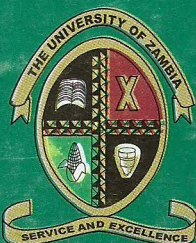


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DRIVING THE PROCESS OR DRIVEN BY THE PROCESS?: The Transformation of Nkrumah College of Education into Nkrumah University College.¹

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Introduction

The article is a record of the activities and events that culminated into the transformation of Nkrumah College of Education (henceforth to be referred to as NCE) into a University College. The significance of this record is that the public can be informed about how NCE became a University College. This record is also for posterity. It is common knowledge that NCE has made a huge contribution to the development of human resource for the country and the sub-region. The text below historicises the college from its inception to its transformation into a university college and locates this development in the history of education in Zambia. The data for the article were collected over a period of one year. One of the researchers was a participant observer, while the other two were observer participants. In short, all of them were involved in one way or another in the process of turning NCE into a university college. The article makes the point that it was the process of turning NCE into a university college that drove the actors (those mandated to carry out the transformation) because the process was a political undertaking. In other words, the School of Education in the University of Zambia, which was supposed to drive the process, was driven by the political pronouncements. How and why did this happen? That question is answered in the text below.

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During the period when Zambia was under the British South African Company (BSACo) (1907-1923), missionaries provided a rudimentary form of training for teachers at each and every mission station. These 'teachers' were sent to run village schools as soon as they could read and write (Musonda 1991: 1). Professional and co-ordinated teacher education owes much to the Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1924 which recommended that priority should be given to the establishment of teacher-training institutions at selected mission stations (Snelson, 1990: 139).

From a situation of rudimentary teacher education, Zambia moved forward in teacher education. The first President of the country, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, ensured that each province in the country had at least one teacher education college to train primary school teachers. NCE, previously Nkrumah Teachers College, is a unique college with a unique history of teacher education in Zambia. This article narrates that unique history leading to the transformation of the institution into a university college. Among other things, the article makes note of the college's contribution to teacher out-put in the country. But above all, it discloses the 'politics' at play in the transformation of the college into a university college.

Brief History of Teacher Education in Zambia

It is important to contextualise this article in the broader perspective of teacher education before narrowing it to Nkrumah. It is incontestable as Musonda (1991: 1) puts it that 'just as the early history of education in this country is associated with the work of Christian missions, teacher education is no exception'. He further locates the actual development and take-off of teacher education when the British colonial office took over the administration of Northern Rhodesia from the British South African Company (BSACo) in 1924. The Phelps-Stokes commission's recommendations were submitted to the colonial office by the Advisory Committee on native education in 1925, through a memorandum entitled, *Education Policy in British Tropical Africa*. On teacher education, the memorandum recommended that 'the native teaching staff should be adequate in numbers, in qualifications and in character and should include women. The key to a sound system of education lies in the training of teachers and this matter should receive primary consideration' (*ibid*, 143). In 1925, therefore, the Governor of the territory, Sir Herbert Stanley, formed the sub-department of Native Education under the Department of Native Affairs following the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission and the subsequent request based on those recommendations by the General Missionary Conference of 1924 that a Director of native education be appointed. One man, Mr. Godfrey Chitty Latham, cannot be forgotten in the history of teacher education in Zambia.

The Role of Latham in Teacher Education

Serious and professional teacher education owes its beginning to Latham. He was not an educationist at all. He was assistant magistrate, Director of Census and Native Commissioner at Sesheke. He belonged to the Northern Rhodesia Police Force. Curiously, he was appointed Director of the sub-Department of Native Education. When he assumed

the position, there were only two institutions in the country which offered serious and well co-ordinated teacher training, namely, Sefula and Kafue run by Reverends A. Coisson and J. Fell respectively. Latham emphasised training in order to produce competent and enthusiastic teachers. To this effect, he encouraged Christian mission schools to take seriously the training of their teachers. He promised two incentives to them, thus to pay (which he did) government grants towards the salaries of trained educationists teaching in normal schools and to ensure that before a normal school was started, there would be fifteen pupils prepared to train as teachers and enter standard III.

Latham worked closely with missionaries through the Advisory Board which he had initiated. In 1932, the Advisory Board stipulated that no one should be allowed to write the teacher examinations unless they had passed their teaching practice in an approved practicing school. Due to Latham's efforts, by 1926, more properly conducted teacher training centres were opened at Madzimoyo, Johnston Falls, Rusangu, Fiwila, Mbereshi, Lubwa and Chikuni (Manchishi, 2004: 2).

This background is meant to show the reader that as far back as 1924, the need for professional teacher education had been acknowledged and efforts were made towards achieving that in a number of mission institutions. We will now turn to the subject of this article, NCE, and we will begin with a brief background to the establishment of the college before it became a university college in 2009.

Background to the Establishment of NCE

In 1953, a recommendation was made to centralise and nationalise teacher education (Binn Report). Consequently, the period between 1953 and 1963 saw the establishment of five colleges: Kitwe (1953), Charles Lwanga (1959), David Livingstone (1959), Malcom Moffat (1960) and Mufulira (1963) (*ibid*, 4). These colleges were, as they still do except for David Livingstone and Mufulira Colleges of Education, which are now training secondary school teachers, set up to train primary school teachers and worth noting is the point that they were established during the colonial times. Charles Lwanga, David Livingstone and Malcom Moffat resulted from Christian missionaries' influence in the colonial education sector, while Kitwe and Mufulira resulted from decisions within the native education department of the colonial times. NCE is thus a post-colonial educational enterprise.

A number of factors led to the creation of NCE. Perhaps the first push or prompting factor was Southern Rhodesia's declaration of independence, the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by Mr. Ian Douglas Smith in 1965. Zambia was at once condemned to taking the brunt of the economic blockade on Smith. When the squeeze tightened, nobody felt it more than Zambia because it even touched on education. The UNESCO sponsored project of teacher training at Chalimbana Teachers College under the aegis of the University College of Salisbury could not continue. The Zambian government proposed to relocate all the UNESCO experts in the project to the University of Zambia (UNZA) in Lusaka. A little more information is perhaps required to explain the Chalimbana programme. According to Manchishi (*ibid*), in 1961 a programme coded S3 was developed at Chalimbana for the purpose of training secondary school teachers. The candidates for this

course were required to have a full senior secondary school certificate (five credits including English). The duration of the course was three years. The University College of Salisbury was responsible for the syllabus, examination and certification of the course.

In 1966, what is now known as the School of Education at the University of Zambia offered a one year post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE), which was recognised by the University of London. This measure was not envisaged to go on forever. Moreover, Zambia's secondary schools were staffed by expatriate teachers, which was costly to the country. Indeed, Zambia received all kinds of expatriate teachers - British, Canadians, Americans, Jamaicans, Indians, Russians, Phillipinos, Egyptians and many others. As the population increased and schools multiplied, Zambia even began to accept teachers from Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda (most of those coming from Uganda had run away from Idi Amin and some of them came with Milton Obote when he sought refuge in the country). Traditionally, teachers had come from English-speaking countries, but these were not enough. As a result, pupils were taught in a language foreign to both the teachers and pupils and the teachers seldom remained beyond their initial two-year contract (O'Brien, 2006: 463). The point though is that as early as 1966, the Zambian government realised the importance of training its own teachers. *The First National Development Plan* of 1966-1970 had this vision:

Zambia cannot depend for an indefinite length of time on expatriate teachers for secondary school expansion. Apart from the difficulties of recruitment, continuity and adjustment to Zambian conditions, it is obviously not right policy for an independent country to plan to rely on expatriate teachers. Provision is made in the plan, therefore, to establish a higher teacher training college to train both primary and secondary teachers. The college will offer a three years teachers course for 300 'O' level students with three or four 'O' level passes. The college will also offer special training in infant methods. It is intended that the graduates from this college will teach at the lower levels at the secondary schools.

The first government, nationalist as it was, indeed implemented this plan by starting NCE.

The Beginnings of NCE

The town of Kabwe at the time of writing this article looked extremely different from how it was in those halcyon days when the Zinc mine was at its peak. The jacarandas and poinsettias still bloom around the old bungalows in what used to be a quiet residential area of Highridge, where NCE is located, though Munkoyo street leading to the college is full of pot-holes as one approaches the college. The college has also been surrounded by a new residential area, commonly, referred to as Nkrumah.

Using the hostels of King George VI Secondary School (Kabwe High School today) NCE opened in March 1967 with an initial intake of fifty-five students drawn from all the provinces of the republic. Most of the expatriate teachers at Kabwe High School were appointed as lecturers at the college. One of the expatriates who remained at the college for a long time was Mr. Campbell-Gordon. He had taught Art, but when the subject was phased out, he taught English and Education. He also served as Chairman of the College Board of Studies for a long time. The first Principal was Dr Noah Seditisho. He too was an expatriate. He had come from Botswana.

Under the *First National Development Plan*, an amount of K800 000 was allocated for the construction of a modern college with boarding facilities, facilities for handicrafts subjects, library and residential housing units for all lecturers. Construction of the college commenced in 1968. The first phase of the college's development was entirely funded by the Zambian government. The World Bank funded the second phase of the project by providing a loan to the government for additional accommodation of a further 300 students. In 1971, the college was opened in its present premises. Dr Kaunda presided over the official opening. The College changed its name from Kabwe Teachers College, to Nkrumah Teachers College in honour of the first President of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah. For those who have been to the college in the last twenty years, they have seen the statue of Kwame Nkrumah in front of the college. This was unveiled by Dr Kaunda on 1 August 1988.

From being an all-expatriate staffed college (academic wise) at inception, things began to change as Zambians became appointed to various departments as lecturers. In 2009, the college had no expatriate lecturer. Below, we list Principals who served at NCE.

Principals

Dr Noah H. Setidisho	1967 - 1970
Mr. Paul Simooya	1970 - 1976
Mr. Jason Kazilimani	1976 - 1987
Mr. Humphrey Zimba	1987 - 1990
Mr. Peter Nyirenda	1990 - 1997
Mr. S. B. Mpundu	1998 - 1999
Mr. Francis Belemu	1999 - 2003
Mrs. Ruth Mubanga	2004 - 2007

As can be seen, Mrs. Ruth Mubanga was the first female Principal, thus breaking the male dominance for many years. A robust administrator, she worked hard with her lecturers to change the face of the college. In 2007, she was appointed Director of Teacher Education. It was during her time as Director of Teacher Education, that the transformation of NCE into a university college gained momentum and finally got effected. Since her departure from NCE, there have only been acting principals. Is this because of the transformation process? It may be the case because there will no position of principal when the college becomes a university college.

The State of NCE Prior to the Transformation

Nkrumah College of Education over the years developed the following vision: 'to provide quality education that is responsive to the changing needs and values of the learner and society'. The Mission Statement of the college is a lengthy one and it reads as follows: 'Nkrumah College of Education, irrespective of gender, status, religion, political affiliation and ethnic origin, shall: train students to become highly qualified teachers and educators; offer conducive teaching and learning environment; promote research that focuses on improving education standards; equip trainees with knowledge and skills to make them

responsive to cross-cutting issues; enhance societal morals and democratic values; cultivate life-long learning.'

In terms of infrastructure, the college had made little progress. The only additions to the original Nkrumah were the Mulungushi students' hall of residence, the Library annex and the wall fence. But the improvised Directorate of Distance Education embarked on building a resource centre to house the Directorate and provide learning resources to students.

Diploma Programme

The college, until 2006 was offering a two years diploma certificate underwritten by the University of Zambia. In 2006, the College went back to the original idea of the nationalist leaders of the 1960s to build a college that would offer a three-year programme for a teachers' diploma. That vision, needless to mention, was shelved due to the scarcity of teachers and a two year diploma run instead in order to increase teacher output. The college offered the following subjects: Science, Business Studies, English, Mathematics, Geography, Civics, History, French, Physical Education, Zambian Languages and Religious Education. Students are also grounded in Theory and Practice of Education, Educational Psychology, Sociology of Education and History and Philosophy of Education. A student had to take two teaching subjects plus all the education subjects. It is worth pointing out that when the College started to train teachers, it offered Art and Industrial subjects such as woodwork and metal work. These subjects were relocated to other colleges. Places at NCE are fiercely competed for. Five 'O' levels including English are required of potential students. When the College began, three 'O' levels were sufficient to gain entry into NCE. This was the norm until the late 1980s.

As we have seen, in 2006 NCE went back to the three-year programme. This was a laudable development. The standards of education have generally gone down in Zambia. Though this is difficult to measure, there has been some discontent concerning the quality of teachers from some colleges including NCE. Indeed, there are very few NCE, UNZA and other graduate teachers measuring up to the kind of teacher the country wants to have. The blame is squarely on the shoulders of the government. For example, the library at Nkrumah has a collection of 31 050 books, three quarters of which are thoroughly obsolete. Students do not have sufficient reading space and books are stolen because the library has not been computerised yet. This situation means that students rely heavily on their notes. The non-reading culture in the country means that students do not augment their lecturers' notes with their own research.

Responsiveness and Unresponsiveness of NCE

Although not entirely its initiative, the college successfully ran a programme of Advanced Diploma in Mathematics and Science. The British government sponsored this programme which targeted in-service teachers. Starting in 1988 and folding up in 2000, the project offered advanced training to 106 Mathematics teachers and 313 Science teachers. In 1997, the college introduced the Diploma course on Distance Learning mode for primary school teachers. More than one thousand teachers have upgraded themselves to diploma status. The college staff needed capacity building in module writing and management of

Distance Education programmes for quality sake. As an affiliate college of the University of Zambia, which monitors quality, one would have thought that UNZA would have provided that capacity building. In any case, the College was not forthcoming and ignored the matter. Some external examiners from UNZA questioned the credibility of the distance education diploma at NCE since students hardly had any learner support in every sense of the word in open and distance learning circles. Though UNZA's Institute of Distance Education only has modules in the Bachelor of Teacher Education programme, it has bound up readers or batches for students.

In 2000, the college introduced a programme called Teacher Education Extension Studies (TEES). Its target was school leavers who wished to sponsor themselves. This self sponsored programme graduated a number of teachers. The Ministry of Education phased out TEES in 2006. Prior to the introduction of TEES, the College had run a secondary school within its premises. This Academic Production Unit was also justifiably stopped by the Ministry of Education. The college had become too congested and effective teaching was under serious threat. Indeed, slowly but surely, academic excellence was being elbowed out all because of money that the teaching staff wanted to be making to supplement their meagre salaries.

However, NCE was not as innovative. Lecturers were capable of introducing a Bachelor of Education degree programme. This programme would have offered education in detail to those with a Diploma in Education. This degree would have enhanced capacity in education management because there is a huge problem with education management in the country. The Ministry of Education's continued appointment of classroom teachers assuming managerial positions (School Managers) without the slightest idea of school management is not only unfair to the individual, but a disservice to the pupils and the teachers. Equally, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) in Lusaka has so called 'specialists' who have learned their work through apprenticeship or personal effort. Our argument is that the College had had a long relationship with the Flemish office for International Co-operation and Technical Assistance (VVOB), with access to some finances, the College would have used to acquire books and run the ICT. The College has also had assistance coming from the Netherlands. It was a missed opportunity for the College. The staff opted to load themselves with Distance Learning to produce the traditional graduate for the classroom. There is no doubt that the college did a mediocre job of preparing secondary school teachers through Distance Learning.

All in all, we argue that NCE could have been a centre of future curriculum specialists and school managers. Issues of qualified personnel to teach these programmes would have been as trivial as it should not have arisen. Once a programme is constructed, UNESCO, USAID, Irish AID and others would have been invited to help in providing the needed expertise and help to build capacity among the lecturers.

Contribution to Teacher Output

As at 2006, NCE had graduated over 8 000 teachers' some of whom came back to teach at the college. Below we present recruitment figures from 1968 to 2007. However, we were not able to disaggregate this piece of data by gender, perhaps somebody else will do

that at a later stage. We are also conscious of the fact that not every student recruited or admitted finished the programme. Our reader should have some allowance for drop-outs, deaths, change of career and so on.

TABLE 1: STUDENT RECRUITMENT SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE COLLEGE UP TO 2007

Year	Number of Students	Year	Number of Students
1968	55	1988	145
1969	58	1989	135
1970	104	1990	138
1971	58	1991	153
1972	102	1992	185
1973	199	1993	155
1974	187	1994	155
1975	173	1995	193
1976	153	1996	226
1977	184	1997	223
1978	143	1998	232
1979	186	1999	621
1980	243	2000	208
1981	235	2001	428
1982	165	2002	917
1983	160	2003	481
1984	143	2004	538
1985	187	2005	681
1986	197	2006	385
1987	166	2007	120

Source: College Admissions Office

NCE Becomes a University College

The intentions of transforming NCE into a University College did not begin in 2005 as it is made to appear. The potential of NCE becoming a University College of Education was noticed many years ago, but there was no political will to transform the college into a university. To use the well known expression in Zambia, 'the Ministry of Education had been looking into the possibility of turning Nkrumah College of Education into a University

College for sometime'. A 'team of experts' from the University of Zambia visited Nkrumah in 1990 to explore that possibility. But the idea at that time was to start in a gradual and systematic manner. In the 1990s, the Ministry of Education's biggest concern, obviously, among others was the unavailability of Science and Mathematics teachers in High Schools. The Dean of Education was requested to propose a way by which Nkrumah could assist in graduating Mathematics and Science teachers. The School of Education immediately worked out a plan which proposed that the Bachelor of Education in Mathematics and Science (BEDMAS) programme be offloaded to Nkrumah and be taught by Nkrumah staff as well as School of Education staff. The offloading of the programme was to be gradual. To begin with, both UNZA and NCE would offer the programme concurrently, but once NCE had developed capacity in its staff, it would go on its own. The School of Education constituted a team led by the Head of the Department of In-Service Education and Specialised Services (ISEAS) to go for an 'on-spot-check' of the physical infrastructure and the capacity of the teaching staff. Strictly speaking, this was a formality because the University of Zambia had first hand information about the college because of the long-standing affiliation arrangement which enabled the School of Education to interact with college administration and staff every so often. In any case, the combined team recommended the following:

1. extend the library and acquire more and new books especially in Mathematics, Sciences and Education.
2. build new laboratories for effective demonstrations of Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics practicals.
3. renovate the hostels.
4. acquire new motor vehicles for students' mobility during their school experience within Kabwe.

The team came back and produced a comprehensive report with all modalities for the Dean to bring to the attention of the Ministry of Education. Like many other reports in ministry departments and at national level, this one also ended up on some shelf to gather dust. The discipline to implement a noble cause with SED money available was utterly forgotten about and money diverted to what perhaps were 'more urgent and immediate' needs in the education sector.

In 2005, the Ministry of Education engaged the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) to review the performance of teacher education programmes in Zambia. The School of Education at the University of Zambia was utterly ignored. According to the findings of CoL, teacher education was not linked to school curriculum and the programmes were not linked to the needs of schools. There was, according to the CoL's findings, under-utilisation and over utilisation of teachers in some subjects. One recommendation made by the CoL to the ministry was that NCE and Copperbelt Secondary Teachers College (COSETCO) be transformed into university colleges. The recommendation was based on the findings that revealed that High Schools did not have degree holders as teachers. Generally there was a yawning gap between demand and supply of teachers in Basic (1-7), Upper Basic (8-9) and High (10-12) schools. This gap is well illustrated in the table below.

TABLE 2: PROJECTIONS (2008-2015)

LEVEL	DEMAND	SUPPLY	GAP
Basic (1-7)	42,081	48,000	+ 5, 919
Upper Basic (8-9)	17,390	8,800	- 8, 590
High Schools (10-12)	5, 039	1, 200	-3, 839
Total	64, 510	58, 000	-6, 510

Source: Teacher Education and Specialised Services)

In 2006, TESS made wide consultations with various stakeholders in the preliminaries of transforming NCE and COSETCO into university colleges. The University of Zambia disagreed with the MoE on the length of the degree programme. The latter wanted a short duration of three years while UNZA maintained the traditional four years. Eventually, MoE gave in and additionally drew up a comprehensive plan to effect the transformation and in March 2007, the concerned colleges' administration, MoE and some lecturers from the School of Education at UNZA met in Siavonga to work out the way forward, time and activities to be undertaken. In May 2008, TESS drafted a Cabinet Memo for the Minister of Education. In July and in October 2008 the Minister made public pronouncements that NCE and COSETCO were going to be transformed into university colleges. Despite the College administration's cautious approach, TESS advertised the programme in August 2008, interviewed the applicants and selected 400 potential students. The Ministry of Education told the college administration that it was in a hurry to see the programme start and reminded the administration not to frustrate what was already in motion by co-opting the School of Education into the process because that would delay the process. The implications of this need to be understood within the legal framework regulating the universities. According to the University Act, No. 11 of 1999 section 4.1:

On the recommendation of the Senate, the Minister may, by Statutory order:

- (a) establish any college or institution of learning as a constituent college or institution of a public university; or
- (b) declare any existing college or institution of learning as a constituent college or institution of a public university.

According to the 1999 Act, the only public universities were University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University. Section 5.1 postulates that the Minister may, on the recommendation of the Senate, approve the affiliation with the Public University of any college or other educational institution of teaching or research within or outside Zambia which has concluded an agreement to become affiliated with the Public University. The Minister of Education took the option of Section 5.1 when the University of Zambia Senate found option 4.1 impossible to implement. What bothered the chairperson of Senate most was the clause in Section 4.3b (iii) which states that 'the [University of Zambia Council] would undertake payment of retirement benefits of the academic or administrative staff or employees of the college or institution whose services are not transferred to the Public University.' In

simple terms, UNZA was going to inherit all the liabilities of Nkrumah College of Education. The UNZA Senate was justified in declining this position because UNZA is under funded and has a huge debt. The problems at the University of Zambia have been tackled in so lackadaisical a fashion that there has been fiasco after fiasco every year.

Concurrently with the pronouncements by politicians, TESS started working on the degree structure for the two universities. By November 2008, a programme outline for NCE as well as COSETCO was produced. In December 2008, two workshops were held in Kafue to work on the structure of the degree. The first workshop produced a draft structure and the second workshop revised the draft and the rest of the days during this workshop were spent on working on course outlines. In January 2009, TESS, Nkrumah and COSETCO lecturers as well as some UNZA lecturers met in Kabwe for another workshop during which time one course outline was constructed in each study area to serve as a model for the rest of the courses in that given study area. At this workshop, it was agreed that by April 2009, all course outlines should be ready and sent to the University of Zambia for scrutiny by the School of Education.

The College staff worked on the course outlines, but instead of sending them to UNZA, School of Education, the College sent them to TESS where they remained for sometime. The School of Education got hold of the outlines just days before the 'Make or Break' workshop in Siavonga. After the Siavonga workshop, the Ministry of Education made a decisive decision to inform the students who had been admitted to the college to report to the college on 27 June 2009 to start learning. What the TESS official had said at the Siavonga workshop was now evident. By 4 July 2009, 200 of the 400 students recruited to begin the programme had reported to the college. At the time when the manuscript of this article was being sent to the publisher, there were 205 male and 170 female students following degree programmes at NCE.

The government had already begun to develop the college to meet the challenges of a university. In 2009, K320 000 000 had been given to the college for purchase of books and computers; 60 billion Kwacha was paid towards infrastructure (library, hostel, office space) development; K230 000 000 for allowances for lecturers (settling in allowances and others) and K57 000 000 was set aside for Physical Education infrastructure development. But there was a shortfall of K120 000 000 in allowances at the beginning which caused a lot of frustration among lecturers. PAID-ESA had been given to the College as part of the new university campus but NCE had not yet occupied the premises.

Upon the Minister's pronouncement, TESS advertised the programmes to be offered at COSETCO and Nkrumah University Colleges. Students were interviewed and selected. The stark reality however, was that there were no lecturers yet to teach the programmes in the two colleges and there were no courses in these programmes. It meant TESS working closely with the School of Education of the University of Zambia. It was not the case. TESS adopted a consultancy approach, whereby some members of staff in the School of Education were asked to go with TESS for workshops in a bid to advance the process of recruitment and programme and course outlines writing. The first exercise was called 're-aligning staff in colleges'. This meant moving all those lecturers in possession of only the first degree to other colleges of education offering diploma certificates. TESS approached the recruitment of staff for the university college with urgency. The one

overriding criterion was that the candidates must possess a Masters degree. Unlike the University of Zambia where another criterion is that the potential lecturer must have obtained a Merit in his or her first degree, the recruiting authority appointed anyone with a Masters degree. In some cases, it turned out that the lecturer was not qualified to teach in the area they were appointed in because their Masters qualification was in a totally different area. In some cases, some of those appointed had not yet received letters informing them that they passed their dissertations. There was no doubt, however, that some of those recruited were among emerging scholars in the country, whose potentials Nkrumah University College could harness.

The pitfalls in the recruitment of staff for Nkrumah University College cannot possibly be blamed on TESS. What TESS did was only to ask Provincial Education Officers to provide names of all teachers and other MoE staff, e.g., planners and others with Masters qualifications to TESS. The selection of staff was finally done by TESS. In short, the staff at Nkrumah University College did not have to send their CVs, transcripts of results and certificates to TESS for consideration and placement. In any case, every effort was made to appoint the right person for the right courses. In some cases though, those appointed were still pursuing their Masters studies; they had not graduated yet.

The Minister had made his pronouncement and he made it a clarion cry at different forums and functions. His statements ended in this phrase, '...UNZA is spearheading this process.' On the ground, UNZA was spearheading nothing. It was TESS spearheading the process with some lecturers from UNZA playing an advisory role. Matters came to a head when the Minister learnt that Nkrumah University College was not going to open on 27 April 2009. A letter was, therefore, written to the Vice Chancellor to ask him to provide information on the process. The Vice Chancellor brought in the Dean of the School of Education to update the Minister. The Dean of the School of Education met officials from the TESS to clarify the whole process. The Dean was informed that the college would remain an affiliate university college in what was termed as 'Phase 1'. What TESS had forgotten was to follow the affiliation process as laid out by the University of Zambia. We briefly illuminate the process of affiliation because, later, we would like to explore what exactly held up the process. As the reader may have already detected, this article stresses the importance of actual events. Our inquiry started from the empirical observation of the realities of the process and not from any pre-conceived notion of what ought or ought not to be analysed. We have attempted to explain what actually happened on the ground, however unpalatable and where we have been constrained to do so by institutional restrictions we have stated it.

UNZA Affiliation Procedure

When a college, private or public desires to affiliate its programme or programmes to the School of Education, the administration of the college writes to the Advisory Unit for Colleges of Education (AUCE) stating the intention. The letter of intent should be accompanied with the programme being intended to be affiliated. This document should contain, among other things, the courses that will be taught. It is also a requirement on the part of the college seeking affiliation to have a cohort enrolled already and learning. The

Chairperson or Head of AUCE will constitute a team to visit the college to see whether the college has what it takes to run a diploma programme that can be underwritten by the University of Zambia. The on-spot check is meticulously done. Infrastructure is scrutinised, the library is investigated and the qualifications of the teaching staff are checked. The team also interviews the lecturers and students. In short, every aspect of the intending college is thoroughly investigated.

Once the on-spot check has been concluded and a report submitted to the School, the Curriculum Review Committee will sit to look at the programme of the intending college. Once this stage has passed, the School will bring the matter to the Senate Curriculum Review for the Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences, Law and Education. The Chairperson of this committee will eventually report to the University Senate.

The process takes a while. This is not by design, but in all cases, colleges have, for some reason(s) failed to write out their course outlines in the proper manner. This problem is rather fascinating. Even after academics from the school have sat down with lecturers from the college intending to affiliate its programme to the School of Education, the final products submitted to the School Curriculum Committee turn out to be generally unacceptable, to the surprise of those lecturers who had gone to assist the college lecturers. In the case of Nkrumah, UNZA staff met the lecturers who were to teach the degree programme at Nkrumah twice for five working days.

Our intention for giving the reader the above procedure is to show the politics at play in the Nkrumah transformation. What is most interesting to notice is the fact that even when the transformation of Nkrumah into a university college was an 'order' from the President of the country, the process dragged. There were politics at play, but what politics? One may jump to 'politics of the belly', but there seems to have been something subtle about this particular case. What delayed the process of affiliation? Wouldn't the teaching have begun while the process was underway? Isn't this provided for in the affiliation procedure?

The Siavonga Workshop: Make or Break?

From 7 to 10 May 2009, the extended curriculum review of the School of Education and academic staff from the schools of Natural Sciences and Humanities and Social Sciences met at Siavonga to primarily assess the course outlines from the colleges in question. The opening of the workshop is worth reporting because it revealed the instrumentation of certain ways of doing things in a situation of chaos by academics and technocrats. Let us begin with the words of the representative from TESS, who said:

For a long time MoE has been thinking of transforming Nkrumah and COSETCO into degree awarding institutions. The Siavonga workshop is make or break. The process may drive us if we do not drive the process because decisions may be made, which may affect quality of education in the country. We do not want that to happen, we want to produce quality teachers.

The TESS representative may have been too Cassandra-like when he gave this warning, but he was serving notice that the Nkrumah dilemma was urgent. What the TESS

representative was saying is that if UNZA continued on the path of 'one step forward and one step backward', the Minister of Education was going to go ahead and open the two university colleges even if the lecturers had no course outlines to start their teaching with and even if the UNZA senate did not approve the programmes of the two university colleges. But who is or who was to blame in this process? Is it TESS or UNZA? The Advisory Unit for Colleges of Education at UNZA took this position: 'If any delays [referring to 'the process will drive us and decisions may be made...', the School of Education did not receive any formal invitation from the Ministry of Education though some individuals had been invited to do some work with TESS.'

Asked to give the TESS roadmap insofar as transforming Nkrumah into a university college was concerned, the TESS official said:

The transformation was being done in phases. In Phase 1, the degree programme at Nkrumah University College will run under the existing affiliation arrangement and college structures and conditions of service for staff. (The official from TESS had no idea when Phase 1 would come to an end.) In any event, when Phase 1 comes to the end, the university college would then become autonomous. Phase 1 entails amending the University Act and the Director of Planning and Information was detailed to work out the legal framework with the Ministry of Justice.

The TESS representative was hopeful that after the Siavonga workshop, Nkrumah University College would announce the commencement of the courses. In other words, phase 1 would start in earnest. Towards the end of the workshop, he registered his disappointment thus: "We have been working with our colleagues from UNZA on the course outlines; I am deeply disappointed to hear in this workshop that the course outlines are still raw. I am surprised to hear that." One had to establish who was to blame. Who really bore the burden of blame?

In trying to get at the truth of what transpired, one has to understand how TESS has behaved before in similar undertakings. For example, when the Ministry of Education introduced the Zambia Teacher Education Course (ZATEC) in 2000, TESS did not involve the School of Education right from the beginning; certain lecturers whose names were known in the corridors of TESS were invited to help with theoretical underpinnings of the ZATEC programme. The School of Education became involved when an attempt was made to introduce a three years diploma in all colleges of education, starting with a selected few. At that time, the school was involved by providing lecturers at a larger scale to go and inspect the colleges. But when it came to preparation of course outlines, only a few individuals were invited by TESS to help.

The resolutions of the Siavonga workshop were clearly spelt out. There was to be another workshop in June [took place in July] 2009 during which time Nkrumah College of Education would have 'perfected' the course outlines so that the workshop would be a verification workshop to deal with any loose ends and to prepare the programme outline and the courses for presentation to the senate curriculum committee. Between May and June therefore, the college lecturers worked on the course outlines.

3-8 July 2009 Workshop in Kabwe

The June workshop took place from 3rd to 8th July in Kabwe at Nkrumah University College itself. Subject panels worked on the course outlines again and there was a lot of work still to be done. The French language panel, however, had already finished working on its outlines way back after the Siavonga 'make or break' workshop. The Kabwe workshop was arguably a more serious workshop because students were already on the campus and teaching was to start after one week of orientation. This meant that course outlines had to be finalised so as to have something to give to students at the start of the year.

The agenda for the Kabwe workshop included revisiting the programme outline as well as going through course combinations in terms of major and minor and course loads. The workshop ended with a resolution that all course outlines must be finalised and framed in a uniform format and style. Instead of being sent to TESS, the course outlines were to be sent to the School of Education bound together with the programme outline. The School of Education Curriculum Committee would then assess the programme and depending on the decisions made by the committee, the programme could be referred back to the College or taken to the Senate Curriculum Committee for approval. The Chairperson of this committee would then report to the UNZA senate for ratification.

4-6 December 2009 School of Education Extended Professional Committee Meeting

Before we report what took place at this meeting, let us give a short background to the meeting. From 7 to 10 May 2009, university colleges presented their curricular, subject combination and course outlines. Colleges reported their staffing levels and infrastructure developments on their campuses. UNZA lecturers felt that colleges still needed to work on the course outlines. In July, UNZA and college lecturers worked on the course outlines in Kabwe at Nkrumah College of Education. Within seven days, colleges brought the re-worked version of the course outlines. The Siavonga December 4-6 meeting was to be the last to look at the course outlines. In the meeting, certain courses still remained with serious problems. Some course aims and objectives remained poorly framed. One wondered whether the 'experts' from UNZA had actually looked at the outlines. Regulations governing examinations, degree classification and so on were presented. The lecturers were still operating in the diploma mindset. Most of college lecturers interviewed told us that the Directorate of Teacher Education should have seconded some senior members of staff in the School of Education at UNZA to the colleges to help with courses and regulations development.

In any case, when opening the Extended Professional Committee meeting, the Dean had the following to say:

The transformation of Nkrumah College of Education and the Copperbelt Secondary Teachers College into university colleges is now a serious matter that is being handled by Cabinet office. A number of us have been working on the course outlines for the colleges for a long time. So, let us finish with this work. I have been accused of delaying the process. We have finally accessed money from the Ministry of Education for this meeting. Therefore, let us apply ourselves to the task before us.

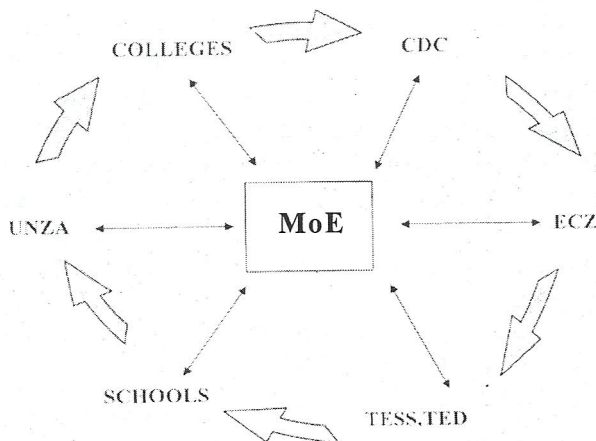
30 June 2010, NCE becomes Nkrumah University College (NUC)

On 11 January 2010, a technical team to facilitate the last leg of the process of the transformation of NCE was constituted by TESS. The team consisted of all public universities vice chancellors and some individuals from TESS. This team will oversee the dissolution of the college and the implementation of a new statutory instrument. By 30 June 2010, NUC will have its own university council, senate, vice chancellor and registrar and so on. This plan is ambitious indeed. Lecturers will be invited to apply for teaching positions and once employed, they will enjoy good conditions of service befitting a university lecturer. Why the technical team was not constituted at the beginning fascinated us, and in our quest for an answer, we were told by the lecturers at NCE that they had proposed that some lecturers from UNZA be seconded to NCE to drive the transformation. Still our question is, why was the technical team constituted now and not at the beginning of the process?

Putting a Finger at the Cause of the Delay in the Transformation of NCE into a NUC

We should begin by answering the question, who was driving the process of the transformation of Nkrumah College of Education into a university college? TESS pointed at UNZA while UNZA pointed at TESS. We can only attribute this to the serious lack of communication there is between UNZA and the Ministry of Education (MoE). UNZA in our case is represented by the School of Education. The School of Education is not quite well connected to the education system in Zambia, and this is because the school has not re-invented itself to take a leading role in directing the education sector through research, policy analysis and sustained communication. Below, we have worked out a model of how the education sector should operate.

FIGURE 1: HOW THE EDUCATION SECTOR SHOULD WORK



The Ministry of Education in this model is the engine that drives the education sector. It is the engine because it is the financier of education and it is connected to the state treasury as well as to the donor community in multilateral and bilateral protocols. It 'lubricates' the rest of the parts connected to it.

Outside the engine are the connected parts of it that feed into the engine. These parts also feed into one another. The biggest problem has been how the outer parts keep connected and ensure quality, relevant and standardised curricula; ensure that the profile of the Zambian teacher at different strata of education is assured and realised. Perhaps there has to be a link person at each institutional level. For UNZA, the Dean of the School of Education is the link person. We argue that he should sit in meetings of Directors, Permanent Secretaries and others at the Ministry of Education. To sideline him or her has had unwelcome consequences such as the slow pace at which the transformation of NCE was done.

Challenges at NCE so Far

Craig and Heneveld (1995), assert that an enabling environment; physical facilities and school climate are important factors for the effectiveness of any education programme. They further state that school infrastructure such as lecture theatres/classrooms, well updated libraries, toilets, sporting facilities, clean running water, tables and chairs for the learners are vital determinants of the quality of education. We have restated what Craig and Heneveld (*ibid*) did assert more than a decade ago because among the many difficulties that the students are currently facing at Nkrumah are the availability of appropriate and enough infrastructure, learning facilities and study materials. Forty-four students on the degree programme were asked to state some of the problems that they were encountering in their studies and in the college. The table below gives their views in terms of percentages.

TABLE 3: PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY STUDENTS DURING THE COURSE OF STUDY

Challenges	Percentage
Lack of appropriate books and those that are there are out-dated	51
Lack of enough furniture/tables, chairs and other lecture theatre facilities	27
Limited accommodation	18
Electricity blackouts and load shading	7
Low levels of hygiene	7
Congested time table and student missing lectures as a result	7
Poor service in the dining room	5
Inadequate staff in the college	15
Poor and limited infrastructure	7
Poor diet (eating beans most of the times)	7
Water pressure is very poor	5
Limited library hours	7
Nepotism and favouritism among lecturers	5

The findings of the research as shown in the table indicate that though running degree programmes at NCE is inadequate in a number of areas, it is practically impossible for any higher institution of learning more especially a university to effectively implement its academic programmes without a well stocked library, without appropriate infrastructure, qualified academic and support staff. It seems to us that the college has changed its face on paper and not in actuality. Referring to a school curriculum, Bishop (1995) makes the point that *the quality of a curriculum is as good as the quality of its teachers*. Bishop's (*ibid*) view can be further extended to include not only teachers but school facilities, equipment, other members of staff, time table, school ethos, attitudes and reference materials, all these are cardinal determinants of the quality of education.

Accommodation will become a huge problem at NCE when another cohort of first year students will be enrolled in June 2010. Lameck Goma, the first Zambian Vice Chancellor of the University of Zambia had this to say about student accommodation in African universities such as the University of Zambia.

The pressure of student numbers raises a policy question with regard to where the students would live. Should all students be required to live in halls of residence at the campus or provided by the university off-campus? Or can some live at home or in approved lodgings by special permission, but must be attached to a hall; or in lodgings at their choice? What proportion should be accommodated by the university? The situation in most African countries is such that it is always difficult and sometimes impossible for students to live out if they are to have reasonable facilities for study and to be able to participate fully in student social life. The absence or inadequacy of suitable public transport in most cases is a further constraint. In these circumstances, the University is obliged to provide residential accommodation for the vast majority of its students. And this is and can be very expensive affair.

There is every truth in Prof. Goma's words. There may be an improvement in public transport with the liberalisation of the economy and the appearance of mini-buses on the Zambian roads, but people renting rooms or houses (known as boarding houses) only provide rooms and beds. Universities' administrations and student unions have not performed to expectation in ensuring that students renting private houses or rooms get acceptable habitable rooms with reading and cooking facilities. Prof. Goma talked about 'approved rooms', which means that universities' administration should approve student rented quarters or rooms. It means that anyone desiring to rent quarters or rooms to students must apply to the University for inspection of facilities, followed by approval or otherwise.

Conclusion

Given the impoverishment of the country, building a new university would have been impossible. It is now common practice world-wide to upgrade colleges into universities. In fact, there is already precedence in Zambia. The Zambia Institute of Technology was turned into the current Copperbelt University when the government failed to construct University of Zambia, Ndola Campus (UNZANDO). To the question: was the process of

transforming NCE driven or is it the process that drove the transformation? Our answer is that the process drove the transformation. Starting out without a technical team and without officially co-opting UNZA to work out a roadmap for the transformation, unnecessary delays occurred. In any case, out of what seemed to have been chaotic, initially, came a most desired result which delighted those students who had been admitted to the programmes that were in shadow existence at the institution. There are lessons to learn from this episode, TESS was not ready to see the process of transforming NCE stall because it had been disappointed by UNZA when in 2006 it gave the institution two billion kwacha for 'fast track' upgrading of 6 000 diploma holders in high schools over a period of years. The money was used to address some of the perennial problems at the institution. Nonetheless, Zambia has a fourth public university, this particular one, to train teachers. One can only hope that they will be absorbed in the teaching profession so that the general conundrum of having teachers and schools without teachers is not perpetuated. The challenges at what will be NUC in June 2010 are numerous and serious and there will be more after June 2010.

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