

Topic: Internationalisation and academic mobility:

Exploring Higher Education students' mobility in Uganda'.

Abstract

The economic and social changes that characterize the 21st century have modified higher education (HE). The most visible change dating from the 1970s is the unprecedented expansion of HE in terms of participation and increased students' mobility. The number of mobile students has been increasing over the years growing to 5.7 million by 2020. Not only has the number of mobile students shot up, the population and HE systems from which these students come have changed. This contradicts the trend in the previous century where mobile students were generally from the most privileged sections of society in Africa. At the same time, HE in developing countries is gradually shifting from a reactive and "Western"-dominated and -replicated systems into a more proactive and autonomous sector with public and private universities. Most importantly, there is increasing strength in HE in emerging countries and increasing South-South cooperation. There are about 16,000 foreign students enrolled in Ugandan universities mostly from Kenya, Burundi and Rwanda. Adopting a mixed methods approach, via questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and document analysis, this study will examine students' mobility into Uganda. The research focuses on the rationale that underlines international student mobility (ISM) in Africa, including the study of aspects such as the influence of the education system in students' home countries on ISM; the extent to which ISM has moved beyond being a benefit of the privileged classes, and the policy implications on working international students in the global south. The study will enhance the existing literature on students' mobility that primarily focuses on countries like the US, the UK and Australia. Its findings will contribute to knowledge necessary for the policy and programme development for improved service delivery.