

# President should provide scholarly basis to justify irrelevance of Arts courses

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Reminding graduates of what they patiently paid for, professionally studied and painfully completed as courses as useless is not only demeaning but also devaluing institutions that designed and presented them for approval by government. nET PHOTO

## In Summary

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There is urgent need to interrogate the philosophical base upon which President Museveni's insistence of the uselessness of social work and social administration, gender and women studies as well as conflict resolution and other courses in the same respect is anchored.

In understanding his insistence, the public ought to demand of the academic to invoke their higher order reasoning to reflect the absence of the once relevant subject, civics in the primary school curriculum as well as political Education in secondary schools.

In a country whose citizens have low civic competence, the academic have turned politicians and many are running to become, intellectual right and independence to hold those in position of authority accountable has suffered compromise. The academic-politico cannot hold the bull by its horns nor bell the cat but rather remained naïve and epistemologically impotent.

The President's position was subjective thus deserving academic artillery by scholars.

Whereas the President is always full of wit and very humorous most times, his insistence to publicly discredit courses that are well designed by the academic and approved by National Council for Higher Education should be treated as a national worry.

I am compelled to remind a few intellectuals like David Mafabi, Ofwono Opondo and Dr Joseph Okia who are closer to the President to write for him papers detailing the relevance of social sciences.

It is public knowledge that UNESCO's classification of education content respects social and human sciences as integral to one's education. Human and social sciences complement natural and life sciences.

Universities that teach social sciences blend their courses with other interdisciplinary course units that are purely science to balance the social sciences, for instance, human

anatomy, mental health, counselling, criminal justice system, the nervous system and addiction are taught to SWASA students.

It is wrong for the academic to remain silent without subjecting the head of state's subjective ideas to an academic test. As one General once said, a leaf can be borrowed, to say, "Leave issues of academics to the academic." Universities should prepare to handle the President's opinion and have the matter sorted once and for all. To think that sciences are constructed at university is missing the bigger picture of the danger created by Universal Primary Education (UPE).

UPE has stunted the production of scientists in the country. Scientists are made right from what mothers feed on when pregnant, the care they receive from both husband and family as well as from the State which must ensure quality medical care as well as relevant parenting and family programmes for all.

While it is a fact that majority of those schooling in primary schools never got an opportunity to receive early childhood care and education, expecting them to be scientists after spending seven years in school on empty stomachs is a dream.

Reminding graduates of what they patiently paid for, professionally studied and painfully completed as courses as useless is not only demeaning of them but also devaluing institutions that designed and presented them for approval by government. It is now or never that subjective opinions must be accorded academic surgery to ensure intellectual accountability to add value to scholarly work.

The National Association of Social Workers should show relevance to counter such opinions to debunk the notion that social scientists and sociologists as well as peace makers are not required at a time when refugees anywhere in the world are as a result of conflict.

The continuous bickering and public fights exhibited by cabinet at continental level require therapy from social scientists. If indeed SWASA courses are useless, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development must close down to give room for another ministry.

The ministries of disaster preparedness and refugees as well as that of Education and Health must also close. In fact, the entire social service sector must reflect on the President's persistence of his discredit for social doctors.

The academic and NASWU must wake up! Organise a social workers' sociologists, as social scientists public forum and invite the President to present a paper as a backup for his ideas to be honestly subjected to scholarly surgery.