

Environment for creating a new teacher;
(legal, social and governance)

A.B.K.Kasozi, PhD (Calif.)
Executive Director,
National Council for Higher Education, Uganda.

The theme in my discussion- and paper

- The environment for creating a new teacher needs positive legal regulatory frameworks made by a well governed state,
- Good teachers and education institutions are therefore likely to be located in democratic states: a relationship between the two exists
- A new teacher is, in a large measure, a reflection of the legal and social context from which he/she emerges,

The theme in my discussion- and paper

- The environment for creating a new teacher is therefore dependant on all social stakeholders involved in the education of students.
- The new teacher has as much responsibility in creating a good environment for his creation as other stakeholders.
- In this digital age, Africa should stop producing non-graduate teachers for all levels: from kindergarten to University. Only graduates can comprehend or deal with current global changes.

Lucio Sia (2005)

Programme Specialist, Division of Higher Education, Sector of Teacher Education, UNESCO. Capacity Building of Teacher Training Institutions in Sub-Sahara Africa,

“What is so special about teachers and why focus on them? In retrospect, was there a teacher who inspired you or influenced what you are now? Undoubtedly, teachers have a forceful influence on learning, and good teachers ideally produce good learners with the right values, attitudes and behavior for responsible citizenship. Teachers equip learners with life skills that promote personal and societal development. They are directly responsible for carrying out the primary goal of Quality Education for All; and education is often correlated, directly or indirectly, with economic development, health and peace. Investing on teachers and their professional development has proven crucial as demonstrated by experience with countries that have attained high learning outcomes”

Multiple stakeholders are involved in creating the environment for a new teacher

1. The State
2. The Education institutions
3. The seasoned Teachers
4. The new teacher him/her self
5. The overall social context

Who is a new teacher?

- I offer two conceptual ways of defining a new teacher:
 - (a) a novice who has just left a teacher training institution with less than one year of teaching experience;
 - (b) every teacher who is faced with new ways of teaching due to global and local changes in methods of knowledge delivery could be called so.

1. The state

- The State must offer:
 - Peace, justice, law and order
 - The legal and regulatory framework
 - Adequate funding within budget constraints
 - Flexible financial framework for raising education funds
 - Moral leadership

1(i) The conducive environment for institutions: Institutional Autonomy

- Institutions must have freedom to:
 - Manage the governance of their affairs;
 - Hire and dismiss staff for good cause;
 - Admit and dismiss students;
 - Design and implement budgets;
 - Set levels of fees;
 - Freely design curricula; and to
 - Have legal protection of above thru a law.

1(ii) The conducive environment for institutions:
Academic freedom of staff

- Academic freedom is the right of academic staff of all levels to freely:
 - Teach, research, publish, debate, write and look for the truth without interference from internal or external authorities, particularly the state;As the “social laboratories of nations”, academic staff and their academic freedom must be guaranteed by states thru relevant laws.

1(iii) Guarantee of accountability and social responsibility

- Teachers must not only seek academic freedom, they must, and the state must legally ensure that, they are socially responsible. They must:
 - Resist taking advantage of their position;
 - Be role models to students and society;
 - Design curricula relevant to society;
 - Manage the academic processes fairly, justly and efficiently.
 - There must be a state law to enforce above.

2. The education institution/work place

- Provide a home for the new with a good work environment;
- Give him/her the basics of the profession; Nurture the new teacher into the culture of teaching;
- Provide a daily laboratory for the new teacher to experiment into new methods

3. The seasoned teacher

- Accept his/her position as role model for the new teacher;
- Behave and live like what he/she says he is: as a good morally upright teacher;
- Be open and responsible to the new teacher;
- Accept the “school system” and change it from within.

3(i) Creating an environment for a digitally literate new teacher

- (a) ICT is probably the greatest social revolution in the last 6000 years. ICT has revolutionized knowledge creation, storage and delivery
- (b) This means that both teacher and student must be digitally literate. Digital literacy embodies:
- “the abilities to appropriately access, validate, synthesize and utilize both analog and digital information sources to achieve a defined purpose. Digital literacy includes the abilities to communicate and collaborate effectively with information, transforming it into knowledge through a process of authentic and contextual utilization” (Fryer, 2005).*

3 (ii) A big brother role by the seasoned teacher

- The seasoned teachers Must act like a big brother making sure that the new teacher is on course. Among issues to respond to are the global ones e.g:
- The current world crisis and the collapse of neo-liberalism
- The looming environmental catastrophe;
- The blurring lines between distance and face to face education delivery due to ICT etc.

4. The “new teacher’s” role

- The new teacher has the central role in developing the environment for his creation
- He/She must be open to learning, criticism and to understand that learning goes on every day until the grave consumes us;
- Be cordial and cooperative to teachers and students.
- Learn all there is to learn to become a good teacher as enumerated in item 5 below.

5. The overall social and legal context including global and national forces

In order to create the environment that can turn out a good teacher in C21st Africa, a number of local and global forces must be understood because the product is conditioned by the pertaining social reality. For Africa the following factors:

- The African dictatorial- and corrupt age, 1965-95;
- The multiparty age, 1995-2005;
- The Neo-liberal Bretton Woods age/Structural Adjustment impact on education .institutions;
- The low levels of African higher education achievements.
- The African condition

5 (i) The dictatorial and corrupt African age, 1965-1995

Between 1965 and 1995, Africa was ruled by dictatorial, in most case, military regimes, as a result of which:

- Freedom of institutions were throttled with force and oppressive laws,
- Little money were spent on education as % of GDP;
- Many student strikes and institution closures;
- Teachers and professors were silenced, underpaid and many-about 40% university.staff -left the continent,
- Military hardware and not education priority of regimes.

5(ii)The multiparty age, 1995-2005

- The collapse of African economies forced them to appeal to IMF/World Bank
- These institutions insisted on good governance, including having multiparty democracy.
- Although education institutions gained freedom thru a number of laws, the World Bank was hostile to university education in Africa: (Harare meeting of 1986).
- African state legalised regulatory agencies eg.Commissions for HE,QA bodies etc.

5(iii)The neo-liberal Age in Africa, 1980-2008

- Popularized by Reagan and Thatcher, the neo-liberal philosophy trusted the market more than the state in the regulation of human affairs.
- The market and not the state was to deliver social services including education. Spend little or nil on it
- This philosophy formed the basis for the Structural Adjustment Conditionalities leading to serious under-funding of education esp. HE in states that borrowed from WB/IMF. Education laws reflected the neo-liberal bias. The collapse of unregulated markets in 2008 might lead to increases in state funding of HE in Africa.

5 (iv)The funding of African education Neo-Liberalism partly to blame

- *“the education budget of a single (high income) country like France, Germany Italy or the United Kingdom outweighs education spending across the entire Sub-Saharan African region”* (UNESCO, 2007)
- With 15% of world school age children, Africa spends 2.4% of world education resources.
- USA with 4% of world children spends 25% of global education resources on education, East Asia and the Pacific spend 18%.
- States must devise environments for raising funds.

5(iv).The appalling levels of HE enrollments in Africa

•Partly due to SAPs, neo-liberal policies, African higher education participation is the lowest amongst continents(UNESCO, 2007):

Regions	Secondary(%)	Tertiary (%)
North America and Europe	97.7	71
Central and Eastern Europe	85.4	62
Central Asia	80.1	31
Latin American and the Caribbean	73.5	34
East Asia and the Pacific	62.9	26
Middle East (Arab States)	52.1	26
South and West Asia	39.3	11
Sub-Sahara Africa (RSA excepted)	26.3	6
<u>World Average</u>	<u>54.3</u>	<u>26</u>

Yet by 2015 only graduate teachers should be used for all levels

The larger African condition

- Africa is far behind in achieving MDGs
 - 30% of Africans live below \$1 a day, # doubling to 313 million, 1981-2007.
 - UPE may not be achieved by 2015 or is of poor quality
 - Of the 41 countries with a child mortality of 10%, all but 3 were in Africa;
 - The maternal mortality rate in Africa was 900 compared 9 in Europe, Latin Am.130, ME 160.
 - 70% of 39million HIV/AIDs positives are in Africa.
 - Democratic governance has seen a back sliding trend

Conclusions

- The quality of an education institution is dependant of the quality of the teacher or professor; other facilities are welcome additions.
- A good teacher is one who can stimulate students to learn and can guide them in doing so. This has been so since Socrates.
- Global and national forces impacting on the teaching profession means old methods and ways of operation must be discarded for new ones.

Conclusions

- A teacher is a product of society and reflects its social values. Therefore many stakeholders must be involved in providing the legal and social environment for his creation.
- Laws and regulation in a given state condition the environment of creating a new teacher.
- In the end, it is the individual “new teacher” that must provide the personal environment to learning what other people and society are teaching him/her. A very good teacher may be able break out of a conscripting social shell.