

## PHENOMENON OF ELASTICITY OF THE ACADEMIC YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BANDUNDU FROM 2019 TO 2020

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### Summary: -

The university is considered a high place of knowledge scientific, training senior executives, designing ideas that can move a country forward (EKWA BISISAL 2004).

And yet the duration of an academic year is fixed by the State which has the organizational power of national education.

This duration is fixed at thirty weeks of effective teaching subdivided into two semesters of fifteen weeks each.

At the start of each academic year, the Minister of higher and university education continues to draw attention by instruction to the heads of establishments in its sector on respecting the academic calendar in order to avoid the elasticity of the academic years.

But a good number of institutions of higher education and universities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in this case the University of Bandundu, often experience disruptions in the application of the academic calendar as planned by the supervisory ministry. Some institutions, even faculties or sections take more than ten months to complete the full program of an academic year and others go beyond twelve months to complete the academic activities. Reason why we would like to know:

- ❖ What are the factors that disrupt teaching at the University of Bandundu? In other words, does the management committee properly manage academic fees?

This situation constitutes a handicap on the level of training of the students.

## I. PROBLEM

Heads of establishments who are responsible for managing everyday institutions have the obligation to plan the teaching process within the institution in order to avoid this phenomenon of elasticity of academic years. And this requires planning, which is a process of preparing and establishing economic programs comprising not only an indication of the objectives to be achieved, but also the forecast of the various stages of financing and implementation of the program. (2) (MUSA. A. 2017).

But unfortunately, at the University of Bandundu amateurism is at its peak among leaders, and an academic year can stretch over more than a year, discouraging students. And this phenomenon can have several causes, such as: the late arrival of teachers, visitors who rush lessons, lack of good management, and late payment of academic fees by students...

Thus, in this research, our concern turns around the following questions:

- ❖ How can we fight against the elasticity of academic years at the University of Bandundu?
- ❖ What are the possible solutions that can enable the University of Bandundu to respect the academic calendar?

In this study, we pursue the following objectives.

- ❖ Detect the real causes of the elasticity of the academic calendar.
- ❖ Make the management committee and the faculties aware of better planning the arrival of visiting teachers in order to avoid exceeding the academic calendar set by the Ministry of Higher and University Education.

And to achieve these objectives we have issued the following assumptions:

- ❖ The elasticity of the academic calendar at the University of Bandundu would be due to the diversity of factors, but it is largely explained by the poor management of academic fees by the management committee.
- ❖ The management committee should organize itself so that visiting teachers can arrive in good time, in order to avoid the elasticity of academic years within this "ALMA MATER".
- ❖ The University of Bandundu could establish a good policy to promote assistants and heads of works in order to constitute its full-time staff, and also to think of preparing successions in order to avoid this phenomenon of elasticity of the years academic.

## II. Some basic concepts

### 1. PHENOMENON

According to the French dictionary Robert, the phenomenon is a complex natural fact, observed fact, abnormal or surprising event.

A phenomenon is the way in which a thing, a fact of the physical, psychic or social world manifests itself to the sensitivity of a living being.

### 2. TEACHING

For KAPUKA MUDIPANU (2008), teaching is action to transmit new knowledge or know-how to a learner, or to a student, i.e., instruct and indoctrinate him while respecting certain rules.

As for KELIKWELE BENSE (2009), teaching involves the interaction of three elements; the teacher, the student and the object of knowledge.

According to LUFUNGULA MUBIALA (2019), education is the integration of new techniques and uses other communication channels to transmit knowledge.

Thus, we join them in saying that teaching is a form of communication whose transmissible emission is between three actors, in particular the teacher, the learner and the knowledge, whose centrality of any act or action of knowledge will be only the learner.

### 3. UNIVERSITY

For MALANDA DEM (1997), the university is the diverse element of Western culture, coming uncultivated in Congolese culture.

According to EKWA BISISAL (2004), the university is a high place of knowledge and production and transmission of knowledge and services to the community. It trains executives capable of making society function in these different instances and capable of research and creativity.

### 4. ELASTICITY

According to the Robert de Poche dictionary (2009), elasticity is the property that certain bodies have of regaining at least partially their original shape and volume when a force exerted on them ceases to act.

Elasticity is the absence of rigidity; it is the possibility of relative variation of one phenomenon compared to another. It is the excess that can cause the deformations.

### 5. STUDENT

For KIKIAMA FULA (2019), the student is a person who attends a university, a college or a higher institute or and on which the country relies, in order to bring a plus for the development of society.

### III. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

In this study, we used the survey method, which is supported by questionnaire and interview techniques to collect data from the targeted students.

### IV. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The study population of our research covers all of all the students of the different faculties of the University of Bandundu. Given the impossibility of surveys on the entire student population, we used a sample of this population. According to SYLLAMY. N. (2005), the sample is a representative fraction of a defined set or population. Our sample consists of eighty (80) students from the University of Bandundu, drawn from different faculties. In practice, we used the random sample, based on the lists made available to us by the deans of the various faculties. We wrote the number granted to each faculty on a sheet of paper which we introduced into the ballot box. After carefully stirring it, we pulled 80 students who study in the various faculties of the University of Bandundu. From these faculties, we drew 80 participants during the year 2020 to 2021.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the sample according to level of study

Education level	F	%
G2	8	10
G3	17	21,25
L1	15	18,75
L2	40	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

In this table n°1, we notice that 40 subjects (50%) are in second license; while 17 subjects (21.25%) are in the third graduate; but 15 subjects or (18.75%) students in the first license; and 8 subjects (10%) are in the second graduate.

Singles: whereas 10 subjects (12.75%) are married; on the other hand, 7 subjects (8.75%) are divorced; and finally, 3 subjects (3.75%) are widowers. Most of the subjects surveyed are single.

### V. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

To enable us to properly conduct our investigations and obtain the necessary data, we used a survey questionnaire.

The presentation of the question does not only consist in to formulate questions, it intends to raise the aim, that is to say, it intends to indicate what each question wants to know, wants to verify.

The pre-survey is a trial application of the whole of the experimental test intended for a small number of subjects of the population. This step makes it possible to measure, for example, the level of understanding that the subjects have for the items that are offered to them according to (NTUNGA NAWANWA. P 2009).

We submitted the questionnaire to eighty (80) students from the different faculties at the University of Bandundu, to give us an account of the level of understanding of the questions by the participants.

At the end of this pre-survey, we noticed that our questionnaire was adapted. Our survey took place within the University of Bandundu in the various faculties. We are interested in students available during the 2020-2021 academic year. Before going to the faculties, we first contacted the deans of each faculty concerned, in order to obtain permission to submit the survey questionnaire to the students concerned.

**Table 2.** Distribution of subjects according to faculties

Faculties	Workforce	%
Right	25	31,25
Psychology & Education Science of	15	18,75
Medicine	14	17,5
Economy	9	11,25
Agronomy	17	21,25
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

This table shows that out of a total of 80 subjects surveyed, 25 subjects (31.25%) are studying in the faculty of law; but 18 subjects (18.75%) come from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences; while 17 subjects (21.25%) are from the Faculty of Agronomy; on the other hand, 15 subjects (18.75%) are from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences; while 14 subjects (17.5%) are studying in the faculty of medicine; and so 9 subjects (11.25%) are from the Faculty of Economics.

**Table 3, Distribution of subjects according to marital status**

Civil Status	Workforce	%
Married	10	12,5
Singles	60	75
Widowed	3	3,75
Divorced	7	8,75
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

Reading Table 3, we see that out of a total of 80 subjects surveyed, 60 subjects (75%) shows that the majority of our respondents were more than single.

We used content analysis to gather by category the different student protocols in the different faculties, in order to extract information related to our hypotheses.

According to MWENE BATENDE (2001), the quantitative analysis of content consists in studying the frequencies with which determined cultural (minimum meaning) units appear in the object of study. The content is a number of cue terms that are believed to have indicative value of the attitude one is trying to establish.

The quantified results were transformed into frequency and as a percentage for comparison of results.

**RESULTS**

In this section, we present the results of our survey on the elasticity of academic years at the University of Bandundu. This is to allow in particular to draw the attention of the management committee to better plan the arrival of visiting teachers to avoid the extension of the academic years at the University of Bandundu.

**Table 4, Compliance with the academic calendar**

Reactions	Workforce	%
Yes	6	7,5
No	73	91,25
Undecided	1	1,25
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

This table clearly indicates that the majority of participants or (91.25%) say that the academic calendar is not respected at the University of Bandundu. But 6 subjects (7.5%) gave opposite opinions. And 1 subject (1.25%) remained neutral. This clearly shows that the academic calendar is not respected at the University of Bandundu.

**Table 5. Causes of elasticity**

Reactions	F	%
Mismanagement	50	62,5
Late arrival of Visiting Teachers	12	15
Lack of planning	18	22,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

Looking at this table, we note that out of a total of 80 subjects surveyed, 50 subjects (62.5%) noticed poor management; while 12 subjects (15%) note the late arrival of visiting teachers; and finally 18 subjects (22.5%) recognize the lack of good planning. Overall a lot of students talk about poor management.

**Table 6. Approbation de l'élasticité des années académiques**

Reactions	F	%
Yes	3	3,74
No	75	93,75
Undecided	2	2,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

This table tells us that most of the respondents either (93.75%) disapprove of the elasticity of academic years; however 3 subjects (3.75%) gave opposite opinions regarding the elasticity of academic years; and 2 subjects (2.5%) remained indifferent. Many of the respondents disapprove of the elasticity of academic years.

**Table 7. Advice to give to the management committee**

Reactions	F	%
Manage costs well	17	21,25
Make a good balance sheet budgetary	55	68,75
Hire Ens full time	8	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

The table above shows that several participants (68.75%) propose the development of a good budget; on the other hand, 17 subjects (21.25) want good management of academic fees; and finally, 8 subjects (10%) prefer that the University of Bandundu hire full-time teachers.

**Table 8. Disinterestedness of students**

Reactions	F	%
Often	60	75
Occasionally	17	21,25
Non	3	3,75
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: our respondents**

It results from this table that 60 subjects, i.e. (75%) often disinterested in the elasticity of academic years; while 17 subjects (21, 25%) are sometimes disinterested in the elasticity of academic years; and 3 subjects (3.75%) remained indifferent.

**Table 9. Compliance with hours worked**

Reactions	F	%
Yes	7	8,75
No	72	90
Undecided	1	1,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources: our respondents**

This table indicates that 72 subjects (90%) point out the hours worked by visitors are not respected; on the other hand, 7 subjects (8.85%) gave contrary opinions; and finally, 1 subject (1.25%) remained neutral. we note that several respondents say that the hours worked are not respected and the lessons are sloppy.

### 5. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

We approach this research in a double effort to summary and understanding of the results. Several respondents (91.25%) say that the academic calendar is not respected at the University of Bandundu. And this means that the management committee must double its efforts to be in harmony with the other institutions.

The causes of this phenomenon which is the subject of our study at the University of Bandundu are caused by poor management, late arrival of visiting teachers due to poor mobility policy and lack of proper planning.

And yet, the minister in charge of education higher and university in its attributions fixes a calendar at the beginning of each academic year and draws the attention of the heads of establishment to the strict respect of the said calendar in order to avoid the elastic academic years in the higher and university establishments.

Clearly, most respondents (93.75%) disapprove of the elasticity of academic years. Because, some students do 24 months instead of the 10 months required.

As for the advice to be given to the management committee, it would be the development of a good budget that would allow the establishment to deal with the mobility of visiting teachers in a timely manner. And the University of Bandundu could hire teachers in time for the smooth running of academic activities.

Compared to the hours worked, several participants (90%), note that the hours worked by the visiting teachers are not at all well done, the lessons are sloppy and the students do not have time to properly assimilate the knowledge transmitted by teachers.

This situation constitutes a handicap on the level of student training. Because the intensity of a teaching that does not prolong ends up decreasing, it is said.

Several other hypotheses can be made, in particular, the heads of institutions who are responsible for the daily management of universities have the obligation to plan the teaching process within their universities in order to avoid this phenomenon of the elasticity of academic years; and the University of Bandundu could introduce a policy of promoting assistants and heads of works in order to constitute its full-time staff, in order to avoid the delay caused by visiting tea Dear.

## CONCLUSION

The article to which we have dealt is part of the phenomenon of elasticity of academic years at the University of Bandundu. We have sought to verify the application of the academic calendar as provided for by the supervising Minister.

The survey was conducted among 80 students from different faculties of the University of Bandundu during the academic year 2019-2022.

The results showed that most institutions colleges and universities across the country are struggling to meet the academic calendar and some are even going up to 24 months instead of the planned 10 months. And, this situation constitutes a handicap on the level of training of the students.

Several participants disapprove of the elasticity of the academic years following lessons that disrupt the order of the academic calendar.

Amateurism among some head teachers paralyzes the proper functioning of academic activities.

The management committee and the faculties should plan better the arrival of visiting teachers by imposing a standard time on them in relation to their workload.

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