

ASSESSMENT OF VALUE CO-CREATION AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS IN TANZANIA'S HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR: *THE CASE OF CBE, DSA/TIA & IFM*

*Elisante ole Gabriel**

Abstract: This paper starts by discussing an overview of the Higher Education Sector in Tanzania. The relevant institutions are mentioned indicating them as private or public. For purposes of consistency of the discussion, three Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) were selected for an in-depth analysis and discussion. It should be borne in mind that, there are differing appreciations between the service users (customers) and the service providers (Managers and Technicians). For purposes of discussion in this paper, service users are students who are the core customers of the business. The three HLIs selected for this study are: The College of Business Education (CBE), The Dar Es Salaam School of Accountancy and the Institute of Finance Management (IFM). After the data collection and analysis, the Chief Executive Officers with their management teams were invited to attend a brainstorming session on 12th December 2002. This facilitated the critical ethnography approach, which has been the ultimate method of collecting data. Participants gave very good inputs and felt owners of the work. This was the objective of the researcher to engage the service providers in the process of analysing and understanding the real situation from the beginning. After the brainstorming session, the service providers promised to make necessary improvement to the Value Co-creation System (VCS) and the service delivery system. Models of the co-creation of value and the value chain are suggested in the paper. These models have been reviewed and acknowledged by marketing and competitive strategies 'gurus' such as Prof. Philip Kotler and Prof. Michael Porter respectively. Genuine recommendations are also given to rectify the weaknesses pointed out by the customers. It should be borne in mind that, this paper is very much driven by customers' perspective. Value should always be considered from the customer's point of view and not the provider. The study is intended to give a cross-section of the real situation on the ground. The researcher hopes that, the findings and analysis made herein will build a stable foundation for all other HLIs to develop their value chain for each contributor of the Higher Education Sector related to that particular Institution. A Communicational Interaction Model (CIM) for the HE sector is developed and provided. This distinguishes the communicational from informational interaction.

INTRODUCTION

This research work is based on the Higher Education (HE) sector of Tanzania, East Africa. Three public Institutions (CBE, DSA and IFM) were used as a segment for this research work. These institutions have more commonalities than differences. They offer the same programmes and in some cases related ones therefore, are competing in the same market. They are all based in Dar es Salaam which is the commercial city of Tanzania. The research is intended to find out the contribution of communicative customer service in service competition in the HE sector. This work has two major objectives. Firstly, to

* Head of Department, Executive Development, Research and Consultancy, The Institute of Finance Management.
Email: elisantegabriel@hotmail.com
Phone: +255-744-434412

develop a new framework for the co-creation of value, value chain and communicational interaction models for the HE sector. Secondly, to suggest various strategies on improving the real situation of 'customer delivered value' in the HE sector of Tanzania. There is always a need to make a choice before conducting a research. The researcher chose the hermeneutic epistemic domain, which is committed to objective ontology with a subjective epistemology. This domain gives room for *interactions* with the community under research hence, a co-creation of meaning as opposed to the positivistic commitment, which takes for granted that the social world can be understood objectively from the 'outside.' In the hermeneutic domain the *pragmatic critical realism* has been chosen as an epistemic stance. It is further developed to 'critical ethnography.' Critical ethnography

allows the researched community to give their views on the outcome of the data collected and the analysis made. Participant observation has been the main method for data collection supported by other methods such as questionnaires, interviews and documentary sources. A progressive movement of the roles of the researcher (using observation as a major method) has been given in Figure 1 of this text. The researcher changed roles from:

Complete observer → *Complete Participant*
 → *Participant as observer* → *Observer as participant.*

Since this method was supported by other methods, data triangulation was used. The advantages of the triangulation approach have been maximised, minimising the disadvantages.

RESEARCH LOCATION

Tanzania has twenty-eight higher learning institutions for the moment, which are spread over nine regions. Out of the twenty-eight, fourteen are in the Dar es Salaam. In terms of ownership, the higher education sector, after trade liberalization is composed of both private and publicly owned institutions. The distribution at the moment is nineteen by nine for public and private respectively. The distribution of these institutes is shown in Table 1.1. The institutes will be shown in relation to their ownership; this means whether owned by the state or privately. It should be borne in mind that even in state-owned institutions, students now study under the cost-sharing scheme. This is very different from the time when students used to get full sponsorship from the Government including: personal allowance, full accommodation, and travel expenses. This implies that though they are state owned (public), they operate differently from those public institutions which existed before liberalization. Additionally, there are also students studying in public institutions but through private sponsorship (parents or

employers). Therefore, ownership and sponsorship should be treated separately.

The Institutes (see Table 1.1) differ not only in terms of ownership but also in ranking. An institute can either fall in category A, B or C. Category A contains universities and university colleges. Category B comprises those institutes which offer undergraduate and/or postgraduate courses but are not yet recognized as universities. Category C comprises those institutes which are mainly offering professional courses and undergraduate courses, with limited infrastructures and capacity to be defined under category B. Under special arrangements, these institutions (category C) can also be allowed to offer postgraduate courses, provided that they have a distinct offering in that particular area of study. There are procedures which are monitored by the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) of Tanzania. It is only when the prescribed conditions are fulfilled that an institute can be recategorised to a higher position. The institute can be recategorised to a lower position if it is evidently clear that it is performing below the set standards.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Due to the on-going structural adjustments in the HE sector and the liberalization of Tanzanian economy, there is a need to make a study which will result in a new sense of direction to sustain this business.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives are very much linked with the significance of the study. However, they are not the same though they are close to each other. The following are the objectives which this study sought to achieve.

- ♦ To make a contribution to the body of knowledge related to the subject matter;
- ♦ To identify the core competencies of various HLIs so that they can build a competitive edge;

Table 1: Regional Distribution of Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania

REGION	HLLs	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION
DAR ES SALAAM	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College of Business Education (CBE) • Dar Es Salaam School of Accountancy (DSA) • The Institute of Finance Management (IFM) • The University of Dar Es Salaam • Open University of Tanzania • University College of Lands and Architecture • Muhimbili University College of Health • Dar Es Salaam Institute of Technology • National Institute of Transport • National Social Welfare Institute • Tanzania School of Journalism ➤ Waldorf College – Dar Es Salaam Campus ➤ Hubert Kairuki Memorial University ➤ International and Medical Technology University
MOROGORO	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sokoine University of Agriculture • Mzumbe University
IRINGA	1	➤ University College of Iringa
MWANZA	1	➤ St. Augustine University of Tanzania
BUKOBWA	1	➤ Bukoba University
KILIMANJARO	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operative College of Moshi ➤ Tumaini University ➤ Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre
DODOMA	1	• The Institute of Rural Development Planning
UNGUJA	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zanzibar University • College of Education Zanzibar
ARUSHA	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Institute of Community Development • Institute of Accountancy Arusha ➤ Makumira University College
TOTAL	28	

Key: ● = Public; ➤ = Private

- To establish a communicational interaction model linking service providers, service users (students) and other stakeholders in the service delivery system;
- To set a base for other researches on related research work in the future.

THE SELECTED SEGMENT OF HLLs

This research work is intended to make a critical analysis of the impact of having a communicative customer service system in place. The scope of the research involved three HLLs in Tanzania. The major focus being at the horizontal level of the service providers and the service users. For the purpose of clarity, the service providers are mainly the lecturers (facilitators) whereas the service users

are students. However, in the broad scope the service providers can be sub-divided into two categories: the service managers (the management team) and the service technicians (the lecturers). The relationship between service users and providers has been observed to be sensitive in the value co-creation system. This is to say; social communication, mutual relationship, trust and co-operation between service providers and users facilitates co-creation of value successfully. These two contributors have a role to play jointly to achieve success or failure of the service quality and delivery. Therefore, it is necessary to relate the two contributors because of the unique characteristic of service known as *inseparability*. For this very reason, it is not appropriate to study only the service providers' views, as the loop

would have remained open. Bearing in mind the limitations and delimitations (hindering factors) of any research, the researcher could not, by any means, carry a study of all twenty-eight institutions. He therefore made a careful selection of three institutions to make the study more in-depth and critical. The three institutions, with their respective categories, are:

- ♦ The College of Business Education (CBE) – Category C
- ♦ Dar es Salaam School of Accountancy (DSA) - Category B
- ♦ The Institute of Finance Management (IFM)- Category B

RATIONALE FOR THE CHOICE OF THE HLIs

In choosing the institutions special consideration has been given to the similarities among these institutions. This was intended to avoid the ambiguity of the data collection as well as analysis and interpretation process. The similarities among the institutions include the following:

- ♦ The nature of the programmes/products offered;
- ♦ The time of inception into the academic sector (each has been in business for about three decades);
- ♦ The size in terms of the number of students and other infrastructures (average of 1,000 students);
- ♦ Location: They are all located in Dar es Salaam;
- ♦ Type of customers: They all focus almost on the same market, hence they are in direct competition;
- ♦ Government intervention: All of them are public institutions

The College of Business Education (CBE)

The College was established following a bilateral agreement (BA) between the Government of Tanganyika and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany signed on 6th September

1962. As a result of this agreement a “Business Training Institute” (BTI) was established in 1963. The short courses were conducted for officers of the Ministry of Commerce and others. The programmes were temporarily run at a place called Ilala Boma, since there were no proper infrastructures for the purpose.

Strategic objectives

It is envisaged that the objectives and functions of the College of Business Education were and continued to be the following (*CBE Prospectus* – 1999/2000: 8):

- i) To provide facilities for the study of, and for training in, the principles, procedures and techniques of business administration.
- ii) To conduct training programmes leading to recognised professional and sub-professional qualifications in business administration relevant to middle level managerial positions in trade and industry.
- iii) To engage in any other educational activities which in the opinion of the Governing Body is necessary, expedient or conducive for the promotion of business education in the United Republic of Tanzania (URT).

Dar es Salaam School of Accountancy (Tanzania Institute of Accountancy)

The school was established as a department of the Ministry of Finance under a special directive of the Ministry. The school started operating from 1st January 1974, to conduct both short and long courses for lower and middle level Government accounting employees so as to make them effective in their jobs and so improve performance. A new name, Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA), came into being in July 2002, but was officially announced in November 2002. This name came as a result of the former Dar es Salaam School of Accountancy (DSA), being transformed to an Executive Agency. However, until now, curricula, objectives and

other settings are still as they were for DSA. Let us consider the establishment of DSA, since it is the one which has been in existence long enough to allow for data collection and analysis for this research. Possibly, the outcome of this research could be one of the opportune moments for TIA to improve whatever DSA missed out in terms of communicative customer service. For the purpose of this research the old name (DSA) will be used unless otherwise stated.

Strategic objectives

- a) To offer courses for lower, middle and higher professional levels in accountancy, materials management and any other business-related courses leading to awards of the Institute;
- b) To provide consultancy services and short courses in various disciplines;
- c) To conduct research in areas of national and international interests;
- d) To conduct training to candidates for external examinations conducted by various professional boards;
- e) To produce manuals and other publications in connection with the activities of the Institute.

The Institute of Finance Management (IFM)

IFM was established in 1972 by Act number 3 of Parliament to offer courses at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, undertake research and provide consultancy services in finance and related subjects. It has established an international reputation for the quality of its courses. It has attracted students (customers) from various parts of the country and abroad. At present it is still a parastatal institution under the Ministry of Finance. It is looking to transform itself into a university in the near future.

Mission and Objectives

IFM is driven by the following mission: *'To excel as a centre and leader in training, research and*

consultancy, in Tanzania, in business and finance related disciplines'. To realise this mission the following are the objectives of IFM:

- a) Improve the quality of teaching through proper staff recruitment, development and retention and adequate supply of teaching aids;
- b) Qualitative improvement of existing programmes to make them more professional, putting into consideration clients' needs both at local and international levels;
- c) Expansion of existing programs through increased enrolment and introduction of new programs;
- d) Diversification into new areas, like international trade;
- e) Development of the Institute's potential for self-reliance in order to sustain its operations within the planned period;
- f) To convert the Institute to a full-fledged University.

STAKEHOLDERS OF THE SECTOR AND THEIR EXPECTATIONS

There is always confusion between stakeholders and shareholders. At this juncture we need to be clear that all shareholders are stakeholders but the reverse is not automatic. In this research some of the stakeholders will be discussed as contributors. Contributors will directly or indirectly be connected to the service delivery system. The model for the Value Co-creation System was sent to Prof. Philip Kotler for review. He replied by appreciating the relevance of the model to HE sector. He also suggested that the name 'service seekers' be changed to 'students' while 'technicians' should be called lecturers (teachers). He gave this comment in order to make the model more communicative for those who will adopt it. It was also sent to Professor Michael Porter who admitted, through his research associate, that they did not consider the components of this sector when developing Porter's value chain model.

Service Managers

These play a key role in designing the service and service delivery system. In some cases, especially privately owned institutions, they are answerable to shareholders. The core expectation of this group is to satisfy their customers and get recognition. They always wish to make themselves stronger than their competitors. These contributors form the first half of the service providers.

Lecturers (Service technicians)

These are at the service encounter with the students (service seekers). They play a key role in communicating the quality of the service to customers. Their key expectation is 'handsome' remuneration.

Students (Service seekers)

These are the key customers of the business without whom there is no business. Their major expectation is to learn comfortably. They expect to acquire knowledge, which in turn can reposition them in knowledge base and knowledge competition. Since they are coming for advanced learning they expect mature handling. Some of them are fresh from school but others are officers working in various organisations. In some cases the more mature students are of a similar age to that of the parents of some of the lecturers. Consequently, they expect to be handled with due respect.

Support Staff

Like lecturers, these employees are more concerned with remuneration. A few of them might be more concerned with the satisfaction of the external customers but the majority are motivated by their salary package.

Public

The public, including the Government, expect

to get experts to solve problems of related subject matters from the graduates from various HLIs. So, they expect solutions.

Shareholders (Investors)

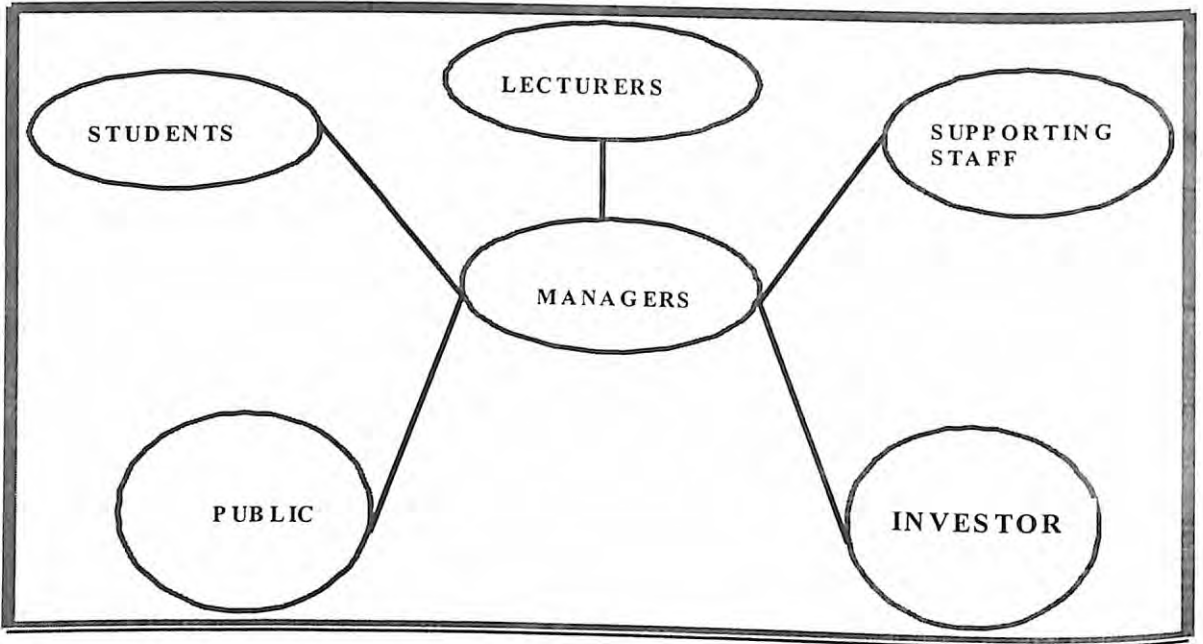
These are the people or organisations, which have invested in this business expecting a handsome return on investment (ROI). This is normally in terms of dividends, especially in the privately owned institutions. They may expect to offer a better service but this does not come first in the list of priorities. In the case of public owned institutions the shareholder is the Government on behalf of the public. In this case the quality of the service is the priority. This gives the public owned institutions a competitive advantage in brand equity.

The model in Figure 1(a), which the researcher has named 'skeleton', depicts a human body system. It displays the analogy of the skeleton of a human body with six major organs. The analogy is demonstrated in Figure 1(b).

These are; spine and pelvis, left arm, head, right arm, left leg and right leg. As in the case of stakeholders of the Higher Education sector, the relationship with organs will be *Managers, Students, Lecturers, Supporting staff, Public and Investors* respectively. In particular managers are placed in the position of spine and pelvis since they are the ones to co-ordinate the other stakeholders. Managers, by default, may wish to claim to be at the position of 'head'. The researcher has positioned lectures at the 'head' since they are the ones in the moment of truth with the students.

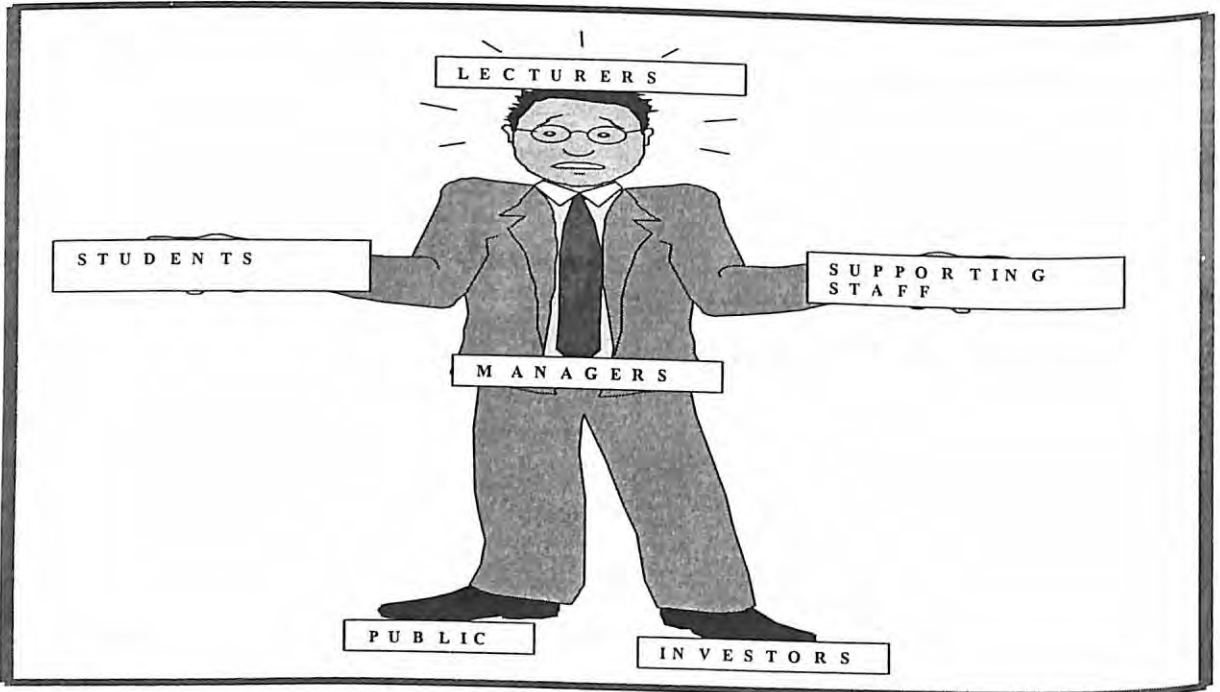
Taking the analogy of the human body in Figure 1(b), it follows that in order for those organs to function, they need a proper blood supply system. Similarly for the components of the stakeholders to operate successfully (Figure 1(a), they need a proper 'social communication system'. Any misunderstanding between the components will be disastrous to the whole sector. For this very reason, though the researcher

Figure 1(a): Stakeholders of HLIs (Skeleton Model, System Approach)



Source: Gabriel, E (2003b)

Figure 1(b): The Analogy of the Human Body System to HE Sector.



Source: Gabriel, E (2003b)

concentrated on the relationship between service providers and students, there was a clear understanding of the whole system.

Methods Used in Data Collection

Having in mind the choices made about the epistemological position, there is a need to discuss various methods, which are relevant for data production, collection and analysis. These methods vary in terms of preparation, application, strengths and weaknesses.

Participant Observation

In this case the researcher generated data from the participation point of view. The significant advantage of this technique is its directness. You need not ask people for their views, feelings or attitudes. You watch what they do and listen what they say and gain access to their feelings and attitudes through interactions. It is one of the best methods to avoid bias and distortion. It is different from interviews and questionnaires.

'...Interviews and questionnaires, for instance, are notorious for discrepancies between what people say that they have done, or they will do, and they actually did or will do.' (Oskamp, 1977)

Other methods used include:

- ♦ Questionnaires;
- ♦ Interviews; and
- ♦ Documentary sources.

Value Co-creation System (VCS)

This is a system whereby contributors co-produce the value according to the expectations of customers. To make this possible, customers need to be involved in the co-creation of value. We can say 'co-creation' ought to be a joint job of every one involved in the system, hence stakeholders (see Figure 1a and 1b). Once the system is working properly the customer service becomes communicative on its sense of delivery (see Figure 2). This model together with the value chain model for HE sector, were proposed to

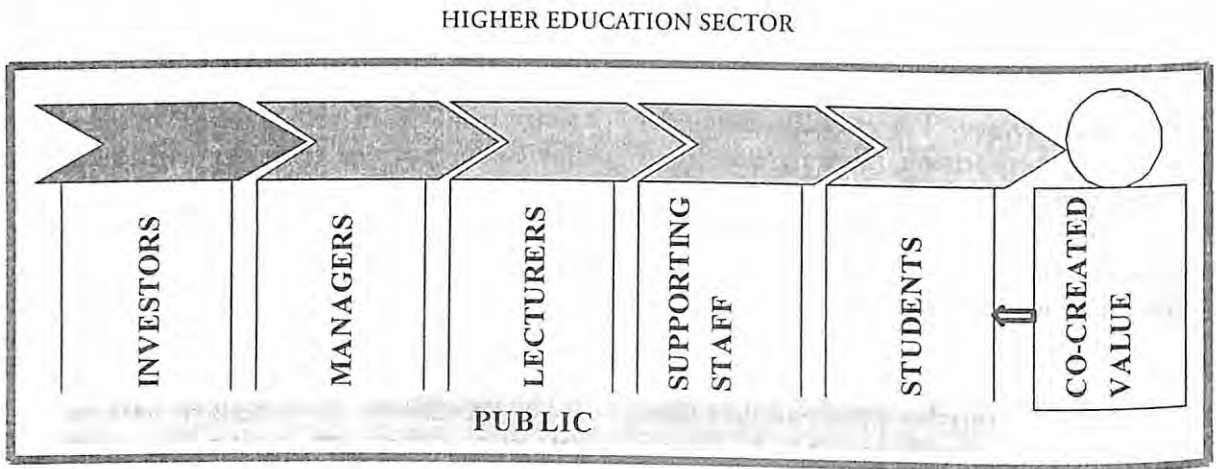
Professor Philip Kotler for his comments. Professor Kotler in his reply, he appreciated the concept to be appropriate giving a suggestion to change the names of 'technicians' to lecturers and 'seekers' to students. It is also important to manage the VCS in such a way that there is a value chain intended for every contributor in order to have an effective value chain for the target customers. By having six contributors, you can have six different value chains depending on the target group. The backward arrow shows the co-created value directed to the intended contributing group, in this case students.

The stakeholders (contributors) have to link their efforts together aiming at a common objective, which ought to be maximization of satisfaction through co-created value delivery approach. Investors have to inject capital to make the infrastructures and other subsystems and supporting activities available. Managers play a significant role in recruiting lectures and supporting staff. Lecturers engage to the moment of truth in the service delivery process. The supporting staff perform various activities to make sure that the system is operating. Students need to provide a good cooperation and also participate fully in the learning process. The public contains every one else but more importantly includes the employers who will take the graduates after completing the programmes. Interaction is needed between joints of the stakeholders (contributors). Interaction will act as a cushion between the joints.

Characteristics of a Managed Value Co-creation System

- i) Each contributor will be given equal value
- ii) The nature of the service (product) will be understood and managed on holistic and not individualistic manner (synergy is given a chance).
- iii) Communicational interactions will be operational and not informational interactions.

Figure 2: Value Co-creation System (VCS)



Source: Gabriel, E. (2003b)

- iv) It ought to be a value delivery network/system;
- v) Continuous evaluation and improvement should be part of the culture of the contributors;
- vi) Service managers should be responsible and accountable for miscommunication, if any.
- vii) Satisfying users (customers) is of the top priority than financial profits;
- viii) Contribution of the contributors matters more than their positions. This means, it does not matter what the position of the one who gives an idea but the value of the contribution is the thing, which matters (Appreciative System concept);
- ix) Service quality gaps are to be eliminated rather than managed. They should not be given room to happen (dialogical service system);
- x) The impact of Word of Mouth (WOM) is highly respected, hence to form part of the components to be managed in the value delivery system.

Service providers need to be sensitive to the VCS if they need to create and sustain their customers as well as a competitive advantage.

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION.

The data were collected using various methods as indicated in previous sections. In particular, a uniform questionnaire was administered in the three HLLs. A lot of information is gathered by questionnaires, which have been distributed to the students. Anonymity was assured to the respondents before they completed the questionnaires. From the responses obtained from the questionnaires, five categories of the collections of the raw data have been derived. The derived categories include:

- a) Core competence
- b) Weaknesses
- c) Managerial Performance
- d) Suggestions from the users
- e) Any unique impressive experience?

These categories resulted from the close – as well as open-ended questions.

After administering the questionnaire to the selected sample of 50, 40, 50 respondents from CBE, DSA/TIA and IFM respectively, the results are hereby presented in combined table of the derived categories.

Table 2: *Derived Categories – Combined & Compared (CBE, DSA & IFM)*

DERIVED CATEGORY		No.	COLLECTIONS	HLIs			
A	CORE COMPETENCIES			CBE	DSA	IFM	
			QNN	QNN	QNN		
		1	The only Institute	✓ 2	✓ 34	✓ 2	***
		2	Reputation	✓ 8	✓ 26	✓ 4	***
		3	Quality of education offered	✓ 3	✓ 6	✓ 3	***
		4	Access to professional boards' examinations		✓ 14	✓ 26	**
		5	Relatively low fees	✓ 4	✓ 1		**
		1	Interactive communication	✓ 23	✓ 17	✓ 24	***
		2	Supporting facilities and activities	✓ 4	✓ 1	✓ 4	***
		3	Service managers responsiveness	✓ 3	✓ 20	✓ 5	***
		4	Lecturers responsiveness	✓ 4	✓ 21	✓ 5	***
		5	Cost Benefit Analysis	✓ 8		✓ 2	**
		6	No customer service unit	✓ 8		✓ 14	**
		7	No priority to customers' needs			✓ 10	*
		8	Leakage of examination			✓ 10	*
		9	No appraisal forms for lecturers			✓ 16	*
		10	Social gap: providers Vs users			✓ 10	*
		11	Discontinuation to finalists			✓ 50	*
		1	Just trying to perform	✓ 38	✓ 1	✓ 3	***
		2	Pleasant fees collection mechanism	✓ 23			*
		3	Nothing special so far	✓ 3	✓ 18	✓ 25	***
		4	Good feedback mechanism	✓ 15			*
		1	Improve the social/interactive communication with users	✓ 3	✓ 17	✓ 14	***
		2	Improve the supporting facilities	✓ 3	✓ 14	✓ 6	***
		3	Establish a customer service unit	✓ 45	✓ 29	✓ 14	***
		4	All lecturers should always be qualified and supportive	✓ 36	✓ 21	✓ 3	***
		5	There should be aggressive promotional campaigns	✓ 6			*
		6	Involve users in decision making process	✓ 4		✓ 4	**
		7	PT lectures should not be interrupting the full time sessions			✓ 6	*
		8	Keep promises promptly	✓ 47	✓ 22	✓ 15	***
		9	Computerize service-information		✓ 26	✓ 6	**
		10	Hold the results instead of stopping candidate doing the examinations			✓ 41	*
		11	Results of one examination/test should be given before another	✓ 50		✓ 45	**
		12	There should be a proper time table for exams as well as results	✓ 46		✓ 15	**
		13	The environment should always be neat and tidy for hygiene reasons	✓ 6	✓ 34		**

		14	Introduce sufficient computer facilities & Internet	✓ 26	✓ 5		**
		15	Some tutors need to be smart in the way they dress		✓ 8		*
		16	Change the management system	✓ 48	✓ 30	✓ 13	***
E	ANY UNIQUE IMPRESSIVE EXPERIENCE	1	Nothing at all but regrets	✓ 48	✓ 2	✓ 21	***
		2	The functional part of the service 'HOW'	✓ 3	✓ 10	✓ 19	***
		3	The technical part of the service 'WHAT'	✓ 3	✓ 4	✓ 10	***
		4	The anticipated recognition	✓ 44	✓ 28	✓ 3	***
		5	The interrelationship amongst students		✓ 17	✓ 40	**
		6	The availability of hostel facility			✓ 30	*
		7	Computer and Internet facilities			✓ 29	*
		8	External collaborations with abroad Institutions			✓ 4	*
		9	Good control of examinations' timetable and leakage		✓ 21		*
		10	Fees collection process	✓ 4			*

KEY:

* = The occurrence among the three HLIs.

No. = Serial number of the collections for listing purpose

√ (QNN): This indicates the existence of that aspect in a certain HLI, with a sample of the questionnaire, which could be referenced for originality. (For the sake of confidentiality and anonymity original samples will only be availed on request)

NOTE: The collections are re-defined without distorting the original meaning collected.

DEFINING THE DERIVED CATEGORIES

The categories have been used to group the collections, which appear to be focusing on the same dimension. They were not fabricated before the research work, but emanated from the collections. The researcher found it useful to categorise the collections in order to have more concise and justifiable reasoning. The collections made from 140 questionnaires have been grouped into five distinct categories. Since they are derived from the respondents' point of view, they might change depending on the nature of the respondents at each particular point of time. However, there is every good reason to take on board what is collected for the moment to have the real situation reflected by the respondents. The researcher also admits that, the questions

were designed in a certain sequence to make a certain flow of getting the information from the respondent. There is no doubt that the nature of answers could be slightly different if the sequence of the questions is altered. The researcher took what is reflected to be one of the possible reflections with the given sequence of questions at the very time of collecting the data. The categories are linked in the sense that they are all from the higher education sector in Tanzania. They are distinct in the sense that each reflects a certain phenomenon in a particular institute or institutions. These categories are redefined in such a way that, they catch the reflection of each open-ended question, which gave the respondents an opportunity to express their points of view unbiased. Anonymity and

originality of the information has been observed very carefully and this gave respondents confidence in answering the questions.

Data Interpretation

The interpretation includes the collection by all media including the interactive observation of the researcher. A special emphasis will be given to the collection made by questionnaires responded by the students. It should be borne in mind that understanding the needs of the customers correctly and acting promptly is a very crucial facet.

There is a fallacy existing between many service providers (managers) in the HLIs. The managers, using most of their time in their offices with paper work, do take for granted that the service is offered in a way they think it ought to be offered. This is not always the case and in most cases this is a misleading ideology. The researcher found enormous differing appreciations between what the service managers are anticipating (not exactly sure about it) is taking place and the reality of the service quality as perceived by the students. It is beyond belief to notice that, some students are almost regretting their choice of a particular institution, whereas the managers of the service as well as the technical-service providers (lecturers) are considering the service to be offered competitively. By the lecturers, the reference is made to those who are engaged at '*the moment of truth*' in the service offering process. This discrepancy of the service providers' appreciation of the service and that of the service users (students) prompts a need for co-construction of what ought to be the acceptable service value.

Unfortunately, some of the service providers assumed that once promotion is done, and customers come for enrolment, then the value is communicated. One of the observations pointed out earlier by the researcher was that at some Institutions, students had this to say;

'...We regret we are in this Institution, we wish we could know in advance that this is the real situation. We could better go elsewhere! Unfortunately we are cheated, by false promises which are never kept to reality...

There is always a difference in addressing the shortfalls pre-Vs post complaints. When some of the students, in a certain HLI, were interviewed they said:

... there are many problems in this Institute...but, the only good thing is that the principal always informs the community well in advance about the anticipated problem, or the existing, as well as measures which are taken to handle the problem. We are so pleased of the way the Principal is managing our issues...'

The above suggests clearly that, students can understand even the shortfalls of the service quality, provided that they are given prior information. This will enable them to build confidence upon the service providers, hence 'trust'.

Suggested Framework for the Way Forward

HLIs need to adopt two fundamental strategies in order to be competitive while satisfying their customers. The two interrelated strategies include:

- ♦ Integrating the roles of the contributors of the HE sector and adopt the Communicational Interaction Model (CIM) while avoiding informational interactions (Gabriel, 2003b).
- ♦ Developing a value chain and adopt it for every contributing group.

The role of Contributors and CIM

CIM is a diamond shaped model. It is intended to be used as a tool for explaining and coordinating the contributors of the service delivery network in the HE sector in Tanzania. Synergism should be observed to create a common understanding

through communicational interactions. This model is meant to operationalise the characteristics of the managed (not controlled) communicative customer service system as discussed earlier. The model consists of five forces emanating from the respective contributors in the service delivery network. The integrated communicational dialogue needs to be among the following contributors:

- i) Students (service users);
- ii) Service managers;
- iii) Lecturers (service technicians);
- iv) Regulatory bodies; and
- v) Competitors.

Each of the above contributes significantly to service delivery and value creation system. Table 3 shows a summary of key contributions of each contributor.

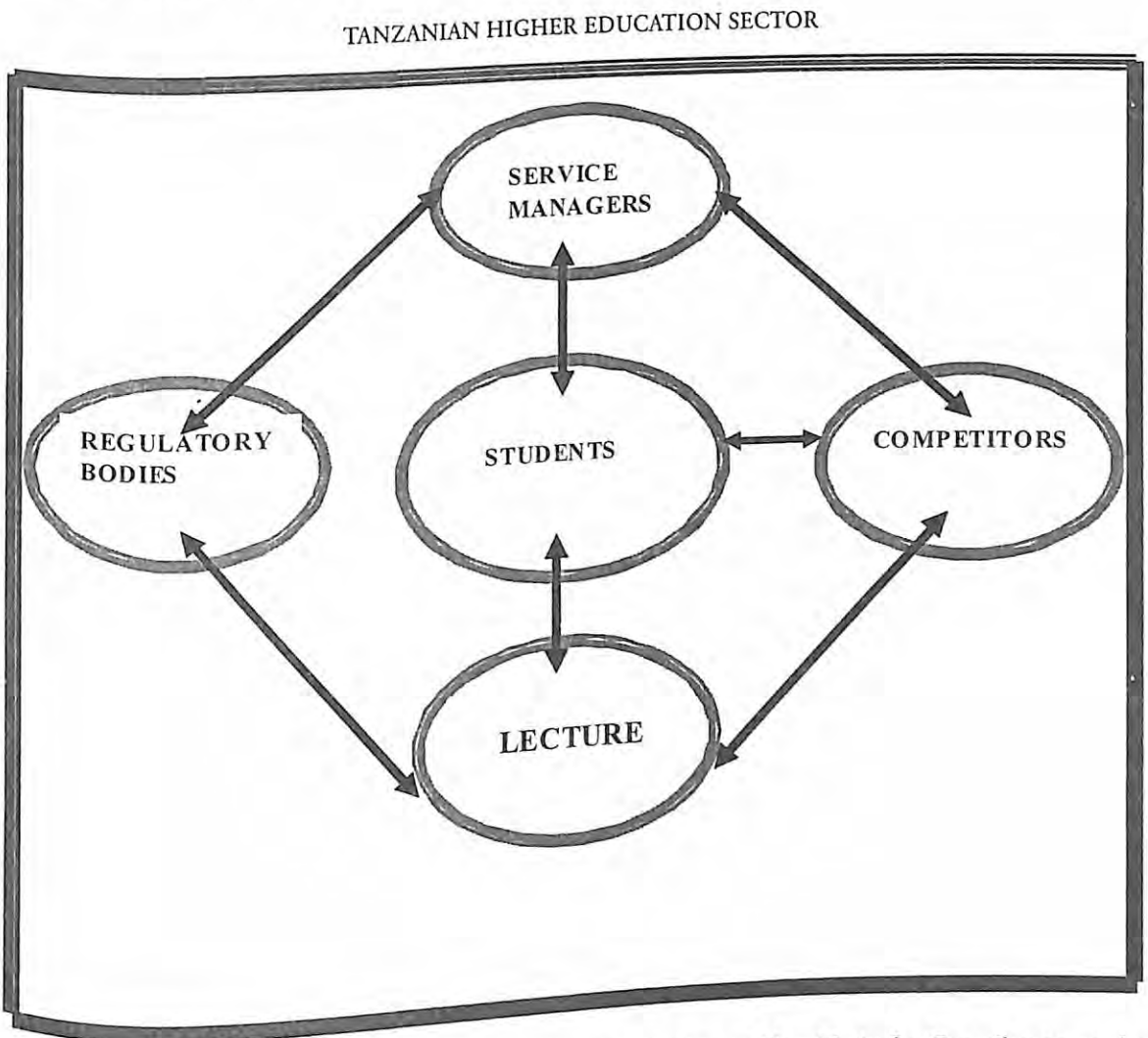
Table 3: *The Roles of Contributors to the CIM*

<i>COTRIBUTING GROUP</i>	<i>CONTRIBUTION</i>
STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the right direction for service design • Provide a quick feedback for improvement • Word of Mouth to the prospective (new) customers • Bring their experience about the world and share with others • Without their presence, there will be no sense of the business in HE sector.
SERVICE MANAGERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the demand of the customers (users) • Design the appropriate product and review it according to varying appreciation of the customers. • Engage other contributors to the value creation system. • Motivate lecturers to do their best.
LECTURERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages the moment of truth. • Quick feedback to the managers • Motivate the users to participate and enjoy the learning process
REGULATORY BODIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage standards of each HLI according to the requirements of the labour market • To review the performance of the HLIs in terms of syllabi • To offer a professional advise and examination regulations (for the professional bodies) • Act as an agent of the Government. Example Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC), Ministries, etc
COMPETITORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create challenge to the institutes of similar or substitute products • To offer professional support, when needed. Example when IFM need professional lecturers of a certain subject from the DSA • Give the users a possibility of making choices unlike a monopolistic market structure. • Encourage innovation, since each HLI will be striving to be ahead of its competitors.

It is only when there is a communicational interaction/dialogue among these contributors, that the social communication process will be a success. The pictorial presentation of the communicational interaction model is shown in Figure 3

The double arrows indicate the concept of 'interdependency' of the contributors. No one should claim to be more important than another. They need to operate as a system (synergy). The researcher suggests that, the five components be continuously interrelated to allow a common appreciation.

Figure 3: *Communicational Interaction Model for the HE sector. (Five Forces Framework)*



Developing a Value Chain for Contributors to the HE Sector

Porter (1985) proposed a value chain system in a competitive business environment. Porter's

SOURCE: Gabriel, E (2003b) 'How Can Communicative Customer Service Contribute to Service Competition in the HE Sector of Tanzania?', *PhD Thesis Manuscript*, University of Salford, UK.

value chain consists of five primary activities and four supporting activities. According to Porter, the primary activities include:

- ♦ Inbound Logistics;
- ♦ Operations;
- ♦ Outbound Logistics;
- ♦ Marketing;
- ♦ Services.

The supporting activities include:

- ♦ Firm's infrastructures;
- ♦ Human resource Management;
- ♦ Technology;
- ♦ Procurement.

The nine activities given by Professor Porter seem to be relevant to the manufacturing sector. For a service sector like HE, there is a need to modify the value chain to fit the need of the customers. A version of the value chain for the HE will address the primary activities as the fundamental responsibilities of the contributors given in the CIM (See Figure 3). Some of the supporting activities will be very similar as those given by Professor Michael Porter. We have discussed about the co-creation of value (See Figure 2). This has been from the stakeholders' perspective. There is, however, a difference between creating the value and delivering the value. The value chain shows the activities involved in extending the co-creation to co-delivery. The concept 'chain' emphasises the integration of activities hence synergy. The required synergy needs to be realised through *communicational interactions*. The researcher proposed the Model to Professor Michael Porter for his comments. In his reply, through his research associate (Andrew Funderburk, on 20th July 2003), Porter acknowledged that they do not have an extensive experience on the service sector (see email reply, Appendix 1.4b). This gives evidence that, Porter's value chain is more oriented to the manufacturing sector as suggested earlier by the author of this text. This prompts a need for a design for the

value chain suitable for the service sector like HE. The primary services/attributes for the HE sector value chain should include the following:

Programmes' Design

Programmes should be designed in such a way that they meet the requirements of the market with the given standards. In most cases the service managers are the responsible group to deal with this task.

Regulatory Recognition

In any case, the Institution with its programmes needs to be legally and professionally recognised. This has a serious impact on the brand equity of the programmes, and the HLI as an entity.

Moment of Truth Management

The moment of truth needs very special attention. Lecturers, in particular, are in a position to make the business a success or failure just by the impact of the moment of truth. This is the moment, which students will remember for rest of their lives after graduating. This builds a memory of 'service experience.'

Learning Spirit

Learning is a commitment not just a mere process like transport hotel service etc. The mental participation is arguably important. Students should demonstrate the ability and willingness to learn. This will in turn motivate lecturers to make the moment of truth more effective. Lecturers might be responsible to build this spirit or activate it for students to participate mentally and physically in the learning process. If the students do not demonstrate a clear level of 'learning spirit' the learning process not be effective and sometimes impossible. It should be borne in mind that, the physical participation of the student in the learning process is not and will never be enough to make the learning process effective. Mental commitment is extremely

important. Through communicational interaction, lecturers can determine the effectiveness of the learning process. Similarly, lecturers should also be a platform for learning new evolving concepts.

Service Competition

There should be competition in order to make all service providers alert of the fact that customers will have available choices to them. This will stimulate service providers to be innovative and never complacent. This will make service providers time-sensitive hence managing the service professionally. The supporting services/ attributes include:

Professional Recruitment

In any HLI, the quality of the students admitted to a programme is crucial. This contributes a lot towards improving the quality of the anticipated graduate. There should be a rigorous, fair and transparent recruitment process.

Modern Tools and Infrastructures

The world is changing so fast in terms of technology and other infrastructures. The HLI needs good facilities, which add a lot to what is discussed as 'physical evidence' of the service. If a certain HLI is providing good Internet services to its students, twenty-four hours access to the Library and Internet facilities, this makes a great difference to a HLI which is not providing such services. We have seen in this research how IFM is enjoying the Internet service (for the moment) against its competitors. Modern classrooms, dormitories, toilets, etc., need to be of high quality and appreciated by customers.

Library With Relevant Books

A well-equipped library is very important to the HLI service delivery system. It is not only the building called library, but also a well equipped library with relevant books. There is no point of keeping many books for engineering programmes

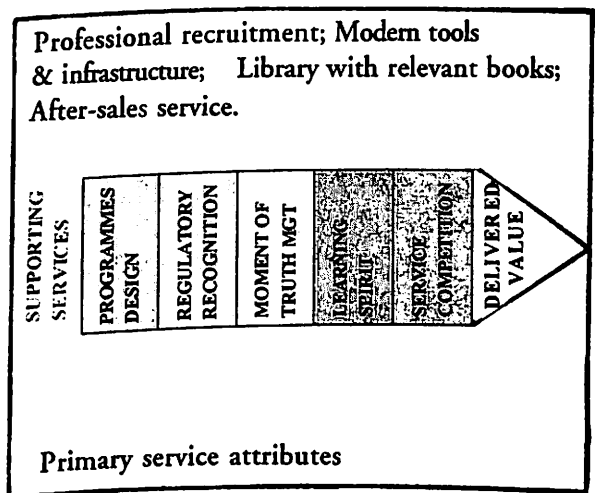
in a Library of a HLI, which is offering only business studies.

After Sales Service

This is one of the supporting activities which most of the HLIs and other service organisations ignore. They consider it as wastage of resources. After sales service have a remarkable benefit in the long run. It keeps an organisation in a continuous relationship with its previous customers. Always, an after-sales service strengthens the impact of word-of-mouth.

A broad scope of these activities is given on Table 3. Therefore a framework of a value chain for HE sector is developed as shown in Figure 4

Figure 4: *The Value Chain (for HE sector)*



Source: Gabriel, E (2003b)

Customers normally incur some costs to acquire value. They get a certain value (customer value) after using money, efforts and time (customer cost). However, for a customer to think of the satisfaction, there should be a net effect of the costs he incurred from the value obtained hence 'customer's delivered value' (Kotler, 1994). In the HE sector, managers should make sure that

there is a noticeable net customer delivered value. Communicational interactions will make customers aware of the costs they have incurred as well as the anticipated value. Customers will then feel part of the value chain. Their spirit of learning should be always motivated throughout the learning process especially by managing well the moment of truth. Their contribution to the value chain needs to be appreciated by other contributors.

CONCLUSION

The author noticed that the role of students (core customers) in determining the value of the service to be delivered is crucial. Doing the service's design without involving the user is like preparing a prescription without any diagnostic dialogue with the patient. The brand equity contributes a lot in attracting customers to make up their mind to choose a particular brand. Similarly, the reputable brand is the one, which can communicate effectively and efficiently to the prospective customers. Word of mouth (WoM) is so powerful in making the brand name strong or weak from the students' point of view. The HLIs in Tanzania have to review the way they offer their services, otherwise the competitive forces will overtake them.

Bibliography

- Alvesson, M., Willmott, H. (2000)
Making Sense of Management: A Critical Introduction
London: Sage Publications.
- Ansoff, I. (1957)
'Strategies for Diversification', *Harvard Business Review*.
- Ballantyne, D. (2003)
"Knowledge Generation Through Communicative Interaction and Dialogue." *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, (forthcoming).
- Barnes, J G. (2001)
Secrets of Customer Relationship Management: It's All About How You Make Them Feel, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Berger, P. L. and Luckmann, T. (1966)
The Social Construction Reality, New York: Doubleday.
- Bloor, D. and Barnes, B. (1996)
Scientific Knowledge: A Sociological Analysis, London: Anthlone Press.
- Bruyn, S. (1966)
The human perspective in sociology: The methodology of participant observation. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Burell, G. and Morgan, G. (1985)
Sociological paradigms and Organizational Analysis, London: Heineman.
- Burnnett, J. (1998)
Introduction to Marketing Communication London: Prentice Hall International.
- Carlzon J. (1989)
Moments of Truth London: Harper & Row.
- Checkland, P B. and Holwell, S. (1998)
Information, Systems and Information Systems: Making Sense of the Field, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Checkland, P B. (2001)
Systems Thinking, Systems Practice, John Wiley & Sons.
- Christopher, M G., Payne, A. and Ballantyne, D. (2002)
Relationship Marketing: Creating Stakeholder Value, 2nd Edition, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Christopher, M., Payne, A. and Ballantyne, D. (1991)
Relationship Marketing, London: Prentice Hall.
- Cibbora, C (1993)
Teams, Markets and Systems : Business Innovation and Information Technology, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Colin, R. (1999)
Real World Research, London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Colin, R. (2002)
Real World Research, London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Davidow, H W. (1990)
Total Customer Service: The Ultimate Weapon, New York: Prentice Hall.
- Deetz, S.A. (1992)
Communication Yearbook, Vol. 15, Newbury, CA.: Sage Publications.
- Deetz, S.A. (1995)
Transforming Communication, Transforming Business: Building Responsive and Responsible Workplaces, Creskill, NJ.: Hampton Press.
- Deetz, S. and Kersten, S. (1983)
'Critical Modes of Interpretive Research', in L. Putnam and M. Pakanowsky, *Communication and Organizations*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

- Douglas, J.D. (1985)
Creative Interviewing Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications
- Fill, C. (1999)
Marketing Communications: Contexts, Contents and Strategies, 2nd Edition, London: Prentice Hall
- Gabbott, M., Hogg, G. (1996)
Consumers and Services, John Wiley & Sons.
- Gabbott, M. et al, (2003)
An Introduction to Marketing: A Value Exchange Approach, Harlow: Pearson Education/Monash University, (forthcoming).
- Gabriel, E. (2002)
'Export Marketing Strategies: A Global Communication Emphasis' *The African Journal of Finance and Management*, Vol. 11, Number 1 (p 49 -59).
- Gabriel, E. (2003a)
'Choosing an Epistemic Stance' *The African Journal of Finance and Management* Vol. 11, Number 2 (p 59 -64).
- Gabriel, E. (2003b)
'How can Communicative Customer Service Contribute to Service Competition in the Higher Education Sector of Tanzania?' *PhD Thesis*, University of Salford, The United Kingdom.
- Gayeski, D M. (1993)
Corporate Communications Management: The Renaissance Communicator in Information-Age Organisation, Boston; London: Focal Press.
- Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (1997)
Research Methods for Managers, 2nd Edition, London: Paul Chapman Publishing Limited.
- Glueck, W. (1988)
Strategic Management and Business Policy London: McGraw-Hill.
- Glynn, J W. and Barnes, J G. (Eds.) (1995)
Understanding Services Management, John Wiley & Sons.
- Gronroos, C. (2000)
Services Management and Marketing: Managing the Moments of Truth in Service Competition, John Wiley & Sons.
- Gruber, T R. (1993)
'A Translation Approach to Portable Ontologies' *Knowledge Acquisition*, 5(2):199-220.
- Hamel, G and Prahalad, C.K (1994)
Competing for the Future, Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Johnson P. and Duberley, J. (2000)
Understanding Management Research: An Introduction to Epistemology, London: Sage Publications.
- Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (1989)
Exploring Corporate Strategy: Text and Cases, 2nd Edition, Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall International.
- Jones, P. (1993)
Studying Society: Sociological Theories and Research Practices, London: Collins Educational.
- Jorgensen, L. (1993)
Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kotler, P. and Fox K F A, (1995)
Strategic Marketing for Educational Institutions, Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Kotler, P. (1994)
Marketing Management : Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control, 8th ed., London: Prentice Hall International.
- Laing, R.D. (1967)
The Politics of Experience and the Birds of Paradise. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Leiss, W. (1986)
Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products & Images of well-being. London: Methuen.
- Levesque, H J. (1984)
'Foundations of a Functional Approach to knowledge representation', *Artificial Intelligence*, July, 23(2), p.155-212.
- evitt, T. (1983)
'The Globalization of Markets.' *Harvard Business Review*, May - June, p.92 - 102
- Lewis, B R. (1995)
Customer Services, John Wiley & Sons.
- Lynch, R., (2000)
Corporate Strategy, 2nd Ed., London: Prentice Hall International.
- Mintzberg, H. (1998)
The Strategy Process, London: Prentice Hall.
- Morgan, N A. (1990)
'Communications and the reality of marketing in professional service firms', *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 9, p. 283-293.
- Newell, A. (1982)
'The knowledge Level.' *Artificial Intelligence* 18:1, p.87 - 127.

- Normann, R and Ramirez, R. (1993)
'From Value Chain to Value Constellation', *Harvard Business Review*, July – August, p. 65 – 77.
- Normann, R. (1992)
Service Management. 2nd Ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Oskamp, S. (1977)
Methods of studying social behavior. In L.S Wringstman (Ed.), *Social Psychology, 2nd edn.* Monterey, Ca: Brooks/Cole. 191.
- Parasuraman, A., Berry, L L. and Zeithaml, V A. (1991)
'Understanding Customer Expectations of Service', *Sloan Management Review*, Spring, p. 39-48.
- Patton, M. (1990)
Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, Sage Publications.
- Peters, J D. (1999)
Speaking into the Air: A history of the Idea of Communication, Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.
- Popper, K R. (1945)
The Open Society and Its Enemies: The Spell of Plato, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Porter, M E. (1980)
Competitive Strategy: Techniques for analysing Industries and Competitors, New York: The Free Press.
- Porter, M E. (1985)
Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance, New York: The Free Press.
- Reiss, A. (1971)
'Systematic Observation of Natural Phenomena' p. 3-33, In Herbert Costner, ed., *Sociological Methodology* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Rumelt, P.(1991)
Richard, P (ed, 1994) *Fundamental Issues in Strategy: A Research Agenda*, Harvard Business School Press.
- Sayer, A. (1981)
'Abstraction: A Realistic Interpretation', *Radical Philosophy*, 28: 6-15.
- Sayer, A. (1992)
Methods in Social Science: A realistic approach (2nd ed.), London: Routledge.
- Schein, E H., Edgar H. (1999)
The Corporate Culture Survival Guide: Sense and Nonsense about Culture, San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Schramm, W. (1982)
Men, Women, Messages, and Media: Understanding Human Communication, (2nd ed.), New York: Harper & Row.
- Schramm, W. (ed.) (1963)
The Science of Human Communication, Urbana, IL.: University of Illinois Press.
- Thietart, R. (2001)
Doing Management Research: A comprehensive guide, London: Sage Publications.
- Varey, R J. (1995)
'A Model of Internal Marketing for Building and Sustaining a Competitive Service Advantage', *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 11, No. 1-3, p. 25-40.
- Varey, R J., Lewis, B R. (eds.) (2000)
Internal Marketing: Directions for Management, London: Routledge.
- Varey, R J. and Gabriel, E. (2000)
'How Can a Relational Strategy Contribute to Service Competition of Two Modes of Passengers Transport?' *13th UK Conference for services marketing*, University of Nottingham.
- Varey, R J. (2002a)
Marketing Communication: Principles and Practice, London: Routledge.
- Varey, R J. (2002b)
Relationship Marketing: Dialogue and Networks in the E-Commerce Era, Chichester: Wiley.
- Varey R. J, and Ballantyne D, (2003)
'Relationship Marketing: The Challenge of Dialogical Interaction' *Conference paper, 11th Colloquium on Relationship Marketing*, Gloucester Business School, (forthcoming).
- Vickers, G. (1965)
The Art of Judgement, London: Chapman & Hall (reprinted in 1995, London: Sage Publications).
- Vickers, G. (1968)
Value Systems and Social Process London: Tavistock Publications.
- Vickers, G. (1970)
Freedom in a Rocking Boat, London: Allen Lane.
- Vickers, G. (1973)
Making Institutions Work, London: Associated Business Programmes.
- Vickers, G. (1983)
Human Systems Are different, London: Harper & Row.
- Watzlawick, P, Beavin, J H. and Jackson, D H. (1967)
Pragmatics of Human Communication: A study of interactional patterns, pathologies, and paradoxes, New York: W W Norton.

Wit, B. and Meyer, R. (1998)

Strategy: Process, Content, Context, 2nd Edition,
London: Thomson Business Press.

Zelditch, M. (1962)

'Some Methodological Problems of Field Studies'
American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 67, No. 5, p.566-
576.

Web sites used:

www.emerald-library.com

www.goole.co.uk

www.tzonline.org

www.tanzania.go.tz/education.html

www.ipppmedia.com