

# Opinion

## Solution to shortage of doctorates in universities



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University education has grown by leaps and bounds in the last three decades, increasing from three public universities – Makerere, Kyambogo and Mbarara University of Sciences and Technology – to over 40 public and private institutions.

However, these universities differ in terms of academic strength, programmes and courses plus the hierarchy of staffing, especially at staff with doctors of philosophy (PhD) to run graduate programmes.

As such delivering quality education in institutions of higher learning, calls for highly qualified lecturers.

For one to qualify to teach in the university, one should, preferably, have a PhD. However, this cadre of staff is in short supply.

Therefore, as universities prepare to start the new academic year, one of the major challenges the institutions have to contend with is the shortage



**PhD graduates from Makerere University. The World Bank has called for the continent to train 10,000 PhDs in the next 10 years.**

of PhD holders.

It is estimated that there are about 1,000 PhD holders in Uganda, yet Makerere University alone needs 900

PhDs. In the long term, the World Bank has called for the continent to train 10,000 PhDs in the next 10 years.

This begs the question, what can be done to deliver a quality education with the current limited number of PhD holders?

One answer is academic co-operation, which involves sharing of expert services and mentorship at individual and institutional levels. It can take on domestic, regional and international nature in reach and quality.

Academic co-operation can also be at individual level, where consultancies could be agreed, and at institutional level, where memoranda of understanding could be entered into for long-term co-operation.

The goal of academic co-operation is to promote higher education by identifying and utilising available academic resources, especially at PhD level, for the benefit of the institution and academic fraternity.

This can be achieved by identifying qualified academicians to serve in universities, strengthening higher institution of learning and rationalisation of programmes to target both the public and private sector markets.

Possible areas of co-operation include programme development, especially masters and PhDs, teaching, research, innovation, community outreach, graduate supervision and examination, plus research and publishing.

Whichever form it takes, academic co-operation is a crucial undertaking if educational prosperity and technological advancement are to be a reality. Short of this, universities may continue to churn out graduates unsuitable for the market.

**The writer is co-ordinator graduates school Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara**

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**The nominee must:**

- Be a Ugandan aged 15-35 years
- Be a small or medium scale entrepreneur (except those doing farming as an enterprise).
- Be drawing his/her livelihood from the business.
- Have an enterprise that has been in existence for at least three years.
- Have an enterprise with apparent impact on society by providing a service/ product that is solving a community need and creating job opportunities.

