

Analysis of Enrolment Rate in Private Institutions in West African Countries

Kehdinga George Fomunyam

Durban University of Technology, Durban

Abstract

Higher education in Africa is often characterized by academic institutions shaped by colonialism and patterned after the European model. With the demand for educational access unstoppable in Africa, it also has immense possibilities for modernization and development in the face of low post secondary attendance levels. One way that has contributed to this drive is the institutionalization of private institutions in the higher education landscape in Africa. This study looked at enrollment rate in private universities in West African Countries by first examining the higher education landscape in Africa and understanding the drive for private institutions in Africa. findings from the study revealed that there has been increase in enrollment rate in private institutions in west African countries. This study therefore recommends that government should focus on both public and private higher education institution to avert a downward spiral in educational quality in the public institutions and to also encourage quality and control in the private institutions. There is also need for proper regulation of private universities to avoid a repeat of the inadequacies of public universities.

Keywords: Private, enrollment, enrollment rate, institutions

Introduction

The Higher education domain in Africa faces lots of challenges and this requires urgent attention from all stakeholders pivotal to the educational landscape in Africa. Higher education in Africa is often characterized by academic institutions shaped by colonialism and patterned after the European model. This is in line with the findings of Altbach and Selvaratnam (1989) which revealed that higher education in Africa is an artifact of colonial policies. With the demand for educational access unstoppable in

Africa, it also has immense possibilities for modernization and development in the face of low post secondary attendance levels. With the emergence of the twenty first century as an era of knowledge, it has been revealed that higher education will play a central role in the realization of this ideal and this will be in the form of renewed interest in higher education in Africa. One way that has contributed to this drive is the institutionalization of private institutions in the higher education landscape in Africa.

According to UNESCO (2010), there has been improved access to education in Africa and an increase of 80% has been observed at the higher education level. Though with this increase, Africa has not been able to keep pace with the OECD countries level. It was revealed by Watkins (2013) that only 12% of eligible youths in Africa are likely to receive tertiary education. This statistic presents a daring case of gap in our higher education enrollment rate which necessitate a concerted action on it. With higher education key for sustainable social, political, and economic development in Africa, it has been constrained by some factors. There are few resources, inadequate capacity and a tale of neglect which has made the sector not to meet with increasing demands and capacity gaps. Also, with this is the various issues associated with research and innovation capacity and the ability to convert this into transformation for the continent. This has been one of the factors that encouraged private institutions in Africa.

According to Varghese (2004c), two factors were necessary for major changes in the higher education and they are privatization and the emergence of the private sector in higher education. It is the growth of the non-state sector in the educational sphere and in most cases, they do not rely on the state for funding. The demand for education is rising at a faster rate more than the government can meet both in developed and developing countries. It has been observed that public school systems cannot meet the demand for high-quality education which is important in this age. This has contributed to enrollment rate in private institutions in Africa. Consequently, this study will take a look at enrollment rate in private universities in West African Countries by first examining the higher education landscape in Africa and understanding the drive for private institutions in Africa.

Methodology

This study begins with some revelation on the higher education landscape in Africa before narrowing down to the impetus for private institutions in Africa. It then proceeds to analyzing enrollment rate in some west African countries using data from World Bank and based on data availability, some few countries were selected.

Literature review

Higher education landscape in Africa

The higher education landscape has evolved over the years from being seen as a luxury before the year 2000 to being seen as a vehicle for national development and global competitiveness after year 2000 (AUC, 2016: Doh, 2012). This shows that higher

education was tainted as a feat those that are wealthy could afford (Teferra, 2016) but this assumed a change as time passed by. This notion led to a neglect of higher education and it didn't receive the attention it needed so as to ensure that it culminates in development. It is important to note that at a conference of vice-chancellors of higher institutions in Africa held in Harare in 1986, it was contended that higher education was a luxury and it was appropriate for African countries to end university education in their country and send their graduates overseas for training (Banya & Elu, 2001). This notion led to many stakeholders involved in education such as the World Bank and the international monetary fund to give little priority and consideration to higher education and optimum priority to primary education which was seen as a public good (Bloom et al, 2014:2007). As a result of this outlook on higher education as a luxury, it resulted in massive underfunding for the sector and this has been one of the banes of quality in higher education (World Bank, 2000: Oanda & Sall, 2016: Teferra, 2016)

Though education is universal and must be encouraged for all across all divides, the less priority given to higher education has resulted in less investment in it which has manifested in various dimensions in Africa. Some of these include widespread poverty, illiteracy, poor development, poor infrastructures, bad leadership, dependence on foreign expertise, international migration etc. It is also vital to note that to ensure development in any territory, government must be involved and show renewed commitment to education which was lacking in Africa as a result of the stereotypical outlook at higher education as a luxury. Though this assumed a change post 2000, the World Bank and UNESCO sponsored report on higher education in developing countries: peril and promise (World Bank, 2000) revealed that higher education is a tool for national and socio-economic development. This gave new legitimacy to higher education as a tool for socio-economic development in Africa and much attention was placed on higher education afterwards (Salmi, 2020).

According to the United Nations (2016), Africa is reputed to be one of the world's poorest regions. This is attributable to many factors which necessitate the need for intensification of effort on education in Africa. Though Africa is blessed with many natural resources, this has not culminated into wealth and development in the region and some of the factors that are responsible for this include over dependence on the natural resources, poor leadership, corruption, and poor education. Poor literacy level has contributed to poor development in Africa and the bulk of the natural resources have not been leveraged on for proper development in the continent. This has also encouraged dependence on foreign expertise to explore these natural resources thus aiding neo-colonization in Africa. Take for instance in Nigeria, as a major oil producing nation, the country cannot boast of a functional refinery and we export our crude to other countries where it is being refined and sold back at a price.

All these show a gap between education and development in Africa as education has not been able to fully contribute to development in the continent. It is essential that knowledge results in development everywhere and this gives more credence to universities as edifices of knowledge but in regions where it does not occur, education is discouraged. To tap into the abundance of natural resources present in Africa, the higher education system in Africa must evolve to provide the right type of education

and skills pivotal for development in Africa. It was revealed by UNESCO and the World Bank that 6 percent of young people in Africa are enrolled in higher education institutions when compared with 26 percent of the global average. This statistic shows the poor enrollment rate in university education in Africa when compared to the world. Though the narrative has changed recently, there has been an increase in enrollment rate between 2000 and 2010 from 2.3 million to 5.2 million and this has resulted in overcrowding in lecture halls in some universities.

With 13% of the world's working age population in sub-Saharan Africa which has been noted to increase by more than 17% in the year 2030, which is the world's second largest after Asia, leveraging this demographic strength has immense opportunity for Africa to unleash new economic growth by creating future industries, labour markets, highly diversified economy, high skilled talents etc. (GE, 2015). But this has not been so as a result of poor human capital potential that are relevant to development in the region (Schwab, 2016). This is also a dimension in which education has failed in the region because of its inability to transform knowledge into skills that will develop human capital in people, making them relevant in proffering solutions to the many challenges of the continent.

Higher education in Africa also has elements of coloniality and there has been incessant calls for decolonization of higher education in Africa. Key amongst the movements that led support to this was the Rhodes must fall manifesto in South Africa against elements of coloniality (Rhodesmustfall, 2015). With Africa being colonized by the British, the conduct and practice of our education has been influenced by them and with English still the lingua franca in most countries in Africa, it has been the language through which educational activity is delivered and the anglicization of knowledge in Africa has been one of the banes against educational success in the continent. With elements of coloniality revolving around our education and curriculum, it has made us dependent on those that colonized us. This is in line with the findings of Onyeani (2005) who reported a continent with regards itself as independent should be able to produce independent thoughts but this has not been the case for Africa as we still depend on our former colonial masters for knowledge.

Most universities in Africa are owned by government and funded by the government. Though the tide has changed recently and there is an upswing of various private universities, as a result of poverty in the continent, most people cannot afford education in private universities and they depend on the government funded universities for their education. While there is a distinction between public and private institutions in Africa, public institutions depend on finances from the federal and state government while the private universities depend on income from fees and other ventures to run their institution. Government subvention to universities has not been adequate and this has not aided educational activity and then development in Africa as a continent. With government interest in other sectors of the economy, budgetary allocation for education has not received the attention it deserved and other sectors such as defense and health take a huge chunk of the budgetary provision of various countries in Africa especially Nigeria.

Impetus for private institutions in Africa

It was revealed by the Bloom *et al* (2014) that between 1990 and 2014, there has been increase in the number of private institutions in Africa from 30 to 1000 than in public universities which increased from 100 to 500. With various reasons, there has been the rise in the number of private institutions in Africa over the years and this will be considered briefly. With the need to ensure quality in education and to overcome some of the shortfalls of public education in Africa, the private institutions have come to stay. With reduction in government spending on education in the public institutions, it has resulted in the reduction in the quality of education offered by public universities in Africa. It is a common scenery seeing dilapidated building, ill equipped laboratories, poorly motivated lecturers across public universities in Africa and this has had an effect on the quality of education offered. With questions bordering on the credibility of public universities to offer quality education to students, the private institutions have come as a tangible option to offer credible and quality education to students in Africa.

With Africa being a developing continent, which still need economic revitalization, there is the need for quality education which might not be gotten from public schools. With Africa still characterized by massive illiteracy, poverty, poor infrastructure, poor leadership etc. There is a need to set the continent on the path of economic recovery and this requires education that is of good quality. Going further from this revelation, private institutions in Africa have been the favorable choice for those who have the economic capacity to send their wards to.

With public universities, suffering lots of bureaucracies as a result of various vested interest, it has affected the quality of education and the time spent on educational activities in public universities in Africa. As a result of bureaucratic delays which manifests in incessant strikes, protests, haphazard academic calendar etc., it affects the conduct and time spent for educational activities in public universities. Conversely, in private institutions there are no bureaucratic delays and the institutions ensure that all that is needed is provided to avoid the aforementioned situation thus lending more credibility to private institutions in Africa. Thus, as a result of these differences, there is better teaching and learning outcomes in private schools than in public schools in Africa.

Private institutions are also flowing with time as they have their programs tailored towards meeting the ideals of the 21st century. Some of the ways they have done this include the zest to invest on quality, deploy innovation in teaching and learning, develop teaching models, encourage digital technologies in teaching and learning etc. With the current menace of the pandemic which resulted to a lockdown and restriction of movement across several countries of the world, it has massive influence on all sectors of the economy and the educational sector is not spared. With this, most students of public universities wasted months at home doing nothing because their institution could not innovate and deploy technologies for online learning. This is not the case with private universities in Africa as teaching and learning continued regardless of the lockdown that was enforced. This has been a defining character for private institutions in Africa and this has contributed to the drive for private education

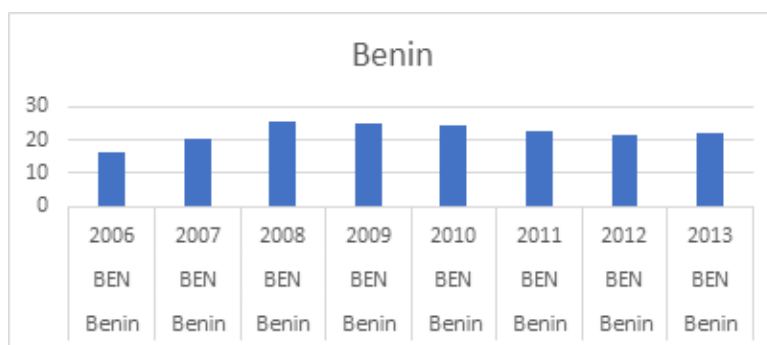
in Africa. the world is global and more connected nowadays as a result of the various technologies we have now and those that are emerging. The conduct of education is changing and it does not necessarily have to be within a physical domain. We now have MOOCS (Massive online open courses) and other online learning platforms that should be considered for teaching and learning in Africa. this is in line with the findings of oxford university (2015) which revealed that there are about 220 campuses globally that are dedicated to providing free courses open to a wide audience through massive online open courses. The type of education offered by private institution is more blended and integrated with a drive towards globalization which makes them a perfect choice for people.

Though, private institutions are expensive and having one's education might come at a cost higher than what public institutions charge, this ensures they do not compromise on quality and standard as huge investment is made in infrastructures, research and innovation, training, curriculum development, capacity building for staffs, manpower development etc. To also ensure global competitiveness, some private schools have infused foreign programs into their curriculum such as Cambridge, American curriculum, SAT, etc. This will ensure that the crop of students produced from these private institutions have the competence necessary to thrive on the international field and thus remain relevant. With changing contexts, there is a need to have the type of education that will factor in this type of changes into their conduct and practice which only the private institutions can offer. Some of these include international accreditation, joint programs with foreign institutions, joint researches, international educational tours etc. which some private institutions do encourage for their students. This has been a notable factor that has made more people to be interested in private institutions in Africa.

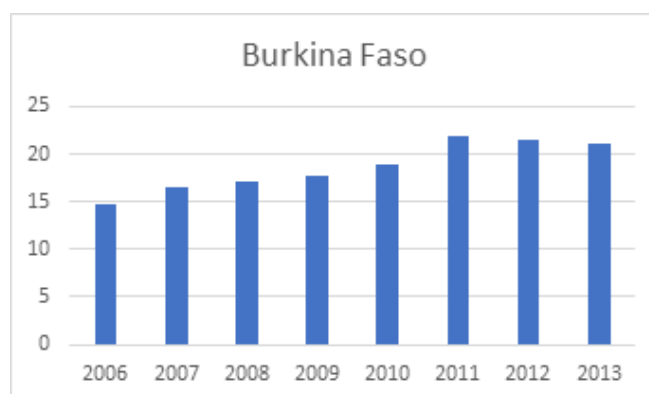
With various failings of public institutions which is even seen in governance, it has given much impetus for the rise of private institutions in Africa. most institutions cannot thrive well under public management and private sector participation is crucial in any economy that wants to thrive. With the need for economic recovery and prosperity in Africa, there has been the rise of private institutions which has also had impact along educational lines. The times are changing and government cannot even take care of itself not to talk of the various institutions hence, the need for private sector participation which has culminated in increase in number of private institutions in Africa over the years. The problems we have now in Africa requires urgent action and there must be joint approach to it, researches not limited to either public or private institutions which will thus set Africa on the Path of economic prosperity.

Enrollment in private institution in Western African countries using the data

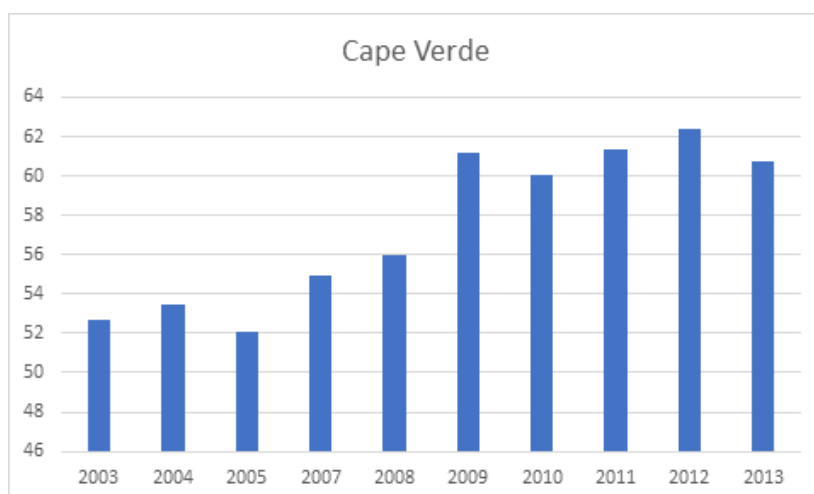
As a result of various reasons captured above, there has been the proliferation of private universities in Western Africa which has lent support to the ideals of education in the region. This study will briefly consider enrollment in private institutions in western African countries using data gotten from world bank.



Enrollment in private institutions in West African countries has gained popularity as a result of some of the issues discussed above. From the chart an increase was seen in enrollment in private institution in Benin between year 2006 to 2008 which then declined from 2009 to 2012. It can be observed from the chart that enrollment in private institution in the year 2006 was 16.26% which increased in the year 2007 (20.39%) and 2008 (25.81%). This implies that there was increase in the number of students being enrolled in private institution in the year 2006, 2007 and 2008. However, enrollment rate in private institutions in Benin suffered a decline afterwards and in the year 2009, enrollment rate reduced to 24.80%, a slight fall from that of 2008. In the year 2010, the decline continued to 24.17% and 22.66% in the year 2011. In the year 2012, the enrollment rate was 21.64% and in the year 2013, It increased slightly to 21.99%. The enrollment rate in Benin republic is high and this can be attributed to the presence of few public universities in the country. It was revealed in a study by A.E Assogbadjo (2016) that only one university existed in Benin till 2000 called National University of Benin (ex-University of Dahomey). With the increase in the number of students per year and the dearth of public universities another university was created in late 2001 called the University of Parakou. It was until 2009-2014 that two other universities were created which raised the number of public universities in Benin to four and in 2015, three more universities were made making the number of public universities in Benin to be seven. From this statistic, it is vital to note that this number of universities cannot cater effectively to the need of the teeming students in Benin and this might have encouraged enrollment in private institution in the country.

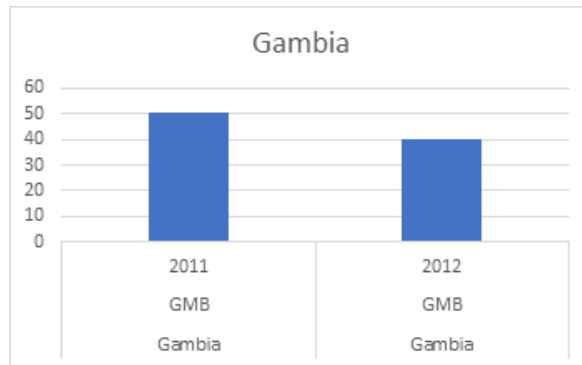


From the trend observed in Burkina Faso, its noticeable that there has been an increase in enrollment rate in private institution in the country between the years considered. This is a clear testament to the fact that there has been increase in the number of students enrolled in private institutions in Burkina Faso. In the year 2006, the enrollment rate in private institution in Burkina Faso was 14.73% which continued to increase till 2011. In the year 2007, the enrollment rate in Burkina Faso was 16.50% which also increased in the year 2008 to 17.21%. the same can be said of the year 2009 as enrollment rate increased to 17.77% and 18.89% in 2010. The enrollment rate peaked in the year 2011 as it reached a high of 21.95%. The enrollment rate declined in 2012 to 21.47% and 21.15% in 2013. Burkina Faso also has few public universities which might have encouraged enrollment in private institution in the country.

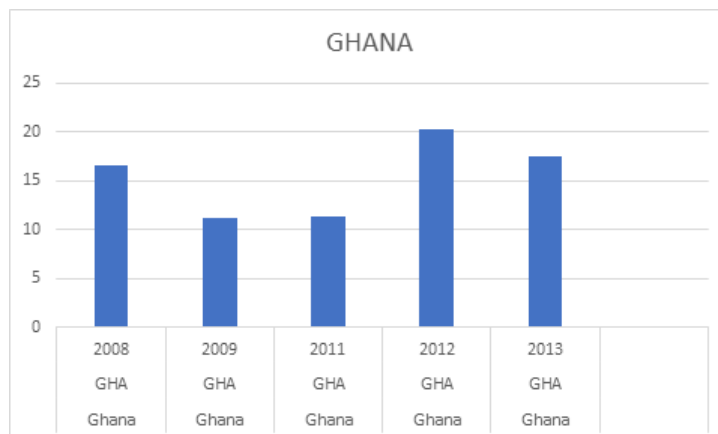


Cape Verde presents a different case in enrollment in private institutions as seen from the chart. There are huge figures in terms of enrollment rate in private institutions and this implies that there is the predisposition towards private institutions in the country. From the chart, there is increase in enrollment from 54.90% in the year 2007 to 55.99% in the year 2008. The increase in enrollment rate continued in the year 2009 to 61.14% which declined in the year 2010 to 60.07%. the enrollment rate in private institution increase in the year 2011 and 2012 to 61.34% and 62.38% which then declined in the year 2013 to 60.71%. With university education being new in Cape Verde, a larger share of the universities there are private and there is a need for the government to invest more in public education. The government thus have made renewed interest to control higher education in private universities in Cape Verde and one of the things that was done is that government established legislation for the authorization and functioning of private higher education institutions ((República de Cabo Verde, 2007) and this might have led to more enrollment in the private higher institutions as a result of the legal backing and overhaul in the functioning of private institutions in Cape Verde. Also, in 2009, there was an intervention by the government to establish external evaluation to assess the quality of the two main private institutions

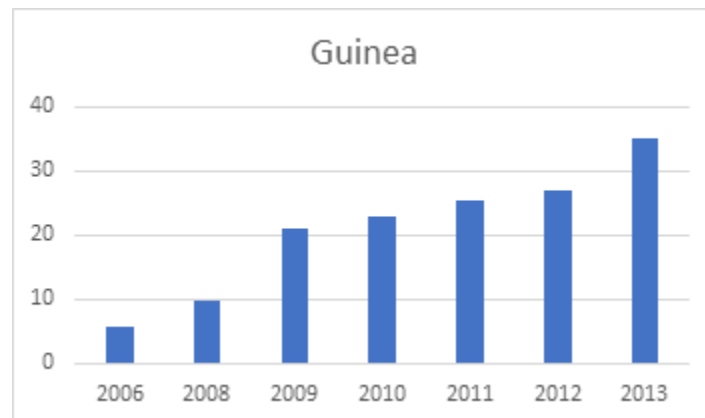
in the country which are the! Universidade Jean Piaget and the Insitituto de Estudos Superiores Isidoro da Graça and recommendations were made (Simon Schwartzman, 2011) which might have encouraged more quality assurance mechanism in private higher education in Cape Verde thus culminating in the high figures in enrollment rate in private institutions there.



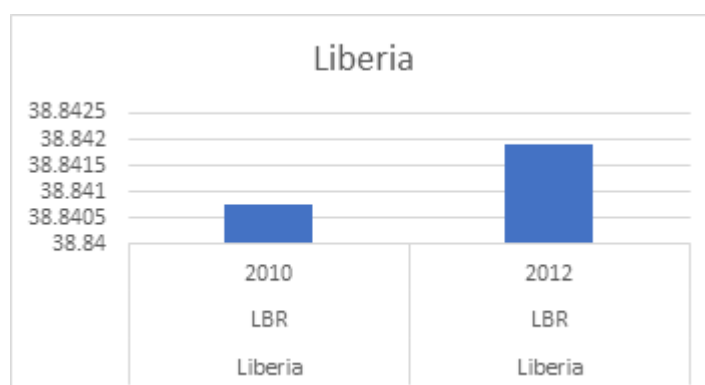
There were few data on enrollment rate in private institutions in Gambia and data was only available for year 2011 and 2012. In the year 2011, enrollment rate in private institutions was 50.35% and it reduced in the year 2012 to 40.01%. This shows that the year 2011 had the highest number in terms of enrollment in private university in Gambia. With Gambia being a very poor country as revealed by the world bank in (2010), it is characterized by poverty, predominantly rural, and has an agricultural-based economy. Since independence in 1965, economic growth has been nearly non-existent, averaging about 0.7% per year between 1965 and 2009. This might have culminated in low investment in public education, hence the increase enrollment rate in private institutions in Gambia. It was revealed in the country status report (2010) that since 1990s to date, tertiary and higher education in The Gambia has experienced a rapid expansion as a result of persistent increase in demand and how could this demand be met, there has to be increase in enrollment rate in private institutions in Gambia.



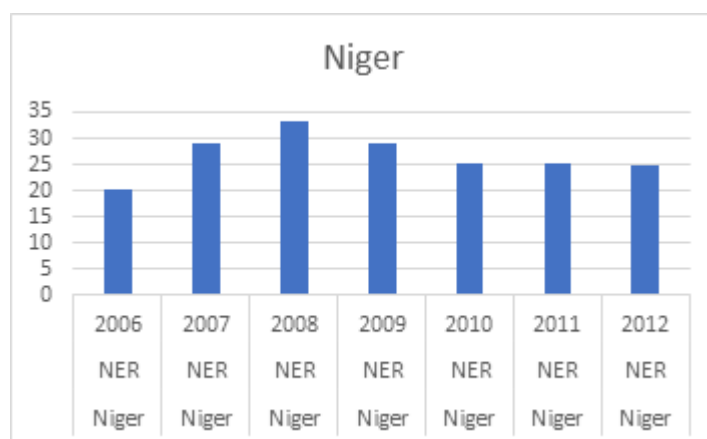
Ghana as a West African country has seen increment in enrollment rate in private institutions. The enrollment rate in the year 2008 was 16.64% which decreased in the year 2009 (11.26%) and 2011 (11.29%). The enrollment rate in private institutions in Ghana peaked in the year 2012 at 20.28% and it declined in 2013 to 17.43%.



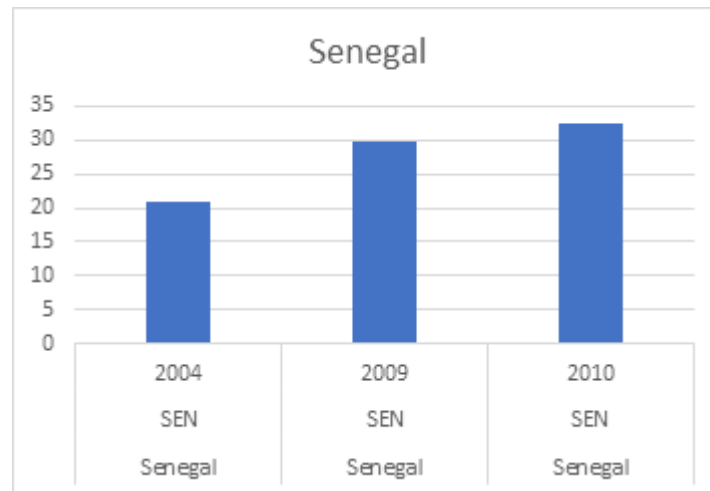
Guinea has increase in enrollment rate in private institution as seen from the chart and this peaked in the year 2013. Though, in the year 2006, the enrollment rate in private institutions was 5.61%, it continued to rise till the year 2013. In the year 2008, the enrollment rate increased to 9.70%. the increase continued in the year 2009 to 21.14% and 22.86% in the year 2010. This was the same for year 2011, 2012 and 2013 as enrollment rate in private universities in Guinea increased. In the year 2011, the enrollment rate increased to 25.33%, while in 2012, the enrollment rate increased to 26.88% and 35.11 in 2013 which was the highest. Enrollment rate in Guinea has assumed an upward trajectory over the years considered as seen in the chart. The higher education landscape in guinea previously consists of two universities and they are the University of Conakry and the University of Kankan. This low number of universities would have given rise to increase enrollment rate in private institutions in West Africa.



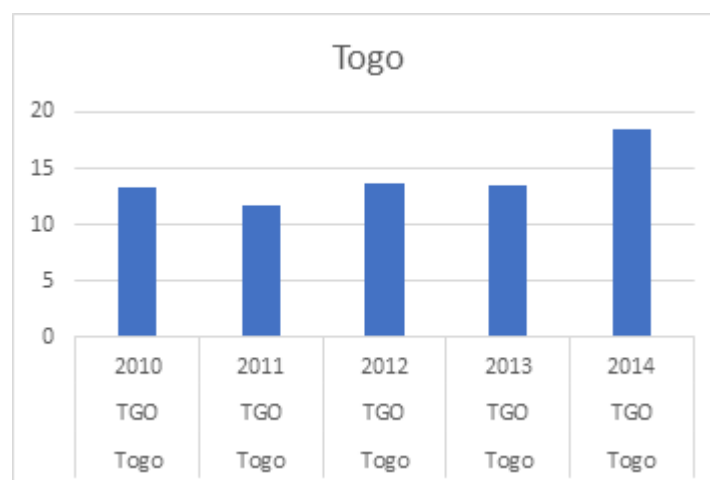
There was a dearth of data in enrollment rate in Liberia and from the chart data was only available in the year 2010 and 2012. From the chart, the enrollment rate in the year 2010 was 38.840% which increased to 38.841% in 2012. This implies an increase in the number of students enrolled in private institutions in Liberia. Liberia presents a different scenario in private higher education as a result of various factors. According to Sirleaf (2012) there were 3 tertiary education institutions in the entire country in the 1980s. This number is small and it will present with it low enrollment rate in the country which necessitates increase in enrollment rate in private institution. It is vital to note that the country endured 14years of civil wars (1989-2003) and this caused major effect on all sectors of the economy including the educational sector. Adding to this is the scourge of Ebola Virus that hit the country adding to one of its challenges. These events have the capacity to influence educational processes in the country and since the country was affected generally, there was a general decline in educational quality which was manifested in various dimensions, in 2013, 25000 students that sat for entrance exam into the university of Liberia which is the biggest state-run university failed as a result of poor performance. It was revealed by Momodou Gataweh the spokesman of the university through BBC Africa (2013) that the student does not know anything about the mechanics of English language. Also, as a result of absence of vacant seats at the state-owned universities, this gave more credence for the establishment of private institutions to save the country from its educational woes. After the war, the majority of the university's infrastructure was completely destroyed or in need of repair as revealed by Gbollie & David (2014).



Enrollment rate in private institutions in Niger increased between 2006 to 2008 which then declined from 2009 to 2012. It can be seen from the chart that the enrollment rate in private institutions in Niger in the year 2006 was 20.36% which increased to 29.05% in the year 2007 and 33.15% in the year 2008. Going forward from this, enrollment rate declined in the year 2009 to 29.01% and 25.02% in the year 2010. The decline continued in the year 2011 and 2012 to 25.02% and 24.67% respectively.

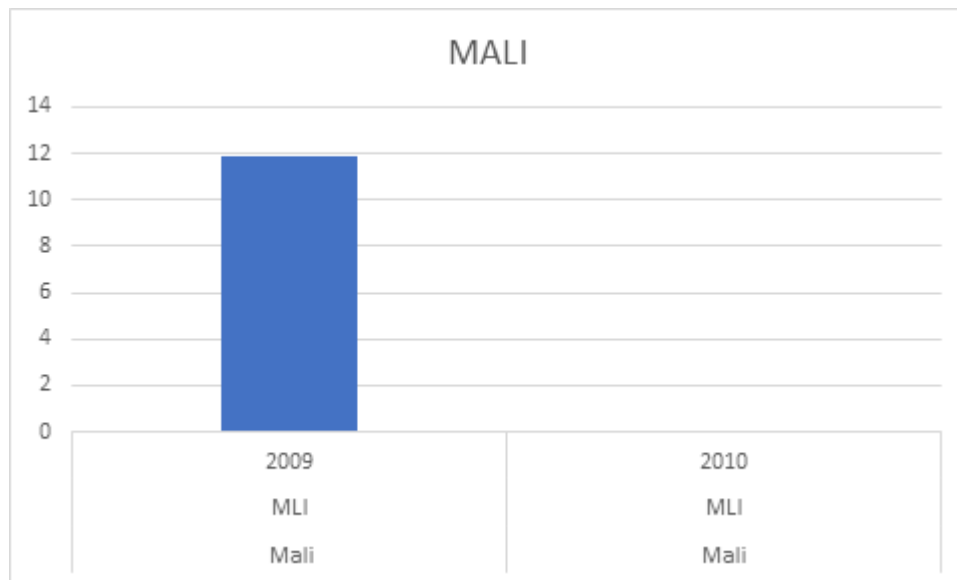


Data available from World Bank revealed that there has been increase in enrollment rate in private institutions in Senegal for the period captured (2004, 2009 and 2010). From the chart, it can be seen that enrollment rate in the year 2004 in Senegal was 21.03% which increased in the year 2009 to 29.79% and 32.57% in the year 2010. The educational landscape in Senegal is one characterized by a distinction between a public school system that was secular and a range of other private schools with religious ties which include catholic and protestant schools, Muslim schools etc.



The enrollment rate in Togo in 2010 was 13.24% which reduced in the year 2011 to 11.66%. there was an increase in the year 2012 to 13.70% and 13.54% in the year 2013 which peaked in the year 2014 at 18.44%. Togo is peculiar in terms of private higher education and this because the country has one major university and four other postsecondary institutions which has necessitated the creation of private institutions of higher education. It was revealed by Edee (2003) that Togo has twenty-two private

postsecondary institutions and eighteen out of them were created between 1998 and 2000.



Data was only available for Mali in the year 2009 and it can be seen from the chart that enrollment rate in private institution in the country was 11.89%. enrollment in private institutions in the country has been on the low and this can be attributable to the numbers of private institutions present in the country. It was revealed by (Africaknows.eu, 2020) that Mali has nine public universities and only two private ones; there are also nine think tanks known to us.

Summary, conclusion and recommendation.

The public sector had more monopoly on the higher education landscape in Africa until recently when deregulation, structural adjustment programs, chunk in economic fortunes and other factors created a rapid environment for the emergence of private higher education institutions in Africa. The time we are in is one of massive change across the educational sector and this has been influenced much by globalization and internationalization. But much more than this, as a result of various reasons, there has been changes in the educational sphere which brought to the limelight enrollment in private institutions. As a result of various reasons given in this research, and to ensure increased enrollment and quality in higher education, private higher institutions have come to stay. This study analyzed enrollment rate in private institutions in West African countries and data from World Bank was used to understand the trend of enrollment in private institutions. This study therefore recommends that government should focus on both public and private higher education institution to avert a downward spiral in educational quality in the public institutions and to also encourage quality and control

in the private institutions. There is also need for proper regulation of private universities to avoid a repeat of the inadequacies of public universities.

Column1	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Benin	NA	NA	NA	16.26879	20.39819	25.81307	24.8028	24.1795	22.66725	21.64155	21.99788
Burkina Faso	NA	NA	16.58793	14.73484	16.50976	17.21678	17.77376	18.89536	21.9581	21.47502	21.15084
Cape Verde	52.64108	53.42556	52.07161	NA	54.90641	55.99279	61.14589	60.07492	61.34761	62.38983	60.71319
Gambia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	50.35461	40.012	NA
Ghana	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	16.64556	11.26534	NA	11.29041	20.2811	17.43824
Guinea	NA	NA	NA	5.61682	NA	9.70058	21.14988	22.86457	25.33433	26.88464	35.11612
Liberia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	38.84075	NA	38.84192	NA
Mali	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	11.89821	NA	NA	NA	NA
Niger	NA	24.64098	31.84554	20.36938	29.05511	33.15917	29.01451	25.02925	25.02728	24.67377	NA
Senegal	NA	21.03975	NA	NA	NA	NA	29.79093	32.57117	NA	NA	NA
Togo	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	13.24899	11.66373	13.70072	13.54204

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