

Crisis for Higher Education Enrollment in Malawi

Albert K.M.Y.Kayange
UNICAF University, Malawi

Abstract

Malawi is currently facing a crisis of annual “Higher Education Enrolment”. Malawi’s tertiary gross enrolment rate is 0.4 percent as compared to 8.2% of Sub-Saharan countries average enrolment. According to the UNDP Human Development Report of 2014, the Malawi enrolment rate of 0.2% is the lowest in Africa in terms of quality and relevance of programs offered in the sector. Before and after Independence (1961 to 1964; 1964 to date), Malawi adopted the following modes of teaching and learning: Distance Teaching and Learning; Radio Instructions; Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and face to face interaction mode. These modes of teaching and learning have greatly contributed to low higher education enrolment for they have been said to be: Not flexible; expensive; and restrictive, leaving out some very able and capable citizens. This tendency has implications for creating an elite society which is contrary to the world-wide goal of creating a more inclusive society. The paper recommends that the Malawi Higher Education System needs to embrace non-residential and non-face-to face delivery modes to complement the traditional residential mode which is less expensive for having no demand for brick and mortar building to use for classroom and boarding space, this gives room for developing groups. This can be done through emerging appropriate technologies and innovation. Examples of emerging technologies may include: Cloud based technology, Virtual and Augmented Reality, STEAM – arts and STEM, Technology to prevent Bullying and Mobile-style Education. The emerging appropriate technologies and innovations supersede the old modes in that students are able to: study at their own pace; study without neglecting professional or family commitments; study at a time and place that is most convenient for each student. Students will be able to choose one of two flexible delivery modes (exclusively online delivery, or Blended learning); enabling them to access high quality of teaching and learning to earn internationally recognized degrees. The government of Malawi will then enjoy the enormous enrolment per intake. To ensure mass enrolment and quality higher education, the paper argues that the Malawi Higher Education Sector needs to invest in procurement of adequate and appropriate teaching and learning resources; upgrade the qualifications of under qualified staff; establish link relationships

and strengthen their external examining systems. It is imperative that national higher education systems conform to international expectations if individuals and their societies are to benefit from the realities and challenges of globalization.

1. Introduction

According to the Commonwealth of Learning [1], Universities in Southern Africa including Malawi, are unable to admit all deserving individuals on a campus face-to-face or residential basis. The Southern Africa Regional Universities Association [2] highlights a range of challenges that are directly responsible for the poor status of higher education in Southern Africa. The challenges include inadequate funding by governments to public universities, teachers training colleges and technical and vocational colleges which are deemed to be more preferred than private universities; rise in competition for donor funding amongst private and public universities; increase in the number of students needing university education; and inefficiency in the use of the available resources by higher education institutions. Higher education improves an individual's quality of life. According to Allen [3], high school graduates, college graduates have longer life spans, better access to health care, better dietary and health practices, greater economic stability and security, more prestigious employment and greater job satisfaction, less dependency on government assistance, greater knowledge of government, greater community service and leadership, more volunteer work, more self-confidence, and less criminal activity and incarceration.

Many economists agree that education is directly correlated with economic growth and stability. Countries thrive when their educational systems thrive. In “Education and Economic Growth,” there is need therefore to encourage school reform in order to improve education because it strengthens national economic competitiveness. Peter [4] cites the National Commission on Excellence of Education in stating that “in order to keep and improve on the slim competitive edge we still retain in world markets; we must dedicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system.” The improvement of educational stances in countries promotes its economic standing and stability.

Education should no longer be viewed and treated as a privilege, but rather considered a right and necessity for the individuals of society. Societies around the world must work at providing education for those who seek it. Society as a whole benefit as a result of education. An educated community is a united community. Education leads to feelings of “togetherness” and compatibility within a society. Anne Bert Dijkstra and De la Motte [5] state that in order for a society to grow, it must share common goals and values while simultaneously promoting variance and uniqueness. She explains that “in a peaceful, strong and vibrant society, differences can only exist if there is sufficient common ground.” When inhabitants of a country come together to participate in shared democratic practices, such as voting or partaking in national polls and surveys, they experience feelings of solidarity and nationalism as a collective unit working to move their country forward. Education helps to promote an awareness of these practices and how we should perform or observe them. There is therefore a need to critically analyze exploitations of other alternatives on how best Malawi Higher Education can be easily accessed.

The paper therefore discusses enormous means of access to higher education by the aid of emerging appropriate technology. Enrolment crisis of higher education in Malawi, old teaching learning and delivery methods, advantages of e-learning, how Unicaf is using appropriate technology in Malawi to mitigate the challenge have been discussed before the conclusion.

2. Statement of the problem

According to World Bank 2016 study, Malawi’s higher education enrollment is among the lowest in the world and the least in the entire Southern and Eastern African region. Following the world banks report, the Malawi National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) has since cautioned that the economic development is ‘obviously affected’ noting that this is a result of ‘focus on basic education for too long at the expense of higher education’ [6].

Universities in Malawi fall into two categories: Public Universities which were established by government through Act of Parliament and private universities, accredited by government which were established through University Charters, NCHE [7]. The lack of an interface between the government, universities and the private sector continues to undermine the ability of universities to respond to the country’s current and future needs. There is need to review the composition of the councils in public universities, which tend to be inward looking and dominated by academics and government officials, with little representation from the private sector and civil society group [6].

According to the word Bank working paper Number 182 entitled “Education System in Malawi” (2010), average university enrolment during the period 2003-2008 was 51 per 100,000 inhabitants representing 0.051 percent of the total population after 44 years of self-rule. The main contributing factor for the so called “crisis of higher education in Malawi is the infringement methods Malawi has ever been using for access to higher learning- the face-to-face mode of delivery. The face-to-face delivery method is a very resource and time demanding inflexible and slow process which limits access to higher education due to the following [8]:

i. Favoritism: Teachers show favoritism, which destroys the personalities of the left-out students. They feel incompetent and worth less. This attitude develops inferior feelings in other students. The teachers must treat all the students equally.

ii. Extracurricular Activities distort students: When there are more extracurricular activities, then students feel difficulty in concentrating on their studies. They are absorbed with the things affecting their educational performance. It is difficult for students to keep balance between studies and extracurricular activities.

iii. Negative Groups: There are chances that students get indulged in the negative groups. The negative group destroys students’ academics and their personality is also affected by associating with these negative groups. These negative factors are nurturing without being noticed.

iv. Costly: Traditional education is costly. The tuition is very high. Moreover, the course books and other school items are quite expensive. It costs so much. Parents have to face difficulty in paying tuition and accommodation fee and other expenses of schools’ activities.

Based on the above information, the researcher was compelled to investigate on how emerging technologies could be a solution in improving Malawi access to higher education. As evidenced by Mambo et al. [6], Malawi Governance of higher education faces some difficult challenges enhancing mass enrolment in higher, hence the need for investigation through this paper, means of strengthening economic development through enormous higher learning recruitment.

Hypothesis

H₀: There is a correlation between Malawi poverty and Low access to higher education.

H_a: There is no correlation between Malawi poverty and low access to higher education.

H₀: Malawi economic status is based on number of higher education graduates.

H_a: Malawi economic status is not based on number of higher education graduates.

Objective

Gwimbi and Dirwai [9], has reiterated that research general objective should be able to specify the type of information the exploration is expected to attain. Therefore, the aim or general objective of this study was to determine if emerging technologies would aid the increase in access to higher education in Malawi. This was achieved by answering the research question of "To what extent can emerging technologies increase access to higher education in Malawi. The investigation seeks to provide answers to the following sub research questions:

- i. How can Malawi increase access to higher education?
- ii. What is the environment of Malawi higher learning institutions
- iii. How can Malawi promote the use of emerging technologies in Higher learning institutions

2.1. Specific Objectives and Significance of the study

Research objectives dis-aggregate and trail logically from the general objective. They are initial interpretation of the research strategy [9]. The exploration therefore was intended to accomplish the following specific research objectives:

- i. To increase access to higher education in Malawi.
- ii. To create conducive learning environment.
- iii. To promote the use of emerging technologies in higher education.

Malawi teaching, learning and deliver methods has evolved through a very slow and expensive modes which have greatly contributed to the low enrolment crisis of today and included the following:

- a. Face-to-face sessions: learners receive tuition, collect study materials including continuous assessment tasks, use institutional libraries, and have individualized discussions.
- b. All use a hybrid of short residential face-to-face tuition followed by independent home-study.
- c. Radio instructions of 30 minutes per week were only used with the Initial Teacher Education Program of the Department of Teachers Education and Development (DTED).

d. Home-study period: learners are encouraged to form study circles, hold monthly seminars and meetings, and keep a professional portfolio to ensure successful learning.

e. Malawi College of Distance Education broadcasts radio programs (known as Tikwere) on local radio station once a week for 30 minutes for Initial teacher Education program only.

3. Literature Review

Malawi College of Distance Education (MODE) was established in 1965 with a set of objectives. The quality of education of the MODE products has been affected by some of the following constraints:

- Shortage of staff at headquarters, due to staff-turn over
- Use of under-qualified teacher supervisors who are trained to teach in primary schools
- Using an open system of enrolment resulting in overcrowded centers
- Inadequate transport for sets bulk dispatch, monitoring, support and supervision
- Lack of incentives, career development and prospects for both staff at headquarters and in the field
- High shortage of booklets-These are not fully supplied to each student because of shortage of printing paper, chemicals and only two efficient printing machines
- Infective radio programs because of overcrowding in centers against one or two radios per center

Given that only 0.4% of the eligible secondary school leavers' access higher education and training in Malawi, it is a must that Malawi invests in requisite infrastructure and technologies to enhance efficacy of open, distance and e-learning as a means of broadening and increasing access to education and training.

3.1. Emerging Appropriate Technologies

The world of education is evolving through the introduction of new technologies trends. Technology in education constantly disrupts and enhances pedagogy. It paves the way for new learning experiences and provides innovative ways to achieve core goals for the next academic year. The following are some trend in technology and education to be looked into if higher education is to withstand the global pace of advancements:

3.1.1. Cloud-based Technology: Cloud-based Technology is web based. It reduces worries for files and documents being lost or deleted or buying multiple USB flash drivers to save assignments. Essay contents related to projects, schedules and assignments will be shared more easily and securely stored on the cloud, such as Google Docs. With more centralized storage of resources, cloud-based technology will allow educators to increase their reach and share information without increased expenditure or additional time pressure.

3.1.2. Virtual and Augmented Reality: New technology provides teachers with tools for delivering enhancing learning experiences through augmented and virtual reality. Teachers are increasingly using augmented reality to layer virtual content on printed materials to enhance understanding and inspiration. The number of free apps and teaching platforms designed specifically for virtual education is growing.

3.1.3. STEAM-art and STEM: Stem is a teaching philosophy that integrates Science, Technology, Engineering and Math into all lessons. There has been a strong pedagogical focus to increase the digital literacy of students and encourage more students to adopt tech-focused subjects over the past years. This has made students more responsible users of internet as well as fostering key transferable skills for their future. Stem classes are perceived as the most technologically advanced of the curriculum, more traditional arts and humanities subjects. Incorporating elements of creativity into STEM subjects has undeniable benefits including increasing the accessibility across genders and engaging different types of learners

3.1.4. Mobile Technologies: With the prolific nature of mobile devices and social platforms, it is a sad truth that online bullying is becoming increasingly common. Educational Technology will be used extensively in the 21st century to monitor student technology, track the use of search terms that they use as well as all visited websites. More apps will allow teachers and IT administrators to remove view any of their students' devices. Platform to provide means of reporting and communication between teachers and students will grow in popularity.

3.1.5. Mobile – style Education: Today, many students own mobile devices. Taping this technology for learning in the 21st century, will improve engagements and motivation across all learning at home. Connecting mobile technology and devices within the classroom will allow teachers to provide a fully immersive, integrated learning experience for all learning styles and abilities. Innovations and trends in technology across business and enterprise

are giving schools more advanced tools and better forms of education technology to improve their school's results and enhance their teacher's pedagogy.

3.2 How Unicaf is using Appropriate Technology in Malawi

Unicaf is a leading online platform in a sub-Saharan Africa addressing an underserved part of the higher education market, through an affordable and flexible learning model. It is an approved and registered by National Council for Higher Education as a higher education institution in Malawi (Ref: NO: NCHE/ ADMIN/1/1), registration number 14432 dated 30th April, 2015. Unicaf University is an independent entity, locally rooted but globally connected. It is connected with ENDEX which is one of the largest private education groups in Europe. Unicaf is also in partnership with a number of institutions such as: the University of South Wales, Marymount University in California, University of Nicosia to mention a few. Unicaf is committed to setting the agenda on flexible learning in higher education in Africa, investing in learning development and working with governments to drive the evolution of the online learning environment.

The university has a total number of one hundred and eighty-nine lecturers (189). Out of 189, 166 are full time while 22 are part time lecturers. Some lecturers are not resident in Malawi and do visit the university from time to time according to required programs and arising needs. Unicaf is currently offering a number of programs at: Bachelors, Master and Doctorate level. Unicaf University has two modes of delivery namely: full on line and blended. The vast pool of existing lecturers and continuous hiring of new personnel ensures that the delivery of programs is conducted by high caliber academic and or professionals.

Many institutions globally have developed e-learning strategies within a rapidly changing Tertiary and Higher education landscape so too have Unicaf - Malawi. There is a high level of online help and guidance, numerous online groups, discussion forums and self-help training available. All faculty use module Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) online management system to enable the presentation of syllabi. Some courses are also available to distance learners with blended learning. The faculty is ultimately responsible for the integrity of online learning content and delivery. Unicaf provides the faculty with the necessary pedagogical and technological training needed to deliver quality online courses. The curriculum content developed for on-line distance delivery satisfies the learning outcomes of relevant programs. Class size for on-line distance learning is appropriate subject to the

curriculum needed to successfully deliver an effective and high-quality course.

Unicaf e-learning has a supportive on-line mechanism with a balance set of dialogue. This means that a course is designed with three dialogues of: faculty to student, student to student and student to resource. It is provided with mini-lecture in text or video podcasts, weekly coaching and reminder announcements and explanations/ interactions with the students. This is in line with Vygotsky's theory which says that "we learn as social beings within a social context" [10].

Lecturers are responsible to make unique assignment that have not been used previously so that students cannot find the answer on the internet. Lecturers are responsible to mark in accordance with the marking scheme and Higher Education standards. Comprehensive feedback is given. All participation marks, assignments, assignment marks, assignment comments and final marks are available at Students Information System (SIS) for internal and external review. Personal lecturers are responsible to make themselves available to students so that any problem can be resolved as soon as possible.

3.2.1. Program monitoring and review: All programs of study offered by Unicaf University are subject to regular review as part of the Unicaf University quality assurance process. Automated evaluation, building quality assurance question into synchronous interviews with students via audio, chatroom and video conferencing such as skype. Making our thinking visible requires students to create, talk, write, explain, analyze, judge, report and enquire. These type of activities makes it clear to students themselves, to the faculty and to fellow learners what students know and don't know, what they are puzzled about and about what they might be curious with.

Blended learning is an instructional methodology, a teaching and learning approach that combines face to face classroom methods with computer mediated activities to deliver instruction. The strength of this instructional approach is its combination of both face to face and on-line teaching methods into one intergraded instructional approach based on which students learns:

- i. At least in part through online learning, with some elements of student control over time, place path and pace.
- ii. At least in part in a supervised brick-and mortar location away from home.
- iii. Modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide intergraded learning experience.

3.2.2. Library resources: Since Unicaf university mode of delivery is both online and blended, provides for its students' unique access through Proquest Digital Library and data base. Globally, Unicaf is one of the few Universities which provides to students access to such vast platform of resources. Emerging technologies could therefore enhance quality and quantity of Malawi higher education institutions if adapted and utilized effectively and efficiently.

3.3. The role of Government/s in Higher Education

Good policies and strategies are recipes of effective and efficient delivery of programs. Many Higher Education programs in Africa, Malawi inclusive do not make any impact in the lives of their citizens because of poor policies and strategies that governments are following. Good policies are those that ensures that Higher education is a priority and not an alternative source of earning a living. Good policies and strategies cannot be implemented without experiencing challenges:

3.3.1. Some higher education challenges: Government should strive to address Higher Education challenges in order to ensure that there is equity in accessing Higher education. Some of the higher education challenges include but not least of:

- Employability
- Relevance
- Collaboration between training institutions and employers
- Accreditation of training providers
- Assessment and certification
- Quality assurance of training programs
- Global recognition of certifications

Today, African states and nations face global economic challenge that will only be met successfully through a dynamic agile and continually calibrated secondary and post-secondary education system that align to meeting the need of our communities and produce well educated and talented citizens. Higher education has limited resources and access to meet the challenges of equipping our emerging workforce to participate in the 21st century economy. Malawi therefore must recognize and accept the strategic importance of higher education and its role in terms of the countries human resource and economic development. Given the importance of Higher education, it is disappointing that so many government policies making in areas of higher

education continue to be largely based on more intuition and folklore than on rigorous and reliable research-based evidence. Education research could be usefully to inform decision makers include monitoring the health of Malawi Higher education systems, investigating options for reform and change, evaluating intended and unintended outcomes of interventions and the provision of assessment strategies which focus on performance and competence-based student learning in higher education which emphasizes the quality of learning.

3.3.2. Deliberate policies: If higher education is to be instrumental to Malawi Social economic development and industrial growth, government have to make deliberate policies in order to sustain the intended goals through:

- a. Malawi Government to institute national policy for online learning for both private and public higher learning institutions.
- b. NCHE to institute a directorate for online learning to safeguard higher learning institutions that offer online education.
- c. Major reforms to revert Malawi schools focusing on preparing every student for full participation in post-secondary meaningful work career advancements and active citizenship. Career and higher education can provide the education and training necessary to stimulate the economy and prepare Malawi future workforce.
- d. The need to separate politics from education through a semi or full autonomous of higher education providers.
- e. The need for senior management to have the requisite skills and qualifications and exposure to national, regional and international which affects the proper national planning. Proper mix of industrial experience and exposure to education and human resource development is required.
- f. Increase the employability and participation of vulnerable groups –young workers, differently-abled, older, displaced workers and incarcerated population.
- g. Establish a national education fund with contributions from government and private sectors.
- h. Continue to channel investments in education and training and employee development in expanding the services sector, especially those that are: generating investments; creating employments and capable of earning foreign exchange.
- i. Develop a dictionary of occupations aligned to international models.

- j. Introduce IT subject in primary and secondary schools.

3.3.3. Challenges of e-learning in Malawi: Rural population refers to people living in rural areas as defined by national statistical offices. Rural population in Malawi was reported at 83.55% in 2016, according to the World Bank collection of delivery indicators. Malawi faces various economic challenges including low productivity; narrow and raw export base with high reliance on few commodities; lack of alternative energy sources; and poor transport network and ICT facilities, the rural area being the worst. Therefore, the following are major challenges for the majority of Malawians to access e-learning opportunities:

- Lack of high-speed internet access
- Cheap bandwidth
- Trained IT personnel
- Stable access to electrical power
- The initial cost e-learning deployment
- Perception of e-learning to the nation

In developing countries like Malawi, technology profession in general is relatively new field. The level of skills and knowledge in these areas are insufficient to a large number of people. The users of these technologies such as teachers, administrators and students all have significant low levels of skills that do not favor the appropriate use of these technologies in education. The cost of IT usually integration and e-learning implementations usually include purchase, set up and testing, internet subscription, service and maintenance as well as training. The cost of acquisition of technology is therefore a great challenge to Malawi due to poverty and weak economy which inhibits the power to purchase.

4. Methodology

The researcher collected data from the existing information such as: Journals/articles, Public and private research organizations, Reference books Public and private universities, Public and private libraries. The information was collected while the researcher was indoor sitting on a desk. Such means of data collection has been described by Frankenberger [11] as desk research. The researcher's aim of data collection was to review the housing related issues in relation to housing policy formation for quality housing. Desk research has been depicted by **Ibid, (2003)** as: a very low cost methodology in comparison to field data collection, allows the ease of making informed decisions,

provides opportunities of new discoveries, research period is much more less as compared to other research means and finely the approach aids the researcher in focusing on the main objective of the study. However, the method requires the researcher to have a proper understanding and knowledge of the approach [12].

The researcher used both internal and external desk research. According to WFP [13], Internal desk research is described as an organizational information collected within the organization for research usage while external desk research is the collection of research information across the organization. The researcher has generally focused on e-learning in comparison with the e-learning institution (Unicaf) he works with.

5. Analysis of Findings

Findings and Discussions from literature based on specific research questions below:

5.1. To increase access to higher Education in Malawi

Literature has shown that, there is a great crisis of access to higher education institutions in Malawi due to the following reasons:

- i. Few numbers of both public and private higher learning institutions.
- ii. High cost of higher learning requirements in terms of tuition as well as accommodation and transportation.
- iii. Illiterate to computer Knowledge.

Malawi adopted face to face mode of learning since 1964 when higher learning institution was launched by the first present of the republic. The system requires scholars to lodge at the institution in form of a boarding. Scholars come from different walks of the nation to very limited number of public Universities. Institutions therefore have very limited space to accommodate scholars such space includes but not least to: classrooms, hostels, laboratories, libraries, and ablution blocks. The situation therefore limits number of scholars based on the available space. This circumstance creates great competition amongst scholars so that less than one percent (1%) of scholars from secondary schools are absorbed into public higher education institutions each year. The rest are left out and opts for private universities as well as Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET). Malawi is ranked third from the poorest countries in the world. The status of Malawian majority is contradicting with the high cost of higher education. Scholars who deserve or qualifies for higher education are bound not to due

to financial incapability. The introduction of government scholar's loans is limited to very few public scholars and none to private scholars. Therefore, poverty is amongst the many berries to attend higher education. The gap between the poor and the rich is so great so that most of wards from well to do families are sent abroad (United Kingdom, United States of America, South Africa) for their higher education. If GDP was uniformly distributed, the resources used to educate able families outside the country would have made better contribution to educate more within the country.

Face to face mode of learning requires movements from scholar's homes to learning institutions. Scholars' movements is encountering huge amount of financial resources since Malawi road networks is in a very dilapidated forms so that the few transports who survive amidst high cost of fuel have pegged travel rates higher than what common people can afford, hence limiting already extremely stricken by poverty to travel long paying distances to learning institutions.

Over eighty percent of Malawians live in rural areas where there is no electricity nor internet. This is a challenge in adapting to use a computer as an aid to learning process. Therefore, the majority of Malawians have no or less exposure to computers knowledge. The majority of Malawians being computer illiterate, limits them to adapt e-learning, a process which depends on internet and electricity. Literature has shown that only 38% of households live in urban areas where electricity and internet are assessed. However, 38% does represent households and not scholars, an indication of limited scholars (less than 38%) who access electrical facilities, computers inclusive.

5.2. To create conducive learning Environment

Most higher learning institutions face a many of challenges which affects scholar's performance as well as achievements. Literature has shown that the following are challenges to learning environments:

- Overcrowded learning facilities i.e., hostels, classrooms, ablution blocks, libraries, laboratories
- Insufficient teachers
- Poor dietary
- Limited learning resources
- Biasness to scholars
- Insecurity of scholars
- Schedules

Malawi stipulated teacher student ratio is 1:40 in higher learning institutions, However, literature has shown that the stipulated teacher student ratio is only paperwork and does not depict the reality in most learning environments. According to literature, the real teacher student class ration ranges from 1: 60 to 1 to 120. It is the number of students who increases against the 1:40 classroom confined space. Learning environment therefore is overcrowded with a lot of health implications. Above all, the interface of teacher student becomes so challenging so that quality automatically becomes compromised.

Literature has shown that the abnormal teacher student ration is not only due to enough space but also due to lack of teachers. Many specialists in particular subjects are on very high demand so that they are absorbed by international higher institutions due to incomparable working conditions.

Boarding higher institutions attracts dietary issues to scholars. It is obvious that scholars come from different backgrounds of variant standards and is a great challenge to unify or standardize their diet. Literature has shown that most strikes in higher education are affiliated to poor dietary. Institutions struggle to strike a balance of diet in order to accommodate scholars of great variances in their wealth and health. In the course of institutions strive to appease scholars, high cost of boarding is attracted leading too many failing to meet the living standard through tuition and boarding fees.

Public higher institutions rely upon scholar's tuition fee for their teaching and learning resources. Due to poverty by most scholars, many scholars default in paying their tuition, leaving institutions strive to meet the required set standards for teaching and learning requirements like books, journal, handouts, articles to mention a few. The government subsidy to public institutions does not suffice the high cost of goods on the market.

Literature has evidenced that face to face teaching and learning promotes biasness and favoritism as well as harassment to scholars. The said unethical practices inhibits affected scholars from their performance as well as achievements due to their embarrassments.

5.3. To promote the use of emerging Technologies in higher education

Literature and case study have evidenced that e-learning promotes enormous access to higher education institutions due to the following grounds:

- Enormous access to higher education
- Option to study at own pace
- Option to study without neglecting professional or family commitments

- Option to study at the time and place that is most convenient for each student
- Option to choose one of two flexible delivery modes (exclusively online delivery, or blended learning- a combination of online and classroom teaching)
- Option to pay only a fraction of the tuition fees through the Unicaf scholarship program me
- High quality of teaching with regular, one to one contact with tutors and social interaction with fellow students
- Accredited, internationally recognized degree awarded
- State of the art, use, user friendly digital platform enabling online delivery or blended learning
- Reliable and helpful student support services

6. Recommendations

- i. Establish National Education funds with contributions from government and private sectors in order to support the qualifying but underprivileged scholars.
- ii. Promote accreditation of training providers through well-established higher education regulatory body.
- iii. Partner with private providers who have the technology and the financing potential in order to implement flexible delivery models.
- iv. Create global recognition of certification.
- v. Champion Educational reform to improve higher education accessibility.
- vi. Invest in higher education technologies.
- vii. Regulate the cost of internet to higher education institutions.

7. Conclusion

The Malawian higher education system's inability to supply sufficient numbers of well-qualified graduates in alignment with the needs of the economy is a major constraint inhibiting the development prospects of the country.

The admission of poorer students to private higher education institutions is further prejudiced by the fact that students enrolled in private colleges are not eligible for government loans and must privately fund all costs associated with their study. Malawi should explore examples from other countries where students enrolled in private institutions can access loans equal in value to those extended to students in public colleges.

E-learning presents enormous opportunities to significantly facilitate the effectiveness of delivering the learning contents and gaining access to immense pool of educational information if appropriately utilized, and it has also gained global recognition as a method to improve the teaching and learning processes aimed at creating an economy powered by technology and propelled by information and knowledge.

The creation of the NCHE is welcomed as an important step towards the improving the quality and relevance of both private and public higher education institutions. It is important however that the council is independent fair, free from politics and corruption, fully capacitated and financed to enable it to effectively implement its mandate. When we are talking about the learning process in the universities, where the E-Learning is more spread, we have deeply to analyze, according to the spatiality how to deliver the knowledge to the students: traditional learning, blended learning or E-Learning. Before commitment from Traditional learning to Blended learning or full Online learning a thoroughly investigation has to be done. Implementing of the E-Learning in the universities leads to growing of the teachers' time for preparing the materials and decreasing the time spending face-to-face with the students. A major disadvantage to E-Learning is that the students need to have self-discipline. While being able to work at their own pace can be an advantage, it can also be a disadvantage. This is especially true for students who have difficulty with time management.

Good ICT infrastructure is vital in improving communication and broadcasting services. In this era of technology, development of ICT infrastructure is paramount in promoting trade and investment. ICT is also playing a catalytic role in the provision of social services such as health and education. In this regard, the government of Malawi is urged to work towards improving the ICT infrastructure in order to create a conducive environment for private sector development which are fueled by higher education.

8. References

- [1] Commonwealth of Learning. (2002). Distance education and open learning in Sub-Saharan Africa: A literature survey on policy and practice. Retrieved from <https://www.col.org/resources/distanceeducation-and-open-learning-sub-saharan-africa-literature-survey-policy-and>
- [2] Southern Africa Regional Universities Association. (2011). Towards a common future: Higher education in the SADC region. <http://www.sarua.org/files/countryreports/CountryReportMalawi.pdf> (Access Date: 12 January, 2021).
- [3] Allen, J. (2007). What do Educational Mismatches Tell us about Skills Mismatches? A cross –Country Analysis. [Doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435).
- [4] Peter, M.S. (1990). *The fifth Discipline. The art and Practice of the organization*. New York. Currency Doubleday.
- [5] Dijkstra, A.B., and De la Motte, P.I. (Eds.). (2014). *Social outcomes of education: The assessment of social outcomes and school improvement through school Inspections*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- [6] Mambo, M. M., Meko, M.S., Tanaka, N., Salmi, J. (2016). *Improving Higher Education in Malawi for Competitiveness in the Global Economy*. World Bank Studies. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24381> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.
- [7] National Council for Higher Education. (2015). *National council for higher education minimum standards for higher education institutions*. http://www.nche.ac.mw/documents/minimum_standards.pdf. (Access Date: 28 December 2020).
- [8] Bencheva, N. (2010) Learning styles and e-learning face-to-face to the traditional learning. *E-learning*; p. 63–67.
- [9] Gwimbi, P., Dirwai, C. (2003). *Research Methods in Geography and Environmental Studies*. Zimbabwe Open University, Harare.
- [10] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [11] Frankenberger, T. (1992). Indicators and data collection methods for assessing household food security. In S. Maxwell and T. Frankenberger, eds. *Household food security: concepts, indicators, and measurements: a technical review*. New York and Rome: UNICEF and IFAD.
- [12] WFP and VAM. (2001). *Guidelines for Undertaking a Secondary Data Analysis: Within the Framework of a SAF Comprehensive Vulnerability Analysis*. Draft.
- [13] WFP. (2003). *Report on the Proceedings of the Expert Consultation on Emergency Needs Assessments (ENA), November 12-14 2002 (WFP: Rome)*