

EFFECT OF CHANGES AND REFORMS ON QUALITY ASSURANCE IN RWANDAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Developing knowledge infrastructure by massive investments in education and training are taken as a benchmark in facilitating the acceleration and possible increases in skills, capacities and competences of Rwandan people has become a priority issue in the recent years. This notion is relevant to Vision 2020 where human resource development and building of a knowledge-based economy are fundamental pillars. In the past years, several policy reforms have taken place in education sector. However, the overarching question is if such changes and reforms are becoming adaptive or complex and if such reforms will not compromise the quality of education in Rwandan Higher Education. The main objective of the study is to investigate the impact of changes/reforms on quality in Rwandan Higher Education in the last 20 years.

Specific objectives are: (i). to establish the changes/reforms that have taken place in the Rwandan higher education; (ii). to assess the impact of the changes/reforms on the quality of higher education in Rwanda; (iii). to examine the effect of modern ICT tools and applications on the quality of higher education in Rwanda. The study considered primary data and both qualitative and quantitative information from 8 institutions, both public and private, namely: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and ICT, University of Rwanda, Independent Institute of Lay Adventists of Kigali, Kigali Independent University, Kigali Institute of Management, Adventist University of Central Africa and Rwanda Tourism University College. In the Ministry of Education, 2 directorates selected were Higher Education Council and Rwanda Education Board. In the University of Rwanda, 5 Colleges including the College of Agriculture, Animal Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (CAVM), College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS), College of Science and Technology (CST), College of Economics and Business Studies (CEB) and the College of Education(CE). Besides, the center of GIS under the University of Rwanda was selected for its distinct function in promoting geographical information systems and remote sensing. Main research instruments were questionnaires and interviews. Pertinent conclusions include putting in place suitable and more adaptive mechanisms to manage the changes in

higher education system and ensure consistency with the Presidential order N^o. 51/01 of 13/07/2010 establishing standards in Higher Learning Institutions.

Key words: *Quality Assurance; Higher Education; Rwanda.*