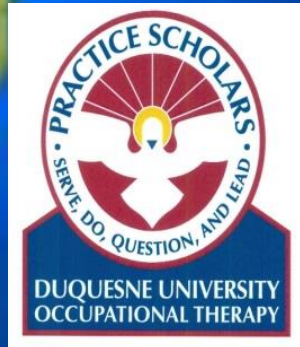


Occupational Therapy Education in Africa

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ELIZABETH CASSON TRUST



Background

- Africa is challenged to educate a critical mass of occupational therapists to meet the populations growing demand and need for health and rehabilitation services.
- WFOT has urged graduate-level training for OTs for decades.
- Very few studies document the number of OT training programs in African countries. (Hum Resour Health 2017 June 12; Bokotro, 2010; Aylers, 2010).
- Healthcare personnel studies focus primarily on nurses and physicians.

Workforce Challenges: Ugandan Example

- 1 in 5 Ugandan over 5 years old has a disability (*Demographic and Health Survey*)
- In 2014 there were >5.6 million PWD in Uganda (*Poverty & Disability in Uganda*).
- 87 OTs are actively practicing (*Uganda Allied Health Council, 2017*).
- **UGANDA: 5,625,000 PWD/87 OTs = 1 OT for every 64,655 PWD**
- **USA: 56,700,000 PWD/111,791 OTs = 1 OT for every 507 PWD**

Aim & Methods of the Study

Purpose: Describe the number and characteristics of OT education programs in African countries.

Sample: Generated database N=26 of existing programs from:

- WFOT
- Academic Institutions/OT Program websites
- Health Professions Associations
- Licensing Authorities in African countries

Data Collection and Analysis Processes

Data Collection Tool: Researcher developed questionnaire asked:

- Year Program was Established
- Type of Degree offered (Dip, BSc, MSc, PhD)
- Academic Faculty Staffing Patterns
- Enrollment Trends and Number of Graduates

Data Collection Process: Questionnaire completed by heads of OT programs in African countries and current students in these program.

- Questionnaire sent to all programs every 2 weeks for a period of 3 months
- Data triangulated: Institutional Heads, Students, WFOT, Licensing Authorities

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics calculated for all data

Response Rate

- Total number of OT Programs identified in Africa = 26
- 17 out of the 26 educational programs responded to the survey.
Response rate = **65.4%**
- Total number of African countries with OT Programs = 15
- 11 out of the 15 African Countries with OT Programs responded:
Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Findings

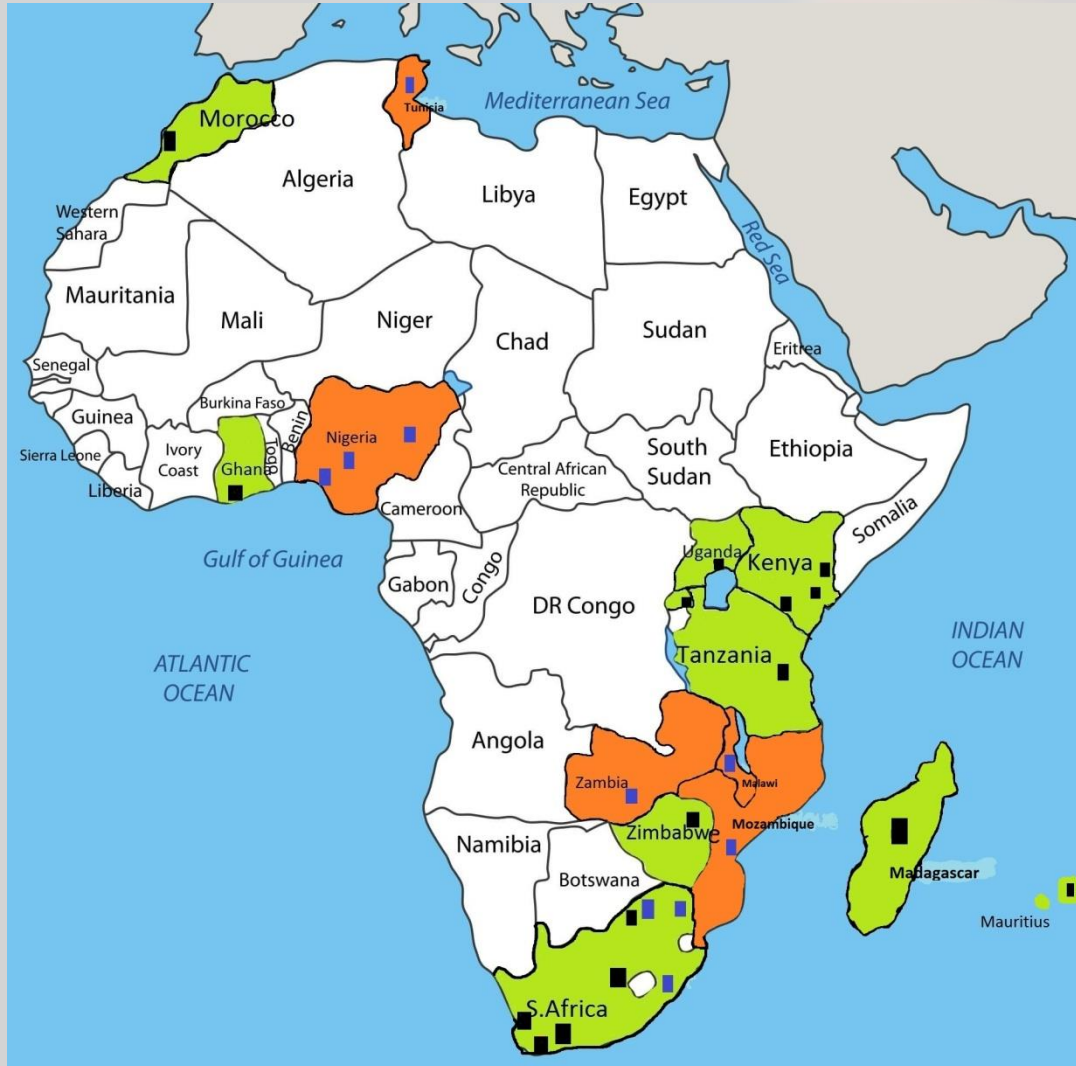
- 15 of 54 countries in Africa have OT education programs
- ALL African OT programs are offered at or below the bachelor's level
 - **Exception**: Most programs in South Africa are at or above bachelor's level
- Levels of OT Educational Programs in Africa
 - 4 Doctoral level (Ph.D.) programs (South Africa)
 - 5 Master's level programs
 - 16 Bachelor degree (BSc) programs
 - 7 Diploma (3-year) Programs





African Countries with OT Programs



15 African countries have occupational therapy education programs

Distribution of OT Programs



-  Countries with OT education programs that responded
-  Countries with OT education programs that did not respond
-  OT education programs that responded
-  OT education programs that did not respond

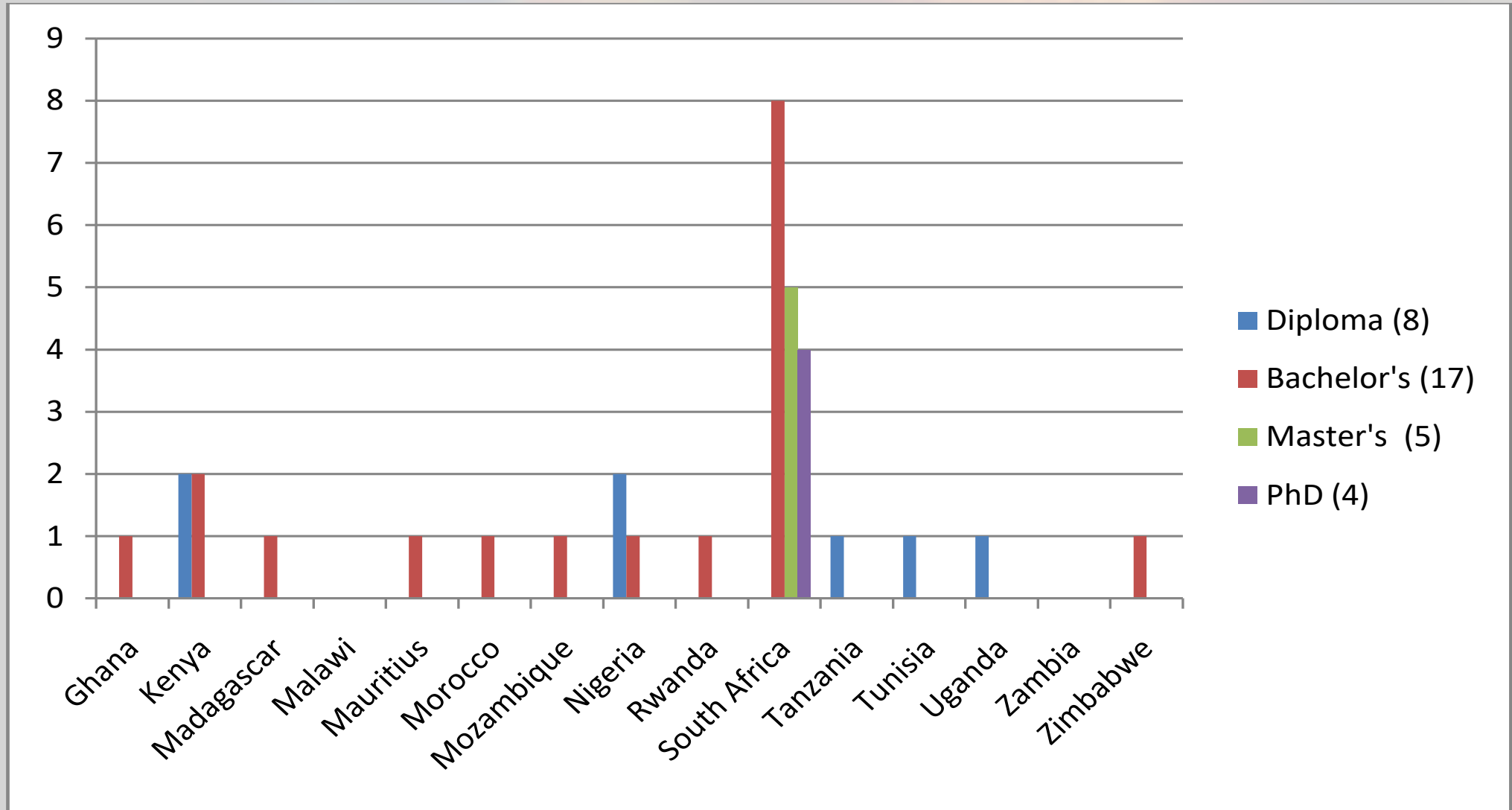
Development of OT Educational Programs (N = 20/26)

New OT Programs Opening by Year

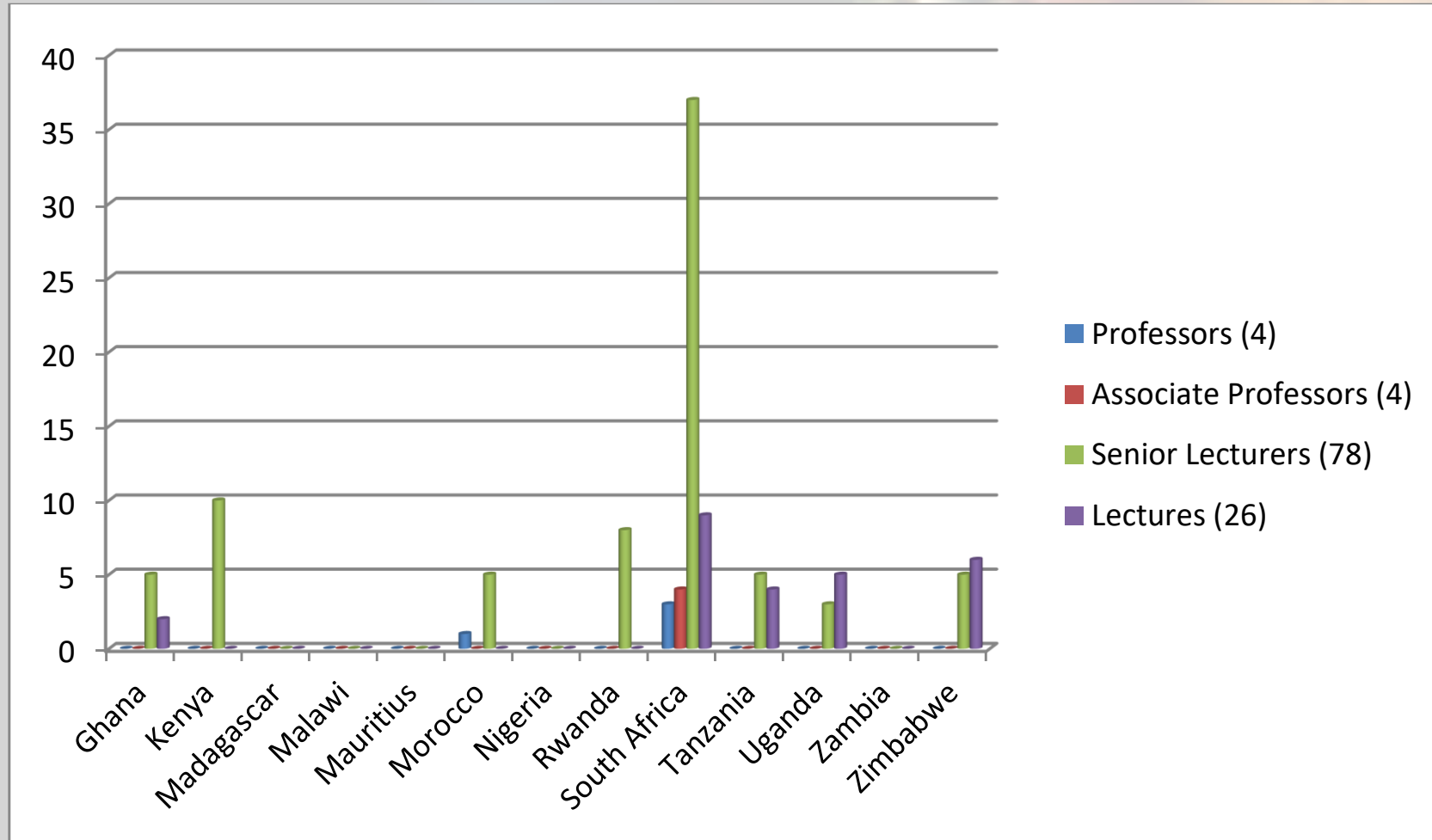


Type of Degree Offered

Number of programs



RANKS OF OT EDUCATORS IN AFRICA



There are as many educators in South Africa as in all OT programs in Africa combined

Discussion: Overall Findings

- There are too few OT educational programs in Africa (N = 32)
- Most educational programs (72%) are at the diploma or bachelors degree level
- There are too few OTs to meet the population needs (approximately 7,453 OTs in Africa for a 1.216 billion people = One (1) OT for 163,156 people)
- The vast majority of OT educators hold the lower ranks in academia

Discussion: Contextualized Findings

- **South Africa**

- Has greatest number of advanced OT programs
- May be positioned to act as a catalyst to build capacity for OT workforce in southern Africa region

- **Nigeria**

- Is quickly building capacity to train more OT healthcare workforce
- Is facilitating international collaboration and exchanges
- May be positioned to play important role in West African region since it has more schools offering OT programs and the program has taken quiet some good time there.

- **Need a concerted effort to...**

- Increase the number of OT clinicians and educators with advanced degrees
- Sustain and develop advanced entry-level OT educational programs at or above the bachelor entry-level

Conclusions and Questions

- The pace of development of OT training programs in Africa seems slow and we are not producing enough OT's to meet the need.
 - ***Why and what can be done to increase the pace of development?***
- There are areas, South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya for example, that may act as catalysts for OT professional development in their regions
 - ***How can we capitalize on strengths?***
 - ***What strategies can be used to develop strong inter-regional collaboration to increase capacity of rehabilitation services?***
- Many OT educational programs collaborate with regional and foreign universities.
 - ***How can we focus these collaborations to elevate the educational training in the region?***
 - ***What kinds of professional development opportunities are needed to provide supports that allow individuals to gain the skills to move up in academic rank?***

Limitations and Challenges

- As a researcher I am a novice and I have learned much about systematic data collection and analysis but also have much to learn
- The data is incomplete and is only representative of the schools that responded; several did not
- A variety of challenges including consistent communication, access and lack of one common language hinder survey research and necessitated creative follow-up strategies to elicit data

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