

Faculty Development in a Private University in Kenya: Faculty Perceptions on What Is and What Should Be

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In a context where faculty development programs are non-existent, this study was conducted to examine the possibility of establishing a faculty development program in a private university in Kenya. The study explored faculty views on what they envision would be the program's goals and purposes and their work-related challenges. Data were collected from all full-time faculty using a survey instrument distributed through Survey Monkey. Findings show that junior faculty with limited work experience in arts and social sciences, business, and education were more positive about the program. The faculty were more likely to support the program if its goals and purpose focus on their career aspirations in terms of excellence in teaching and scholarship. Professional-related challenges identified relate to the need to develop skills to teach effectively, undertake and publish rigorous research, and secure competitive grants. The findings suggest that incipient faculty development programs would be successful if they target junior and less experienced faculty and are built around their career aspirations.

Introduction

Relative to the extensive history of higher education, faculty development (FD) is only a recent addition to the numerous innovations within the academy. It emerged as a distinctive field in the United States in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a period characterized by immense social and economic tur-

bulence. During this period, the students' rights movement insisted that students should have more control on what is taught, be able to provide teachers with feedback on their teaching, and determine what would be in their curriculum as a way of injecting more relevant program offerings (Ouellet, 2010). This called for a re-envisioning of faculty work that moved beyond emphasis on research and publications. This new vision required a more holistic focus including excellence in teaching and service, a revolutionary departure from the earlier view of professors as isolated scholars fixated on research and publishing. Along with this re-envisioning of faculty roles came a reevaluation of faculty incentives and rewards to take into account quality teaching and service (Ouellet, 2010; Rice, 2007; Gaff & Simpson, 1994). Since then, the process of developing and maintaining robust programs that support faculty's effective functioning in the dynamic world of higher education setting has remained a challenge.

FD is a dynamic process with a set of interrelated activities designed for continuous professional development. In 1976, Crow, Milton, Moomaw, and O'Connell (1976), defined FD as "the total development of the faculty member—as a person, as a professional, and a member of an academic community" (p. 3). Earlier, Francis (1975) defined FD as "(a) process which seeks to modify the attitudes, skills, and behavior of faculty members toward greater competence and effectiveness in meeting student needs, their needs, and the needs of the institution" (p. 720). More recently, Shagrir (2012) has defined FD as systematic observation, analysis, and reflection of teaching practice including a wider variety of activities such as "discussion, investigation, experimentation with new practices, learning, expansion of knowledge, acquisition of new skills and the development of approaches, stances, knowledge and work tools" (p. 23). Evident in the definitions are both the immediate and ultimate goals of FD: Immediate goals relate to improved curricula, instruction, research, and service, while the ultimate goal is the more effective fulfillment of the educational needs of students and the institution's mission.

Literature indicates that FD is central to improved morale and vitality, enhanced teaching performance, increased research productivity, job satisfaction, and increased work commitment (Penlington 2008; Blackmore & Blackwell 2006; Fraser 2006; Warhurst 2006). The recognition of the importance of faculty development as a critical tool to improving the quality of higher education has spurred a surge in FD programs across the globe. Despite this growth, however, the distribution remains uneven, with some countries having a FD program on each of its campuses, while other nations have no FD programs at all. Countries with little or no FD programs are to

be found in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and most of southern and eastern Europe. Countries with robust FD programs and voluntary participation include USA, Germany, and Thailand (Fink, 2013). In the United States, 30-40% of two- and four-year colleges have a FD program (Kuhlenschmidt, 2010). Those with a near universal and mandated participation for new teachers include the six British Commonwealth countries (Canada, England, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Australia, and New Zealand) and five countries of northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands) (Fink, 2013). Among other causes, the main reason for the growth in FD programs include ineffectiveness of traditional teaching approaches that thwart the development of students as critical and self-directed learners (Blaich & Wise, 2011). This means that new approaches to teaching and learning are required, skills that are not provided in traditional graduate programs.

African Universities and Faculty Development

Though medieval Africa was home to some of the oldest higher education institutions, the modern university is still a recent addition to the continent's higher education landscape (Munene, 2010). FD is a rare occurrence in Africa's higher education sector, yet recent transformations of the sector make it a necessity rather than an option. The continent's experience with the modern university can be traced to the colonial period in the early 1940s and 1950s when the European colonial powers established branches of metropolitan universities in their African colonies. This period gave rise to numerous branch campuses of the University of London in British-controlled territories and the University of Paris in French-ruled areas. The curricula, examinations, appointment of teaching faculty, quality assurance mechanisms, and modes of study in these branch campuses were all determined by the metropolitan universities in order to ensure uniform academic standards across the board.

Following independence in the 1960s up to the early 1990s, these colonial universities became national development universities with the sole mission of meeting the national governments' development agendas. Training labor to staff government agencies, conducting research to address development challenges and instilling patriotism to enhance nationalism were the major roles assigned to the universities by the governments immediately after independence (Yessufu, 1973). Though the rhetoric centered on the need to indigenize the universities, curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment

structures still retained the vestiges of the colonial universities. Importantly, quality assurance still relied on the old method of having external examiners, sometimes from Europe, moderate examinations conducted at the universities.

By the early 1990s, the national university model was seen as a liability in need of radical transformation. Though successful in training the first generation of post-independence government bureaucrats and corporate leaders, the model was no longer tenable owing to the social and economic changes within the continent. As expounded by the World Bank (1994; 1988), the model became a liability due to the following features:

- Small, Western-oriented, elite institutions that could not meet the burgeoning population's growing demand for more higher educational opportunities
- Free on-campus residence for all students, which necessitated the construction of expensive housing, including public-supported board services
- Free tuition for all students even for those able to pay
- Unsuitable curricula followed by massive graduate unemployment amidst labor shortages in the critical scientific, technological, and medical fields
- Infrastructural decay due to inadequate facilities maintenance, occasioned by the tight fiscal restraints by the national governments
- Intensive politicization of the universities as they acted as the "opposition" to the one-party national regimes, leading to the erosion of institutional autonomy and academic freedom
- Rate-of-return analysis, finding that higher education had the lowest societal returns in contrast to basic and secondary education, which registered higher rates of returns.

As a solution, the World Bank recommended in the early 1990s, and African governments agreed, that a neo-liberal model of university development was the solution to these challenges. This model would allow for privatization of the higher education sector, cost-recovery, and commercialization of public universities programs and activities, and the introduction of tuition fees in public universities through the cost-sharing policy.

This neoliberal reform has radically altered the character of the university education system in the continent, leading to a highly diversified mass system. From one national public university in each country, the university system now boasts of a mix of religious, private (non-religious), and state universities. From small elite public universities, the system now consists of mass institutions, many of which are demand-absorbing, teaching-only institutions, serving a differentiated student population. From single-campus universities, the system now consists of multi-campus university systems. From universities offering traditional courses in humanities, social sciences, basic natural sciences, engineering and medical sciences, the current dispensation emphasizes business studies, information technology, computer science, and applied technology. Furthermore, faculty are now required to teach online, offer interdisciplinary courses, be versatile in attracting external funding for research, and avail themselves for community engagement activities (Munene, 2014). These transformations have taken place without any FD programs instituted in university campuses; a masters or doctoral degree remains the only qualification needed to work as a faculty member in the universities.

Kenya's university landscape mimics the developments elsewhere in the continent. At independence in 1963, the country boasted of only one university college (a member of the University of East Africa, a federated university of the three East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) with an enrollment of around 571 students (Weidman, 1995). The University of East Africa broke up in 1970 and from then until 1984, Kenya enjoyed only one public university, the University of Nairobi and its affiliates Kenyatta University College and Moi University College with a combined enrollment of around 8,900 students (Commission for University Education, 2016). Currently, the surge in university education has seen the number of universities increase to 33 public universities (22 full universities and 10 university colleges) and 17 private universities. Of the 33 public universities, around 70% were established between 2012 and 2013. Student enrollment consists of 443,782 students of which 363,334 are in public universities while 80,448 are in private ones (Kenya, 2016). Besides the growth in institutional and student numbers, growth has occurred in the number of campuses per university, the modalities of program offerings (full-time, evening, weekend, and online) and the type of students served (high school graduates, working and retired professionals).

This growth in the overall system has not been without its downside. Declining state resources, burgeoning student enrollment, inadequate facilities,

low quality of academic staff, faculty departures due to unfavorable working conditions, and political interference have taken their toll of the quality of education provided in both public and private universities (Munene, 2014; Mwebi & Simatwa, 2013; Odhiambo, 2011; Sifuna, 2010). Public concerns over the quality of graduates and the unpreparedness of graduates for the job market figure prominently in the mass media (see for instance Ouma, 2016). Besides inadequate resources, a major problem confronting the universities is the use of antiquated teaching methods. Instruction is still based on the lecture method in which student engagement is minimal. Innovative teaching approaches such as service-learning, role play, group work, projects, case studies, and seminars, among others, are hardly used. Most disconcerting is the absence of any FD programs in any of the universities to provide continuing professional development. A master's degree or doctorate is considered sufficient to be able to function effectively in the university despite the rapidly evolving dynamics.

Even as conditions deteriorate, the public's concerns about the quality of postsecondary education continue to shape future developments in the universities. There are now calls for knowledge dissemination through appropriate teaching methods besides lectures and examinations. There is increased encouragement for faculty to produce knowledge by engaging in relevant and rigorous research that has impact and is publishable in reputable international journals in order to enhance the institutions' global competitiveness. Furthermore, faculty are now being asked to apply their knowledge and skills to help communities solve critical problems through service and outreach. These complex and challenging skills are not learned in graduate school but acquired overtime through a strategic and deliberate faculty development program. The purpose of this study was to explore the possibility of establishing FD program in Kenya's universities by looking at faculty views on what they envision would be the program's goals and purpose in light of their work-related challenges.

Methodology

In a context where Faculty Development (FD) programs are foreign, it is important to understand the perspective of faculty toward instituting such programs. This needs assessment sought to gauge faculty perspectives through following questions:

1. Which faculty are most responsive to the establishment of a FD program?
2. What goals and purposes do faculty perceive to be most critical in establishing a FD program?
3. What work-related issues do faculty deem most critical for the development of FD program?
4. What are the top professional-related challenges confronting faculty members and the university?

Participants

A private university in Kenya was selected for study on the possibility of establishing a FD program. The university was selected because it was the only private institution participating in a project being undertaken by the three authors and, therefore, the researchers were quite familiar with its academic programs and the institutional leadership. Furthermore, we opted for a private university because, going by the trends in university developments in the country, such institutions are more receptive to innovations, unlike state-funded universities, which have often proven to be impervious to change.

The university has been a chartered university for over 20 years. Its student enrollment stands at around 4,245 undergraduate and graduate students, reflecting the low enrollment rates that private universities experience as they compete with public universities that also enroll privately-sponsored students.¹ The full-time faculty strength is around 200.² Given the small number of the full-time teaching faculty, we canvassed the whole population for the study.

Data Collection Procedure and Instrument

The data was collected via Survey Monkey platform as opposed to the traditional pen-and-paper mode so as to illustrate the efficacy of modern technologies in academic research. A list of email addresses of all full-time faculty was obtained from the university's human resource department. The faculty received an email assuring them of strict confidentiality and requesting them to participate in the study, which had been cleared by the research department of the university. The survey remained opened for around five weeks in order to allow as many as possible to participate. In the end, 53 responded, marking a response rate of 27%.

The use of Survey Monkey created two problems that may have limited the participation rate. Except for one recent PhD graduate from a U.S. university, the rest of the faculty had not heard of Survey Monkey, let alone had used it either as a researcher or respondent. Inquiries as to why many did not participate revealed that most found the tool strange, cumbersome to navigate, and “tech heavy” (sophisticated). In addition, despite the assurance of confidentiality, many faculty members remained suspicious that their responses could be traced back to them through their email addresses. This reflects the low level of human subject protection since universities in Kenya do not have Institutional Review Boards that can provide guarantees for such protection.

The data gathering instruments consisted of seven sub-sections. The first collected basic information about the respondents including their education level, academic rank, departmental affiliation, administrative rank (if applicable) as well as their teaching experience. The second subsection elicited the respondents’ perspectives on FD goals and purposes, while the third asked them to provide insights with regard to teaching. The fourth subsection had questions on scholarship, and the fifth consisted of questions focusing on grantsmanship. The sixth and seventh subsections had questions on academic mentorship and community service respectively. The questions consisted of a combination of Likert-scale, rank order, and open-ended items. Most of the question items were adapted from the instrument developed by Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, and Beach (2006). The items were reviewed by FD experts in the United States to ensure the items were consistent with basic tenets of a needs assessment in establishing a FD program. For the Likert-scale items, reliability was measured by a Cronbach alpha, which was found to range from 0.82 to 0.86.

Data analysis involved basic descriptive statistics including percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. Since the idea was to gain perspectives on what faculty thought about establishing a FD program, these data analysis techniques were appropriate, allowing us to have a broad view of faculty insights without making additional inferences.

Findings

Faculty Characteristics

Table 1 shows the distribution of participants as per their departmental affiliation. Most of the respondents were from the schools of education, business, arts, and social sciences respectively. This participation suggests the faculty in these schools could be more willing to give FD a chance at the institution than faculty in other divisions. The School of Law did not have a respondent, perhaps reflecting the heightened sense of confidentiality concerns that lawyers bring to bear on such an approach to data collection. The low response rate of specialized units like the Institute for Regional Integration and Development (IRID) and Canon Law could be attributed to the low number of academic staff in these centers, which (other than the directors) are typically staffed by affiliate faculty and part-time external specialists.

Table 1: Academic Staff School by Disciplinary Affiliation

School	Count	Percent (%)
Education	12	24.0
Commerce	10	20.0
Arts and Social Sciences	7	14.0
Science	6	12.0
Theology	6	12.0
CSJE (Center for Social Justice and Ethics)	4	8.0
Canon Law	2	4.0
Other (please specify)	2	4.0
IRID	1	2.0
Law	0	0.0

In terms of academic rank, the data in Table 2 discloses that junior faculty participated in the study in higher numbers than senior colleagues. There was more participation by those in lecturer and assistant lecturer positions.

Table 2: Respondents by Academic Rank

Rank	Count	Percent (%)
Lecturer	18	36.7%
Assistant Lecturer	15	30.6%
Senior Lecturer	14	28.6%
Professor	1	2.0%
Associate Professor	1	2.0%

Both positions are entry level and require a minimum of a masters degree for appointment. The lecturer position usually will require a doctorate, although some instructors are appointed to this position with only a masters degree but with university teaching experience. The senior lecture position is a promotional rank for those with a doctorate degree and a minimum of 4 years teaching experience and evidence of scholarship and community service. The low participation by senior faculty in the ranks of associate and full professors suggests that they did not regard FD as critical variable in the senior career level.

In terms of applicable administrative positions held, 28 % (10) were either head or deputy head of an academic department, while 22% (8) held the position of program coordinator or deputy program coordinator. Around 7% (3) were either director or deputy director of a center. Around 37 % (13) of the respondents indicated they held some form of administrative appointment but did not specify. This data suggests that most faculty members who responded hold an administrative title, a combination that may give more credibility on issues that are pertinent for FD program.

Most participants, 59% (29) had between 1-5 year's working experience at the institution, while 22% (11) had a work experience of between 6-10 years. Those with over 10 years work experience were only 18% (9). That most participants were faculty with limited work experience suggests recent hires for whom career growth couples well with faculty development programs. Faculty with more experience were more likely to be at a senior levels in their career trajectory making FD programs less attractive.

In all, our data suggest that most of the participants were drawn from business, social sciences, and humanities disciplines. Equally, most were jun-

ior faculty with limited work experience in the institution. In addition, a majority of the respondents identified themselves as having some administrative appointment. Less likely to participate were senior faculty with more work experience at the institution as well as those drawn from the natural sciences and law disciplines.

Goals Guiding Development of FD Programs

A variety of goals guide the establishment of FD programs, but the overarching goal is to improve student learning. Our interest was to determine what faculty perceived to be primary goals of a FD program that would facilitate students' learning. We offered the respondents 10 statements of goals and purposes, ranked them on a 4-point scale based on the degree to which the goals guide the program. By percentage, these were the primary goals of the program as perceived by faculty:

- Responding to individual faculty members goals for professional development (68%)
- Creating or sustaining a culture of teaching excellence (65%)
- Supporting new innovations in teaching and learning (56%)

The goals given the least priorities were:

- Locating the university at the frontier of educational innovation (16%)
- Providing support for departmental goals and development opportunities (12%)
- Responding to critical needs of the university (9%)

These goals reflect three important considerations for the faculty. First, the emphasis on personal professional development echoes the desire for an all-round professional development in order to enhance personal career growth. This is hardly surprising as most respondents were junior faculty with limited work experience. Second, the emphasis on teaching other than institutional missions like research and community engagement reflect a faculty willing to advance their skills in teaching and learning as these are hardly offered in graduate school. Third, the low ranking of institutional-level goals shows their minimal relevance to the junior faculty, who need to master skills more proximate to their work and career growth.

We also requested the faculty to rank four functional areas—teaching, scholarship, grantsmanship and community service—in terms of priority in FD. Teaching was ranked as number one by 72% faculty members followed by scholarship at 68%. Ranked with the lowest priority was Grantsmanship at 34% and community service at 28%. These findings mirror results on program goals in that faculty rank as the highest functional areas those central to their professional growth, namely teaching and scholarship. Given that most respondents are junior academics, good teaching and scholarship provide the avenues for upward career mobility as opposed to writing grants and outreach through community service.

Teaching for Student Success

Teaching excellence was ranked high as a critical goal for any FD program. Being largely a teaching university, the school views teaching as the primary reason the faculty are employed. Using a four-point scale, we solicited the respondents' opinions on what level of professional development is needed: (4) great need for further professional development; (3) moderate need for further professional development; (2) some need for further professional development; and (1) no need for further professional development. The results, displayed in Table 3, show that innovative teaching techniques such as online teaching, teaching at a distance, curriculum reform, and graduate thesis supervision were the top four desired strategies. The least desired areas of interest marked traditional challenges to teaching such as teaching large classes, teaching controversial topics, changing student demographics, and staff-student interactions.

Asked to identify two publishing activities they would consider vital for FD programs, the faculty ranked (a) writing skills and strategies and (b) securing funding for scholarly work as the most desirable. For writing, they were interested in co-authorship, library research, peer-review processes, and time management for writing. As for funding, they were interested in information about national and international grants to support scholarship. Thus, faculty associated academic scholarship with accompanying financial resources.

Table 3: Scores on Teaching Techniques Needed

Teaching Techniques	Count	Rating Mean	Standard Deviation
Technology integration in traditional teaching including blended learning	43	2.51	0.66
Teaching online and distance environments	41	2.44	0.70
Curriculum and Course reform	43	2.42	0.69
Thesis supervision	43	2.40	0.72
Graduate student teaching development	43	2.26	0.84
Strategies of assessment of student learning outcomes	43	2.21	0.82
Lecture presentation	43	2.16	1.01
Lecture preparation and organization	42	2.12	1.10
Student engagement and participation in class	43	2.12	0.99
Teaching underprepared students	43	2.00	0.89
Staff-student interactions	43	1.95	0.83
Shifting demographics/characteristics of students and teaching challenges	43	1.95	0.89
Teaching controversial topics	43	1.93	0.87
Teaching large classes	42	1.88	0.91

Given the large number of part-time faculty, we asked the respondents in an open-ended question to indicate the top three issues they consider a priority for FD program for the adjunct faculty. The three top-rated issues were: (a) teaching and lecture preparation, (b) institutional values, mission, and corporate culture, and (c) planning administration and assessing examinations. These responses suggest the need to develop *esprit de corps* amongst a part-time teaching fraternity that may not necessarily identify with the goals of the institution, its values and practices, and its working ethos. Intensive and high-level teaching activities like teaching of graduate students, thesis supervision, and online teaching were considered low-priority areas for part-time faculty.

Scholarship and Grants for Academic Careers

We asked the faculty to indicate what importance they attach to publishing in their university career using a four-point Likert scale: (4) extremely important, (3) very important, (2) moderately important, and (1) not important. Writing journal articles ($M=2.66$; $SD=0.61$), converting thesis into books ($M=2.51$; $SD=0.67$), and writing books and book chapters ($M=2.46$; $SD=0.77$) were deemed extremely important in that order. Academic conferences were ranked lower and perceived as only very important ($M=2.28$; $SD=0.67$). Asked to identify the level of challenges associated with aspects of scholarly activities, writing a book ($M=2.10$; $SD=0.77$) and locating a publisher ($M=1.90$; $SD=0.88$) were the most challenging respectively. Those considered very challenging were writing book proposals and concepts ($M=1.83$; $SD=0.79$), identification of an appropriate journal ($M=1.49$; $SD=0.80$), and writing the journal article ($M=1.15$; $SD=0.84$) respectively. Peer-reviewed academic artefacts were highly rated being the primary basis for career advancement and also the most challenging to accomplish.

The findings on grantsmanship seem to validate the faculty members interests on FD programs related to grants. Faculty were asked to indicate their level of competence on a four-point scale in various grants-related activities and the results are displayed in Table 4 (below). Though the mean ratings do not tell the complete picture, it is evident that most faculty had no or little competence in critical skills required for grantsmanship including writing competitive grants, crafting memorandums of understanding (MOU) and agreements (MOA), and managing grants. These areas had low standard deviation implying greater agreement in perceptions on these issues. Very few expressed extreme competence in grant activities; these were in the tangential areas of ethical issues and managing grants. The three top grant-related activities that were cited most important for FD programs were (a) grants writing mechanics (identifying funding sources, writing competitive grants, and teaching buyout for grant recipients), (b) grant management activities (collaborations for grant writing, managing grants, and ethical issues in grant work), and (c) grants outcomes (evaluation and monitoring, report writing for donors, patent development, and linking grant work to teaching and scholarship).

In sum, faculty prioritized peer-reviewed artefacts as the most significant for their work and equally the most challenging to produce. They lacked skills in grant work, an areas to which they attached great importance in terms of the success of their scholarship and, ultimately, career.

Table 4: Faculty Competence on Grant-Related Activities

Grant Activity	No compe- tence	Some compe- tence	Com- petent	Very compe- tent	Count	Mean Rating	Standard Deviation
Ethical issues and conduct related to grant activities	13	11	15	6	45	2.43	1.00
Managing grants	19	17	9	6	51	2.03	0.96
Linking grant activity to scholarship and teaching	14	18	10	3	45	2.00	0.87
Institutional policies and framework for grant management activities	15	17	10	3	45	1.98	0.88
Identification of funding sources-local and international	13	18	9	1	51	1.95	0.79
Writing competitive grant applications	22	19	9	1	51	1.80	0.80
Writing MOUs and MOAs for international collaborative grant applications	31	14	6	0	51	1.46	0.69

Mentorship & Community Engagement

Mentorship and community engagement are areas considered peripheral to an academic career in Kenyan universities. We were interested in gauging faculty perspectives on their importance to their careers. Asked to rank the three roles of academic mentorship in order of importance, the ranking for those deemed the most important was as follows:

- Promotes academic members' sense of personal, social, and professional wellbeing (48%).

- Powerful predictor of good starts for new academics (33%)
- For senior academics revitalizes their approach to profession and harnesses their experience and expertise (21%)

We also asked respondents to identify the importance they attach to goals of academic mentorship as disclosed in Table 5. Career growth, professional networking, and productivity in teaching and research were perceived to be the most important goals of academic mentorship. These goals are mutually reinforcing and central to promotion and advancement in academia. Considered least importance were goals related to the organization culture and social goals of solidarity and collegiality.

Table 5: Importance of Goals of Mentorship

Mentorship Goals	Not Important	Some- what Im- portant	Im- portant	Very Im- portant	Count	Rating Average	Standard Devia- tion
To encourage all academics to achieve their full potential	0	0	8	44	52	3.85	0.36
To create opportunities for maintaining a broad network of professional colleagues	0	1	14	31	46	3.69	0.56
To offer support in the development of productive teaching and research agenda	0	3	15	33	51	3.65	0.43
To assist new academics in understanding university culture	0	3	17	25	45	3.46	0.63
To invite feelings of collegiality and shared opportunities	0	4	24	24	52	3.43	0.59
To promote an ongoing sense of community for academics	2	5	20	25	52	3.38	0.70

As for community engagement, faculty were asked to rate various attributes of outreach services to their university careers. Approximately 86% ranked professional service as very important and important, while 79% did so for university service. The two attributes considered of lower importance were community service and clinical service at 71% and 56% respectively. With regard to outreach teaching, the faculty ranked engagement conferences and workshops (73%) and workshops training programs (71%) as very important in that order. Those ranked low were service learning (17%) and weekend programs (20%). As for research outreach, the three top activities considered very important were capacity building (84%), policy analysis (79%), and technology transfer (79%). The two with the lowest ranking were applied research (28%) and technical assistance (22%). Taken together, the findings show that community engagement focused on a personal career growth and founded on attributes that faculty were very knowledgeable about were deemed very important.

Discussion and Conclusions

This needs assessment has highlighted important findings relative to our research questions. With regard to which faculty are more responsive to the establishment of a FD program, our findings suggests that it is the junior faculty with limited university teaching experience of not more than five years who are more likely to embrace the program. Further, such faculty would be in education, arts and social sciences, as well as business disciplines. Those in law, natural sciences, theology, and specialized units were less likely to embrace the program. As far as the goals and purpose of the program are concerned, the data suggests that more faculty were inclined toward programs that enhance their university career goals such as teaching and scholarship. Respondents were less inclined toward program activities that furthered the institutional or departmental mission and goals including grantsmanship and community service.

As far as work-related issues are concerned, faculty ranked innovations in teaching strategies, such as the integration of technology, teaching online and in distant environments, and curriculum and course reform, as the most desirable issues to be addressed for FD in teaching. For scholarship, they cited strategies for publishing peer-reviewed artefacts such as books and journal articles as the most important. Significantly, respondents also identified activities that would enhance their career growth with respect to grantsmanship. They identified writing competitive grants and authoring

credible memorandums of understanding and agreements as the most desirable topics for any FD program dedicated to grants. As for mentorship, they were more inclined toward activities that support their promotion and career growth rather than the organizational culture and collegiality. Finally, they viewed favorable community engagement activities that were in consonance with their knowledge base and career aspirations—professional and university services were ranked higher than community or clinical services.

As for professional-related challenges confronting the faculty, our data suggests that faculty perceived lack of skills necessary to teaching effectively, to undertake and to publish rigorous research and to secure competitive grants as the most important challenges. These are skills that junior faculty seeking career and professional advancement would rank highly. Faculty did not rate skills necessary to achieve broad institutional goals and purposes as the main challenges confronting their work.

How do these findings resonate with the literature? Most respondents were junior academics at the beginning of their university career. Most were from education, social science, and business disciplines. Senior academics—associate and full professors—were underrepresented among the respondents. This observation is consistent with findings that junior faculty are more amenable to FD than their senior counterparts who perceive few benefits for such programs (Fink, 2013; Secret, Leisey, Lanning, Polich, & Schaub, 2011; Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, & Beach, 2006). Our findings showed minimal participation by faculty in law and the natural Sciences, which is a clear departure from other studies.

Consistent with other studies (Marion & Atkinson, 2015; Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, & Beach, 2006), the findings validate the belief that FD development is essential for academics in a dynamic university environment. Overall, the faculty believed that goals of FD should focus on personal development in order to create a culture of teaching excellence and academic scholarship that will enhance career goals. In teaching, they were inclined to incorporating technology in instruction, use of alternative delivery methods and curriculum reforms just as other studies have established (Marbach-Ad, Schaefer, & Thompson, 2012; Al-Musawi, 2008). In scholarship, the faculty were more interested in skills related to peer-reviewed artefacts such as journal articles and books, which are essential for their career growth. They expressed the need for financial support to undertake such scholarly activities. In tandem with Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, and Beach's (2006) findings, faculty did not rate the focus on institutional and departmental goals highly.

In terms of grantsmanship, the faculty were interested in activities that relate to their scholarship interests, including writing competitive grant applications, managing grant activities, and controlling grant outcomes work. Equally, they were interested in mentorship activities inextricably connected with their immediate career needs including those that promoted professional well-being and networking. The same is true of community engagement where the faculty were more inclined to support activities that resonated well with their professional skills and career aspirations. These findings mirror others that have shown that successful FD programs that need to be anchored in faculty expectations and aspirations (Blanton & Stylianou, 2009; Ouellet, 2010; Marion & Atkinson, 2015; Mundy, Kupczynski, Ellis, & Salgado, 2012;).

Notwithstanding the limitations of this study including a comparatively lower response rate than anticipated and use of Survey Monkey platform in the collection of data, the findings offer two important considerations in the establishment of professional development programs for institutions without a culture of FD. First, incipient programs need to target junior faculty at the beginning of their university careers. Such faculty are more likely to offer perspectives on the goals of the programs and are more likely to be available to participate in them. Second, such programs need to intersect with the faculty skills, values and, most importantly, career goals. Programs that focus on the faculty members' individual development rather than the overarching institutional mission and goals are more likely to receive support and to succeed.

In view of the surge in universities and the attendant concern over the quality of learning outcomes in Kenya today, the findings from this study provide important pointers for institutional development. First, the data show that faculty labor under conditions of limited professional development, which negatively impacts their ability to deliver quality services to the students and institutions and to grow professionally. Where faculty members do not see opportunities for professional development in order to function optimally in their academic careers, it is difficult for them to feel motivated to remain in the institutions. Second, since most respondents were more inclined to professional development programs that focus on their individual professional growth, universities in Kenya should consider organizing joint programs that focus on teaching strategies as scholarship activities. These activities are at the center of faculty work and go a long way in determining the quality of learning outcomes and institutional mission.

These are PD activities that are in great need by the junior faculty across institutions. Furthermore, universities have senior faculty with vast experience in teaching and are widely published who could constitute an important resource pool for such PD activities.

Notes

¹ Until the late 1990s, public universities only enrolled government-sponsored students who paid a subsidized tuition fee. Since then, they also enroll privately or self-sponsored students who pay a market-rate tuition fees effectively competing with private universities which do not enroll government-sponsored students.

² As per the Commission for University Education, chartered (accredited) universities are required to maintain a minimum full-time academic staff of 30% of their total needs.

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