

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ARCHBISHOP JAMES UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (AJUCO) TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the various ways in which Archbishop James University College (AJUCO) contributes to socio-economic development in Tanzania. The paper is descriptive and it is based on observations and literature review of development concepts. This paper is a theoretical attempt aimed at conceptualizing the contributions of AJUCO to economic development in the country. AJUCO embodies a combination of social, economic and intellectual resources which generate benefits on a local, regional and national scale. The paper reveals that AJUCO's role in economic development has been important, and it is expected to further increase in the future given the emergence of the 'knowledge-intensive' economy and society, in terms of the growing focus on knowledge and usage of information and communication technologies, in all sectors of economic activities. It further suggests that AJUCO will act as an engine, powerhouse, driver, dynamo, booster, accelerator and breeding ground for regional economic development. The paper concludes that as a new and growing institution of higher education in the region, AJUCO needs support from both the community and the state to enhance its core activities for competitiveness.

Keywords: Economic Development; Knowledge Production; Human Capital Development; University College, Higher Education; Ajuco.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Development is a complex equation, with various and sometimes contentious concepts. Development helps people to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to resources needed for decent standards of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community (UNDP, 2008). Achieving human development is like freeing people from obstacles affecting their ability to develop their own lives (UNDP, 2008). To develop is to empower; it is about local people taking control of their own destiny, expressing their own demands, find solutions to their own problems (Todaro, 2003). As a field, economic development looks not only at traditional economic rubrics like GDP per capita income, but also at the standard of living, health care, education, and equal right opportunities. Following Nafziger (2006), development economics concerns itself with political processes and agendas, with more specific economic agendas. Many ideas of contemporary development

economics were derived from early thinking, although this field has grown far beyond its focus into a more holistic look at the elements that make up a healthy society.

Development is an act of supporting new industries to become competitive by not suppressing them (Todaro, 2003; Nafziger, 2006). It is like making some areas of land and water more productive, profitable and useful, such as “the development of Alaskan resources”; “the exploitation of copper deposits” (ARD, 2011). Development is about improving quality of life by ensuring that everyone has a choice in life. Choices that are broadened through a joint effort from locals, government, NGOs, civil society organisations, community organisations, churches and religious groups, and international organisations (WiseGEEK, 2011). The term economic development describes sustained, concerted effort by both policymakers and community in promoting living standards and economic progress for all. Such efforts may involve several areas such as human capital development, education, infrastructural development, social inclusion, sustainable environment, regional competitiveness, health and security, etc.... (Todaro, 2003). According to O’Sullivan and Sheffrin (2003), the scope of economic development includes the process and policies by which a country improves the political, economic and social well-being of the people. Economic development involves economic growth, the increase in per capita and attainment of a high standard of living (Schumpeter and Backhaus, 2003; Abbott, 2003; World Vision, 2011; Wikipedia, 2011). Born out of the Keynesian theory supporting government intervention, and the Neoclassical economics that stresses induced intervention, economic development theory led to high-growth in nations of Singapore, South Korea, and Hong Kong (Ranis et al, 2000).

1.1 THE PROBLEM

The good development process should involve those living in poverty, those tackling the interrelated causes of poverty. Such development works for a long-term change, rather than quick-fix solutions (World Vision, 2011). It is no wonder that countries with similar average income tend to differ substantially in terms of quality of life (World Bank, 2000). The same applies to institutions of higher education, with those in the advanced development stage always benefiting more than those in rudimentary less development stage. No institution of higher education came into existence being developed, all went through the same development process, facing many challenges and difficulties (Paytas et al, 2004; Giroux, 2007). AJUCO is a Constituent College of St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) located in Ruvuma region in Tanzania. It came into existence in 2011. As a Higher Learning Institution, AJUCO offers courses in different fields like Education, Medicine and Mass Communication to undergraduates, graduates and post-graduate students. In that capacity, AJUCO participates in the development process by training and educating people to become social scientists and human capital (OECD, 2001) able to study different aspects of society, from past events and achievements to human behaviours and relationships among groups. AJUCO contributions help provide insights into the different ways individuals, groups and institutions make decisions, exercise power, and respond to change. They are capable of looking at the data in detail, re-analysing already existing data, analysing historical records and documents, and interpreting the effect of economic development and other aspects of the society (Scott et al, 2007).

Through their studies and analyses, AJUCO social scientists offer insights into the physical, cultural and economic development of the people, including the links between human activity and the environment. AJUCO has produced both bachelor degree and Master degree graduates who have made huge contributions to the national economy. While a bachelor's degree is the minimum educational requirement for many markets and research jobs, however, higher degrees are usually preferred for advanced and more technical positions. However, strong quantitative skills and keeping current with the latest methods of developing, conducting, analysing and interpreting surveys data and other data are important skills that should be focused on (US Department of Labor, 2009). Therefore, if one of the fundamental roles of AJUCO is to prepare students toward the above tasks, these intellectual dispositions need to be modelled and cultivated in the curriculum offered and in the research produced at AJUCO (Boulton and Lucas, 2008; Giroux, 2013).

Transformation is something that AJUCO needs in order to improve its programmes, productivity and staff. That is, to be able to understand the notions underpinning its performance will result in the intellectual, political and moral examination of its core activity (Badat, 2009; Lange, 2014). Given the above background, the main aim of this paper is to describe the ways in which AJUCO has been contributing to national economic development in Tanzania. Specifically, to highlight the meaning of some related and most used development concepts. The remaining of the paper is organised as follows: section 2 provides methodology and information used in this paper; section 3 explains the various ways how AJUCO contributes to economic development; section 4 concludes and recommends.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 OBJECTIVES, DESIGN AND INFORMATION USED

The fundamental purpose of this paper is to describe the ways in which AJUCO contributes to overall economic development in the country. In order to achieve this, the influence of its different functions was separated while considering other regional development factors. The traditional functions of knowledge and human capital development in higher education institutions have been the most important contributing factors to economic development. This approach extends on previous research with strong emphasis on more general claims about the relative importance of higher education activities in influencing economic development outcomes at the regional level (Goldstein and Renault 2004). In addition, the paper examined the possibility that AJUCO activities depend on (or conversely substitute for) regional agglomeration economies. To this effect, the impacts of spatial spillovers arising from AJUCO's involvement in economic development activities in the region was described. The relationship between spillover and higher education impacts in development has been descriptively addressed (Adams, 2002; Fischer and Varga, 2003), while the analyses of higher education spillovers effects have based on technological innovation and transfer activities (Carlsson and Fridh, 2002).

Secondary sources of information were used in this paper. Although it might be argued that the primary-secondary distinction is blurred, the difference is clear in so far as primary sources are concerned to be the original written materials of the author's own experiences and observations. Secondary sources are the materials derived from someone else as the original

sources (RUM, 2018). Secondary sources used were obtained by means of observation data collection technique for the following reasons:

- It allows for the study of the dynamics of a situation, frequency counts of target behaviors, or other behaviors as indicated by needs of the evaluation;
- It is good source for providing additional information about a particular group, and can use video to provide documentation;
- It can produce qualitative (or narrative data) and quantitative data (or frequency counts, mean length of interactions, and instructional time) RUM (2018).

The examination of the different sources of information assisted in looking at the contribution of AJUCO to national economic development holistically.

3.0 WAYS IN WHICH AJUCO CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Archbishop James University College contributes to national economic development of the country in various ways, as explained below:

3.1 AJUCO'S OPERATIONS

The institution's operations make significant contributions to the country's economic output. AJUCO directly employs more than 56 academic and 44 supporting staff and supports the delivery of knowledge to over 1500 students. The operations of AJUCO generate significant contributions to Tanzania's economic output, national income, full-time and part-time jobs creation both directly and indirectly. "A thriving AJUCO is synonymous with the economy". The role that it plays in contributing to the socio-economic life of the people transcends the contribution of its core operations to GDP and employment, as significant as these contributions are in its own right. International evidence suggests that strong universities are associated with stronger economies and higher standards of living (ACER, 2011). Countries with higher levels of higher education attainment and higher levels of investment in higher education research and development are consistently shown to have higher levels of per capita income (Goldstein and Renault, 2004). A descriptive empirical analysis conducted to inform this paper enhances the widely held view that universities generate and embed skills and knowledge in society through their teaching and learning, research discovery and adoption, and community service activities (Murray, 2007; Acs et al, 2009). Furthermore, it also demonstrates that AJUCO activity is a direct and significant driver of growth in incomes, output and employment across the country's economy. The resulting socio-economic benefits accrue both to those directly engaging in AJUCO-led activities and to society at large (Leibowitz, 2012; Lange, 2012). Generally speaking, in many cases naturally and especially, it is the broader society that is by far the greatest beneficiary of AJUCO's activities (Glasson, 2003, Marginson, 2007).

3.2 AJUCO EDUCATION

In general terms, AJUCO system of education increases the people's productive capacity and their living standards. It has been well established that AJUCO graduates have achieved

higher labour force outcomes than those with lower qualifications, have higher employment rates and significantly higher lifetime earnings (Salter and Martin, 2001). Even though this can be attributed in part to a student's innate ability, mostly this is due to formal education received from AJUCO educational system (Jones, 2014). However, it is not possible to quantify the value that AJUCO education has added to the productive capacity of the people in the region and the nation as a whole (estimated to be TZSh billion in GDP). That means that Tanzania's GDP is estimated to have gained higher % as a result of the impact that AJUCO education has had on the productivity of the workforce with a university qualification. At least some TZSh billion of these benefits are estimated to accrue in annual earnings premiums to students themselves each year (Boulton and Lucas, 2008). In terms of the broader societal benefits, this is related to the positive spillovers associated with the contribution of AJUCO graduates to the workforce, evidently significant. As an indicator of the positive spillovers from AJUCO education is that, the wage of those without a tertiary qualification has been estimated to be 1% higher as a result of a 1% point increase in the number of workers with a university higher education degree. Besides the benefits generated from incrementally higher labour force outcomes, AJUCO education has demonstrated to be positively associated with improved health outcomes, quality of life and a range of other social indicators (Boulton and Lucas, 2008).

3.3 AJUCO IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO SOCIETY THROUGH ITS COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

By drawing on its resources embodied in staff, students and facilities, AJUCO shares knowledge, expertise and amenities to enrich communities on a local, regional and national levels (Brand and Xie, 2010). While it is not possible to quantify the scale of the benefits generated by community service activities, through a number of AJUCO representatives (staff and students), it is apparent that there are many and varied ways that AJUCO contributes through community service in the country (de Rassenfosse and Williams, 2015). These activities and services include the following: community capacity building; providing cultural facilities and programs; hosting community forums, events and festivals; opening up AJUCO facilities to the community; student-led community initiatives, and contribution to regional governance and planning; to name just a few (Hanover Research, 2011). As the global economy expands, the role and contributions of AJUCO will further expand with the expansion of the country's economy. Throughout history, evidence suggests that the global economy is always changing, and the nature of the changes taking place in the coming decades is said to be more profound. Such changes will take into consideration other macro trends, such as the disruptive impacts of technology, changes which suggest both a big opportunity for the nation's higher education and a critical imperative in supporting continued growth in the nation's living standards (Helliwell, 2003; British Council, 2012).

Although AJUCO has no culture of research to drive innovation, productivity and economic growth, University research remains the gateway between the world of pure and unapplied knowledge and the world of real economic impacts (Elnasri and Fox, 2014). AJUCO research would pave the way for technological progress through improved productivity, innovation, entrepreneurship, generation of knowledge spillovers, spin-off technologies and companies. Indeed, as usual, it is also difficult to estimate the existing stock of all knowledge generated by all universities research in the country (Jones, 2014). Furthermore, in recognition of the

vital role that university research plays in driving economic growth, investment in university research has to be supported and given a boost to growth in real terms by a big margin of growth rate a year (Dowrick, 2003).

3.4 ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

AJUCO plays an essential role in responding to the changing skills demand of the knowledge economy in the region, at the same time it will also help to shape and define the industry and jobs of the future, acting as a gateway for the region's future growth to some extent (McMahon, 2002). The continued growth of living standards in the region will rely almost exclusively on higher levels of productivity and the university sector stands to be at the forefront of this challenge (Moretti, 2004). AJUCO and the skilled workforce it produces, have a major role to play in addressing the productivity imperative the region confronts. Indeed, it can be argued that one-third of the region's historical labour productivity growth may be attributable to the accumulation of AJUCO education (OECD, 2006). If given the possibility, AJUCO will successfully evolve to provide not only the graduates that the changing region economy needs, but the skills and intellectual resources that the future knowledge economy requires. All these will see AJUCO continue to be among the most significant drivers of growth in living standards over the decades ahead. The literature indicates that about 10% increase in tertiary education attainment rate in the region would lead to a permanent increase in labour productivity by about 1.5% to 2% points, representing about half of the required rate of productivity growth needed to maintain the region's growth in living standards over the coming decade. Also AJUCO research will play an important role in supporting growth in multi-factor productivity over the coming decades. Indeed, the literature estimates that about 10% increase in the stock of publicly supported higher education research can increase the region's productivity by 3.6% points over the long-term (Stiglitz, 1999; Salter and Martin, 2001; RUN, 2013).

4.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 SUMMARY

In summary, the growing importance of knowledge as the base of the economy has been translated into growing expectations of AJUCO to function as engines for regional development. The role it will play in regional development processes is extensively acknowledged (Popescu, 2011). It is expected to further increase in the future given the emergence of the 'knowledge-intensive' economy and society, in terms of the growing focus on knowledge and usage of information and communication technologies, in all sectors of economic activities. The complex relationship between AJUCO as higher education institution and regional development has been outlined in various ways in the literature (Arbo and Benneworth, 2007). It can act as an 'engine', 'powerhouse', 'driver', 'dynamo', 'booster', 'accelerator' or 'lever' for regional growth and prosperity (Arbo and Benneworth, 2007). In the way, it can be seen as a 'hothouse', 'seedbed', 'breeding ground', 'spawning place', 'catalyst', or 'fermenter' for regional development. These concepts engender associations with something that sprouts then blossoms. AJUCO constitutes a 'node', 'hub', 'bridgehead', 'mediator', 'coupling unit', 'transfer point', 'transmission centre' where access to and dissemination of information and knowledge are emphasized (Popescu, 2011). To

understand the contribution of a university to economic development, Charles (2006) focuses on the investigation of the different forms of knowledge including knowledge transfer in the form of commodity knowledge, human capital and social capital.

4.2 CONCLUSION

AJUCO has evolved considerably over the past six years of its existence. As a young and a progressive university college, it has strived to meet the skills demands of an emergent regional economy that champions progress in terms of technology, culture and society. AJUCO contributes to the economic and social development of the region in broad and varied ways. These contributions are linked to the unique role it plays in society. In broad terms, this has been explained by outlining its position in the society, including how it has strengthened the economic and social fabric at a local, regional and national levels. In the coming years, creativity and innovation embodied in AJUCO human capital will become central to the strength of the region's economy, while at the same time its research will continue to be an indispensable driver of technological progress (Moretti, 2004; Bloom et al., 2013). Should AJUCO realise this enormous potential, and adapt to meet the demands of the future knowledge economy, the value of its economic contributions to society can only be expected to grow. AJUCO embodies major concentrations of social, economic, intellectual and communicative resources combined to provide a key driving force behind economic and social development. They freely reach across populations and borders, sustain large networks and connect to government, industry, NGOs and community organisations (Marginson, 2012).

It can be argued that AJUCO is one of larger regional economies, providing significant value to economic output and national income, as well as providing job opportunities for the local communities directly through its operations, and indirectly through the students and researchers that it attracts to the region. Indeed, AJUCO has played a critical role in supporting economic growth in the region and the construction of a democratic, socially cohesive society. The broad remit of AJUCO includes many factors associated with the creation and dissemination of knowledge. This supply of knowledge and intellectual resources has considerable impacts on the economy (1) in supporting economic growth and development by generating human and social capital through teaching and learning activities; and (2) in enriching society through broader community service activities (Elnasri and Fox, 2014).

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with this paper, the following recommends can be made:

1. AJUCO is a new and a growing higher learning institution with high potential for growth. Keeping it among higher education institutions in the country would be a better way to promote its contributions to economic development.
2. As a new progressive institution in the region, it is rather good to support it by enhancing its learning programmes for the good of both students and community. All new industries and institutions deserve the chance to grow and to become competitive.

3. AJUCO is the Symbol of the region, closing it down will mean closing the lives of many living in the region.
4. The focus should be on the "Public Purposes" of AJUCO as a University College and its historical Views.

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