Strengthening Higher Education Leadership in Africa
Launched in 2011, with funding support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY), the HELP program sought to support research networks, policy forums and publications to document and provide an understanding of transformations underway with regard to the governance and leadership of higher education institutions in Africa. In initiating the program, CODESRIA was motivated by the desire to contribute to the knowledge base and initiate policy debates that would deepen the reforms, as leadership and governance are central to ensuring the quality and relevance of higher education in the continent.

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Strengthening Higher Education Leadership in Africa

A Study of Ghana’s Situation

John Gasu

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
DAKAR
The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) is an independent organisation whose principal objectives are to facilitate research, promote research-based publishing and create multiple forums geared towards the exchange of views and information among African researchers. All these are aimed at reducing the fragmentation of research in the continent through the creation of thematic research networks that cut across linguistic and regional boundaries.


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Preface

Higher education institutions in Africa, since the 1990s, have been operating within a context that is discernibly different from the preceding periods. The landscape for higher education, as it exists today, has been reconfigured by a conjuncture of mutually reinforcing factors that include globalisation, neoliberalism, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), privatisation and new public management system. This has led to the liberalisation of higher education landscape, in which private sector actors have become important players and the public ones corporatised. As a result, public and private higher education institutions have come to share commonality in their adoption of managerialism. The arrival of private sector providers and the infusion of capitalist culture into institutional governance have drawn much concern.

Prior to the current situation, public higher education governance in Africa was largely absolved from the stress of seeking alternative sources of funding as the state was supposed to take up that responsibility. The academia was also not distracted by moonlighting activities that has become so enervating on faculty. However, the downscaling of state funding for university education at the instance of the World Bank has generated new challenges for higher education leadership to deal with so as to sustain their institutions.

The concerns that have been raised centre around the fear that quality service could be guaranteed within a competitive liberalised higher education system. Another source of fear has been that commercialisation of teaching services, which has become the main source of income generation for the universities, would draw back research activities. Whether higher education leadership in Africa has the capacity to transcend these challenges to restore confidence in stakeholders by assuring quality service has remained a nagging question.

This study which uses the Ghanaian situation as a case study examines leadership in higher education. It addresses the governance situation in six universities namely, University of Ghana (Accra), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science
Higher Education Leadership Programme (HELP)

and Technology (Kumasi), University of Cape Coast (Cape Coast), University for Development Studies (Tamale), Valley View University (Accra) and the Catholic University College of Ghana (Fiapre, Sunyani). These institutions constitute a mix of four public universities and two private ones. It examined how the general African higher education governance situation has played out in Ghana’s universities, with a view to examining whether the capacity of higher education leadership is adequate to the challenges of a competitive landscape. Aside from focusing on the specific mandates and objectives which each of the six institutions are set up for, the contingencies in which their operations had been embroiled are also looked at. Of particular significance to the study are the key issues of (a) finding out ways in which leadership structure in each of the universities meet the challenges of academic excellence; (b) to find out whether leadership capacities in the universities were adequate in ensuring high academic service delivery; and (c) an examination of the measures for building capacities of staff to enhance efficiency. The findings of each of the institutions are separately chapterised and then a separate chapter is provided for a comparative analysis between the institutions. Recommendations to remediate the challenges that are encountered, as provided by the stakeholders and the author are made for policy considerations.

John Gasu
University for Development Studies
Ghana
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<td>AAU</td>
<td>Association of African Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEA</td>
<td>Association for the Development in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfriQAN</td>
<td>African Quality Assurance Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQAPA</td>
<td>Academic Quality Assurance Planning Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQAU</td>
<td>Academic Quality Assurance Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>African Union Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSc</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAMES</td>
<td>Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l’Enseignement Supérieur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARCCO</td>
<td>Centre of Applied Research Consultancy and Community Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCEIR</td>
<td>Centre of Continuing Education and Interdisciplinary Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDWF</td>
<td>Colonial Development and Welfare Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEPS</td>
<td>Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>Convention Peoples’ Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAPQA</td>
<td>Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance</td>
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<td>ENQA</td>
<td>European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>FACS</td>
<td>Faculty of Agribusiness and Communication Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAS</td>
<td>Faculty of Applied Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCUBE</td>
<td>Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education’</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIDS</td>
<td>Faculty Integrated Development Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>FMS</td>
<td>Faculty of Mathematical Sciences</td>
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<td>FOA</td>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPLM</td>
<td>Faculty of Planning and Land Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRNR</td>
<td>Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCBC</td>
<td>Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAS</td>
<td>Institute of African Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICST</td>
<td>Information and Communication Sciences and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUC</td>
<td>Inter-University Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<td>URC</td>
<td>Universities Rationalisation Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>UST</td>
<td>University of Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDCs</td>
<td>Workers’ Defence Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>WGHE</td>
<td>Working Group on Higher Education</td>
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About the Author
