The Status of Student Involvement in University Governance in Kenya
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The Status of Student Involvement in University Governance in Kenya

The Case of Public and Private Universities

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Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
DAKAR
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List of Abbreviations

AAU    Africa Association of Universities
AIU    African International University
AGM    Annual General Meeting
AKU    Aga Khan University
ANU    Africa Nazarene University
AUA    Adventist University of Africa
BWI    Bretton Woods Institutions
CHE    Council on Higher Education
CODESRIA Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
CORD   Coalition for Reform and Democracy
CU     Chuka University
CUE    Commission of University Education
CUEA   Catholic University of Eastern Africa
DBA    Doctor of Business Administration
DKUT   Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
EMOD   Executive Master of Science in Organizational Development
EU     Egerton University
FGDs   Focus Group Discussions
GEMBA  Global Executive Master of Business Administration
GLUK   Great Lakes University of Kisumu
GOK    Government of Kenya
HELB   Higher Education Loans Board
IAU    International Association of Universities
ILO    International Labour Organization
ILU    International Leadership University
IMF    International Monetary Fund
IUCEA  Inter-University Council for East Africa
JKUAT  Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
JOOUST Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
KABU   Kabarak University
KACE   Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KARU</td>
<td>Karatina University</td>
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<td>KCAU</td>
<td>KCA University</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCSE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KeMU</td>
<td>Kenya Methodist University</td>
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<tr>
<td>KHEU</td>
<td>Kenya Highlands Evangelical University</td>
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<td>KIs</td>
<td>Key Informants</td>
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<td>KNEC</td>
<td>Kenya National Examination Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>KSU</td>
<td>Kisii University</td>
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<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>Kenyatta University</td>
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<tr>
<td>KUC</td>
<td>Kenyatta University College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUSA</td>
<td>Kenyatta University Students Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWUST</td>
<td>Keriri Women's University of Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYMs</td>
<td>Kanda ya Mikono</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIA</td>
<td>Letter of Interim Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Laikipia University</td>
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<tr>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Master of Business Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>MKU</td>
<td>Mount Kenya University</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMARAU</td>
<td>Maasai Mara University</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMU</td>
<td>Multi Media University of Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMUST</td>
<td>Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU</td>
<td>Moi University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUA</td>
<td>Management University of Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>MUST</td>
<td>Meru University of Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>National Council for Science Technology and Innovations</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWU</td>
<td>North-West University</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODM</td>
<td>Orange Democratic Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan Africa Christian University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIU</td>
<td>Pioneer International University</td>
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<tr>
<td>PU</td>
<td>Pwani University</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUEA</td>
<td>Presbyterian University of East Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>RU</td>
<td>Riara University</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Student Affairs Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAPs</td>
<td>Structural Adjustment Policies</td>
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<td>SCU</td>
<td>Scott Christian University</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEKU</td>
<td>South Eastern Kenya University</td>
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<tr>
<td>SONU</td>
<td>Student Union of Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPU</td>
<td>St Paul University</td>
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<tr>
<td>SU</td>
<td>Strathmore University</td>
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TAWS    Tanganyika African Welfare Society
TEAU    The East Africa University
TNA     The National Alliance
TUK     Technical University of Kenya
TUM     Technical University of Mombasa
URP     United Republican Party
UEAB    University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
UFS     University of the Free State
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UoE     University of Eldoret
UoK     University of Kabianga
UoN     University of Nairobi
UP      University of Pretoria
URP     United Republican Party
USA     United States of America
USIU-A  United States International University, Africa
WASC    Western Association of Schools and Colleges
WERK    Women Educational Researchers of Kenya
USIU    United States International University
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Preface

The book is based on the study on the status of student involvement in University Governance in Kenya using experiences of one public and one private university. It addresses the critical area of governance of higher education in Kenya, given the role universities play in socio-economic and political development for most African countries. Governance of universities has been a challenging issue on the African continent with most universities experiencing poor governance characterized by poor quality of university education and staff and student strikes. The book is conceptualized around the theoretical framework of shared governance to interrogate how students, who are key members of the university community, have been mainstreamed in the democratization of higher education processes that have taken place in Kenya in the last decade. It is premised on the reality that collaborative governance is essential if universities are to attain their visions, missions and goals. The level and nature of student involvement in university governance is interrogated through the examination of key student self-governance processes including the inclusiveness of policies and organizational structures as well as the role of and support provided to, student governance bodies to ensure participation in university decision making. In addition, the objectives of the study center on whether students value and are satisfied with, their involvement in the decision making processes.

The book is organized in six chapters. The first three chapters set the stage for the study by providing a background on the history and state of university governance in Kenya. They highlight the issues that relate to student involvement in decision making processes at the university. Chapter one introduces the book by spelling out the problem statement, objectives, and justification and research issues of the study. In chapter two, the growth of university education in Kenya is discussed providing a platform for analysis of governance in higher education for proceeding chapters. Here, factors responsible for university growth and challenges faced that have implications on the quality of university education in Kenya are highlighted. Chapter three which is on the governance of higher education is mainly a literature and theoretical conceptualization of the study. The concepts of leadership and good governance are not only debated but their intersection is also established and contextualized to the governance of university education. Specifically, the chapter uses Kenya to provide an understanding of the structures and practices of university governance from a student involvement
perspective. Chapters four, five and six delve into how the study was done, its findings and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. In chapter four, details of the study methodology and protocols are underscored. In chapter five, after providing a background on the socio-demographic characteristics of the study respondents, the study findings are discussed along the study objectives. Chapter six concludes the book by discussing the study findings and drawing some implications of the findings in terms of conclusions and recommendations on how to ensure a democratic culture in the governance of Kenyan universities in general and student involvement in particular.
Foreword

For many years in Kenya, universities have been conceived as battlefields where spasmodic violent protests by students, over a variety of grievances, break out frequently. Quite often, lecturers and professors have also taken their own turn to go on the streets to demonstrate against poor remuneration. This perception has overshadowed the mission of university education presented in this book as the production of graduates who respond to the needs of the society, with regards to upgrade of skills of the existing workforce, development of community and business leaders of tomorrow, as well as the empowerment of beneficiaries ability to start new businesses to employ Kenyans and contribute to the country’s economic well-being. As institutions of higher learning where the country’s top human resource is trained, universities have attracted attention for the wrong reasons. It is against this background that this book, well researched and written by Prof. Mulinge, Dr Arasa, and Dr Wawire, reputable academics, prolific researchers with big publication portfolios and long careers in the service of universities in Kenya, the East African region and abroad, sets to interrogate the governance in universities often blamed for these conflagrations of protest. For the large numbers of academics, politicians, policy makers, and members of the public, this is the book that answers the big question that is often asked: “what is ailing our universities?”

To answer the questions that frequently come to mind about the difficulties that bedevil universities, this book sets a background by exploring the role of university education as the single most important driver of socio-economic development in societies and the sole agent of social mobility and national cohesion, particularly in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa. This is the justification for the huge budgetary allocations governments, non-governmental organizations, and aid agencies keep giving to ministries and agencies manning education. The 21st century has however seen the emergence of other influences that have impacted the delivery of quality education. Chief among them have been what the authors call the “massification” of education to accommodate growing populations and human resource needs, the need to ensure efficiency in the delivery of education, and the democratization of nations. These factors have triggered close scrutiny of leadership and governance in higher learning institutions including universities. Kenya, for example, has experienced turbulence in higher education institutions with frequent strikes which have been accompanied by violence and destruction
of property. An intellectual exposé of the nature that this book provides is a welcome effort in directing the spotlight on leadership and governance issues in universities that would otherwise be lost in the maze of occurrences blamed on a host of societal shortcomings.

Situating their study of governance in university education in Kenya, Prof. Mulinge, Dr Arasa, and Dr Wawire demonstrate the exclusive value of university education in the design and productive use of new technologies for a nation’s innovative capacity that outstrips any other social institution in the development of the civil society. They confirm the role of university education in social, cultural, political and economic development of nations through knowledge creation and dissemination. They achieve this by exploring, as part of the background, the evolution of university education from beginnings when the institutions had no focus on the development role through the ‘Accra Declaration’ to the 1990s and 2000s, when the focus fell squarely on the revitalization of university education to forge a tighter link with development. But for university education to accomplish this link and the noble objectives the country has set for it, it has to be effective. The authors are persuaded that governance issues, in as far as they relate to the shared governance principle of good governance in the running of the universities, is critical in enabling the institutions to achieve the mission of university education. Their investigation reveals that the country’s university education is afflicted by violation of the core principles of good governance, particularly shared governance; students, easily recognizable as major stakeholders in university education, are largely excluded from significant structures of governance thereby limiting their influence and participation. Even though their representation is provided via student government organs, such organs do not retain the trust and confidence of the student body. The authors urge a paradigm shift in the involvement of students in the governance of universities in ways that encourage and entrench democratic principles.

This book provides a deeply and exhaustively researched exposé of governance issues in university education and shows why the relationship between students and university leadership has been characterized by turmoil. It is incisive as it is exhaustive. It also offers pragmatic solutions for the enhancement of participation by all stakeholders of this vital sector of Kenya’s development engine.

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