

# **Somaliland Academic Staff: Identity, functions, and institutional development**

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## **I. Introduction**

The functions of higher education systems in Sub-Saharan African societies have been criticized for their colonial establishment, chronic lack of support due to structural adjustment era policies, low standing in international ranking competitions, and privatization (Cloete, Maassen, & Bailey, 2015). This criticism has come during a time of rapid system expansion globally as well as regionally (Areaya, 2010). Though higher education policy sharing and international pressure to compete in regional or global rankings pushes African universities toward functions that are similar to Northern institutions, most are not able to come close to matching resources, organizational culture or structure, or staffing needs that results in similar academic identity, functionality, or institutions.

This paper draws on the survey and interview responses of academics in Somaliland to shed light on the underlying function of higher education in the region and to compare this with cross-national studies from the higher education literature focused on research-based, 'world class' institutions. The pressure on academic work due to system expansion, diversification, and institutional development globally has meant that the traditional roles, training, and characteristics of academic faculty are in a state of flux (Altbach, Reisberg, Yudkevish, Androushchak, & Pacheco, 2012; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2006). For Somaliland, answering the question of faculty roles in new institu-

tional development as well as showing the policy change needed in lieu of changing functions comes at a critical time.

## **II. The Somaliland Context**

For over twenty years, Somaliland has acted as an independent state from Somalia. Somaliland has established two branches of parliament, an executive, judiciary, ministries, police, and military services; and, has held both regional and national elections for parliamentarians and presidents (Bradbury, 2008). Before 1996, there were no institutions of higher education in Somaliland. Qualifying students attended university in Mogadishu. This makes the Somaliland higher education system a fascinating case study for understanding the institutionalization of the academic profession in a peripheral location. The most recent characteristic data of the populations of Somalia/Somaliland, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti are shown in Table 1. Data on Somaliland, separate from Somalia, are limited due to the lack of current research, government resources, and census infrastructure. Where data is available for the broader Somalia, these numbers are reported.

Educational indicators point to 'crisis' conditions in Somaliland. Neighbors Ethiopia and Kenya have out of school rates at 16% and 13%, respectively. Somaliland lags at 54% of primary aged children out of school. Investment in education in Somaliland is also significantly behind its neighbors at 2.6% of the national GDP and only 7.2% of the government budget. Ethiopia in comparison spent 4.7% of its GDP and 25% of its national governmental budget on education. The instability of the Somaliland context has meant a significant portion of the national budget is dedicated to police and security forces (Bekalo, Brophy, & Welford, 2003; Chandran, 2014). Even in the midst of this bleak socio-economic situation, for the last twenty years there has been significant growth in higher education.

## **III. The Academic Profession**

A number of studies on the academic profession have highlighted global trends. However, most scholars recognize the significant diversity in the profession across regions, nations, within differing types of institutions in nations, across eras of institutional development, and even across departments in universities themselves. As Mok (2000) concluded for the two closely related Asian contexts he studied

**Table 1. Demographic information for the Horn of Africa (UNESCO, 2011; MoEHE-Somaliland, 2012).**

	Somalia/ Somaliland	Djibouti	Kenya	Ethiopia
Total population (000)	3,500a (est. 2014)	906	41,610	84,340
Annual population growth rate (%)	1.75	1.9	2.7	2.1
Population 0–14 years (%)	44	35	42	41
Rural population (%)	62.3	23	76	83
Total fertility rate (births per woman)	6.08	3.7	4.7	4
Infant mortality rate (0/00)	100	72	48	52
Life expectancy at birth (years)	52	58	57	59
GDP per capita (PPP) US\$ (2009)	600 (2010 est.) <sup>b</sup>	2 296	1 710	1 109
GDP growth rate (%) (2009)	2.6 (2012 est.)	5	4.4	7.3
Children of primary school-age who are out of school (%)	54 (2012) <sup>a</sup>	48	16 (2009 est.)	13 (est.)
Pre-primary (GER)	n/a	4	43 (2002)	5
Primary (GER)	n/a	59	91 (2002)	106
Secondary (GER)	10 (est. 2012) <sup>a</sup>	36	41 (2002)	38
Tertiary (GER)	<5 (est. 2014) <sup>a</sup>	5	3 (2002)	8
Pupil/teacher ratio (primary)	n/a	35	47 (2009 est.)	55
<b>Public expenditure on education</b>				
as % of GDP	2.6 (est. 2012) <sup>a</sup>	8.4 (2007)	6.7 (2010)	4.7 (2010)
as % of total government expenditure	7.2 (est. 2012) <sup>a</sup>	22.8 (2007)	17.2 (2010)	25.4 (2010)

Notes. All values are for 2011 unless otherwise stated; Somaliland has little published information separate from Somalia

<sup>a</sup> Indicates Somaliland and not Somalia.

<sup>b</sup> Actual GDP per capita for Somaliland estimated at \$347 per year.

(Malaysia and Singapore), “while there are clear globalization trends, especially in the economy and technology, the nation-state is still a powerful actor in shaping the nation’s development and in resolving global-national tensions” (p. 174). Much of the labor in international surveys of faculty has been to understand the historical, political, and contextual factors common to various groupings of countries in order to correlate those factors with happenings in the academic profession. This literature forms the basis for comparative analysis of particular cases like Somaliland.

## A. Carnegie Foundation Study

In order to understand the place Somaliland academic staff have in the broader context of the academic profession, characteristic data of the profession is drawn from cross national studies. One example of a cross-national study on faculty is *The Academic Profession* (1994), published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Boyer, Altbach, and Whitelaw reported data from close to 20,000 respondents in 14 countries and nearly every continent (except sub-Saharan Africa). Significant assumptions made in the study were: 1) institutions surveyed were well established and funded, offering students at least a baccalaureate degree; 2) faculty respondents had some teaching or research responsibilities, and; 3) institutions and faculty names were randomly selected. The desire to represent the professoriate globally as *one* general unit with a common identity pervades the book. However, the authors, in their assumptions, had to greatly limit where and who they actually surveyed in order to narrowly constrain the profession into what they defined were its locations, actions, and functions. Thus, the survey is limited to the central, 'premier' institutions worldwide, excluding many periphery institutions. However, they still found significant variation across the profession and made efforts to group countries with similar characteristics in order to theorize about social trends. Topics covered in the study address issues of employment (professional activity, satisfaction, workload, participation in leadership, etc.), demographics (age, gender, etc.), productivity (publications, students, etc.), and organization (governance, internationalization, relationship with society, etc.). Conspicuously absent from this research are data on faculty pay and compensation (see Altbach et al, 2012). Questions generated from this analysis have been taken up in various studies that utilized the Carnegie data or used it as a comparative set for their own original research (i.e. Coaldrake and Stedman, 1999; Welch, 1997). This foundational study served as a basis for the longitudinal study that followed: *The Changing Academic Profession* (CAP) survey.

## B. CAP

The CAP survey was undertaken by the Research Institute for Higher Education (RIHE) at Hiroshima University in Japan (2007). This cross-national study was conducted in twenty-two countries, utiliz-

ing most of the same survey protocols as the Carnegie study in order to observe longitudinal trends in the professoriate. It included one country from SSA—albeit an outlier for the region—South Africa. The objective of the CAP survey was as follows: To what extent is the nature of academic work changing; What are the external and internal drivers of these changes; To what extent do changes differ between countries and types of higher education institutions; How do the academic professions respond to changes in their external and internal environment; What are the consequences for the attractiveness of an academic career; and, What are the consequences for the capacity of academics to contribute to the further development of knowledge societies and the attainment of national goals? (Centre for Higher Education Research and Information, 2010).

Some changes isolated by the study were presented at a 2009 conference in Japan. Arimoto (2009) saw the social transitions from 1994 to 2007 from an industrial society to a “knowledge” society as foundational to the changes going on in the academic profession surveyed (RIHE, 2009). He focused on the transformation necessary in higher education to become more “knowledge exporting” rather than “knowledge importing.” Arimoto’s point was expanded upon by Teichler in the same conference report. He suggested that in the midst of this rapidly changing economic and social environment, the “details of the biography, employment and work [of academic professionals] are of the utmost importance for the proper functioning of academic work” (RIHE, 2009, p. 58). Like the Carnegie study of 1994, the CAP data focused on research universities in mostly middle to high development nations. Teichler’s analysis limited the data even further to five economically advanced countries: Australia, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the USA. Even when trying to limit the differences between national development and educational development indices, Teichler found significant variation in academic biographies, careers, and work. He concludes therefore that the “institutional frameworks for academic careers and for the employment and work characteristics are strongly shaped nationally” (p. 62).

Though the major bulk of scholarship isolated the significant variation between national data, which speaks to the growing diversity in higher education, a few overarching trends were also reported (RIHE, 2009). These include: a growing percentage of academic staff with higher degrees, especially doctorates; An increased introduction of fixed-term appointments; high job satisfaction; increased cumbersome

administrative processes and a top-down management style; increased pressures on faculty, especially on young faculty in the research arena; and, feminization, especially in countries such as the USA, the UK, Japan and Mexico (RIHE, 2008, p. 402–403).

A number of scholars have used the data from the CAP survey to address specific issues within the professoriate such as globalization, management, or governance (i.e. Bentley & Kyvik, 2011; Locke, Cummings, & Fischer, 2011). These authors are usually careful to suggest, that local conditions and historical circumstances had a high importance as well. One method they used to differentiate these contextual considerations was to suggest some institutions were ‘emergent’ and others ‘mature.’ They found the data set more representative of their hypothesis in mature systems. Academics in emergent higher education systems tended to be more satisfied with less “primary influence,” an important caveat for a SSA research context like Somaliland.

### **C. Center for Higher Education Transformation**

The Center for Higher Education Transformation (CHET), based in South Africa, has specialized in cross-national studies on the continent, making their data important for comparative research in higher education scholarship for the region. Though the center focuses on organizational data, key indicators relevant to faculty have been collected as well (percent of faculty holding doctoral degrees, publication rates, average research budgets, etc.). Two studies are particularly salient for academic staff. The first looks at empirical data for the role higher education has in national development (Cloete, Bailey, Pillay, Bunting and Maassen, 2011) and the second focused their cross-national study on performance indicators in SSA higher education institutions (Bunting and Cloete, 2012). Both studies relied on interviews, statistics, and document analysis of ‘flagship’ universities in eight African countries: Botswana, Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Ghana, Mozambique (Eduardo Mondlane), South Africa (University of Cape Town), Uganda (Mekere), Mauritius, and Kenya (Nairobi).

Bunting and Cloete’s (2012) study on performance indicators showed key indications of faculty output in ‘flagship’ universities in SSA. In general, outside of the University of Cape Town, academic staff do not have sufficient funding for research (<\$20,000 per year), are not able to publish in competitive journals at the benchmark rate (0.50 publication per year), and are not able to supervise new doctoral

candidates through to graduation at an acceptable rate (<15% per academic faculty). However, five of the eight flagship institutions are able to employ staff holding doctoral qualification at a benchmarked rate (>50%). The remaining universities, Eduardo Mondlane, Mekerere, and Mauritius, come close to the goal.

Research connecting these educational organizations to economic development and participation in the knowledge economy was the basis of the research done by Cloete et al (2011). Using the same data as the 2012 study, the South African researchers found that except for the University of Cape Town, the knowledge production output variables of the academic cores were not strong enough to enable universities to make a sustainable contribution to development. None of the universities in the sample seemed to be moving significantly from their traditional undergraduate teaching role to a strong academic core that could contribute to new knowledge production and, by implication, to development (Cloete et al, 2011, p. 37).

The data collected by CHET is valuable for regional comparisons of higher educational institutions. Though this shows characteristics of input and output for academic staff, it does not measure the same type of professional information as the Carnegie or CAP survey data that assessed the views of academic staff on various employment issues (satisfaction, hours of work, etc.). Nevertheless, it forms an important guide for assessing parts of the higher education environment that Altbach and Salmi (2011) propose are key for developing a 'world-class' university.

#### **IV. A Theory for the 'Profession of Professions'**

In presenting academic staff characteristics in Somaliland a 'professions' framework is utilized to understand the characteristics in light of international data (Abbott, 1988). Isolating academic staff as a field is useful for understanding the relation between the personnel corps, form of institutions of higher education, and their key social function during a particular era (Agevall & Olofsson 2013). The academic profession has been considered a 'profession of professions' due to the nature of its role in preparing other individuals for their area of expertise in work, especially for 'knowledge economies' (Clark, 1997), but also a profession under attack that is 'changing' and being 'rethought' (Gappa, Austin, & Thrice, 2006). Academic professional identity, and its functions, is still considered a 'situational identity,' which is learned

through participation in a discipline, its forms and institutions (Jones & McEwen, 2000; Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). The 'professions' framework helps to give foundational understanding of the initiation and development of the Somaliland academic workforce and its identity. Three categories and their relationship to each other are considered: 1) personnel corps; 2) form of institution; and, 3) key social function.

## **V. Methods**

In this study a convergent parallel mixed method was used in which multiple data types were collected simultaneously, integrated, and analyzed for convergence (Creswell, 2014). The types of data that were sampled include a survey, interviews, documents, and field notes. As survey data were collected over the course of a few months in June 2014, initial interviews were performed and documents were collected. These may have affected the subsequent interviews in the data collection process; however, the semi-formal interview protocol was consistently addressed. Interviews were completed once convergence of the data was achieved.

Regarding survey sampling, three institutions agreed to participate in this study: The University of Hargeisa (UoH), Admas University College (Admas), and Amoud University (Amoud). Since the number of lecturers at these institutions was relatively small ( $n \sim 600$ ) an attempt was made to contact the entire population. This represents not only professors with doctoral status, but also individuals with master's degrees, those who work part-time, or professional lecturers. 166 surveys were collected from the three participating institutions. Response rate varies as shown in Table 2. A significant issue with collecting surveys at the University of Hargeisa in particular was the level of part-time labor. Over 95% of lecturers are reported to be working part-time for the institution and are therefore rarely available to participate in interview or survey completion. For this reason, the response rate at the University of Hargeisa is a sample size of 47 (14%). This limits the generalizability and inter-institutional comparisons of the sample in a few ways. First, lecturers working part time at one institution may also work for multiple universities. No duplicate surveys were collected. However, this phenomenon confounds the response rate because the actual population of academic staff sector wide is less than reported by each individual institution. Also, the number of part-time academic staff who would self-identify primarily with another



**Table 2. Survey response rate for academic staff in the three institutions of higher education.**

	Sample	Population	Response rate
Admas University College	24	37	65%
Amoud University	94	227	41%
University of Hargeisa	47	344	14%
Total	165	608	27%

professional activity (medical doctor, business owner, etc.) instead of a lecturer also reduces the number of ‘academic staff’ for the country. These characteristics were not quantified in this research.

Regarding interview sampling, a stratified random sample was employed. Groups were stratified according to function within the institution in order to do comparative analysis of faculty views based on educational achievement (Master’s or PhD) and position within the institution (assistant professor, professor, etc.). Thirty-seven interviews were conducted. A caveat is noted for administrative individuals of high rank (Government officials, Deans, President, Vice-President, etc.); due to the limited availability and number of these academic staff ( $n < 10$ ), and the value of their knowledge to answering the central research questions, a purposeful sample was utilized. There were 12 administrative officials interviewed from the three institutions including presidents, vice-presidents, quality assurance, and human resource directors. Also interviewed were two government officials associated with the regulation of higher education. In addition to the administrative informants on academic work for Somaliland higher education, 23 lecturers from the three institutions were interviewed in order to observe any variance between administrative and academic staff viewpoints as well as variance from doctoral degree holders to bachelor degree holders.

## **VI. Results**

### **A. Personnel of Somaliland Higher Education**

The type of degree qualifications of academic staff in Somaliland is shown in Table 3. Data collected was about staff qualifications from both documents and surveys. The academic profession is mainly in the hands of professional ‘lecturers’ who hold a bachelor’s (52%) or

**Table 3. Qualifications of academic staff in Somaliland**

Degree	Survey Data (%)	Document Analysis (%)	CAP (%)	CHET (%)
Bachelor	44	52		
Master	48	44		24–61%
Doctorate	8	4	90–95	19–71

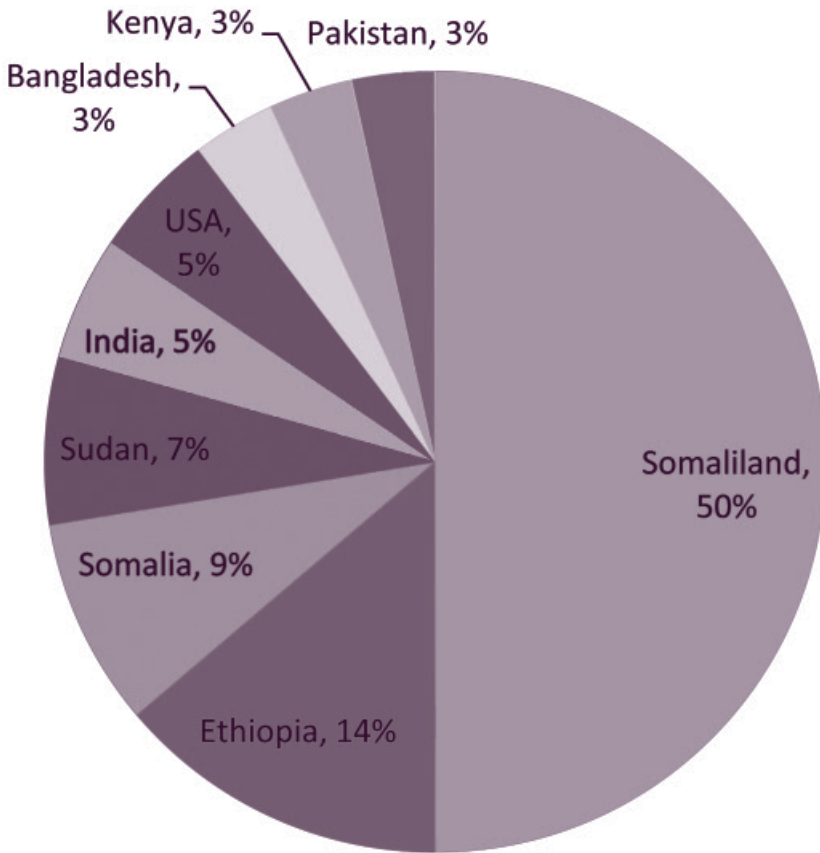
*Note:* Survey data are skewed slightly toward higher degree holders

master’s (44%) level qualification, which is significantly below both the international and regional levels for academic staff qualifications for flagship universities. In comparison, results from the CAP survey indicated 90–95% of staff have a doctoral level qualification in global flagship universities. Results of CHET research on flagship African universities indicated 19–71% of academic staff hold doctoral degrees and 24–61% have a master level qualification. No permanent academic staff in these two studies have bachelor’s degree qualifications. The level of part time academic labor in Somaliland confounds this comparison.

In general, the qualifications of academic staff stems from the ability of Somaliland to support that level of education for the society. The percent of country of study for bachelor degree holders in Somaliland is shown in Figure 1. Academic staff that hold a bachelor’s degree from Somaliland institutions represent only 50% of the total degree holders of that level. The second most prevalent country for staff to obtain a bachelor’s degree is Ethiopia at 14%. The percent of country of study for advance degree holders (masters and PhD) is shown in Figure 2. The Somaliland higher education system only prepares 4% of their advanced degree holders (all master’s level). The majority (24%) of master or doctoral level academics received their diploma from Uganda. In fact, Somaliland is seventh in training advanced degree holders for the universities sampled: behind Ethiopia (12%), Kenya (9%), Malaysia (8%), and the United Kingdom (5%), respectively.

## **B. Employment Characteristics**

Three relevant characteristics of academic staff employment in Somaliland are the rate of employment (full-time or part-time), salary, and number of years in academic work. Academic staff in Somaliland are mostly employed on a part-time basis (85%). As stated earlier, there is little chance for ‘advancement’ or ‘tenure’ in the higher education academic system. The results of document analysis and the survey



**Figure 1. Percent of country of study for bachelor degree holders in Somaliland.**

collected from the three institutions related to employment characteristics are shown in Table 4. Most permanent academic employees hold an administrative position within the university (dean, assistant dean, department director, etc.). UOH, the largest institution with 344 academic staff considers nearly all lecturers as ‘part-time.’ This is a designation that does not necessarily mean a specific quantity of hours worked, but rather that the status of commitment between the institution and the academic is contracted on a yearly basis. Remuneration for part-time staff is based on the number of credit hours taught. Even though 85% were considered part-time, the percentage of academic staff indicating outside employment or outside salary was only 45%. This suggests that the field is significantly under-employed.

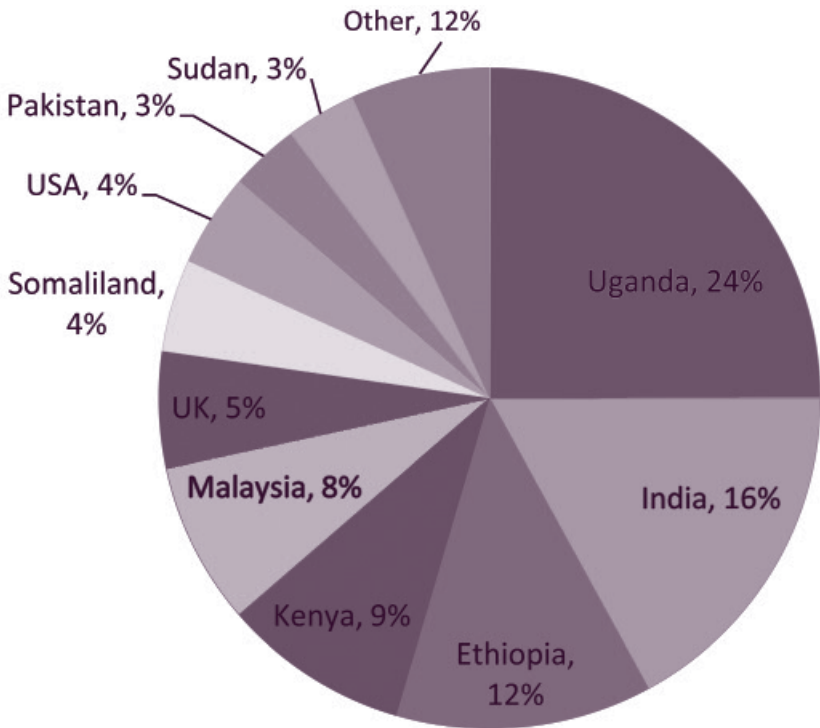


Figure 2. Percent of country of study for master and doctoral degree holders in Somaliland.

Table 4.3. Qualifications of academic staff in Somaliland

<b>Rate of Employment</b>	%
Full Time	15
Part Time	85
Outside employment	45
<b>Salary (per month)</b>	<b>USD</b>
Institution	466
Outside employment	398
<b>Length of employment</b>	<b>Year</b>
Year began work with current institution	2011
Year completed formal study	2007

Note: Table shows mean values calculated from survey sample.

Regarding salary, on average, academic staff received \$466 per month from their institution. With outside employment, qualitative data suggest that most lecturers considered the academic profession to grant them a 'livable' wage in Somaliland where the average *yearly*

GDP is estimated at \$600 (\$50 per month). Of the few expatriate staff interviewed, three indicated that one of the reasons that they came to Somaliland was due to the salary level in comparison with the cost of living. However, comparing this wage with regional wages in Ethiopia or Djibouti indicates that Somaliland has limited ability to attract more qualified scholars to their higher education system. A few lecturers express their frustration with this situation as follows...

there is a stagnancy in status...I mean salaries don't increase, there is no advancement in this university... (Lecturer)

In Addis Ababa, the head office, it is 18 credit hours. But here it is 21 credit hours with our basic salary...So when you compare that with the salary we are getting, it is really very frustrating. (Lecturer)

Regarding work experience, on average, academic staff sampled began their career in higher education in 2010. A histogram of when Somaliland academic staff began working in higher education is shown in Figure 3. The histogram is bi-modal with a significant gap from 1990 through 1995 due to the civil war between Somaliland and Somalia, which represents a significant 'generation gap' in higher education employment. A factor affecting the academic staff quality highlighted by interviewees is frustration between the older and newer generations of lecturers. Responding to the question of factors affecting the accomplishment of the UOH mission, one academic staff person said,

...we are in badly in need of teacher training. The teachers are... most of our teachers, our lecturers are young. Most of them are straight from universities and almost all graduated from universities that didn't make...that we consider not quality. Like India, Pakistan... third world countries (Lecturer).

### **C. Workload and Profile**

The work of academic staff in universities is usually split between teaching, research, service, and administration. The division of academic staff working in the Somaliland dataset and reported in the CAP survey for emerging countries is shown in Table 5. Somaliland academic staff slant toward teaching and administration at 48% and 25% of the workload, respectively. Emerging countries in the CAP survey also slanted toward teaching; however research still maintained

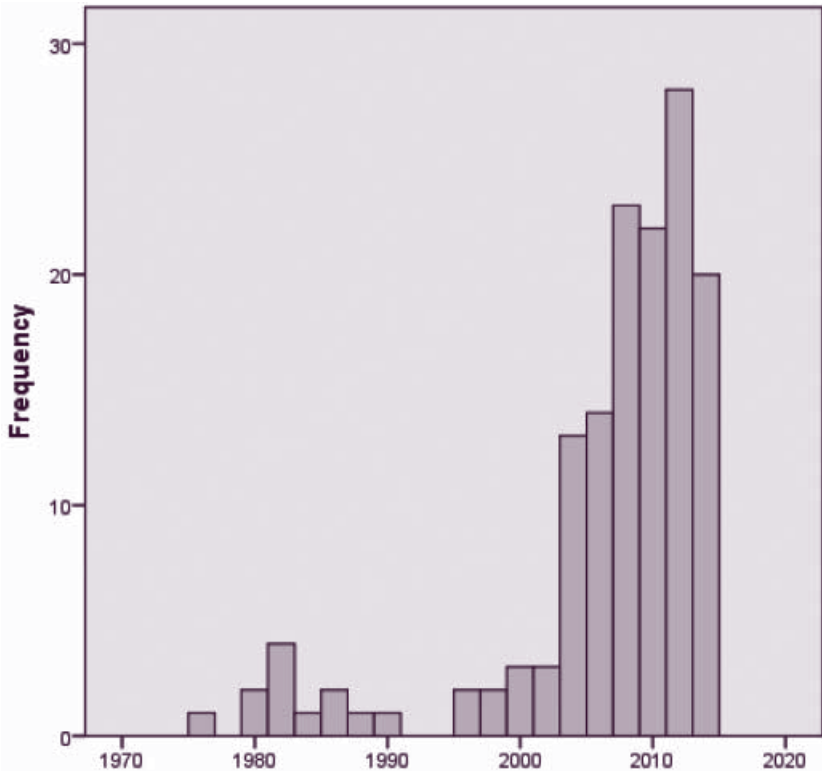


Figure 3. Histogram of year Somaliland academic staff began working in higher education.

a higher place in the academic workload at 29% versus Somaliland at 11%. The total workload of Somaliland academics (36 hours per week) was less than the CAP data for other emerging countries (40 hours per week). This reveals the part-time nature of the academic profession sampled (CAP data for more developed countries were even higher, >50 hours of work per week).

#### D. Teaching vs Research Nexus

Teaching and research are considered the main work of the academic profession globally. The teaching-research nexus is often discussed in the higher education literature for characterizing the nature of the higher education institution in question (Teichler, Arimoto, & Cummings, 2013). Sixty-one percent of Somaliland academic professionals

**Table 5. Division of work for academic staff in Somaliland**

Hours of Academic Work	Somaliland (%)	CAP-emerging countries (%)
Teaching	48	46
Research	11	29
Service	17	5
Administration	25	12-25
	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Total (hours)	36	40

*Note:* Table shows mean values calculated from survey sample.

**Table 9. Teaching vs. research preference for academic staff in Somaliland**

	Somaliland (%)	CAP (%)
Primarily in teaching.	24	13
In both, but leaning towards teaching.	37	40
In both, but leaning towards research.	31	40
Primarily in research.	8	6

*Note:* Mean values.

sampled at least ‘lean toward’ teaching over research compared to only 53% from the results of the CAP survey for research intensive universities (see Table 9).

Academic professionals surveyed produced 0.1 peer-reviewed publications per academic staff per year, which is biased by the finding that non-Somaliland, expatriate academic staff produced nearly half (44%) of the publications represented in the sample. Eliminating these values from the calculation of academic publication rate yields 0.06 peer-reviewed publications per year per academic staff, which means in an institution of 350 lecturers, UOH produces around 20 publications per year. For comparison, a typical benchmark in Sub-Saharan African context is 0.5 peer-reviewed publications per permanent academic staff per year, nearly ten times the Somaliland rate (Bunting and Cloete, 2012).

One issue that academic staff in Somaliland face is a lack of resources for funding research (see Table 10). Lecturers mostly used their own funds for financing their research (30%). The next highest contributor is “internal institutional resources” (29%). Document analysis indicates that these resources represented small grants for mostly social science or medical research related to public health studies. For the 39% of academic staff who report that they at least “lean toward research” or are “primarily interested in research,” this represents an important concern for Somaliland higher education institutions.

**Table 10. Sources of funding for Somaliland academic staff research**

Source	%
Internal institutional resources	29%
Public research funding agencies	5%
Government bodies	7%
Business firms or industry	5%
Private not-for-profit foundations/agencies	16%
International entities (governments, not-for-profit foundations, or non-governmental agencies)	4%
Personal resources	30%

### **E. Institutions in Somaliland**

Institutional forms must now be explored for understanding the second part of our professional framework. If the model presented by Agevall and Olofsson (2013) holds for Somaliland, “We presume the following order of determination: function → institution → personnel corps” (p. 3). In this paper we are considering the model in reverse. In order to differentiate institutions in higher education, organizations and researchers have developed complicated systems for classifying them (McCormick & Zhao, 2010; Teichler, 2008; Mabizela, 2007; Obasi, 2007; Nwenke, 2008).

In Somaliland, universities are not differentiated according to any planned organization. Characteristics for Admas, UOH, and Amoud are shown in Table 11. AU was the first founded, in 1996. All the universities were inaugurated shortly after the civil war of the late 1980s and early 1990s. All universities are functionally ‘private’ in that they receive their funding nearly entirely from student tuition. However, UOH and AU are “...regarded as a national institution[s]. National in the sense that it doesn’t belong to [a city] as such, but it is common for all the people” (Academic Administrator). Admas is not regarded as a ‘national’ institution not based on a difference in funding or community participation but according to the Ethiopian diploma it grants to graduating students. The three institutions have been licensed by the Higher Education Commission of Somaliland. The university budgets are low compared to nationalized institutions in other regional centers, such as Djibouti, Addis Ababa, Kampala, and Nairobi.

Universities in Somaliland have grown steadily in number of institutions, number of faculties, and student enrollment, which is consistent with the massification of higher education in the region in general.



**Table 11. Institutional characteristics of universities in Somaliland**

	Admas	UOH	Amoud
Year founded	2006	2000	1996
Student Enrollment	1431 (2013)	5002	4031
Percent of annual student Enrollment growth	18% (8 years)	24% (3 years)	30% (4 years)
Budget (million USD)	1.0 (est.)	1.6	1.5 (est.)
Percent of staff with PhD	6%	4%	5%
Percent of graduate students	n/a	0.4%	3%
Percent of students in STEM*	n/a	37%	31%
Female student enrollment	40%	38%	27%
Number of students graduated	400 (est. since 2006)	2420 (since 2004)	2487 (since 2003)
Number of lecturers	37	344	227
Number of Faculties	4	12	15

Note: \*AU does not classify freshmen students in STEM faculties until Sophomore year which raises this statistic to 42%.

First, the number of institutions in Somaliland has increased from zero to over 20 providers of tertiary education since 1995. In the past, students went to Mogadishu for tertiary education. This was reserved for only the top students who graduated from the secondary schooling system of northern Somalia. Second, faculty or department growth has also been used as an indicator of overall system growth. Again, AU leads the Somaliland university system with 15 faculties, UOH has 12 faculties (which they term 'colleges'), and Admas has four faculties. Finally, in the last 3 to 8 years, student enrollment has grown from 18%, 24%, and 30% for Admas, UOH, and AU, respectively. AU and UOH, which represent the largest universities in Somaliland according to enrollment and budgets, have current student enrollment of 4,031 and 5,002, respectively. Student fees range from \$150–\$300 per semester, dependent on program and year of study but they do not vary significantly between institutions.

Characteristics of the student population in Somaliland also highlight the nature of institutions in the region. First, female student participation in higher education ranges from 27% at AU to 38% and 40% at UOH and Admas, respectively. This lags behind more developed regions in higher education where female student populations are higher than or equal to male participation, however, female participation has seen a positive trend over the last 15 years. Second, student

participation in STEM subjects is 31% for AU and 37% for UOH (not applicable to Admas). Finally, student graduate education is still in its infancy in Somaliland. Admas, AU, and UOH have initiated some programs under the name of 'post-graduate education.' AU and UOH have 0.4% and 3% graduate student populations, respectively. Admas, which has initiated a post-graduate program, is still in the process of recruiting the students and staff to administer master's level training. None of the institutions have initiated doctoral level programs. This is most likely due to the lack of sufficient doctoral level staff to grant this level of certification.

## **F. Function of Higher Education**

As stated above, foundational for institutional formation and the characteristics of the academic workforce is understanding the function of higher education in Somaliland (Agevall & Olofsson 2013; Harvey & Williams, 2010). Qualitative data were collected from the survey mainly through two open response questions: 1) What is the goal(s) of your institution; and, 2) Give two or three indicators of quality in higher education in Somaliland. Three significant emergent themes provided rich data into the function of higher education for Somaliland communities. Two themes generated from qualitative analysis were 'development,' which denotes the significance of the place of higher education as an 'instrument' of development for lower economic development contexts (World Bank, 2002; CHET, 2011) and 'keeping the peace.' The later emergent theme is perhaps the most foundational to the function that higher education was initiated in the Somaliland Republic in the mid-1990s. Academic administrators state...

...peace building process was going on in Somaliland...either you create employment opportunities, which was not feasible at that time, or prolong the system of education and that was what was agreed upon. So, that is the reason, [higher education was initiated]. It was part and parcel of the peace process, and it still is today. In your countries, you probably have...objectives [for] higher education...or education in general is to promote research and to conduct teaching and academic activities. But here also, there is a third element which that it is also part and parcel of the peace building process as well. (Academic Administrator).

When you consider our situation,...our major objective at this stage of the country...is to maintain peace... because to give hope to the young

people at least we make them busy, make the young people very busy, that is a great one, really. Without these universities, no matter what the quality is, the young people would probably be...roaming the streets and joining Al-Shabab and militias and all these things. But it is a hope that there is a university. So, quality not really there...we are struggling really to improve. (Academic Administrator)

Somaliland academic workforce clearly aligned their purpose with the significant peacekeeping effort. Engaging youth in any form of positive activity has held higher precedence than quality or academic intensification. For this reason, where other contexts would limit institutional expansion for the sake of maintaining certain quality standards, Somaliland policy makers have simply looked for more professors, mostly those holding bachelors' degrees from their own institutions to fill the gap in human resources. As the function for higher education changes from engaging youth in positive activity to more knowledge intense activity, institution and academic staff characteristics will begin to change.

Regarding institutional development, limited diversity in the higher education landscape means that new institutions have not been created with a view toward competitive structures (McCormick & Zhao, 2010). This phenomenon does not only include a world class research based institution, but also the lack of technical, vocational, and educational training (TVET). Somaliland currently has no TVET institutions. Though some critics warn diversification does not always produce positive movements in quality (Teichler, 2008), certainly the absence of any TVET options leaves a void in the system for individuals who would not necessarily qualify for more academic intensive professional training. For the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), TVET is an important component in the Somaliland plan for educational reform. This issue was addressed by multiple academic staff interviewed because it represents a lack of options in the tertiary education landscape of the region.

Regarding the characteristics of the academic profession in Somaliland, functional change toward more internationally competitive higher education will require more highly qualified academic staff. Future policy toward the accreditation of universities and licensing of institutions must address the level and number of master and doctorate holders necessary in a faculty or university in order to address the relevant knowledge, competencies, and evaluation of the students

being trained. This policy development could include more diversified classifications of universities to give direction to consumers and accommodate current institutional realities.

## VII. Conclusion

Somaliland higher education is at a crossroads. Significant growth in youth participation in the last 15 years is seen as a great success of peacekeeping efforts. From the ashes of post-civil war ruin and continued insecurity they have built over twenty institutions of tertiary education. Now key stakeholders are asking questions of the basic foundations on which higher education was founded. If the effort to “keep youth busy” has succeeded, academic intensification is the next challenge. The increasing role of government, the institutionalization of educational laws and practice, and competition both nationally and regionally will shape higher education for the near future. Somaliland lecturers, though underqualified, are forging a pathway for a mass higher education system.

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