Abstract

The 21st century has been referred to as the knowledge society due to the propensity of the production of knowledge as a result of the learning revolution. As a consequence, focus has been drawn to the education models and the effectiveness in producing a citizenry that is able to keep abreast with the dynamism of the times. This paper offers a critical examination of our education model, in view of the fact that recent literature has indicated that most of our school graduates do not learn much (KNLAR, 2010; MOEST, 2003 & Mamdani, 2007). We propose the use of a competence based model of teaching and learning, where by, the learning products are defined explicitly, the delivery options are varied and the level of learning is what drives the assessment model rather than the evidence of credit points usually captured in the traditional teaching and learning model. The competence-based model has been said to be the bridge between the traditional education paradigm and the learning revolution that has beset the 21st Century, since, learning can be described and measured in ways that are apprehended by all parties. The student is able to return to one or more competencies that s/he has not mastered in the learning process, rather than repeating a whole unit, as would be in the traditional model (Voorhees, 2001). Using a case study of the DePaul University/Tangaza B.A. degree programme, which is based on the competence-based model, this paper will outline the critical elements that underline the effectiveness of the model and why it would be useful as an alternative to re-engineer our traditional model of teaching and learning at institutions of Higher Learning in Africa.