

**EXPLAINING THE UNDERUTILIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
RESEARCH IN THE FORMULATION OF AFRICA'S  
SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES:  
THE CASE OF UGANDA**

**BY**

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***Abstract***

*Research generally and Higher Education Research (HER) in particular plays a cardinal role in the formulation of efficient and effective policies, especially those intended to guide socioeconomic development of any country. However, the formulation of many of the policies intended to guide the socioeconomic development of Africa generally and of Uganda in particular is largely not based on empirical research. The policies therefore end up being inefficient and ineffective as far as achieving their intended purposes is concerned. What is baffling is that there is a wealth of HER conducted in these countries about the various components of socioeconomic development, including education and health, but this research is largely unused in the formulation of the policies needed to guide the development of the components. Accordingly, this paper sought to establish the factors explaining the underutilization of HER. Data were collected from officials involved in the formulation of education and health policies; purposively selected from Uganda's universities, Ministries of Education and Sports, and Ministry of Health. The findings revealed that: i. despite having the content which is largely relevant to formulation of effective and efficient education and health policies, much of Uganda's HER is somewhat lacking in the area of using quantitative data (as a result of poor record keeping and restrictive management policies of studied institutions) and practical recommendations, ii. Indifferences in attitudes of education and health policy designers towards the use of HER, extent of publishing, and access to HER manuscripts is very low. The paper recommended the use of quantitative data, which can be realized by improving record-keeping and avoiding restrictive management policies; coming up with practical recommendations; policy designers' change of attitude towards HER; and publication of HER to make it more accessible to education and health policy makers and others interested in its use.*

**Introduction**

Socioeconomic development is a multidimensional concept that focuses on quantitative and qualitative changes in the life conditions of members of any society (Akhtar, 2005; Ntale, 2002; World Bank, 2007). The changes may be positive or negative and can be established

using various indicators ranging from a society's members' levels of health, education, nutrition, food security, communication, commerce, trade, environmental preservation, technology, tourism and a host of others (Ayolekire, 2008; MFPED, 2006). Socioeconomic development is not achieved out of a vacuum. It tends to be guided by policies (World Bank, 2008). A policy can be defined as is an action-plan made to guide decisions, procedures and actions that should be taken in given conditions in order to achieve a specified purpose (Carver and Miriam, 1997; Conduff, Edsall, Gabanna, Loucks, Paszkiewicz, Raso and Stier, 1999; Friedmann, 1987; Ikelegbe, 1994; Miriam and Charney, 2004; Naidoo, 2004; Owolabi, 2005). Socioeconomic policies are therefore action-plans intended to guided decisions, procedures and actions intended to transform society from one social or economic state to another, which may be measured educationally or in terms of quality of health, nutrition, or levels of food security, commerce, technology, or any other indicator. Accordingly, such policies may be on education, health or any other socioeconomic component.

Health policies guide actions intended to improve the quality of health of members of a society (Ministry of Health (MOH), 2007, 2008). Examples include National Health Service management and delivery policies such as primary healthcare policies, HIV/AIDS prevention policies, reproductive health policies and so forth (Ministry of Health, 2008). Education policies guide actions intended to provide the desired didactic quality (Bitamazire, 2008). They include both school-level and national level policies such as Education management policies, administration policies, funding policies, curriculum policies, and so on (Owolabi, 2005). The formulation of all these policies is affected by a number of factors one of which is research (Amin, 2005).

Indeed, the cardinal role played by research in the formulation of efficient and effective policies, particularly those intended to guide national socioeconomic development, cannot be disputed by any policy designer worth the name (Powell, 2004). Practical, efficient and effective policies are formulated only when reference is made to empirical research on what is being planned for (De Clerq, 2004). This is because research, particularly HER focuses on gathering, analysis, interpretation and examination of information needed to understand any socioeconomic problem or need and how it can be addressed in order to achieve desired results (Amin, 2005). It also collects and provides information about tools, human and material variables that need attention in order to solve a socioeconomic problem. Research is also capable of providing an empirical basis for predicting or visualizing the future as well as what is likely to happen in case something is done (Senaratne, Kagioglou, Amaratunga, Baldry, Aouad, and Bowden, 2005; Wolfenden, 1995). It therefore offers a practical, informative and in-depth appreciation and understanding of the feasibility of much of what planners do, including formulation of effective and efficient policies.

Unfortunately, the formulation of many of the policies intended to guide Africa's socioeconomic initiatives and actions is largely not based on empirical research (Musaaazi, 2005). The policies therefore end up being inefficient and ineffective as far as achieving their intended purposes is concerned. World Bank Reports (2007, 2008) on development in Africa highlight countries where socioeconomic policies have failed to achieve their intended purposes effectively, including Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Uganda amongst others. What is surprising is the existence, in these countries, of a wealth of research conducted in their public and private universities and tertiary institutions.

In particular, considerable HER has been and continues to be conducted in Uganda about the various components of socioeconomic development, including education, health, food security, nutrition, agriculture, tourism, entrepreneurship, transportation, communication, commerce, trade, finance, taxation, ecological preservation, conflict resolution, ethics, morality, community organization, and a host of others. Illustrations abound. Studies conducted by Ayolekire (2008), Byaruhanga (2008), Hafisa (2008), Kalungi (2008), Kanyamurwa (2007, 2008), Kanyemibwa (2007), Kayongo (2004, 2007, 2008, 2009), Kasenene (1999, 2003), Kasozi (2003), Kyambadde (2005), Musisi (1996), Onyango (1992), Osingilio (2006), Ssekamwa (1996), Katende (2009), Tibarimbasa (1989), to mention but a few. Not only have each of these and a host of other studies provided a meticulous understanding of a socioeconomic component on which they focus as a concept and research variable, they have also underpinned the practical implications of the weaknesses and challenges associated with the component, and provided a wealth of recommendations that should be adopted to deal with the weaknesses and challenges and cause desired improvements in the component.

HER should therefore have been in a position to act as a practical basis for coming up with effective and efficient socioeconomic development policies in Uganda instead of those that fail to satisfactorily achieve their intended purposes. Sadly, this research is highly underutilized in the formulation of the country's socioeconomic development policies. The HER, which is compiled in various forms including dissertation, theses, articles, papers and essays by higher education scholars and students, is laying idle, just collecting dust in the bookshelves of African university libraries and document collection centres where it is piled after serving its academic purposes: That is, enabling its authors to fulfill the requirements for graduation (in case of students) or for being promoted to positions of senior lecturer, associate or full professor (in case of academicians).

The purpose of this paper was therefore to explore factors explaining the afore-described scenario. The paper, however, did not address all the components of socioeconomic development as this would make its compilation rather tedious, especially in view of its first objective. Its content scope was confined to specifically health and education as the specific components. These components were selected not because they are very special relative to others in terms of formulating effective and efficient policies but because the socioeconomic development process of any society is largely guided by policies that promote its members' enlightenment and health. If health and education policies are largely ineffective and inefficient (World Bank, 2008), they are likely to cause more concern, especially when research that should have guided their formulation as effective and efficient policies is abundantly available.

The specific objectives of the paper focused on examining whether the factors underlying the underutilization of HER in the formulation of Uganda's education and health policies were:

1. The content of HER in terms of its relevance to formulating education and health policies in Uganda
2. Policy makers' perceptions/attitudes towards the use of HER as a basis for formulating health and education development policies for Uganda.
3. The extent of publication of HER and level of accessing it by the makers of Uganda's health and education development policies

## **Methodology**

The methodology used to achieve the foregoing objectives involved documentary review, administration of a questionnaire to selected health and education officials and analysis of the collected data. Documentary review involved a critical assessment of HER manuscripts, which included dissertations, theses, essays, papers and articles. The manuscripts were selected using purposive sampling because only those whose main theme focused on education and health from a social or economic perspective were targeted. They were selected from libraries of five universities, which included Makerere University, Kampala International University, Makerere University Business School, Nkumba University, and Kyambogo University.

The universities were selected using simple random sampling so as to give each university an equal chance of participation in the study. A list of all the universities located in the central region of Uganda was compiled to act as sampling frame. The central region was selected because it harbours most of the universities in Uganda. The names of the compiled universities were then written on pieces of paper. The pieces were then collected in an urn and shuffled a number of times. One piece of paper was selected without replacement every after each a shuffle until five pieces were selected. The universities whose names appeared on the selected pieces of paper were then selected to participate in the study.

Documentary review involved a critical scrutiny of every selected manuscript. Depending on the subject area of the manuscript, attention was mainly on examining whether or not the sampled manuscripts had the content relevant to guiding formulation of effective and efficient educational or health policies in Uganda. Critical focus was mainly on establishing whether the literature and findings chapters as well as the recommendations of the manuscripts had the content that could guide policy designers to formulate effective and efficient education or health policies.

More data was collected 24 officials and 10 librarians (two from each selected university) who were selected using purposive sampling. This was because only the officials who were knowledgeable about or dealing in education and health policy formulation and librarians who were handling HER manuscripts were targeted to act as key informants. The selected officials included: the head of Public Administration Department, the head of Public Health Department, and the Head of the Education Department/Faculty of the selected universities. Two health and two education officials were also selected from the Ministries of Health and Education, respectively. These officials included the heads of the Planning Units and the permanent or under-secretaries because these were the officials in charge of policy issues in their respective ministries. The data was collected from the officials and librarians using a structured questionnaire.

While the data collected from university librarians was intended to establish the extent of publication, the data collected from the officials was intended not only to establish their attitude towards the use of HER as a basis for guiding policy formulation but also to ascertain the level of accessing HER manuscripts in case one wanted to use them. Such extent, attitude, and level were established using an appropria

The data was therefore quantitatively analyzed. The specific analysis techniques included means and standard deviations. While the means helped to establish respondents' explanation for the underutilization of HER on average, standard deviations helped to establish whether the explanations deviated significantly or not.

## **Findings**

The findings are presented in three sections following the objectives of the paper.

### **Relevance of the Content of HER to Guiding the Formulation of Education Policies in Uganda**

A critical review the HER dissertations, theses, papers and articles written about education and health revealed that most of them are informative about various aspects of these two socioeconomic components. As far as education is concerned, the HER dissertations and theses authored by Bakkabulindi (2007), Dungu (2006), Higwira (1993), Kasenene (1999), Kasozi (2003), Katende (2009), Kitatta (1999), Musisi (1996), Muyimbwa (2005), Nabwire (2008), Nantagya (2009), Tibarimbasa (1989), Okoth-Ogola (1995), Uzamukunda (1998), and Wamala-Lule (2000) as well as the articles and papers written by Abu (1992), Ching-Yaw, Phyra and Keomony (2007), Emojorho (2004), Faux (2008), Getler and Glewwe (2002), Grant and Edgar (2003), Herther (2009), Hurych (2005), Jingsong, McCormick and Hoekman (2008), Kajubi (1992, 1996), Kayongo (2007), Maurice (2003), Muema-Kavulya (2006), Mutula (2001), Nawe (2002), Orszag and Kane (2008), Saint (1994, 1995), Sverker-Sörlina (2007), Tormey, Liddy, Maguire and McCloat (2008), Wright (2007), and Wolfenden (1995) give detailed accounts of the factors affecting the provision of the desired quality of education in Uganda as a whole and in her various private and public educational institutions in particular.

A careful overview of the foregoing manuscripts indicates that although they each focus on conceptually and contextually different subjects, they examine the different educational needs of Uganda and the problems facing the delivery of education necessary to address the needs effectively. The manuscripts identify educational needs in terms of the quality of education expected by stakeholders who include students, sponsors and employers. They show that while students' needs include development of talents and acquisition of knowledge and skills that make them productive and employable, sponsors' needs include seeing their children becoming successful, self-sustaining and able to contribute positively to the development of society. Employers' needs are discussed as consisting of employing competent and skillful workers.

Apart from the educational needs of the stakeholders as individuals, some of the reviewed dissertations identify others as general educational needs of Uganda. These include not only the theoretical knowledge largely inculcated by most of the schools in the country but also the practical skills acquired in form of entrepreneurship, computer technology, technical work, sports and recreation, hospitality, music, and business marketing and management (Bagamuhunda, 2000; Kahara-Kawuki, 1998; Kalema (2009), Katende, 2009; Kayongo, 2007; Sewanyana, 1997).

The manuscripts show that the various problems and challenges facing education in Uganda span over curricula, co-curricula, leadership, technological, managerial, staff development, funding, and budgeting inadequacies and constraints. They also indicate how each of these

problems affects the delivery of the desired quality of educational services either at institutional or national level. Specifically, they identify the problems as consisting of declining public financing of education; corruption, financial impropriety, and lack of transparency in financial accountability by educational administrators, community underfunding of schools; inappropriate leadership styles or managerial ineptitude of school administrators; ineffective instructional and non-instructional methods, poor teacher training, inadequate teacher supply and motivation; severe inadequacy of instructional materials and equipment especially in public schools, deficient community organization and management; and inappropriate curriculum content whose consequence has been failure to transform students into productive citizens who can address the socioeconomic and technological needs of Uganda. Other highlighted challenges include: over-enrolments, especially in UPE schools, discontent among teachers due to poor motivation and increased indiscipline amongst students. The latter two problems are pointed out as critical factors behind school fires going on in Uganda today.

The manuscripts also establish and examine relationships between each of the foregoing problems and educational management and service delivery at different levels. While some manuscripts cover the relationships in the context of primary education, others examine them at post-primary or secondary level and others at tertiary or university education. Others

practical by using familiar teaching and learning aids; and shifting from largely arts-based curriculum to science-based curriculum. The recommended managerial and leadership training strategies include self development, in-service training and adoption of management training courses and programmes.

Clearly, in terms of offering knowledge needed to identify the needs, problems and challenges of education in Uganda plus the ways of addressing them, the content of the reviewed HER papers, articles, theses and dissertations is relevant. Therefore, it can supply the information needed to guide the formulation of educational policies needed to effectively and efficiently deliver the desired educational services in Uganda. Given the wide scope of the content of this HER, it can act as a basis for formulating any educational policy, be it on educational management and administration, development and implementation of relevant curriculum, resource mobilization and allocation, or any other policy.

### **Relevance of the Content of HER to Guiding the Formulation of Health Policies in Uganda**

The review of the manuscripts written by Abrahams and Pia (2002), Byaruhanga (2008), Hafisa (2008), Himanshu-Sekhar (2008), Kalungi (2008), Kansakar (2002), Kanyamurwa (2008a, 2008b), Kanyemibwa, (2008), Krieger, Williams and Moss (2007), Mapule-Ramashala (2008), Loewenson (2004), Mugenyi and Kanyamurwa (2004), Osingilio (2006) revealed that these manuscripts contain detailed though contextually and conceptually different accounts of the healthcare needs of the people living in various parts of Uganda. They identify the health needs of Ugandans as ranging from disease prevention, through medical care in form of curative services, improved nutrition (balanced diet), living in private and public hygiene and sanitation, to life conditions characterized by non-occurrence of pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, Cholera, Hepatitis, and other incurable but preventable bubonic diseases.

The manuscripts further examine the conditions and levels of health service delivery, describing them as being far below public expectation. They show that the health conditions of most the Ugandans are characterized by pathetic and unhygienic conditions, poor waste management, poor nutritional standards, suffering from preventable diseases, and low levels of accessing and using medical services due to either long distances to health centres, unaffordable cost of health services offered at the centres, or negligible delivered of required health services. The studies show that while most of the people in rural areas live in substandard health conditions characterized by poor household sanitation and substandard healthcare services, the situation for most of those in urban areas is worse.

Indeed, most of the Ugandan urban dwellers live in filthy, slum-like conditions characterized by poor, dusty and smelly environmental health plus lack of easily accessible public health facilities like bathrooms, urinals and toilets. Waste management is at its lowest as people dispose of human and animal waste using polythene bags thrown in open places such as river channels and un-gazetted dumping grounds. The studies view such poor waste management as a critical health problem because living in unhygienic conditions implies that people cannot prevent human contact with hazards of wastes such as the physical, microbiological, biological or chemical agents of disease. Such openly disposed of wastes as human and animal faeces, solid wastes, domestic wastewater (sewage, urine, sullage, grey-water), industrial wastes, and agricultural wastes can easily cause health problems.

As if that is not enough, the theses show that the delivery of health services in both rural and urban areas of Uganda is poor characterized by acute under-funding, lack of medicines and drugs in health centres, malfunctioning or lack of medical equipment, severe inadequacy of health workers, financial impropriety, corruption, poor service encounters with patients, inadequate or virtual lack of medical sundries and facilities, and administration of counterfeit drugs to patients. The theses show that these problems are faced not only by decentralized health centres and dispensaries but also national referral hospitals as well.

Not only do the theses identify the health needs of the people of Uganda and the problems constraining the delivery of health services, they also provide recommendations regarding how the problems should be addressed in order to deliver the desired quality of health services. Some of the recommendations include: adoption of the following hygienic means of controlling the disposal of wastes: use of engineering solutions (sewerage and wastewater treatment), simple technologies (latrines, septic tanks), solid waste recycling, and personal hygiene practices such as hand-washing with soap. They also make strong recommendations such as increasing the stock of drugs and medicines, recruitment of more health workers, wiping corruption out of the health sector, and training health workers to show care or be friendlier when dealing with patients. Other recommendations include building and equipping more health centres to improve access to health service delivery, increased funding of the health sector, improving environmental health and household sanitation, and promotion of adequate and proper nutrition for the aim of improving people's dietary patterns.

In general, all the foregoing content appears in the cited HER manuscripts. The content is clearly rich in terms of identifying Ugandans' education and health needs, problems that hinder the provision of educational and health services, and the recommendations that should be adopted to address the problems and subsequently satisfy the needs as desired. It can be used to guide formulation of various policies in the fields of education or health management and administration, funding, service delivery and reform. Why then is such content not used to guide policy formulation in Uganda's education and health sectors? Below are some of the established explanations.

### **Explaining Why the Content of HER Manuscripts is Underutilized**

First of all, the review of the selected manuscripts indicated that none of them covered either all the education or health needs, problems hindering the delivery of the services necessary to address the needs, and recommendations that should be adopted to overcome the problems and provide the services satisfactorily. This is a valid observation notwithstanding the fact that all these attributes are in this paper compiled together in a concise manner. The content covering all of them put together after consulting many manuscripts. This suggests that its assemblage necessitated reviewing a number of manuscripts. Thus, if a policy designer is to use the content of HER as a basis for identifying Ugandans' education and health needs to be addressed; and for establishing the strategies regarding how to address the needs and how to avoid the problems that may hinder the delivery of educational and health services needed to satisfy the needs, the designer has to survey a considerable number of manuscripts. This tends to be a difficult task, especially in Uganda where the reading culture is generally low (Tumwebaze, 2009) and where, therefore, many of the educational and health policy designers neither show keen interest nor create time to read dissertations, theses, articles or

papers rich with information needed to inform their policy options. This was actually corroborated by the results obtained from the selected officials as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Indices Showing Top University Officials’ Responses to Using HER Manuscripts**

Questionnaire items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s education policies show keen interest in reading HER dissertations and theses as sources of the information that they need to design effective polices	24	1	3	1.84	0.110
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s education policies show keen interest in reading published HER articles as sources of the information that they need to design effective polices	24	1	3	1.80	1.141
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s education policies show keen interest in reading published HER papers as sources of the information that they need to design effective polices	24	1	3	1.94	0.407
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s education policies create time to read dissertations or theses conducted about in education in Uganda	24	1	3	1.89	1.010
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s education policies create time to read papers written education in Uganda	24	1	3	1.61	0.087
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s education policies create time to read articles published about education in Uganda	24	1	3	1.75	0.707
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s health policies show keen interest in reading HER dissertations and theses as sources of the information that they need to design effective polices	24	1	3	1.64	0.320
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s health policies show keen interest in reading published HER articles as sources of the information that they need to design effective polices	24	1	3	1.60	1.221
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s health policies show keen interest in reading published HER papers as sources of the information that they need to design effective polices	24	1	3	1.54	0.467
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s health policies create time to read dissertations or theses conducted about in health in Uganda	24	1	3	1.55	1.019
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s health policies create time to read papers written health in Uganda	24	1	3	1.54	0.987
Officials in charge of designing Uganda’s health policies create time to read articles published about health in Uganda	24	1	3	1.56	0.777

**Note:** the indices were generated from the following codes: 1-Never, 2-Rarely, 3-Sometimes, 4-Often, 5-Very Often. The critical indicators of determinants are highlighted in bold letters.

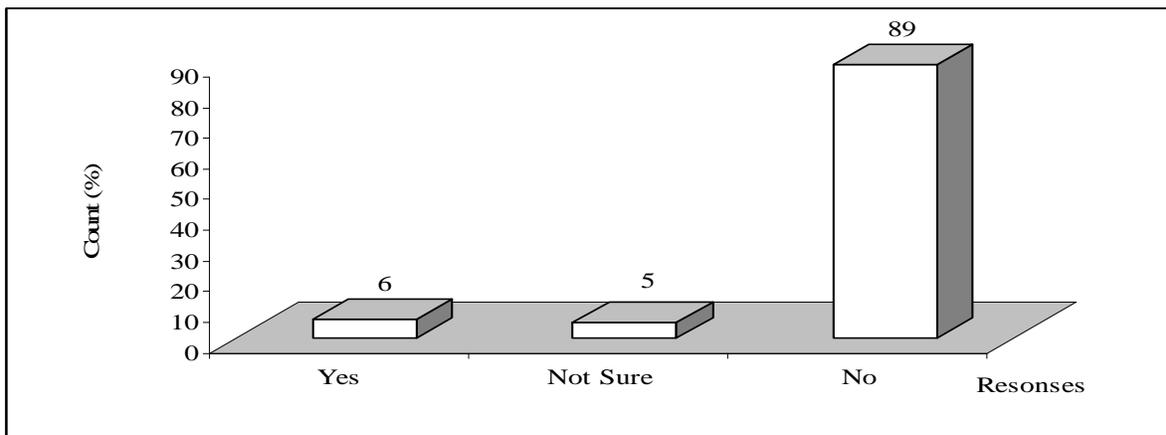
**Source:** Field Research

Results in Table 1 show the manner in which the selected officials perceived the way in which the designers of Uganda’s education and health policies consulted HER manuscripts. Accordingly, officials who responded with ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ implied that the manuscripts

were not used. Those who responded with ‘sometimes’ implied that the policy designers utilized the manuscripts but not regularly while those who responded with ‘often or ‘very often’ implied that the manuscripts were frequently made use of. From this interpretation, results in Table 1 show that the responses of the officials ranged from never (Minimum value = 1) to sometimes (Maximum value = 3). The mean values show, however, that on average, the officials’ responses were close to ‘2’. In addition, the standard deviations were generally less than 1.4 and therefore very small. The findings indicate therefore that on average, officials did not deviate much from each other in their perception that the policy makers of Uganda’s education and health policies rarely showed keen interest and rarely created time to read dissertations, theses, papers, and published articles authored about Uganda’s education and health policies. Rare show of interest and of creating time to read HER manuscripts implies that the officials were essentially not using the manuscripts.

In addition, even when some of the education and health policy designers would have used HER manuscripts to get information needed to guide formulation of effective policies, it was discovered that none of the selected dissertations, theses, papers and articles came up with quantitative models predicting feasible ways of addressing identified educational and health needs. The manuscripts therefore offered little in terms of knowledge needed by policy designers to figure out optimal ways of delivering educational and health services to the people of Uganda. This was further confirmed by the selected university officials as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Officials’ Responses on Whether HER Manuscripts Provide Quantitative Predictive Models (N = 24)**



*Source: Field Research*

Figure 1 shows that 89% of the officials responded negatively. This implies that the majority of the officials believed that HER manuscripts did not provide the quantitative models predicting the feasible ways of addressing the identified educational and health needs. This explanation was established from a synthesis of the analysis methods that were used to analyze the data presented in the manuscripts. The synthesis revealed that although most of the methods were essentially quantitative, the data to which they were applied was highly qualitative. The data was largely based on perceptions of respondents ascertained using various Likert scales of responses. Therefore, the findings generated from the analysis models could only be interpreted in a qualitative sense.

Indeed, although most of the models came up factors that needed critical attention in terms management or policy formulation/implementation, they fell short of showing the net quantitative outcomes of the attention. For instance, one of the survey manuscripts showed

that budget management predicted the quality of education delivered in a higher institution of learning by 76.8%. This was interpreted to mean that the manner in which the institution's budget was managed largely explained the poor quality of educational services delivered by the institution. This interpretation was proper in a qualitative sense but it could not help much in quantitative and predictive terms. Budget management deals largely with mobilization, allocation and spending of finances (Charalambos and Ananiadis, 2004) but no financial data was used to come up with the prediction. It therefore fell short of showing how much money needed to be mobilized and allocated so as to deliver a given level of educational service quality in terms of its quantifiable measures such as instructional facilities and technologies.

Research that is largely deficient of quantitative data cannot help much as far as the quantitative aspects of policy formulations are concerned (Dowd and Kowal, 2000; Duncan, Daly, McDonough and Williams, 2007; Heckathorn and Maser, 1990; Krieger, Williams and Moss, 2007; Smith, 2002; Spillane, Reiser and Reimer, 2002). The foregoing weakness in the content of most HER manuscripts would therefore have been overcome by using quantitative data. It was however established the authors of all the selected dissertations and theses showed that the major reason for failure to use quantitative data, even when it would have been the most appropriate data, was related either to management policy encumbrances and lack of keeping records regarding the research variables addressed in the studies. This implies that the usefulness of HER as a basis for guiding the formulation of education and health policies can be improved if such impediments are minimized.

Further, the review indicated that some of the selected dissertations and theses, particularly those that focused on higher education in Uganda, did not offer practical recommendations as far as formulating of effective and efficient higher education policies is concerned. This was detected from the fact that these manuscripts acknowledged that government funding to higher education was not only ever inadequate but also continually and systematically plummeting. In this case, a practical recommendation would have been to encourage universities to diversify their funding sources. Surprisingly, instead of this recommendation, most of the manuscripts recommended that government had to increase its funding to universities! Such a recommendation lacked practical sense because it is now a deliberate policy of Uganda government to shift educational funding from higher education to promotion of universal primary and secondary education (Kahuku, 2008; MFPED, 2005, 2006, 2008/09). Thus, even when the national revenue envelope expands as a result of improvements in public revenue collection, this does not mean that funding to public universities must automatically increase (Kayongo, 2007, 2008). In Africa, government priorities take precedence even when they may be politically motivated.

Furthermore, some of the recommendations were made without any sense of their practical implications. For instance, while some of the manuscripts recommended strongly that government had to increase funding to the health sector instead of promoting cost-sharing; they did not recommend anything to do fighting corruption in the sector. This implies that the manuscripts fell short of recognizing that increasing funding cannot lead to anticipated results if the endemic corruption identified in the sector is not averted. Critical thinking is needed when coming up with recommendations if HER is to act as a practical basis for guiding the formulation of effective and efficient education and health policies.

Generally therefore, despite the fact that HER has the content which is largely relevant to guiding the formulation of education and health policies in Uganda, particularly in terms of

highlighting the various education and health needs, problems and strategies necessary to overcome the problems and deliver the desired quality of educational and health services, it is somewhat lacking in the area of coming up with practical recommendations.

**Attitude of Policy Designers towards HER as a Basis for Guiding Formulation of Education and Health Policies in Uganda**  
The content of HER manuscripts was in the previous section discovered to be largely

respondents did not deviate much from each other in their perception that Uganda's education and health policy designers had an indifferent attitude towards the use of HER as a basis for coming up with effective and efficient education and health policies. This attitude implies that the officials were not interested in using HER to obtain information needed to come up with effective policies. A close look at the minimum and maximum values in Table 2 reveals that the disuse of HER as a result of policy designers' indifference was mainly caused by the fact that the designers believed that its content was so academic that it could not offer practical solutions to formulation of desired education and health policies.

**Extent of Publication and Accessibility of HER by the Designers of Financing Policies of Uganda's Universities**

The extent of publishing HER so that it could be accessed by anybody interested in using it was established by asking the selected librarians to estimate the level at which HER manuscripts were published either by their authors or the universities. Results obtained are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Indices Showing the Extent of Publishing HER Conducted in Uganda as Rated by Librarians**

Questionnaire items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
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the manuscripts. It is therefore not surprising that most of them end up collecting dust in the bookshelves where they lay until students, lecturers or external researchers request for any of them. Moreover, it was discovered that most of the manuscripts were released for academic purposes only. Indeed, after observing one of the librarians removing dust off some of the manuscripts that the author had requested for, she was asked why the manuscripts had collected such great amounts of dust. She argued that the materials are not regularly used because they given out to students and for academic purposes only. They are not given out to unregistered library users. The tendency of denying unregistered people access to HER manuscripts may be considered as an internal control mechanism for preventing loss of the manuscripts. However, it has an adverse effect of enhancing the inaccessibility of the manuscripts. As a consequence, unregistered users who may include education and health policy designers do not access them as desired.

### **Conclusions**

- 1) Findings show that the content of HER is largely relevant to guiding the formulation of effective and efficient education and health policies in Uganda. However, it is not used by policy designers because it is somewhat lacking in the area of using quantitative data (as a result of restrictive management policies and lack of record keeping) and of coming up with practical recommendations.
- 2) Results show further that education and health policy designers have an indifferent attitude towards the use of HER as a basis for guiding formulation of educational and health policies.
- 3) Lastly, results indicate that the extent of publishing and accessing HER dissertations, theses, papers and articles is very low. The authors of these manuscripts and the universities in which they are kept put in negligible efforts to publish HER. It is therefore rarely published

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made in according to the foregoing conclusions:

- 1) Authors of HER manuscripts should use quantitative data instead of totally relying on qualitative data. This can be realized with improvement in the keeping of records and if the administrative and management policies of the institutions about which research is conducted are changed to permit access to quantitative data
- 2) Authors of HER should ensure that they come up with practical recommendations, especially in terms of their applicability to solving the problems being addressed. This can be achieved through taking up a thorough analysis of the realities surrounding the implementation of the recommendations being advanced.
- 3) Education and health policy designers should change their indifferent attitude and become more positive about the use of HER as a source of information needed to come up with effective and efficient

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