

## **THE PROFESSOR WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES**

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### **Abstract**

In a globalizing world the absence of standardization in measurement does not allow for objective comparison and ranking of education-related concepts and experiences across nations. The ranking of world universities especially with regards to the quality of their professors is a case in point. Differing and relative definition of assessment indicators make such effort unfair across universities in different parts of the world. This paper discusses the international principles and guidelines leading to the professoriate. It affirms that the professor is the soul of the university which itself is a world-wide liberal space for the development of the human intellect and genius. The paper further argues that when an individual has been able to satisfy the rigours of the professoriate, such an individual owes it as an obligation to impact positively his/her environment through contributing to the resolution of the problems that may be plaguing his/her environment. It was within this purview that the African professor was called upon not to divest himself/herself of the rigours and discipline of the professoriate as soon as he attains the peak of academic accomplishment for the pursuit of vain political and social attainments. The African professor is rather called upon to embark on the most important phase of his career by using his privileged position to proffer solutions to pressing African problems.

### **Résumé**

À l'ère de la mondialisation, le manque d'uniformité des standards à travers les pays ne permet ni comparaison ni classement objectifs des concepts et

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expériences liées à l'éducation. Le classement mondial des universités, particulièrement en ce qui concerne la qualité de leurs professeurs, est un bon exemple. Étant différents et relatifs, les indicateurs de l'évaluation des critères d'évaluation des universités de différentes parties du monde rendent ces efforts injustes. Cet article aborde les conventions et principes internationaux menant au professorat universitaire. De plus, l'article tient à démontrer que le professeur est l'âme de l'université qui est en soi un espace libéral mondial pour le développement de l'esprit et du génie humain. Il fait en outre valoir que, lorsqu'une personne a été en mesure de satisfaire les rigueurs du professorat, elle est aussi appelée à exercer un impact positif sur son environnement en contribuant à la résolution des problèmes qui sévissent sur celui-ci. C'est ainsi que le professeur africain est appelé à ne pas se désinvestir des rigueurs et de la discipline du professorat dès qu'il/elle atteint le point culminant de l'accomplissement académique pour la poursuite des réalisations politiques et sociales futiles. Le professeur africain est plutôt appelé à se lancer dans l'étape la plus importante de sa carrière à l'aide de sa position privilégiée pour proposer des solutions aux problèmes africains les plus urgents.

### **Introduction**

The first African university came on stream in 1827 in Sierra Leone. This was followed up by the establishment of the University of Cape Town in 1829 and the University of Khartoum in 1902 (Teferra and Altbach, 2003). All these universities have been in continuous existence since their establishment and although they all began with borrowed academic staff from Europe, they have successfully built their own stock of indigenous staff. Indeed, many generations of these indigenous academic staff have been churned out over the last two centuries.

Among these academics were and still are those who have attained the apex of academic achievement and who had had the privilege of being addressed as 'professor'. The making of a professor usually follows a robust and sometimes

frustrating process and the professor is usually expected to play sterling roles within and without the university system. In consonance with the initial and changing roles of the university, the professor is looked upon not only as the kingpin around whom all core university activities revolve but also the initiator and driver of these activities.

This paper examines general and specific university guidelines for the making of a professor. It equally ex-rays the role currently played by African professors within the context of African universities' relevance to African development.

### **Meaning and Role of the University**

The concept of university must be traced back to those medieval schools referred to as "*studia generalia*" (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1998, p.165). These schools drew their students from all over the world and their purpose was the generation, advancement and verification of knowledge. Indeed, the morphological make-up of the term "university" speaks volumes about its meaning, mission and the original intent of the originators of the concept of university. One most striking word that jumps to the eye from "university" is the word "universe". This stem 'universe' is itself made up of two morphemes derived from Latin: '*uni*', meaning one, whole, entire; and '*versus*', past participle of the verb '*vertere*', which means 'to turn' (Osundare, 2005 p.7). The concepts 'uni' and 'versus' then suggest the idea that the many and the multiple have been turned into one or into a whole. Therefore the university has always conveyed the idea of a physical or conceptual space where people who have come from all over the world (the universe) to learn, share ideas and collectively agree to investigate and unveil the mysteries of nature which are then transmitted through teaching. It is equally a space so free of such unwarranted bigotry and social restrictions that brilliant careers may be offered those who were neither noble by birth nor powerful, nor rich....it is a place (sic) that confers its rewards on those who sought knowledge, not power (Raleigh, 1911, p.6). It is a wallless space within which knowledge is crafted and brought to life (Nenty, 2004).

Traditionally, three missions have been assigned to universities, namely, teaching, research and community service and engagement. However, with the re-emergence of the concept of globalisation which, within modern perspectives, emphasises acute

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competition, another mission emanating from that of research, has risen tall and compelling. That mission is the creation of knowledge. This mission is itself propelled by the modern concept of globalisation, and now lays emphasis on a kind of human resource development that churns out individuals that should not be content with imbibing discovered knowledge, but thinking persons that are stimulated enough to invent or create solutions to problems. Some differentiation should be made here between 'academic' research carried out mainly to satisfy promotion requirements and problem-solution-seeking research carried out to contribute solutions or sustain contribution to a specified problem in the society.

The concept of globalisation that gave birth to this fourth university mission is the globalisation that began in about the 1850s. Although Arku and Arku (2011) suggest that the emergence of globalisation as both concept and practice must be traced to the European colonialism that began about the 15<sup>th</sup> century C. E., the concept of globalisation that came to introduce the dimension of global and outlandish competition in human relations is that which began about the 1850s (Scholte, 2000). The emergence of this competition-oriented globalisation was itself fuelled by the exceptional development accomplished by the human species in the area of communications technologies beginning from the 19<sup>th</sup> century through to our days.

The means to take globality beyond the imagination into more substantive social relations began to develop from the middle of the nineteenth century. The hundred years after 1850 saw the advent of the first global communications technologies, the consolidation of the first global markets, some elements of global finance, and a degree of globality in certain organisations (Scholte, 2000 pp.65-66).

Consequently, if the university is to remain relevant to the world within which it is operating it must, along with teaching, researching and engaging with communities, begin to create knowledge that may solve problems or/and put some groups of human beings ahead of other humans at some periods and in some places. In fact the creation of knowledge must come to inform teaching and community engagement if the university is to remain relevant to the times.

Knowledge creation is a step ahead of the research mission of the university. While research may help to uncover new facts, promote a greater understanding of phenomena and even reveal mysteries, knowledge creation demands that all or part of all known knowledge be moulded into a new enlightening whole that may be employed to bring practical benefits to mankind. If the university must upload this fourth mission, it must become creator of knowledge and the university professor, the arrowhead of all major university activities, must lead the way.

### **The University System**

The university system operates unique regulations pertaining to recruitment, discipline, promotion and retirement. The university runs two main streams of personnel that are generally referred to as academic personnel and non-academic personnel. In a number of traditions, the non-academic personnel are appropriately referred to as support staff as the core business of a university is the pursuit of academic activities. The focus of the present paper is on the academic personnel of the university.

The academic personnel are categorised in a number of ways across universities. In some universities, the cadres of academic personnel run from Graduate Assistant, through to the professoriate. In other words, the following cadres are distinguished within such an arrangement: Graduate Assistant (Teaching Assistant), Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer II, Lecturer I, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor (Reader) and Professor. In other traditions, the categorisation ignores the Graduate Assistantship to begin categorising the academic personnel from the cadre of Assistant Lecturer. Yet, in many other systems, the cadres of Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer II and Lecturer I are collapsed into the title "Lecturer" before proceeding to recognise the cadres "Senior Lecturer", "Associate Professor" and "Professor". In yet a number of other traditions within which the Doctorate degree or its equivalent is the minimum teaching qualification accepted, the academic personnel is grouped in only three categories, namely, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor or Full Professor.

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As numerous as are the cadres within which the academic personnel may be categorised, so are the titles they may officially bear. Throughout the world, one distinguishes three types of titles usually employed to designate the academic personnel. In some traditions, all academic staff below the rank of full professor are addressed as “Ms” “Mr” “Mrs” or “Dr” in accordance with the designation that may be most appropriate to each individual academic member, while only a full professor is addressed “Professor”. In other traditions, only persons below the rank of Associate Professor are addressed as “Ms” “Mr” “Mrs” or “Dr”, while any person that has attained the rank of Associate Professor is officially allowed to bear the title “Professor”. In yet other traditions, as soon as a person is appointed Assistant Professor, s/he is allowed to bear the title “Professor”

### **The Making of a Professor**

By professor, it is meant here, full professor. Although, he or she who must become a professor is currently expected to distinguish himself or herself in the general areas of teaching, research and service (European Commission, 2008; Kogod School of Business, 2010; University of Botswana, 2013), the performance of a would-be professor is also assessed on a greater variety of activities within the context of a university. These other activities include attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops, review of others’ research works, mentoring students and junior colleagues, serving on university, faculty and department committees and interacting with professionals, regulators and standard setters (Brigham Young University, 2012; Theall and Arreola, 2012; The Economics Network, 2013).

### ***Research***

Research, also known as “scholarship”, is a sine qua non for attaining the professoriate. It is one activity without which no person may rise to the professoriate. It is so important to the process of becoming a professor that it has come to be known as a criterion that decrees that each aspiring professor must publish or perish; this

suggests that the period an aspiring professor forgets or neglects his or her research responsibility, that period signifies the end of his or her aspiration to the professoriate.

Research is measured by both quantitative and qualitative output classified in terms of expected rates of output across existing categories (junior cadre, senior cadre and professoriate) of academic staff. He or she who must become a professor is expected to demonstrate visible research proficiency within the last four years leading to his application to the professoriate. While research output expectations may vary from university to university, it is nonetheless the norm to expect that the professor or would-be professor is the most published quantitatively and qualitatively within the university.

It is equally expected that the currency of the would-be professor or professor's works at all time, will not only serve as a constant motivation to the growing academics, it will also serve as a measurement of the continued usefulness and therefore need for the professor or aspiring professor. The research portfolio by which a would-be professor would usually be assessed include refereed journal articles, books, book chapters, cases, citation rates and impact analysis; it equally includes research grants, awards, honours and conferences (Noll, 1997; Kogod School of Business, 2010; The University of Western Australia, 2013). In some cases, the would-be professor is expected to demonstrate knowledge and mastery of areas beyond his/her own restricted disciplinary boundary.

High calibre reviewers, guided by the appointment and promotion criteria of the appointing institution, are usually selected to submit a decision on whether a professorial applicant merits or not to be appointed. Although these reviewers are assisted by the appointing institution's promotion guidelines, they are not usually bound by the guidelines in making up their final judgement. They are allowed to rely on their own wealth of experience as long standing professors or acclaimed professors while submitting their decision. This is the reason why reviewers for appointing professors are carefully chosen with regards to their independence and freedom from biases and/or vested interest, outstanding research record, depth of analysis and moral reputation.

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Usually, would-be professors are expected to demonstrate exceptional prolificacy in the production of journal articles. So much so that the best positioned professorial candidate is usually he or she that has almost all his or her publications in academic or professional journals. However, it has recently been found out that not all disciplines have the patience of condoning the sluggishness or thoroughness that attends the production of journals with regards to the duration of review and publication. One such area of academic pursuit is the Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) within which development, innovations and inventions outpace orthodox publication processes including on-line publication processes. In an area such as this, even conference proceedings are accepted as long as they meet the criterion of high impact assessment.

Books and book chapters are the next scholarship materials highly valued in the progression towards professorship. High quality books are an asset not only to the writer(s) but also to the institution of the writer(s). They are especially a formidable advertisement tool for the institution employing the writer(s). Papers presented at high quality conferences (world conferences, prime professional conferences, conference of professors, etc.) are also materials that support smooth progression towards professorship. Within high profile conferences such as these, any statements made are of high significance to the world, the institutions represented and the presenters themselves.

Research grant awards are equally good indicators of the quality of scholarship of professors and would-be professors. Where an individual wins a number of international grants or grants in rare areas of scholarship or grants that advance resolution of important social, scientific, technological, environmental and/or economic issues, such an individual stands a chance to be speedily considered for appointment to the professoriate.

Academic honours such as selection for a Nobel Prize and other similar international recognitions speak for themselves. A Nobel Laureate is seen as an exceptional professor even if he or she was not referred to as professor at the time of nomination. In all cases, it is the criterion of high impact that plays a major role in speedily



deciding the promotion to the professoriate. The high impact factor throws up the high level of visibility of the author and institution which a publication or award may have brought about. A number of procedures such as publication in main stream journal(s) of a discipline, appearance on a highly selective index, high number of citations enjoyed by the publication or popularity on the Google Scholar are some of the procedures employed in establishing the criterion of high impact.

Scholarship is equally measured through the determination of the number of PhD candidates that a would-be professor may have graduated, the number of international collaborative publications a would-be professor may have been involved in and through the amount of funds that s/he may have attracted to the university (European Commission, 2008). All these criteria have been found to be reliable indicators of scholarship because

- i). the works of PhD candidates are assessed internationally and therefore whoever may have graduated one or a substantial number of PhD candidates can be seen as having been acknowledged and recognised by his peers internationally.
- ii). Collaborative research works involve colleagues within national borders and international colleagues. Wherever and whenever a would-be professor may have had the opportunity of a number of collaborative researches, it can logically be deduced that the said would-be professor is enjoying the acceptance and recognition of his academic colleagues both within and outside the borders of the country within which s/he is exercising.
- iii). The amount of funds attracted to the institution through research work is not only an indicator of the professorial candidate as a quality academic but also a valuable revenue earner for the institution.

Judging from the importance of research therefore, it is inconceivable that a professor will choose to remain within the university system without participating in research. It is understood that best practices require that teaching universities take on a little less research activities than research universities. For example, Ellward (2011) reminds us that a 40-40-20 ratio is recommended among research, teaching and service activities within teaching (conventional) universities while a 60-20-20 ratio is recommended for the same three activities within the context of research universities. Yet, all activities

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including teaching, community engagement (service) and knowledge creation are supported and improved upon through the activity of research. Therefore, while it is expected that professors serving within research universities should be more deeply involved in research activities than professors serving within conventional or teaching universities, all professors and would-be professors are expected not to neglect research. No one can claim to be a professor without substantial contribution of knowledge to his/her discipline through the creation and dissemination of knowledge and the utilisation of such knowledge in contributing solution to problems in the society.

### ***Teaching***

In addition to the expectation that the professor should initiate research-supported curriculum reforms and innovations, s/he is equally expected to take on the practical activity of teaching both small and large classes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (The University of Western Australia, 2013). Using the best practice in the assessment of teaching as carried on within the university system, teaching is assessed at the levels of classroom activities and non-classroom activities (Kogod School of Business, 2010).

***Classroom activities:*** Within the classroom, a professor or would-be professor is expected to demonstrate mastery and even proficiency in his discipline. S/He is equally expected to motivate his/her students through the design of stimulating course outlines, the introduction of a combination of teaching techniques and adoption of Information Communications Technologies (ICTs) as support for facilitating learning among students. S/He should exhibit a high level of evidence of commitment to his/her profession. Although the scholar-teacher is the leader of his/her class, a would-be professor is expected to organise students in a way that facilitates the participation of the latter in classroom discussions, debates and question-and-answer sessions that complement the scholar-teacher delivery activities.

***Non-Classroom activities:*** In these days of knowledge explosion, it is a farce to assume that much of the learning to be done may end in the classroom.

Additionally, however hard a teacher may try to impact learning in the class, some students may exist who will succeed in understanding what is taught in class only after carrying out some activities outside the classroom (experimenting or learning through experience). For these reasons therefore, non-classroom activities are important for the success of teaching within the university. Consequently, the would-be professor must demonstrate ability to extend teaching outside and beyond the classroom.

Useful activities that may extend teaching outside the classroom include the organisation of independent studies situations for students (independent location and exploitation of indicated learning materials in the library, short term research on a community issue, etc.). The supervision of internships, job placement simulation, organisation of excursions and assisting in future career development are other useful non-classroom activities that the would-be professor may undertake.

Three levels of assessment may apply for the purpose of determining whether the would-be professor has fulfilled the teaching criteria for promotion. These include students' assessment, peers' assessment, and the Head of Department's assessment (University of Botswana, 2013; Kogod School of Business, 2010). A number of dimensions including, but not limited to, mastery of subject matter, skills of design, delivery and management and assessment of learning are measured within the key performance area of teaching. Each university develops specific instruments for capturing these performance indicators.

A would-be-professor is usually expected to pool three quarters of the total score allocated to 'teaching' over at least two thirds of the period leading to his application to the professoriate. Aside the performance of the scholar-teacher on the teaching performance indicators, a basic condition for teaching within universities, is currently gradually developing. Assessment of his/her effort as an effective teacher by students, peers and heads of department are taken into consideration not only during promotion, but even after, for yearly salary enhancement. A would-be professor has to demonstrate a high level of ability to mentor and supervise students' theses and dissertations. Another emerging condition is the acquisition of a basic teaching

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qualification as a pre-requisite for employment as a scholar-teacher. Although only universities that pride themselves as frontline universities are currently able to implement this policy, it is to be expected that this policy will soon take root in most universities in the world.

### ***Service***

Service is usually assessed at three levels for all cadres of academics within the university. However, to those that must aspire to become members of the professoriate, a fourth dimension is usually added. This fourth service dimension is known as “academic leadership”, the general three dimensions being “service to the university”, “service to the profession” and “service to the community”. In other words, the would-be professor, in addition to the first three areas of performance within the service section, must demonstrate visible academic leadership through mentoring junior colleagues, leading academic debates and units with great dexterity and contribute valuable suggestions that will keep piloting the institution or its parts to higher levels of achievement.

Specifically, service to the university may include

- a) contributions to committees, task forces, programs, faculty governance and other initiatives.
- b) Mentoring junior colleagues and advising student organisations.
- c) Serving on recruitment, placement, fundraising, alumni and media representation committees.
- d) Administrative responsibilities such as department chair, program director and other such activities (Kogod School of Business, 2010).

Service to the profession includes participation in editorial work relating to the candidate’s discipline, advising governments on policy issues regarding the discipline and profession and providing national and international consultancy works within the framework of the discipline and profession.

Service to the community has begun to assume a slightly different orientation to the one employed by most African universities up until now as a result of the criticisms levelled against the “look-down” at the communities approach adopted by most universities. In order to instil the virtues of the new approach to community service into the academics, the terminology “community service” has been modified into “community engagement” wherein

Community engagement is ...the collaboration between institutions of higher learning and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national and global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity (Schuetze, 2010, p.5).

Working with a concept of community service such as this, it is expected that the academics and would-be professors would have spent time learning with the communities within their reach with the view to realistically improving the lots of these communities. Proofs of projects and realisations within community engagement context are assessed and scored in the process leading to the appointment into the professoriate.

### **Beyond the Appointment to the Professoriate**

If the afore-discussion concerned the criteria that facilitate the appointment to the professoriate, the subsequent discussion emphasises the attributes of a professor that must remain relevant to the university, the community and the continent of Africa. The process leading to the appointment of a professor makes of the individual who is eventually named “Professor” a composite individual to whom a great number of qualities and roles are attributed. Upon appointment, the professor is not only viewed as an icon and embodiment of knowledge at least within his or her chosen field, s/he is automatically reckoned as an individual imbued with both the skills and capacity to advance the frontiers of knowledge by creating new knowledge. S/He is also viewed as a knowledge repository of a sort who may serve as a reliable knowledge reference source. S/He is equally accepted as an individual that has been prepared and is

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competent to employ his or her wealth of knowledge, skills and attributes to render valuable service to the university, the community within which the university is located and to his or her nation and continent and the world at large. More often than not, achievements realised in order to be promoted to the post of professor are of demand, hence extrinsic, but those which the professor achieves after such a promotion ought to be for the purpose of satisfying the intrinsic urge to make a difference in his/her calling and in society.

### **The African Professor and African Development**

Although the professor's work environment is the university, his/her works do impact or are expected to impact communities that live outside the walls of the university. For example, public and governance policies are known to be derived from research; the natural kingpin of research is the professor. This suggests that all good and useful policies have or ought to have had the contribution of the professor in their development. Since all social, economic and scientific developments are usually driven by good policies, the professor's ability to positively influence development trends is therefore not in contention. How much then has the African professor impacted development trends in Africa? As we write this paper, Sub-Saharan Africa is home to 43% of the world's out-of-school children, the financial crisis has reduced education spending in some countries and jeopardized the growth in spending required to achieve EFA in others (UNESCO, 2011).

Only 7% gross enrolment is achieved in African universities annually (Tilak, 2009) and African youths are suffering from an average unemployment rate of more than 50% (Gallup, 2012). Additionally, poverty is rife in Africa, not necessarily because of lack of resources but more for inability to think out of the box.

Yet, Africa does boast of professors who ought to have so positively defined development both within African universities and African nations as to enable a unique African developmental take-off. Understandably, charity is to begin at home.

In other words, if the African professor is to be of any practical use to the nations of Africa, he must first and foremost demonstrate capacity to run a credible university system. S/He must be able to run a university system in which scholarship and promotion systems adhere to high standards of performance and in which patronage, ethnicity and petty wrangling do not make a mockery of the university.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to submit that a high number of universities in Africa are able to adhere to the high standard for appointing a professor that was described earlier. Indeed approved universities exist in Africa that are not able to look after the basic needs of students in the area of preparing and releasing students' results as at when due and in a most ethical manner. The professoriate in some African universities is nothing but a council of traditional title holders within which, upon appointment to the chair, all academic pursuits (research, service and even teaching) cease in favour of political appointments within and outside the university. The resultant effect of such a professorial misdemeanour is that the African professor quickly becomes unproductive if not senile and the gold within the university goes quickly rusty leaving the iron (academics on lower cadres) to fare no better.

Although much may have been given by way of the taxpayers' money to produce these types of African professors, much is not to be expected from the professors themselves. These professors are not able to creatively reverse the trend of unemployment by supplying ingenious or African solutions to the unique problem of unemployment plaguing the continent in the mix of plenty traditional and modern employment opportunities. These professors are not able to help chart a developmental course for the nations of Africa through the fashioning of a development theory that will embody African realities and strategies. The fashioning of such a theory is of a prime importance for Africa since in the words of Kuhn (1987),

...development theory offers the justification for policies. The answer to the question "What is development?" determines which strategies, policies, projects, what type of industry, or what organization of agriculture should be considered to be in line with development goals or detrimental to these. Different positions in development policy are based on differences in underlying development theories (Kuhn, 1987, p. 11).

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Ajayi, Goma and Johnson (1996) have decried the uncritical manner in which university curricula are adopted from societies that are socially and developmentally different from Africa. They advance that greater effort needs to be deployed towards applying African intellect to the resolutions of African social, economic and political difficulties. In specific terms, these authors submit that many of the learning curricula in African universities today are not geared towards addressing the difficulties experienced by Africa. Yet, Africa does not lack professors capable of applying their intellect to these issues.

As it is, therefore, Africa has major developmental issues to be attended to. In view of the past subjugation that Africa has had to contend with and as a result of the deft arm twisting and competition that exist on the international developmental arena, competent high calibre persons are needed by Africa to securely chart out its developmental trajectory. Professors, but only properly sourced out professors, may fill in this position squarely.

At this juncture, it must be highlighted that the African professor cannot be said to be in control of all the factors that make university campuses and the African society what they are. For example, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Africans wanted a secular university, emphasizing African and classical studies, science and technology. What they got were Fourah Bay College and Fort Hare (Ajayi, et al., 1996 p.187). Fourah Bay College and Fort Hare did not offer the types of learning opportunities desired at the time.

Additionally, it is the politicians and not the professors that tend to determine the policy directions for universities in Africa at the moment. In the words of Lulat (2005) "It is not experts but politicians who decide what is best for society, for good or ill." (Lulat 2005, p.4).

It is therefore understood that the professor operates within a social environment mined with numerous social, economic and political obstacles. Yet, it is believed that, with a bit of vision and determination, the professor can devise viable strategies and



methodologies for remedying the current situation. S/He needs to be heard a little more within national administrative circles and his/her works need to guide national actions a little more. The discipline and other qualities regarding focus, rigour of thought and clarity of perception developed during the journey into the professoriate can be relied upon to make the professor more relevant and useful to his/her environment.

Positioning African universities therefore in a way as to enable them to appoint and maintain high calibre professors, using fairly high standards in the process is the beginning of a viable developmental process for Africa.

### **Policy recommendations**

The adoption of the following recommendations may move the continent closer to the goal of producing professors that will serve it more productively and profitably.

1. An additional specific and typical African criterion of promotion to the professoriate should lay emphasis on the ability of the candidate to professorship to prove that s/he has made scientific (logical) contributions to finding solutions to at least one national/African problem.
2. While it is proper to encourage professors and would-be-professors to seek collaboration and funding for researches outside African borders, it should be remembered that communities outside Africa may not necessarily be interested in African solutions to all African problems. Consequently, deliberate greater efforts need to be deployed by African governments and sources to support research efforts aimed at solving specific African problems.
3. While every university is independent, given the current compelling trend towards globalization of education, there is the need for at least a loose standardization of ranking of academic staff and the requirements for promotion to the rank of professor across African universities. This will facilitate transfer of staff across African universities.

## **Conclusion**

The university affords nations and academics the opportunity to interact across borders. This interaction is guided by well thought out principles and regulations that aim to maximise the development of human talents wherever this human may be residing on planet earth. Unfortunately, all sections of the planet do not experience the same types of problems. Consequently, while the university makes it possible for humanity to develop its mental capacities in a collective manner, the application of the acquired knowledge must necessarily be selective and localised if the product of the university must be of benefit to different parts of the earth. Professors, who are usually the arrow head of intellectualism and movers of development, after subjecting themselves to the rigours of the journey to the professoriate, are expected to add lucidity to their work by impacting positively the space they occupy and within which they exercise.

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