

Strengthening Higher Education Leadership in Africa

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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

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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

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.

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List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

AAU	Association of African Universities
ADEA	Association for the Development in Education
AfriQAN	African Quality Assurance Network
AQAPA	Academic Quality Assurance Planning Authority
AQAU	Academic Quality Assurance Unit
AUC	African Union Commission
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CAMES	Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur
CARCCO	Centre of Applied Research Consultancy and Community Outreach
CCEIR	Centre of Continuing Education and Interdisciplinary Research
CDWF	Colonial Development and Welfare Fund
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHEPS	Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies
CPP	Convention Peoples' Party
DAFQA	Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
FACS	Faculty of Agribusiness and Communication Sciences
FAS	Faculty of Applied Sciences
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education'
FIDS	Faculty Integrated Development Studies
FMS	Faculty of Mathematical Sciences
FOA	Faculty of Agriculture
FPLM	Faculty of Planning and Land Management
FRNR	Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources
GCBC	Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference
IAS	Institute of African Studies
ICST	Information and Communication Sciences and Technology
IUC	Inter-University Commission

IDL	Institute of Distance Learning
IGF	Internally Generated Funds
IMC	Interim Management Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JHEIA	Journal of Higher Education in Africa
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
KSB	KNUST School of Business
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MPA	Master of Public Administration
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
NAB	National Accreditation Board
NABPTEX	National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations
NCBWA	National Congress of British West Africa
NCHE	National Council Higher Education
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
NLC	National Liberation Council
NPM	New Public Management
NWG	National Working Group
OFY	Operation Feed Yourself
PHAS	Public Health and Allied Sciences
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
QAAPU	Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Unit
QAP	Quality Assurance Programme
RCC	Regional Coordinating Council
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SBL	School of Business and Law
SMHS	School of Medicine and Health Sciences
SoB	School of Business
STM	School of Theological Missions
TTFPP	Third Trimester Field Practical Program 158
UCC	University of Cape Coast
UCSE	University College of Science Education
UDS	University for Development Studies
UGBS	University of Ghana Business School
UIC	University Interim Council
UK	United Kingdom
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission of Africa

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
URC	Universities Rationalisation Commission
UST	University of Science and Technology
VC	Vice-Chancellor
WDCs	Workers' Defence Committees
WGHE	Working Group on Higher Education



About the Author

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