

HARAMBEE PHILOSOPHY AND THE INSTITUTES OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY: A CASE STUDY OF SANG'ALO INSTITUTE OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY //

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the evolution of the philosophy and spirit of Harambee and how it has been used to establish and maintain Harambee Institutes of Science and Technology. Special attention is given to how these institutes relate to the total government educational policy. It is argued that, though they represent a potentially crucial element in the process of economic and social change, their true potential has yet to be realized, and as they exist today, they can at best have only a marginal impact upon the course of development.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine and describe the present status and role of Harambee Institutes of Science and Technology, using Sang'alo Institute of Science and Technology as a case study. In particular, the study focusses on the role being played by Sang'alo Institute in making contributions towards satisfying the socio-economic needs of the people of Bungoma District.

The sample study population comprised a total of 184 respondents. Of these 71 were current student trainees enrolled in the first, second and third year training programmes at the institute; 44 former trainees (Graduates) of the institute currently working in various parts of the Republic; 9 staff members of the institute; 3 members of the Board of Governors; 3 members of the Board of Trustees and 54 randomly selected members from different 'backgrounds' of the community.

Four research questions and various related sub-problems were developed to guide the data collection and analyses. The investigation proceeded on the basis of the established formal primary and secondary research techniques, using questionnaires and personal interviews and reviewing of the related literature. Whereas the responses from the questionnaire were computer-analyzed, those from the interviews were summarized. All the responses were then discussed and presented decriptively, making use of Tables and frequencies. A total of 66% usable returns of the expected 75% was considered to be satisfactory for the purposes of this study.

The major findings were as follows: (1) There was a dire need for a College of Science and Technology by the Bungoma people. Its location at Sang'alo was because of the available farm and the infrastructure on it; (2) that the structural organization of the institute permitted and facilitated the training programme; (3) despite the fact that the institute is a Harambee project, its sources of finances are varied; (4) that the institute is making contributions towards satisfying the socio-economic needs of Bungoma district. These contributions include:

- (a) that it offers a wide spectrum of courses to its trainees in the fields of crop and animal husbandry;
- (b) that the recruitment ratio of trainees from Bungoma district is higher than from any other districts in the country;
- (c) that the number of Graduates from Bungoma

is higher and were assisted by the institute in getting jobs in various sectors of the modern economy; (d) that the institute offers employment opportunities to both teaching and non-teaching staff mainly from Bungoma; (e) that the institute sells some of its produce to the local community at subsidized prices; (f) that its continued existence is a measure of the local community's success in contributing towards its development and maintenance; and (g) lastly, that the institute is worth maintaining.

In the course of research it was learned that the institute faces crucial financial problems. These have made the institute operate on a deficit. Secondly it faces shortage of staff as the course programme continues to expand. These two issues were of major concern to the institute's administration.

In the light of the findings above, recommendations were made that would help alleviate the institute's position. More specifically, it was recommended that, there was (a) need to organize a massive Harambee drive to raise funds for both capital and recurrent expenditures; (b) to introduce new and diversify the course structure (curriculum); (c) to commence a staff-development programme; (d) to expand the accommodation facilities for both the staff and the students; (e) to grant its graduates same salary as those of Egerton College; and finally, (f) for the government to gradually raise the status of the institute to University level. It was hoped that if these recommendations were adopted and implemented, they would enable the institute to play a bigger role in development of Bungoma district than it is doing today.