

**The role of strategic planning on the performance of higher learning institutions: a case of the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

**Terence Mbumbira**

**Master of Arts (Project Planning and Management)**

**University of Dar es Salaam, College of Social Sciences, 2019**

The growing difficulties experienced by many Universities during the 1970s led to the adaption of strategic planning as a potential solution for developing a proactive framework to cope with the changing demands and declining resources. After adaptation of strategic planning in 1994, the University of Dar es Salaam despite attaining tremendous achievements such as inc increased enrollment, research and publications, new postgraduate and undergraduate programmes, and launching of the international standard library. It still faces several inefficiencies, major ones including weakness in information management systems, financial and asset management systems, and inadequate number of staff in some areas. This study was conducted to assess the role of Strategic Planning on the performance of Higher Learning Institutions taking the University of Dar es Salaam as the study organization. The study outlined the factors that gave rise to strategic planning, evaluated the strategies employed in the planning and implementation of the UDSM Strategic Plan, and analyzed the effects of the strategic planning on the performance of the University of Dar es Salaam. The study employed document review, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observations as data collection methods. Content Analysis and Narrative Analysis were the data analysis methods. The key findings of the study reveals the economic reforms of the second political regime in Tanzania which gave rise to the need of strategic planning in 1994, formulation and approval process of strategic planning, the implementation strategic, as well as the outcomes such as significant improvement in student enrollment, and the challenges of implementing the University Strategic Plans such as a low sense of ownership among UDSM staff. The study concludes that strategic planning is a platform for improving the University of Dar es Salaam's performance, and recommends effective communication, and more participation.