

Leadership for a Changing Public-Private Funding Higher Education Landscape

Ernest Aryeetey



Outline of Presentation

- Global challenges for higher education
- Rising demand for higher education
- Increasing privatization of aspects of public higher education
- Growth of private higher education
- Finding the right mix for the public-private engagement
- Leadership

Global Challenges facing Higher Education

- Key drivers of 21st century academic "revolution" have been identified by UNESCO as
 - the massification of tertiary systems everywhere
 - the 'public good' versus 'private good' debate
 - the impact of information and communications technology
 - and the rise of the knowledge economy and globalisation

Rising Demand for Higher Education

- Between 2000 and 2015, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 30 percent (from 13.2 million to 17.0 million) in the US
- The demand for university places in Africa is described as skyrocketing by the World Bank. Only 1 in 5 eligible students applying for places in Ghana will enroll
- The shrinking state

Increasing Privatization of Aspects of Higher Education

- Increased use of tuition fees outside of the US (two tracks for students in public universities)
- Charges for specific services provided by universities to students (e.g. IT)
- Cost sharing (utilities)
- Charges for services to the public, etc

GHANA: Angry students protest range of fee hikes

Francis Kokutse

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- Students of the University of Ghana, Legon, in Accra and representatives of the National Union of Ghana Students and the Graduate Students Association of Ghana took to the streets at the end of July to protest increases in the academic and residential fees that take effect from the new academic year, starting in August. Students of the University of Ghana, Legon, in Accra and representatives of the National Union of Ghana Students and the Graduate Students Association of Ghana took to the streets at the end of July to protest increases in the academic and residential fees that take effect from the new academic year, starting in August.
- After a four-hour demonstration, the students presented a petition to parliament, which was received by the chairperson of the select committee on education, Gershon Gbediame.
- President of the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) Hamza Suhuyini said that by demonstrating, students were "sending a strong signal to the vice-chancellor to rescind his decision by reducing the fees to an acceptable level".
- Suhuyini said the government needed to intervene to address the grievances of students. He warned: "We will hit the streets again if the authorities do not listen to us."
- According to a story on the website of local radio station Kapital 97.1 FM: "The students are particularly angry with payment of venture capital, security, sports and other fees, which they say is an unjustified financial burden on them."
- But University of Ghana Vice-chancellor Professor Ernest Aryeetey described the demonstration as "unfortunate and extremely sad".
- He claimed that the leadership of both NUGS and the Graduate Students Association of Ghana (Grasag), who supported the demonstration, were weak leaders who wanted to destroy the image of the university for their parochial interests.
- "I would like my students to learn that destroying the university cannot be an option, and that is the path that the leadership of NUGS and Grasag are taking; they simply want to destroy the university for their personal ends," he said.
- Stating that the students had been included in a meeting where the percentage of the fee increment was determined, he said he could not understand why students were "using untruth to fight a cause that cannot be defended".
- Deputy Minister of Education Mahama Ayariga asked the students to use dialogue to solve the impasse between them and university authorities. "It is unfortunate for the students to resort to street demonstrations to press home their demands," he said.

Growth of Private Higher Education

- Private universities have always been associated with the US
- Increasingly present in many African countries as a result of the growing demand and the inability of the state to meet that demand
- There is a more tolerant view of private universities now, after initial tensions

Finding the Right Mix of Public-Private Funding of Higher Education

- The Ghana story: 10 public universities and over 60 private universities
 - Private universities are generally affiliated with public universities
 - Financing private university education has many challenges as a result of the low incomes of households
 - There is clearly a limit to how high fees can go
 - Regulatory challenges beginning to affect private universities
 - Can the state support students in private universities?

Developing Infrastructure with Private Capital

- Is there scope for PPP in university infrastructure development?
 - Student and staff housing
 - Academic buildings
 - Roads
 - Recreational facilities
 - Municipal services

Providing Leadership

- *“Aryeetey Must Go”?*
- Visionary
- Team approach
- ‘Financial literacy’
- Statutes
- Improved relationships with students and other stakeholders

Conclusion

- Private universities are here to stay
- Partnerships between public and private institutions should lead to more efficient use of human and financial resources
- It is important to find better ways of regulating and supporting them to provide quality education