



TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION IN KENYA BY CREATING CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE IN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract:

The global call for an inclusive and equitable quality education for sustainable development is a grand step in ensuring that all children have an opportunity to unleash their potential in education and that they are empowered to participate in the development agenda of their society. In response to the call, current reforms in education in Kenya and across the world demand creating pathways to access learners to areas of interest, ability and talent in an effort to ensure that education is structured to enable individual learners realize their potential regardless of location, economic status, religion and race. The reforms place demands on universities to establish their 'nitch' so that each becomes a centre of excellence in a certain area of specialization by which it is known, rather than the current situation in Kenya for instance, where universities are offering similar degree programmes. This has led to a very stiff competition over students' admission to the programmes as illustrated by the rigorous marketing in different forms of media by different universities for virtually the same programmes. A learning institution distinguishes itself as a centre of excellence by maintaining the highest standards of education through exemplary leadership; employing learner-centred teaching methods and differentiated assessments; engaging students in research and training; requiring them to engage in community service and putting in place structures and mechanisms for feedback to ascertain that quality and standards are maintained by all departments. This paper reviews literature on the structures and processes universities have put in place to qualify them to be centres of excellence with a view to making recommendations on how universities in Kenya could establish themselves as centres of excellence.

Keywords: quality education, centre of excellence, 21st century skills

1. Introduction

The linkages between education and national economic performance are widely acknowledged. Thus, government concern about the quality of education derives from

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the widespread belief that quality education has a significant impact on economic growth and development (Pigozzi, 2006). Ozturk (2008) maintains that no country can achieve sustainable economic development without substantial investment in human capital. He outlines the benefits of education as raising people's productivity and creativity, promoting entrepreneurship and technological advances as well as securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution. Further, Ozturk (2008) maintains that education enriches people's understanding of themselves and the world and improves the quality of their lives and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society. Sustainable Development Goal 4 supports this view, noting that education is the key to prosperity which opens a world of opportunities, making it possible for each of us to contribute to a progressive, healthy society. The goal further outlines the benefits of education including liberating the intellect, unlocking the imagination and promoting self-respect (Goal 4: Quality Education/The Global Goals). These benefits of education pressurize governments in many countries (including Kenya) to incur more expenditure on education than any other ministry. However, realizing the benefits requires learning institutions to enhance inclusivity in education in order provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their dreams in education within their capacity, interest and talent.

Education is also concerned about relevance, that is, the question of whether systems of education are preparing young people for future adult roles as creative, thinking citizens who can sustain themselves and contribute to the well-being of their families, communities and societies. Pigozzi (2006) argues that education must be understood in terms of a larger context that reflects learning in relation to the learner as an individual, a family and community member, a citizen and as part of a world society. Education must also relate to knowledge building and the skilful application of all forms of knowledge by unique individuals who function both independently and in relation to others. Achieving this demands embracing individualized and personalized teaching methods and differentiated assessments in order to enable all learners engage in learning productively.

Pigozzi (2006) argues that a high quality of education reflects the dynamic nature of culture and languages, the value of the individual in relation to the larger context and the importance of living in a way that promotes equality in the present and fosters a sustainable future. This reflects a holistic view of education expected of all learning institutions that desire to become centres of excellence (CoE). Education for sustainable development goals target 4:7 resonates well with this holistic view of education in its agenda to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. For universities to deliver such high quality education, it is imperative that they embrace the reforms outlined above and further reform their curricula to accommodate interdisciplinary approach to education in order to broaden the learners' knowledge and skills to enable them cope with the numerous challenges of the dynamic society.

As noted above, a learning institution distinguishes itself as a centre of excellence by maintaining the highest standards of education. This entails upholding quality and standards. The following section discusses quality education as a set of processes.

2. Quality Education as a set of Processes and Outcomes

UNESCO (2005) conceives quality of education as a set of processes and outcomes that are defined qualitatively using indicators such as the quality of the curriculum, quality of facilities, services and technology and policies and practices that institutions have put in place. In addition, UNICEF (2000) identified five dimensions of quality namely learners, environments, content, processes and outcomes, and emphasizes that the elements must be adequate and relevant for quality education to be achieved. A university should satisfactorily define and implement the elements above and also ascertain that the dimensions of quality are adequate to enable it provide acquire the standards and practices of quality education that align with a CoE.

Pigozzi (2006) emphasizes that the understanding of the concept of quality education should shift from literacy, numeracy and life skills as these skills are no longer adequate for the educational needs of today's dynamic society. She also notes that the education offered in many school systems is not pertinent to the societies today, and raises concerns on wastage in education as the graduates are not empowered with skills that can help them participate in the development of the society. The concerns raised here have featured in the resurgent debate on the mismatch between the education offered by universities and the labour market needs which has meant that employers have to train graduates on employability skills (Hampson, Patton and Shanks, 2011; IUCEA Survey, 2015). The British Report (2014, in IUCEA, 2015) makes it clear that the status of universities in Sub-Saharan (Kenya included) is wanting as they operate with unmanageable student-teacher ratios with overstretched resources and insufficient teaching staff. This implies that the standards in these universities are far below the basic requirements of a CoE as the teaching of huge numbers and lack of sufficient resources cannot allow learners to enjoy the benefits of individualized and personalized instruction outlined above. There is urgent need for governments, educators and stakeholders in education in the region to urgently address the issues in the universities with a view to restoring them back to their former glory.

Education should address the social, psychomotor and affective dimensions of learning to empower students with skills so that they can make a contribution to sustainable human development, peace and security, universal values, informed decision-making, and the quality of life at individual, family, societal and global levels (Pigozzi, 2006). This holistic view of education aligns well with the definition of a centre of excellence above. It is also supported by Njoroge and Bennaars (2000) in their emphases that a complete education addresses the four dimensions of education namely the cognitive, the normative, the creative and the dialogical. The Center for Curriculum Redesign (2016) also maintains that curriculum should offer a complete framework across the four dimensions of education - knowledge, skills, character, and

metacognition. Sustainable Development Goal 4 also emphasizes that quality education is pedagogically and developmentally sound and educates the learner in becoming an active and productive members of society. It further focuses on the whole person (the social, emotional, mental, physical, and cognitive development) without discrimination of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or geographic location and also prepares the learner for life, not just for testing. The views concur that education should be holistic, inclusive and relevant to the needs of the society. They also emphasize the notion that education enhances sustainable development. To offer such a complete and relevant education requires universities to employ high standards and best practices in education that characterize a CoE. This demands that resources for enhancing learning (including technology) are adequately availed to the faculty. It further requires universities to embrace the reforms outlined above and to provide faculty with ongoing staff development programmes to enhance their skills so that they can deliver holistic quality education that empowers learners to be part and parcel of sustainable development.

Further Sustainable Development Goal 4 emphasizes that each child enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle; learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for learners and adults; is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community; has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults; and is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment. These are crucial learning factors that a learning institution should seek to fulfil if the learner is to experience a sense of belongingness and ownership of the processes of learning. However, while the goal paints an ideal learning environment with essential learner support services, most learning institutions in developing countries including Kenya do not meet the qualities of a supportive learning environment outlined above. For instance, as observed above, the high student-teacher ratios in universities in Kenya cannot allow them to engage learners through the learning process. This is compounded by overstretched facilities and resources, and inadequate teaching staff in terms of numbers and training (IUCEA, 2015; Bunyi, 2011). As noted above, the challenges indicate that the universities do not have the standards that distinguish an institution as a CoE.

Alia & Saleen (2014) outline the success factors in achieving quality education as legislative support, putting proper structures and polices in place, providing administrative support to teachers, implementing relevant and appropriate policies, restructuring learning resources, measuring learning outcomes, providing effective learning environments, seeking out learners, enhancing learning processes through active learning approaches, acknowledging what the learner brings to class, considering the content of formal and informal learning and embracing lifelong learning. These factors resonate well with the qualities of a CoE outlined above.

Further, the factors illustrate that establishing a learning institution as a CoE is a concerted effort of education stakeholders including students, parents, teachers,

learners, administrators and the government, who are expected to play their roles effectively without which quality education cannot be achieved.

Pigozzi (2006) suggests that quality in education should be assessed against quality indicators derived from the elements of quality education. She outlines the indicators as the relationship between the learner and the teacher, the inputs, processes, environments and outputs that surround and foster or hamper learning, noting that they affect the quality of education at the level of the learner in his/her learning environment and at the level of the education system that creates and supports the learning experience. Further, Pigozzi maintains that learning institutions should ensure that the relationship between the learner and the stated elements work optimally to enhance quality education. This demands that teachers are regularly empowered with professional development and that the environment is enriched with required facilities and resources (including technology) and other leaner support services. In addition, the processes and mechanisms of enhancing internal quality assurance (IQA) must be well established and coordinated.

In this regard, a learning institution should ensure that all elements that affect quality are taken into consideration in order to enhance and maintain high quality standards and best practices in education. The elements include the learner, content, feedback, hidden curriculum, environment, managerial and administrative support and relevant educational policies that are consistent with national laws and registration as well as methods of measuring learning outcomes (Pigozzi, 2006). Practice, belongingness and configuration, integration, class culture and technology are also crucial elements. Each element is briefly discussed in the following section.

3. The learner

Achieving quality education demands that individual learners are facilitated with education without discrimination. This requires teachers to take into account the factors that shape learners into unique individuals (such as economic status, gender, cultural backgrounds and disability) and also affect their academic performance and socialization. It also requires them to value all learners as individuals who are capable of learning and contributing to the welfare of the society. In addition, teachers should select learning activities that are within the abilities and interests of individual learners and also involve them in planning for lessons. Further, they should encourage learners to initiate ideas and creatively come up with solutions to problems through transfer of knowledge gained in school experience (Salend, 2001 & Wisconsin Education Council). Rodriguez, Evans, Allam, Barrett & Forrest (2010) support this, adding that teachers should take cognizance of learners' different learning styles. Learner involvement in decisions concerning their learning should be encouraged because learning belongs to them and therefore they should have a stake in decision making about it in order to own the process of learning. However, as noted elsewhere in this paper, universities in Kenya operate with very high student- teacher ratios and this influence them to uphold the transmission model of education which subjects students to play the role of a

recipient in the education process. This means that there is no opportunity to enhance student creativity, critical thinking and innovation.

Quality education requires teachers to individualize learning so that it is conveyed in a way that best suits each learner, and that lessons are adapted and integrated in the learner context to make it understandable and meaningful. It further requires teachers to acknowledge what the learner brings to his/her own learning, and to that of a group in order to help them reflect on how the prior and current situation presents obstacles or opportunities for the way in which they learn. It further requires teachers to intervene for learning obstacles in order to enhance effective learning. UNESCO (2009) emphasizes the need for teachers to create a learning environment that adapts and integrates classroom teaching to accommodate learner contexts and a school culture and environment in which individual learners thrive and unleash their potential. It is critical that learning institutions embrace the principles of individualized learning in order to uphold individual learners' right to education. This has the potential to accelerate sustainable development as all learners are accorded an opportunity to develop skills they can use to participate in economic development within their level of ability, interest and talent.

4. Content

The content of education should be continually reformed to respond to the changes of the society to ensure it meets its needs. The 21st Century Education-Center for Curriculum Redesign (2016) emphasizes that curriculum should offer holistic education based on knowledge, skills, character and metacognition. It further maintains that curriculum should be interdisciplinary in order to nurture learners with the 21st Century skills and also help them to connect different disciplines in the curricula, to gain an integrated view of knowledge, and broaden their mind to enable them to cope with the numerous challenges of the dynamic world. This new approach to education requires learning institutions to create learning environments that support differentiated instructional objectives, content and assessment in order to enhance learner-centred and personalized learning. It also places demands on individual nations to align their education with the 21st century skills to ensure that learning institutions, prepare competent graduates who can work and live anywhere in the world.

However, Pigozzi (2006) laments that much of what is taught across the globe may be less relevant due to its intellectual focus. She recommends that reform in curriculum content should enhance development of learners' soft skills including respect for the earth and other life forms, appreciation of peace and diversity and citizenship values. She also emphasizes the need for access to adequate and sufficient educational materials (including technology) to support the learning of content in order to enhance quality learning. Universities should establish the outlined standards of the content of education and embrace the suggested reforms to enable them deliver education with high standards and best practices to establish themselves as CoE. This

requires them to develop the infrastructure, facilities and resources needed for delivering quality education.

4.1 Practice

Practice refers to repetition of habits or skills to a point where they are fully mastered and internalized by the learner. This demands teachers to incorporate opportunities for learners to practice what they learn to make the learning permanent (Chelule, 2009). Practice enables a learner to acquire mastery of knowledge and skills and this enhances their problem-solving through knowledge transfer. This element calls for a paradigm shift in assessment from summative to formative approach in order to integrate feedback to enhance improvement in learning. Universities should reflect a higher percentage of formative assessment through continuous assessment to enable them to focus more on developing learners with skills and also align with the global education that is skills based.

4.2 Belonging and configuration

Belonging refers to the learners' sense of well-being, belonging, and personal safety in the learning environment while configuration means restructuring of learning experiences. This entails that processes and structures are perceived in a new relation, a new pattern and learning takes place after experience is restructured (Chelule, 2009). The outlined attributes of a learning environment enhance best practices and standards in education as they make a learning institution learner friendly. Configuration also enhances best practices as it helps learners to get the meaning of the concept or principle taught by relating and integrating it with the familiar experience. Universities should provide the necessary learning resources and learner support services to enhance the well-being and security of learners. The learning environment should also be democratic. In addition, faculty should embrace teaching methods that engage learners to enhance restructuring of learning experiences for ease in understanding what is learned.

4.3 Integration

Integration is the utilization of the acquired knowledge in a holistic manner to enable the learner go beyond understanding of separate facts or subjects to seeing them in a unified manner. This helps them to make connections across curricula and to broaden their understanding of the concepts and application to problem-solving. It could also enhance their transformation as they go through the learning process. Achieving integration requires teachers to organize learning activities to help learners connect concepts with related disciplines as opposed to knowledge compartments influenced by the traditional model of education (Chelule, 2009). However, effective integration requires that curriculum is diversified to accommodate interdisciplinary education. Integration also enhances development of broad thinking which helps learners to cope with the complex challenges of the dynamic world. To transform learners through holistic quality education, universities should employ the principle of integration.

However, this requires them to reform curricula, teaching methods and assessment as emphasized above.

4.4 Feedback

Feedback refers to information or knowledge about performance that helps teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders to know where they stand. In learning, effective feedback is a two-way dialogue which provides learners with knowledge on their performance throughout each module, along with support on how to use the feedback to improve learning. However, learners should be made aware whenever they are to be assessed for feedback. They should also be given an opportunity to give teachers feedback on what they have learned to help them know whether their teaching is helping them to achieve the expected learning outcomes for their course. Feedback should also be tied in with wider course design and formative assessment structures to ensure that the course is structured in a way that allows students to reflect on and use the feedback they receive. In addition, effective use of feedback requires teachers to establish clear structures on how it is to be integrated with the curriculum design and the necessary support on how it is to be used for continuous improvement of learning. It should also be a continuous process of conversation and reflection in order to enhance improvement.

(Formative Feedback: Feedback for Learning. University of Sheffield). As noted above universities should focus more on formative assessment to enhance development of learners with 21st century skills including problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and innovation.

4.5 Class Culture

A class culture is the social organization of the classroom which sets the tone and direction of the learning activities. Jacobsen, Eggen & Kauchak (1993, p.269) identify three types of classroom social organization namely competitive, cooperative and individualistic. While competitive pattern stresses individual excellence and achievement that urges learners to do better than their peers and to reach higher for a better position on the academic ladder, individualistic pattern influences learners to work at their own levels and paces to achieve individual cognitive tasks. Teachers should embrace the cooperative pattern for its emphasis on the need for learners to work together and consider all members of a group important and capable of making unique contributions regardless of their ability levels. Further, the pattern encouraged learners to set group goals and tasks, to divide and assign work equitably, to listen to all viewpoints, and weigh alternative solutions as well as participate in various tasks which call for creativity, initiative, and application of previous knowledge to the present situation, organization and evaluation. The pattern also increases learner achievement and improves relationships between learners of different ethnic backgrounds, sexes and academic abilities (Slavin, 1990 cited by Jacobsen, Eggen & Kauchak, 1993, p.270). Universities should embrace this pattern to enhance

development of students' personal and professional skills to enable them cope with the needs of the 21st century society.

4.6 Technology Integration in Learning

As a key driver of change in the 21st century, technology should be integrated with education if learning institutions are to offer relevant education and also maintain the symbiotic relation between education and society. Technology has the advantage of accommodating learners' unique needs, interests and individual learning styles as they go through the learning process. Mobile technologies for instance transform schools and curricula as they facilitate feedback, which allows learners to progressively revise their work and understand what they learn. They also increases educational opportunities for people in underprivileged communities (UNESCO, 2012) and this helps children to realize their right to a basic education of good quality and also equip them with skills that enable them to cope with the challenges of today's complex world among other things (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). These and other benefits of technology dictate the need for learning institutions to ensure compliance with technology in order to match the global education landscape which is standards based. However, most learning institutions (including universities) have not fully embraced modern technology due to lack of infrastructure and facilities, technology phobia by teachers and negative attitude towards technology as some believe that it threatens to replace them which implies losing their jobs (Otunga, Odero & Barasa, 2011).

4.7 Hidden curriculum

Hidden curriculum refers to the unwritten, unofficial, and often unintended lessons, values, and perspectives that students learn in school (Hidden Curriculum Definition-The Glossary of Education Reform, 2015). Hidden curriculum has a significant influence on learning as it enables learners thrive as they alleviate potential barriers to learning and assessment (Wisconsin Education Council). A learning institution should seek to enhance a positive influence of the hidden curriculum in order to entrench a quality culture in every department, to enable it meet and exceed customers' expectations (Teklemariam, 2009, p. 49). This is crucial in enhancing quality and standards in education.

5. Environment

Quality education requires a learning environment to adopt student-teacher ratios that are commensurate to learner-centred pedagogical practices. This helps individual learners achieve their educational goals. The environment should also have adequate learning facilities and resources. It should further build a culture of respect, acceptance and co-existence of different races, ethnic groups and religions among learners and members of the school community. This prepares learners to live in an integrated manner in the society in future. In addition, the environment should ensure that learners are physically safe, emotionally secure and psychologically enabled. Also,

hygiene and sanitation facilities should be adequate and accessible to all learners. Learners should also be provided with incentives and networks and their educational experiences should be diversified (The Four Pillars of learning, UNESCO, 2013). Establishing these factors in a university in context is one significant way of enabling an institution to assume the status of a centre of excellence as they have the potential to enhance high standards and best practices in curriculum delivery.

The above elements of quality education require managerial and administrative system to work optimally with clear rules and regulations as well as responsibilities and related procedures well-articulated and implemented to enhance achievement of learning outcomes. Implementation of good policies is also crucial in achieving quality education. The management should also communicate set education policies to administrators, teachers and students to create awareness for ownership of implementation. Mechanisms should also be put in place to implement and enforce the policies. However, to successfully promote, implement and enforce good policies, teachers and students should be involved in setting and implementing them. Further, policies should be consistent with national laws and legislation, which should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that education is relevant (Quality Management Systems; Pigozzi, 2006; Martin, 2018). Universities are expected to establish internal quality assurance (IQA) structures and systems to ensure that institutional policies are implemented and that they align with external policies and laws governing higher education (Green, 1994, Commission for Higher Education, 2008). This is crucial because a university that establishes itself as a centre of excellence is expected to have global standards.

Pigozzi (2006) further observes that a high quality education requires coherent and supportive policies in areas such as a 'responsible' media, health education, youth, early childhood development programmes, and lifelong learning opportunities. Supportive legislative framework is also essential in ensuring that agreed principles contained within the concept of the right to education is put to action on a daily basis in a sustained way. This demands that both education legislation and other related legislation must be in place, understood by the general public as well as by experts, and implemented. The legislative framework must also provide an enabling environment for right to education and must facilitate necessary changes in the education system, both at the macro and micro levels in order to access quality education to all children. This clearly indicates that establishing institutions with high standards and best practices is a concerted effort among stakeholders which requires each stakeholder to play the required role effectively as observed above.

Further (Pigozzi (2006) states that Legislation should address the obligations of the provision of education to include both access and quality, resource allocations (human, time and financial), and the overall expectations of the system. Developing countries are yet to address these obligations. For instance, Kenya is currently going through major challenges including lack of infrastructure and resources in its first phase of implementation of its Basic Education reforms Framework (2017). Also, in its effort to access students to secondary school, it has compromised the quality of

education as secondary schools have overstretched their facilities and resources beyond capacity. These challenges illustrate that learning institutions in Kenya have a long way to go before they can establish themselves as CoE.

Methods of measuring learning outcomes such as knowledge, values, skills or competences and behaviour are also crucial in quality education. Knowledge refers to the essential cognitive achievement levels that learners should reach including literacy, numeracy and core subject knowledge) while values refers to solidarity, gender equality, tolerance, mutual understanding, respect for human rights, non-violence, and respect for human life and dignity. On the other hand, skills or competencies are concerned with ability to solve problems, to experiment, to work in teams, to live together and interact with those who are different, and to learn how to learn while behaviours focuses on the student's capacity to put into practice what has been learned (Pigozzi, 2006). Interestingly, measuring learning achievement varies considerably in relation to the kinds of outcomes that are being measured. For instance, 21st century education emphasizes the need to effectively measure learning outcomes in the outlined areas using the right assessment tools. To the contrary, research shows that emphasis is given to measuring knowledge and competencies, than values and behaviours (Pigozzi, 2006, Wamahiu, 2015). Shiundu and Omulando (1992) lament that this narrow emphasis in assessment has influenced curriculum backwash as teachers concentrate on teaching the topics that are examined while ignoring others. Thus, standards of education in learning institutions including universities are eroded. Thus as Pigozzi (2006) suggests, there is need to reconsider indicators for quality, given the evolving understanding of the various dimensions of quality. National, regional and international comparisons are also needed for policy purposes to ensure that quality is understood and interpreted in an international context. This is critical in ensuring that students are offered education that equips them with skills that enable them to compete for international jobs.

6. Conclusion

The fundamental purposes of education are to become a tool that can build societies based on peace, equality and democratic practice. Educators must acknowledge and actualize the fact that what constitutes the quality of education today has shifted from cognitive emphasis to competency based education. This requires them to embrace best practices in education such as, inclusive and lifelong education, active teaching methods, interdisciplinary education and formative assessment methods that. Quality entails that education focuses on the whole person (the social, emotional, mental, physical, and intellectual) in order to empower the learner with skills for life, not just earn an academic paper as the current practice in Kenya's 8-4-4 system of education is. Sustainable development goals (SDGs) reflect a global consensus that education is a human right and a public good that is critical to the health and future of the world. This requires education stakeholders to promote policies that support holistic development of the learner, access to quality teachers who use quality learning resources and are

regularly empowered with professional development. Universities should implement the elements and processes of quality education discussed in this paper to help them employ high standards and best practices that could enable them deliver holistic quality education that is relevant to the needs of the society. This could also help them to establish themselves as centres of excellence in scholarship, research and community service.

6.1 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made with special reference to universities in Kenya:

6.1.1 Establish Centres of Excellence in Universities

Each university should embrace the qualities of a centre of excellence if it is to deliver holistic quality education that is responsive to the needs of the society. The qualities are: maintaining the highest standards of education, employing learner-centred teaching methods and differentiated assessments, engaging students in research and training, requiring students to engage in community service and putting in place structures and mechanisms for feedback to ascertain that quality and standards are maintained by all departments.

In addition, individual universities should establish themselves as centres of excellence in a given area by which they want to be best known for and concentrate its efforts and resources there rather than establish too many programmes that hardly attract students.

6.1.2 Create opportunities for Students' and Lecturers' to engage in Exchange Programmes

To create centres of excellence, universities should provide students and faculty with opportunities for exchange programmes with like-minded universities nationally and internationally for bench marking purpose in order to enhance standards and best practices in education. They should further seek collaboration with multi-national companies for funding; and joint consultancies and researches among themselves locally on the basis of a university's strength, rather than compete amongst themselves.

6.1.3 Embrace Reforms in Education to align with Global Trends

Universities should embrace reforms in curricula, teaching methods and assessment in order to deliver relevant quality education. Learner educational experiences should also be diversified to embrace interdisciplinary approach to education in order to develop them with the skills needed to combat the numerous challenges in the dynamic global society.

6.1.4 Create Effective Learning Environments

Universities should facilitate sufficient infrastructure, facilities and resources to support learning. They should also provide students with learner support services including

mentorship and coaching, financial support to needy students, clubs and societies, sports and games, guidance and counselling, and student academic advisory to help them hone their professional and personal skills. Financial support services to students from poor families is critical in helping them pursue their dreams in education. It is also a key factor in enhancing inclusivity in education.

6.1.5 Build Staff and Faculty Capacity

Learning institutions should provide opportunities for regular in-service training to staff and faculty to empower them with new skills that could enable them employ best practices and standards required by a Centre of excellence .

6.1.6 Collaborate with Stakeholders and the Industry

Universities should collaborate with stakeholders and the industry in order to get a comprehensive data base of the market demands to help them develop students with labour market skills. They should involve professional from the industry in curriculum development, implementation and review to ensure that their programmes remain relevant to the needs of the market.

6.1.7 Establish a placement department

Universities should establish a Placement Department and link it to the industry to ensure a continuous exchange of the new developments in various professions and to also provide opportunity for students to be mentored and coached by professionals on current labour market skills.

6.1.8 Enforce the Policy on Student-Teacher Ratio

Universities and other levels of learning in Kenya should align their student-teacher ratios with the standards provided for in policy documents by CUE and Ministry of Education respectively. This is imperative if faculty is to shift from knowledge transmission methods of teaching to individualized personalized teaching and learning practices that enable all learners to benefit from instruction.

6.1.9 Ensure that Expansion of Programmes is Commensurate to Facilities and Resources

Universities should match expansion of education with facilities and resources to avoid overstretching what is available in order to maintain quality and standards in education.

6.1.10 Establish Incubation Centres for young entrepreneurs

Universities should institutionalize innovation hubs to enable them nurture students with creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving and incubation of ideas. They should involve professionals from the industry to demonstrate new plants in the market and also nurture business ideas and job creation.

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