Internationalisation at Home: The Cases of the Universities of Makerere and Nairobi

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Abstract

This article presents a comparative analysis of internationalisation efforts at Makerere University in Uganda and the University of Nairobi in Kenya, with a focus on internationalisation at home (IaH). It examines various aspects of IaH, including institutional commitment, policies, leadership, curriculum, funding, student enrolment and collaborative networks. Motivated by concerns about the limited internationalisation initiatives in East African universities, these universities were selected as case studies due to their historical ties and flagship status in their countries. Utilising documentary analysis and literature review methodologies, data were collected from policy documents, statistical records and updates from the universities' websites and relevant educational bodies. The study found that both institutions have made notable progress in internationalising their environments through IaH, although the extent varies. The findings reveal comparable efforts but highlight the need for enhanced institutional commitment, improved policies, strengthened leadership, innovative curricula, optimal funding, diverse enrolment strategies and robust partnerships to advance IaH and overall internationalisation in East African higher education.

Keywords: internationalisation at home, East African universities, comparative analysis, higher education, institutional commitment

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Résumé

Cet article présente une analyse comparative des efforts d'internationalisation de l'Université de Makerere en Ouganda et de l'Université de Nairobi au Kenya, en mettant l'accent sur l'Internationalisation at Home (IaH). Il examine divers aspects de l'IaH, notamment l'engagement institutionnel, les politiques, le leadership, le programme d'études, le financement, l'inscription des étudiants et les réseaux de collaboration. Motivées par les préoccupations concernant les initiatives d'internationalisation limitées dans les universités d'Afrique de l'Est, ces universités ont été sélectionnées comme études de cas en raison de leurs liens historiques et de leur statut de fleuron dans leur pays. En utilisant des méthodologies d'analyse documentaire et de revue de la littérature, les données ont été collectées à partir de documents politiques, de registres statistiques et de mises à jour des sites web des universités, ainsi que des organismes éducatifs pertinents. L'étude a révélé que les deux établissements ont réalisé des progrès notables dans l'internationalisation de leur environnement par le biais de l'IaH, même si l'ampleur de ces progrès varie. Les résultats révèlent des efforts comparables, mais soulignent la nécessité d'un engagement institutionnel accru, de politiques améliorées, d'un leadership renforcé, de programmes d'études novateurs, d'un financement optimal, de stratégies d'inscription diversifiées et de partenariats solides pour faire progresser l'IaH et l'internationalisation globale de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique de l'Est.

Mots clés : internationalisation à domicile, universités d'Afrique de l'Est, analyse comparative, enseignement supérieur, engagement institutionnel

Introduction

In their quest for global recognition, universities strive to excel both nationally and regionally (Ayebare and Onen, 2021). As institutions increasingly recognise that global engagement enhances education quality, research output and societal contributions, the extent of internationalisation has become a critical determinant of a university's prestige (Hewitt, 2021). However, it should not be seen as an end in itself but as a strategic tool to foster collaborative knowledge production, technology transfer, and innovation in the global knowledge society (de Wit and Altbach, 2020; Teferra, 2019). While many regions have strategically embraced internationalisation, African universities have often approached it in an ad-hoc manner, treating it as a marginalised activity with limited planning and support (de Wit, 2011; Jowi, 2009).

Despite these challenges, African universities such as Makerere University (Mak) in Uganda and the University of Nairobi (UoN) in Kenya have increasingly recognised the importance of internationalisation. These institutions aim to capitalise on internationalisation opportunities while addressing associated challenges (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020; Ayebare and Onen, 2021). In particular, the concept of internationalisation at home (IaH) has gained traction as a vital strategy to enhance global engagement within domestic educational environments. Internationalisation at home focuses on integrating international and inter-cultural dimensions into the curriculum and campus life, promoting a globally-oriented education for all students, regardless of mobility (de Wit and Altbach, 2020; Moshtari and Safarpour, 2023).

This comparative study explored the extent of IaH at Mak and the UoN, examining how these universities implement internationalisation strategies, particularly in terms of institutional commitment, policies, leadership, curriculum development, and student engagement.

Historically, internationalisation in African higher education has been influenced by colonial legacies that prioritise Western paradigms, often at the expense of local knowledge systems (Teferra, 2019; Alemu, 2019). This has created challenges in asserting an independent international presence while embracing African epistemologies (Ndlovu and Sabelo, 2017). Given these dynamics, African universities must approach internationalisation in ways that reflect both global trends and local contexts. Internationalisation at home provides a critical opportunity to do so by embedding international perspectives into the curriculum while promoting Africanisation, thus fostering a balance between global engagement and affirmation of African identities.

Drawing on the American Council on Education's (ACE) framework, this study compared Mak and the UoN's internationalisation. The ACE framework calls for a comprehensive approach to internationalisation, integrating policies, programmes and individuals across the institution to create globally connected universities (American Council on Education, 2023). It served as a guiding structure to analyse how Mak and the UoN implement IaH and broader internationalisation strategies, ensuring that internationalisation is embedded throughout the institution rather than being confined to specific offices or disciplines.

This study addressed the following research questions with a particular focus on IaH: (i) How do Mak and the UoN demonstrate institutional commitment to internationalisation, particularly IaH? (ii) What policies support IaH? (iii) How are leadership and organisational structures aligned with IaH? (iv) How is the curriculum internationalised, particularly within the context of IaH? (v) What funding mechanisms are in place to support IaH initiatives? (vi) How do student enrolment strategies incorporate IaH? and (vii) How do collaborative partnerships and networks at Mak and the UoN enhance IaH efforts?

By addressing these questions, this study aimed to contribute to the on-going debate on Africanisation and internationalisation in African higher education, highlighting the role of IaH in creating inclusive, globally engaged universities that are responsive to both local and global challenges.

Literature Review

A university's commitment to internationalisation is a pivotal factor in achieving global success, calling for its explicit prioritisation in strategic plans (American Council on Education, 2023). As evidenced by the inclusion of internationalisation in its mission statements, Mak exemplifies this commitment (Ayebare and Onen, 2021). It is reflected in Mak's core values and cross-cutting approach, which include attracting international students, integrating international perspectives into teaching and learning, fostering collaborative research, and offering joint degree programmes (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). Such strategic alignment underscores Mak's proactive stance towards IaH, aligning

with its mission to be a leading institution for academic excellence and innovation in Africa.

Policies play a crucial role in shaping universities' internationalisation trajectory. In developed regions such as Europe, policy frameworks like the Bologna Process have been instrumental in promoting multi-cultural diversity on campuses (European University Association, 2018; Muyaka et al., 2020). Although the UoN has adopted policies that support IaH, including those governing partnerships, admission of international students, quality assurance and intellectual property (Kathae, 2015), many African universities, including Mak and the UoN, lack specific, concise policy frameworks for internationalisation (Moshtari and Safarpour, 2023).

Effective leadership and organisational structures are essential to integrate internationalisation efforts within universities. Nuagaba (2018) highlights top leadership's influence on internal university dynamics, suggesting the need for organisational restructuring to accommodate international students. The Centre for International Programmes and Links (CIPL) at the UoN is dedicated to integrating internationalisation. However, its specific contribution to attracting and supporting international students requires further exploration (Kathae, 2015). Similarly, Mak's International Relations Office (IRO) focuses on internationalisation processes; however, a more detailed analysis is needed to understand its impact on the university's internationalisation efforts (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020).

The internationalisation of curricula in East Africa has historical roots in colonial higher education systems, which, despite limitations, laid the foundation for future developments (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020; Clifford and Montgomery, 2017). Internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) involves incorporating international, inter-cultural, and global dimensions into educational content, learning outcomes, assessment, teaching methods, and support services (Leask, 2015; Beelen and Jones, 2015). While both the UoN and Mak are currently reviewing their programmes to align with international needs, specific details remain unclear (Kathae, 2015; Ayebare and Kaweesi, 2022).

Funding and support are vital for successful internationalisation. For example, the European Higher Education Area has established an "Internationalisation Agency" to manage scholarship programmes (Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research, 2009). In contrast, many universities in Uganda and Kenya rely heavily on government funding, which often does not suffice to support comprehensive internationalisation initiatives (Moshtari and Safarpour, 2023; Rwendeire et al., 2017). While Mak's affordable fees and low cost of living have attracted international students, the lack of clear governmental support for international student sponsorship raises concerns about the sustainability of these efforts (Tadesse and Doevenspeck, 2015).

The enrolment of international students makes a significant contribution to campus diversity and offers local students exposure to global perspectives. However, enrolment trends in Uganda and Kenya indicate a decline in international student numbers, raising concerns about the effectiveness of strategies to attract them (Ayebare and Kaweesi, 2022; Othoo and Sika, 2022; Nuagaba, 2018). On-going questions have been raised with regard to international students' low enrolment in specific disciplines, such as PhD programmes and the potential under-utilisation of existing structures to support these students (Muyaka, 2019; Kathae, 2015).

Partnerships and networks are essential to foster global collaboration and leverage diverse resources for effective internationalisation (American Council on Education, 2023). The UoN has established various partnerships. Mak has signed numerous Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) for research collaboration (Kathae, 2015; Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). However, there is a need for more detailed information on the specific partners and how these partnerships translate into tangible internationalisation outcomes for both institutions.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative methodology using a dual case study design to examine the intent and practice of IaH within Mak and the UoN. The dual case study approach was selected to provide a comprehensive analysis of these institutions, incorporating a literature review and document analysis (Busetto et al., 2020). The choice of Mak and the UoN was justified by their prominent roles in higher education within their respective countries and their active involvement in internationalisation efforts, making them ideal subjects for this research. Both were purposefully selected due to their historical significance as founding colleges of the University of East Africa and their on-going prominence as leading universities in Uganda and Kenya, respectively (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). They are also regarded as crucial centres of excellence in the revitalisation of the East African Community (Bisaso, 2017).

The comparison of the two universities was structured around several critical parameters: institutional commitment, policies, leadership and structure, curriculum, funding and support, student enrolment and partnerships and networks. These were drawn from a thorough review of the empirical literature on higher education internationalisation and were further refined using the Comprehensive Internationalisation Model (American Council on Education, 2023). The data sources included strategic plans, policy documents, abstracts, reports, newsletters and statistical data available in institutional databases (Busetto et al., 2020).

The use of university websites and institutional publications as primary data sources is justified by their authoritative nature and a direct reflection of the universities' official position and activities. University websites serve as official communication channels and repositories for strategic documents, policy statements, and updates, thereby providing accurate, current information about institutional priorities and activities. These sources are precious in contexts where direct access to internal data may be restricted, allowing researchers to gain insights into the universities' internationalisation strategies and achievements.

Moreover, reliance on qualitative data such as policy documents and institutional publications does not preclude the ability to draw meaningful conclusions. The qualitative analysis enables a nuanced understanding of institutional contexts. It can reveal underlying motivations, strategies, and challenges that may not be captured by quantitative data alone. Careful triangulation of information from multiple sources mitigated the limitations associated with the availability of quantitative data,

ensuring a comprehensive analysis of internationalisation efforts at Mak and the UoN.

The data were systematically analysed to determine the two universities' internationalisation status. This process involved identifying existing practices, highlighting gaps, and proposing recommendations to enhance internationalisation efforts. While potential limitations such as the availability and comprehensiveness of data on university websites and the scarcity of studies in specific thematic areas are acknowledged, these did not undermine the study's validity. Instead, they highlighted the need for more robust data collection and reporting mechanisms within the institutions.

In conclusion, despite its inherent limitations, the research makes a valuable contribution to understanding internationalisation at Mak and the UoN, laying a foundation for further inquiry and policy development in the region (Busetto et al., 2020; Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020; Bisaso, 2017; American Council on Education, 2023).

Results

Research Question 1

The first research question was, "How internationalised is Mak compared to the UoN in terms of institutional commitment?" Institutional policy documents, website records and updates were analysed to obtain answers to this question, and the results are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Differences/Similarities in Internationalisation in Terms of Institutional Commitment

No.	Document	Parameter	Makerere University	University of Nairobi
1.	Strategic Plan	Strategic Theme	Mak explicitly anchors its strategic theme on internationalisation, emphasising its commitment to becoming a global knowledge hub in the heart of Africa (Makerere Universiy, 2023a).	The UoN articulates global aspirations in its vision statement. It aspires to be a world-class university committed to scholarly excellence and competition with other global institutions (University of Nairobi, 2023a).
		Vision and Mission	The vision and mission of Mak reflect a dedication to knowledge generation for societal transformation and a commitment to providing transformative and innovative education that is responsive to global needs (Makerere University, 2023a).	The vision and mission statements of the UoN also signify the institution's commitment to internationalisation, as it aspires to be a world-class university dedicated to scholarly excellence that demonstrates commitment to global standards (University of Nairobi, 2023a).
		Core Values	Mak's core values, professionalism, and inclusivity underscore its commitment to internationalisation, emphasising competence, diversity and a global perspective (Makerere University, 2023b).	While the UoN's core values do not explicitly include internationalisation, specific strategies within its thematic areas reflect a commitment to global engagement (University of Nairobi, 2023b).
		Strategic Goals	All four goals of Mak's strategic plan unequivocally address internationalisation, indicating a clear commitment to achieving academic excellence on the continent and globally (Makerere University, 2023a).	Strategies within the UoN's strategic plan themes, such as 1.7, 2.1, 4.2.4, and 5.3, include mention of internationalisation, providing evidence of the university's commitment to global initiatives (University of Nairobi, 2023a).
2.	Website	Leadership Commitment	Mak leaders express aspirations for collaboration with eminent global institutions and address complex national, regional and global issues, demonstrating collective commitment to internationalisation (Makerere University, 2023a).	The UoN's leaders also express aspirations for collaboration with eminent global institutions and address complex national, regional and global issues, demonstrating collective commitment to internationalisation (University of Nairobi, 2023a).

Table 1 compares institutional commitment to internationalisation at Mak and the UoN, highlighting their different approaches to becoming world-class universities within the African context. African universities face unique challenges in this quest, including the legacy of colonialism, resource constraints, and the need to balance global engagement with

local relevance. These shape how universities like Mak and the UoN interpret and implement internationalisation, making it crucial to consider their context-specific strategies (Makerere University, 2023a; University of Nairobi, 2023a).

Makerere University's strategic theme is anchored in internationalisation, positioning the university as a global knowledge hub rooted in Africa. This commitment is reflected across its strategic goals, core values, and leadership vision. Its approach aligns with the Africanisation discourse, which advocates for African universities to address local challenges while engaging with global academic standards. By emphasising internationalisation within an African framework, Mak seeks to redefine what it means to be a world-class university—not by replicating Western models but by building a unique global identity grounded in African realities and priorities (Makerere University, 2023a; 2023b).

In contrast, the UoN articulates its global aspirations through the vision of becoming a world-class institution that competes with global peers. This more traditional approach reflects Western standards of academic excellence, focusing on global competition. While the UoN's strategic goals and thematic strategies include internationalisation efforts, these are less explicit than those of Mak, showing more conventional alignment with global academic trends rather than a focused effort to contextualise internationalisation within Africa's unique challenges (University of Nairobi, 2023a; 2023b). The UoN's internationalisation efforts could benefit from more explicit integration of local goals alongside its global aspirations.

The comparison of Mak and the UoN underscores the broader challenges and opportunities confronting African universities striving to be world-class institutions. This quest requires them to address resource limitations, decolonise their curricula and balance global engagement with local relevance. Makerere University's explicit, focused approach, grounded in inclusivity, diversity and a global perspective within an African context, demonstrates that being world-class involves creating an African model of excellence rather than mimicking Western universities (Makerere University, 2023a). While the UoN shows a solid commitment to internationalisation, a more precise articulation of how

its global aspirations align with local relevance and Africanisation could strengthen its position in redefining what it means to be a world-class African university (University of Nairobi, 2023a).

Research Question 2

The second research question was, "How internationalised is Mak compared to the UoN in terms of institutional policies?" The findings revealed that both institutions demonstrate commitment to fostering a diverse and globally engaged academic environment. The UoN articulates its commitment to internationalisation through specific policies and guidelines. Its Information for International Students manual is a comprehensive guide for international students that outlines essential information and expectations (University of Nairobi, 2023b). The university's website policy also aims to improve visibility locally and internationally by creating a solid brand presence (University of Nairobi, 2012). The open access policy emphasises the long-term preservation of the university's research output, increased visibility, and collaboration with the global research community (University of Nairobi, 2021).

Several Mak policies recognise diversity. The institution's ICT strategic plan (2020-2030), the policy on establishing research entities, the joint award policy, and the quality assurance policy framework all acknowledge and value diversity within the university (Makerere University, 2018). Notably, the quality assurance policy framework highlights the importance of national and international bench-marking for quality assurance, aligning the university with comparable research-led institutions globally (Makerere University, 2021).

Research Question 3

The third research question was, "How internationalised is Makerere compared to the UoN in terms of leadership and structure?" The findings showed that both have established dedicated offices and structures to support and facilitate the integration of international students. At the UoN, the International Students Office serves as a central hub for international students. It offers comprehensive information to assist international students in settling in, including guidance on visa

acquisition, safe accommodation, and a list of private and university hostels (University of Nairobi, 2023c). The information manual for international students outlines structural services such as guidance and counselling, emphasising the university's commitment to providing a supportive environment (University of Nairobi, 2023c).

Similarly, Mak demonstrates a structured approach to internationalisation through its Guild Government ministries. The Ministry of National and Pan-African Affairs and its committee are tasked with fostering relationships with African student organisations, while the Ministry of International Affairs and its committee focus on such relationships outside Africa. In addition, Mak has an International Office dedicated to various aspects of international student affairs. Its officers are responsible for admission, welfare, and university collaborations for international students. It also conducts separate orientations for international students, emphasising the importance of a tailored approach to their integration (Makerere University, 2023b).

Research Question 4

This fourth research question was, "How internationalised is Mak compared to the UoN in terms of curriculum?" The findings revealed that both universities are actively working to integrate elements of global awareness and intercultural competence into their curricula. At the UoN, there is a strong focus on cultivating human capital to address global challenges, mainly through postgraduate fellowships. Although the specific target of these fellowships is not clear, the university's commitment to preparing students for global engagement is evident (University of Nairobi, 2023b). The UoN primarily operates in an English-language environment, reflecting its adherence to international norms of communication and instruction.

The UoN's curriculum emphasises comparative studies, which are critical in nurturing students' ability to participate in regional and global conversations. Programmes such as the Master of Education in Comparative and International Education and History of Education aim to provide students with the tools to understand educational systems and practices within both regional and global contexts (University of Nairobi, 2023d).

This contributes to the development of globally competent graduates who are well-prepared to address international educational challenges.

In addition to comparative studies, the UoN's Department of Languages introduces intercultural dimensions into the curriculum through a range of language programmes. Courses in Arabic Studies, English Linguistics, German Literacy Studies, Intercultural German Studies and Korean Linguistics illustrate its efforts to offer a diverse linguistic foundation that supports its internationalisation goals (University of Nairobi, 2023d). However, the extent to which these language programmes influence the broader university culture and contribute to a more holistic internationalisation strategy could warrant further investigation. The reach of these offerings throughout the university and their impact on students' intercultural competence could be areas for future study.

Makerere University also demonstrates a solid commitment to internationalisation through its curriculum by offering a diverse range of language programmes and global engagement initiatives. The Department of European and Oriental Languages offers programmes in Arabic, German, French, Chinese and Kiswahili, which are integrated into several academic disciplines, including Tourism, Agribusiness, Business Administration and Social Research (Makerere University, 2023b). This diversity of language offerings underscores Mak's dedication to equipping students with intercultural competence, ensuring that they are well-prepared for global interaction in various professional fields.

Beyond language programmes, Mak actively engages in global exchange initiatives, particularly those aimed at enhancing inclusivity and intercultural understanding. For example, the university's participation in the Talloires Network of Engaged Universities facilitates exchange programmes for students with disabilities. These programmes connect participants from 27 countries across Africa, South Asia, and the US, reflecting Mak's commitment to promoting a global perspective while ensuring that its internationalisation efforts are inclusive (Makerere University, 2023b). This focus on inclusive global engagement is a distinguishing feature of Mak's approach to curriculum internationalisation.

In comparing the two universities, it is clear that the UoN places distinct emphasis on comparative studies within its curriculum. In contrast, Mak integrates a broader range of foreign languages and places a strong emphasis on global exchange programmes. However, the true impact of these international dimensions on local students' global competence requires further exploration. An assessment of how effectively these initiatives reach students across the entire university and contribute to their global awareness would provide valuable insights. Both universities are making significant strides in shaping curricula that prepare students for a globalised world. However, on-going evaluation of the practical outcomes of these efforts will be crucial to ensure that they continue to meet the evolving demands of internationalisation.

Research Question 5

The fifth research question was, "How internationalised is Mak compared to the UoN in terms of funding?" Institutional policy documents, website records and updates were analysed to answer this question.

Both Mak and the UoN demonstrate concerted efforts to attract students from various African countries, reflecting a shared commitment to regional integration and internationalisation. However, the scale, accessibility, and diversity of funding opportunities differ. For example, Mak has implemented scholarship programmes like the MasterCard Foundation Scholarship and the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scholarship Program (African Union, 2023) with the aim of diversifying its student population. These provide opportunities for African students to study at Mak, emphasising the university's focus on African students. However, the limited number of fellowships, such as those offered through the East African Network of Bioinformatics Training (EANBiT), highlights challenges in expanding access to students across the continent.

In contrast, most of Mak's scholarships target opportunities in developed countries rather than in Africa. This Western-oriented focus may limit the university's ability to draw more international students to study at Mak. Furthermore, Mak's fee structure presents a substantial barrier, as international students are required to pay nearly double what local

and East African students pay, which could deter potential international applicants (Makerere University, 2023a). This raises questions about the inclusivity of Mak's efforts, particularly for students from lower-income African countries.

The UoN offers a more diverse array of scholarships, including the Aga Khan Foundation Scholarship, Mitsubishi Scholarship and UPEACE. These support not only Kenyan students studying at home but also African students wishing to study in Kenya (University of Nairobi, 2023b). This broader spectrum of funding demonstrates the UoN's more substantial commitment to both inbound and outbound student mobility within Africa. Kenya's Ministry of Education also provides scholarships for Kenyan students to study abroad (Kenya Ministry of Education, 2023). These initiatives reinforce the UoN's role in regional educational integration and its efforts to create a more interconnected African student network.

The fee structure at UoN also reflects a more balanced approach to internationalisation. International students are charged only 20% more than local students, a much smaller difference than at Mak (University of Nairobi, 2022). This makes the UoN a more financially accessible option for international students, particularly those from neighbouring African countries. The university's ability to offer competitive fees alongside a range of scholarship opportunities enhances its attractiveness to a diverse global student body, positioning it as a more inclusive institution in terms of funding and accessibility.

In summary, both Mak and the UoN demonstrate a firm commitment to internationalisation through their funding mechanisms. However, the UoN's more comprehensive range of scholarships, combined with a more moderate fee structure for international students, suggests that it may offer a more conducive environment to attract a diverse global student population. While Mak's scholarship initiatives target African students, the significant fee disparities and Western-oriented scholarship focus highlight areas where the university could enhance its internationalisation strategy to better align with regional priorities.

Research Question 6

The sixth research question was, "How internationalised is Mak compared to the UoN in terms of student enrolment?" Both universities have made efforts to attract diverse student populations. However, the data points to varied perspectives, especially when distinguishing between international and regional students. These differences provide insights into the universities' internationalisation strategies and the effectiveness of their enrolment policies. Understanding the specific dynamics of student enrolment at these universities requires a closer examination of regional influences and challenges unique to the African context.

Kenya's 2017/2018 University Statistics Report highlights a 13.59% increase in international student enrolment, growing from 4 730 to 5 373 students across the country's universities (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). This reflects a broader trend of regional integration and mobility within East Africa, with many of these students coming from neighbouring countries. The Standard reported that Kenyan universities, including the UoN, enrolled 6 202 international students two years ago, with the UoN accounting for a substantial share of 1 300 (The Standard, 2020). Despite their classification as international students, many of these students are from East African countries, indicating solid regional ties and the UoN's role in fostering regional collaboration and cultural exchange.

Enrolment of students from more than 40 countries contributes to the UoN's culturally diverse campus environment, enriching students' experiences and promoting global citizenship (University of Nairobi, 2023a). This diversity underscores its efforts to create an inclusive and internationally recognised institution. However, the data suggests that regional students from East Africa make up a large portion of the international student body, which may limit the extent of cross-continental or global diversity. While this regional focus strengthens East African educational cooperation, it raises questions about how far the UoN's internationalisation efforts extend beyond the region.

In Uganda, reports show a general decline in international student enrolment, from 20 324 in 2018/2019 to 19 981 in 2019/2020 across all its universities (Makerere University, 2023a). If this trend is mirrored at Mak, it could pose challenges to the university's internationalisation efforts and reduce opportunities for intercultural interaction between international and local students. Various sources provide conflicting figures for Mak's international student population, with QS Top Universities citing 3 500 international students from more than ten countries (QS Top Universities, 2023), while Times Higher Education suggests 2 694 international students out of 34 651 constituting 7.8% of the total student body (Times Higher Education, 2023). Despite these differences and similar to the situation at the UoN, the majority of these international students are regional, primarily from neighbouring African countries.

While Mak shows commitment to internationalisation through the enrolment of international students, the decline in numbers and limited cross-continental diversity present challenges. Reliance on regional students highlights a significant aspect of Mak's internationalisation strategy, which focuses more on intra-African student mobility than on attracting students from other continents. While vital for strengthening East African educational ties, this limits the broader intercultural experiences that a more globally diverse student body could offer.

In conclusion, both Mak and the UoN are actively pursuing internationalisation through student enrolment, mainly focusing on attracting regional students from East Africa. The UoN shows steady growth in international student enrolment and greater diversity, reflecting its efforts to foster cultural appreciation and global citizenship. However, Mak faces challenges in maintaining its international student numbers and expanding beyond regional diversity. Both universities illustrate the complexities of internationalisation in an African context, where regional integration plays a crucial role in shaping student mobility and enrolment patterns.

Research Question 7

The last research question was, "How internationalised is Mak compared to the UoN in terms of partnerships and networks?" Both universities have forged collaborations with local, regional and international

institutions. The UoN's Research blog states that it has partnerships with organisations like the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC), Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA), and International Business Machines (IBM), among others (University of Nairobi Research Blog, 2023). These contribute to the UoN's visibility on the global stage through collaborative research efforts to address international challenges. Local partnerships could also indirectly support internationalisation efforts by enhancing the university's overall capacity and influence (Othoo and Sika, 2022).

Makerere University boasts a rich array of partnerships and collaborators, which is evident on its website (Makerere University, 2023a). Each of its nine colleges and the School of Law has targeted partners. The university collaborates with institutions such as the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD), CARTA, the University of Peradeniya and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). Furthermore, Mak hosts unique international centres, including the Food Technology and Business Incubation Center (FTBIC), the Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation (CREEC) and the Centre for Tobacco Control in Africa (CTCA), among others. These attract students and staff from diverse parts of the world for research and learning purposes, contributing significantly to Mak's internationalisation efforts (Makerere University, 2023b).

Discussion

The study's findings shed light on Mak and the UoN's internationalisation efforts, revealing similarities and disparities. Commitment to internationalisation is evident in both universities' strategic plans, with Mak demonstrating a more pronounced intention throughout its plan. At the same time, the UoN exhibits varied commitment across different sections of its institutional framework (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). This aligns with previous studies, including that of Kathae (2015), which indicated that both universities have adopted internationalisation policies.

Both institutions have established offices and appointed office bearers to handle international matters, aligning with the coordination role

identified by Nuagaba (2018) and Bisaso and Nakamanya (2020). However, as recognised by Mak, their primary focus on admission and the welfare of international students calls for a more comprehensive approach that encompasses collaboration (Nuagaba, 2018; Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020).

International and inter-cultural dimensions are incorporated into the curricula of both universities, reflecting the commitment to global education. The study concurs with Clifford and Montgomery (2017), who emphasised the importance of integrating international, inter-cultural and global dimensions into teaching methods, content and assessment tasks. However, the need for increased effort in publishing engagements that bring the international community to local spaces, both physically and virtually, is highlighted, aligning with the recommendations of de Wit (2011) and Muyaka (2019).

The study revealed that both Mak and the UoN lack published internal funding options for international students and research collaboration, relying on higher fees for international students. This is consistent with the challenges faced by African universities, as noted by Moshtari and Safarpour (2023). The disparities in additional fees for different courses at Mak suggest the need for a more standardised, equitable approach to avoid deterring prospective international students. The lack of published funding opportunities from the ministries of education calls for a review of funding models that can facilitate internationalisation.

The demographic analysis indicated higher enrolment of international students in Uganda than in Kenya, with a significant share in public universities. This aligns with previous studies by Kathae (2015), Nuagaba (2018), Bisaso and Nakamanya (2020) and Othoo and Sika (2022), emphasising the dominance of East African students and higher enrolment of international students in private universities. There is a need for further investigation of the reasons behind Uganda's success in attracting more international students despite enrolling a smaller number of students overall.

Both universities boast networks of partners and collaborators, with Mak hosting unique programmes and participating in initiatives like

HEED-Africa (HEED-Africa, 2023). The study suggests that the UoN could learn lessons from Mak's commitment to internationalisation, which is evident in its strategic plan (Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). At the same time, Mak could reconsider its additional fees for international students (Moshtari and Safarpour, 2023). Formulating comprehensive policies on internationalisation, strengthening international offices, and creating online systems to publicise their internationalisation status are crucial steps for both universities (Nuagaba, 2018; Bisaso and Nakamanya, 2020). The study calls for more in-depth empirical research on declining rates of inward mobility of international students, the flourishing of private universities and funding models that favour international students (Moshtari and Safarpour, 2023; Muyaka, 2019).

Conclusion

Based on the above findings, it is concluded that both Mak and the UoN have made strides in internationalisation across multiple facets, albeit to varying degrees. Both demonstrate commitment to internationalisation within their strategic plans, although disparities exist in the depth of this commitment. While establishing offices to manage international affairs aligns with established practices, the study underscores a noticeable focus on admission and welfare, suggesting the need for more extensive emphasis on collaboration, as championed by Mak. Integrating international and inter-cultural dimensions into curricula showcases dedication to global education. Nevertheless, the study accentuates the need for intensified efforts to facilitate engagements that bring the international community into local spaces, which is in line with recommendations for cultivating multi-cultural experiences and global perspectives among local students.

The study revealed insufficient funding options for international students and research collaboration, indicating heavy reliance on higher fees. The additional fees charged by Mak raise equity concerns, emphasising the need for a standardised approach. The lack of published funding opportunities from ministries of education underscores the need to re-evaluate funding models so that they can more effectively facilitate internationalisation. The demographic analysis exposed higher enrolment of international students in Uganda compared to Kenya, with public universities playing a significant role. Further investigation is proposed to understand Uganda's success in attracting more international students despite enrolling fewer overall students. Both universities have networks of partners and collaborators, with Mak hosting unique programmes and participating in initiatives like HEED-Africa, which offer opportunities for reciprocal learning.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the UoN glean insights from Mak's robust commitment to IaH. At the same time, Mak could benefit from re-evaluating its fee structure for international students. Formulating comprehensive policies, fortifying international offices and operating online systems to publicise their internationalisation status is pivotal for both universities. More in-depth empirical research is required to grasp the reasons for dwindling inward mobility and the flourishing of private universities, contributing to the on-going discourse on effective internationalisation in higher education.

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