

# Strategic Organization for Competitiveness in East African Universities

Okoche John Michael Maxel

School of Business and Public Management, Mount Kenya University, P.O Box 342-01000 Thika, Kenya  
E-mail: okochem@gmail.com

## Abstract

The success of any organization is intricately tied to its ability to positively respond to environmental dynamics. Universities are no exception to environmental changes; due to global politics, economic and technological changes, fragmentation of consumer and business markets due to changing tastes and craving by consumers for specialized services. This has led to increasing the velocity of change, critical issue of time, bending shape of organizations, need to compete and yet innovate simultaneously, design and implement new organizational architectures. The challenge today is to design an organization architecture which is flexible and adaptable with ability to perform effectively in the face of uncertainty. This is not just for today but for a great time in the future. Whereas in other parts of the World Universities have been in a position to adapt to the changes and dynamics but Universities in E. Africa have lagged behind. These therefore calls for Universities in E. Africa to quickly adapt to the environmental changes, match global trends, become competitive and enhance effective service delivery. This paper highlights traditional organization in E. African Universities, changing environmental trends, current organizational challenges, and strategies for effective management of Universities. The strategies for organization will enhance University clock speed, establish structures that promote divergence, promote organization modularity, structure hybrid distribution channels, design symmetrical research and development, construct conflict management processes, maintain organizational coherence and develop executive teams that will manage the challenges in the new century.

Finally the strategies proposed are mindful of the current and future organizational environment.

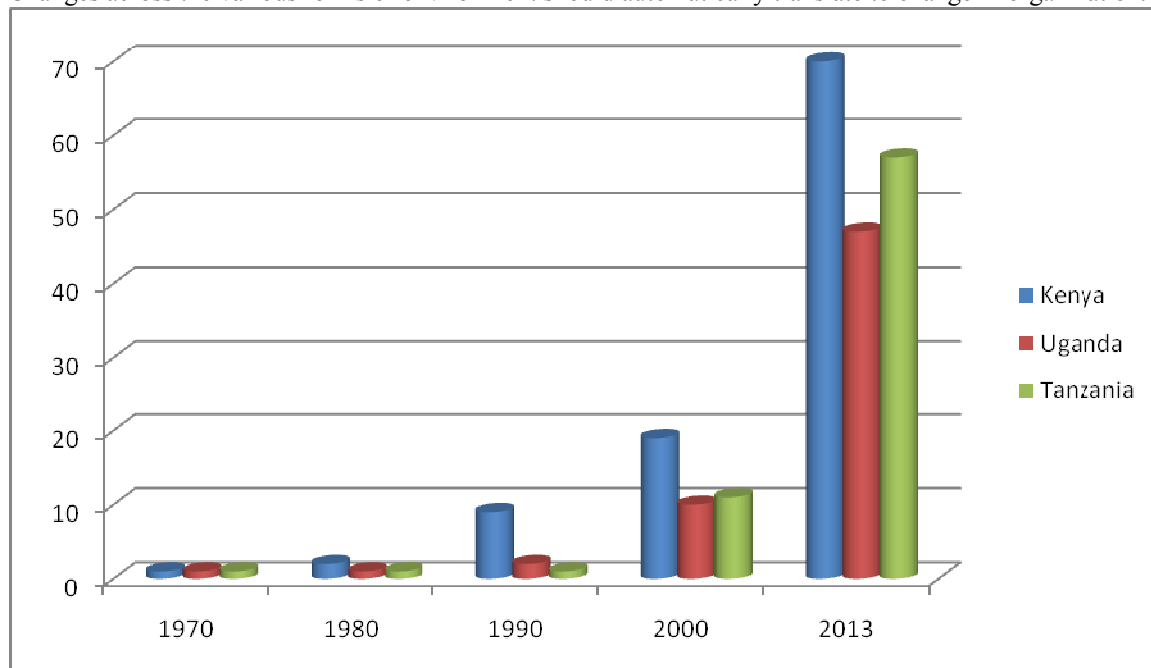
**Key Words:** Strategies, Structures, Organization, and Environment

## 1.0 Background

University education in East Africa started some time back in 1922 when Makerere College was founded as a small technical college, an inter-territorial institution for students from Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The small college in 1949 Makerere College later entered into a special relationship with the University of London for the sake of enabling the students from the institution to tutor and obtain degrees from the University of London. The college also facilitated the admission of students in Cambridge certificates preliminary education before eventually enrolling for diploma and degree. Makerere College was transformed into University of East Africa in 1963 upon the East African Countries became independent to serve all the students from East Africa and the great lakes region. The East African University based at Makerere, Kampala had constituent colleges in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania). In 1970, the East African University Authority decided to confirm the constituent colleges into three independent universities in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. This resulted in Makerere University becoming a first University in Uganda, University of Dar-es-Salaam for Tanzania, and the University of Nairobi in Kenya. However, these universities maintained a close collaboration to promote good standards and maintained the spirit of East African Community. However, this collaboration failed due to the collapse of East African Community in 1977 further dampening the networks for improved delivery of quality education in East Africa. The trends were also modeled by autocratic governments leading brain drain of the best professors and lecturers to Europe.

Despite challenges East African higher education witnessed a tremendous increase in the numbers of public and private Universities. The change in leadership and economic conditions led to the liberalization of economies facilitating emergence of the private universities in East Africa. Akilagpa (2002) highlighted that East African university education expanded over time Kenya went from 2 private universities in 1980 to 9 from 1990; Tanzania from 1 in 1990 to 11 by 2000 and Uganda 2 in 1990 to 10 in 2000. The trend completely changed as countries like Burundi which didn't have a university by 2000 by 2002 had 4 universities. The bar graph 1 below illustrates the trend of increase in universities in the three major economies of East Africa that is Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The change in the number of universities has not appropriately taken care of the new dynamics of policy, economics, technology and globalization. During the 1970s the universities were operating in a fairly predictable and stable environment that could easily be addressed with a stable centralized organization. Organizational structures were centralized with matrix arrangements that favoured the process of rigid and non dynamic environments. The changes over the years; colonial period, independence, post independence especially

in the 1970s to the early 1980s, the 1990s and the 21<sup>st</sup> century have greatly impacted on university education. Changes across the various forms of environment should automatically translate to change in organization.



Most universities in East Africa are still using old modes of organization characterized by hierarchy, vertical structures, much formality, standardization, stringent rules and procedures, highly specialized roles, low integration, low mechanisms for maintenance of value added systems with networking abilities. Organization can be analyzed by systematically looking at organizational components, goal setting, levels of hierarchy, level of centralization and decentralization, rules and schedules, reward systems, identification of duties and roles, specialization, degree of integration, mechanisms for maintenance of value added systems, mode of integration, networking approaches, outsourcing, approaches for alliances, and organizing across borders (Child, 2005). Surely using traditional organization cannot make a competitive university in the current volatile environment cannot foster competitiveness. No wonder Yizengaw (2008) in his study of East African universities highlighted poor leadership and management leading to the inability to retain and attract faculty, underutilized facilities, duplication of programs, high dropout and uneconomical procurement. This was in agreement with Akilagpa (2002), in their study noted that teaching, research, and an institutional quality assurance had tremendously declined and recommended for mechanisms to be put in place for improvement. Traditional organization with rigid structures cannot facilitate effective teaching, research, resource mobilization and competitiveness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Whereas it could be argued that traditional organizations were effective during the colonial time but this was basically the environment at the time was not volatile as today. Akilagpa (2002) noted that “in the colonial and early independence years, the question of the quality of the universities in Africa was hardly ever at issue as the institutions were able to operate at close to “international standards”, in effect, the standards of the relevant colonial power. There were two main reasons for this: (a) the nature and the extent of the relationship that the African institutions and their faculty had with metropolitan institutions helped set and maintain metropolitan standards; and (b) the small sizes of the universities and the relatively substantial resource support from the state meant that they had the resources for doing quality work”. The landscape has completely changed due to high student’s enrolment, changes in the policy environment with liberalization of education, unpredictable economic situation, influence of technology, the emergence of new management concepts that are challenging the traditional approaches of organizing. Traditional organization functioned well with the objectives of the centralized East African states which established Makerere at the University College of East Africa (Southall, 1974). Increase in size, scope, importance and cost of university education brought more pressure (Altbach 1991), together with fear of destruction necessary academic ethos (Lee 1997:198). The authoritarian system treated university as an extension of the government (Albornoz 1995) cannot deal with the trends that have emerged. Starbuck (2003:162) concludes the argument by saying that nearly everyone who has written about bureaucracies has complained about it; almost the only authors find value in the bureaucracy were Germany economists and sociologists writing between 1870 and 1915.

Organization is most effective when its design characteristic matches the environment (Lorsch & Lawrence, 1969). Organizations that operate in different environments need equally different strategies and structures to be competitive. East African universities that desire to be competitive have to design strategies and structures that match the current and emerging business environment. Management has to understand and anticipate current and future environment in order to put in place appropriate processes, systems, and architectural. Environment drives strategic architecture, organizational design, process and systems (Nadler & Tushman (1999). Understanding organization's environment and making appropriate decisions regarding the strategies has to be pursued in order to appropriately respond to the new dynamics especially current and emerging environment. Environment influence organizational structure, coordination and entire processes that management use for achievement of desired goals. It calls for alignment of formal and informal mechanisms by management so as to become more competitive in this century. Organizational design also influences the process of organization, which is interlinked with the environment. Organizational design facilitates or inhibits the achievement of the desired goal is strategic organization. Strategic organization is the process of arranging collective effort that achieves an outcome potentially superior to that of individuals acting or working alone (Child, 2005).

## **2.0 Objective**

This paper attempts to design a structure and strategy that will enhance effectiveness and efficiency through translation of strategic imperatives into new organizational architecture and new leadership priorities for competitiveness.

## **3.0 Methodology**

The method for designing of the new structure and strategy for East African Universities involved reviewing relevant secondary data of various Universities. The secondary data that were collected from policy documents, academic manuals, communication, marketing, strategic plans, websites and other relevant data for the East African Universities. This facilitated in coming up with an understanding of the current environment, appropriate strategies and structures for use in East African Universities. It was complemented with reviews of online books and journals.

## **4.0 Environmental drivers for change**

**4.1 Political drivers:** The political landscape shaped by the politics of power in the state and the politics of external influence have been the major drivers in the political environment in East Africa from the time of colonialism to date. The political environment is defined by the policy -making the extent to which power is concentrated or dispersed within the polity. Despite the existence of little political competition towards independence this quickly disappeared in most African countries shortly after independence. The new leaders, with a desire to consolidate power, often banned political competition (Kimenyi and Mbaku, 1996). This led to the emergence of autocratic governments strongly controlling education in Uganda Idi Amin led to loss of scholars in Makerere University. During military and single-party rule, decision speed making powers were dominated by just a few individuals. With regard to the politics of external influence, during the colonial period policies were designed externally and Africans had little input so the external influence on the University education was outstanding as the colonialists were also part of the processes of education. Political forces at home and abroad, are among the most significant determinants of organizational success. The systematic change in the political environment in East Africa has been systematically translating to respective changes philosophy, values, and ideologies. Political stability and foreign policies have played a great role in transforming are paramount in the transformation of the organization for the universities to gain competitive advantage. National political environment articulated by foreign relations, defense, education policy, tax policy, labour law, environmental law, trade restrictions, tariffs, and political stability greatly influences university education. The post independence political environment was motivated by high control of education by governments thus traditional organization was ideal (Southall (1974), universities were viewed as an extension of the state thus exercised a fairly strict internal discipline.

However, with political and economic liberalization, some power was transferred to local, regional and international spaces and actors (Kimenyi & Datta; 2011). Deregulation and privatization may be elements of the state's development strategy and linkage of technological and educational policies will enhance a country's informational productive factors (Castells 1996: 90). Change in the political atmosphere due to liberalization as opposed to nationalization together with the integration of the East African community has completely changed the political landscape. Liberalization of university education has brought in more competition and calls for change in the mindset from the old traditional approach with the adoption of a new strategy and mode of organization.

**4.2 Information Communication Technology (ICT):** the emergence of new technology, communication and technology has greatly transformed the technological environment in East Africa. Knowledge among the East African population about the products, services and mechanisms for delivery by the University has greatly influenced the dynamics of management. This has influenced social behaviour and attitudes of the communities towards service delivery. Technology has brought about fragmentation of the markets, and causing customers to have unique needs and aspirations. This evolution of in technology worldwide has influenced every sphere of life right from needs, perception of quality, marketing, and delivery of service thus redefining competition.

Technological also facilitates innovations in products and service provision like online education which enables people from different locations to study like being in the same room. East African Universities need to cope with technological changes in order to remain competitive as Information technology has made communication very easy and more convenient. It has also enhanced the development to global market for both domestic and international organizations, made work easier, faster, cheaper and efficient.

Information technology has also enhanced international virtual education thus diversifying competition with Universities from very far locations like Harvard, University of Liverpool and access of education just, by clicking of a button. These calls for managers of universities anticipate technological changes, business managers started building competencies for technology forecasting and management to effectively organize for competitiveness.

The opportunities offered by the convergence of information technology requires appropriate changes in higher education professionally (Gibbons, 1998) professionally administratively, approaches of teaching together with learning environments (Pallof & Pratt, 2003).

**4.3 Globalization:** has moved towards integrating goods, technology, information, labour and capital or the process of making this integration happen. Strong torrents of globalization through competition have enabled organizations to expand business networks of relationships and cooperation. The networking was done among different complementing firms or even among competing firms.

Globalization is being driven by advancements in technology, easy communication and transportation across borders by air, road, rail and sea. The use of the internet for communication has enhanced abilities of the global population to behave as though they are in a global village. This has facilitated the opening of markets that were previously limited to local universities this now enlarges the market for the goods and services that various companies can offer. This has also brought about very stiff competition from international universities.

In order to take advantage of the enlarged market opportunities and cope with the global market challenges, the university's management has to abandon old organization strategies and come up with a strategic organization so as to become more competitive. Several studies opine that revolutionary change in technology, communications and geopolitics impacted on all aspects of life (Carnoy, 2000; & Castells, 1996, 1998) and this cannot be ignored.

**4.4 Professionalism:** Previously management was a domain for successful persons in the respective fields; a successful teacher became a head teacher, successful doctor becomes a medical superintendent, and successful banker elevated to be a bank manager and successful professor easily became Vice Chancellor. However, the trend changed with the emergence of management as a profession led to establishment new management concepts. This approach of management worked because of a predictable traditional environment which was stable and predictable thus easy to manage. Whereas previously organizations were simple to manage before the 20<sup>th</sup> century but the dynamic has greatly changed, during the industrial revolution when family owned firms and businesses were replaced by professionally managed firms.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century new forms of organization emerged with divisions of labour and techniques. This led to the birth of key concepts like strategic management that was able to differentiate between successful and unsuccessful organizations. Ideologies like organizational culture, organizational design, and strategic organization were developed in order to gain a competitive advantage. Strategic management and techniques differentiated successful from unsuccessful organizations. Yabs (2007), the competitive advantage is influenced by the natural factors, related and supporting industries, demand conditions and firm strategy, structure and rivalry. Universities can be in a position to gain a competitive advantage through the establishment of organizational structures that adequately understand the university competitive environment. Managers have to critically look at the new dynamics that influence achievement of organizational goal and strategy in order to undertake strategic organization.

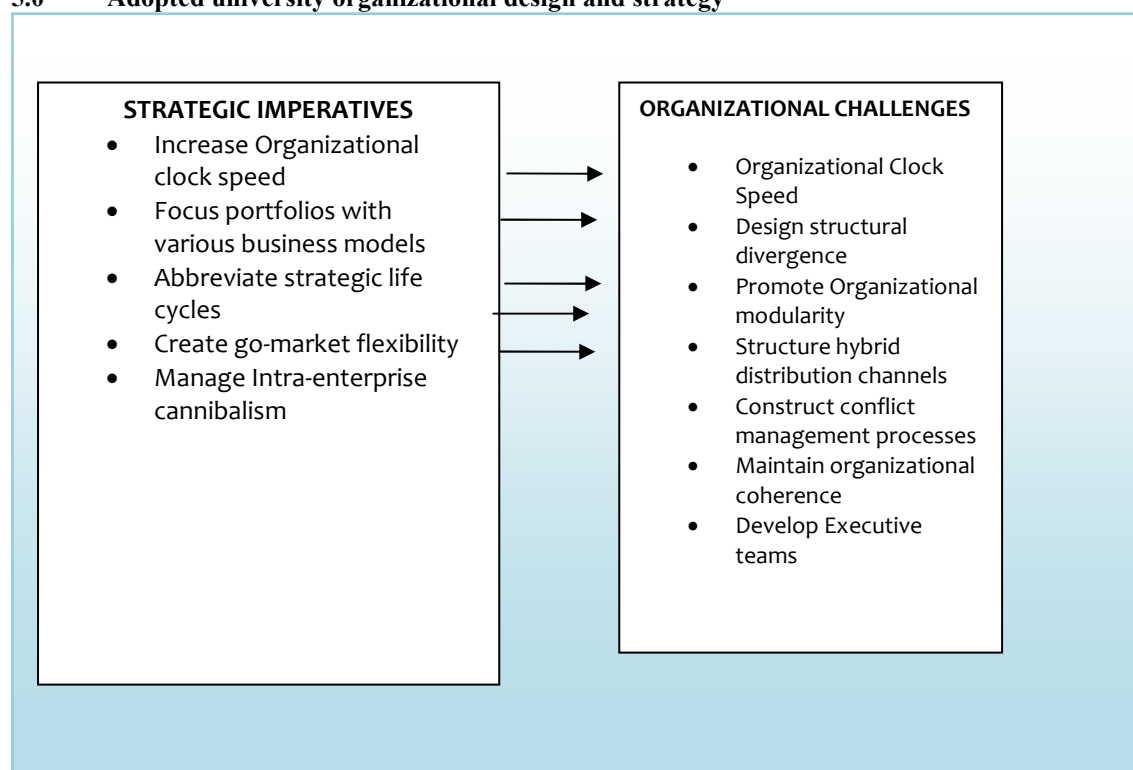
**4.5 Effective exploitation of opportunities:** universities need to strategically organize so as tap the opportunities that are available in East Africa. Universities can be involved in research for creating small to large-scale village industries, development of industrial products, prevention of environmental degradation, processing, canning and utilization of livestock products, information technology and open learning opportunities, tackling of food and water insecurity, protection and preservation of environments, utilization of biodiversity and main streaming products into Agro biodiversity practices with concomitant sharing of accrued benefits with the community (Michieka, 2010). Designing better and affordable ways of inter-connectivity and

promoting telecommunication within the region for purposes of trade and promotion and spread of the open learning phenomenon.

The opportunities in East Africa can best be harnessed by Universities strategically organizing. This opportunity extends to the ability to source and research for alternative energy for solid and water waste, orphan crop plasmas, promoting utilization in cross boundary products in East Africa, stimulating and strengthening the integration of East African Community, establishment of better mechanisms of utilizing the arid and semi-arid conditions, dealing with climate change patterns, policy formulation and working towards improvement in the world university rankings.

Strategic organization will enable East African Universities to tap talents in research and consultancy to promote innovation and creativity. The great economies require locations where outsourcing arrangements can be made but call for more established and mature universities to build human resources to train personnel for the market. Michieka (2010), “the gap between our universities and industries is so big that we cannot be innovative; without closing the gap”. This one can be achieved through the creation of first class universities with great ability to teach, conduct research, consultancy to harness opportunities available in East Africa and beyond.

## 5.0 Adopted university organizational design and strategy



**Fig: as adopted from Nadler and Tushman 1999:56**

**5.1 Enhance University organization clock speed;** Organizational clock speed is the rate within which an organization can understand, anticipate and respond in the most effective manner to environment changes. East African Universities, like counterparts from developed countries must improve their clock speed by continuously scanning the internal and external drivers’ in order to match current and future dynamics. Organizational capacity to understand, anticipate, and respond appropriately to external changes that fundamentally alter the rules of engagement and sources of value in a given business segment is imperative for competitiveness.

*Management needs to properly understand* the new dynamics driving the education industry; policy, economics, globalization, and technology due to the emergence of internet. Change in attitude and willingness to embrace change will definitely spark innovation and creativity are for competitiveness. The Universities have to become more innovative and creative to provide high quality services to different customers at affordable prices bearing in mind the changes while moving towards sustainable growth. Good strategic planning understands and anticipates the driving force by use of SWOT, PESTLE analysis with other tools of strategic organization. Organization and strategic planning will put provide universities with a better understanding of the environment, competitors, and compete effectively. Universities that will move with the times will grow at supersonic speed, the ones that resist will find themselves getting out of business and slow movers will find themselves struggling (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Child, (2005: 396) asserted that “Competitors unable to replicate Southwest

approach because were adopted to approach to organization of people.” Development of the leadership capacity within higher education to enable it to respond to this challenge is paramount towards achievement of the goal (Sarua, 2009).

*Vice Chancellors in this century have to be prepared to re-invent their organization to match the speed of the environmental change. This may require reinvention several times within a limited time. Payment of attention to the environment will enable the chief Executive Officers to appropriately adjust structures, processes, control, roles, processes and reward mechanisms to unlock the market potentials.*

*There has to be a paradigm shift towards competitiveness for success, university managers have to be prepared to change attitude and redesign clock speed in order to compete effectively.*

**5.2 Design an appropriate University structural divergence and convergence;** the biggest challenge for organizations is designing and development of multiple ways to achieve value within a defined competitive space (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Changing environment has made it very hard to develop and design a business model which is generally applicable across the various market segments due to the emergence of various factors like policy, economics, technology and globalization. Universities are finding it hard to operate in environments changing at high rates in a bid to achieve value within a defined competitive space. Universities in East Africa are no exception to the organizational challenge of mastering the art of designing divergence- the ability to create, support, and link, where necessary a wide variety of related businesses that use different architecture and at times conflicting strategies. Organizations have to master the art of designing divergence—the ability to create, support and link (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Most university mandates rotate around teaching, research, consultancy and community service but the major challenge is the development of structures and strategies that effectively coordinate these mandates in various market segments without losing focus.

Successful Universities will have to work towards building appropriate divergence and convergence. Divergence is about differentiation at points of strength while convergence at the points of weakness. The strategies and design have to put in place similarities at the enterprise level and differences in points of uniqueness to maximize comparative advantage. The times of rapid higher education change described as global trends have not had the same impact here that they have elsewhere, although pressures are being experienced from rapid growth in student numbers in some contexts, and from changing expectations on the sector in others. However, it is increasingly acknowledged that traditional models are no longer sufficient to position the sector for its role in national development (Nyaigotti-Chacha 2001). University education has substantially been affected by expansion of both primary and secondary education; in 1980, Uganda had 510 government-aided secondary schools, with 37,000 pupils. By 1996, the numbers had risen to 621 and 256,000, respectively (Musisi, 2002) Tanzania experienced a 60% increase in secondary school enrolment between 1990 and 1998 (Mkude et al., 2001), while Burundi is reported to have experienced an explosion in secondary school enrolments between 1985 and 1993 (Shabani, 2001).

Management needs to determine the level of convergence where the policies of the different entities are similar and dissimilar with an overall objective of enhancing competitiveness. Innovative and creative universities will be in a position to design business structures that are both complementary and competitive in the current and emerging environment. This implies that the universities must in building congruence by providing adequate frameworks that make it possible to exploit various opportunities at various levels, units and sections. This is about making strategic choices to minimize linkages at the point of strength to maximize benefit and yet at the same time maximizing linkages at the point of weakness to maximize benefits. Ajayi (1990), in his ideology envisaged the freedom or autonomy of the institution to make its own decisions in a broad complex of issues without interference from external, non-university agencies.

**5.3 Promote university organization modularity;** East African Universities need to work towards promoting organization modularity, by establishment of structures that suits the demands of a modern University education in a competitive environment. This involves putting in place appropriate and coherent, responsive structures, processes, systems that will match the current modern environment. The greatest challenge about the current University structures emphasizes hierarchy and a culture of bureaucracy. The new strategy and structure should be streamlined in the process, employing modular design, which has an advantage of retaining benefits of learning, team building and ownership. McNerney (1996: 5), while emphasizing on the changes in Southwest Airline that was able to grow in strength to be the most valued business enterprises highlighted that the company adopted a culture de-emphasized the hierarchy. This resulted in the much revered success of the company.

*Dynamic environments now call for designs of the systems, processes, structures, cultures, strategies, roles and mechanisms that are suited to the prevailing environment.* Whereas various universities are bent towards making structures and systems suited to the environment but the dynamics in the current environment are very dynamic that the changes are taking place more frequently. It is therefore imperative that East African Universities encourage and promote organization modularity that matches the time. The changing system must be quickly changed to match the times, the speed of technology and globalization has brought in new dynamics that cannot

allow the university years to implement one change due to a rapidly changing environment. To address the many challenges being faced by higher education in Kenya and other African countries, innovative organizational and leadership approaches are required which have to tap into the individual and collective stakeholder creativities and competencies in pursuit of core university functions (Sifuna, 2012).

**5.4 Establishment of various unique relevant and appropriate structures for service provisions;** East Africa is a big territory with different unique political, social, cultural, economic, and technological environments. These successfully structured the population into various unique entities with various needs. It is coupled with a challenge of different market segments across the region. Whereas universities previously could provide generic programmes that could be provided to clients across the divides but this cannot be the case Universities therefore have to establish various unique relevant and appropriate structures and programmes that can serve the various locations with the unique needs. Universities need to design a hybrid distribution channel to manage the different market segments and meet various customers' needs through technology and other mechanisms. This is in agreement with Nadler & Tushman (1999), who proposed for the organizations to come up with different structures in order to simultaneously manage different channels of distribution and fragmented markets.

Competitive and valuable universities will be in a position to build structures and provide product that are flexible to the different unique markets. The designing of programmes that are suited to the customers in terms of convenience, validity, appropriateness, and market orientation will be important for university success. Most markets are now interested in networked organizations that provide various unique products to meet their unique tastes and preferences. The programmes must recognise the different levels of economic growth, differences in policies, and values in the different market segments.

**5.5 Proper design of symmetrical research and development;** The environment that the University is currently operating is very dynamic. The winning idea today is a losing idea tomorrow. The same idea cannot be replicated across the different markets to success, across departments, colleges affiliate colleges and within the various sections in the same University. East African Universities have to design structures and processes that will guide research and development with great consistency with the business model. It calls for universities to design structures and process that guide research and development in the development of products, services and development. This will enhance the university's ability to compete in the present and future because of appropriate research and design. This implies that the processes, structures, priorities, and behaviour adapted will be flexible in the delivery of services to emerging challenges and opportunities in Education.

Most universities in East Africa have a mandate of research but this primarily is being used for academic purposes. This is acquisition of academic qualification and extension of theories but little efforts has been put in place to facilitate innovation within the campus. Research and development must be carried out to facilitate strategic growth and development within the university. Research would facilitate understanding and anticipation of the dynamic environment and coming up with appropriate strategies of responding to the volatile environment. In the new millennium organizations like South West Company that have been very successful, mainstream research and design to business. Hickson (1997: 100), South West company encouraged employees to carry out research in order to come up with innovations and creativity. This further supported by Sifuna (2012), who advised Universities in East Africa to Increase democratization and participatory decision-making, based on mutual gains among the university system components, needs to be researched and utilized.

**5.6 Construction and development of dynamic conflict management processes;** Traditionally universities in East Africa had designed structures, processes, systems, roles, responsibilities, mechanisms of reporting and culture for the sake of promoting harmony and stability. This was due to the fact that the environment was also predictable and not dynamic as it is today. The current and future environment is dynamic and very unpredictable that designing structures that are stable would lead to automatic failure. Nadler & Tushman (1999), an organization that uses the design to impose an artificial sense of stability in the face of sweeping environmental change will become its own enemy.

Universities need to build in mechanisms of management of conflicts among the different units due to the challenges of the new dynamics. The new design and strategies will facilitate the streamlining of consistency, stability, harmony and complementarities among the different units in the University. This is through building and developing processes, cultures, and attitude that encourages conflict resolution. East African Universities need to build systems with a mindset of accommodating and promoting conflict resolution. These structures should promote competition with conflict and yet providing mechanisms for conflict management processes. Effective conflict management in the new century will become one of the competitive advantages of the modern universities. Universities need to put in place structures, systems, processes and mechanisms for dealing with conflict for the benefit of its customers as conflict becomes inevitable due to the various factors in the market.

Waswa & Katana (2008), economic pressures undermine the quality of service delivery leading to poor performance by staff which can be improved through the encouragement of participative decision making (Olayo, 2005). Maina (2011) also found that colleges that keep students informed of the challenges that they face in

providing services, candidly explaining any setbacks and how these are handled, give students an opportunity to experience management in action. Inadequate involvement of staff and students in decision making has impacted negatively on the quality of teaching and learning in public universities and private universities (Gudo, Oanda and Olel 2011). Proactively establishing systems for decision making and conflict resolution is vital East African universities.

**5.7 Maintain university organizational coherence;** universities need to establish and put in place mechanisms that will enable the core stakeholders to have shared common values, philosophy, beliefs and mind programming as a means of reinforcing formal structures. The culture built will work as the glue that reinforces the university to work in unity of purpose and focus towards the achievement of organizational goal. The design and strategy will enable to the University to maintain coherence upholding and reinforcing cultures, values and shared goals to replace formal systems that glue the organization together. Coherence through the informal structures help in strengthening the organization and realization of goals become very easy due to commitment of employees. The process of building coherence has to be through culturalization by inductions, orientations and training. *Like south west company, Pugh and Hickson (1997:139), "core values they see as key to the enterprise: quality, reliability, action, regular informal communication, and quick feedback"*. The culture can best be built by making employees to appreciate the co-values, mission, vision and strategic objectives of the organization. Microsoft has strategically mainstreamed shared values to all employees to the extent that the employees have little attachment to job titles, formal structures and bureaucratic procedures no wonder the success.

East African universities can adopt this means of ensuring gaining competitiveness in a dynamic environment. It will facilitate coherence, tolerance and dealing with uncertainty and making universities more competitive. Job titles, formal structures and bureaucracy will have little influence on the people that have a common belief, values, and philosophies will enable staff to focus towards achievement of a common goal. This very vital in the challenging environment in which competition is severe.

Mead & Andrews (2009:80), constructed organizational culture is a product of structures, systems, and regulations, planned and imposed by management. The management works towards building of values that suit the organizational goals. The process of building values, beliefs, philosophies and mental programming of the employees in most cases is superficial doesn't enlist commitment and involvement.

**5.8 Development of executive teams for taking forward the reform, innovation and creativity agenda;** East African Universities need to build more cohesive in top management by development of executive teams that work towards competitiveness and productivity to meet the challenges of today and the future. The dynamics that have affected universities continuously becoming complicated as the environment keeps changing at supersonic speeds. The biggest challenge in the management of big organizations is the complexity of envisioning the entire organizations; that is management of big organizations like small organizations. Top management has a mandate of envisioning universities to manage current and future challenges. Dynamics now require for management of large organizations like small organizations in order to gain competitive advantage. One person in the modern organization cannot possess the charisma to drive the organization into the desired end without establishment of good executive teams that can work towards coherence and strategic fit the unique environment.

East African Universities with top managers, middle managers and lower level cadres need to work towards building teams at the various levels of the organization to deliver quality and appropriate services to the customers. These sophisticated tasks require the combined intellect of senior people who share a commitment to the common good of the enterprise (Nadler & Tushman 1999:59). Design and strategy has to establish executive teams with a responsibility of generating coherence through envisioning the University. This will promote teamwork, cooperation but requires development competency of executive teams, and collective skills important innovative strategies and organizational architectures. This should be with a great intention of exploiting the global and local advantage. Like the South West Company preserved its simple form with limited staff (Bovier, 1993, p. 58).

Operating units have to be strengthened, so as to function efficiently and effectively. The recruitment of deans, directors of institutes, heads of departments, administrators and managers for the operational units should be done competitively at all levels and remuneration pegged to competence and performance (Sifuna, 2012). The problem of governance is the location of authority to resolve these issues both internally and externally (Millet 1985).

The executive teams have to build in relation to context that the team is needed, purpose, cultural orientation, structure and support the systems that have been established by the university. This should also mix skilled, experienced and motivated teams with appropriate sizes that can be effective in the achievement of organizational goals. This should also be built with abilities to effectively communicate, make decisions, and manage conflicts.



## 6.0 Conclusion

Worldwide various universities have responded to the changing trends by organization of education across borders but the East African Universities have not fully embraced organizing of strategic organization. Whereas the integration of East Africa was viewed as a catalysed but this has not been the case. The environmental drivers for strategy; political, economic, technological, globalization, and professionalism in management require universities in east Africa to move towards strategic organization. Universities in E. Africa must quickly adapt to changes in the operating environment. The old bureaucratic organization with formalized systems, tall and specialized hierarchy, centralized authority, single reporting lines, mandatory rules and rule based orientation are outdated. Traditional organization that is rigid is unsuitable for the new market forces thus calling for adoption of new forms of organizing to match customers' tastes and preferences. The implementation of this design and strategy will contribute towards enhancing competitiveness of East African Universities. This is through improvement in clock speed, design effective structures, promote organization modularity, structure better distribution channels, design systematic research and development, construct conflict management processes, maintain coherence and develop executive teams that will manage the challenges in the new century. This was the basis of designing the winning strategy and architecture that will enhance the university organizational effectiveness, translate the imperatives into new organizational architecture. The final outcomes of this design and strategy are good governance, coordination, common vision, effective structures, reliable organizational systems and improved image of the University

## References

- Ajayi, K., (1990), 'Academic Freedom and University Autonomy in Relation to Human Liberty: Nigeria as a Case Study', in B.D. Kaba and L.C.A. Rayapen, eds., *Relevant Education for Africa Younde: Professor World Peace Academy*.
- Akilagpa. S. (2002), "African Universities and the Challenge of Research Capacity Development" (Unpublished) (See [www.aau.org/english/documents/](http://www.aau.org/english/documents/)).
- Albornoz, O., (1991), 'Autonomy and Accountability in Higher Education', *Prospects, Quarterly Review of Education* Vol. XXI, No. 2.
- Altbach, P.G., (1991), 'Patterns in Higher Education Development: Towards the Year 2000', *Prospects, Quarterly Review of Education* Vol. XXI, No. 2, pp. 189-203.
- Bovier, C. (1993), "Teamwork, the heart of an airline", *Training*, June, pp. 53-5, 58.
- Carnoy. M. (2003), *Globalization and education restricting*, *Melbourne Studies in Education* 39 (2). 21-40.
- Castells. M. (1996), *Challenges of globalization: South Africa debates with Manuel Castells*.
- Castells. M. (1996) *the information Age Economy, Society and Culture. Volume 1. The rise of network society*. Oxford. Blackwell.
- Castells. M. (1998) *the information Age Economy, Society and Culture. Volume 3. The rise of network society*. Oxford. Blackwell.
- Child, J. (2005) *Organization: contemporary principles and practice*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Gudo, C.O., Oanda I.O. & Olel, M.A., (2011), *Role of Institutional Managers in Quality Assurance: Reflections on Kenya's University Education*, *Australian Journal of Business and Management Research*, Vol.1, No. 2.
- Gibbons. M. (1998), *Higher Education Relevance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Available online: [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/07/19/000094946\\_9912220532351/Rendered/PDF/multi\\_page.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/07/19/000094946_9912220532351/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf). [ Accessed on 29th June, 2013]
- Harrison, J.S (2003): *Strategic Management: Of Resources and Relationships*, Leyh Publishing LLC.
- Hodgson, D.E. (2004), 'Project work. The legacy of bureaucratic control in the post-bureaucratic organization', *Organization*, **11** (1): 81-100.
- Kimanyi, M.S. and Mbaku, J. (1996) 'Barriers to Economic and Political Reform in Africa.' *The Independent Review* (Kenya) 1(1).
- Kimanyi. M. S. & Datta. A. (2011), *Think Tanks in Sub-Saharan Africa: How the political landscape has influenced the political landscape has influence their origins*. Overseas Development Institute 111 Westminster Bridge Road London SE1 7JD, UK.
- Lee, M.N.N., (1997), 'Reforms in Higher Education in Malaysia', in K. Watson, C. Modgil and S. Modgil, eds., *Education Dilemmas: Debate and Diversity* Vol. 2, London: Cassell.
- Lorsch J. & Lawrence. P. (1969), *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration*. Harvard University Press.
- Maina, R.K., (2011), 'Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intentions among Kenyan College Students', *KCA Journal of Business Management*, Vol. 3, No 1.
- Maznevsky, M.L. & Chudoba, K.M., (2000), 'Bridging space over time: Global virtual team dynamics and effectiveness', *Organization Science*, **11** (5): 473-492.

- McNerney .D.J. (1996). Contingent workers: Companies refine strategies. *HR Focus*, 73, 1-6.
- Mead, R. & Andrews, T. G. (2009) *International management*. 4th ed. Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons.
- Millett, J.D., (1985), 'Governance of Higher Education', in Torsten Husen and T. Neville Postlethwaite, eds., the *International Encyclopaedia of Education*, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Nadler, D. A, & Tushman, M. L. (1999) 'the organization of the future: Strategic imperatives and core competencies for the 21st century', *Organizational Dynamics*, 28 (1), pp. 45–60.
- Olayo, J.O., (2005), 'The Impact of Employee Empowerment on Work Performance: Case Study of Selected Universities in Kenya', Unpublished MBA thesis, Kenyatta University.
- Pallof. R.M., & Pratt. K. (2003), The Role and Responsibility of a the learner in the online Teaching and Learning Classroom. 19<sup>th</sup> Annula conference on distance learning. Availableonline [http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/Resource\\_library/proceedings/03\\_24.pdf](http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/Resource_library/proceedings/03_24.pdf) [Accessed on 20th June, 2013].
- Perkins, J.A. (1978), 'Autonomy' in the *International Encyclopaedia of Higher Education*, Vol. 2A, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, pp 578-83.
- Powell, W.W. Koput, K.W. & Smith-Doerr, L. (1996). 'Interorganizational collaboration and the locus of innovation: Networks of learning in biotechnology', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 41: 116- 145.
- Pugh, D.S. & Hickson, D.J. (1997), *Writers on Organizations*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Sarua, (2009), *Leadership Challenges for Higher Education in Southern Africa*, Southern Africa Regional Universities Association Leadership Dialogue Series, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2009.
- Sennett, R. (1998) *the Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*, New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Sifuna, D.N., (2010), Some Reflections on the Expansion and Quality of Higher Education in Public Universities in Kenya, *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, Vol. 15, No. 4.
- Sifuna, D.N., (2012), Leadership in Kenyan Universities and the Challenges of autonomy and academic freedom: An Overview of Trends since Independence, *JHEA/RESA*, Vol. 10, 10.1, 2012, pp 121-137.
- Southall, R., (1974), *Federalism and Higher Education in East Africa*, Nairobi: East African Publishing House.
- Starbuck, W.H. (2003), 'The origins of organization theory', in Tsoukas, H. & Knudsen, C. Eds., (2003), *The Oxford Handbook of Organization Theory: Meta-Theoretical Perspectives*, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.
- Waswa, F. and Katana, G., (2008), Academic Staff Perspectives on Operating Beyond Industrial Actions for Sustainable Quality Assurance in Public Universities in Kenya, *International Journal of Environment, Workplace and Employment*, Vol. 4, No. 1.
- Yabs, J (2007): *Strategic Management Practices In Kenya*, Lelax Global Ltd, Nairobi Kenya.
- Yizengaw. T. (2008), *Challenges of Higher Education in Africa and Lessons of Experience for the Africa - U.S. Higher Education Collaboration Initiativ*, A synthesis report based on consultations made between March- April, 2008 and review of literature related to higher education and development in Africa. [DRAFT WORKING PAPER - 1/2008]. NASULGC.

This academic article was published by The International Institute for Science, Technology and Education (IISTE). The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open Access Publishing service based in the U.S. and Europe. The aim of the institute is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the publisher can be found in the IISTE's homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

## CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

The IISTE is currently hosting more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals and collaborating with academic institutions around the world. There's no deadline for submission. **Prospective authors of IISTE journals can find the submission instruction on the following page:** <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> The IISTE editorial team promises to review and publish all the qualified submissions in a **fast** manner. All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Printed version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

## MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Recent conferences: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/>

## IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

