponding increment in the number of students who have been passing MSCE examinations and who form a large category of demand for higher education. On average, the increase in pass rate has been 19.1 per cent which is almost double the increase in enrolment levels in HEIs. This means that, even if it can be assumed that the increase in higher education enrolment is caused by fresh students from secondary school, the increase in the absorption rate by the universities is still far below the increase in potential demand for places in higher education.

With 9 690 students at MZUNI and UNIMA, the overall enrolment in public HEIs constitutes 84 per cent of total higher education enrolment in Malawi. The low level of enrolment in private HEIs is attributed to their infancy levels in terms of infrastructural and human resource capacity.

Between 2000 and 2010, the enrolment in public HEIs has been increasing by an average of 8.9 per cent per annum while private HEIs have been increasing their enrolment by an average of 152.8 per cent per annum for the four-year period of their operation that this study looked into. In

the similar period between 2006 and 2010, the average increase in the enrolment for public HEIs was 25.2 per cent. This remarkable increase in public HEI enrolment levels was caused by the increase in non-residential students which until 2010 were admitted by UNIMA's constituent Colleges (excluding CoM and KCN). Table 6.7 below shows the percentage increase in the number of non-residential students at UNIMA's Bunda College, Chancellor College and Polytechnic as well as MZUNI.

Table 6.7: Trends in the Percentage of Non-Residential Students in UNIMA Constituent Colleges and MZUNI

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Bunda	2.1	6.5	7.1	10.0	13.3	18.3	20.2	19.0	22.8
Chancellor	6.2	13.6	20.0	24.5	39.3	43.2	35.6	40.1	44.3
Polytechnic	15.3	16.5	34.4	37.1	51.9	44.5	37.5	47.3	50.1
MZUNI	0	0	0	5.7	39.3	35.8	57.7	52.1	51.2

Source: Author's Own Computation from UNIMA Colleges and MZUNI Data.

Table 6.7 above shows that the impact of non-residential students on enrolments has been significant at Chancellor College, the Polytechnic and MZUNI. For instance over 50 per cent of students enrolled at Polytechnic were non-residential students in 2006 and 2010, while for MZUNI, non-residential students constituted over half of the total enrolment in 2008, 2009 and 2010. However, Bunda, unlike Chancellor College, the Polytechnic and MZUNI, has been registering a steady increase in non-residential students' enrolment with the exception of 2009. However, in terms of the undergraduate enrolment percentage increase, the MGDS as was earlier discussed set a target of 40 per cent on public HEIs by 2010 (from 2006). There were 6 654 undergraduate students in 2006 while in 2010 there were 9 128 students in public HEIs. This represents an increment of 37.2 per cent, which is still below the prescribed target of 40 percent.

Seen from the perspective of accessibility, the preceding discussion has few interpretations. First, on the whole, private HEIs have been expanding accessibility of higher education at a faster pace than public HEIs for the past four years. This means that if infrastructural and human resources constraints are sorted out, private HEIs can drastically boost their enrolment levels.

Second, enrolments in public HEIs are limited by bed space. For UNIMA this is because of the

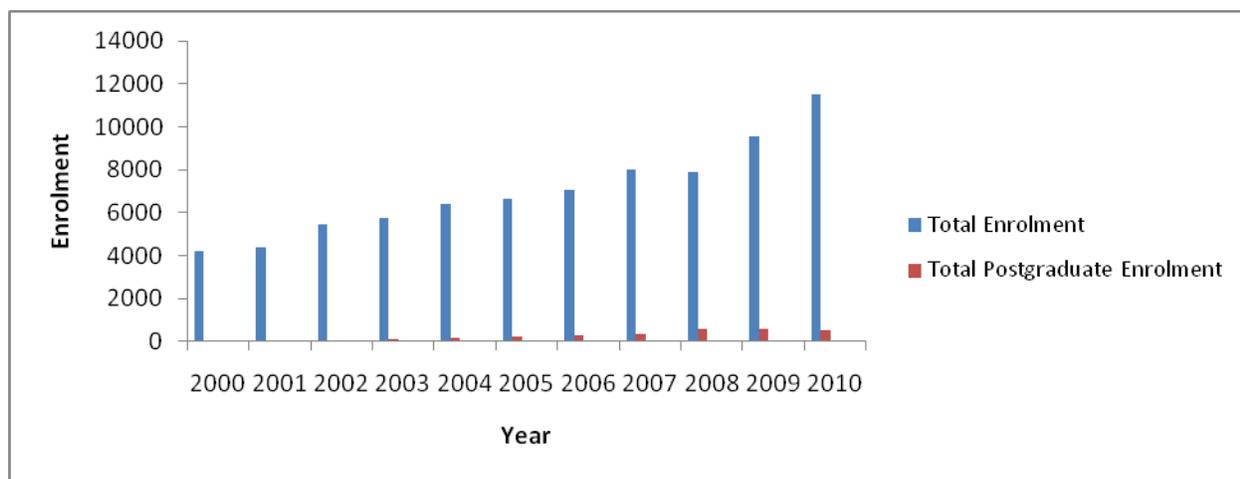
requirement of the 1998 University of Malawi Act. The bed space has not been increasing over time due to lack of funding. Thus it is currently only possible for UNIMA and MZUNI to increase enrolment by increasing their intake of non-residential students. Although low numbers of staff at both UNIMA and MZUNI were attributed as one of the reasons for low enrolment levels, it will be observed later in this chapter that lecture-student ratios are still higher, suggesting that it is possible to increase enrolment with the current level of staffing.

Third, although tuition fees in private HEIs are beyond the reach of the majority of Malawians, it is possible for both public and private HEIs to increase their intake even if they all (public and private HEIs) peg their fees at slightly higher levels than the prevailing fee levels. This can enable HEIs to recover the cost and improve on the quality of education by buying the some of the teaching and learning materials.

6.4.4 Postgraduate Enrolment

Postgraduate enrolment represents an insignificant portion of total enrolment. Despite the national development’s policy prescriptions to increase postgraduate enrolment, the enrolment levels over the years have been very low as evidenced in Figure 6.8 below.

Figure 6.8: Postgraduate Enrolment Trend



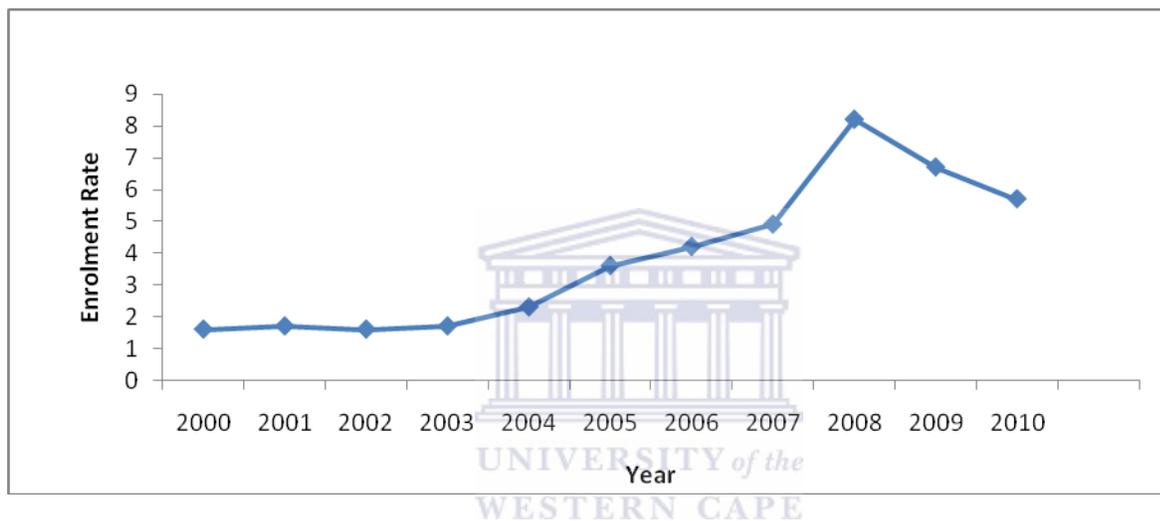
Source: Author’s Own Summary and Depiction from HEIs’ Data Sources.

On average, postgraduate enrolment between 2000 and 2010 has been 3.5 per cent of Malawi’s total higher education enrolment and 3.8 per cent of public HEIs enrolment. Either way, there has

not been a significant rate of increase in enrolment. The most visible increment rates (in public HEIs) were registered between 2005 and 2008.

There was a decrease in 2009 and 2010 as shown in Figure 6.9 below. Total postgraduate enrolment therefore has been and still remains lower than the 10 per cent expected by the policies in public HEIs.

Figure 6.9: Postgraduate Enrolment Trend in Public HEIs as a Percentage of Total Public HEIs Enrolment

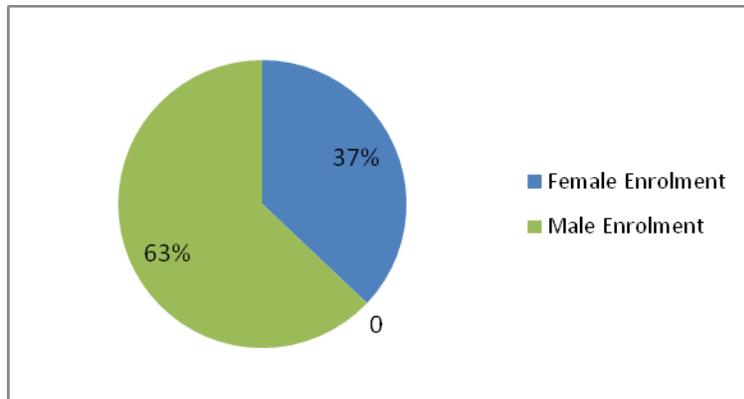


Source: Author's Own Summary and Depiction from HEIs' Data Sources.

6.4.5 Gender, Income and Regional Parities

Data analysis revealed significant parities along gender, income and regional divide. As of end 2010, there were 3 459 females in public schools out of a total 9 690 students. This represents 35.6 per cent, which is slightly above the 35 per cent target imposed on public HEIs by the policies. For both private and public HEIs, there were 4 269 females out of 11 497 students representing 37 per cent. This means that males constitute 63 per cent which is still relatively a higher percentage as shown in Figure 6.10 overleaf.

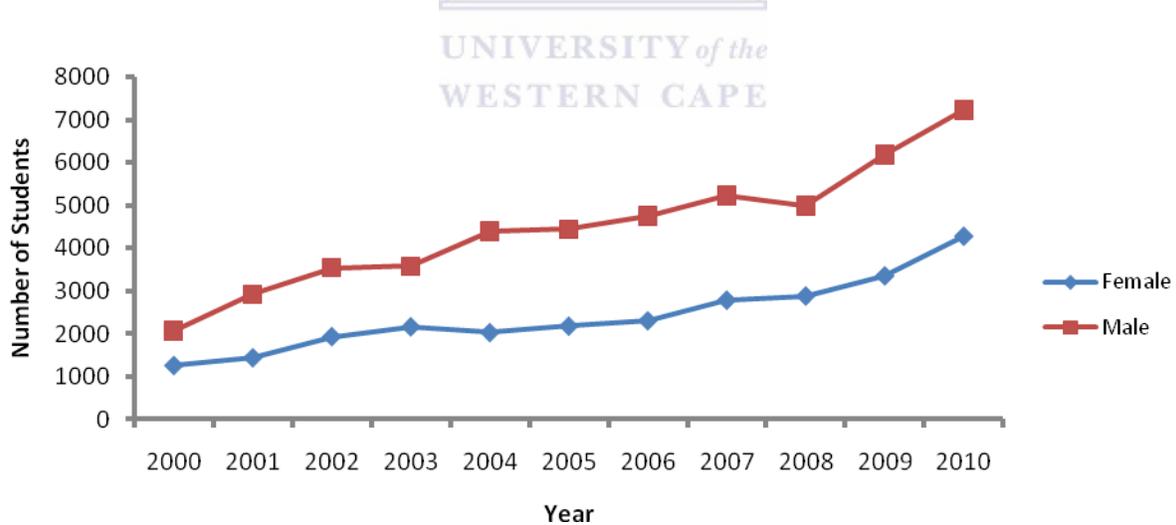
Figure 6.10: Male-Female Enrolment Level in 2010



Source: Author's Own Computation and Depiction from HEIs' Data Sources.

Although there has been some reasonable increase in enrolment levels between 2000 and 2010, male enrolment rate increase was still higher as shown in Figure 6.11 below.

Figure 6.11: Male-Female Enrolment Trends between 2000 and 2010



Source: Author's Own Depiction from HEIs' Data.

As depicted above, although female enrolment has been increasing, the gap between male and female enrolment has widened between 2003 and 2008 and between 2009 and 2010.

On average, the enrolment levels for females have been rising by 13.4 per cent per annum. This means that it will take five and a half years⁸⁰ for the current enrolment level to double. Relatively, the female enrolment rate has been higher in private HEIs as it has been rising at 59.3 per cent (between 2006 and 2010) compared to public HEIs' female enrolment increase rate of 11 per cent. Even when comparison is restricted to the 2006–2010 period, enrolment increase in public HEIs for females was just 11.4 per cent. This is ironic considering that UNIMA, unlike private HEIs, has an affirmative action policy for enrolment of women and yet in terms of the percentage increase in enrolment of females, public HEIs (where UNIMA constitutes over 60 per cent of total enrolment) is registering minimal increases as compared to private HEIs' average female enrolment increase. Overall, the low enrolment levels for females are partly explained by low pass rates for girls at MSCE as will be shown and discussed in the next chapter.

Gender parities are also visible in terms of participation of females in science and non-science subjects. On average, only 15 per cent of the total enrolled females between 2000 and 2010 were doing their programmes in Pure Sciences, Engineering and Applied Sciences although there has been an annual increment of three per cent between 2005 and 2010. (Between 2000 and 2003, there was literally no female student in the Mechanical Engineering class). This compares badly with 25 per cent average for males who have been doing Pure Sciences, Engineering and Applied

⁸⁰ This has been calculated as follows:

$$t = \frac{\text{Log } 2}{\text{Log } (1+r)}$$

Where $t = \text{time (number of years)}$

$r = \text{rate of increase}$

$$t = \frac{\text{Log } 2}{\text{Log } (1 + 0.134)}$$

$$t = \frac{0.301}{0.055}$$

$$t = 5.5 \text{ years}$$

Sciences over the same period. Among other reasons, the concentration of females in non-science subjects is caused by a cultural-historical pattern in which the choice of careers for females in Malawi was limited to teachers, secretaries and nurses while for males it was expected of them to aspire to become pilots, engineers and mechanics (Chidyaonga, 2003; Malawi Government, 2004; Malawi Government, 2009) Second, throughout the primary and secondary education, males in Malawi outperform females in almost all curricular areas except *Chichewa*⁸¹ and Bible Knowledge. The performance differential between boys and girls is widest in Mathematics and science subjects (Kadzamira, 1997). While UNIMA has the policies to increase the enrolment of women, there are no consistent policies in place to increase their enrolment in science subjects.

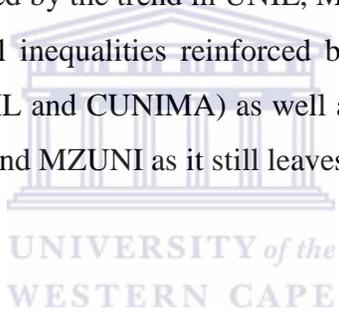
Apart from inequalities along gender lines, the enrolment trend also shows some inequity along income background of the students. Of those who are enrolled in both private and public HEIs, 90 per cent are from the 10 per cent richest quintile (World Bank, 2010b). There are two key reasons for this. First, tuition fees in private HEIs are beyond the reach of many average families. Thus, although HEIs are enhancing accessibility of higher education, the equity aspect remains unimproved as most of those who can afford to pay at private HEIs are from the well-to-do families. Second, public HEIs subsidise higher education by almost 100 per cent; the very fact that most of the students who perform well at MSCE are from good secondary schools (which are mostly private) further puts the students from rich families at an added advantage. 50 per cent of those who are selected to UNIMA and MZUNI are often from 37 schools, most of which are private institutions (World Bank, 2010b). There are, however, some schools within the 37 that are government owned. However, admission into these schools is competitive. In the end, many students who make it to these schools are those that have had good education at primary school and in most cases these happen to be students from wealthier families. Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) which enroll over 50 per cent of the students from average families on average send less than two per cent of students to public HEIs.

Regionally, between 2000 and 2009 as was earlier indicated, the north contributed almost 45 per cent of the students to HEIs – despite being the smallest in terms of population partly due to the availability of many conventional secondary schools (proportional to the population) and the

⁸¹ Chichewa is the national vernacular language.

culture of learning initiated by the earlier Christian missionaries who established many more schools in the region than in the other regions (Divala, 2009). The government also claims that there has been a trend of regionalising admission at MZUNI (for its intake until 2010) and UNIL. It was reported for example that more than 50 per cent of students between 2000 and 2010 at MZUNI were from the northern region while over 95 per cent of students at UNIL have been coming from the northern region.⁸² This researcher was however only able to crosscheck this with UNIL by using students' surnames to trace the region of origin.⁸³

The introduction of quotas, however, might not change the trend much as it means that once the 280 students have been selected using the system (in the case of UNIMA) the northern region will still have an advantage in competing for the remaining 2 000 places. Besides, the very fact that other private HEIs administer entrance examinations additionally puts the northern region students at an advantage as evidenced by the trend in UNIL, MAU and CUNIMA. Put differently, the enrolment levels show regional inequalities reinforced by both pure meritocratic selection system in private HEIs (MAU, UNIL and CUNIMA) as well as low quotas (10 per district) used in the current selection to UNIMA and MZUNI as it still leaves a lot of room for pure meritocratic selection.



6.5 Financial Performance

In the policies, public HEIs are expected to improve their financial management by ensuring that there is cost sharing between students and the university, by generating on their own significant amounts of resources and by reducing costs on non-core activities. Besides, all HEIs are expected to attract private sector participation in the financing of higher education for purposes of improving the quality of education.

6.5.1 Sources of Funding

Unlike private HEIs, UNIMA and MZUNI fees are significantly lower, with government-sponsored students paying almost nothing as shown in Table 6.8 overleaf.

⁸² Interview with Director of Higher Education, MoEST Spokesperson and MoEST Planning Officer.

⁸³ Practically, it is possible to detect if somebody comes from the north by looking at their surnames which have resemblances.

Table 6.8: Summary of Fees Paid in Malawi's HEIs in 2010 at Undergraduate Level

Institution	Tuition Only (MK)	Lodging and Food (MK)	Others (MK)	Total
CUNIMA	320 000	210 000	7 000	537 000
MAU ⁸⁴	256 000	172 000	12 000	440 000
BIU	224 000 ⁸⁵	-	2500	226 500
UNIL	420 000 ⁸⁶	-	7 000	427 000
SOUM	1 st Year –197 000 2 nd Year – 286 000 3 rd Year –312 000 4 th Year – 390 000	-	5 000	1 st Year –202 000 2 nd Year – 291 000 3 rd Year –317 000 4 th Year – 395 000
UNIMA	K25 000 for normal entry students K100 000 for parallel students	NA	NA	K25 000 for normal entry students K100 000 for parallel students
MZUNI	K50 000 for normal entry students K150 000 for parallel students	NA	NA	K50 000 for normal entry students K150 000 for parallel students

Source: HEIs' Registrars Records.

As will be shown below, UNIMA and MZUNI student fees do not constitute much in the total university budget. In both UNIMA and MZUNI, in 2000, the tuition fee was K1 500 (US\$10) with the government providing the books and stationery allowance of the same amount. Between 2001 and 2004, the tuition fee was K25 000 (US\$167) which was accompanied by a loan scheme of the similar amount for normal entry students or students on full government scholarship. The government was also giving a book and stationery allowance of K5 000 (US\$33) per annum to normal entry students. In 2005 the books and stationery allowance rose to K10 000 (US\$66 and went further to K20 000 (US\$133) in 2008. Until 2010, the provision of food and lodging was the responsibility of the government through the university. Between 2002 and 2010, qualifying

⁸⁴ According to MAU's 2011 Fee Policy, students pay per credit at K6 500 and must take 20 credits per semester.

⁸⁵ Tuition for Distance learning is K140 000.

⁸⁶ Inclusive of boarding as there is no option of self-boarding.

students could be enrolled directly by UNIMA colleges as parallel students (and on non-residential basis).

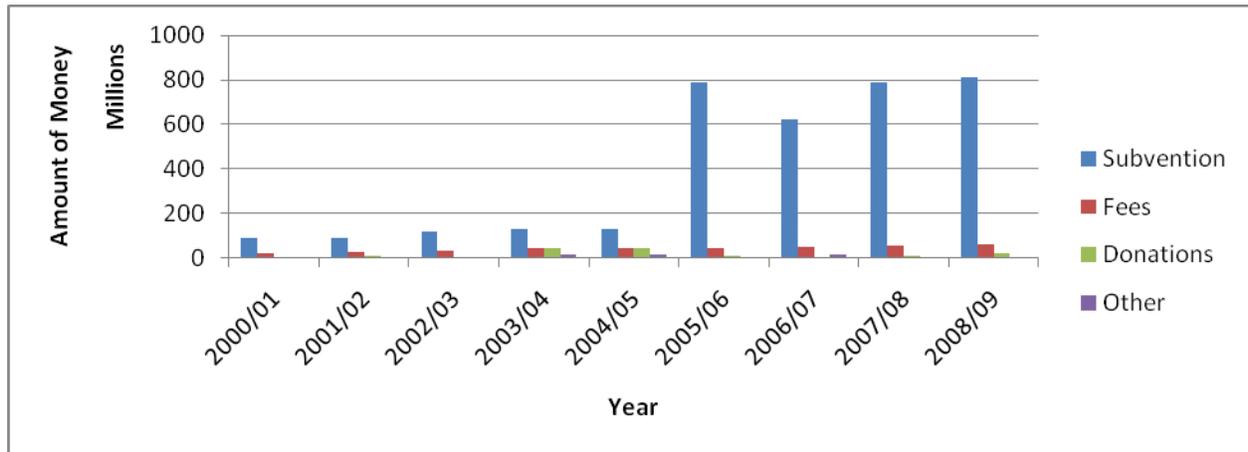
The tuition fee for UNIMA's parallel students until 2009 was K100 000. At MZUNI, non-residential students (those who are not on government scholarship) pay a tuition fee of K150 000 while those on government scholarship pay tuition of K50 000 per annum which is also provided by the government through the Public University Students Loan Trust (PUSLT). However, given the fact that 90 per cent of the students in public HEIs are from the 10 per cent richest families in Malawi – who arguably can manage to pay slightly more than that – such subsidies further entrench the inequalities between the rich and poor and subsidise those who can already afford to pay. Records at the PUSLT also show that over 95 per cent of the beneficiaries of the loan scheme have not been able to pay back. The amount owed to these PUSLT by these students is K700 Million Kwacha (US\$4.6 Million).⁸⁷ Furthermore, an assessment of the economic cost of education carried out by UNIMA in 2006 shows that UNIMA and MZUNI's cost of operations were K1 275 266 and MK1 083 088 respectively (World Bank, 2010b). If one is to accept these figures, then it means that UNIMA and MZUNI students pay less than five per cent of the total cost while non-residential students pay less than eight per cent of the total cost. This suggests low cost recovery levels from the students. The exception however appears to be for Master's and PhD students who pay between K1 000 000 and K2 500 000 for both UNIMA and MZUNI students (tuition for the whole programme) as well as mature entry students who pay between K100 000 and K200 000 (tuition per annum).

Accordingly, the dominant source of funding in the two public HEIs is government subvention as depicted in figures 6.12, 6.13, 6.14 and 6.15.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Interview with MoEST Spokesperson.

⁸⁸ Accounts records for the 2009/10 financial year could not be accessed as the books had not been officially closed at the time of this study.

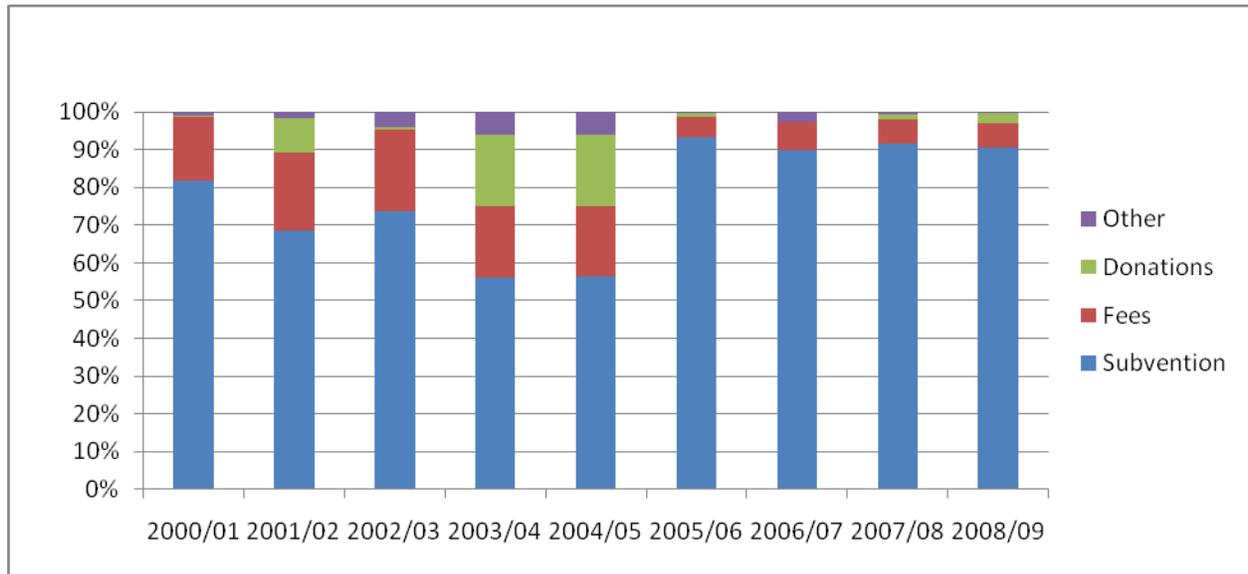
Figure 6.12: Sources of Funds for MZUNI



Source: Author's Own Depiction from MZUNI's Annual Financial Reports.

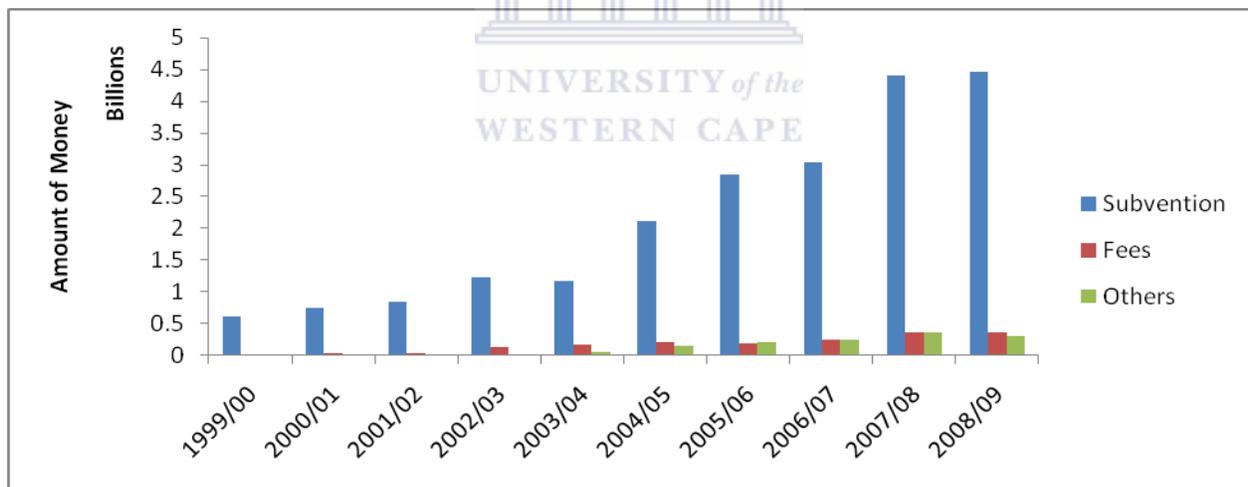
Although government subvention was not much higher relative to other sources, it has been significantly high since 2005/06 financial year as shown above. Expressed in percentage terms, subventions have always constituted more than 70 percentage of total funding with the exceptions of the 2001/02, 2003/04 and 2004/05 financial years. For UNIMA, subventions have often constituted more than 85 per cent of total funding with the exception of 2003/04 financial year. Thus, relatively, UNIMA relies significantly more on government subvention than MZUNI although in both cases percentages are substantial. MZUNI, apart from fees and other sources, received donations which are orchestrated by the fundraising body called MZUNI University Trust Fund. UNIMA does not have such a fund. In the 2003/04 and 2004/05 financial years, such donations accounted for more than 15 per cent at MZUNI. As it would be expected, fees at UNIMA have accounted for less than 15 per cent with the exception of the 2003/04 financial year. MZUNI however has between 2000 and 2005 been getting more than 15 per cent of its funds from tuition fees charged to students.

Figure 6.13: Trend in Sources of Funds for MZUNI (in %)



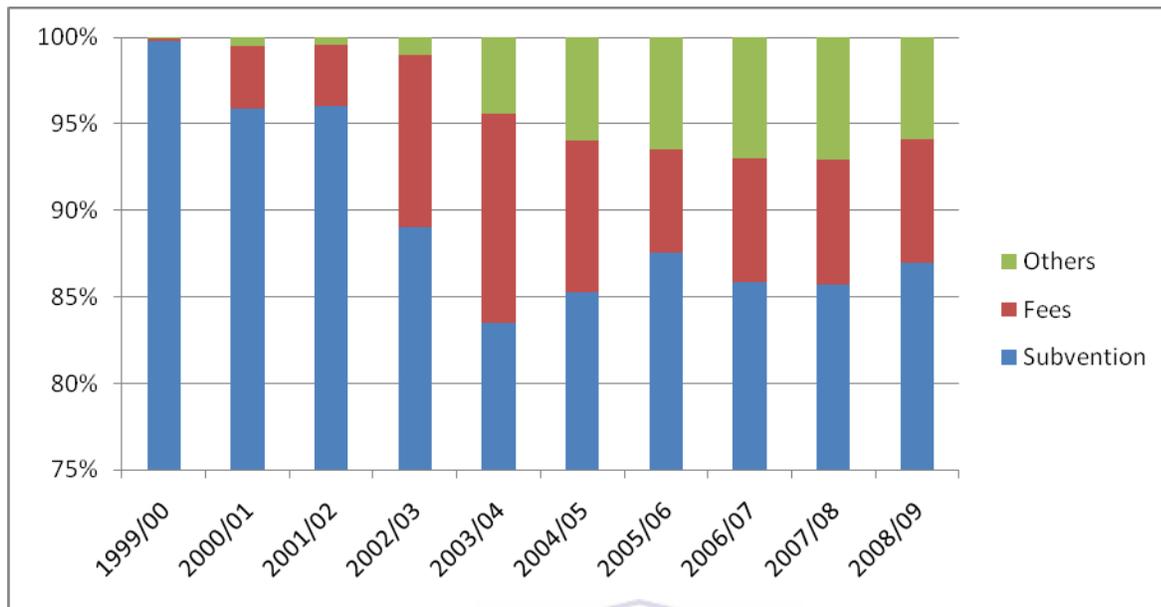
Source: Author's Own Compilation from MZUNI's Annual Financial Reports.

Figure 6.14: Trend in Sources of Funds for UNIMA in Malawi Kwacha



Source: Author's Own Depiction from UNIMA's Annual Financial Reports.

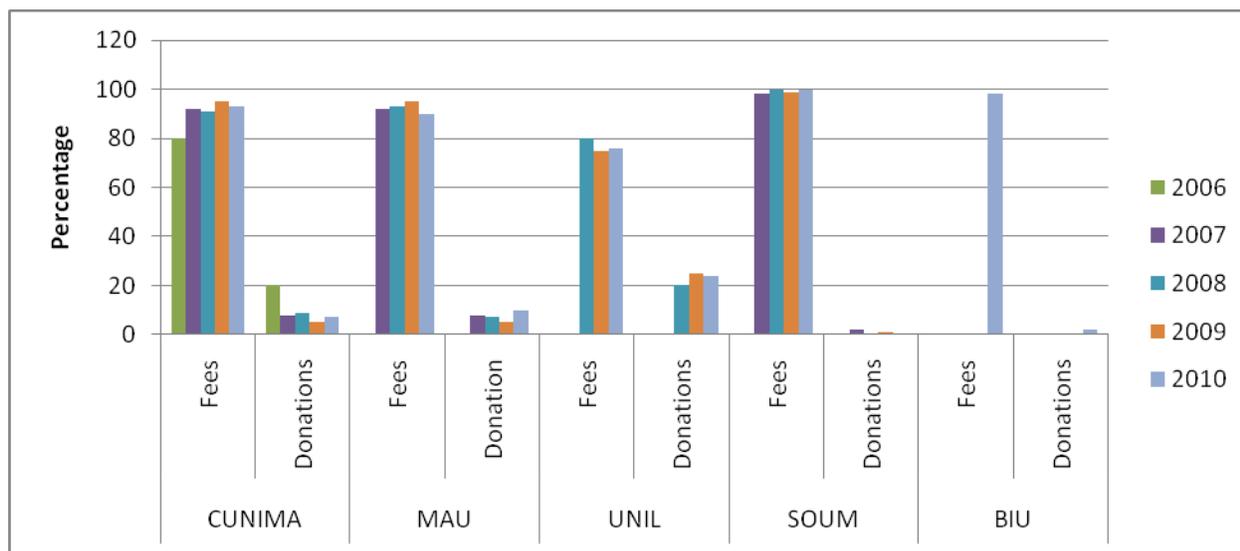
Figure 6.15: Trend in Sources of Funds for UNIMA (in %)



Source: Author's Own Depiction from UNIMA's Annual Financial Reports.

For private HEIs, a breakdown of their sources of funds in terms of percentage is depicted in Figure 6.16 below. In all the private HEIs, fees have been constituting more than 70 per cent (in the case of UNIL) and more than 80 per cent in the case of MAU and CUNIMA. For BIU and SOUM, fees have accounted for almost 100 per cent of the total funds. The figure below also shows that religious HEIs (CUNIMA, MAU and UNIL) have been receiving donations unlike SOUM and BIU where such donations have been negligible. In the case of MAU, UNIL and CUNIMA, such donations have been coming from sister churches abroad and local congregations of the SDA, CCAP and Roman Catholic Church respectively. However, considering that private HEIs rely exclusively on tuition fees which, as shown above, are well below the determined unit cost of providing such education, it is irresistible to question how private HEIs are managing to provide education at such costs.

Figure 6.16: Trend in Sources of Funds for Private HEIs (in %)



Source: Author's Own Depiction from Private HEIs' Financial Reports.

There are a number of reasons for the above trend in financing sources. First, the dominance in government subvention in public HEIs is caused by the failure by the HEIs to mobilise own resources beyond fees (for private HEIs) and subvention (for public HEIs) partly due to internal organisation's human resource capacity constraints. Both private and public HEIs cited lack of awareness among key groups in society such as private companies, international NGOs and other stakeholders of the real and potential contribution of universities. This was largely attributed to lack of public relations offices or marketing departments in all HEIs. With the exception of MZUNI, all other HEIs have no specialised section of semi-autonomous body charged with the responsibility of fundraising. Consequently participation in the promotion of higher education by the private HEIs and other well-wishers is minimal. For public HEIs, efforts to raise own resources are being hampered by poor reinforcement of internal organisation's policies.⁸⁹ For example, while both MZUNI and UNIMA consultancy policies require lecturers who are undertaking consultancies to remit a portion of their proceeds to the universities (for using the universities' resources),⁹⁰ it was noted that almost none of the staff were doing so despite the fact that universities' resources are used in all consultancies in varying degree. Between 2000 and

⁸⁹ Interviews with UNIMA VC and MZUNI VC.

⁹⁰ See Mzuzu University, 2009, 2010 and University of Malawi, 2006.

2008, only three lecturers did so while at MZUNI none did so. Apart from internal challenges in raising their own resources, government has also been irresponsive to HEIs' requests to raise fees in line with economic costs. This leaves subvention as the sole dominant source of funding for public HEIs. (This will be discussed further in the next chapter).

6.5.2 Expenditure Pattern

For public HEIs, the emoluments and benefits of staff have constituted the largest share (over 50 per cent for UNIMA) since 2000 for the two public HEIs as shown in Tables 6.9 and 6.10 below.

Table 6.9: UNIMA's Expenditure Trend and Pattern (in %)

Budget Item	Year									
	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Emoluments and benefits	61.4%	62.4%	58.4%	59.9%	54.4%	53.6%	60%	59%	59.1%	55.7%
Utilities	6.1%	6%	5.1%	4.9%	5.8%	5.4%	4.7%	5.7%	4.9%	5.1%
Student Provision/allowances	9%	8.1%	8%	6.3%	8.6%	7.2%	7.1%	7%	8.1%	8%
Teaching materials/equipment	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0%	0.4%	1%	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%
Books and periodicals	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.9%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
Travel allowances	1.8%	1.9%	2.9%	1.2%	2.3%	1.6%	1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	4.1%	4%	5%	3.7%	3.8%	3.6%	2.5%	2.4%	2.7%	2.2%
Repairs for houses/buildings	3.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.6%	2.4%	2.7%	2.1%	1.9%	1.6%	1.3%
Leasing and assets purchase	2.4%	2.3%	3.4%	1.1%	5.1%	6.1%	2.0%	1.9%	2.1%	1.9%
Cleaning rates	1.1%	1%	0.9%	0.4%	1.0%	1.2%	2.4%	2.7%	2%	2.1%
Training and development	1%	0.9%	0.8%	1.4%	1.5%	1.8%	1.3%	1.5%	0.7%	1.3%
Research and publications	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.8%
Administration	6.8%	7.7%	11.5%	13.4%	10.2%	13.8%	12.4%	12.3%	13.5%	15.1%
Others	2%	1.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	2.1%	3.1%	3.2%	2.5%	4.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Author's Own Computation and Summary from UNIMA Financial Reports.

Table 6.10: MZUNI's Expenditure Trend and Pattern (in %)

Budget Item	Year									
	2000/	2001/	2002/0	2003/0	2004/0	2005/0	2006/0	2007/	2008/09	

	01	02	3	4	5	6	7	08	
Emoluments and benefits	25%	40%	44.2%	39.8	46.2%	43.6%	50.6%	54.7%	58%
Utilities	12%	8.2%	7.7%	8.1%	6.9%	3.2%	4.8%	4.9%	5%
Student provision/allowances	18%	17.9%	17.6%	17.4%	13.6%	10.3%	9%	8.1%	9.2%
Teaching materials/equipment	5.1%	3.1%	1.5%	1.7%	3.7%	8.5%	8.8%	7.1%	3.2%
Books and periodicals	4.1%	2.8%	1.2%	3.6%	1.8%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.1%
Travel allowances	9.9%	8.3%	8.2%	4.0%	8.2%	6.8%	9.2%	6.5%	7.8%
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	4.2%	4.6%	5.8%	4.1%	4.4%	0%	0%	3.6%	3.8%
Repairs for houses/buildings	5.3%	1.9%	2.1%	2.7%	2.9%	0%	0%	1.3%	1.1%
Leasing and assets purchase	6.1%	7.8%	7.4%	8.6%	0.4%	15.7%	9.7%	5.3%	4.2%
Cleaning rates	1.3%	1.1%	1%	0.2%	0%	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%	0.9%
Training and development	1.6%	1.7%	0.5%	0.8%	1.7%	3.4%	2%	1.9%	1.7%
Research and publications	0%	0.1%	0%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%
Administration	6%	2.1%	2.2%	6%	7.3%	1.5%	2%	2.8%	3%
Others	1.4%	0.4%	0.6%	3%	2.1%	3.8%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Author's Own Computation and Summary from MZUNI Financial Reports.

Relatively, UNIMA has been registering higher percentages of emoluments than MZUNI. Although it is not unusual in the SSA region for emoluments to constitute high portions of total expenditure (Amonoo-Neizer, 1998), the main reason for high emoluments in the case of UNIMA and MZUNI is the high number of staff, especially support staff (discussed in the next section). The World Bank (2010b) also argues that the higher emoluments share is due to reasonably high perks for UNIMA (and MZUNI) compared to many universities in the SADC region. (This study however could not verify this observation). Until 2009 when the two HEIs started outsourcing the catering services, students' provision and allowances constituted the second largest item for MZUNI and the third largest for UNIMA. As shown above, students' provision and allowances have constituted a significant percentage considering also that this item is not a core business of the university. For UNIMA, administration has often constituted the second largest expenditure while for MZUNI it has always been the third. Leasing and purchasing of assets has been MZUNI's fourth largest expenditure followed by the purchase of teaching materials. Viewed from the quality dimension, such an increase in the teaching materials is a move in the right direction. Ironically for UNIMA, such a category (teaching materials) has often constituted not more than 1.2 per cent of total expenditure. In 2003/04 financial year, UNIMA did not buy any teaching and learning materials as the registered expenditure on this item was zero. For both UNIMA and

MZUNI, allocation to research has been less than one per cent between 2000 and 2010. This signifies the neglect of an important component of the core activities of the public HEIs as expected by their respective legislations as well as the policies. There have also been minimal resources allocated to staff development, conspicuously in the case of UNIMA, making it difficult for the improvement of quality of staff.

In the period between 2000 and 2010 both UNIMA and MZUNI registered budget deficits as shown in Table 6.11 below.

Table 6.11: Summary of Budget Deficits for UNIMA and MZUNI between 2000 and 2010 (in %)

	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
UNIMA	6.1%	15.2%	18.1%	12.1%	10.3%	11.5%	8.9%	9.8%	7.9%	7.1%
MZUNI	-	3.2%	4.8%	14.1%	12.1%	16.0%	21.1%	12.8%	7.7%	18%

Source: Author's Own Computation from UNIMA and MZUNI Financial Reports.

The deficits tabled above signify the budget bottlenecks that these HEIs go through. It is very difficult to argue precisely that such deficits are caused by low funding levels when one considers the preoccupation of these HEIs with non-core activities such as catering and student lodging as well as internal inefficiencies caused by a bloated workforce especially in terms of support staff (see the section on internal efficiencies). However, the obvious implication at this juncture is that these two HEIs need to diversify their funding sources if such bottlenecks are to be curbed.

For private HEIs, the pattern is shown in Table 6.12 below. MAU and UNIL provide student lodging and catering services, which explains the high per centage in students' provision as compared to CUNIMA (which outsources) and SOUM and BIU (which do not provide). In all the private HEIs, emoluments have been reasonably high although not higher than public HEIs (with the exception of CUNIMA). This is so because of the minimal number of staff in the private HEIs. For SOUM and BIU, leasing and assets purchase constitute a large portion because the two institutions are using rented premises. Just as in public HEIs, negligible portions have been spent on teaching and learning materials as well as books and periodicals. Considering that all these HEIs are new (and therefore have no substantial resources), such levels of expenditure signify the

compromise in the quality of education offered. With the exception of UNIMA, all other private HEIs have not made any allocation towards staff and research and development since their opening. This confirms the visible absence of a research component in private HEIs will be discussed later in this chapter.

Table 6.12: Private HEIs' Expenditure Trend and Pattern (in %)

CUNIMA's Expenditure Trend and Pattern					
Budget Item	Year				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Emoluments and benefits	45.7%	58.8%	74.4%	71.1%	75%
Utilities	7%	7.7%	5.6%	7.8%	8.1%
Student provision/allowances	17.9%	11.5%	0.9%	1%	1.1%
Teaching materials/equipment	0.7%	1.1%	1.5%	1.2%	1.6%
Books and periodicals	0.7%	0.9%	0.8%	0.6%	0.5%
Travel allowances	0.2%	0%	2.3%	1.2%	2.2%
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	2%	1.9%	3.1%	2.9%	3%
Repairs for houses/buildings	4.4%	0%	2.1%	3.2%	4.1%
Leasing and assets purchase	5%	0%	2%	1.3%	0%
Cleaning rates	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Training and development	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Research and publications	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0%	0%
Administration	14.9%	11.0%	3.4%	7.2%	4.1%
Others	1.8	6.5%	3.5%	2.1%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
MAU's Expenditure Trend and Pattern					
Budget Item	Year				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	
Emoluments and benefits	22%	25%	24%	26.1%	
Utilities	7%	5.2%	7%	8.1%	
Student provision/allowances	45%	42%	40.8%	38.2%	
Teaching materials/equipment	0.9%	1.8%	1.2%	1.9%	
Books and periodicals	0.2%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	
Travel allowances	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.9%	
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	0.9%	5.1%	3.9%	3.5%	
Repairs for houses/buildings	0%	6.4%	8.1%	4.1%	
Leasing and assets purchase	6.3%	3%	3.7%	4.1%	
Cleaning rates	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	
Training and development	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Research and publications	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Administration	11%	7.4%	7.9%	4.1%	
Others	6.5%	3%	2.1%	8.2%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	
SOUM's Expenditure Trend and Pattern					
Budget Item	Year				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	
Emoluments and benefits	38%	39%	40%	38.2%	
Utilities	7%	5%	6.3%	5.1%	
Student provision/allowances	0%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%	

Teaching materials/equipment	0.8%	1.3%	1.6%	1.5%
Books and periodicals	0.4%	0.9%	1.7%	0.9%
Travel allowances	0.8%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.7%
Repairs for houses/buildings	0.2%	0%	0.8%	5.1%
Leasing and assets purchase	15.1%	19.1%	23.1%	26%
Cleaning rates	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
Training and development	0%	0%	0%	0%
Research and publications	0%	0%	0%	0%
Administration	8.1%	10.5%	9.9%	10.2%
Others	29%	23.4%	15.3%	11.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

UNIL's Expenditure Trend and Pattern

Budget Item	Year		
	2008	2009	2010
Emoluments and benefits	29.9%	31%	28%
Utilities	6.8%	6%	8%
Student provision/allowances	41.8%	40%	41%
Teaching materials/equipment	0.8%	0.7%	0.5%
Books and periodicals	0.9%	1.4	2.1%
Travel allowances	2.3%	2.1	1.9%
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	7.9%	6.2%	8.4%
Repairs for houses/buildings	7.4%	3.8%	4.1%
Leasing and assets purchase	2.1%	1.9%	2.1%
Cleaning rates	0.15	0.1%	0.1%
Training and development	0%	0%	0%
Research and publications	0%	0%	0%
Administration	3%	5.2%	3.6%
Others	0%	1.6%	0.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

BIU's Expenditure Trend and Pattern

Budget Item	Year
	2010
Emoluments and benefits	49%
Utilities	8%
Student provision/allowances	1.8%
Teaching materials/equipment	0.5%
Books and periodicals	2.1%
Travel allowances	0%
Vehicle maintenance/fuels	1.8%
Repairs for houses/buildings	10.1%
Leasing and assets purchase	20.1%
Cleaning rates	0.2%
Training and development	0%
Research and publications	0%
Administration	6.2%
Others	0.2%
Total	100%

Source: Author's Own Computation from Private HEIs' Financial Reports.

6.5.3 Private Sector Financing

The private sector does not directly finance the operations of the higher education system. In all the HEIs, only three private companies and four trust agencies have been involved in some regular financing of the HEIs in the period under study. The National Bank of Malawi gives monetary awards to best students in each faculty of the University of Malawi while Total Malawi and Stansfield Motors award best students in the Engineering Faculty. Press Trust donates books to public HEIs, while Khuze Trust runs a football trophy for the Law faculty of UNIMA. Beit Trust also donates books to public HEIs and once constructed the female hostel at Chancellor College. The Reserve Bank of Malawi has also been buying books for HEIs on request. Other than these six organisations, there has been no form of funding by private companies to the HEIs except through the members of staff who are studying in these HEIs. The private sector was not involved in the provision of infrastructure until 2009 when catering services were outsourced by UNIMA. In the same year, the Malawi Housing Cooperation (MHC) also built two hostels for UNIMA which it rented out to students directly thereby easing the accommodation problem especially for non-residential students. At CUNIMA, catering services to students are also offered by a private firm. With the exception of Banking Hall at MZUNI and UNIMA's Chancellor College (served by the NBS Bank), no bank has an agency in the HEIs. There are small retail shops in all the HEIs but these are run by students.

6.6 Research

Research is not an institutionalised activity in the private HEIs. There was no research reported by the private HEIs in the period of their existence and none of the private HEIs have a research policy in place. As was seen under the section of the expenditure trend, there have been no budgetary allocations to research component since their establishment – reinforcing further the dormant research component. In the course of interviews, it was however disclosed that there are a few lecturers from the private HEIs who are involved in research but who do so outside the university operational framework. It was however difficult to establish the number of lecturers involved in research activities as well as the type and scale of research as none of their output was traceable even by university authorities themselves.

For UNIMA, research as an institutionalised activity is mostly undertaken by the Centres which

are largely aligned to specific academic faculties. Individual academic staff members at UNIMA are also involved in some research activity on their own. (However, it is difficult to establish the exact number of research projects and the nature of such projects because of failure by individual colleges to keep such records due to the tendency of individual academic staff to hide the disclosure of such information). Key research Centres at UNIMA are:

- Centre for Social Research (CSR) at Chancellor College
- Centre for Language Studies (CLS) at Chancellor College
- Conflict Management Centre at Chancellor College
- Industrial Research Unit at Chancellor College
- Leadership for Environmental and Development (LEAD) at Chancellor College
- Centre for Educational Research and Training (CERT) at Chancellor College
- Centre for Agricultural Research and Development (CARD) at Bunda College
- Centre for Water, Sanitation, Health and Appropriate Technology Development (WASHTED) at the Polytechnic
- Centre for Industrial Technology at Polytechnic
- Kamuzu College of Nursing Research Centre
- College of Medicine Malaria Centre
- Gender Studies Unit at University Office.

With the exception of the Gender Studies Unit, the above centres and units are aligned to specific faculties although some such as CERT, CRS and CARD have their own staff but who are employees of UNIMA. The idea in all the research centres has been to contribute to basic and problem-solving research. However, in most cases, the centres work as consulting agencies for non-governmental organisations and government. Consequently, 90 per cent of research funding has come from donors while the university only contributes through the salaries to the members of staff. Between 2000 and 2010, total research funding (from donors) to the above centres (aggregated under college) has been increasing by an average of 5.2 per cent. Total funding to the individual colleges in the period under study was as shown in Table 6.13 overleaf.

Table 6.13: Research Levels in terms of Funding as of December 2010

College	Number of Projects	Value (in MK)
Bunda College	17	215 881 000
Chancellor College	32	229 185 000
College of Medicine	28	533 630 000
Kamuzu College of Nursing	5	270 777 000
The Polytechnic	8	36 595 000
University Office	6	27 678 000
UNIMA Total	96	1 313 746 000

Source: Author's Own Compilation from UNIMA's Constituent College Financial Reports.

However, it was observed that reliance on donor support has often resulted in instances where the supported research does not address the research needs of Malawi but rather the operational needs of the funding agencies.⁹¹ There has also been little collaboration between private firms and these centres as most collaboration is done with the international donor agencies.

Visibly, the problem solving and basic research have been the main victims in the research activities of UNIMA. The first reason as alluded to is the fact that most of the funding comes from donor agencies whose research interests are not often in tune with the research needs of the country. Total UNIMA allocation as was shown in the preceding section has on average been less than one per cent of total expenditure. The highest expenditure of 0.8 per cent was only registered in the 2008/2009 financial year. However, this study established that each of the individual centres has for the past ten years been able to raise annual resources (through consultancy projects) adequate enough to support basic research on a small scale. Since the employees of the centres are paid by the university, this researcher observed that, with a clear plan of action for basic research, such basic research would be feasible. It was difficult to establish precisely how the centres spend most of the fee charged for consultancies but the directors interviewed confirmed that over 80 per cent of the proceeds are often paid to individuals involved in the

⁹¹ Interviews with Directors, Centre for Social Research (Chancellor College), Centre for Industrial Technology (Polytechnic) and Centre for Agricultural Research (Bunda College).

research as “honorarium”.

Second, lack of effective coordination of research at UNIMA also accounts for lack of basic research. Although there are Research Coordination Committees at UNIMA, it was observed that all of them find it difficult to “impose” the will of the university on the Research Centres beyond the resources that UNIMA makes towards research component. At UNIMA, it was observed that the Research Centres tend to resist the “intrusion” of the university areas in which the university is seen not to have invested much.

For MZUNI, the research centres are not fully aligned to faculties and, in most cases, their operations are not directly linked to the research activities of faculties by of individual departments. There are five research centres:

- Centre for Open and Distance learning,
- Centre for Continuing Education,
- The Test and Training Centre for Renewable Energy technologies (TCRET),
- Centre for Security Studies,
- Centre for Environmental Education, Training and Research.

With the exception of the Test and Training Centre for Renewable Energy Technologies, the other centres have largely been involved in offering courses in their related fields as well as undertaking consultancies for NGO and donor agencies. The amount of money that these centres have been raising could not however be established. The Test and Training Centre for Renewable Energy Technologies managed to undertake innovative research in renewable energy – mainly the development of solar panels – using the research resources allocated to it by the university. This partly confirms that it is possible for some small-scale problem-solving research to be done even with the few resources made available to these research centres. Just as in the case of UNIMA, research activities by individual lecturers (in the form of consultancies) are common although such activities are not documented as they are not made known to MZUNI administration.

6.7 Internal Efficiencies

Internal efficiencies partly signify the quality of education as well as the organisational prudence

in maximising the usage of resources. The graduation rates for the HEIs expressed as a proportion of total number of students who sit for final examinations at undergraduate level have been as follows:

Table 6.14: Summary of Graduation Rates in Malawi's HEIs

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
UNIMA	98.3%	98.1%	99.3%	99.7%	98.2%	99.1%	98.1%	99.1%	98.1%	98.3%
MZUNI	NA	NA	NA	NA	98.2%	98.1%	98%	99.2%	98.1%	97.9%
CUNIMA	NA	98.3%	97.5%							
MAU	NA	97.4%	97%	98%						
UNIL	NA	97.2%	96.9%							
SOUM	NA	96%	95%	96.2%						
BIU	NA									

Source: Author's Summary from HEIs' Registry Data.

The above picture shows that in all HEIs over 95 per cent of students who sit for final examinations pass and eventually graduate. This shows a significant level of internal efficiency as it implies that the system does not spend resources on the same students.

Annual repetition rates (for undergraduate) in all HEIs are also very low as shown below in Table 6.15, with the exception of MAU and SOUM. Within UNIMA, 60 per cent of the repeaters were from Engineering, Science and Agriculture faculties while MZUNI's 50 per cent were the Education Science degree programme. Shortages of equipment in these subjects were given as the main reason for high reoperations as students have to cope with shortages in relatively difficult disciplines.

Table 6.15: Repetition Rates for Undergraduate Students in Malawi's HEIs

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
UNIMA	5%	4%	7.1%	6%	3.9%	3.1%	4.2%	4.1%	3.8%	3.1%
MZUNI	3%	2.8%	3.7%	2.9%	5.2%	2.1%	3.1%	7.8%	3%	4.2%
CUNIMA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.9%	2.1%	1.4%	2.5%

MAU ⁹²	NA	13%	9%	10.7%						
UNIL	NA	2.9%	4%							
SOUM	NA	8%	10.1%							
BIU	NA	NA	NA							

Source: Author's Own Summary from HEIs' Registry Data.

It was difficult to establish the reason behind MAU high repetition rates but at SOUM it was observed that most of the students work during the weekdays and in most cases they have to cope with the pressure of both studies and work.⁹³

The calculation done for all HEIs shows that it takes a student in Malawi 4.3 years to finish an undergraduate programme instead of the normal four years. This shows some inefficiency although it is not significant. However, at postgraduate level, inefficiencies are high as it takes an average of four years for UNIMA and MZUNI master's students to finish (instead of the prescribed two years) while it takes six years to finish a PhD programme at UNIMA only (instead of the prescribed three to four years).⁹⁴ Reasons for this performance have partly been given in the next chapter. While such longevity of duration, according to studies, could be due to students' abilities, economic factors and educational setting (Katsikas, 2010), the key point that can be underscored here with little contention is that there are inefficiencies in postgraduate schooling in Malawi's public HEIs.

Viewed from the student-lecturer ratio, the efficiency in Malawi's HEIs⁹⁵ is as follows with UNIMA and UNIL topping the list in terms of inefficiency:

⁹² MAU uses the credit system of assessing students and the percentages indicated are for number of students repeating one or more courses.

⁹³ Interview with SOUM Registrar.

⁹⁴ MZUNI was excluded as none from its first PhD cohort had finished at the time of this study.

⁹⁵ SOUM is excluded as at the time of this research there were some programmes which were not accredited but were being offered. Since the focus is only on students that are attending accredited programmes, it is likely that a student-lecturer ratio calculated along these lines would have underrated SOUM's efficiency.

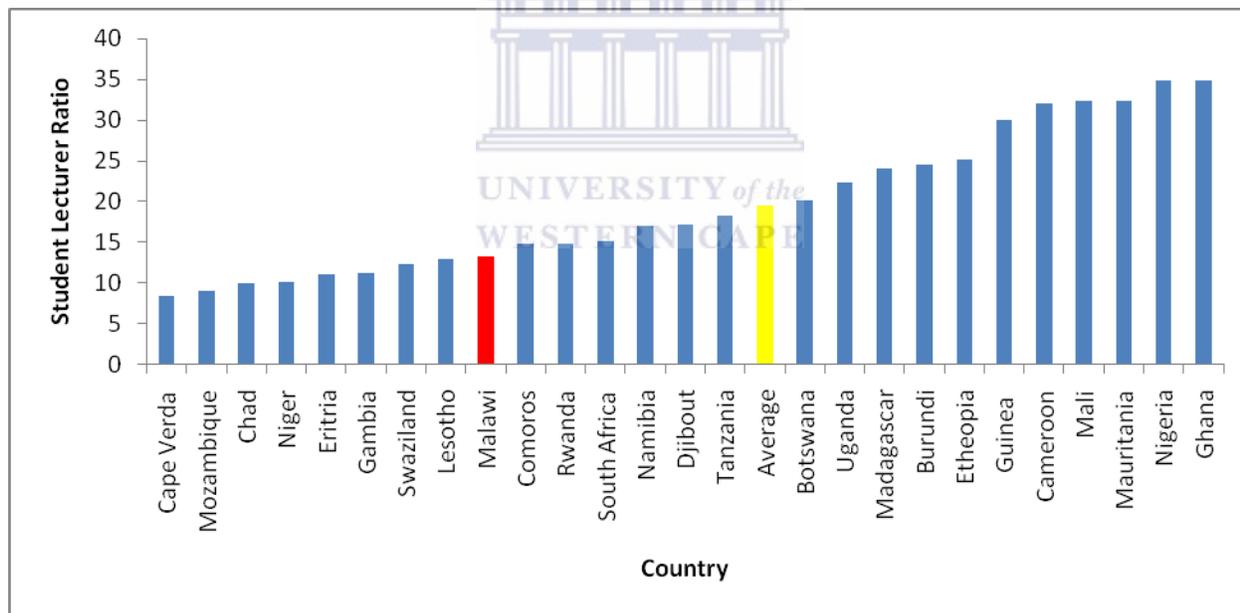
Table 6.16: Summary of Student-Lecturer Ratios in Malawi’s HEIs for 2010

<u>Name of HEI</u>	<u>SLR</u>
UNIMA	10.1
UNIL	10.2
MAU	13.2
BIU	14
MZUNI	14.1
CUNIMA	18

Source: Author’s Own Computation from HEIs’ Registry Data.

The above picture shows that, on average, one lecturer in Malawi’s HEIs teaches 13.2 students. This is however below the average 19.5 in the SSA region as shown in Figure 6.17 below – an indication that it is possible to increase enrolment with the current number of lecturers.

Figure 6.17: Student-Lecturer Ratio in Selected SSA Countries in 2010



Source: Author’s Own Depiction from UNESCO (2011).

There is however a striking inefficiency in the two public HEIs when it comes to student–support staff ratio (SSSR) as shown overleaf.

Table 6.17: Summary of Student-Support Staff Ratio in Malawi's HEIs in 2010

<u>Name of HEI</u>	<u>SSSR</u>
UNIMA	4.1
MZUNI	10.6
MAU	13.9
CUNIMA	22.7
BIU	65.6
UNIL	12.5

Source: Author's Own Computation from HEIs' Registry Data.

The picture above shows that, on average, one support staff member supports only four students at UNIMA while at MZUNI he or she supports 10.6 students (roughly 11 students). Although MAU and UNIL provide catering services to students (and therefore include cooks), it is ironic to find them slightly more efficient above both MZUNI and UNIMA which, as of 2010, were outsourcing the catering and cleaning services. For BIU and CUNIMA, the offloading of catering services partly explains their low student support staff ratios.

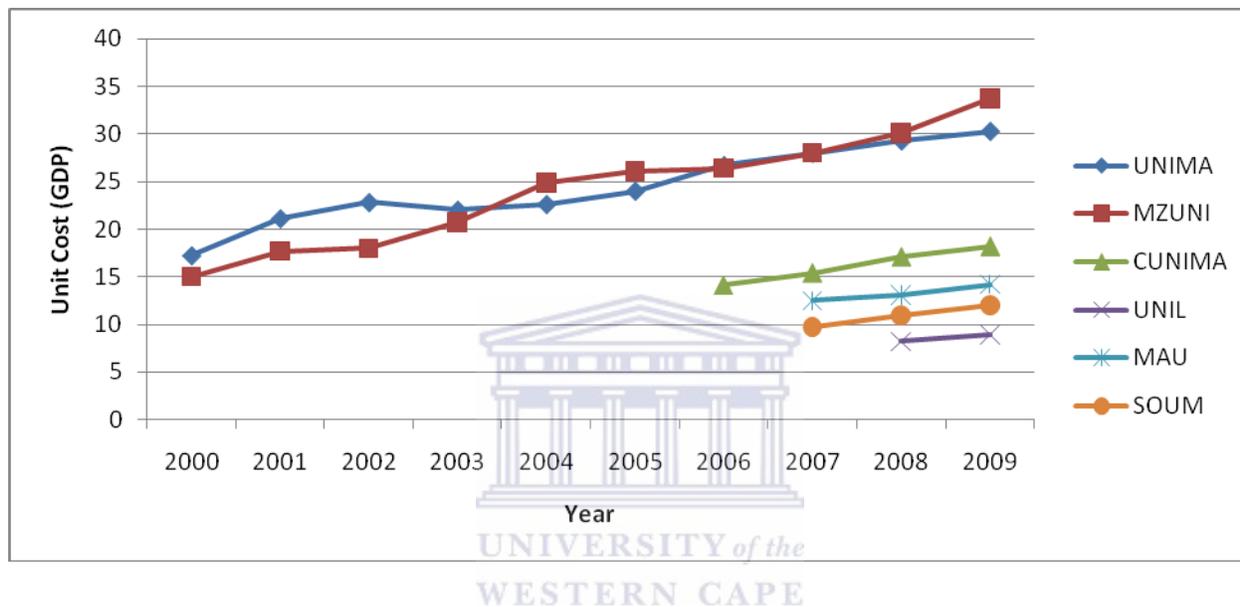
In both UNIMA and MZUNI, the establishment provides for four and five Assistant Registrars respectively. Ironically, the two institutions cannot expand on academic post establishments. Considering that the roles of these Assistant Registrars are narrow and could be fulfilled by two assistant registrars, it can be argued that the presence of many Assistant Registrars at UNIMA and MZUNI is part of the reason for low academic establishments. Similarly, the role of University Librarian is not particularly necessary in the presence of individual college Librarians.

With regard to the unit cost in terms, this study opted to determine the cost in terms of GDP as it enables thinking and analysis of costs in terms of sustainability. It enables the cost of education service delivery to be related to the annual domestic resources available (World Bank, 2010b). The cost most often considered is recurrent costs. The study used actual expenditures provided by the HEIs and the books and stationery allowances provided to students in public HEIs.⁹⁶ For non-residential students at UNIMA (average of all colleges), MZUNI, MAU and SOUM, the cost of living was based on approximations given by registrars on how much a student would need to survive, although it was admitted that such approximations could be on the lower side. The

⁹⁶ The assumption here was that the books and stationery allowance is really spent on books and stationery.

approximations were also based on cost of calculations compiled quarterly by the Centre for Social Concern (CFSC). (However this was only for those HEIs that are in Zomba, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Blantyre.⁹⁷) The approximations for previous years were arrived at after adjusting for inflation levels in each year based on National Statistical Offices (NSO) annual inflation figures. Such costs of living were approximated as shown in Figure 6.18 below.

Figure 6.18: Trend of Unit Cost (In Relation to GDP Per Capita)



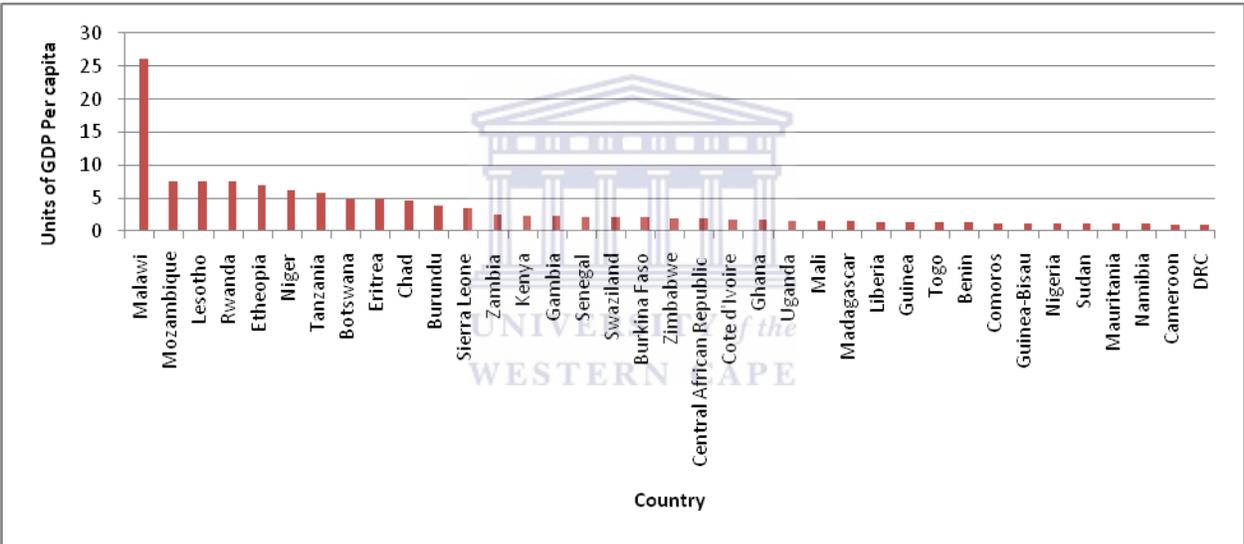
Source: Author's Own Calculation and Depiction from HEIs Data, CFSC Cost of Living Data and NSO Data.

The above figure shows that there have been varied unit costs for different HEIs and that in all of them there has been an upward trend. Conspicuous in the figure is the low unit cost for private HEIs compared to public HEIs. The first reason is the nature of programmes offered by the private HEIs which do not require a lot of resources as compared to those offered by public HEIs especially in the field of Science, Medicine and Engineering. Second, the unit cost is also low because of the small staff used by the private HEIs as compared to public HEIs. Third, since private HEIs rely so much on tuition fees only, they are compelled to manage their resources prudently as compared to public HEIs, thereby controlling the unit cost at low levels. In both public and private HEIs, there is an increase in the unit cost at the time when they are also

⁹⁷ CFSC's makes calculations only for the four cities of Malawi, namely Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Blantyre and Zomba.

increasing their enrolment which implies that economies of scale are not being realised. Finally, it can also be observed that the fee charged by public HEIs on non-residential students (K100 000 for UNIMA and K150 000 for MZUNI in 2009) was much lower than the unit cost of providing education. Although they do not have to be the same, a conclusion that can be drawn from this huge difference is that the government does subsidise the education of non-residential students heavily. Unsurprisingly, the public recurrent unit cost of providing higher education in Malawi public HEIs was the highest in the SSA region in the year 2009. Juxtaposed against figures for the SSA countries in the same year, the picture below emerges.

Figure 6.19: Higher Education Public Recurrent Unit Cost in SSA Countries in 2009



Source: Author's Own Calculation and Depiction from the 2009/10 Revised Malawi Ministry of Finance Budget and World Bank (2010b).

6.8 Relevance and External Efficiencies

HEIs in Malawi are expected by the policies to reinforce the relevance of their education. Relevance, as was discussed in the previous chapter, is assessed by looking at:

- the time it takes between the time students finish their studies and graduate;
- employability of graduates in the job market;
- the period that it takes before graduates are employed

- the levels of satisfaction by employers with the graduates;
- the levels of satisfaction by graduates with the skills acquired; and
- the ability of the system to feed the economy with the critical skills needed.

Relevance is also assessed by looking at the types of university-industry links (UILs) and the depths of such UILs.

The time it takes between the time students finish their studies and graduate is reasonably shorter for private HEIs. It takes four months at CUNIMA, UNIL, and SOUM and five months at UNIL. BIU had not yet graduated any group as it just got accredited in 2010. Between 2000 and 2010, UNIMA and MZUNI students have on average been spending six months from the time of finishing their last paper to the time of graduation. This delay has largely emanated from strikes by lecturers as well as difficulties in fitting into the tight schedule of the State President who, as Chancellor of the two institutions, is traditionally expected to preside over the first congregation. There is no study on the ground which shows the extent to which the delay in graduating affects students. However, the tracer studies (discussed below) do reveal that the majority of students secure employment after formally graduating. Thus, even when students have received notification of their results, any delay in formally graduating could have an impact although the exact magnitude of such impact has not been documented by any study.

To determine the employability of students, the level of satisfaction by employers and the average time span between graduation and job entrance of its graduates, this study used three sources, namely the 2004 Intergraded Household Survey (HIS) and the two tracer studies conducted in 2008, namely the Malawi Labour Market Survey (LMS) commissioned by TEVETA and the TEVET and Higher Education Completers in the Malawi Tracer Study commissioned by GTZ and World Bank. Since it was only UNIMA and MZUNI which had produced graduates that participated in this study, the results in the two tracer studies are applicable to the two institutions.

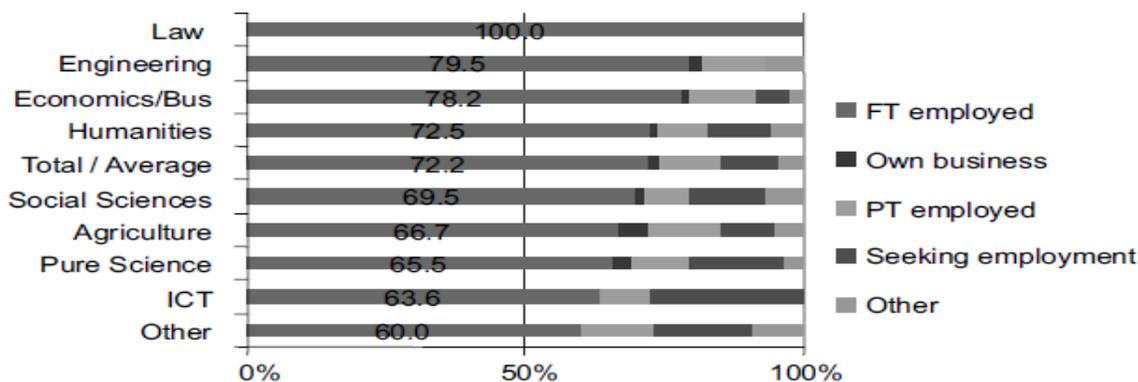
According to the tracer surveys, 75 per cent of all graduates are employed within the first six months after graduation while 94 per cent manage to find jobs within one year (JIMAT Consultants, 2008; Pfeiffer & Chiunda, 2008). The GTZ/World Bank tracer study shows that 83.3 per cent find employment after graduating with the 72.2 per cent in full-time wage employment while the 11 per cent work part time (Pfeiffer & Chiunda, 2008). The tracer study also shows that

a large number of respondents that indicated to be still seeking employment were the recent (2007) graduates. For those that were employed, 80 per cent were earning between K30 000 and K150 000 (Pfeiffer & Chiunda, 2008). Those that are employed increase their earnings by an average of 15–20 per cent per year. Seventy per cent of respondents in the tracer studies indicated that were satisfied with their studies while 8.2 per cent indicated that they were not satisfied (Pfeiffer & Chiunda, 2008). On the part of employers, 10 per cent indicated that they were not satisfied, indicating that the graduates do not exhibit the level of knowledge and competence expected. Of the employers, 74.4 per cent indicated that their graduates would need six months for professional adaptation (Pfeiffer & Chiunda, 2008).

For the private universities, they have nevertheless been able to compile and trace the employability of their students. All UNIL's graduates were employed as secondary school teachers. This was also reported for MAU's Bachelor of Education graduates. Eighty per cent of SOUM students are people who are working and it was reported that, with the exception of a few, over 90 per cent either continued working or found another job after graduation. Eighty per cent of CUNIMA's education graduates got employed by the government as secondary school teachers while only half of the graduates in social sciences were reportedly traced by the university to have secured employment mostly with non-governmental organisations.

The 2004 Integrated Household Survey (HIS) (Malawi Government, 2005), Malawi Labour Market Survey (LMS) and GTZ and World Bank tracer studies, as well as scattered tracer records of private HEIs, thus show the high employability of higher education graduates in Malawi's labour market. Although the sample was only drawn from the two public HEIs, the records of the private HEIs also confirm a high absorption rate of their graduates especially those with education field qualifications. For public HEIs, the high employability of graduates within one year of graduating (94 per cent) (JIMAT Consultants, 2008; Pfeiffer & Chiunda, 2008) partly confirms the relevance of graduates to the labour market. However, going by the employability of graduates by field of study, the pattern in Figure 6.20 overleaf emerges.

Figure 6.20: Occupational Situation of Malawi’s Graduates



Source: Adopted from Pfeiffer & Chiunda (2008).

The above pattern can however be clearly explained. First, the employability among law graduates was indicated to be at 100 per cent, mainly due to the low number of graduates in the field. As of 2010, there were precisely less than 350 qualified lawyers in Malawi (UNDP Malawi, 2010), representing a lawyer population ratio of 1:40 000.

The same low number of graduates in the other fields partly explains high employability among engineering graduates. This can be observed from the Malawi Business Climate Survey Reports of the previous six years. In the reports, lack of skilled workforce in the Engineering, Sciences and Technology related fields was rated as one of the top three major obstacles to doing business in the country (MCCCI 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005). This means that, while there is a declining overall enrolment in the Engineering field, there is increased demand for Engineering graduates. The huge demand for Engineering graduates is reflected in the high vacancy rates for engineering posts in different sectors as was observed by the African Development Bank skills study for 2009. These sectors include agricultural processing, communication, water, power, telecommunication, air transport and mining (AfDB, 2009; Garments and Textiles Manufacturers Association, 2008).

Second, in all the fields, a lower per centage of graduates in the tracer study indicated being in self-employment. The inability to be self-employed has a negative effect on the forward linkages that are supposed to be made by higher education graduates in creating employment for secondary and technical colleges’ graduates. While this situation is caused by the high absorption rate in the

labour market, the problem is caused by lack of general entrepreneurial courses or related modules in many of the fields being offered.⁹⁸

Finally, although business graduates are the third top most sought-after students, a study by Lombe (2011) reveals a tendency which shows external inefficiencies. Soon after graduating, 80 per cent of Accounting students from (UNIMA and other HEIs) are compelled to enroll for professional accounting programmes such as the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) and Public Accountants Examination Council of Malawi (PAEC) where ultimately, upon successful completion, they can become chartered accountants. University graduates are exempted from some modules and, in an ideal situation, they are supposed to spend less than two years on the programme. However, on average, most of them spend 5.2 years (Lombe, 2011:15). In the job market, most employers prefer the students who have a Diploma in Accounting but are Chartered Accountants rather than degree holders who are not chartered accountants. One recommendation by the employers has been to incorporate ACCA, CIMA or PAEC modules into the core university syllabus in order to reduce the external inefficiencies (Lombe, 2011).

6.8.2 University-Productive Sector Links

Data on the collaboration between HEIs and the productive sector or the industry were scanty. Between 2000 and 2005, Public Administration, Law, Engineering and Medical students used to be placed in several organisations, companies and hospitals respectively during long vocational holidays. At the end of the internships, host organisations compiled reports on students' performance on the job and extra skills that they may need to acquire. Although similar initiatives were absent in other programmes, it provided a feedback mechanism to the HEIs. Since 2006, such organised arrangements are evidently absent in all public HEIs. Between 2000 and 2010, only UNIMA and MZUNI had joint innovation research collaborations with companies. MZUNI, with the Ministry of Energy and Mining, was involved in exploring alternative renewable energy sources, especially the innovation of cheap solar panels. Bunda College worked with Mosanto Malawi and Chitedze Research station in coming up with drought-resistant maize and disease-

⁹⁸ Interviews with MEJN Executive Director, MEJN Programme Manager, World Bank Education Specialist and ECAMA President.

resistant cassava. It was also involved in testing the viability of jatropha bio-diesel plants with the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC). The Polytechnic has been collaborating with Toyota Malawi and CFAO in disseminating new computerised automobile technology. Its Built-Environment has also been working closely with the Alliance One tobacco company through student placement. The College of Medicine on the other hand has been in partnership with Johns Hopkins University in the USA, conducting trials on Malaria and HIV/Aids drugs. However, a closer look at these projects reveals that it is only very few academic departments that are currently working closely with the industry, while in private HEIs there was no department which registered any cooperation with the industry.

6.9 Chapter Summary

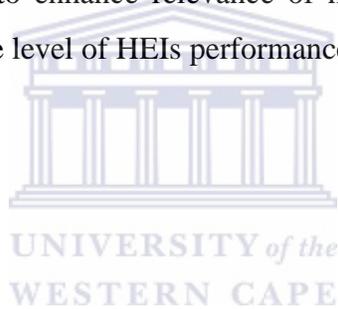
This chapter presented the findings of the second objective, which was the assessment of the performance of Malawi's HEIs in their expected roles. The results were presented under seven themes, namely the programmes offered by the HEIs, the quality dimension, accessibility and equity, financial performance, internal efficiency, research and relevance. The chapter showed that, while although Malawi has 19 main fields of study, private HEIs only offer Education, Commerce, Theology and ICT and Social Sciences. It was observed in the chapter that five of the fields are already being offered by the public HEIs. In all the HEIs, the chapter noted that emphasis was on Education, Commerce and Social Sciences as evidenced by enrolment levels in these sciences. In all HEIs, science expansion has been minimal.

The chapter also showed significant compromises on the quality aspect by all HEIs in terms of teaching and learning resources as well as the qualifications and seniority of academic staff. Overall, private HEIs have been compromising on the quality dimension more than public HEIs especially on the qualifications of academic staff, research and teaching and learning materials. The chapter also showed that access rates for higher education in Malawi are still low (87 people out of 100 000 inhabitants), which has also been accompanied by inequities of access along gender, regional and income background.

Financially, both private and public HEIs have not been able to expand their horizon of sources of funds beyond fees and subventions respectively. Expenditure patterns show heavy neglect of core teaching and learning materials in all HEIs as well as the dominance of emoluments and other

non-core expenditures such as student provisions (for public HEIs). Internal efficiencies in terms of repetition and graduation rates are commendably higher. However, for public HEIs, there are inefficiencies in terms of lecturer-student ratio, unit cost and postgraduate completion rates (for public HEIs). The research component in private HEIs is completely neglected, while in public HEI, it is supported by external organisations. The focus of research in the public HEIs has not been on problem solving.

Finally, the chapter also showed that Malawi's higher education is highly relevant in as far as the employability of students is concerned (although it is partly due to low number of graduates in the labour market). However, in terms of critical skills needed in the market, HIEs have not been in a position to increase their production, thereby not doing much to enhance the relevance of higher education. There has also been an absence of many linkages between HEIs and industries, thereby missing an important opportunity to enhance relevance of higher education. The next chapter discusses the factors that explain the level of HEIs performance presented in this chapter.



CHAPTER SEVEN: DETERMINANTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS' PERFORMANCE IN MALAWI

7.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter assessed the performance of Malawi's HEIs against their expected roles as espoused in the national development policies. In line with the third objective of this study, this chapter now identifies and analyses the determinants of Malawi HEIs' level of performance presented in the previous chapter. The chapter is divided into two main sections: internal environment and external environment. Within these two broad sections, key factors that impact on the performance of HEIs in their expected roles will be identified and discussed. Thereafter, the chapter will briefly examine the link between the internal determinants and the external determinants.

7.2 External Environment

7.2.1 *Socio-demographic Conditions and the Challenges of Equity and Access*

Partly, the crisis of demand for higher education can be appreciated by examining the national socio-demographics and the pressures they exert on the primary and secondary education sub-sectors.⁹⁹ The outer socio-demographic context of higher education is characterised by wide imbalances in participation rates between boys and girls, urban and rural dwellers and rich and poor households (Malawi Government, 2009b). Participation rates at secondary school are higher for boys, urban dwellers and rich households than for girls, rural dwellers and poor households respectively (Women and Law in Southern Africa, 2005; World Bank, 2010). Obviously, this

⁹⁹ Malawi follows an 8-4-4 structure: eight years of primary education (Standard 1–8) four years of secondary (Form 1–Form 4) and four years of university level education. At the end of primary education, students take the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE) which determines their eligibility for entry into secondary school. Public school secondary students attend either Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs) or Conventional Secondary Schools (CSSs). At the end of two years of secondary education, pupils take the national Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) which is followed by the Malawi School Certificate Examination (MSCE) two years later.

socio-demographic landscape has a significant impact on the participation patterns in higher education (Malawi Government, 2008a). In 2008, 49 and 51 per cent of the 13.1 million people were composed of males and females respectively (Malawi Government, 2008b). Eighty two per cent of the population lives in rural areas where the demand and supply for education in general is weaker than in urban areas (World Bank, 2010). The Southern region of Malawi is the most densely populated part of the country with 5.9 million people (45 per cent of the total population) (World Bank, 2010). The Central region has 5.5 million people (42 per cent). The Northern region is the least urbanised and has the lowest share of the population with only 1.7 million people (13 per cent) (World Bank, 2010).

However, although the northern region is the least urbanised and populated, the region is the hub within which education institutions first became established. This can be traced to the colonial period where Christian missionaries were accepted in the region more than the other two regions (Divala). Consequently, this led to establishment of more schools in the region than the southern and central region (Divala, 2009). The hostility of the central and southern regions to the early Christian missionaries resulted in fewer schools despite being heavily populated than the north (Divala, 2009). Currently, it can also be observed that every district of the northern region has more public schools than any district of similar size in the other two regions. The central and southern regions were however receptive to the early traders (Divala, 2009). Therefore, it can partly be argued that the northern region became established in educational emphasis more than the central and southern regions, which became rooted in commerce (Divala, 2009). This can be evidenced in the Northern region's Gross Enrollment Rates (GER) in primary and secondary school which stand at 134 per cent and 28 per cent in primary and secondary education respectively, and which are higher than those at national levels (World Bank, 2011) which are 115 and 21 per cent for primary and secondary school respectively (Malawi Government, 2011).¹⁰⁰ However, completion rate (proxied by access rate to Form 4) is at the same level for the southern and northern regions (12 per cent) but lower for the central region (nine per cent) (World Bank, 2010).

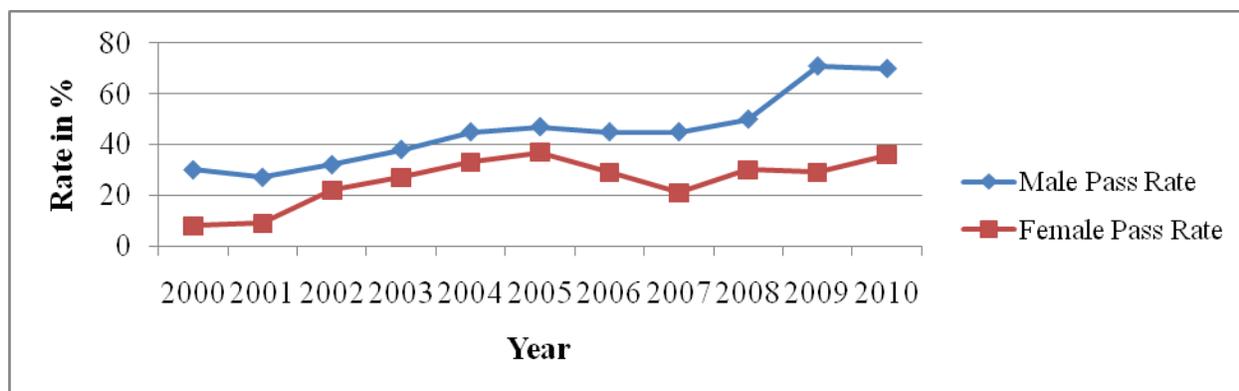
¹⁰⁰ Gross enrolment rate means children in primary school (Grade 1–8) or secondary school (Form 1–4) regardless of age as a proportion of children in official primary school-going age (6–13 year) and in official secondary school-going age (14–17).

Malawi's demographic burden for education in general and higher education in particular is heavier than any of the SADC countries (World Bank 2010b). Out of its 13.1 million people, 37 per cent is in the pre-tertiary school-going category of age 5 to 16 (World Bank, 2010). Largely because of free primary education, enrolment in primary schools has jumped from 1.9 million pupils to 3.6 between 1994 and 2011 (Chimombo 2005:156; Malawi Government 2011:20). Ironically, the primary high enrolment levels have not impacted equally on secondary education. In 2011, there were over 300 000 students enrolled in secondary schools (Malawi Government, 2011:16). This is due to the fact that survival rate of pupils up to the last grade 8 of primary schools stands at 48 per cent while transition rate to secondary stands at 38 per cent (Malawi Government, 2011:20). It is also due to the fact that GER for the whole secondary school cycle stands at 21 per cent (Malawi Government, 2011:16). GER for lower and upper secondary school stands at 18 and 14 per cent respectively with a transition rate in between the two levels of 64 per cent (World Bank, 2010b). However, although GER for upper secondary is very low, in absolute terms it represents a significantly high figure relative to the absorption capacity of higher education as earlier depicted in Figure 6.5.

The demographic context also displays significant gender disparities which are also reflected in the HEIs as was discussed in chapter six. At primary level, the ratio of females to males has increased from 0.87 in 1992 to 0.91 in 2000 and further to 0.995 in 2007 (Malawi Government, 2008a). The projected figure shows that by 2015 a ratio of 1:1 would be achieved, while the results for secondary schools indicate that the target is unlikely to be met (Malawi Government, 2011). This trend therefore shows that gender parity, in aggregate terms, may be achieved at primary education level but it still remains a challenge at secondary level, which in turn affects the ratio of females to males at higher education level (Malawi Education Local Donor Group, 2009:6). In 2009, the ratio of males to females was 0.8 and may only increase to 0.89 by 2015 (Malawi Government, 2011). The gender disparity to the disadvantage of females at secondary level is more conspicuous in Form 4 which is the last grade in secondary school where female enrolment rate between 1998 and 2010 has been hovering between 37 and 42 per cent (Malawi Government, 2011). The gender disparity is even worse in terms of those who pass the Malawi School Certificate Examination (MSCE) administered in Form 4 and who ultimately have chances of accessing higher education. As seen in Figure 7.1 below, despite the admittedly low pass rates in general, the trend has been worse for females than males, consequently reducing

their prospects for admission to higher education institutions.¹⁰¹

Figure 7.1: Trend in MSCE Pass Rate for Males and Females



Source: Author's Own Computation and Depiction from MANEB MSCE Annual Results Reports.

There are also striking demographic imbalances in terms of entry and completion levels at secondary school between the urban and rural dwellers as well as the richest and the poorest. Enrolment and completion rates are higher for those in the urban areas and those from the richest quintile than those from the rural and poorest quintile (World Bank, 2010). This is so because the supply and demand of secondary education is lower in rural areas than in urban areas and this is generally reinforced by the fact that opportunity cost of sending students to school for the poorest quintile is higher than that of the richest quintile (World Bank, 2010). It is estimated that Form 1 enrolment rates for urban dwellers are at 56 per cent – far ahead of 20 per cent for the rural dwellers (Malawi Education Local Donor Group, 2009:22). Out of those who complete Form 4, 33 per cent are urban dwellers while only six per cent are from rural areas (Malawi Education Local Donor Group, 2009).¹⁰² With regard to income disparities, the students from the richest quintile represent 59 per cent of those who enroll in Form 1 against nine per cent from those in the poorest quintile (Malawi Education Local Donor Group, 2009:22). Worse still, whereas 31 per cent of students from the richest quintile will complete Form 4, only two per cent from the poorest quintile will manage to complete Form 4 (Malawi Education Local Donor Group, 2009:22).

¹⁰¹ Interview with LEG Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Director.

¹⁰² The other 61 per cent is composed of students from semi-urban areas (Malawi Education Local Donor Group, 2009).

7.2.2 Economic and Political Historical Dynamics and the Impact on Current Performance

7.2.2.1 Neoliberal (Economics) Institutional Wave and the Challenge of Quality

Although the discussion in this section applies specifically to the University of Malawi, the impact of the dynamics discussed in the section has an indirect impact on the current level of performance on HEIs in Malawi as will be shown later. Economically, Kamuzu Banda practised a mixture of capitalism and state control (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002) as might have been observed in chapter 1 of this study. As it was shown in Section 1.2.1, the period between 1964 and 1979 was a glorious period for Malawi in terms of economic growth. In essence, this means that the University of Malawi which was established in 1964 operated in an untroubled national economic environment. However, between 1980 and 1989 Malawi registered a low GDP growth rate of two per cent due to the oil crisis, decreasing demand for migrant labour in South Africa and civil war in Mozambique, as well as the maturity of foreign loans (Mkandawire, 1999). As has already been discussed, the period of economic crisis saw the World Bank becoming the producer and disseminator of neoliberal institutional models under the package of its Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). In Malawi, the three Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs)¹⁰³ saw the World Bank becoming highly influential in education policy making, “with other bilateral and multilateral donors¹⁰⁴ virtually ceding education policy to it” (Heyneman, 2003, quoted in Holland, 2010:210). SAPs’ voice in the education sector required “shifting funding from higher education to primary education, increasing the private costs for attending university through increased user fees, increasing student enrolment to decrease costs per students, and offsetting students’ financial burden by creating loan schemes” (Holland, 2010:210).

Consequently, government financial support to UNIMA declined. Moyo (1992) estimates that, during Malawi’s three SAL periods from 1980 to 1988, the proportion of state funding for education apportioned to UNIMA dropped from 25.21 per cent to 16.44 per cent of total budgetary allocation to the education sector.¹⁰⁵ Holland (2010:212) argues that the model was

¹⁰³ This was discussed in detail in Section 1.2.1 of this thesis.

¹⁰⁴ Some of the agencies include UNESCO and USAID (Heyneman, 2003, quoted in Holland, 2010).

¹⁰⁵ The first reforms which recommended student fees and a student loan scheme were agreed in 1984 but were not fully accepted or implemented. In 1988, Malawi was again selected for a second time to implement these reforms.

“deleterious”. He observes that:

“in this model, the university was susceptible to competitive market forces; institutional status and funding [pitted] primary and secondary education against tertiary education; and productivity was valorised through the monetised terms of cost-benefit analysis. In a point most divergent with the previous model of higher education, the neoliberal model viewed higher education as a private rather than a public good, effectively delegitimising the association between the nation and its university by recasting the university as a catalyst for individual advancement rather than of the nation.” (Holland, 2010:212)

The World Bank’s model which gave rise to Malawi’s reforms was strongly articulated in its 1971 Education Sector Policy Paper where the supremacy of primary and non-formal education over tertiary education was emphasised (Banya & Elu, 2001).

After Banda was forced to the negotiating table in the early 1990s – with the democratic pressure groups – by the G8 and the IMF, the new President Bakili Muluzi and his United Democratic Front (UDF) were conscious that they were beneficiaries of the IMF and G8. “Too aware of the power of the G8”, Muluzi’s government in 1994 “participated whole-heartedly” in IMF stabilisation programmes such as devaluation of the currency, liberalisation of trade and investments, and the devolution of many government agricultural, educational and social policy activities to the private sector and NGOs (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002:86). In education, the policy introduced free and ‘compulsory’ universal primary education.¹⁰⁶ There was significant reduction of funding to UNIMA and to MZUNI which was created in 1997. On average, between 1995 and 2004, UNIMA as well as MZUNI (between 2000 and 2004) operated with half of their required budgets.¹⁰⁷

There are four key outcomes of the above neoliberal model which resonate tightly with the level

Holland (2010:211) observes however that “Malawi’s selection for such treatment a second time was spurred less by the need to resolve acute funding problems than for experimental purposes because of Malawi’s helpfulness over the first set of reforms.”

¹⁰⁶ The compulsory aspect is yet to be implemented in Malawi.

¹⁰⁷ Computed from UNIMA and MZUNI various financial records

of performance by HEIs (especially UNIMA and MZUNI) presented in the previous chapter. First, whereas in the period between the 1960s and 1970s Malawian academics had left the country due to political reasons (to be discussed below), from the 1980s declining opportunities and morale led to a brain drain as many academicians were prompted to seek greener pastures abroad while some of those who opted to remain found economic refuge in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Holland, 2010). Due to reduced scholarships, most academicians who had managed to secure PhD scholarships on their own opted to remain outside the country in a similar search for greener pastures. A rough estimation from interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI respondents show that over 80 of Malawi's former UNIMA and MZUNI lecturers are professors outside the country.¹⁰⁸ In essence, it means that, holding all factors constant, there would have been by now 126 professors in UNIMA and MZUNI, since at the time of this study – as it is presented in Table 6.5 of this thesis – there are 46 professors for both UNIMA and MZUNI.¹⁰⁹ Besides, with few candidates trained beyond undergraduate level in Malawi, efforts to fill vacancies often go beyond the country's borders in seeking to recruit foreigners.¹¹⁰ However, due to low competitive remuneration rates, it has always been difficult to get the best quality of academic staff needed.¹¹¹ Holland (2010) provides a dire example on this challenge. Since the 1990s, the Psychology Department at Chancellor College has lost senior members (due to deaths and attractive opportunities abroad) and by 2004, only two members of staff were in the department with none of them having a PhD (Holland, 2010). When an advert was placed in the papers, none of the 27 applicants had a PhD while the only one with a master's degree was in Education and not mainstream Psychology which was sought by the department. The other 26 applicants held bachelor's degrees (Holland, 2010).

Second, while UNIMA policy prohibits staff associates who hold bachelor's degrees from teaching, they have since the early 1990s been allowed to teach (Holland, 2010). In the mid 2000s they started receiving full professional allowances (a stipend given to full lecturers) –

¹⁰⁸ Interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI Registrars.

¹⁰⁹ The criterion for one to become a professor differs across universities in the world. The assumption made here is that the criterion used in those foreign universities is the same as those used by UNIMA and MZUNI.

¹¹⁰ Interview with UNIMA Registrars.

¹¹¹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

consequently legitimising their teaching for more advanced courses (Holland, 2010). Similarly, while undergraduates were initially supposed to be supervised by PhD holders only, the situation changed to those with master's and experience, then those with master's and now even those with first degrees.¹¹²

Third, the above incapacitation of UNIMA and MZUNI has seen many donor agencies shunning working with the two institutions.¹¹³ In 2004, EU delegation in Malawi for example proposed the establishment of a new public policy analysis and research organisation which would be independent of the government and the university, arguing that UNIMA had “limitations such as not covering all areas of policy interest, exhibiting poor inter-institutional communication and linkages and neglecting crucial areas such as macroeconomic issues, private sector development, and infrastructure and economic services” (Holland, 2010:215). At Bunda College, USAID similarly proposed delineating its funded Centre for Agriculture Research and Development (CARD) from UNIMA and having it registered as a private company in order to ensure that it operates effectively and efficiently (Holland, 2010). These two instances demonstrate how neoliberalism's incapacitation of the two institutions is currently leading to further incapacitation as donors now shun working with UNIMA. The consequence is that UNIMA finds it hard to raise resources for its operations as was shown in the previous chapter.

Finally, the syndrome of “survival” which is used to justify private consultancy work has also emerged partly because of the impact of the neoliberal pattern (Holland, 2010). Although the negative impact of the syndrome on the quality of teaching and scholarship is admitted,¹¹⁴ such practices are seen as the only way to supplement the income of many academics.¹¹⁵

7.2.2.2 Politics, Political Patronage and Academic Freedom: the Problem of Quality and Relevance

The reality of UNIMA in the early 1960s was a compromise between the outgoing British

¹¹² Interview with UNIMA and MZUNI VCs.

¹¹³ Interviews with World Bank Education Specialist, USAID Education Specialist and EU Economist.

¹¹⁴ Interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI VCs.

¹¹⁵ Interviews with Chancellor College and Bunda Principals.

colonial masters' liberal humanism which encouraged "objective pursuit of knowledge, truth and free exchange of ideas" and radically Afrocentric ideals of the young nationalists (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002:76).¹¹⁶ The main source in the frustration of the two ideals was however, as Kerr and Mapanje (2002:77) put it, "the discrepancy between them and the nexus of ambitions and political beliefs" held by Kamuzu Banda who opposed socialism (cherished by his young ministers) on all fronts. A cabinet crisis consequently erupted leading to the resignation and exiling of the young ministers in 1964 (Baker, 2001). A few years later, Banda turned Malawi into a one-party state with himself firmly in control of "a mutually determining and reinforcing political apparatus of authoritarianism, paternalism and repression" (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002:77). In 1971, he was made life president. In the words of Kerr and Mapanje (2002:77), Banda "assumed direct control of the army and police and built a powerful system of clandestine surveillance". Three powerful and independent intelligence systems were operated by Banda, namely the Army Intelligence, Police Intelligence and the Young Pioneers (paramilitary wing of the party). Each intelligence system had direct access to Banda and his inner circle and "each tried to outmaneuver the others to gain Banda's favour" (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002:78). Detentions without trial were normalised while nepotistic networks and patronage increased. An uncle to Kamuzu Banda's trusted partner,¹¹⁷ John Tembo became the Chairman of University from 1980 until 1994 (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). Consequently, as Kerr and Mapanje (2002:79) observe:

"(w)ithin the autocratic polity that had been established, the notion of an intellectual elite committed to Malawi's development was almost a contradiction in terms. The very skills of creativity, innovation, and independent thinking that universities nurture were the very qualities that led intellectuals to question the basis of the regime's legitimacy."

This is more evidenced in the extract below of Banda's letter to the members of staff at Edinburgh University concerning the detention without trial of the then head of the English Department at Chancellor College, Professor Jack Mapanje:

¹¹⁶ These young nationalists include Masuako Chipembere, Kanyama Chiume, Orton Chirwa and Willie Chokani who later resigned and fled into exile after the 1964 cabinet crisis.

¹¹⁷ For 31 years, Cecilia Kadzamira was Banda's trusted partner and was often referred to as Official Hostess in Public.

“Teachers, here, who stick to their professional work of teaching students, are not interfered with by anyone. Jack Mapanje has taught at Chancellor College for a number of years without doing anything wrong, just like all his colleagues, whether Africans or Europeans. But after all these years, he changed his mind, for his own personal reasons, and started using the classroom as forum for subversive politics. This cannot and will never be permitted in this country particularly, in the University of Malawi. Therefore, he had to be picked up and detained. This is Malawi in Africa, and not any other country. Things have to be done according to conditions and circumstances in Malawi, Africa.” (Banda, 1988:1)

Consequently, during Banda’s reign, local students and lecturers were forced into exile and expatriates were deported, while some local staff and expatriates left “in disgust” (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002:79). Those who opted to remain often faced detention without trial and without charges (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). Once detained, the academic staff members were not allowed to return to UNIMA. Using the Special Branch as a surveillance system, agents were placed in UNIMA Colleges to pose as students, administrators, secretaries, cleaners and lecturers (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). The Censorship Board Act of 1966 provided powers to the board to censor any book before being ordered for use by students and lecturers, while the National Research Council was mandated to issue official clearance to any research project by UNIMA. In addition, UNIMA researchers seeking access to the Malawi National Archives needed to obtain consent from the Office of President and Cabinet (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). Banda himself took an interest in what was being taught in UNIMA and in one instance influenced a prominent historian Brigdal Pachai to write a book, *A History of the Nation* (1973), which shunned any mention of the role of his “libelous ministers” in the independence struggle (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). Politics of patronage on the other hand also saw the appointments of academic, administrative and non-academic staff based on political loyalty (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002).

This political system had four consequences which are still being felt in UNIMA. First, the fleeing of students and academic staff meant a brain drain largely also propelled by the economic downturn presented in the previous section. The continuing impact of the exodus of academicians

is the current low number of highly educated and qualified academic staff in UNIMA.¹¹⁸

Second, through strict censorship and the attack on academic freedom, UNIMA lost the opportunity to build and consolidate its research profile and capacity.¹¹⁹ The institutional culture of research conspicuously faltered and disappeared (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002).

Third, political interference and patronage undermined the university system as a whole and led to the increased feeling of marginalisation by the university in its contribution towards the development agenda.¹²⁰ Although the post-1994 UDF-led government lifted several bans that affected academic freedom, it maintained the patronage system in its handling of UNIMA (and later MZUNI). Its 1994 free education system distracted its attention from UNIMA and, as earlier discussed, funding was significantly reduced between 1994 and 2004. The feeling of marginalisation by both UNIMA and MZUNI on the part of students partly accounts for their frequent violent behaviour towards the police and surrounding communities, while, for the academic staff, it has led to an increased propensity to strike in times of “minor grievances”¹²¹

Finally, in the post-colonial eras (both the one-party dictatorship and the democratic era),¹²² although numerous reforms aimed at cutting inefficiencies in the university had been undertaken, the politics of patronage have rendered these reforms useless and have in fact reinforced inefficiencies.¹²³ This is equally observed by Kerr and Mapanje (2002).

¹¹⁸ Interview with UNIMA VC.

¹¹⁹ Interview with UNIMA VC.

¹²⁰ Interview with Director of the Centre for Social Research.

¹²¹ Interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI VCs and Link for Education Governance Director.

¹²² It is admitted here that the issue on whether Malawi is a democratic state or a dictatorship is contentious. For example, while Somerville (2012) considers the current Malawi as a dictatorship, Chingaipe (2010, quoted in McBrams, 2010) considers the current Malawi as a defective democracy (that is, a polity that has not yet fully consolidated liberal democracy but is not a dictatorship). The debate on whether it is indeed a dictatorship or a democracy is beyond the scope of this study. However, I use the term democratic era in this study to denote the period from 1994 to the current period.

¹²³ Interview with CSCQBE and Link for Education Governance.

7.2.3 Current State-HEIs Relationship and the Impact on HEIs' Performance: the Challenge of Access, Equity, Relevance and Quality

As discussed in chapter three, there are essentially two key types of state-HEIs relationship models, namely the statist and the neoliberal models (St George, 2006). The statist model is characterised by government's use of deliberate systems of regulations and incentives to expand the higher education sector and to produce graduates in perceived areas of need such as science, technology, engineering and scientific research linked to economic growth, and to the needs of local (and emerging) industries (St George, 2006). The neoliberal model, on the other hand, concentrates on reducing the role of government in higher education and creating a market for individual institutions to compete against each other (St George, 2006). The differences lie in the beliefs about change, mode of financing, mode of administration, curriculum design and marketing innovation (St George, 2006). In this study the nature of the relationship that exists between the state and HEIs was observed to be exerting some impact on the performance on the performance of HEIs discussed in chapter six. Before discussing the nature of the impact, it important to appreciate the nature of the relationship between HEIs and the state by examining the beliefs about change held by the state, financing of HEIs, administration of HEIs, curriculum and teaching as well as marketing innovation.

During the interview with government officials,¹²⁴ it became clear that that they believe that the only way in which the higher education system can bolster development is when the state is directly controlling HEIs' operations through an accreditation system, monitoring and evaluation continuously to ensure quality and relevance of education. They also argued that free competition among the private HEIs would be an ideal way of achieving higher access rate but as long as entry into the higher education market is controlled to ensure that profit-making motives of the private HEIs do not water down the aspect of quality and relevance.¹²⁵ The government indicated that, while access is something which the private universities can provide, it was its responsibility to ensure equity by fully owning and running the public institutions.¹²⁶ It revealed that it was for this

¹²⁴ These are the Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Planning Officer in MoEST and MoEST Spokesperson.

¹²⁵ Interviews with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Planning Officer in MoEST and MoEST Spokesperson.

¹²⁶ Interview with Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

reason that it was establishing five more public universities in the country to take care of the missing areas of relevance and access in the private HEIs operations.

On funding, both government officials and representatives of HEIs indicated that funding was based on historical incremental levels to public institutions by the state with Chancellor College getting the lion's share followed by Polytechnic, Bunda College, College of Medicine and Kamuzu College of Nursing in that order.¹²⁷ The government does not provide any funding to private HEIs. However, it was revealed that in two cases the state president donated buses to UNIL and MAU. This gesture was described by MAU and UNIL as an encouragement as it meant that government was willing to assist them in times of dire need for the effective operationalisation of their missions.¹²⁸ With the absence of an explanation of why such donations were made to these two universities only and why they were not made to the other private HEIs, there was speculation by the other universities that the government was only assisting those universities that seemed to be “politically upright to the ruling party”.¹²⁹

Regarding the administration of the universities, the state uses public HEIs as instruments for reinforcing equity and excellence in higher education as it believes that these cannot be fully entrusted in the hands of private universities.¹³⁰ For public HEIs, the state does not directly decide on recruitment of lectures and enrolment levels although it does so through its resource allocation leverage on the public universities.¹³¹ The state does not determine the curriculum of public universities but does so for private universities through the Evaluation and Accreditation Committee (EAC).¹³² The EAC comprises the Department of Human Resources Management

¹²⁷ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in the MoEST.

¹²⁸ Interviews with MAU and UNIL Registrars.

¹²⁹ Interview with Executive Directors for LEG and CSCQBE.

¹³⁰ Interview with Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹³¹ Interview with Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹³² At the time of this study government had just passed the bill which provides for the creation of the National Council for Higher Education which will take over the activities of the EAC. According to the VC for MAU who was the Director for Higher Education in the Ministry of Education and Culture (then) between 1980 and 1985, there was in 1982 a proposal by the Office of President and Cabinet to the Ministry of Education and Culture (then) to explore the viability of establishment of the Council for Higher Education. He indicated that the internal

(now Department of Public Service), Ministry of Education and Public Universities. It is usually a representative from one of the country's public universities that heads the EAC. The process of accreditation starts with an application from the private university to the Ministry of Education's Department for Higher Education which passes on the application to the EAC whose composition changes from time to time depending on the nature of the private university applying and the programmes it intends to offer.¹³³ The state does not impose any limitation on enrolment levels of private HEIs as long as they still meet the requirements of accreditation.¹³⁴ Tuition fee is also not regulated by the government.

For public HEIs, although operationally both UNIMA and MZUNI are parastatals, they are aligned to the line Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). Despite being semi-independent, the operations of UNIMA and MZUNI are heavily influenced by the voice of Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST).¹³⁵ UNIMA and MZUNI can only raise fees with the approval of MoEST. In practice, this also needs the approval of the state president. Open evidence of this was when the state president overturned the council decision to introduce K80 000 student-loan-financed fees at a political rally and directed a complete halt of any interest charging on the student loans (DPP, 2011). For private HEIs, there are no hurdles in adjusting fees as the decision rests with their proprietors.¹³⁶ The only exception was MAU which has a structure that requires proposals to be approved by the SDA Michigan headquarters.

The other aspect of the state-HEIs relationship hinges on the absence of specific laws governing the entire spectrum of HEIs apart from the two public HEIs whose establishment was facilitated by their respective statutes.¹³⁷ Since independence there has been no law governing higher education as well as the regulatory body at national level. Consequently, there has been no body and law to promote and check on the standards of higher education as well as enforce

organisational politics in the ministry then led the senior officers to assume that the establishment of the Council would reduce their "empire" and their powers. Consequently, the senior officers tactically delayed the process.

¹³³ Interviews with Planning Officer and Spokesperson in the MoEST.

¹³⁴ Interviews with Planning Officer and Spokesperson in the MoEST.

¹³⁵ Interview with LEG Director.

¹³⁶ Interviews with CUNIMA, MAU, BIU, UNIL and SOUM Registrars.

¹³⁷ These are the UNIMA (1964, 1974 and 1998) Acts as well as the MZUNI (1997) Act.

involvement of private HEIs in disciplines of study critically needed by the economy, especially the science-related fields. The availability of a legal framework and regulatory body would have made it easy for government to tie (or make conditional) its accreditation and licensing to private HEIs provisions of the fields critically needed by the government as well as continuous monitoring of quality and relevance aspects.¹³⁸

In the absence of a full-time and fully functioning national body responsible for coordination of higher education institutions, the expansion of higher education has been spearheaded by the EAC. However, since the composition of the EAC has been changing – with different teams doing the inspection – there have consequently been delays in the accreditation process.¹³⁹ Such delays were experienced by SOUM and UNIL. Besides, it has been observed by private HEIs that the EAC uses other rules which the private universities are unaware of.¹⁴⁰ For example, in the case of SOUM, the EAC demanded it to produce audited accounts although it is not one of the initial criteria for accreditation.¹⁴¹

There have also been different experiences regarding the accreditation process among private HEIs. While UNIL applied for accreditation earlier than CUNIMA, it was CUNIMA which first got accredited¹⁴² (after the EAC opted to inspect CUNIMA first before UNIL – a move which UNIL interpreted as politically motivated to punish the Livingstonia Synod of the CCAP which was seen at that time as championing the agenda against the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)).¹⁴³ On the other hand, CUNIMA was seen as politically connected to the ruling DPP.¹⁴⁴ Similar experiences were reported for BIU and SOUM. While BIU's accreditation process was quick, the government's accreditation of SOUM took longer.¹⁴⁵ Between 2009 and 2010, the

¹³⁸ Interviews with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST, CSCQBE Executive Director.

¹³⁹ Interviews with MoEST Spokesperson, SOUM Registrar and UNIL Registrar.

¹⁴⁰ Interviews with MoEST Spokesperson, SOUM Registrar and UNIL Registrar.

¹⁴¹ Interviews with MoEST Spokesperson and SOUM Registrar.

¹⁴² UNIL got accredited after three and half years while CUNIMA got accredited after one and half years since their respective openings according to the UNIL and CUNIMA Registrars.

¹⁴³ Interview with LEG Executive Director.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with CSCQBE Director.

¹⁴⁵ BIU accreditation was made after two years from the time of applying while SOUM took six years according to

government threatened to revoke the licence of SOUM for allegedly enrolling unqualified students.¹⁴⁶ However, at a round table discussion between the two sides, it later transpired that the ruling party suspected SOUM of promoting the political ambition of the the state vice president (VP) who had fallen out of political favour with the ruling DPP and was dismissed.¹⁴⁷ This was after SOUM put pictures of the VP presiding over the graduation ceremony of SOUM on its website.¹⁴⁸ SOUM also rents premises of the opposition Malawi Congress Party (MCP), a move which the ruling party sees as meant to support the agenda of the opposition.¹⁴⁹ SOUM suspects that its application for the accreditation of further degree programmes had been put on hold as at the time of this study because of this perception on the part of the government.¹⁵⁰

With regard to marketing innovation, the state does not define the research agenda of HEIs. The link between the National Commission for Research, Science and Technology and the government was indicated to be weak and, in most cases, the research agenda put by the commission is not a full reflection of government's research agenda. This is so because even the government itself does not publish or clearly communicate its research agenda.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, the commission does not have specific monetary allocation for HEIs' research. In fact over the years, it has also been insufficiently funded even to meet its own internal operations.¹⁵² However, HEIs can access some funding from the commission just as other any organisation. The research grants given have been of small scale (K100 000 to K500 000) and so far no private university has had access to the funds as none has ever applied.¹⁵³ On average between 2000 and 2010, UNIMA

BIU and SOUM Registrars.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with SOUM Registrar.

¹⁴⁷ In Malawi, the president is elected together with the vice president, who stands as a running mate. The president therefore has no power to dismiss the vice president. Thus, even if the vice president is dismissed from the ruling party, she or he can still hold the vice presidency as is currently the case in Malawi.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with SOUM Registrar and Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with SOUM VC.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with SOUM Registrar.

¹⁵¹ Interviews with the Deputy Director of National Commission for Research, Science and Technology, National Industrial Research Council and National Commission for Research, Science and Technology Research Officer.

¹⁵² Interview with Deputy Director of National Commission for Research, Science and Technology.

¹⁵³ Interview with Director, National Commission for Research, Science and Technology.

and MZUNI combined received research grants of ranges between K2 000 000 and K18 000 000.¹⁵⁴

In summary, Malawi’s state-HEIs relationship can therefore be characterised along these lines as follows:

Table 7.1: Features of Malawi’s State-HEIs Relationship

Issues	Features
Beliefs about Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State direction through accreditation, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that higher education contribute to economic growth. • State intervention needed to ensure access and equity. • Free competition among private HEIs with minimally controlled entry to ensure access, quality and relevance.
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost total public funding to public HEIs with less than 15% and 20% coming from fees for UNIMA and MZUNI respectively • Funding to public HEI historical incremental basis • Irregular donation to private HEIs from government based on political expediency of the time
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public HEIs regarded as instruments (or peak universities) of reinforcing and setting standards for quality in private HEIs • Semi-autonomy in the running of public HEIs • Full autonomy in the running of private HEIs • Own curriculum decision for public HEIs (but at upper University Committee level) but state-approved curriculum for private HEIs • Curriculum changed with difficulties and delays in public HEIs but due to their (public HEIs) own systems • Recruitment of staff decided by private and public HEIs on their own • Some political interference in recruitment of strategic administrative positions for public HEIs. • Enrolment in public HEIs indirectly dependent on government’s budget while enrolment uncontrolled in private HEIs • No law or legally sanctioned body to supervise particular issues but only EAC.

¹⁵⁴ Computed from National Commission for Research, Science and Commission annual reports.

Marketing Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal state provision of competitive research funding through the National Research Council • Research agenda provided by the National Research Council but not a full reflection of government’s research agenda. • No state funding to facilitate UIL linkages
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Source: Author’s Own Summary.

The above characterisation shows that Malawi’s model of state-HEIs relationship does not fully fit into either statist or neoliberal categories as features of both models are present. It is clear that the state intervenes much more in public HEIs through funding. However, state intervention in the private HEIs is only regulatory, especially in the area of quality. To that extent, the Malawi state-HEIs relationship can be said to be a mixed model with a display of features from both statist and neoliberal model.

The above state-HEIs relationship however has exerted both positive and negative effects on the performance of Malawi’s HEIs presented in the previous chapter. First, the state direction of higher education through accreditation process has to some extent helped in ensuring that those who are operating private HEIs are able to meet certain quality standards.¹⁵⁵ In public HEIs, the intervention of the state mainly in admission has helped to ensure that there is equity (especially for students from poor families who perform exceptionally well at MSCE).¹⁵⁶ However, as has been noted before, the accreditation process does not prescribe equity and relevance for private HEIs. The government does not prescribe the number of women or disadvantaged groups that these HEIs should enrol or are encouraged to enrol. The accreditation process does not also prescribe the programmes that HEIs which want to apply for accreditation should be offering after a prescribed time. In the absence of this, most private HEIs still concentrate on “soft” fields already offered by the public HEIs.¹⁵⁷ Thus the two aspects of equity and relevance are

¹⁵⁵ Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Executive Director of LEG, Executive Director of CSCQBE, UNIL Registrar and BIU VC.

¹⁵⁶ Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Executive Director of LEG, Executive Director of CSCQBE.

¹⁵⁷ Interviews with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Executive Director for LEG and Executive Director

consequently neglected by the private HEIs.¹⁵⁸

Furthermore, while state intervention to ensure quality in private HEIs is made through the accreditation process, such a process has not substantially translated into high quality standards. This is so because although monitoring of standard is supposed to be an on-going process in private HEIs, in practice this has not been the case – leading to heavy laxity on the part of private HEIs on the quality of lecturers as well as teaching and learning facilities.¹⁵⁹ It was observed that in most cases, the private HEIs would relax after the accreditation outcome since the EAC and MoEST would rarely visit them again. Worse still, the politicisation of the accreditation process has at times affected the operations of the concerned private HEIs, mainly in terms of admission and introduction of new degree programmes.¹⁶⁰

Second, the general absence of a formal legal institution and independent body to equally check quality standards in public HEIs has left public HEIs neglected with the actors in a relaxed mood over quality aspects as presented in the previous chapter.¹⁶¹ Thus, while the state uses public HEIs as instruments for setting and reinforcing standards of quality in private HEIs, the government has not put in place mechanisms of also ensuring quality in the public HEIs (through a regulatory framework or body). The accreditation process that is followed in private HEIs is not followed in public HEIs and quality of education standards in HEIs is assumed to be automatically there.¹⁶² Consequently, there has been a dwindling standard of quality in the public HEIs. In private HEIs, the absence of a formal regulatory body has also slowed down the process of accrediting degree programmes lined up to be offered by the private HEIs.¹⁶³ The accreditation of such programmes would have an impact on total higher education enrolment level in the country.

of CSCQBE.

¹⁵⁸ Interviews with Director of Higher Education, UNIMA VC and Executive Director for LEG.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁶⁰ Interviews with World Bank Education Specialist, UNIL Registrar and SOUM Registrar.

¹⁶¹ Interviews with World Bank Education Specialist, UNIMA VC and Director of Higher Education.

¹⁶² Interviews with the Executive Director of LEG and Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁶³ Interviews with UNIL Registrar and SOUM Registrar.

Third, there is weak enforcement mechanism of government policies aimed at ensuring quality. In practice, the reward and punishment system is lacking. The reward and punishment system for the expected roles of HEIs appears to be administered only through the accreditation process. This is however only on private HEIs. As earlier indicated, the process of accreditation is done by the Evaluation and Accreditation Committee (EAC). The EAC looks at three factors when accrediting and revolving the accreditation of private HEIs, namely quality of infrastructure, resources (such books and laboratory equipment) and qualification and experience of academic and key support staff (it requires 60 per cent of the lecturers to be holders of at least masters degrees).¹⁶⁴ The EAC then makes a recommendation to the Ministry of Education which finally accredits the private HEIs either fully or partially. Private HEIs are supposed to adhere to the same standards of their initial accreditation, namely infrastructure, resources and well-qualified lecturers.¹⁶⁵ Monitoring of these standards is a continuous process. However, every five years, private HEIs are supposed to undergo a rigorous screening and evaluation process and the license can be revoked if the EAC decides so. In a situation where the private HEI decides to introduce new programmes, the process of accrediting the private HEI to offer these programmes is the same as the one outlined above.¹⁶⁶

Ideally the accreditation process would have impacted on the quality aspect. As already mentioned, the government does not strictly enforce the three pillars of accreditation, namely quality of infrastructure, resources and qualification and experience of academic and key staff. This has resulted in serious laxity of quality aspects in private HEIs.¹⁶⁷ For example, while it is required that 60 per cent of the lecturers should be holders of masters degrees, this is not followed in almost all the private HEIs as was exposed in the previous chapter. Besides, almost half of the lecturers in the private HEIs are part-time or adjunct lecturers. Furthermore, while monitoring is

¹⁶⁴ Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Planning Officer in MoEST and Spokesperson in MoEST.

¹⁶⁵ Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Planning Officer in MoEST and Spokesperson in MoEST.

¹⁶⁶ Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Planning Officer in MoEST and Spokesperson in MoEST.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

supposed to be a continuous process, EAC has not been doing this.¹⁶⁸ Where it has been done as in the case of SOUM, it was largely propelled by political reasons as discussed in the previous section. Thus, while the accreditation system has succeeded in identifying institutions that would be offering higher education, there has been laxity in ensuring that the system reinforces the quality standard as expected in the policy.

Fourth, with regard to the mode of financing, it has already shown that the state provides almost total funding to the two public HEIs with fees constituting less than 15 and 20 per cent in UNIMA and MZUNI respectively. Unlike in some public HEIs in the SSA region, funding is done on the historical incremental basis and not output along the lines of efficiency, relevance, equity, quality and access. Thus there is no reward system in place that would ensure that the public HEIs are fully compelled to perform as expected in the policies. The trend between 2000 and 2004 however shows that rewarding was only done within UNIMA's constituent colleges depending on the college's perceived political orientation (that is, whether it is anti-government or not) and not fully on performance.¹⁶⁹ Within that period, Chancellor College and Polytechnic were characterised by long periods of closure due to their frequent anti-regime demonstrations. On the other hand, KCN, Bunda and CoM experienced a stable calendar due to their apolitical behaviour.¹⁷⁰

There are two major consequences of the mode of funding not based on performance or output indicators. First, government subventions have not been tied to the actual budgeted needs of the public HEIs. This has resulted in allocations that have always been below the requested subvention and, mostly, key operations such as research, publications, as well as purchasing of books and other teaching equipment (especially for science-related subjects) have not been given due attention as was observed in the previous chapter. Inabilities to procure the necessary teaching equipment in the needed quantities for UNIMA was given as some of the reasons why expansion in Science and Engineering fields has been minimal and negative respectively.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Interview with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁶⁹ Interviews with LEG Executive Director, World Bank Education Specialist and Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction.

¹⁷⁰ Interviews with UMSU President and UMSU General Secretary.

¹⁷¹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

Second, incremental funding has rendered strategic planning in the public HEIs (although it only surfaced in the mid 2000s) a useless process as in most cases the levels of funding are below the budgeted amounts. This has partly led to minimal achievement of the targets (quality, efficiency, equity, access and relevance) contained in the strategic plan of these two institutions.¹⁷²

Further to the above observation, the mode of public HEIs' student financing does not reinforce efficiency in terms of enrolment levels and equity. A poor public (universities) loan administration system was also noted as a challenge, consequently hampering efforts by the government to increase funding to universities. In 2005, the Public University Student Loan Trust (PUSLT) was established to lend and recover the loans from graduates. It is solely funded by the government although it can get money from other sources.¹⁷³ Before then, the loans which were administered directly by the government were not recovered. Between 2000 and 2010, more than K800 000 000 million was disbursed but less than 0.5 per cent has been paid back. Currently, the mode of repayment is a mortgage type loan based on a fixed rate of payment over a period of time and not an income contingency system which is based on the percentage of the salary of the borrower when he or she gets employment.¹⁷⁴ While the main objective of PUSLT is to improve access to the needy, thereby ensuring quality (Malawi Government, 2006b), the system does not apply a means-test approach and is not targeted, and therefore results in those from wealthy families (90 per cent of those enrolled) also benefitting. The PULST does not employ a means-testing system. With means-testing, it is possible for a large number of students even in private HEIs to benefit even with the same amount. Furthermore, loans are interest free, thereby hampering chances of increasing the fund. The loan agreement requires that loan repayments start three months after completion of studies and should be paid back monthly in six years (Malawi Government, 2006b). This translates into K1 944 monthly for UNIMA and K3 111 for MZUNI. Since the average salary for Malawi's graduates is more than K80 000 according to the 2008 Tracer Studies, it means the repayment can be increased for quick recovery.¹⁷⁵ Although the Trust

¹⁷² Interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI VCs.

¹⁷³ Interview with Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁷⁵ The average monthly basic cost of living in Malawi according to Centre for Social Concern 2011 December survey is K60 000 for an average family of six for all the four cities. It is therefore feasible to peg the monthly loan

is empowered to use any lawful means as it deems necessary to recover the loan (Malawi Government, 2006b) and holds the guarantor of the loan responsible when the borrower defaults, in practice this has not been implemented.¹⁷⁶ Although some argue that this is due to lack of a “strong legal framework for enforcing the provisions”,¹⁷⁷ it should be observed that the fact that students formally sign loan agreement is valid enough to hold them legally accountable in the formal court of law in Malawi if they default.¹⁷⁸ Thus, in practice, the loophole has less to do with the legal framework than it has to do with the failure by PULST to deliberately enforce the servicing of the loan agreement by students. This failure to push for loan recovery by PULST due to PULST’s internal capacity challenges¹⁷⁹ is deliberately used for political expediency and fear of the student body’s reaction as discussed in the previous sections.¹⁸⁰

As already presented, the government does not provide any funding in form of loans to students in private HEIs. Ideally, this would have been done through subsidisation of tuition fee for some students in private HEIs. The end result is a situation where almost all the students enrolled in private HEIs are from the families that are financially able to pay. The challenge of limited space in public HEIs would have been eased with admission into private HEIs of those qualifying students who cannot be admitted to public HEIs. With high tuition fees (which is the only source of income), private HEIs have therefore been unable to ensure equity of higher education by enrolling those from the poor families.

Fifth, as was already discussed, operationally although the two public HEIs are supposed to be semi-autonomous, they are aligned to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

repayment at K5 000.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Spokesperson for MoEST.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with World Bank Education Specialist.

¹⁷⁸ The legal procedures for enforcing breach of contract are laid down in Malawi’s 1999 Rules of the Supreme Court that prescribe the civil procedures for such cases since they hinge on breach of contract, in this case between students and PULST.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with the MoEST Spokesperson.

¹⁸⁰ Interviews with the Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction, LEG Executive Director and UMSU President.

(MoEST) and their operations are at times heavily influenced by the voice of MoEST.¹⁸¹ UNIMA and MZUNI can only raise fees with the nod of the MoEST. In practice, this also needs the nod of the state president.¹⁸² Despite the continuously expressed need to revise tuition and other fees over the years, the state machinery has used its hand in the MoEST to block “politically sensitive” fees and make other other amendments.¹⁸³ As a result, it has been very difficult for the two universities to move in the seemingly appropriate path in the areas of enhancing equity, quality, efficiency, relevance and efficiency. At the directive of the state president there have also been instances where the UNIMA and MZUNI boards closed and opened the universities according to the political atmosphere although such decisions are the exclusive right of university management. For instance, in 2002, a local reggae musician (Evison Matafale) died in police custody after being detained for singing anti-regime songs. Some quarters suspected that he had died due to torture by the police. Meanwhile, UNIMA students were disenchanted with the dwindling quality of food and they staged a protest against the government. However, the government assumed that the protests were to do with the mystery surrounding the death of the local reggae musician and the president ordered the closure of Chancellor College, Bunda College and the Polytechnic.¹⁸⁴ The three colleges remained closed for four months. Due to closures sanctioned by the state president, between 2000 and 2010, the UNIMA academic calendar was lagging behind by 18 months while MZUNI lagged behind by 12 months.¹⁸⁵ Besides the political influence, there are also frequent delays by the MoEST in giving feedback to policy reform proposals made by HEIs.

Sixth, while the recruitment of staff is entirely left to the HEIs themselves, there has been some political interference in some public HEIs by the government machinery, especially on strategic staff positions such as university VC, pro-VC, university registrar, assistant registrars, directors and college principals (MIM, 1996). This has resulted in the erosion of allegiance by the members of staff to the holders of these posts who are seen as political clients of the ruling party. Within

¹⁸¹ Interview with LEG Director.

¹⁸² Interview with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

¹⁸³ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar and MZUNI Registrar.

¹⁸⁴ Interviews with Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction and UNIMA Registrar.

¹⁸⁵ Interview with CSCQBE Executive Director.

UNIMA, the colleges that are seen to be harbouring such people (such as Polytechnic, Bunda and Chancellor College) have been characterised by frequent protests and stay-ins by students and lecturers against such people or against their decision whenever there is a trigger factor such failure to implement, approve or champion some demands by the lecturers or students (MIM, 1996).

Political infiltration in staffing matters has also resulted in inefficiency. In all public HEIs, although the number of support staff members has been evidently higher than needed, proposals to lay off some of them have not always received the nod of the government for fear of political backlash.¹⁸⁶ This has resulted in continued large expenditures on personal emoluments at the expense of recruitment of more academic staff, research and publication, as well as purchase of teaching and learning materials.¹⁸⁷

Finally, on the aspect of market innovations, the relationship between the state and HEIs also does not reinforce market innovations especially in the area of research (needed by the state) and the UIs. While the state expects HEIs to undertake first-class research that is germane to the economic needs of the country, funding towards research either directly or indirectly through the National Commission for Research, Science and Technology has been very minimal. Besides being of small ranges (K100 000 to K500 000), there has been no deliberate policy to ensure that HEIs are among the key beneficiaries of these grants.¹⁸⁸

7.3 Internal Environment

7.3.1 Features of Malawi's HEIs and their Impact on Performance

The study also observed that Malawi's HEIs have internal features and characteristics that do impact on the performance of HEIs as presented in the previous chapter. This observation will be demonstrated and confirmed in the discussion of organisational goals of HEIs, the congruence between HEIs' goals and their expected policy roles and the impact of the level of the congruency on the performance, the operational structure of HEIs, and the impact of the levels of centralisation and decentralisation as well as participants in the running of HEIs and their quality.

¹⁸⁶ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar and MZUNI Registrar.

¹⁸⁷ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar and MZUNI Registrar.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Deputy Director of National Commission for Research, Science and Technology.

7.3.1.1 Values, Vision, Mission and Goals of HEIs

Respondents from all HEIs hinted that their objectives, missions, values and visions were largely significations of their understanding of their overall responsibilities and roles in the society (including national development) as well as an articulation of the intended method for achieving those goals.

Until 2004, UNIMA had operated without a strategic plan (MIM, 1996). However, from 1996, its operations were supposed to be guided by the 1996 MIM report which recommended that UNIMA should strengthen its management capabilities, embark on strategic planning and broadening its financial base and upgrade the performance of the faculties.¹⁸⁹ These goals were also incorporated in its 2004/05–2009/10 academic years.

The overall vision of UNIMA's 2004/05–2009/10 strategic plan was to ensure that UNIMA becomes “an academic institution providing relevant world-class education, research and services for sustainable development of Malawi and the world” which it purposed to realise through “engaging in teaching and research and by facilitating the dissemination, promotion, and preservation of learning responsive to the needs of Malawi and the world”. Thus, juxtaposed against UNIMA's (1998) Act especially sections 5, 6 and 7, there is a clear alignment of its purposed mission and vision to its expected role espoused in the Act, namely engaging in teaching and research.

There is also a clear linkage between UNIMA's proposed strategic pillars and goals on one the hand and the expected roles of HEIs as presented in the policies, on the other hand. This is shown in Table 7.2 overleaf.

¹⁸⁹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

Table 7.2: Summary of UNIMA’s Strategic Plan

UNIMA’s Pillar	Strategic Goals	Expected Role in the Policies to which the goals are linked
Funding and financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing and diversifying UNIMA financial base to achieve self-reliance, • strengthening financial management systems in the university, • improving the university’s capacity for resources generation and investment, • rationalise allocation of university funds • mobilise donor support 	Improvement of the financial performance of UNIMA
Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase accessibility to double intake by 2010 • Enhance quality in teaching and learning • Review and re-orient the curriculum in response to society needs • Increase and update relevant teaching and learning resources • Consolidate and expand postgraduate training 	Enhancement of Quality Curriculum review Increasing of Access Enhance Relevance
Research, Consultancy and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity in research and consultancy • Enhance quality and relevance of research and consultancy services • Improve dissemination and utilisation of research results • Establish mechanisms and procedures for coordination unit to facilitate and develop consultancy 	Enhance Relevance
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and retain quality staff • Improve ICT capacity utilisation 	Improve Quality
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote efficiency in management • Strengthen financial management systems in the university • Revive the planning unit • Develop strategies for managing change • Develop information management systems 	Improve the governance of HEIs
Cross Cutting Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement affirmative action in student admission 	Reduce inequalities in higher education participation

Source: Author’s Own Summary from 2004/5–2009/10 UNIMA Strategic Plan.

However, UNIMA’s strategic plan does not mention diversification of programmes and expansion of training in Science and Engineering. Besides, unlike in the 1998 UNIMA Act, the strategic

plan does not mention of the provision of “research facilities” to non-members in the strategic plan.

Just as UNIMA, MZUNI also operated without a strategic plan until 2004.¹⁹⁰ Before 2004, its operations were however in addition to the 1997 MZUNI Act also guided by the recommendations of the Working Committee on Mzuzu University (WOCOMU) which among other things recommended “an equitable and meritorious balance and some form of proportional representation” in the recruitment of all staff, appointment of deans and heads of departments, selection and admission of students and the award of scholarships (COMESUN, 1996:27). In 2004, MZUNI came up with a strategic plan which spanned the years up to 2010. The plan presented MZUNI’s mission as “to support the national development policy through the provision of high quality education, training, research and complementary services in response to emerging economic demands to meet the technological, social and economic development goals of the country through four themes: access; quality; relevance, and management” (MZUNI, 2006:2). It also presented MZUNI’s vision as to “contribute to Malawi’s future through education, training and research” (MZUNI, 2006:2). The overall goal, on the other hand, was “to support quality higher education in the fields of education, environmental sciences, health, information and communication technology, hospitality management and tourism, commerce and law, agriculture, and veterinary science” (MZUNI, 2006:2).

The strategic plan of MZUNI was premised on key observed challenges of MZUNI, namely infrastructural inadequacies (as the university inherited premises which were designed for Mzuzu Teachers’ Training College), delivery process challenges (due to inadequate teaching and learning materials), low human resource base (evidenced by inadequate number of specialised academic staff and lower numbers of senior and experienced staff), and financial bottlenecks (due to low levels of government subvention) (MZUNI, 2006). To deal with these challenges, MZUNI’s strategic plan was based on the pillars of:

- i) Enhancing access: by expanding teaching facilities in order to adequately accommodate all faculties; launching the Centre for Open and Distance Learning and the Centre for Security Studies, and to consolidate the Centre for Continuing Studies, and the Centre for

¹⁹⁰ Interview with MZUNI VC.

Training and Testing Renewable Technologies; developing 2 600 hectares of land at Choma as the main university campus; developing outreach programmes and linking with various sectors of the economy and communities; and introducing parallel programs

- ii) Enhancing quality: by recruiting, training and retaining high-calibre staff capable of managing and delivering high-quality education, research and outreach programmes; providing sufficient learning facilities and learning aid; conducting scholarly research in order to create new knowledge, generate solutions to problems, and disseminate results through publications and other avenues; involving the surrounding community to evaluate the performance of its university; and promoting the use of information communication technology in teaching and research by the university
- iii) Enhancing relevance: by continually reviewing curricula so that they respond to national needs; conducting scholarly investigative research in order to be at par with new global developments; and continually reviewing cross-cutting issues to enrich the curriculum.
- iv) Enhancing management capacity: by developing a financial business plan that would enable the university to generate up to 50 per cent of its recurrent budget by the year 2010; consolidating the Mzuzu University Trust Fund (MZUTF); instituting a Standing Committee of Vice Chancellors in Malawi to serve as a common front in relation to government strategy on the development of higher education; outsourcing catering services, security services and cleaning services; and attaching administrative staff to faculties (MZUNI, 2006).

Thus MZUNI's strategic plan also relates directly to the expectations of national policies on HEIs, namely access, quality, diversification of programmes, relevance and the implementation of good management practices (MZUNI, 2006). The aspect of research and teaching as reflected in its 1997 Act is also emphasised in its strategic plan. However, missing on MZUNI's targeted plans is the aspect of equity and expansion of Science and Engineering. The component of making available research and learning facilities to non-members also does not also appear in the strategic plan.

For MAU, the vision is to "become a world class university with excellent programmes for creating high quality graduates who are capable of serving God and mankind" (MAU, 2010:4). Its main objectives are:

- i) Enhance mental development (i.e., students should demonstrate critical thinking in a given situation, acquire the mental discipline required for academic success and manage human and material resources prudently).
- ii) Enhance physical development (i.e., develop positive attitude towards physical exercises).
- iii) Demonstrate temperance in matters of diet and rest.
- iv) Enhance spiritual development (i.e., students should lead devotional and spiritual activities on and off campus, pass on leadership skills in religious activities to new students and develop awareness of the SDA Church's contribution to humanity).
- v) Enhance socio-economic development by ensuring that students:
 - a. Acquire personal qualities of loyalty, honesty and integrity.
 - b. Develop respect for the dignity of all human beings irrespective of status.
 - c. Recognise duly constituted authority.
 - d. Demonstrate Christian and moral values in relationships between individuals of opposite sex.
 - e. Participate in various social activities.
 - f. Practice ethical, legal, spiritual and moral aspects of his or her profession.
 - g. Demonstrate competent and cost-effective use of available resources both on and off campus (MAU, 2010).

Its professed factors of success are:

- i) Qualified and result-oriented mature leadership.
- ii) Courteous, qualified and competent human resources.
- iii) High-quality, effective and efficient service delivery.
- iv) Adequate, well-managed and broad-based financial resources.
- v) Credible, attractive and relevant conditions of service.
- vi) Appropriate, timely and responsible communication and consultation.

The above shows that quality and sound financial performance are key components from the national strategies that are mainstreamed in its professed values. The aspect of relevance (of the graduates in the working world) is also recognised although it is more aligned to the spiritual

ideologies of the church.¹⁹¹ Absent in the MAU's mission, vision and values are, however, the aspects of equity, access, Science and Engineering as well as the broad expansion of programmes offered.

CUNIMA, just as MAU, had no strategic plan as at the time of this study. However, its objectives are laid in the statutes of the university and these are to:

- i) Proclaim and share the meaning of truth as enshrined in *gaudium de veritate* 'the joy about the truth' that culminates in the joy of searching for, discovering and communicating truth.
- ii) Build an informed laity that is capable of confronting, challenging, and transforming the moral culture of their societies.
- iii) Produce leaders/scholars who are distinguished not only by their academic and professional expertise but also by high moral standards, wisdom, and spiritual resources.
- iv) Build international networks with other universities and international agencies to assist the development of Malawian society (CUNIMA, 2006:3).

CUNIMA's vision is "to be the centre of excellence for quality holistic education in every field of knowledge for the good of the people of Malawi and beyond" while the mission is "to contribute to the integral development of the nation through vocational training, academic courses, and research activities that tailor to most critical needs of the nation and the Church" (CUNIMA, 2010:4).

CUNIMA's mission statement therefore clearly reflects the aspect of relevance of the workforce to the working world – largely through the indoctrination of Christian values. The research component is also recognised and the aspect of vocational training as hinted in the national policies. The mission statement is also congruent to the aspect of quality emphasised in the national policies. In its professed values, it also mentions enhancement of educational opportunities and excellence (as well as good learning environment) which relate to access and quality respectively. However, the components of Science and Engineering are not mentioned.

Like CUNIMA and MAU, BIU had no strategic plan at the time of this study. However, the mission professed in the handbook is to "provide all students with the skills and knowledge

¹⁹¹ Interview with MAU VC.

needed to be responsible citizens and productive contributors to intellectual, cultural, and social endeavours” (BIU, 2010:2.) BIU also cherishes the following philosophy:

- i) A new view of knowledge.
- ii) A greater integration of knowledge.
- iii) A renewed commitment to life-long learning.
- iv) A commitment to the goal that education must be for all and not just for some.
- v) Commitment to learning how to learn and to develop a love for learning in order to provide the basic building blocks for life-long learning, involving the development of the ability to critically assess one’s learning.
- vi) A third “passport” of learning, namely the enterprise passport, which involves nourishing the capabilities of thinking, planning, cooperating, communicating, organising, solving , problems, monitoring and assessing.
- vii) An emphasis on personal development, self-awareness, esteem and confidence, in order to deal with a rapidly changing world.
- viii) A commitment to promoting inter-personal development supporting the ability of young people to develop relationships with others.
- ix) A commitment to cooperative globalism, a commitment to “care for all” (BIU, 2010:2).

BIU also believes that university education should aim at the following:

- i) To teach that life has a meaning.
- ii) To awaken the innate ability to live the life of soul by developing wisdom.
- iii) To train for self-development.
- iv) To develop certain values like fearlessness of mind, strength of conscience and integrity of purpose.
- v) To become acquainted with cultural heritage for its regeneration.
- vi) To enable to know that education is a life-long process.
- vii) To develop understanding of the present as well as of the past.
- viii) To impart vocational and professional training (BIU, 2010:2).

It is explicit that BIU’s philosophy cherishes the aspect of relevance of graduates to the working world. Unlike all the HEIs, the aspect of equity and access is emphasised by BIU through life-

long learning. BIU's beliefs also include the aspect of Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training. The components of Science and Engineering as well as quality are however not mentioned in the handbook. There is also an absence of value for financial robustness of the university.

Like CUNIMA, MAU and BIU, UNIL also had no strategic plan as at the time of this study. Nevertheless, the aspects of access, equity, relevance and quality are well reflected in philosophy, commitment, mission and core values. Its philosophy is based on the Synod's belief that "a Church university founded on Christian values provides exceptional education for young people of Malawi" (UNIL, 2008:1). UNIL's commitment is to "sustain spiritual, moral and social values important to the Malawian society and boost the ability of Malawi to train leaders for future development of Malawi's economic base" (UNIL, 2008:1). The mission of UNIL is to "educate and inspire students to become principled leaders who will transform society for the glory of God through excellence in teaching, research and learning environment" (UNIL, 2008:1). The professed core values of UNIL are:

- an open-door policy,
- enhancement of educational opportunities,
- standard of excellence,
- student success,
- character development of students
- supportive learning environment, as well as
- stewardship and development that will help Malawi achieve high standards of moral, social, economic and physical development (UNIL, 2008).



The aspect of vocational and entrepreneurial training, expansion of programmes, financial robustness and Science and Technology are however not reflected in UNIL's mission, commitment, philosophy and values.

SOM was also operating without a strategic plan as at the time of this study. However, the mission of SOM is "seeking to bring about the best in others" (SOM, 2010:13). It is run on core values of "service to humanity, honesty, integrity and professionalism, as well as giving and success" (SOM, 2010:13). The professed objectives of SOM are:

- i) To compliment government efforts in the provision of higher education by:
 - a. Increasing access to high education.
 - b. Providing flexible learning for those who are working (SOUM, 2010)..

Thus, relevance (service to humanity), access and quality are the major aspects emphasised. Missing are the components of Entrepreneurial and Vocational Training, Science and Engineering and financial robustness of the university.

In summary, not all policy expected roles of HEIs are reflected in the values, philosophies, commitment, mission and objectives of HEIs. In private HEIs, the components of Science and Engineering as well as the expansion of programmes are missing. The components are not explicitly emphasised in public HEIs either. Partly, this of lack of emphasis could be because the private HEIs in particular are of the view that the existing fields of study still needed further expansion.¹⁹² The component of financial robustness is however absent in all private HEIs except MAU. All private HEIs indicated that, although it is not reflected in their mission statements, objectives, commitment, values and philosophies, the financial robustness component was still a priority to them.

However, although these expected roles are not reflected in their guiding documents, it is very difficult to conclude that this absence explains the low emphasis on these areas as shown in the previous chapter. On paper, the emphasis on quality, relevance, equity, access (for all HEIs), entrepreneurial and vocation training (for CUNIMA and BIU) as well as research (for public HEIs) and financial robustness (for MAU and public HEIs) could be observed. However, with the exception of external relevance, there was low performance on the HEIs' expected roles although they are reflected in the guiding documents of the HEIs. In other words, whereas policy expected roles are equally reflected in the guiding documents of HEIs, the performance was still not good as was discussed in the previous chapter. Put differently, congruence between the expected roles and HEIs' guiding philosophies has not resulted in practical implementation of the expected roles on the ground by HEIs. Accordingly, it is therefore difficult to argue that the absence of the expected roles in the guiding philosophies has resulted in poor performance on the same. This suggests the prominence of other determinants than the congruence of the policy expectations and

¹⁹² Interviews with SOUM, BIU, MAU and CUNIMA VCs.

HEIs' guiding philosophies.

7.3.1.2 Operational Structure and Rules of HEIs

The study however observed that the operational structures of HEIs (in terms of the levels of centralisation and decentralisation) are exerting some impact on the performance of HEIs.

For MAU, the supreme body is the University Council which is headed by the President of SDA Church in Malawi. Below the council is management which is headed by the vice chancellor and deputy vice chancellor respectively. Administratively, below the vice and deputy vice chancellors is the registrar, while academically, there are deans of faculties. However, although the council and management have some powers, their powers are limited significantly. This is so because the SDA is a world church with centralised headquarters (in Michigan State, USA) and hence its national churches and institutions (such as MAU) have no liberty to undertake certain activities without the nod of the US headquarters.¹⁹³ This is mainly so on infrastructures. Any new infrastructure in SDA's institution is supposed to be approved by the headquarters.¹⁹⁴ This is partly so because any building is insured by the SDA headquarters in Michigan.¹⁹⁵ This means that, even if MAU decides to erect new structures and has money to do so, this can only be done after the approval of the headquarters. Both the VC and the registrar indicated that quite often this takes a minimum time of two years and derails management efforts to aggressively raise the funds through other means as it is difficult to reconcile accountability to potential donors with the directives from the Michigan headquarters. The same set-up applies with regard to remuneration of MAU's employees. Even if the university can have resources to adjust and improve the remuneration of its employees, such actions can only be taken after the approval of the headquarters.¹⁹⁶ This has consequently led to MAU remuneration being one of the lowest amongst the HEIs in the country and consequently attracting low-qualified members of staff. Besides, since the operations of MAU are under the domain of SDA rules, non-SDA members cannot be employed as lecturers at MAU. In this case, it has been difficult to find qualified

¹⁹³ Interview with MAU VC.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with MAU VC.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with MAU VC.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with MAU VC.

prospective lecturers who, apart from being members of SDA, are also willing to join the university with the low remuneration. Besides, MAU, in line with the directive from the Michigan SDA headquarters, requires all of its students not to be taking meat as food. According to the registrar, the implication of this is that those students who cannot manage to become vegetarian get excluded from the possibility of joining the university.¹⁹⁷ The same applies to the observation of Sabbath rules which, as was observed in the previous chapter, has excluded many non-SDA prospective students from enrolling with MAU.

For CUNIMA, the university is legally owned by the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) which is the committee of Catholic Bishops of Malawi.¹⁹⁸ The chairperson of the ECM is ultimately the Chancellor of CUNIMA. Below ECM is the board of trustees which is composed of five fellows distinguished in their own fields of operations (CUNIMA, 2006). It has its own chairperson. Below the board of trustees is the university council which is currently composed of members also drawn largely from the circle of retired academicians. Below the university council is management which is headed by the vice chancellor (VC) appointed by the ECM in liaison with board of trustees and university council. Under the VC are three deputies (DVC) responsible for academics, administration and finance. Under DVC - Academic, there are deans of faculties while the university registrar (UR) reports to DVC administration. The finance officer is below DVC finance. The senate is composed of the VC, Deputy VCs, and deans of faculties. However, the fact that there are three bodies before the university management has resulted in key decisions taking long to be implemented.¹⁹⁹ Besides, it was also noted that quite often the roles of the Episcopal conference and board of trustees appear duplicated as they all act as custodians of the institution.²⁰⁰ Although the presence of the three committees has no serious implication on monetary expenses, the duplication of role was costly in terms of time, especially those decisions to do with infrastructural development and policy reforms. At management level, the coordination of academic, finance and administration sections headed by the DVCs has been problematic and, in most cases, it has resulted in bureaucracy in key decisions such as the purchasing of teaching

¹⁹⁷ Interview with MAU Registrar.

¹⁹⁸ These are Chikwawa, Mangochi, Blantyre, Lilongwe, Dedza, Zomba, Mzuzu and Karonga.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with CUNIMA VC.

²⁰⁰ Interview with CUNIMA VC.

and learning materials.

UNIL's supreme body is the university council chaired by the chairman. The synod is represented in the council by the general secretary, moderator and synod's secretary for education. The registrar helps the vice chancellor in day-to-day running of the university. There are academic departments under the dean of faculties. However, in practice, it is the registrar who makes most of academic decisions. Senate is not operational.

At BIU, the structure in practice has the VC, academic deans and registrars below him with heads of departments reporting straight to the deans. There is also no fully constituted board, and currently the owner who is also its chancellor is the board chairperson as well. He is directly assisted by the registrar, the accountant and receptionist. With the unfilled post of vice chancellor, all other administrative and academic logistics are handled by the registrar.²⁰¹ Just like UNIL, the senate at BIU is non-existent. There were no full-time deans of faculties and heads of departments. As a result, the registrar is too burdened with responsibilities that could have been completely handled at faculty or departmental level.²⁰² Consequently, the screening of prospective students and admission is also done by the registrar.²⁰³ There are reportedly instances where students were enrolled into various programmes without sufficient documents because the responsible registrar had no time to undertake a screening exercise.²⁰⁴ The procurement of necessary teaching and learning materials is also neglected in the process.

The case of registrars handling both administrative and academic tasks was also observed for UNIL, SOUM and MAU. At UNIL, one person acted for two years as VC, registrar and librarian.²⁰⁵ Thus all private HEIs are characterised by substantial centralisation of these roles in the hands of the registrar and VC. In religious private HEIs, the registrars are strategic people appointed directly or indirectly by the church while, for the secular private HEIs, such registrars are relations of the key shareholder (as in the case of BIU) or one of the shareholders (as in case

²⁰¹ Interview with MAU Registrar.

²⁰² Interview with MAU Registrar.

²⁰³ Interview with MAU Registrar.

²⁰⁴ Interview with BIU Registrar.

²⁰⁵ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

of SOUM). The consequent result of over-concentration of the roles of registrars, strategic alignment to the church as well as the involvement of shareholders in the management of private HEIs is that there has been a tendency of self-exclusion or isolation by the academic staff in active running of the HEIs and in coming up with new ideas. For example, although they have the autonomy to initiate the introduction of other degree programmes (as long as it goes through the government accreditation process), such plans have never been hatched by the academic staff except by either the registrar or the VC. It was reported that, in all private HEIs, academic staff felt that such decisions are the exclusive mandates of shareholders (secular private HEIs) and churches (for church-aligned HEIs). In similar vein, the final decision on recruiting academic staff of specific qualification is often made by the registrars of the HEIs. This has resulted in situations where the hired members of staff do not contribute much academic value to the departments to which they are aligned.

The problem of low involvement levels by the academic staff in the HEIs also emanates from non-conducive promotional procedures in private HEIs. With the exception of UNIL and CUNIMA, the other private HEIs reported that they had no appointments and promotion committee as well as no concrete policy on promotion of academic staff. Consequently, promotion is done singularly by the chancellor or VC using criteria of which the members of staff are mostly not aware.²⁰⁶ According to the registrars, this has led to some members of staff becoming unmotivated to “go the extra mile”.²⁰⁷

UNIMA’s supreme body on the other hand is council dominated by those appointed by the state president as well as those sympathetic to the ruling party.²⁰⁸ The VC, who is the head of management, is also appointed by the state president (UNIMA 1998 Act). Quite often, both the council and the VC are seen as political “stooges” of the ruling party.²⁰⁹ The VC therefore exercises strenuous caution when making or recommending certain decisions to the board while the college principals also observe “political rules” when making certain decisions within their

²⁰⁶ Interviews with MAU, CUNIMA, BIU and SOUM Registrars.

²⁰⁷ Interviews with MAU, CUNIMA, BIU and SOUM Registrars.

²⁰⁸ Interview with CSCQBE Executive Director.

²⁰⁹ Interview with LEG Executive Director and CSQBE Executive Director.

respective campuses.²¹⁰ It was reported that quite often the VC, board and principals are “preoccupied with tactical issues and thus unable to provide the grand picture and vision of university’s development and growth” (MIM, 1996:13). In practice the board has been determining the closure and opening of UNIMA colleges when faced with “threats”. While the board is supposed to deal with these matters independently, most of the decisions have had to be approved (and at times directed) by the state president, as earlier discussed. Similar experience was also reported for MZUNI. Unlike in most of the private HEIs, UNIMA and MZUNI have functional senates constituted by the VC and deans of faculties.

With regard to pace at which decisions are made and implemented, UNIMA’s federal system was reported to be a key challenge in making key decisions at college level. For example, it was reported that quick response to industry’s changing needs is difficult because UNIMA’s operational set-up makes it very hard to introduce a course, revise it and introduce a new degree programme. On average it takes four years for a programme to be introduced from the time of initial conceptualisation,²¹¹ largely because the final responsible committee is a central committee composed of members from all constituent colleges. Other committees, such as the Senate, the Postgraduate Committee and the Appointments Committee, also have membership drawn from all the constituent colleges. In practice, it has always been difficult for these committees to reach a quorum and in most cases important decisions are postponed. In some instances, failure by the Postgraduate Committee and Senate to meet as regularly as possible resulted in instances where some master’s students could not graduate for two years after having formally defended their thesis. As a result of these bureaucracies, industries and other partners have found it difficult to work with UNIMA on some projects. Between 2004 and 2010 for instance, the Political and Administrative Department’s (PAS) request to construct its own buildings (whose money had already been given by a partner organisation) had not been fully processed by UNIMA because of the responsible committee’s delays in making important decisions. Thus inefficiencies and delays in making important decisions as well as lack of timely implementation of activities and programmes were reported as one of the main causes of minimal linkages with the industry or the productive sector because UNIMA is currently regarded as being slow at responding to industries

²¹⁰ Interview with LEG Executive Director and CSQCBE Executive Director.

²¹¹ Interview with Dean of Faculty of Science at Chancellor College.

needs. This situation is however different from MZUNI's, whose responsible committees have been able to make decisions within time limits partly because of the geographical confinements of the responsible committees. The time that elapses for the course to be introduced at MZUNI is also shorter (two years).

For UNIMA, although it has a strategic plan to guide the operations of its colleges, it was reported that most key aspects of the plan still remained in the hands of the university office. These includes the allocation of research funds, recruitment of staff and procurement of essential items. This set-up, according to college principals, meant that it was very difficult for colleges on their own to effectively undertake some programmes as purposed in the strategic plan. It was also reported that, although the strategic plan encourages individual colleges to solicit funds for various infrastructural expansion programmes, the process of releasing these funds to the intended purposes is often characterised by long delays. The previous example of the PAS department attests to this fact.

For MZUNI, the implementation of their strategic plan is decentralised and in most cases resulted in quick implementation of activities and plans. However, this decentralisation had in many instances resulted in reports of financial mismanagement, thereby jeopardising the very programmes that were supposed to be implemented. Between 2000 and 2010, MZUNI failed to properly account for over K300 million subvention meant for infrastructural development according to the audited reports for the 2004/5 to 2007/8 financial years.

Operationally, academic sections are internally informal while their relationship with administrative sections is characterised by lack of cooperation in key areas. For the period between 2000 and 2004, both UNIMA and MZUNI had not undertaken any performance review of academic staff because such exercises had not received the cooperation of academic staff. Operationally, although the head of department is supposed to be a team leader, they have not been able to reinforce certain human resources policies such as those to do with absenteeism on the part of the academic staff members. The relationship between academic staff and heads of departments or deans is characterised by excessive autonomy by the members of staff to the extent that a lecturer can be absent from the university for a period of three weeks without the head of department knowing the whereabouts of the lecturer. Similarly, at postgraduate level,

lecturers are not fully obliged to observe the schedule for proposal submission, thesis writing and submission.²¹² Thus in most cases, the probability to finish depends on the volitional speed and goodwill of the supervisor.²¹³ The head of department (HoD) or course coordinator rarely pushes the supervisor and in practice the supervisor is accountable to no one.²¹⁴ Consequently, postgraduate students have no office at which to lodge a complaint against a supervisor who “over-delays” the completion of their degree programmes.²¹⁵

While lack of internal cooperation within departmental structures has resulted in delays for postgraduate students as well as frequent absenteeism by lecturers, lack of inter-sectional cooperation has resulted in the HEIs failing to enforce key internal administrative regulations. For example, the university rules for both UNIMA and MZUNI require academic staff to inform the consultancies bureaus through the heads of department about any private consultancy that they are undertaking and to remit 10 per cent of the proceeds to the university. However, in practice, almost all academic staff members do not declare proceeds of consultancy work to the head of department and rarely remit the 10 per cent. The implication of this tendency is that the university has not been able to boost its financial base despite losing resources (lecturers and their time) to private consultancies.

Failure to reinforce internal rules has also resulted in the prolonged study leave of many academic staffs thereby reducing the already available number of academic staff. UNIMA, unlike MZUNI, does not enforce a maximum study completion period rule for its academic staff members who are studying abroad. Since most of the lecturers who study abroad continue drawing their salaries besides the likely scholarships that they get abroad, prolonging of study duration implies maximising the duration of getting “double money”. This has resulted in many lecturers deliberately pronging their studies by either looking for post-doctoral opportunities (for those who were doing a PhD). At the time of this study, 64 academic members of staff had exceeded the duration period that they had applied for while 13 of those who had completed had not yet

²¹² Interview with UNIMA and MZUNI Registrars.

²¹³ Interview with Bunda College Principal.

²¹⁴ Interview with Chancellor College Principal.

²¹⁵ Interviews with Chancellor College Student Union Chairperson, Polytechnic Student Union Chairperson, University of Malawi Student Union Chairperson and University of Malawi Student Union General Secretary.

returned despite finishing.²¹⁶ For MZUNI, the rule on over-staying is effectively reinforced and only eight of those that went abroad had overstayed at the time of this research.

However, while failure to cooperate at inter and intra departmental level emanate from a lack of regular performance appraisals, they also partly emanate from the promotional criteria within UNIMA. Unlike at MZUNI, UNIMA's promotion criterion is not based on leadership abilities but rather solely on publications. This reduces the incentive to discharge duties diligently and to participate in key development of the university by the lecturers except through publishing. For UNIMA, it has also resulted in a significant exodus of lecturers to MZUNI in order to get promotion. For example, about 40 per cent of MZUNI's lecturers migrated from UNIMA.²¹⁷

Finally, while the private HEIs have few administrative staff handling many things, public HEIs have several administrative staff handling similar functions. For instance it was observed that at UNIMA's office the University Registrar has four assistants for routine activities of admission, finance, human resources and administration (MIM, 1996). In practice, the roles of these assistant registrars are not different from those undertaken by four assistant registrars at college level. Thus assistant college registrars report to the college registrar who then reports to the university registrar. However, the college registrars also report to the principals, thereby resulting in dual accountability. Similarly, there are librarians and bursars at both university and college level. The 1996 MIM Report on UNIMA observes that:

“the dual accountability for college registrars, bursars, and librarians has led to the erosion of leadership and spirit of team work at the college level – a common service approach goes contrary to the ideal of building substantive institutional capacity” (MIM, 1996:15).

At MZUNI, the presence of five assistant registrars, coupled with a lack of coherent and rich job description, has also resulted in thin separation of tasks amongst the assistant registrars which has further resulted in delays and overlaps of key decisions (MIM, 1996). For both MZUNI and UNIMA, this has also resulted in challenges in reinforcing key administrative rules and

²¹⁶ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²¹⁷ Interviews with UNIMA and MZUNI Registrars.

regulations such as monitoring of the collection of levies on private consultancies by academic staff.²¹⁸

It should be clear at this juncture that, in both private and public HEIs, there has been a conspicuous absence of specialised departments for marketing, public relations and academic planning as well as fundraising (with the only exception of MZUNI which has a trust fund responsible for raising funds). Lack of fundraising departments partly explains the low levels of funds procured from sources other than fees and subvention. In the context of limited resources and challenges in attracting and retaining highly skilled academicians needed in Applied Sciences, Pure Sciences and Engineering, public HEIs have been unable to significantly expand in these fields, while, for private HEIs, the start-up cost is so high that they are strongly oriented to the direction of offering “soft” fields that have lower start-up and operating costs.²¹⁹ The absence of public relations and marketing offices has also resulted in minimal interaction or linkages between potential financiers of the HE and the HEIs as most key stakeholders do not know what the university is doing (Kululanga, 2009; MAKNET, 2009). In all HEIs, only BIU had an active website, which was updated in 2010, while MZUNI and MAU did not have one. UNIMA, SOUM, UNIL and CUNIMA’s websites were last updated in 2009. Lack of marketing and public relations also resulted in many organisations and companies opting to send their members of staff abroad for studies even in fields which Malawi’s HEIs are offering.²²⁰ Lack of public relations on the other hand has resulted in failure by the HEIs to tap into the possible feedback that the key stakeholders are capable of giving²²¹. Absent in all the HEIs are also academic planning units which would come up with strategies for academic throughput of students as well as general assurance. Lack of these specialised units was seen to be one of the key reasons why there have been serious quality compromises in both private and public HEIs.

²¹⁸ Interviews with MZUNI Registrar and UNIMA Registrar.

²¹⁹ Interviews with UNIMA VC, MZUNI VC, MAU VC, CUNIMA VC, SOUM Registrar, BIU Registrar and UNIL Registrar.

²²⁰ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar, MZUNI Registrar, General Manager for Chombe Tea Company and Managing Director for Toyota Malawi.

²²¹ Interviews with MCCI Economists, MCCI Chief Executive Officer, Managing Director Toyota Malawi, General Manager Chombe Tea Company.

7.3.1.3 Actors in Malawi's HEIs: Quality, Interaction and Level of Activeness

Besides the two organisational features discussed in the preceding two sections, the study also noted that the quality of stakeholders involved in the running of HEIs has some impact on the performance of HEIs presented in the previous chapter.

In private HEIs, church leaders, VCs, registrars, academic staff and shareholders are the key stakeholders. As already discussed, UNIL, MAU and CUNIMA have strong links with the church and the leaders of the church are key stakeholders. Of the three, UNIL and CUNIMA have however been able to use the links with the church to mobilise resources from their congregations and other partners for the running of the university.²²² The presence of bishops and Synod leaders in CUNIMA and UNIL respectively has made it easy for the university to solicit external support for the running of their universities. For CUNIMA, the bishops have in some instances used their 'icon' status to mobilise support for the university. The university library currently constructed at CUNIMA is directly financed by funding sourced by the bishops.²²³ For UNIL, the presence of the three senior members of the church administration (General Secretary, Moderator and Secretary for Education) has also worked to UNIL's advantage as the church presbyteries have been making annual food donations to UNIL since its opening through an appeal backed by the three leaders.²²⁴

However, for MAU, the involvement of its Malawi leader has not resulted in similar results due to the fact that the Michigan office has to approve key decisions.²²⁵ For CUNIMA and MAU, the Chairman of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi and the President of SDA become University Council Chairs respectively. However, since the two may not usually have the managerial acumen, they have not been able to effectively provide policy guidance and strategic direction in the development of their respective universities.²²⁶ Consequently, for MAU and CUNIMA, the possible innovative role of the VCs is curtailed by the strong involvement of the church

²²² Interviews with UNIL and CUNIMA VCs.

²²³ Interview with CUNIMA VC.

²²⁴ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

²²⁵ Interview with MAU Registrar.

²²⁶ Interviews with MAU VC and CUNIMA VC.

leaders.²²⁷ In the case of MAU, it is further complicated by the fact that a lot of decisions have to be endorsed by the SDA Michigan Head Office.²²⁸ This is despite the fact that, in both cases, the VCs are people with long experience in higher education management and have quite often used their previous connections to link the university to the government as well as other international bodies. For UNIL, this situation is neutralised because the three church leaders on the council have no special powers except those of ordinary board members. The VC and council chair of UNIL are ordinary members selected “purely on merit”.²²⁹ This in practice has helped in ensuring that individuals with technical know-how are placed at the helm of council and management.²³⁰ For SOUM and BIU, the chancellors who are also board chairs are accomplished business people. However, their involvement has tended to place emphasis on profit motives as opposed to general academic competitiveness.²³¹

With the exception of CUNIMA, the registrars in all the private HEIs are at the centre of the many academic and administrative responsibilities as was discussed earlier on. This has resulted in situations where they discharge too many responsibilities, leaving no time to undertake institutional planning of HEIs’ long-term academic development.²³² In the case of SOUM and BIU, registrars are both relatives and business accomplices of the chancellors. This leads to pressure to meet business goals more than academic development goals.²³³

In private HEIs, most of the academic staff are only involved in teaching and grading.²³⁴ While the visible dormancy of academic staff has resulted in few academic activities in these HEIs, it was also observed by this study that the quality of academic staff in these HEIs reinforces this aspect. As was earlier presented, the majority of staff in all the private HEIs are holders of first degrees and belong to the junior category of academic staff. Consequently, while this on its own

²²⁷ Interviews with CUNIMA VC and MAU VC.

²²⁸ Interview with MAU VC.

²²⁹ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

²³⁰ Interview with UNIL Registrar.

²³¹ Interview with Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

²³² Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, SOUM Registrar, UNIL Registrar and MAU Registrar.

²³³ Interview with Director of Higher Education in MoEST, SOUM Registrar and BIU Registrar.

²³⁴ Interviews with UNIL Registrar, MAU Registrar, BIU Registrar and CUNIMA Registrar.

implies low quality of education, such levels of quality have repercussions on the ability of these private HEIs to introduce new programmes both at undergraduate and postgraduate level, especially in the Pure Science, Applied Science and Engineering fields. It has also resulted in low levels of research and inability to raise resources, as well as inability to connect with the industry.²³⁵ The situation has further resulted in lack of strategic planning, making it difficult for them to come up with targets in terms of enrolment, recruitment, quality, efficiency and relevance as well as the strategies and means for achieving them.²³⁶

In public HEIs, the state president, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), university councils, administrative staff, academic staff and student bodies are key stakeholders whose involvement has had an impact on performance in one way or the other. The impact of the roles of the state president and MoEST on the performance of public HEIs has already been explained in section 7.2.3. As it was indicated, UNIMA and MZUNI university councils are appointed by the state president. The councils are also often characterised by presence of politicians (usually from the ruling party) (Sabola, 2010). This has often made it difficult for university management to stand aloof from political pressure especially in the awarding of some contracts, and in the recruitment of college principals, university registrars and other appointments where the university office or board has direct or indirect influence. Thus the presence of politicians in the councils, especially those that have no administrative acumen and prowess, has also not worked to the betterment of UNIMA and MZUNI.²³⁷

In terms of human resources, the quality of academic staff in public HEIs is relatively better as compared to those of private HEIs (in terms of the percentage of lecturers holding masters and PhD degrees) as was already observed in the previous chapter. However, the percentages of PhD holders are still lower for UNIMA and MZUNI (19.7 per cent and 16.4 per cent respectively according to Table 6.4) than the required 50 per cent. The number of lecturers with PhDs is still on the lower side while those with first degrees are also significant in number. Senior academics are also not in a majority. Coupled with the fact that the establishment of academic posts is low,

²³⁵ Interviews with Education Specialist for USAID and Planning Officer for MoEST.

²³⁶ Interview with Education Specialist for USAID.

²³⁷ Interviews with UNIMA VC and MZUNI VC.

this has resulted in some adverse outcomes. First, in case of UNIMA, there have been instances where some degree programmes have been abandoned due to a limited number of academic staff in general and those qualified to teach in general.²³⁸ It has also partly resulted in instances where masters programmes, such as Economics, Political Science, Development Studies, Social History and Public Health, Sociology, Agronomy, Crop Science, Animal Science, Entomology, Tissue Culture, Plant Breeding, Aquaculture and Fisheries, Agro Forestry, Social Forestry, Nutrition, Horticulture, Business Administration and Industrial Relations and Paediatric intakes are on a cohort basis whose duration depends on how long the already enrolled students take to finish.²³⁹

Second, since most of the lecturers have no research experience as they are recruited directly after finishing their first degree, many of them have been unable to undertake problem-solving research.²⁴⁰ Lack of practical experience leads to many of them being easily indoctrinated into the organisational culture of non-compliance with internal rules by a majority of academic staff, as already observed.²⁴¹ It also implies that many of them have no managerial experience to transform the operations of the public HEIs into entities capable of implementing their policy expected roles.

Besides the academic and administrative staff, public HEIs, unlike private HEIs, are characterised by the presence of active student bodies. Politically, student bodies in Malawi have been barometers of regime strength and (un)popularity.²⁴² Between 2000 and 2010, student bodies from UNIMA and MZUNI have used this political edge to their benefit.²⁴³ This however has resulted in continued paralysis of key reform measures in the two institutions. For example, despite the fiscal burden on the government, the student bodies have successfully managed to push for the raising of books and stationery allowances. In 2001, they managed to block the raising of tuition fees from K1 500 to K46 000 (although the government was to pay loans) and also managed to block an increase in 2010 from K25 000 to K80 000. They also managed to

²³⁸ Interview with Chancellor College Principal.

²³⁹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁴⁰ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁴¹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁴² Interview with Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction.

²⁴³ Interviews with UMSU President and MZUNI Student Union President.

block the charging of interest. This has often resulted in situations where even after both (UNIMA) Council and MoEST have approved certain proposals by the public HEIs, their implementation has been difficult. Besides the students' blocking of the introduction of key financial measures, 80 per cent of damages that were included in the maintenance budget between 2000 and 2010 were deliberately caused by them.²⁴⁴

The strength of the student bodies coupled with their ability to apply violence upon those they perceive as adversaries has meant that student perpetrators of property vandalism are fully protected. Besides paralysing the fiscal reforms and adding to maintenance costs, the lagging behind of UNIMA's calendar was caused by violent protests. For instance, in March 2004, UNIMA's Chancellor College was closed for two months after the rejection of the fourth-year Bachelor of Education students' demand to get their teaching practice allowance in lump-sum form resulted in the looting of shops in Zomba city by the students.²⁴⁵ Quite often, they strengthen their demands by using sit-ins and violent demonstrations which have resulted in either the complete closure of HEIs or additional weeks of learning, thereby leading to financial inefficiencies.²⁴⁶

However, the relationship between student bodies and academic members of staff has not led to students putting their lecturers on their "toes". This is so because, as already observed, academic members of staff are in practice accountable to none and often use the "privilege" of giving grades to keep themselves aloof from any student "bullshit".²⁴⁷ The result has been that students rarely report lecturers who abscond from classes to the head of department as doing so would be digging one's own "grave of low grades".²⁴⁸ The same situation applies to postgraduate students who, for fear of jeopardising their prospects for finishing, allow the incurrence of delays instead of reporting their supervisors to the responsible authorities.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁴ Interview with UMSU President.

²⁴⁵ Interview with Assistant Registrar for Chancellor College.

²⁴⁶ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁴⁷ Interview with UNIMA VC.

²⁴⁸ Interview with UNIMA VC.

²⁴⁹ Interview with UNIMA VC.

However, absent in both private HEIs and public HEIs is the participation of key business captains in the running of HEIs, in terms of parents as well as former students. The result is that all HEIs have not been able to bring on board the voice and support of those who matter in the financing of HEIs. Parents, alumni and business captains have been spectators of the hurdles that the HEIs face. Similarly, all the HEIs have missed the opportunity of tapping into potential expertise needed by these HEIs in the modern HE business management.²⁵⁰

7.3.1.4 Views of Actors on Policy Content

There are generally divergent views of HEIs' actors on national policy (that relate to higher education and national development) content which the study identified as having an impact on the performance of HEIs. The process of identifying this factor involved examining the societal problems sought to be redressed by the policies and how the HEIs view the causal dynamics of the problems sought to be addressed by the policy.

As was presented in chapter five, both the national development and education sectoral policies are poised towards dealing with the key challenges – relevance, equity, access, quality and efficiency in the higher education system – which are seen as stumbling blocks in the contribution of higher education towards economic growth (Malawi Government, 1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008). The expected roles of HEIs identified in chapter five are meant to ensure that HEIs address these challenges so as to ensure that economic growth is promoted.

However, the views of HEIs in Malawi on these problems reveal the general feeling that they consider the challenges of access, equity, relevance, quality and efficiency as largely beyond their control and largely within the court of the government. The study noted that this has resulted in minimal efforts to deal with the expected role. All the HEIs consider the sorry state of primary and secondary education in Malawi as a contributing factor in the low quality of higher education. In the views of public HEIs, the challenges of access, equity, quality, relevance and efficiency were also caused by low levels of public funding and political interference. They argued that for almost 10 years government's funding had been below the requested amount. They argued that it

²⁵⁰ Interviews with MCCCCI Economists, MCCCCI Chief Executive Officer, Managing Director Toyota Malawi, General Manager Chombe Tea Company.

was very difficult to increase enrolment and research activities without increasing funding to these universities. Thus, despite the internal inefficiencies by the HEIs exposed in the previous chapter which contribute to challenges of relevance, access, equity and quality, low funding is rated as one of the causes of the challenges. As put by the VC of UNIMA:

“you have to know that research is best done by well qualified staff. We need to send these lecturers for masters and PhD so that they are capable of undertaking research which the industry can value.”

The public universities also felt that quality was being hampered by the exodus of lecturers to neighbouring universities in the region due to low remuneration rates caused by low funding levels. The UNIMA registrar put it this way:

“We pay our professors less than K300 000 and yet when they go to UB (University of Botswana) they are paid more than four times this salary and you expect us to convince him to be with us by appealing to his patriotism. Would you yourself [the researcher] want to come to us if UB offers you such amount simply because you want to be seen as a patriot?”

Apart from low levels of funding, public HEIs also hold the belief that the problems of relevance and quality are being aggravated by the mushrooming of private universities. They reported that many private universities were engaged in the duplication of less costly programmes (such as business and education) instead of embarking on other programmes which are needed in the industry. The MZUNI VC put it this way:

“...what they [private HEIs] are doing is taking advantage of the thirst for higher education by desperate Malawians.”

The two public universities also bemoaned the tendency among the private HEIs of using their (public HEIs’) staff as this was exhausting their members of staff.²⁵¹ This view is held by the administrators in the public HEIs despite the fact that enforcement of operational rules for the two HEIs is weak.

²⁵¹ Interview with Bunda, Polytechnic and Chancellor College Principals.

On the other hand, the private HEIs believe that the main cause of the challenges outlined in the policies is government's failure to provide indirect funding to the private HEIs in the form of fees.²⁵² They also contend that the problem of low levels of research is due to lack of funding. Thus, despite the fact that private HEIs' failure to boost access, relevance equity, efficiency and quality is partly due to lack of deliberate internal policies and efforts to boost these aspects as earlier discussed, they (private HEIs) disown the responsibility of rectifying the challenges as expected of them in the policies. On quality, they argued that the government has the mentality that quality was only an issue to be checked in private institutions and not public ones. They contend that failure by government to equally enforce quality measures in public institutions was a cause of deteriorating standards. Private HEIs feel that they are producing better graduates than public universities.

“If you go to all banks, almost all employees of the year awards are scooped by graduates from SOUM and yet the government thinks we have to be checked on quality more than UNIMA”.²⁵³

The disowning of responsibility thus should tentatively explain at this juncture the irony observed in section 7.2 where the match between HEIs' guiding principles and roles defined by the policies has not translated into practical implementation of HEIs' roles. In other words, although HEIs profess similar values and beliefs related to their expected roles, in practice they believe that many of the challenges can be handled by them if the government and “others” have done their part.

It should at this juncture be noted further that, to a large extent, antagonistic views among the HEIs themselves on the one hand and between the HEIs and the government, on the other hand, are due to minimal participation levels by the HEIs in the policy processes. In the drafting stages of the development policies, individuals from HEIs participated as private consultants.²⁵⁴ In minor instances where they had participated as representatives of HEIs, their participation was hardly preceded by efforts to come up with a common position or proposal among themselves.

²⁵² Interviews with CUNIMA VC, SOUM Registrar, BIU Registrar and MAU VC.

²⁵³ Employee of the year is an award given to Bank clerks who outperforms others in that particular year.

²⁵⁴ Interviews with UNIMA VC and MZUNI VC.

7.4 External and Internal Factors: Independent, Mutually Reinforcing, or Linear Causative?

Before winding up the chapter, it is important to appreciate the nature of the relationship that exists between the internal and external factors presented in the preceding sections in order to establish if its variables are independent, mutually reinforcing or linear causative (that is, only one factor causes the other). This brief exercise will enable this study to make realistic recommendations on the measures needed to ensure that HEIs are effectively responding towards the development policies.

It is however very difficult to provide a detailed account of the relative strength of internal and external factors vis-à-vis their impact on the performance of HEIs in their expected roles in this study. Nevertheless, one first observation that can be made is that the internal factors are not fully independent of external factors. Many of the internal factors can be controlled with a favourable external environment.

For example, laxity or disorientation towards introduction of Science and Engineering, especially in private HEIs, is a challenge which could have been controlled if the legal and regulatory framework exercised by the state was in place. This would have provided an enforcement mechanism to ensure that those that are opening private HEIs are also undertaking to provide Science-related fields. Similarly, the problem of quality and relevance (specifically research) in both private and public HEIs would have been checked by the presence of such a legal and regulatory framework. For instance, as was indicated, apart from UNIL and CUNIMA, the other private HEIs reported had no appointments and promotion committee as well as no concrete policy on promotion of academic staff at the time of this study. Consequently, promotion is done piecemeal by the Chancellor or VC using a criterion of which the members of staff are mostly not aware. This, as was already discussed, has an effect on the working morale as well as innovativeness of academic staff. A proper regulatory framework would have made it mandatory for all HEIs to have internationally accepted appointment and promotion procedures. In a similar vein, a regulatory body would have been in a position to consistently check on the qualification of academic staff in the HEIs, a factor which has partly led to low levels of research and challenges in introducing new programmes, as well as low postgraduate education expansion.

In addition, a proper regulatory body would have been instrumental in dealing with the determination of tuition fees for public HEIs. Currently, as was discussed, the decision to raise fees needs the approval of MoEST and the state president. Where feedback is provided, such feedback often takes six months.²⁵⁵ The absence of a regulatory body has also left a gap in terms of a proper system of ensuring that the research needs of the country are taken on board and given funding priority in the support provided by the government on the one hand and given priority in implementation by HEIs on the other hand.

The current external political interference has also hampered the professional running of public HEIs where the students, administrators and academic staff barely cooperate due to mistrust in and eroded allegiance to those seen to be serving other political interests. Historically, political interference has led to mass exodus of lecturers from UNIMA and this has resulted in a low number of senior staff.

The impact of both current and previous economic neoliberal policies, as earlier discussed, has already shown that many competent staff members in UNIMA have left the country in search of greener pastures while the teaching and learning facilities have become increasingly poor.

For internal environment, the organisational lapses and laxities in the public HEIs – such as excessive autonomy that leads to frequent absenteeism, and lack of performance appraisal – a funding mechanism that ties funding to output would be a significant control measure. Such a measure is however an external aspect to the public HEIs.

Finally, the antagonistic views of the HEIs themselves on the one hand and between the HEIs and the government on the other hand about the challenges that have bedevilled the higher education system as well their possible solution are due to minimal participation levels by the HEIs in the policy processes. The process of policy formulation in Malawi is such that it often becomes the domain of government technocrats with minimal participation of other key stakeholders (Booth *et al.*, 2005). This is also something that can be controlled through a proper government bureaucratic system of consultation and policy formulation.

There is however one notable causative effect of internal factors on the external factors. The

²⁵⁵ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar and MZUNI Registrar.

political activeness of students has caused the government to be very sensitive towards politically “unpopular” decisions such as the raising of fees. Consequently, the government has treaded carefully, choosing not to delegate this responsibility to any agency, and in the process clinging to the same model where it still has a substantial controlling hand.

Generally, however, the causative impact of internal factors towards external factors is minimal as compared to the other way round. Thus it is possible to conclude that the relationship between the internal and external environments is neither that of full independence towards each other nor is it fully mutually reinforcing. It is predominantly linear causative, with the external environment largely having a huge impact on the internal factors that effect HEIs’ performance.

7.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter operationalised the third objective of this study which was to identify and analyse determinants of Malawi HEIs’ performance presented in the previous chapter. It examined the impact exerted by the external and internal environments of HEIs.

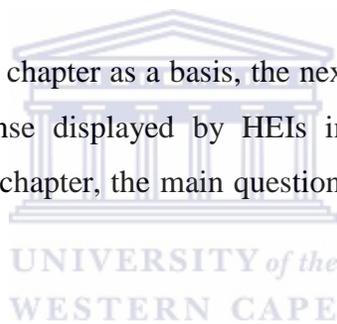
The chapter observed that the socio-demographic landscape in pre-tertiary education is characterised by wide imbalances in participation rates between boys and girls, urban and rural dwellers and richest and poorest families. Participation rates at secondary school are higher for boys, urban dwellers and richest families than for girls, rural dwellers and poorest families respectively. These imbalances have had an effect on HEIs’ efforts towards the rectification of the imbalances through equity considerations. Apart from the socio-demographic landscape, neoliberal policies, both in the 80s as well as in the 90s have had an impact on the quality of education being offered in Malawi especially in public HEIs. Politically, patronage has until this day affected the performance of HEIs in their expected roles. The nature of the relationship between the state and HEIs is not conducive to enforcing the HEIs to undertake their expected roles. Equally, the internal environment of the HEIs negatively affects the performance of HEIs in Malawi. The chapter observed that the operational structures of all HEIs significantly affect the aspect of quality, equity, access and relevance. The chapter noted that, in all HEIs, there was a visible absence of modern specialised departments for marketing, public relations and academic planning which would be responsible for mobilising funds, enhancing UILs and getting feedback from key stakeholders when coming up with strategies for academic throughput of students. Lack

of these specialised units partly resulted in underperformance in quality, financial mobilisation and relevance.

In terms of actors, the quality of lecturers in both private and public HEIs has had a significant impact on the low performance of the HEIs, while the sour relationships amongst inner actors in public HEIs has made enforcement of key rules that would have resulted in a positive impact on the performance of HEIs difficult. In public HEIs, the student bodies have acted as barriers to financial reforms.

The chapter noted as well that the relationship between the internal and external factors is not that of full independence from each other. It is also not a fully mutually reinforcing relationship. The relationship is largely a linear causative one, with the external environment having a huge impact on the internal environment of HEIs.

Using the previous chapter and this chapter as a basis, the next chapter will undertake to identify and analyse the pattern of response displayed by HEIs in their response towards national development policies. Through the chapter, the main question for this study will be conclusively addressed.



CHAPTER EIGHT: THE PATTERN OF RESPONSE BY MALAWI'S HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TOWARDS POLICY-EXPECTED ROLES

8.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter analysed the factors that affect the performance of HEIs in Malawi. Using the level of performance by HEIs presented in chapter six and the factors that influence the response of HEIs discussed in chapter seven as a basis, this chapter will now tackle the fourth objective of this thesis, namely to identify and analyse the patterns of response by Malawi's HEIs towards national development policies which tentatively explain the sub-optimal contribution by higher education system in national development.

8.2 The Question of Generalisability of HEIs' Response

Identifying a pattern of response for HEIs in this study largely implies making generalisations. Polit and Beck (2010:1451) define generalisation as the “an act of reasoning that involves drawing broad conclusions from particular instances – that is, making an inference about the unobserved based on the observed”. It thus implies the applicability of the evidence and lessons to situations, contexts and populations other than those in which the evidence and conclusions were produced. The practice of generalisation is more widely acknowledged in quantitative research, but it is controversial in qualitative research (Polit & Beck, 2010). Although mixed methods studies can promote confidence in generalisability in the classic sense (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), it is important to remember that although this study used a mixed approach in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used, it was the qualitative approach which was predominant. In qualitative approaches the goal is not to generalise but rather to “provide a rich, contextualised understanding of some aspect of human experience through the intensive study of particular cases” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:1451).

However, apart from the fact there was some form of quantitative approach, there are generalisations that can still be made from the whole study mainly because the study used Grounded Theory analysis method in which theoretical sampling was also used. When theoretical sampling is used in Grounded Theory method, it is tantamount to argumentative generalisation in the process of data collection. As was discussed, from the beginning of data collection the

material is analysed by coding and labelling in a sense of inductive theory development until first results lead to considerations of further material (including new interviews, field observations, and documents) and so on in an iterative process until the process comes to an end if sufficient evidence had been found or there is enough saturation. This is also in line with the mode of generalisation called analytic generalisation where “researchers strive to generalise from particulars to broader constructs or theory” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009:1451). In the course of their analysis, as Polit and Beck (2010:1453) put it:

“researchers distinguish between information that is relevant to all (or many) study participants, in contrast to aspects of the experience that are unique to particular participants. Analytic generalisation in qualitative inquiry occurs most keenly at the point of analysis and interpretation. Through rigorous inductive analysis, together with the use of confirmatory strategies that address the credibility of the conclusions, qualitative researchers can arrive at insightful, inductive generalisations regarding the phenomenon under study.”

In this study, six patterns of response by HEIs were identified based on the findings of the study presented in the previous two chapters as well other background data gathered in this research.

8.3 Responding to Crises of Access and Equity: Political and Profit Sensitivities

The response of both private and public HEIs to their expected roles displays a unique feature. The trend is that they are responding to the crisis that are politically sensitive or decisive (for public HEIs) but largely at policy reform level while for private HEIs they are responding to the profit-compatible crisis. For public HEIs, the crisis of accessibility and equity is politically sensitive and decisive while for private HEIs, the response to crisis of accessibility is compatible with the profit motives.²⁵⁶

The crisis of access and equity in Malawi’s history is well documented.²⁵⁷ By 1949, Malawi had only one known African University graduate, Kamuzu Banda who later became the founding President of Malawi, with a trickle of six students studying at Fort Hare and one at Makerere

²⁵⁶ Interviews with LEG and CSCQBE Directors.

²⁵⁷ See (Malawi Government, 1964b).

(Lamba, 1985). Later, other students were sent to universities of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and Witwatersrand (Keer & Mapanje, 2002). When Malawi obtained her independence in 1964, few secondary schools had been opened and therefore few students qualified for entrance to higher education which was available only outside the country (Morton, 1975; Holland, 2010). Even when UNIMA was opened, its expansion was very slow as shown in Table 8.1 below for the selected years (interval of eight years), leading to the period analysed in this study (2000 to 2010).

Table 8.1: University Enrolment Trend in Malawi between 1965 and 1997

Year	Total National Population (Estimates)	Total University Enrolment	Female Participation Rates	Enrolment per 100 000 inhabitants
1965	4 039 500	90	24%	2
1973	4 943 460	1 054	4%	21
1981	6 222 492	1 640	11 %	26
1989	7 609 104	2 535	20%	33
1997	8 653 000	2982	33%	35

Source: Pryor (1988), Malawi Government Education Statistics Annual Reports (from 1965 to 1997), Population Census Reports (from 1965 to 1997).

As of 1996, Malawi’s university system had produced only 15 000 graduates (MIM, 1996). For reasons explained in the previous chapter, the main beneficiaries of higher education in terms of accessibility were Malawians from the northern region. Kamuzu Banda’s MCP government therefore decided to change the system of entrance to UNIMA from the “merit system” to the “quota system” based on the prospective student’s district of origin. This was done in 1988. By then, Malawi had 24 districts. Under the system, each district was given space for 10 students in the first-year intake within the succeeding years (Divala, 2009). Within the system, the selecting of ten students from each district would be based on “merit” (Divala, 2009).

To confirm that Banda’s MCP government had introduced the system out of political calculation, one has to appreciate the historical dynamics around the establishment of UNIMA and its potential political impact soon after independence. Ideally, Livingstonia Institute in the northern

region, which had been in existence since the Scottish Presbyterian missionaries in the northern region would have been a convenient location (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002). UNIMA's constituent colleges were, however, eventually located in the southern and central regions. On the surface, "part of the reasoning behind situating the institutions in the Centre and in the South, rather than at Livingstonia in the North, was that the majority of the population lived in the central and especially southern regions" (Kerr & Mapanje, 2002:76). The MCP claimed that its intention was to ensure that areas that hitherto had been neglected should have access to educational opportunities and that no person should be barred from higher education because of poverty or the question of distance from the campus (MCP, 1961).

However, the locality of UNIMA and the attendant human resource development had less to do with egalitarian principles than it had to do with the control of political opportunities (Holland, 2010). Holland (2010:203–205) observes:

"(t)he education field was in fact a key domain of struggles to define and control new political opportunities. Specifically, uneven regional distribution in Malawi prior to independence contributed to the potential of differential access among local [ethnic] groups to the new opportunities associated with independence. Rapid localisation of human resources would have primarily benefited people from the north, a region of the country where missionaries had emphasised education and where more people therefore had basic skills for more advanced training. In contrast, *"rapid localisation would have disadvantaged those in the southern and central regions, in particular the Chewa, the kin group and core political support of Malawi's founding president, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. Thus, despite the university's appeal as a symbol of the nation and engine of nation building, its very efficacy was a threat to Dr. Banda's hegemony over the distribution of advantages in the new social order."*²⁵⁸

After five years of the quota system, the high court overturned it in 1993 soon after the ushering in of the multiparty dispensation, labelling it as a "violation of the fundamental rights of

²⁵⁸ Emphasis mine.

Malawian citizens to equal development through equal opportunities to the access for higher education, irrespective of the district of origin” (Divala, 2009:6). Having been recently overturned, Bakili Muluzi’s post-1994 UDF government did not waste time challenging the court order. It could not however completely ignore the political sensitivity of higher education access. It therefore opted to deal with this aspect by opening a new university.²⁵⁹ In his maiden State Address in Parliament, Muluzi, while acknowledging the myriad challenges of university education in Malawi, only singled out accessibility as per the extract below:

“Mr. Speaker Sir, in university education, problems are also many and complex. The Government will try to overcome some of these problems by encouraging private scholarships for students into the university. The Government will also endeavour to increase university places by either expanding the current colleges or establishing another university and the Northern Region will be given priority when considering the establishment of another University” (Muluzi, 1994:16) .

In the UDF’s manifestos for the 1999 and 2004 general elections, the issue of access and equity was paramount, although some allusion was made to the intention to establish the Council for Higher Education (United Democratic Front, 1999, 2004). In 2009, Bingu wa Mutharika’s DPP government gathered the courage to reintroduce the quota system. Unlike the UDF and the MCP, the DPP government did not hide its frustration with the growing disparities in terms of regional accessibility to higher education. In several political rallies, Mutharika used a famous argument about the repercussions of the disparities on the distribution of posts in the top management or super scale in the government. In Malawi, super-scale grade is from P8 to P2. He argued that, whereas the Chikwawa²⁶⁰ district of the Southern region has a population of about 500 000, only 55 are in the super-scale, yet the northern districts of Chitipa and Karonga whose combined population is not half that of Chikwawa have 255 in the same scale (Divala, 2009).

Thus, politically, the prudence of implementing a quota system is that it appeases the Southern and Central region where 80 per cent of the votes come from since the system enhances the

²⁵⁹ Interview with the Executive Director of the Institute for Policy Interaction.

²⁶⁰ The district is now called Chikhwawa.

participation of the Central and Southern region districts.²⁶¹ The implication of the above is that, for public HEIs, the accessibility and equity components are crises meant to be dealt with and given priority for the “political safety” of the ruling elite who have often come from Southern and Central regions.²⁶² Unlike in the private HEIs, equity for public HEIs is a component which has implications for the political survival of the ruling elites. In practice, equity and access issues have not been enhanced much. However, one observes efforts by public HEIs towards the two areas which are being hindered by other factors mentioned in the previous chapter. In that regard, although national policy expectations span beyond access and equity, these two are politically sensitive issues and are accorded some priority at least at planning and policy reform level in the public HEIs (courtesy of state hand), although such reforms are constrained by other factors.²⁶³

For private HEIs, emphasis on access is partly profit driven which coincides with their expected policy role of enhancing access.²⁶⁴ The roles of expanding Science training, diversifying university programmes to serve clearly identified areas of human resources needs, introducing more postgraduate programmes, equity and relevance are not fully congruent with the profit-making pursuit and thus, although they are equally expected policy roles, they are conspicuously neglected as there high cost implications associated with fully embarking on these roles.²⁶⁵

8.4 Use of Sub-standard Resources and Methods Antithetical to Genuine Teaching and Learning

For those roles that HEIs are undertaking, their implementation is characterised by usage of sub-standard resources and methods that are not ideal to genuine teaching and learning. This is the trend in both the private and public HEIs. As was discussed in chapter six, the process of ensuring that courses are of good standard is supposed to be enforced by the Evaluation and Accreditation

²⁶¹ Interview with LEG Executive Director.

²⁶² Interview with (LEG) Executive Director.

²⁶³ Interviews with the Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction LEG Director, CSCQBE Executive Director and Director of Higher Education in MoEST

²⁶⁴ Interviews with the Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction LEG Director, CSCQBE Executive Director and Director of Higher Education in MoEST

²⁶⁵ Interviews with LEG Director and Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

Committee (EAC) of the government which looks at three factors when accrediting and revolving the accreditation of private HEIs: quality of infrastructure, resources (such as books and laboratory equipment) and qualification and experience of academic and key support staff (it requires 60 per cent of the lecturers to be holders of at least masters degrees). As was indicated, due to laxity in enforcing these requirements, the private HEIs have tended to make use of lecturers who are mostly first degree holders. As was shown in Table 6.2, the common form of reading materials is class notes, while internet accessibility is absent for all the private HEIs except CUNIMA. Students in all the private HEIs do not have the opportunity to access journals in their respective universities. At least 50 students in private HEIs have to wait for one computer if they want to make use of it. There are also very few prescribed texts. At UNIL and SOUM, as discussed in chapter six, students have no access to printers within the university premises, and in the case of UNIL, students have to travel for about 50 kilometres to the nearest trading centre to type and print their assignments.

In public HEIs, as was discussed, the number of PhD holders is low while the number of first degree holders is high. Senior academics are also not in the majority. Consequently, as indicated earlier, while the university policy prohibits staff associates who hold bachelor's degrees from teaching, they have since the early 1990s been allowed to teach while undergraduates and masters students are now being supervised by lecturers who are holders of masters degrees. Besides, as previously discussed, the public HEIs have had to make use of the few available lecturers in departments which offer a higher number of modules.

Besides the quality of lecturers, the availability of prescribed texts, laboratory equipment, journals, printers and photocopiers is limited as was demonstrated in Table 6.2.

Thus, overall, where HEIs are undertaking their roles the mode of doing it has been to use sub-standard resources and processes that are antithetical to genuine learning and teaching.

8.5 Tendency Towards the “Soft Roles”: Private HEIs’ Strategies

As was indicated in chapter six, private HEIs are offering courses in five of the total 19 fields of study being offered by the public HEIs. These are Theology, Commerce, Education, Social Sciences and Information Technology. These are considered soft fields as they are easy to offer at

a lower cost as compared to the Science-related fields. However, as already indicated, HEIs in Malawi in general are also expected to provide Entrepreneurial, Technical and Vocational training as well as practical skills; expand the training of Science and Engineering; diversify programmes to serve identified areas of human resource needs in the economy; and increase undergraduate and postgraduate enrolment, among other roles (Malawi Government, 1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2004, 2006). These are the roles that are not undertaken by the private HEIs. As was discussed in the previous section, the main reason why the private HEIs are not offering these fields despite their being needed by the country is the cost implications as well as the fact that the accreditation mechanism does not outline the menu of fields from which those who want to enter the higher education sector may provide offerings.²⁶⁶ In other words, while the intentions of the national policies are clear, there is no enforcing mechanism that would ensure strict adherence to the intentions of the policies. In the absence of such mechanism, and mindful of their profit-making interests, private HEIs have kept on expanding what the public HEIs are already doing significantly while shunning away what the public HEIs are not doing²⁶⁷. In the process, the focus has been on soft fields whose costs are low. In other words, the absence of proper enforcement mechanisms, bolstered by the profit-making motives earlier discussed, has resulted in a pattern of response amongst the private HEIs of engaging themselves in demand-absorbing activity or in the tasks of providing more rather than novel opportunities.²⁶⁸

8.6 Reinforcing their Marginalised Status

One common pattern of response by the HEIs which can be observed in this study is the implicit acceptance of their marginalised situation. Among the expected roles, HEIs – in particular the public HEIs – are expected to improve their governance by involving key stakeholders in the running of HEIs (Malawi Government, 1998a, 2002, 2008a). Both private and public HEIs are also expected to improve the quality of higher education by attracting private sector funding. Theoretically, linking with the private sector and the industry in general is meant also to ensure

²⁶⁶ Interviews with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Executive Director for LEG and Executive Director of CSCQBE.

²⁶⁷ Interviews with LEG and CSCQBE as well as Director of Higher Education.

²⁶⁸ Interviews with the Director of Higher Education in MoEST, Executive Director for LEG and Executive Director of CSCQBE.

relevance of the products produced by the HEIs as it strengthens a feedback system (Martin, 2000).

However, for both internal and external reasons already presented in the previous chapter, HEIs remain marginalised by the outside sector.²⁶⁹ In several public policies, the recognition of their roles in technology and agriculture development has not translated much into support to HEIs.²⁷⁰ In their incapacitated state, HEIs have been shunned and marginalised by several donor institutions as well as the private sector, resulting in only a few university-industry links.²⁷¹

Ironically, HEIs have generally responded by implicitly accepting the marginalised status, in a process taking part in or reinforcing their own marginalisation. In other words, while one would expect HEIs to scale up efforts aimed at ensuring that they are not marginalised and that they bring on board key stakeholders such as the private sector and non-governmental agencies, evidence on the ground shows the virtual absence of those efforts. This is evidenced by two key features.

First, the Board or Council members in the two public HEIs have no members drawn from the private sector. Section 10 (1) of the UNIMA (1998) Act provides for roles of the Council, one of which is to “to take such steps as it thinks fit for the purpose of procuring and receiving contributions to the funds of the University to further the objects of the University, and, for this purpose, to raise money in such a manner as it thinks fit”. Most of the Council members are those appointed by the President and Government Principal Secretaries (as ex-officials) as well as those drawn from the University Senate and Colleges.²⁷² The Council can on its own co-opt not more than four members.²⁷³ However, in practice, those co-opted have tended to be either academicians or sympathisers of the ruling party although the Act encourages that the co-opted members should

²⁶⁹ Interviews with UNIMA, MZUNI and CUNIMA VCs and MCCCCI Chief Executive Officer.

²⁷⁰ Interviews with UNIMA, MZUNI and CUNIMA VCs and MCCCCI Chief Executive Officer.

²⁷¹ Interviews with UNIMA, MZUNI and CUNIMA VCs, MCCCCI Chief Executive Officer. EU Economist, World Bank Education Specialist and PLAN Malawi Country Director.

²⁷² University of Malawi (1998) Act Section 11

²⁷³ University of Malawi (1998) Act Section 11 (1k)

be drawn from the “industrial, agricultural and commercial occupations in Malawi.”²⁷⁴ Consequently, between 2000 and 2010, all members of the UNIMA Council have been academicians, government officials and ruling party sympathisers.²⁷⁵ A similar composition was also noted for MZUNI.

However, in the case of MZUNI, this was supposed to be compensated by the Mzuzu University Trust which is responsible for the generation of resources. However, even the Trust itself is composed of ex-academicians and government officials as well as ruling party sympathisers.²⁷⁶ For CUNIMA, the incorporated business person serves on the Board of Trustees (which as earlier discussed is overshadowed by the Episcopal Conferences of Malawi). MAU has none of the business persons serving in its 10-member board while UNIL has only one out of its 15-member board. At BIU, as was earlier discussed, the board was non-existent at the time of the study while for SOUM only one member is drawn from the business community.

Second, besides leaving out the business community or private sector in the running of HEIs, all HEIs, as discussed in the previous chapter, have no public relations and marketing offices. This, as was earlier discussed, has tended to reinforce the already minimal levels of interaction or linkages with the industry of potential financiers of higher education. As it was observed in the previous chapter, HEIs have partly been unable to attract funding from the private sector because most of them do not know the services being offered by the HEIs (Kululanga, 2009; MAKNET, 2009). Apart from public relations offices, HEIs are characterised by the absence of websites. Where such websites exist, they are irregularly updated. Lack of marketing and public relations also resulted in many organisations and companies opting to send their members of staff abroad for studies even in fields that are offered by Malawi’s HEIs.²⁷⁷

Thus, on the whole, Malawi’s HEIs have generally failed to give adequate information about

²⁷⁴ University of Malawi (1998) Act Section 11(3)

²⁷⁵ Interview with CSCQBE Executive Director.

²⁷⁶ Interview with CSCQBE Executive Director.

²⁷⁷ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar, MZUNI Registrar, General Manager for Chombe Tea Company and Managing Director for Toyota Malawi.

themselves to key stakeholders as well as to the general public.²⁷⁸ This has resulted in marginalisation and low commitment by key stakeholders in higher education financing and quality. As higher education specialists equally observe, the absence of these players' commitment in developing countries "should [also] be seen as a failure by the universities to generate and sustain such commitment" (Ajayi *et al.*, 1996:154).

8.7 Some Abandonment of National Development-compatible Pledges and Ideals

Malawi's HEIs are founded on principles and objectives that pledge to contribute to national development. UNIMA, as discussed in chapter five, was established to:

"advance knowledge and to promote wisdom and understanding by engaging in *teaching and research* and by making provision for the dissemination, promotion, and preservation of learning; by *engaging in such university education and research as is responsive to the needs of Malawi and the whole world.*"²⁷⁹

Neither the 1974 nor the 1998 amended versions of the Act made any alteration to the component of teaching and research that is responsive to the needs of Malawi. Its 2004/05–2009/10 strategic plan reaffirms the objectives on which it was founded. The strategic plan commits UNIMA to ensuring that there is enhanced learning and teaching, diversification of resource base and improved research, among other pillars of the founding objectives.

Just like UNIMA, MZUNI was also founded with the objective to:

"... advance knowledge and to promote wisdom and understanding by engaging in *teaching, research* and training by making provision for the dissemination, promotion and preservation of learning; by engaging in such university education, research, and training as is *responsive to the needs of Malawi, Africa and the whole world*, by offering an education of a *high university standard*; and by providing complimentary services to

²⁷⁸ Interviews with Toyota Malawi and Chombe Teas Managing Directors.

²⁷⁹ UNIMA (1964) Provincial Act: section 5. (Emphasis in italics mine)

meet the *technological, social and economic needs* of individuals and communities in Malawi”.²⁸⁰

MZUNI’s strategic plan cherishes the above objective and commits MZUNI to ensure that there is enhanced accessibility, equity, quality, relevance as well as management capacity (MZUNI, 2006).

Thus, although undertaking research that is *responsive to the needs* of Malawi does not necessarily imply or demand that the two public HEIs should be run as entrepreneurial outfits, the core gist of their statutes is the need for relevance of their activities to the developmental project of the country.

For private HEIs, emphasis on relevance (service to humanity), access, equity and quality are the major aspects emphasised in their founding principles. Missing are the components of entrepreneurial and vocational training and science and engineering, as well as financial robustness of the university. Although the aspect of financial robustness is not reflected in their documents, the private HEIs indicated that the aspect was still a priority to them.

Thus it can be argued that, although each of the HEIs does not emphasise all areas (namely equity, accessibility, relevance, quality, financial robustness, provision of science of science, technology and vocational training) in its guiding and founding principles, there is a significant articulation of these components in the HEIs guiding documents. The expected roles of HEIs in national development are significantly incorporated and reflected in the guiding and founding principles of Malawi’s HEIs. In other words, most of the founding principles of HEIs are compatible with their national policy-prescribed roles. However, as it was observed in chapter six, although national development-compatible roles are reflected in the founding and guiding principles of HEIs, the HEIs’ performance on the policy-expected roles is generally not optimal as demonstrated in that chapter. By induction, one can conclude that there is some abandonment of their (HEIs’) founding and guiding ideals in their response towards the expected roles.

It is however important to caution that the nature of abandonment referred to here is not complete abandonment but partial. Although the actual contribution of HEIs to national development is

²⁸⁰ 1997 Mzuni Act: section 5. (Emphasis in italics mine).

beyond the scope of this study, it should be noted that complete abandonment would entail zero contribution by HEIs in the national development project which is not the case currently. Malawi's HEIs for example are still involved in teaching culminating in the production of graduates who continue to fill both the private and public sectors. The abandonment of the ideals thus has to do with the number and levels or the extent to which Malawi's HEIs are accomplishing the prescribed roles. For example, as was discussed in the previous chapter, the number of graduates being produced is still lower compared to what the national development policies prescribe. Similarly, for public HEIs, the equity aspect is being addressed although not to levels prescribed by the policies.

8.8 Substituting Short-term Survival Strategies for Long-term Coherent Academic Planning

The challenges faced by Malawi's HEIs both in terms of resources and legal operational framework have already been highlighted. The loss of human resources, failure to attract best academics and inadequate and dilapidating infrastructure are the realities that Malawi's HEIs face. In trying to avert the challenges that they face within the general project of responding to their expected roles, Malawi's HEIs have tended to substitute long-term coherent academic planning with short-term survival strategies.²⁸¹ As was indicated in the previous chapter, academic staffs have found economic refuge in the combination of secondary employment, extended leaves and absenteeism. Secondary employment for academics has taken several forms such as private consultancy and part-time teaching outside the universities. As observed by Holland (2010:214), Malawi's "academics invoke the theme of 'survival' to justify consultancy work which many admit has a negative impact on teaching and scholarship". For example, in UNIMA and MZUNI, it was earlier discussed that while their respective policies require academic staff to inform the consultancies bureaus through the heads of department about any private consultancy that they are undertaking and to remit 10 per cent of the proceeds to the university, (UNIMA, 2006) those that are involved in individual as well as group (composed of academic staff) consultancies do not remit the 10 per cent (UNIMA, 2006). The implication of this tendency is that UNIMA has not been able to boost its financial base despite losing resources

²⁸¹ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar, MZUNI Registrar, World Bank Education Specialist, LEG Executive Director and Executive Director of Institute for Policy Interaction.

(lecturers and their time) to private consultancies.²⁸²

Strategy of survival by academics is also reflected by significant shunning of UNIMA's college-based consultancies bureaus which were created in 2009 and whose aim is to coordinate consultancy work and ensure that colleges are able to generate resources from such consultancies. This is so because working with the bureau makes academics earn less as compared to what they would have earned if it was a privately individual task²⁸³.

Besides the consultancies, it was also reported that a good number of academics from UNIMA and MZUNI have part-time jobs in the private HEIs as well as other tertiary institutions such as nursing colleges, teachers' colleges and technical colleges. In UNIMA, 123 lecturers were involved in extra-teaching activities at the time of this study,²⁸⁴ while in MZUNI a total of 91 lectures were involved in such extra teaching.²⁸⁵

Other than consultancies and extra-employment, survival by academics especially in UNIMA is also done through granting of prolonged leave periods.²⁸⁶ This is despite the fact that the prolonged study leave of many academic staff reduces the already available number of academic staff. As was discussed in the previous chapter, since most of the lecturers who study abroad continue receiving their salaries besides the likely scholarships that they get abroad, prolonging of study leave implies that one is maximising the duration for "double money". The previous chapter showed that, at the time of this study, 64 academic members of staff had exceeded the duration period that they had applied for while 13 of those who had completed had not yet returned despite

²⁸² Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁸³ Interview with Director for Chancellor College Consultancy Bureau. For example, according to the 2009 Consultancies, Contract, Research and Short Courses Coordination Guidelines for Chancellor College, the bureau, in liaison with the leadership of the Faculty/Department/ Centre/Unit where the expertise is available, identifies the staff members to carry out the consultancy under the terms stipulated in the Research and Consultancy Policy where the College gets 10 per cent of the consultancy fees as overheads, the Department receives 20 per cent and the staff member(s) concerned 70 per cent.

²⁸⁴ Interviews with Polytechnic Principal, Bunda College Principal, Chancellor College Principal and UMSU President.

²⁸⁵ Interview with MZUNI Registrar and MZUNI Student Union President.

²⁸⁶ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

finishing.²⁸⁷ Out of the seven lecturers who had returned from their PhD studies in 2009 six had, prior to their return, applied to the university management for an extension to take up post-doctorate fellowships but they were advised by the university to undertake their post-doctorate studies after some years.²⁸⁸ Despite UNIMA successfully negotiating with their (six) lecturers' host universities for such post-doctorate fellowships to be done at a later stage, all of them protested against the decision and went ahead to enrol for their post-doctoral fellowships. When UNIMA management informed them that their salaries had been suspended, all of them returned within a month and agreed to take up their post-doctorate fellowship at a later stage.²⁸⁹

The strategy of short-term survival does not only implicate academicians. It is also practised by the individual colleges within UNIMA as well as MZUNI. It should be observed that public HEIs' research centres generate a relatively reasonable amount of resources (compared to individual colleges) which they have not been able to account for or report to their respective College administrations (for UNIMA) and university administration (for MZUNI).²⁹⁰ In UNIMA, the creation of college-based consultancies was therefore a strategy aimed at bringing in the much-needed financial resources which research centres "often withhold".²⁹¹ The promotion of consultancy activities as is being championed by both UNIMA and MZUNI is not central to the mission of these two universities as can be observed from their respective statutes.²⁹² While the research centres are meant to be research hubs of UNIMA, the creation of consultancy bureaus has shaken their financial base and has further led them into competition for funding projects with the consultancy bureaus even if such funding is not germane to the research agenda. However, even before the creation of consultancy bureaus, the strategy of survival pushed centres to embark on projects that had "nothing" to do with their core research objectives merely for purposes of survival.²⁹³

²⁸⁷ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁸⁸ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁸⁹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁹⁰ Interviews with UNIMA Registrar and MZUNI Registrar.

²⁹¹ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

²⁹² UNIMA (1998) Act Sections 5, 6 and 7 as well as MZUNI (1997) Act Sections 7.

²⁹³ Interviews with UNIMA's Centre for Education Research Director, UNIMA's Centre for Agricultural Research

For private HEIs, heavy reliance on part-time lecturers should also be seen as a short-term survival strategy that obviously compromises their long-term internal capacity requirements²⁹⁴. As it was noted in chapter six 30 per cent of masters degree holders in private HEIs are adjunct lecturers drawn from UNIMA and MZUNI. Thus, while permanent highly qualified lecturers are needed in private HEIs (for purposes of long-term organisational capacity), the short-term survival strategy has been to use part-time lecturers for the sake of maintaining continuity in the offering of degree programmes. In the similar vein, private HEIs' failure to invest in their own staff training as discussed in chapter six is an indication of short-term survival strategies.

From the infrastructural perspective, short-term survival measures are equally evident (with the exception of SOUM and UNIMA's KCN). MZUNI currently uses rented Luwanga youth premises and yet the long-term plans of having its own extended premises are not being implemented. BIU uses a rented house and the plans for its own premises are yet to be laid out. As was discussed, UNIL is housed in what used to be a secondary school. Despite the need for modification and extension of the buildings, the plans are yet to be effected.

8.9 Chapter Summary

Using the level of performance by HEIs presented in chapter six and the factors that influence the response of HEIs in their expected roles discussed in chapter seven as a basis, this chapter has identified and analysed the pattern of response displayed by HEIs in Malawi towards their expected roles. In doing so, the chapter has managed to address the main objective of this study which was to examine how HEIs in Malawi respond to national economic policies. The chapter identified six patterns of how HEIs respond to their roles as expected in the national development policies. First, their response is inclined towards the crisis in politically sensitive areas (for public HEIs) and profit-compatible areas (for private HEIs). For public HEIs, these politically sensitive crises are those in the area of access and equity while for private HEIs the profit compatible area is the enhancement of accessibility.

Second, HEIs' respond towards the national policies by using sub-standard resources and methods

Director, UNIMA's Centre for Social Research Executive Director and MZUNI's Dean of Environmental Sciences.

²⁹⁴ Interviews with Director of Higher Education in MoEST.

that are antithetical to genuine teaching and learning. The chapter observed that in adopting the few roles that they are currently undertaking, HEIs have generally relied on using inadequate and low-quality human, material and infrastructural resources.

Third, on the whole, all private HEIs have resorted to responding to their expected roles by duplicating the efforts that significantly are already being made by public HEIs. This is so because, in the absence of a regulatory framework, profit-making motives and cost implications compel them to make such duplications as opposed to embarking on either new or “expensive” areas of study.

Fourth, in their state of marginalisation by key stakeholders, HEIs have ironically reinforced their marginalisation, by neglecting strategies that would aid in bringing the key stakeholders closer to them (HEIs). This has in the end created a difficult situation in which HEIs are unable to optimally undertake their policy-prescribed roles.

Fifth, confronted by several challenges and orchestrated by the lack of a proper regulatory framework, Malawi’s HEIs display a pattern of response in which they betray the original ideals and founding pledges that are compatible with national development roles as prescribed by the policies.

Finally, confronted by the external and internal environments presented in chapter seven, Malawi’s HEIs have resorted to the substitution of long-term coherent academic planning with short-term survival strategies. Academic staffs in public HEIs have found economic refuge in the combination of secondary employment, granting of extended leave periods and absenteeism while the research centres in these HEIs have been forced to embark on projects that have little value to their research agenda or objectives. In private HEIs, heavy reliance on part-time lecturers is a short-term survival strategy, while from the perspective of infrastructural bottlenecks both private and public HEIs have only resorted to short-term and not long-term measures. The next chapter provides a summary of findings for the study as well as their implications. It also presents theoretical and empirical contributions of this study.

CHAPTER NINE: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, CONTRIBUTION AND CONCLUSION

9.1 Chapter Overview

The previous four chapters presented the major findings for the thesis on each of the four specific objectives. The last chapter specifically addressed the main objective of this study. This chapter will present a summary of the findings. It also draws implications and makes general recommendations about the response of Malawi's HEIs to national development policies. This chapter will also attempt to demonstrate the theoretical and empirical contribution made by this study. Structurally, the chapter begins by presenting a summary of key findings on the four objectives that were pursued in this study, followed by implications as well as theoretical and empirical contributions. This will in turn be followed by a section of suggested areas for future study. The whole thesis will be wrapped up by concluding remarks.

9.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study had four specific objectives. The four major sections below give a summary of the findings on the four objectives.

9.2.1 The Expected Role of HEIs in Malawi's National Development Agenda

Overall, the study observed that, in the period between 2000 and 2010, Malawi's HEIs were expected to undertake the following initiatives as a way of ensuring that higher education is congruent to the national development agenda:

- Provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational training as well as practical skills.
- Expand the training of Science and Engineering.
- Enhance the enrolment of women and students with special needs.
- Diversify programmes to serve identified areas of human resource needs in the economy.
- Devise admission policies that allow for more students who can afford to pay.
- Tailor the course to acceptable standards.
- Encourage private sector financing of higher education.
- Increase undergraduate and postgraduate enrolment.

- Increase teaching and learning materials.
- Introduce cost-recovery mechanisms.
- Reduce inequities in access along income, gender, regional and urban-rural divides.
- Undertake periodical curriculum review.
- Ensure relevance of higher education to the economy.
- Improve quality of higher education.
- Enhance access to higher education.

In addition to the above roles that have been applicable to both private and public HEIs, the public HEIs are in particular expected to:

- Increase enrolment of women to 35 per cent (by 2010).
- Improve financial performance.
- Provide targeted scholarships to those in need.
- Improve governance and management of the university.
- Increase undergraduate enrolment by 40 per cent (between 2000 and 2010) and postgraduate enrolment to 10 per cent of total enrolment (by 2010).
- Making research facilities available to the general public.

In general, the study noted that the above expectations are meant to deal with the key challenges that have embroiled the higher education system, namely low levels of relevance, equity, access, quality and efficiency, which are seen as stumbling blocks in the contribution of higher education towards development.

9.2.2 Performance of Malawi's HEIs in their Expected Roles

Using the indicators guided by the three “Es” (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) criterion of the input-output model of the open systems theory, the study assessed the performance of Malawi's HEIs in their expected economic roles presented in the previous section. The assessment of the performance of HEIs in their expected roles was done along the seven themes, namely programmes offered by HEIs; quality of education offered; accessibility and equity; financial performance of HEIs; internal efficiency; research; and relevance.

9.2.2.1 Orientation towards “Soft” Fields, Narrowness and Duplications in Programmes Offered

In terms of the programmes offered by the HEIs, the study noted that there are only 19 fields of study. Of these fields of study, private HEIs offer only five disciplines, namely Theology, Education, Social Sciences, Commerce and Information Technology. The study observed a bias towards ‘soft’ fields by private HEIs away from Pure and Applied Sciences as well as Engineering and Health related programmes which are immensely capital intensive and require high running costs. Combined enrolment in all HEIs has also been high for Education, Commerce, Social and ICT as compared to Pure Sciences, Applied Sciences and Engineering. At postgraduate level, the study noted that the degree programmes are offered only in the fields of Education, Humanities, Science, Social Science, Agriculture, Development Studies, Public Health, Medicine, Nursing, Commerce (for UNIMA) and ICT and Theology (for MZUNI and UNIMA). None of the private HEIs is offering postgraduate programmes.

9.2.2.2 Compromises in Quality Dimension

Overall, the study noted compromises of quality along the monitoring component, teaching and learning materials, infrastructure and academic staff, as well as a rigid curriculum (due to lack of a regular curriculum review).

9.2.2.3 Low Accessibility and Equity Levels

Generally, the admission policies of all HEIs have grappled with the challenge of balancing quantity, quality and equity. The admission policies of private HEIs facilitate expansion more than the public HEIs. With the exception of SOUM and BIU, the mode of studying for other HEIs is full time over weekdays. In terms of enrolment levels, Malawi is still the lowest in the SADC region with only 87 people enrolled in Malawi’s HEIs for each 100 000 people.

On postgraduate enrolment, despite the national policy prescriptions to increase postgraduate enrolment, the enrolment levels over the years have been as low as 3.5 per cent of total higher education enrolment and 3.8 per cent of public HEIs enrolment. Either way, there has not been a significant rate of increase in enrolment and it has remained lower than the 10 per cent enrolment rate expected on public HEIs. In terms of male-female divide, although female enrolment has

been increasing, the gap between male and female enrolment has been widening between 2003 and 2008 and between 2009 and 2010. Apart from inequalities along gender lines, the enrolment trend also shows some inequity along income background of the students. Regionally, the north dominates in sending students to HEIs despite being the smallest in terms of population.

9.2.2.4 Dominance of Fees and Subventions in Financing and Emoluments in Expenditures

Government subvention and tuition fees are the dominant sources of funds in public and private HEIs respectively. Fees and subvention have accounted for more than 70 per cent in private and public HEIs respectively. Public and private HEIs have been unable to diversify the base of the sources of their funds. In all HEIs, donations and research projects have not been key sources of funds.

The expenditure pattern in public HEIs shows that over 50 per cent is allocated towards personal emoluments while student provision also constituted a large portion of public HEIs. With the exception of MZUNI, all HEIs have not been spending significant portions of money on teaching materials. UNIMA and MZUNI have spent a negligible portion of their budget towards research and publications while private HEIs spent almost nothing in the entire period. Small allocations have been used on staff development in MZUNI and UNIMA while all private HEIs have spent nothing in the period of their existence.

9.2.2.5 Low Levels of Research, Absence of Basic and Problem Solving Research

The study established that research is not an emphasised component in both private and public HEIs, thereby compromising on the national policy expectation to ensure that HEIs make higher education relevant to the economy. The study established that research is not an institutionalised activity in all private HEIs and is not given any prominence as nothing is spent on it while in public HEIs not more than one per cent of their total spending is devoted towards research.

9.2.2.6 A Mixture of Internal Efficiencies and Inefficiencies

Malawi HEIs perform well in terms of pass rates for those who sit for final exams, as over 95 per cent of students who sit for final exams pass and eventually graduate. There have also been low repetition rates overall.

There are also some levels of efficiency in the time it takes to finish undergraduate studies as it takes only 4.3 years to complete an undergraduate programme (instead of the normal four years). However, at postgraduate level, inefficiencies are conspicuously high as it takes an average of four years for UNIMA and MZUNI masters students to finish (instead of the prescribed two years) while it takes six years to finish a PhD programme at UNIMA only. In terms of student-lecturer ratio, one lecturer in Malawi HEIs teaches 13.2 students, which is still a higher ratio. This implies that it is possible to increase enrolment with the current number of lecturers. With regard to the unit cost, the cost of providing education in private HEIs is lower than in public HEIs. In all HEIs, the unit cost has been going up at the time when enrolments have also been rising, which implies that there are no economies of scale.

9.2.2.7 Relevance: High Employability and Low Links with Industry

Malawi's HEIs have been in a position to enhance relevance substantially when considered in terms of the employability of graduates in the job market; the period that it takes before graduates are employed; the levels of satisfaction by employers with the graduates; and the levels of satisfaction by graduates with the skills acquired. However, the substantial degree of employability of students is largely due to the low number of graduates in Malawi. Malawi's HEIs have however not been able to ensure that the higher education system is fully feeding into the economy with the critical areas of skills needed such as in the fields of engineering, agricultural processing, communication, water, power, telecommunication, air transport and mining.

9.2.3 Determinants of HEIs' Performance in Malawi

The study has shown that the key determinants of HEIs' performance in Malawi emanate from the external and internal environments of the HEIs. The external factors include the socio-demographic conditions, the political and economic historic dynamics and the current relationship between the state and HEIs. Internally, the performance of HEIs in the expected roles is affected by operational structure, rules, actors and the views of the HEIs' actors on policy content. In the study, however, it was observed that the relationship between the internal and external environment is neither that of full independence from each other nor is it fully mutually reinforcing. The study found that the relationship between internal and external environments is

largely a linear causative relationship with the external environment having a huge impact on the internal environment of HEIs.

9.2.4 The Pattern of Response by HEIs towards Development Policies

First, the study found that the response of public HEIs - at policy reform level - is inclined towards politically sensitive crisis of access and equity while private HEIs are inclined towards profit compatible of access as well. Second, the study found that, for those roles that HEIs are undertaking, there is a tendency to use sub-standard resources and methods that are not ideal to genuine scholarship. Third, the study found that, overall, private HEIs tend to focus on offering programmes that are “soft”, owing to cost implications and the absence of a deliberate reinforcing regulatory framework while avoiding fields that have high start-up and operating costs. Fourth, the study found that, in their marginalised state caused by key stakeholders, HEIs have tended to reinforce their marginalisation by neglecting the strategies and mechanism that would help to bring the participation of external key stakeholders in the development of HEIs. Fifth, the study found that, although Malawi’s HEIs are founded on principles and objectives that pledge to contribute to national development in general, there is a tendency in HEIs to betray the original ideals and founding principles which are compatible with the roles as prescribed by the policies. Finally, the study found amidst the challenges within the general project of responding to their expected roles that Malawi’s HEIs have tended to substitute long-term coherent academic planning with short-term survival strategies.

9.3 Implications for the Study: What Lessons can be Learnt from the HEIs Implementation of National Policies?

Generally, the following implications and lessons can be noted:

9.3.1 Importance of Recognising Intra-sectoral Linkages

The higher education sector is not the only sub-sector within the education realm. Secondary and primary as well as technical and vocational education is equally important in the performance of Malawi’s higher education institutions. As was discussed in chapter seven, the crisis of demand for higher education emanates from demographic pressures being exerted on primary and secondary education sub-sectors. Participation in both primary and secondary education is

characterised by wide imbalances in participation rates between males and females, urban and rural dwellers and richest and poorest families (Women and Law in Southern Africa, 2005). Thus Malawi's HEIs are expected to fast-track the expansion of accessibility while at the same time be addressing the disparities in participation patterns along gender, income, and regional divide.

However, as observed by Tan (1994:250), the "educational process is a cumulative process using learning inputs from many sources available". These sources of inputs include the home and the physical environment as well as the social environment (Pillay, 2006). The effect of differences in inputs from these sources is often reflected through disparities in the participation rates of various groups in Malawi's HEIs, as already discussed.

It is therefore a tall order to expect Malawi's HEIs to deal with these myriad assignments if there are no such concurrent and simultaneous efforts to rectify the disparities in both secondary and primary education. It is the responsibility of key stakeholders led by the government to ensure that such disparities are rectified. Even when such disparities are rectified in primary and secondary school, it is still unrealistic to expect that Malawi HEIs will be able to absorb the full demand for higher education. The rate at which such demand is growing and the rate at which Malawi's HEIs are currently absorbing do not suggest such a possibility in the foreseeable future.

The implication of this is that government, aided by other stakeholders, should devise a mechanism of meeting the demand for higher education which HEIs cannot fully absorb. In line with the economic growth aspirations, such mechanisms would include the setting up and expansion of more technical and vocational schools which would absorb excess demand for higher education. The economic success of East Asian countries is partly explained by this strategy (Bodibe, 2008).

Polytechnic institutions, vocational schools and institutes of technical education figure prominently in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore (Woo, 1991; Tilak, 2002). Thus any long-term and short-term planning on HEIs' targets and roles should not be divorced from other educational sub-sectors and, where possible, measures should be undertaken to control and deal with possible forces (in those sub-sectors) that might at a later point "suffocate and choke" the higher education sub-sector.

9.3.2 Consequences of “Assault” and Neglect of the Developmental University

That HEIs are among the key actors in national development project is beyond serious controversy. The World Bank (1998) admits that Africa requires both highly trained people and top-quality research in order to be able to formulate the policies, plan the programmes and implement the projects that are essential to economic growth and development.

This as espoused by the World Bank perfectly applies to Malawi. By the time Malawi was gaining its independence, the country was in a race against time to make up for the colonial neglect of education (Lamba, 1985). The colonial government and the missionaries seemed unenthusiastic about the development of higher education as it was assumed that professional development for Africans would reduce and “render vulnerable the myths surrounding the colonial status quo” (Lamba, 1985:16). As a result, in the run-up to independence, there was a handful of graduates and other highly qualified personnel. Accordingly, the Malawi Congress Party’s Manifesto for the 1961 General Elections pledged to make higher education “to establish the University of Malawi as soon as possible” (Malawi Congress Party, 1961:8) to be based on egalitarian and pan-Africanist ideals, and, as far as possible, with an indigenous knowledge base (Kerre & Mapanje, 2002). As indicated earlier, the 1964 UNIMA (Provincial) Act tasked the university to serve the needs of Malawi’s economy and that of the world by engaging in teaching and research and by making provision for the dissemination, promotion and perseverance of learning. Subsequent 1974 and 1998 Acts state the same expectation. The development policies since independence have also been clear on the role of UNIMA and other HEIs in national development.

Thus, from independence, HEIs have been expected to be “*developmentalist universities*”,²⁹⁵ geared towards the development project of the country. On the contrary, as observed in the thesis, there has been what Mamdani (2008:7) refers to as an “assault” on the developmental universities as well as a neglect of the higher education system in Malawi inflicted by the post-independence era’s neoliberal policies, politics of patronage, lack of a proper regulatory framework to enforce the translation of economic policies by HEIs; and the nature of the state-HEIs relationship. These

²⁹⁵ The concept of the developmental university within the African context has emerged from the writings of scholars such Yesufu, 1973, Court, 1974 and Saint, 1992.

factors, as have been discussed in the study, resulted in the emergence of an internal environment for HEIs which has reinforced HEIs' inability to effectively carry out their expected roles. It essentially resulted in a pattern of response as presented in the previous chapter. It can therefore be safely argued that HEIs can only effectively fulfil their roles when their very development is not stifled. Any attempt to undermine the development and progress of Malawi HEIs through outsider influence (external agencies) or internal factors (within the country) should be seriously regarded as detrimental and dangerous.

9.3.3 Setting the Development Agenda for HEIs: The Question of Regulatory Framework

To what extent can private universities, with their profit motives and 'cost-consciousness' be expected to fully align themselves to the developmental project of the country in Malawi? Evidence extracted in this study suggests that, without a deliberate regulatory framework, private HEIs cannot be expected to voluntarily abide fully by their expected roles. In many countries, it has equally been proven that "leaving higher education to market forces has led to uneven growth, increased inequity, erosion of quality and exploitation of consumers particularly at institutions that fall in the 'for-profit' category" (Musise & Mayega, 2010:217). Evidence presented in this study shows that private HEIs in Malawi emphasise accessibility largely out of profit expediencies. The roles of expanding science training, diversifying university programmes to serve clearly identified areas of human resources needs, introducing more postgraduate programmes, equity and relevance are significantly shunned.

Thus, unless there is a deliberate mechanism to ensure that such roles are undertaken by private HEIs, they cannot be automatically undertaken to a significant level. In Africa, such deliberate mechanisms include the creation of a legal and regulatory framework by the state (Pillay, 2010b). As observed by Musise and Mayega (2010), whereas the regulatory role of the state before the emergence of private HEIs was limited to state-funded HEIs, African states should now strengthen their role in education provision and financing. In Malawi, such mechanism would include the enactment of proper legislation and the creation of a regulatory body.²⁹⁶ Such a body would among things be responsible for advising government on development of higher education;

²⁹⁶ Although the National Council for Higher Education Act was passed in Malawi in 2011, the responsible regulatory body is yet to be created.

coordinating long-term planning of higher education; monitoring aspects of quality, research, relevance and equity in HEIs; encouraging and ensuring that HEIs mount programmes that are relevant to the needs of learners and the country; ensuring optimum usage of resources (in public HEIs); promoting the culture of research in HEIs; and certifying that HEIs have adequate and accessible physical structures and staff for the courses to be offered by them.

Altbach (2006:105) cautions that in the absence of such a framework there is often an emergence of what he refers to as “pseudo universities”. According to Altbach,

“pseudo universities are specialised, they do not offer programmes in a wide range of subjects but rather focus on targeted market-driven fields, and have the ability to shift their focus, based on student demand; so far management and business studies, information technology, and some areas of teacher training and education administration have been the most appealing fields. The chosen areas are those (in which) instruction can be offered without the need for expensive laboratory equipment. The pseudo universities have no permanent faculty and are staffed by managers who make decisions about the business and the curricular aspect of the institution. Instructors are hired to provide (tuition) and ensure that customers are served. Costs are kept low by hiring instructors to teach specific courses. Pseudo universities have no interest in research. Indeed research would detract from the profit oriented mission of the institution” (2006:105).

It is therefore naive to think of high performance by private HEIs in their expected role as automatic and obvious if there are no sanctions or punishment for low performance. Policies cannot entirely depend on the goodwill of those who are to implement them without an accompanying package of sanctions (Brynard *et al.*, 2011). The reinforcement of sanctions demands robust institutional set-ups that are specifically devoted towards the operations of private HEIs and public HEIs as well. The government has therefore a responsibility not to countenance or support the existence of mediocre universities in Malawi, and mediocrity needs to be consciously fought and defeated whenever it surfaces. As Goma (1989) observes, the quality slope is steep and slippery: while the downward slide is easy and fast, the upward climb to

recovery is extremely difficult and slow.

However the need for a legal and regulatory framework is not only strong in the case of private HEIs. It is equally important in public HEIs. The findings of this study do not show and suggest that public HEIs can optimally undertake prescribed roles without a proper regulatory framework. Thus a suitable legal and regulatory framework is a necessary tenet for eliciting the response of both public and private HEIs that is germane to the development agenda.

9.3.4 The Imperative of Regional and Internal Network

Robust research enables HEIs to participate in the knowledge frontier both within and outside their countries (Castells, 1993). In Malawi, research is considered a tool through which HEIs can cultivate and advance applied knowledge as inputs to national development processes. However, just as in many African states (Ajayi *et al.*, 1996), Malawi's HEIs partly retreated from the "knowledge frontier". The government has not encouraged the serious pursuit of research as evidenced by low budgetary allocations to research and ineffective institutional set-up of research promotion. In their quest to fulfil their research mission, as is the case in many other African universities (Ajayi *et al.*, 1996), Malawi's HEIs have ended up with a plethora of research projects that advance neither the cause of knowledge nor the worth of the university or the real development of the country. In public HEIs, genuine research has been substituted by "pseudo-research" under the veneer of consultancies. Allocation to research is often not more than one per cent of total budget, while in private HEIs there has virtually been nothing allocated to research.

Admittedly, university-led research is rarely cheap (Ajayi *et al.*, 1996). It demands substantial resources. With the competing demands within the higher education sub-sector in Malawi, it is unlikely that the each of the demands (research, staffing, infrastructure and learning materials) will get the maximum attention in the short term. To that effect, regional collaboration in teaching and research should seriously be pursued. There can be a sharing of facilities in special areas of university education and research both at SADC region and AU level and even beyond. As observed by Braddock and Neave (2002) and Coombe (1991), the way forward under current resource constraints for many African universities for the development of research and postgraduate training is through selective concentration of resources within the university system, and the achievement of collaboration among African universities and between African

universities and research institutes. Inter-university cooperation would enable other regional HEIs to share their scarce resources with Malawi's HEIs in the development of local research capacity. Through this, as Verspoor (1993:61) observes, universities "will be able to perform their developmental function better and move beyond the traditional goals of transmitting values, selecting elites and training people for the civil service."

The importance of regional collaboration is equally appreciated by the SADC. In its 1997 Protocol on Education and Training, the member states agree that:

"mounting robust post-graduate programmes in all required fields is too costly for each Member State to pursue on a realistically sustainable basis and therefore that it is essential to pool the Region's resources in order to establish high quality post-graduate programmes [and] agree to recommend to their universities to establish links between and among themselves bilaterally and multilaterally for purposes of joint or split-site teaching, collaborative research and consultancy work, and for other academic activities where appropriate".²⁹⁷

However, to effectively participate in inter-university collaborative research, Malawi's HEIs should deliberately scale-up their human and infrastructural capacities in order to become attractive partners in inter-university research endeavours or any form of inter-university academic collaboration.

At local level, the capacity of private HEIs can be boosted if there is collaboration between public and private HEIs. Accordingly, the government needs to provide a conducive environment and an attractive framework that would encourage such collaborations at country level. The deliberate intervention of the government is important mainly in the light of the fact that private HEIs are considered as novices whose added value to public HEIs could be almost negligible.²⁹⁸

9.3.5 Reducing Marginalisation and Linkages with the Productive Sector

The challenge of marginalisation of HEIs was discussed in the previous chapter. Where HEIs are

²⁹⁷ 1997 SADC Protocol on Education and Training, Article, 7(D)1b.

²⁹⁸ Interview with UNIMA Registrar.

marginalised, it is always difficult to foster the critically needed linkages with the productive sector. As was presented in the previous two chapters, lack of information about Malawi's HEIs is one of the core reasons for their marginalisation (besides their level of incapacitation). A lot therefore needs to be done by Malawi's HEIs so that they are not marginalised. This will entail disseminating the necessary information to sell themselves (HEIs) to the society. A robust presentation of what they (HEIs) are doing or are capable of doing through marketing and public relations departments is therefore vital. Effective marketing is a hook for linkages between HEIs and the productive sector or the industry. The benefits of such linkages are many. Among others, such linkages:

- i) enhance the reputation of the university;
- ii) provide opportunities for staff and researchers to participate directly in economic development which should improve their social recognition;
- iii) make the curricula of the university course more relevant to needs of society and provides feedback to the HEIs;
- iv) benefit the industry firms and in the course of time, as industries develop, benefits the HEIs financially; and,
- v) provide complementary resources drawn from industry which enhance the financial autonomy of HEIs (Ajayi, 1992).

Thus university-productive sector linkages are both the outcome and the cause of deliberate efforts to bring HEIs into the spotlight and to centralise them in the development project of the country. However, the real concern is whether, in view of resource constraints and the unfavourable environment within which Malawi's HEIs and the industry operate, it is possible for effective linkages (with the productive sector) to emerge and flourish. It is in this respect that government needs to support the establishment of such linkages through various incentives. Such incentives could include tax incentives as well as removal of bureaucratic hurdles that discourage and frustrate efforts aimed at creating such linkages. Government should also be at the forefront in pooling resources for HEI and productive sector joint projects. The government needs also to lead the way in the marketing, patenting and usage of by-products of such collaborations.

The participation of the productive sector (especially the private sector) is not only limited to joint

research projects. It also includes the role of the private sector in infrastructure development of the HEIs. In Malawi, the participation of the private sector in the provision of accommodation and recreational services is minimal. To encourage the involvement of the private sector in such areas, the government needs to provide incentives in the form of land leases as well as a duty waiver on imported building materials.

9.3.6 The Question of Higher Education Financing: Modality

Access, equity, efficiency and relevance are some of the key dimensions that Malawi's HEIs are challenged to optimally ensure. However, these dimensions are equally affected by the financial challenges that abound in both private and public HEIs in Malawi. It is therefore difficult to divorce the aspect of financing from these issues. As was discussed in chapter three, at least three goals can be achieved through the funding of higher education:

- iv) "Increasing access to, and equity in tertiary education measured by increasing overall participation rates and reducing disparity rates between students from low and high background as well as other important dimensions of equity such as gender and racial/ethnic groups;
- v) Increasing the external efficiency of the tertiary education system by improving both the quality of education provided and the relevance of programmes and of graduates in meeting societal and labour markets needs.
- vi) Improving the internal efficiency and sustainability of tertiary education system by reducing or moderating the growth over time of costs per student and improving how resources are allocated both among institutions and within institutions; and decreasing repetition and raising the rates of degree completion." (Salmi & Hauptman, 2006, quoted in Pillay 2010b:223–224).

It is thus important that those responsible for funding HEIs (predominantly the state) should recognise the potentiality of financing in dealing with the above and devises appropriate financing mechanism that can produce the above outlined results. In order to enhance accessibility, there is a need to significantly deal with inadequacy in public financing. In Malawi, this can be done through:

- i) private-public partnerships where the state can provide substantial funding for capital expenditure while the private sector will be responsible for operation expenditure.²⁹⁹
- ii) Differentiated government funding model in which the government can be funding public HEIs based on societal benefits. This would imply that those courses where societal returns are high (such as teacher education) would be more subsidised than those with high private returns (such as Accountancy and Engineering).³⁰⁰
- iii) Cost-sharing through tuition levelled on the students. This will ensure that inadequacies in the revenues of public HEIs in particular are dealt with.³⁰¹
- iv) Work-study arrangements in which students are provided with part-time jobs as library assistants, clerks and gardeners. While the method enables students to be exempted from university fees, its major advantage is that it replaces regular workers in their tasks and thus bestows some beneficial effect on the net budgetary positions of universities (Ziderman, 1994).

In order to address the aspect of equity, the government could provide loans even to needy students both in private and public HEIs based on a means-testing criterion. This would however entail strengthening the institutional capacity of the Public Universities Students Loan Trust (PUSLT) and enacting appropriate legislation that enables it to be significantly insulated from adverse political forces of the state. Finally, efficiency can also be improved through the linking of higher education planning to budgeting, where public HEIs would be required to submit three-year plans to the government's mid-term expenditure framework budgeting process. This often ensures efficiency in the utilisation of limited public funds (Pillay, 2010b).

9.3.7 Educational Investment Priorities and Development Policies: the Question of Sequencing

The national development agenda can hardly elicit the appropriate response of HEIs in Malawi because of poor sequencing of education investment priorities, development strategies and the expected roles of HEIs. In order to enhance the contribution of educational investment to

²⁹⁹ This method is successful in Botswana. See Siphambe (2010).

³⁰⁰ This method has worked well in Mauritius. See Mohadeb (2010).

³⁰¹ This method has also worked well in Mauritius. See Mohadeb (2010). It has also worked well in South Africa, Tanzania and Namibia. See Pillay (2010b).

development, “it is important to select educational investment projects in line with the development stage and strategy” (Lee, 2010:62). This is more so when “the objective of the educational investment is not to satisfy the internal needs of the educational system, but to meet the demand for the development strategy since development itself has stages or an internal sequence” (Lee, 2010:62–63). It is therefore important that the alignment between development strategies and education policies is reflected in the priorities and that the sequence of education investment is accordingly appropriate.

As was discussed in the study, the 1980s SAPs saw a lot of investment going to primary education. The trend continued even after the first multiparty government in 1994. Ironically, the development strategies on the ground articulated the aspiration of enhancing the manufacturing sector and improving agriculture sector productivity through agricultural technology (Malawi Government, 1998b). While agricultural productivity-enhancement goals can also be tackled by heavy investment in primary education (Ranis *et al.*, 2000; Papageorgiou, 2003) as was shown in chapter two, enhancing manufacturing and its attendant technological advancements demand substantial investment in higher education (Bloom, 2005). As was discussed in the study, there has been no serious shift in education investment towards higher education at a time when the prominent national development strategies have been to enhance the manufacturing sector. On the ground, emphasis on manufacturing (as indicated in the national economic strategies) has therefore not been matched by substantial shifts in education investment to higher education. From 1994, the UDF regime, under the auspices of the IMF, continued investing heavily in primary education until the mid 2000s when the Millennium Development Goals campaign took over in championing primary education.

Thus, for almost 30 years, Malawi’s education investment has tended to be biased towards primary education. Ironically, most of the articulated development strategies call upon the active contribution of the higher education sub-sector. However, since the focus has always been on primary education at the expense of higher education, the subsector has now failed to cope with demands mounted upon it. The sub-sector has also failed to undertake its other policy-prescribed roles due to incapacitation largely caused by the neglect of the sub-sector. Malawi is therefore an interesting case study of the effects of education investment and development policy or strategy mismatch. Countries that have benefited more from education investment tied the sequence of

their educational investment and priority according to the development policies (Lee, 2010).

9.4 Contribution to the Field of Study

This study seeks to contribute to the field of development studies in general and the study of national development policies and higher education institutions in particular.

8.4.1 Theoretical Contribution

This research was located within a broader well-known field of higher education and development and a little-known sub-field of higher education institutions and development policies. In this sub-field the focus is on how HEIs respond to national policies. Few studies have managed to examine the HEIs' response to government policies. A well-known study is by the HEINE project which examined the HEIs' changes in eight European countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal) (Gornitzka, 2000). Other works devoted to this task include "Diversity, Differentiation and Markets" by Meek *et al* (2000) and "Adaptive University Structures: An Analysis of Adaptation to Socioeconomic Environments of US and European Universities" by Sporn (1999). However, the focus of these studies has been on the response of HEIs to regional integration and reduction in state funding, as well as increased public pressure to adopt market-oriented practices. Furthermore, these studies exclusively focused on developed countries. In developing countries such as Malawi and other SSA countries, pursuance of development goals is a critical national project. Thus, by assessing how exactly HEIs respond to national development policies (especially through their expected roles), this study seeks to partly fill the gap left by literature that overlooks HEIs' response to development policies specifically in developing countries where development is a desperately sought-after goal.

Second, this study seeks to add to the theoretical body by using the open systems theory's approaches of resource-dependency and neo-institutional approach to identify context-specific factors that have an impact on the performance of Malawi's HEIs. The identified factors in this study, namely the internal and external environment, are in concordance with what various studies have also been able to locate and identify when studying the determinants of organisational functioning and performance. Using the same open systems theory, indicators for the evaluation of Malawi's HEIs were developed in this study. These indicators are also in line with what

education and development specialists use to assess the performance of HEIs (Mosha, 1997; Hall, 1997).

Third, whereas many studies in higher education and development would consider the response of HEIs presented in this study (chapter eight) as challenges meant to be dealt with (Teichler, 1999; El-Khawas, 2001; Banyan, 2001; Atbach, 2006) this study took an approach which concluded that such response is largely a symptom or an outcome of some factors presented in chapter seven. The study managed to extract the entrenched factors (using an open system theory) that impact on HEIs and which result in the pattern of HEIs' response presented in chapter eight. To that effect, this study seeks to contribute to the theoretical body through the recommendations that emphasise the "causes" of HEIs' response presented in chapter seven and how they can be dealt with. Although such causes are context-specific to Malawi, there is no basis to assume that they are not worthy of examining or equally applicable in other SSA countries.

9.4.2 Empirical Contribution

Empirically, this study also seeks to contribute to the knowledge body of *how* HEIs in practice respond to national development policies in Malawi. In the problem statement, it was observed that the higher education system is regarded as one of the factors that account for low levels of development in Malawi. The pattern of response by HEIs towards their expected roles as presented in this study tentatively unmask the reason why, despite consistent recognition of the roles of higher education in national development, the performance of the sub-sector is regarded as a cause of low level of development in Malawi. The study has provided information and insights for national development and higher education policy makers in Malawi on the dynamics and interplay of the determinants of HEIs' response to development policies. Accordingly, the study draws implications of what needs to be considered in any endeavour poised towards bringing the active and effective participation of HEIs in their expected development roles. To that effect, the study makes recommendations on some of the areas that would ignite the desirable and significant response of HEIs towards policy-expected roles.

9.5 Suggested Areas of Further Research

The study proposes the following areas of further research. First, the focus of this study was on

the way in which HEIs respond to national development policies. Within the study, the extent to which the prescribed development policies are being implemented was examined. The assumption made in this study was that by implementing the articulated roles HEIs do contribute to national development. However, having observed the sub-optimal performance of HEIs in their expected roles, it would be important to undertake a follow-up study that verifies the exact impact of this level of performance by the HEIs in their contribution towards national development. This entails measuring the exact contribution of HEIs to national development (either through economic growth or social development or both) in either the period chosen by this study or any closer period. Through such a study, the findings and generalisations of this study can be alternatively tested, solidified or qualified.

Second, the study assumed that, if HEIs were to implement the roles placed on them by the policies, they would automatically be contributing to national development. Much as this sound valid on the surface, it would be important, besides retrospectively measuring the exact contribution of HEIs towards national development, to undertake a macro-simulation exercise of the contribution that HEIs can make towards national development through several performance scenarios in specific roles. Such a study would therefore for instance make a simulation of the economic growth levels or social development levels against various levels of higher education enrolment, equity, different levels of graduates in scarce disciplines (such as Science, Engineering, Applied Sciences) and different levels of quality and efficiency, among other factors. Doing so would put to test the question whether, if HEIs implement the policies as expected, they would really be contributing to development and, if so, by how much. So far there has been no study on this in Malawi.

Finally, this study admittedly took a broader perspective of issues in HEIs and development. Relevance, equity, access, quality and efficiency were all considered in this study despite being broader higher education dimensions on their own. Future research might need to look into these areas in greater detail and depth than examined in this study. This might be from an absolutist perspective or from the comparative perspective of public and private HEIs. Such an approach is capable of culminating in recommendations that are not general as in this study but that are more focused on each of them (relevance, equity, access, quality and efficiency) on either private or public HEIs.

9.6 Concluding Remarks

The role of higher education in national development surely relies very much on the role of key actors in the higher education system, namely the HEIs. The extent to which HEIs are implementing their expected roles greatly determines the extent of the higher education system's contribution towards development. However, for HEIs to carry out their expected role, several factors come into play. In Malawi, the internal and external environments of HEIs have a profound impact on the manner in which they respond to their expected roles. All external forces that assault the developmental university or make it difficult for HEIs to respond accordingly to their expected roles must therefore be deliberately checked, controlled and managed. Equally, the internal environment of HEIs should be ideal to the fulfilment of their roles. Unless HEIs are well-staffed, well-resourced, efficient, well-manned and have an organisational cultural that is goal oriented, as well as a team-spirit that values innovation and organisational development, their ability to respond to development policies in a desired way will be greatly compromised. That being granted, the causative effect of the external environment on the formation of internal determinants of HEIs performance should always be seriously taken into account by key stakeholders in higher education system.

The state is a key institution in the external environment of HEIs. Its relationship with the HEIs therefore matters a lot in the way that HEIs respond to development policies. The regulatory and legal framework as well as the political atmosphere that it is capable of engendering and influencing on the one hand and its financial strength on the other hand should all be deliberately tailored to ensure quality, efficiency, equity, accessibility and relevance of higher education. It is difficult to eliminate the political interest of the ruling elite but the responsibility that the state shoulders in igniting the response of HEIs towards national development policies needs not be ignored. Its power to mobilise the support of various strata of the society's players towards the mission of HEIs should diligently be exercised. On the other hand, HEIs cannot afford to be spectators at their own game. They should continuously and pro-actively engage both state and non-state actors in their (HEIs') mission. They should strive as much as possible to prove that they are worthy of the attention and support of various key actors in the country.

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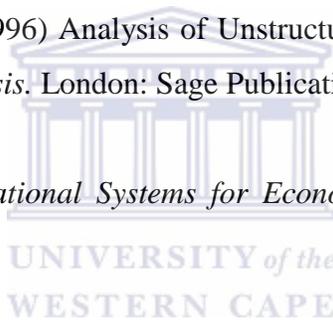
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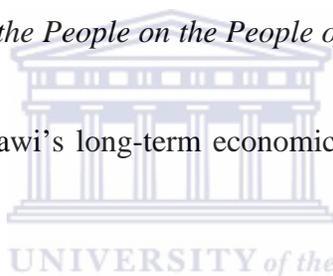
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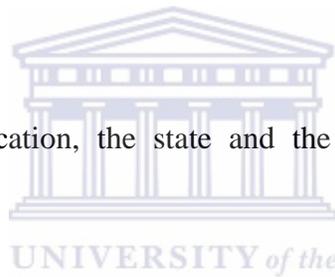
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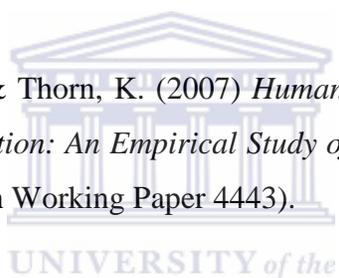
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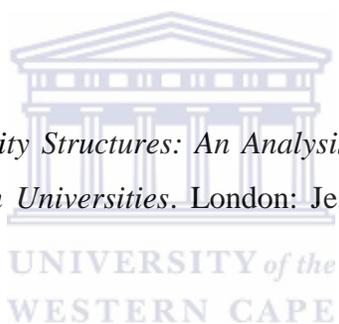
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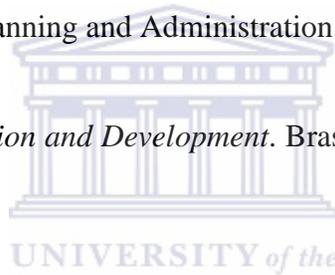
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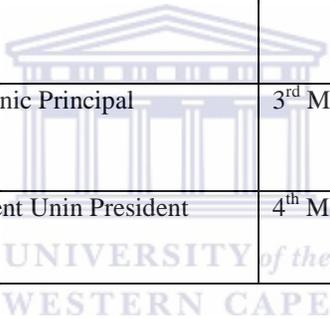
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Annexure 1: List of Respondents

No.	Name of Interviewee	Organisation and Designation	Date	Place of Interview
<i>Those Responsible for the Running of Higher Education Institutions</i>				
1.	Ms. Susan Thombozi	The Polytechnic Student Union President	8 th December 2010	President's Hostel Room, Blantyre
2.	Mrs. Kelefyia	The Polytechnic Assistant Registrar	8 th December 2010	Assistant Registrar's Office, Blantyre
3.	Prof. Kuthemba Mwale	Malawi Adventist University (MAU) Vice Chancellor	9 th December 2010	Vice Chancellor's Room, Ntcheu
4.	Mr. Steven Moyo	MAU Registrar	9 th December 2010	Registrar's Office, Ntcheu
5.	Mr. Tikhala Ebele	MAU Student Union President	9 th December 2010	President's Hostel Room, Ntcheu
6.	Prof. Jack Makhaza	ShareWorld Open University (SOUM) Vice Chancellor	10 th December 2010	Vice Chancellors' Office, Blantyre
7.	Mrs. Olalia Antony	SOUM Registrar	10 th December 2010	Registrar's Office, Blantyre
8.	Mr. Benedicto Malunga	University of Malawi (UNIMA) Registrar	14 th December, 2010	Registrar's Office, Zomba
9.	Prof. Emmanuel Fabiano	UNIMA Vice Chancellor	14 th December, 2010	Vice Chancellor's Office, Zomba
10.	Dr. Chris Kamlongera	Chancellor College Principal	11 th January 2011	Principal's Office, Zomba
11.	Mrs. Nita Chivwara	Chancellor College Assistant Registrar	11 th January 2011	Assistant Registrar's Office, Zomba
12.	Prof. Anaclet Phiri	Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA) Vice Chancellor	12 th January 2011	Vice Chancellor's Office, Chiradzulu 319
13.	Mr. John Mphepo	CUNIMA Registrar	12 th January 2011	Registrar's Office, Chiradzulu

14.	Dr. Charles Chanthunya	Blantyre International University (BIU) Chancellor	13 th January 2011	Chancellor's Office, Blantyre
15.	Mr. Harold Chanthunya	BIU Registrar	13 th January 2011	Registrar's Office, Blantyre
16.	Mr. Victor Chipofya	CUNIMA Student Union President	19 th January 2011	Megabyte Restaurant, Blantyre
17.	Mr. Mphatso Chirwa	UMSU General Secretary	19 th January 2011	The Polytechnic Car Park, Blantyre
18.	Prof. Dorothy Nampota	Centre for Education Research (UNIMA) Director,	1 st February 2011	Director's Office, Zomba
19.	Prof. Alfred Ntenje	Chancellor College Consultancy Bureau Director	4 th February 2011	Director's Office, Zomba
20.	Prof. Fred Msiska	Faculty of Environmental Sciences, MZUNI Dean	15 th February 2011	Dean's Office, Zomba
21.	Prof. Landson Mhango	Mzuzu University (MZUNI) Vice Chancellor	15 th February 2011	Via Skype connected to UK where the respondent was at the time of the interview
22.	Mrs. Chiyamiko Chimkwita	MZUNI Registrar	15 th February 2011	Assistant Registrar's Office, Mzuzu
23.	Rev. Matiya Nkhoma	University of Livingstonia (UNIL) Registrar	16 th February 2011	Registrar's Office, Mzuzu
24.	Prof. Kirk	UNIL Vice Chancellor	16 th February 2011	Vice Chancellor's Office, Mzuzu
25.	Mr. Charles Mwale	UNIL Student Union President	16 th February 2011	Mzuzu Hotel Lounge, Mzuzu
26.	Prof. Moses Kwapata	Bunda College of Agriculture Principal	17 th February 2011	Principal's Office, Lilongwe
27.	Mr. Gregory Banda	University of Malawi Student Union (UMSU), President	17 th February 2011	President Hostel Room, Lilongwe
28.	Dr. Eston Nsambo	Faculty of Science, Chancellor College, Dean	21st February 2011	Dean's Office, Zomba

29.	Mr. Brewn Musopole	Director, Centre for Industrial Technology, the Polytechnic	23 rd February 2011	Director's Office, Blantyre
30.	Mr. Herbert Longwe	Research Officer, College of Medicine Malaria Project	24 th February 2011	KIPS Restaurant, Blantyre
31.	Prof. Paul Kishindo	Centre for Social Research, Chancellor College Director	1 st April 2011	Director's Office, Zomba
32.	Mr. Pearson Munthali	MZUNI Student Union President	2 nd April 2011	Researcher House, Zomba
33.	Mr. Lonjezo Sithole	Chancellor College Student Union President	2 nd April 2011	Researcher's House, Zomba
34.	Asst. Prof. Safalao	Centre for Agricultural Research, Bunda College, Director	20 th April 2011	By Skype from UK where the respondent was based at the time of the interview
35.	Dr. Grant Kululanga	The Polytechnic Principal	3 rd May 2011	Principal's Office, Blantyre
36.	Mr. Khama Mwale	SOU Student Union President	4 th May 2011	KIPS Restaurant, Blantyre
 <i>Those Responsible for Formulation and Reinforcement at National Level</i>				
37.	Lindiwe Chide	Ministry of Education, Science and technology (MoEST) Spokesperson	2 nd December 2010	MoEST, Lilongwe
38.	Mr. Wathando Mughandira	MoEST Planning Officer	2 nd December 2010	MoEST Board Room, Lilongwe
39.	Mr. Christopher Guta	National Industrial Research Council Director	14 th March 2011	Via Sykpe form UK where the respondent was at the time of the interview

40.	Dr. Alson .B Maluwa	National Commission for Research, Science and Technology Deputy Director	17 th March 2011	Deputy Director's Office, Lilongwe
41.	Mr. Andrew Mpase	National Commission for Research, Science and Technology Research Officer	17 th March 2011	Research Officer's Office, Lilongwe
42.	Dr. Augustine Kamlongera	MoEST Director of Higher	18 th March 2011	Director's Office, Lilongwe
<i>Those that Support Formulation of Policies at National Level</i>				
43.	Mr. Andrew Ussi	Link for Education Governance (LEG) Executive Director	1 st December 2010	LEG Board Room, Lilongwe
44.	Mr. Clement Masangano	LEG, Research, Monitoring & Evaluation Director	1 st December 2010	LEG Board Room, Lilongwe
45.	Mr. Benedict Kondowe	Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education (CSCQBE) Executive Director	1 st December 2010	CSCQBE Board Room, Lilongwe
46.	Mr. Chikondi Maleta	United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Education Specialist	4 th January 2011	USAID Offices, Lilongwe
47.	Ms. Bupe Mlagha	European Union (EU) Delegation to Malawi Economist	4 th January 2011	Ali Baba Restaurant, Lilongwe
48.	Ms. Kima Mwela	American Embassy Project Assistant	4 th January 2011	Ali Baba Restaurant, Lilongwe
49.	Ms. Emma Longwe	World Bank Education Specialist	5 th January 2011	Ali Baba Restaurant, Lilongwe
50.	Ms. Rose Chowawa	Office of President and Cabinet, Department of Public Service Human Resource Officer	25 th January 2011	Department of Public Service Board Room, Lilongwe
<i>Experts</i>				
51.	Mr. Milward Tobias	MEJN, Programme Manager	30 th November 2010	MEJN Board Room, Lilongwe

52.	Mrs. Martha Khungwa Chalera	Malawi Knowledge Network (MAKNET) Project Manager	3 rd December 2010	MAKNET Office, Blantyre
53.	Mr. Andrew Kumbatira	Malawi Economic Justice (MEJN) Executive Director	3 rd December 2010	MPTC ED Office, Blantyre
54.	Mr. Mwambene	PLAN Malawi, Country Director	30 th December 2010	KIPs Restaurant, Blantyre
55.	Ms. Tiya Kaleya	World Bank Education Specialist	5 th January 2011	Ali Baba Restaurant, Lilongwe
56.	Mrs. Emily Banda	Freelance Consultant	22 nd February 2011	KIP's Restaurant, Blantyre
57.	Mr. Rafiq Hajat	Institute for Policy Interaction (IPI) Executive Director	28 th February 2011	IPI Office, Blantyre
58.	Dr. Thomas Munthali	Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA), President	1 st March 2011	ECAMA Office, Lilongwe
59.	Mr. Russel Tembo	ECAMA Economist	2 nd May 2011	ECAMA Office, Lilongwe
<i>Representatives of Key External and Private Sector Actors</i>				
60.	Ms. M. Sabweza	Malawi Export Promotion Agency (MIPA) Export Officer	25 th January 2011	MIPA Offices, Lilongwe
61.	Mr. Patridge	National Bank of Malawi, Chief Executive Officer	7 th March 2011	Chief Executive Officer's Office, Blantyre
62.	Mrs. Margaret Mkandawire	Managing Director, Toyota Malawi	8 th March 2011	Managing Director's Office, Blantyre
63.	Mr. Hussein Madi	Chombe Tea Company General Manager	8 th March 2011	General Manager's Office, Blantyre
64.	Mr. Chrales Kaferapanjira	Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI) Chief Executive Officer,	21 st April 2011	Chief Executive Officer's Office, Blantyre
65.	Mrs. Rehanna Mvula	MCCCI Economist	25 th April 2011	Economist's Office, Blantyre

Annexure 2: List of Unstructured and Semi-structured Interview Questions Guide According to Research Objectives

In this study, data were collected and collated to achieve the three specific objectives:

- *To identify the expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national development.*
- *To assess the performance of HEIs in their expected roles.*
- *To identify and analyse the determinants of HEIs performance in their expected roles.*
- *To identify and analyse the pattern of response by HEIs towards national development policies.*

Operationally, these objectives were unpacked into sets of questions and variables that guided the process of data collection through unstructured and semi-structured interviews (as well as documentary review). The following research questions guided the specific questions posed to respondents.

A) Expected roles of Malawi's HEIs in national development

- i. What are the national policies that specify the role of HEIs in national development?
- ii. How do the national development policies articulate the link between higher education and development?
- iii. What roles do the policies place on HEIs to ensure national development?
- iv. Are there education sectoral policies that also articulate the link between higher education and development?
- v. If so, what are they and what specific roles do they place on HEIs?
- vi. Are there differences in the roles placed on private and public HEIs?

B) Performance of HEIs in their Prescribed or expected Roles

- i. Which fields of studies do HEIs offer and what degree programmes do HEIs offer?
- ii. How many of the fields are offered by public HEIs on the one hand and private HEIs on the other hand?
- iii. What have been the specific degree programmes offered in the period under review?
- iv. Has there been any increase in the number of degree programmes in the period under review?
- v. What has been the enrolment trend in the fields of study?
- vi. What have been the total enrolment levels and trend over the years?
- vii. What have been the enrolment patterns (in terms of sex, geographical locations, income band)
- viii. What have been the modes of studying (full time, part time, distance learning)?
- ix. What have been the trends in enrolment levels of postgraduate students vis-à-vis undergraduate enrolment levels?
- x. What are the admission policies of HEIs and to what extent do they enhance access and equity?
- xi. What have been the sources of funding for HEIs?
- xii. What have been the expenditure patterns of the HEIs?
- xiii. What have been the levels of internal efficiencies in terms of student lecturer ratio, student – support staff ration, repetition rates, graduation rates and unit cost?
- xiv. Are there private sector and other stakeholders' involvements in financing of HEIs?
- xv. What are the cost-sharing levels between students and the HEIs?
- xvi. How often have curricula been reviewed for all the HEIs?
- xvii. What are the availability levels of infrastructure as well as teaching and learning materials?
- xviii. What is the quality of staff in terms of their qualifications and academic credentials in all the HEIs?
- xix. What are the levels of research in HEIs?

- xx. What is the source of funding for research?
- xxi. What are the levels of resources devoted to research?
- xxii. What is the focus of research activities?
- xxiii. Do the HEIs link with industry or the productive sector in some research activities or any other areas?
- xxiv. What are the levels of external efficiency in terms of:
 - a) employability of students
 - b) provision of critically needed skills in the economy
 - c) Satisfaction of students with their degrees
 - d) Satisfaction of employers with the skills of students

C) Determining factors of HEIs' level of performance in their expected roles.

- i. What are the goals and guiding philosophies of HEIs?
- ii. Why do they offer the programmes in outlined in A?
- iii. How congruent are the HEIs' goals and philosophies to their policy-expected roles?
- iv. Does the level of congruency affect their performance? If so, how?
- v. What are the operational structures of HEIs?
- vi. How centralised and decentralised are they?
- vii. How and to what extent does the centralisation/decentralisation affect the performance of HEIs?
- viii. To what extent does the presence or absence of the operational structure facilitate or affect the operations of the HEIs?
- ix. Who are the key actors and participants in the running of the HEIs?
 - x. What is the quality of the participants?
 - xi. To what extent does the quality of participants affect the performance of HEIs?
 - xii. Do legal, political, economic and demographic factors affect the performance of HEIs?
 - xiii. If so, how and to what extent?
- xiv. What is the prevailing model of state-HEI relationship?

- xv. Does the nature of the relationship between the state and HEIs have any effect on the performance of HEIs?
- xvi. If so, how and to what extent?
- xvii. What higher education problems or challenges do the national policies seek to redress?
- xviii. What beliefs underlie the policies?
- xix. How do HEIs view the causal dynamics of the problems sought to be addressed by the policy?
- xx. How do those beliefs match or mismatch the beliefs of HEIs at which the policies are targeted?
- xxi. In case of a mismatch, to what extent does it affect the response of HEIs to the policies?
- xxii. Does the state use and apply some instruments to ensure conformity to national policies?
- xxiii. If so, what are those instruments and how effective are they?
- xxiv. Are there any linkages between HEIs and industry or the productive sector?
- xxv. If so, what are they and at what level?
- xxvi. Are there any factors that explain the levels of linkages between HEIs and the productive sector?
- xxvii. How are the linkages and their levels (or their absence) affecting the performance of HEI?
- xxviii. How do factors internal to HEIs relate to factors that are in the external environment of HEIs?

D Pattern of HEIs' Response in the Roles

- i) Are there general similarities in the response by HEIs to development policies as noted in their levels of performance?
- ii) If so, what patterns of response to development policies can be identified from HEIs' level of performance?

Annexure 3: List of Documents Reviewed

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Annexure 4: Letter Seeking Permission for Interview

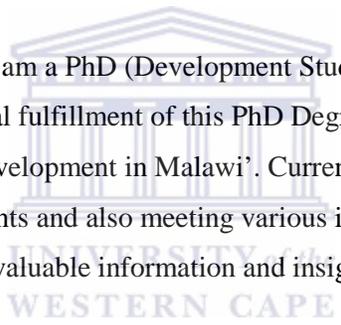
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25th November, 2010

.....
.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

SEEKING AUDIENCE

My name is Felix Benson Lombe and I am a PhD (Development Studies) candidate at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. In partial fulfillment of this PhD Degree, I am writing a thesis on ‘Higher Education Institutions and National Development in Malawi’. Currently, I am doing my research work in which I am reviewing relevant documents and also meeting various individuals, groups and organisations’ representatives who have relevant and valuable information and insight in this subject matter.



I therefore humbly book an appointment with you or your representative on your soonest convenient date for an interview on a number of areas which are of interest to my study. As per ethical declaration which I have signed with the University of the Western Cape, the information which will be given to me is purely meant to be used for academic purpose only. I am also prepared to make a signed declaration you’re your organisation restricting my usage of the data only for academic purpose, if it will be deemed necessary on your part. My contact details are provided above.

Sincerely Yours,

Felix Benson Lombe
PhD Candidate, UWC

Annexure 5: Introductory Letter



Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, Cape Town, South Africa
Telephone : (021) 959 3858/6 /959 3845 Fax: (021) 959 3865
E-mail: cconradie@uwc.ac.za or pkippie@uwc.ac.za

25th November 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to introduce Mr. Felix Benson Lombe who is a registered PhD (Development Studies) student at the above institute. In partial fulfillment of the PhD Degree, Mr. Lombe has undertaken to write a thesis on **‘Higher Education Institutions and National Development in Malawi’**. The nature of his study requires him to meet various individuals, groups and organisations’ representatives who have relevant and valuable information and insight in this subject matter.

We would therefore be grateful if you could grant Mr. Lombe an interview and provide him with relevant information. From an ethical point of view, he has signed the University Research Ethics Declaration, which prescribes the acceptable pattern of behavior when conducting interviews and research. We would also want to confirm that Mr. Lombe’s work is mainly intended for academic purposes. The University of the Western Cape appreciates the support it gets from individuals and organisations that assist our students.

Thank you and regards,

Ms Ina Conradie

Coordinator

DRD

ISD, School of Government

University of the Western Cape, Cape Town

Annexure 6: Programmes offered by HEIs in Malawi

<i>Degree Programmes Offered by UNIMA</i>		
College	Faculty	Degree
Bunda	Agriculture	BSc (Agriculture) B.Sc (Agronomy) B.Sc(Irrigation Engineering) B.Sc (Animal Science) B.Sc Agriculture (Nutrition and Food Science) M.Sc (Agronomy) M.Sc (Soil Science) M.Sc (Animal Science) M.Sc (Food Science & Human Nutrition) M.Sc (Entomology)
	Development Studies	B.Sc (Agribusiness Management) B.Sc (Agricultural Economics) B.Sc (Agricultural Extension) B.Sc (Agriculture Education) M.Sc (Agricultural Extension) M.Sc (Agricultural Economics)
	Environmental Science	B.Sc (Aquaculture & Fisheries Science) B.Sc (Environmental Science) B.Sc (Horticulture) B.Sc (Natural Resources Management) B.Sc (Forestry) M.Sc (Aquaculture & Fisheries) M.Sc (Social Forestry) M.Sc (Horticulture)
Chancellor	Education	B.Ed (Language) B.Ed (Science) B.Sc (Social Studies) University Certificate in Education M.Ed (Policy, Planning & Leadership) PhD (Education)
	Humanities	BA (Humanities) BA (Theology)

		BA (Media Studies) MA (Applied Linguistics) MA (Pure Linguistics) MA (Theater, Mass Communication & Development)
	Law	LLB (Hons) Diploma (Law)
	Science	University Certificate in Computer Science Postgraduate Diploma in Computer Science B.Sc M.Sc (Chemistry) M.Sc (Environmental Chemistry) M.Sc (Informatics) PhD (Biology) PhD (Chemistry)
	Social Science	B. Soc.Sc BA (Public Administration) BA (Political Science) BA (Human Resources Management) MA (Development Studies) MA (Political Science) MA (Economics) MA (Human Resources Management & Industrial Relations) MA (African Social History) PhD (Economics)
College of Medicine	Medicine	Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) Bsc in Pharmacy Bsc Medical Laboratory Technology Master of Public Health Master of Medicine (MED, Paediat)
Kamuzu College of Nursing	Nursing	Diploma (Nursing) B.Sc (Nursing) University Certificate in Midwifery M.Sc (Midwifery)
The Polytechnic	Applied Sciences	B.Sc (Management Information Systems) B.Sc (Information Technology) B.Sc (Environmental Health) B.Sc (Environmental Science Technology)

		B.Sc (Mathematical Science Education)
	Built Environment	B. Sc (Architectural Studies) B.Sc (Quantity Surveying) B.Sc (Land Surveying) B.Sc (Land Economy) B.Sc (Physical Planning)
	Commerce	B. Business Administration B. Accountancy B. Commerce MBA
	Education & Media Studies	BA (Journalism) B.Ed (Business Studies) B.Sc (Technical Education) BA (Business Communication)
	Engineering	B.Sc (Civil Engineering – Structures) (Hons) B.Sc (Electrical Engineering) (Hons) B.Sc (Mechanical Engineering) (Hons) B.Sc (Electronics & Computer Engineering) (Hons) B.Sc (Electronics & Telecommunications Engineering (Hons)

Degree Programmes offered by CUNIMA		
Faculty	Departments	Degree Programmes
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biblical and Religious Studies • Geography • History • Linguistics and Literature • Mathematics • Special Needs Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts in Education (with majors in History, Geography, Biblical & Religious studies, Linguistics & Literature) • Bachelor of Science in Education (Mathematics) • Bachelor of Special Needs Education

Social Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthropology • Political Leadership • Social Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.Soc.Sc (Social Work) • B.Soc.Sc (Anthropology) • B.Soc.Sc (Political Leadership)
Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.Com (Accountancy)

<i>Programmes Offered by MAU</i>		
Faculty	Department	Degree Programmes
Faculty of Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theology 	BA (Theology) BA (Religion)
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Languages 	Bachelor of Education
Business Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting • Marketing • Management 	Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (with majors in Accounting, Marketing and Management) (BBA)

<i>Degree Programmes Offered by MZUNI</i>	
Faculty/Centre	Degree Programmes
Tourism & Hospitality Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.Sc (Tourism) • B.Sc (Hospitality Management)
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA (Education) • B.Sc (Education) • BA (Theology & Religious Studies) • MA (Theology & Religious Studies) • PhD (Theology & Religious Studies)

Health Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.Sc (Biomedical Sciences) • B.Sc (Nursing & Midwifery) • B.Sc (Optometry) • B.Sc (Health Science Education)
Information Science & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma (Library & Information) • Postgraduate Diploma (Instructional technology) • B. Library & Information • B.Sc (ICT) • M.Sc (Information Theory, Coding and Cryptography)
Environmental Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.Sc (Forestry) • B.Sc (Renewable Energy Technology) • B.Sc (Fisheries) • B.Sc (Land Management –Land Surveying) • B.Sc (Land Management –Estate Management) • B.Sc (Land Management – Physical Planning) • B.Sc (Water Resource Management)
Centre for Security Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate (Security Studies) • Diploma (Security Studies)
Centre for Continuing Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate in Education • Diploma in Education

Degree Programmes Offered by BIU

Faculty	Degree Programme
Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Actuarial Sciences (BASc) • Bachelor of Business Administration • Bachelor of Economics (B.Econ) • Bachelor of Guidance and Counseling (BG&C) • Bachelor of Entrepreneurship (B.Entp) • Bachelor of Banking and Finance • Bachelor of Accounting and Finance (BAFin) • Bachelor of Information Technology (BITec)

<i>Degree Programmes Offered by SOUM</i>	
Faculty	Degree Programme
Business, Economics and Management Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Human Resources Development and Management • Bachelor of Business and Finance

<i>Degree Programmes Offered by UNIL</i>	
Faculty	Degree Programme
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Education (Humanities)

Source: Author's Own Summary from HEIs' Data Sources.



Annexure 7: Categorisation of Programmes According to Fields

Field	Name of Programme and HEI offering the Programme
Agriculture	BSc (Agriculture) – UNIMA B.Sc (Agronomy) - UNIMA B.Sc(Irrigation Engineering) - UNIMA B.Sc (Animal Science) - UNIMA B.Sc Agriculture (Nutrition and Food Science) - UNIMA B.Sc (Forestry) - MZUNI B.Sc (Fisheries) - MZUNI B.Sc (Aquaculture & Fisheries Science) - UNIMA B.Sc (Horticulture) - UNIMA B.Sc (Natural Resources Management) - UNIMA B.Sc (Forestry) - UNIMA M.Sc (Animal Science) - UNIMA M.Sc (Food Science & Human Nutrition) - UNIMA M.Sc (Entomology) - UNIMA M.Sc (Aquaculture & Fisheries) - UNIMA M.Sc (Forestry) - UNIMA M.Sc (Horticulture) - UNIMA M.Sc (Agronomy) - UNIMA M.Sc (Soil Science) - UNIMA
Development Studies	B.Sc (Agribusiness Management) - UNIMA B.Sc (Agricultural Economics) - UNIMA B.Sc (Agricultural Extension) - UNIMA B.Sc (Agriculture Education) - UNIMA M.Sc (Agricultural Extension) - UNIMA M.Sc (Agricultural Economics) - UNIMA
Environmental Science	B.Sc (Environmental Science) - UNIMA M.Sc (Environmental Chemistry) - UNIMA B.Sc (Environmental Science and Technology) - UNIMA B.Sc (Water Resource Management) - MZUNI

Education	<p>B.Sc (Mathematical Science Education) - UNIMA</p> <p>Bachelor of Education - MAU</p> <p>Bachelor of Education (Humanities) - UNIL</p> <p>BA (Education) - CUNIMA, MZUNI</p> <p>B. Sc (Education) - CUNIMA, MZUNI</p> <p>Bachelor of Special Needs Education - CUNIMA</p> <p>B.Ed (Language) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Ed (Business Studies) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Technical Education) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Ed (Science) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Social Studies) - UNIMA</p> <p>University Certificate in Education - UNIMA, MZUNI</p> <p>Diploma in Education - MZUNI</p> <p>M.Ed (Policy, Planning & Leadership) - UNIMA</p> <p>PhD (Education) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Applied Linguistics) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Pure Linguistics) - UNIMA</p>
Theology	<p>BA (Theology) - UNIMA, MAU</p> <p>BA (Religion) - MAU</p> <p>BA (Theology & Religious Studies) - MZUNI</p> <p>MA (Theology & Religious Studies) - MZUNI</p> <p>PhD (Theology & Religious Studies) - MZUNI</p>
Humanities	<p>BA (Humanities) - UNIMA</p>
Law	<p>LLB (Hons) - UNIMA</p> <p>Diploma (Law) - UNIMA</p>
Pure Science	<p>University Certificate in Computer Science - UNIMA</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Computer Science - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc - UNIMA</p>

	<p>M.Sc (Chemistry) - UNIMA</p> <p>PhD (Biology) - UNIMA</p> <p>PhD (Chemistry) - UNIMA</p>
Social Science	<p>B.Soc.Sc (Social Work) - CUNIMA</p> <p>B.Soc.Sc (Anthropology) - CUNIMA</p> <p>B.Soc.Sc (Political Leadership) - CUNIMA</p> <p>Bachelor of Human Resources Development and Management - SOUM</p> <p>Bachelor of Guidance and Counseling (BG&C) - BIU</p> <p>B. Soc.Sc - UNIMA</p> <p>Bachelor of Economics (B.Econ) - BIU</p> <p>BA (Public Administration) - UNIMA</p> <p>BA (Political Science) - UNIMA</p> <p>BA (Human Resources Management) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Development Studies) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Political Science) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Economics) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Human Resources Management & Industrial Relations) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (African Social History) - UNIMA</p> <p>PhD (Economics) - UNIMA</p>
Nursing	<p>Diploma (Nursing) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Nursing) - UNIMA</p> <p>B. Sc (Nursing & Midwifery) - MZUNI</p> <p>University Certificate in Midwifery - UNIMA</p> <p>M.Sc (Midwifery) - UNIMA</p>
Applied Sciences	<p>M.Sc (Informatics) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc - Renewable Energy Technology - MZUNI</p>
Built Environment	<p>B. Sc (Architectural Studies) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Quantity Surveying) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Land Surveying) - UNIMA</p>

	<p>B.Sc (Land Economy) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Physical Planning)- UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Land Management -Land Surveying) - MZUNI</p> <p>B.Sc (Land Management -Estate Management) - MZUNI</p> <p>B.Sc (Land Management - Physical Planning) - MZUNI</p>
Commerce	<p>B. Business Administration - UNIMA, MAU</p> <p>B. Accountancy - UNIMA, CUNIMA</p> <p>Bachelor of Actuarial Sciences (BASc) - BIU</p> <p>Bachelor of Business Administration - BIU</p> <p>Bachelor of Entrepreneurship (B.Entp) - BIU</p> <p>Bachelor of Banking and Finance - BIU</p> <p>Bachelor of Accounting and Finance (BAFin) - BIU</p> <p>Bachelor of Business and Finance - SOUM</p> <p>MBA – UNIMA</p>
Media Studies	<p>BA (Media Studies) - UNIMA</p> <p>MA (Theater, Mass Communication & Development) - UNIMA</p> <p>BA (Journalism) - UNIMA</p> <p>BA (Business Communication) – UNIMA</p>
Engineering	<p>B.Sc (Civil Engineering - Structures) (Hons) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Electrical Engineering) (Hons) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Mechanical Engineering) (Hons) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Electronics & Computer Engineering) (Hons) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Electronics & Telecommunications Engineering (Hons) – UNIMA</p>
Medicine	<p>Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) - UNIMA</p> <p>Bsc in Pharmacy - UNIMA</p> <p>Bsc Medical Laboratory Technology - UNIMA</p> <p>Master of Medicine (MED, Pediatric) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Biomedical Sciences) - MZUNI</p> <p>B.Sc (Optometry) – MZUNI</p>
Health Science	<p>Master of Public Health - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Environmental Health) - UNIMA</p> <p>B.Sc (Health Science) – MZUNI</p>

Information Technology	B.Sc (Management Information Systems) - UNIMA B.Sc (Information Technology) - UNIMA Bachelor of Information Technology (BITec) - BIU Diploma (Library & Information) - MZUNI Postgraduate Diploma (Instructional Technology) - MZUNI B. Library & Information - MZUNI B.Sc (ICT) - MZUNI M.Sc (Information Theory, Coding and Cryptography) – MZUNI
Hospitality & Tourism Management	B.Sc (Tourism) – MZUNI B.Sc (Hospitality Management) - MZUNI
Other	Certificate (Security Studies) – MZUNI Diploma (Security Studies) – MZUNI

Source: Author's Own Summary.



Annexure 8: Trend in Enrolment Levels in Different Fields of Study

Year	Field of Study and Enrolment																				
	Agr	Dev St	Env Sc	Edu	Theolo	Hum	Law	PureSc	Soc Sc	Nurs	Appl Sc	Built Env	Com	Media	Eng	Med	Health Sc	ICT	Hos& Tour	Other	Total Enr
2000	704	77	110	740	31	480	114	283	299	220		66	489	70	280	99	60	120			4242
2001	827	85	113	870	28	467	106	280	341	231		76	311	80	241	102	87	123			4368
2002	872	207	110	1251	34	500	128	301	345	239		74	583	82	305	130	120	198			5479
2003	830	212	86	1383	36	489	129	303	389	241		73	590	84	383	183	160	176			5747
2004	798	209	109	1411	35	634	131	297	461	326		77	791	88	427	201	156	281			6432
2005	761	233	97	1459	34	520	120	306	470	334	9	80	890	96	419	250	172	290		87	6627
2006	756	261	98	1650	37	539	134	309	512	379	9	87	950	104	401	270	184	309		65	7054
2007	749	241	123	1774	150	570	133	379	659	516	15	116	1059	134	394	311	174	381	35	100	8013
2008	688	281	108	1852	177	540	119	311	717	503	15	139	963	122	360	290	212	391	58	31	7877
2009	676	398	120	2647	228	510	121	371	789	597	21	188	1209	125	352	311	220	511	67	78	9539
2010	653	510	121	2811	309	690	170	410	1190	587	67	214	1700	270	302	341	219	712	89	132	11497

Source: Author's Own Summary from HEIs' Data Sources.