Comparing Pedagogy in Kenya's Public Universities

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Comparing Pedagogy in Kenya's Public Universities: The Roles of University Managers[1]

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Abstract

Past studies have shown that the increased enrolment of students in public universities has not been matched with supporting human and technical resources. This has affected the quality of teaching and learning. This article examines pedagogical approaches in the context of mass expansion of tertiary education in selected public universities in Kenya. Further, the authors explore how managers within these institutions support academic staff in pedagogical innovations. The results from a survey of selected public universities showed that certain teaching and learning pedagogies have been favoured and used in these institutions to accommodate the increasing number of students. Further, although the study shows that there is an effort on the side of university lecturers and managers to use and/or support pedagogies that favour the large number of students, there are bottlenecks that are currently beyond their control. These include inadequate funding, staffing, and physical facilities, among others. Subsequently, there are calls for the Ministry of Education and Commission for University Education to work hand in hand with universities if significant quality education is to be realised in Kenya's public universities.

Résumé

Des études antérieures ont montré que l'augmentation du nombre d'étudiants dans les universités publiques ne s'est pas accompagnée d'un soutien en ressources humaines et techniques. Cela a affecté la qualité de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage. Cet article examine les approches pédagogiques dans le

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contexte de l'expansion massive de l'enseignement supérieur dans certaines universités publiques du Kenya. De plus, les auteurs explorent les modalités qu'utilisent les gestionnaires de ces institutions pour soutenir le personnel enseignant dans les innovations pédagogiques. Les résultats d'une enquête menée auprès d'un éventail d'universités publiques ont montré que certaines pédagogies d'enseignement et d'apprentissage ont été privilégiées et utilisées dans ces institutions pour répondre à la massification croissante des effectifs. En outre, bien que l'étude montre qu'il y a un effort de la part des enseignants et des administrateurs d'université pour utiliser et/ou soutenir les pédagogies favorables au grand nombre d'étudiants, il existe toujours des goulots d'étranglement qu'ils ne maîtrisent pas. Il s'agit notamment de l'insuffisance du soutien financier, du personnel et des installations physiques. C'est ainsi que des appels sont lancés dans la direction du ministère de l'éducation et de la Commission pour l'éducation universitaire pour travailler de concert avec les universités, pour une éducation de qualité significative dans les universités publiques du Kenya.

Introduction

This article directly touches on quality of teaching and learning in universities – an issue that has been of global concern due to increasing enrolment and the number of students. In Kenya, various scholarly studies have alluded to challenges regarding increased enrolment (Gudo et al. 2011; Gware and Gwati 2018; Sifuna 1998). The stakeholders, both public and private, acknowledge that the increasing number of students in universities has affected the quality of teaching and learning. This is especially so in contexts where the increase in student numbers cannot be matched with the required resources. Expansion of university education was initially thought to help universities become self-reliant. As a consequence of financial cuts to universities, management has had to mobilise resources to sustain these institutions. This has in turn encouraged growth of university campuses, constituent colleges, and massive recruitment of students to generate money (Sall and Oanda 2014) with direct implication on the quality of education (Githaiga and Tuitong 2009; Sifuna 1998). The growth of the campuses and constituent colleges for both private and public universities is captured in Table 1. The numbers under public universities and their constituent colleges are high.

Further, the growing number of programmes offered in these institutions evidence the expansion of university education, steadily increasing to 2,807 as compared to 630 in private chartered universities (as seen in Table 2). The increase in number of institutions, programmes, and students in the public universities has a direct implication on financial and human recourses, factors that are directly related to quality as well as innovation for teaching and learning.

Table 1: Number of university institutions 2013–17

Type of university	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Chartered private universities	17	17	17	17	17
Universities with letter of interim authority	11	13	14	14	14
Newly registered universities	2	1	1	-	-
Institutions collaborating with universities	33	33	35	35	35
Public universities	22	22	23	30	31
Public university constituent colleges	9	9	10	3	5
Private university constituent colleges	5	5	5	5	5
Public university campuses established	81	87	101	115	168

Source: Data obtained from Economic Survey KNBS (2018: 240)

Table 2: Number of approved degree and CUE validated diploma programmes

Type of university	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Public universities	--	2,027	2,066	2,066	2,807
Public university constituent colleges	--	--	106	106	108
Chartered private universities	362	456	554	620	630
Private university constituent colleges	--	18	18	21	21
Universities with letter of interim authority	--	49	56	64	70
Registered private universities	--	4	4	4	4
Institutions collaborating with universities	38	38	38	41	45
Validated diploma programmes	--	88	94	101	103

Note: – data not available

Source: data obtained from Economic Survey KNBS (2018: 240)

This kind of expansion pushes universities to apply various market driven approaches and strategies. Key among the strategies is diversification of programmes, marketisation of the programmes, and other services. Marketisation is a platform for competition among these institutions. Numerous constituent colleges and satellite campuses run a wide range of programmes duplicated across these institutions in cities and towns all over the country. The programmes include parallel programmes for self-sponsored students; evening programmes for those who are unable to learn during the day; part-time for those unable to be enrolled as full time students; modular, in which there is combination of classes from different levels of study; and,

school or institution based programmes for learners who take classes during school holidays, presented with a reduction in the number of sessions that constitute a semester to attract students who then finish in the shortest possible time, content notwithstanding (Odhiambo 2011; Owuor 2012; Wangenge-Ouma 2008). The departmental heads and respective lecturers are encouraged to market their courses to attract students. While marketisation as a strategy has to some extent bailed universities out of their financial difficulties, there are genuine fears that the programmes have greatly dented the quality of Kenya's public higher education. There are concerns over the adequacy of teaching staff, physical infrastructure, as well as pedagogical innovation and resources (Wangenge-Ouma 2008). Pedagogy, is the concern of this article. In the context of the increased numbers and questions around pedagogy, the support and environment that the management of these institutions offer and/or create is key.

Mbirithi (2013) identifies the key role of management as that of guiding an organisation towards goal accomplishment. He further identifies five key functions of management: planning, organising, commanding, co-ordinating, and controlling. These are applied over the following management task areas: staff personnel, physical and material resources, student personnel, curriculum and instruction, finance, and institution and community relations. This article provides an overview of the growing student population in Kenyan public universities, examines the pedagogies in place given this increased enrolment and interrogates the roles played by university managers in relation to innovating for teaching and learning.

The management in question stems from the roles of vice chancellors. The vice chancellor (VC) of a university is celebrated as the utmost authority within the university environment, with their deputies (DVC) and deans/directors of schools and institutes forming the university management team. Under the deans are chairs of department and co-ordinators of programmes.

The expansion of higher education in Kenya, and indeed elsewhere in Africa, has induced a number of changes to these institutions (Constance and Pletsch-Betancourt 2009; Sall and Oanda 2014) that directly touch on management (Simala 2014). The question is whether these changes are aimed at responding to the changing university landscape and, specifically, the swelling number of students in these institutions. Quality control, quality assurance, quality audit, quality assessment, and indicator systems (Mbirithi 2013; Odhiambo 2011; Owuor 2012; Simon 2015) are some of the monitoring systems that have been introduced. However, the grip on quality of teaching and learning seems elusive. Further, what are the pedagogies in place in the studied public universities? While using these pedagogies, what

are the frustrations of lecturers dealing with these increasing large number of learners, and subsequently big classes? How do they manoeuvre? What kind of support do they get from the university management?

Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings

University management falls under the bigger picture of governance of universities. However, in the context of higher education, governance is a contested term and has not been consistently applied to the same criteria. Following on from Mulinge et al. (2017: 38) who argue that governance relates to 'structures, processes and activities that are involved in planning and directing of higher education institutions and the people working in them', we conceive of the term governance to convey the machinery put in place – both human resources and otherwise – to ensure efficiency in the running of universities. We maintain that this is the role of the state and the university councils.

All the public universities in Kenya have councils that function as the governing bodies. The cabinet secretary in charge of education, science, and technology appoints chancellors and members of the university councils. Up until early 2019, the university councils interviewed the VCs and the names of potential candidates forwarded to the cabinet secretary in charge of education for appointment of the qualified candidate. As of March 2019, the Public Service Commission took over employment of senior managers, including VCs, their deputies, registrars, and procurement officers. As studies in other settings have shown (Hénard and Mitterle 2006; Odhiambo 2011; Smit 2006), this set-up implies that in spite of the reforms in university governance to give the institutions some form of autonomy, technically, the state still maintains significant control. This is likely to undermine the aspects of management that are focused on the academic mission of the institutions and problem solving.

There exists a number of studies on the function and efficacy of university management and related structures. For example, Akuno et al. (2017) examine the role of management and governance in the development of creative and cultural industries in Kenya. Other studies focus on issues such as management's competence and accountability in general performance (Alabi and Alabi 2014); quality assurance (Hénard and Mitterle 2006; Kagondu and Marwa 2017; Materu 2007; Mgaiwa and Ishegoma 2017; Muriisa 2014; Petrucka 2017); conflicts between managerial and academic cultures (Waugh 1998); the changing nature of governance in institutions of higher learning (Sall and Oanda 2014); the service and quality of leaders in private universities (Schalkwyk and Steenkamp 2016); and dilemmas of deanship in the social sciences (Otara 2014; Simala 2014). However,

these studies do not explore the role of university leaders/managers on the quality of teaching and learning in the context of increasing number of students on a limited resource environment. Leadership in any organisation or institution, especially a complex one, requires balancing of all crucial aspects with an aim to contribute towards quality services and output. The leaders in such scenarios need to influence others to accomplish group or organisational goals (Khan et al. 2017).

Theories of leadership conceive it as a continuum, ranging from the passive, which is the least effective and satisfying, through laissez-faire, transactional, and finally transformational (Bass and Riggio 2006; Burns 1978). Transactional leadership either rewards their subordinates for meeting certain standards or punishes them for failing to perform agreed obligations, largely adopting the 'carrot and stick' approach to leadership. Transformational leadership is inspiring, with the leader serving to empower subordinates to develop their leadership capacities and exceed expected performance, motivating employees to innovate and create change that will help grow and shape the future success of the institution (Bass and Bass 2008; Bass and Riggio 2006; Khan et al. 2017). Although transformational and transactional theories of management have largely been applied in business models, they are also suitable in explaining contexts that require consultations and empowerment. The two models are therefore useful in analysing the role of university leadership with regards to innovating approaches to navigate the challenges of increased enrolment.

The open education movement and the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) both influence pedagogical innovations (Walder 2014) and are characteristic features of university education in Kenya. Understanding the dynamics of their application is therefore critical. Learning institutions are under increasing pressure to integrate ICT in teaching and learning given the knowledge and skills needed in the twenty-first century (MOEST 2012; Santhiram 2016; Zhana 2016). This article adopts a very broad definition of innovative pedagogies to not only include the use of new technologies, investing technology, and use of ICT in open distance e-learning (ODeL), but also the need to prioritise staff training and developing supportive structures to facilitate inclusion for the benefit of the learner. Consequently, we interrogate the place of the lecturer within this environment and, importantly, the facilitation made by university managers in this endeavour. Furthermore, we categorise pedagogies into those that apply approaches related to the use of ICTs, personal learning environment (PLE), virtual learning environment (VLE), and improved teaching and learning environment (ITLE) (see Hénard and Roseveare 2012).

Methodology

As of June 2018, there were thirty-one chartered public universities in Kenya. Since all these public universities have undergone expansion, the comparative criteria was to pick on two from the first six that were founded by the year 2000, and two from those founded in the last twenty years (Mulinge et al. 2017). The University of Nairobi (UoN) as the premier university in Kenya, founded in 1970, and Moi University as the second, founded in 1984 (Mulinge et al. 2017), were purposively selected. These were compared with Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) and Kisii University, randomly selected through ballot using the 10 per cent rule for homogenous populations (Kothari 2004: 61; Kumar 2011: 169). The latter two were established in 2007 and chartered in 2013.

Being public chartered institutions, these universities all have programmes ranging from certificate, diploma, undergraduate, masters, and doctorate. They also have the same criteria of employing academic staff and admitting students to their programmes. These criteria provided a basis for similarities to carry out a comparative study. There are of course differences in their founding years, which proved problematic with regards to analysing whether this in some way contributes to the complexities of innovativeness and quality of learning from a management perspective.

The VCs, DVCs, deans (in schools of arts and social sciences), the directors of quality assurance and heads of departments (in 10 per cent of departments of social sciences) were purposively sampled and interviewed. Further, 10 per cent of lecturers were interviewed proportionately according to the selected number of departments. This ensured that all the departments in the respective schools and faculties were represented.

Data Collection

Data was collected from the months of June 2018 to January 2019. The study applied a sequential mixed method approach. In the first phase of the study both qualitative and quantitative data from all four institutions was generated using a questerview. The data spoke to the effects of increasing the number of students to teaching and learning approaches, the role of the managers in teaching and learning approaches, the innovative pedagogies in place, and adherence to Commission for University Education (CUE) regulations. This data was analysed to inform the second phase. The emerging issues from this initial data were verified and interrogated through qualitative follow-up interviews with key informants including two VCs, three DVCs, three officers in charge of quality assurance, and a few lecturers.

We used SPSS to generate frequencies, tables, and charts for the different universities for comparison and consolidated analysis of all the four universities for general observations. The qualitative data was coded to generate themes for discussion, which has been presented through narratives to complement, support, and explain the statistics generated from quantitative data.

Findings and Discussion

All the four universities studied seem to have a steady increase in the number of students over the years, although in 2016 and 2017 there was a slight decrease. Regardless, the numbers in public universities remain high.

Table 3: Enrolment in selected public universities in Kenya 2014–18

University	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
UoN	69,946	98,715	72,798	67,827
Moi	43,290	46,726	42,670	37,907
MMUST	11,693	14,231	18,886	16,827
Kisii	8,275	13,546	22,908	19,903

Source: KNBS (2018: 239)

The DVCs and deans/directors had varying opinions about who mandates the increase in number of students in public universities. However, there seemed to be a thread across all the universities that schools/faculties and departments are required to declare their capacities depending on the available resources – accommodation and teaching facilities – although the institutions do not usually follow this criterion. These capacities are approved at the deans' committee and eventually sanctioned by the Senate. Once these numbers are forwarded to the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS), the body in charge of admitting students to various institutions of higher learning, the universities have no control beyond declaring capacities.

Within the schools of arts and social sciences in the four universities, there have been mixed enrolment trends since the 1990s. In MMUST, a DVC indicated that there had been an increase of about 10 per cent every year. However, a decrease was observed in the academic years 2016/17 and 2017/18 (which tallies with KNBS data shown in Table 3). At Moi University, 7,293 students were enrolled in the school of arts and social sciences during the academic year 2016/17, decreasing to 5,092 in 2017/18

and to 4,865 in 2018/19. The explanation given for the reduction was two-fold: first, government's decision that students qualifying from secondary schools be distributed evenly between the public and private universities; and second, new management in the Ministry of Education that imposed stringent measures in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations in order to combat the increasingly common practice of cartels selling examinations papers to head teachers to facilitate better performance and ranking for their secondary schools. A further interpretation could be that this decrease in enrolment numbers is a calculated move by the Ministry of Education to redress the imbalance between quality and funding/resources. In fact, there have been calls for those who fall below grade C+ to join technical and vocational education training institutions, which the government is keen to fund and support through bursaries. This move, if embraced, is likely to decongest the universities.

Given the many programmes and number of students enrolled in these universities, the number of courses a lecturer teaches per semester is of particular interest. The CUE mandates three courses for lecturers. Field data showed that about 33 per cent of lecturers across departments taught three courses. At MMUST, however, the Senate had mandated lecturers to teach a minimum of four courses besides part-time courses to counter the shortage of teaching staff occasioned by the increase in programmes and number of students. Further, 41 per cent indicated that the number of courses varied depending on the season and student demands. For this group, the demands forced them to juggle between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, and supervision of research students. Others said that they taught regular, modular, and school-based courses, and also offered part-time courses for other institutions. The few who said that they taught one or two courses were mainly professors and university managers (deans and a few DVCs) since most of their time was spent on administrative work. The remaining 5.7 per cent indicated that they taught more than six courses per semester, as seen in Figure 1.

The student numbers per course in the departments also varied. For undergraduate classes, consolidated analysis of the results showed that 32 per cent of classes had between 1–50 students; 21 per cent of classes had between 51–100; 11 per cent had 101–150 students; while the majority, 36 per cent, ranged from 150 and above. Comparatively, for undergraduate courses, UoN, given their high enrolment rates, had the highest number of students across all categories. At Moi, a good number of their classes had more than 150 students; while UoN, Kisii and MMUST were almost at par with most of their classes recording 51–100 students (Figure 2).
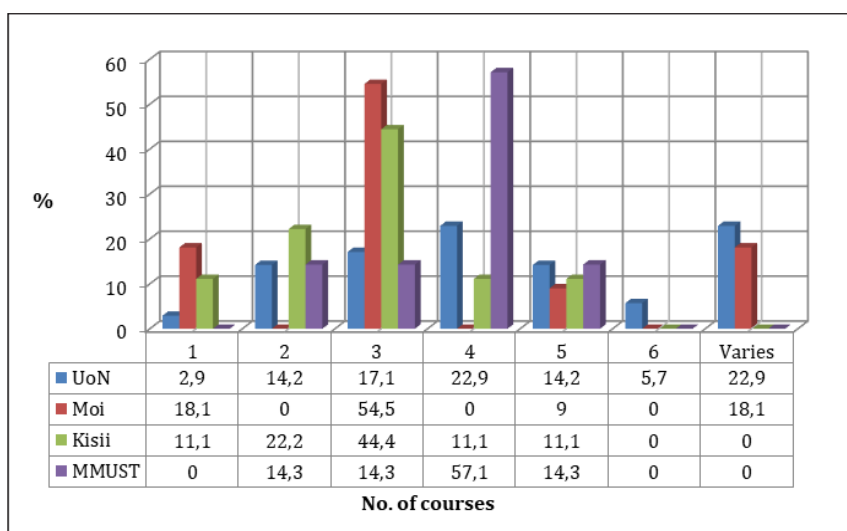
No. of courses	1	2	3	4	5	6	Varies
UoN	2,9	14,2	17,1	22,9	14,2	5,7	22,9
Moi	18,1	0	54,5	0	9	0	18,1
Kisii	11,1	22,2	44,4	11,1	11,1	0	0
MMUST	0	14,3	14,3	57,1	14,3	0	0

Figure 1: No. of courses taught per semester

Source: authors' field data, 2018

	1-50	51-100	101-150	150 and above
UoN	32,2	29	6,4	32,2
Moi	16,6	8,3	0	75
Kisii	66,6	25	25	0
MMUST	14,2	28,5	14,2	42,8

Figure 2: No. of students per class for mandatory courses
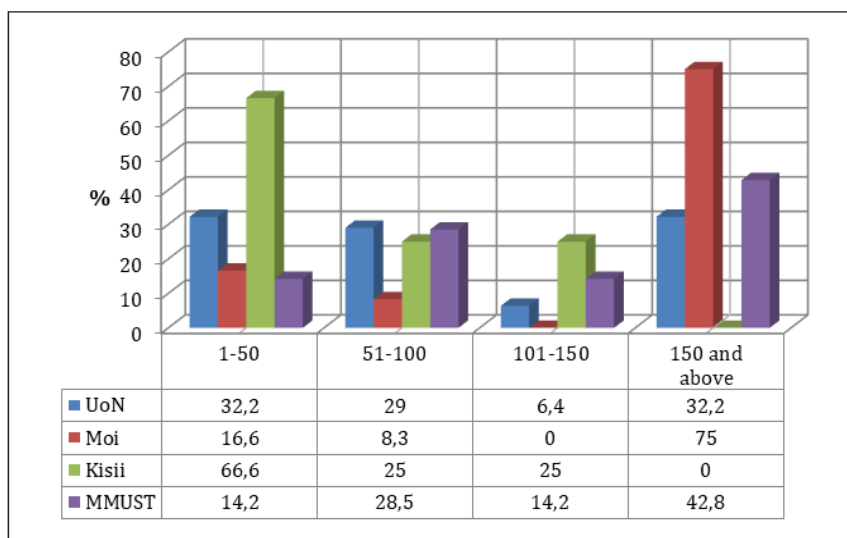
Source: authors' field data, 2018

The number of students were said to be higher in undergraduate common courses ranging between 300–1,200 students in some courses. For postgraduate courses, 100 per cent of students within the arts and social sciences had 15 or fewer students per class. Recent data from CUE (Mukhwana et al. 2016) show similar trends, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of academic staff per selected clusters courses

Clusters	Number of staff	Number of students	Ratio
Humanities and arts	962	40,179	1:42
Business and administration	1,883	93,331	1:50
Education (arts)	1,648	69,186	1:66
Journalism and information	248	11,298	1:46
Education (science)	144	26,772	1:186
Social and behavioural sciences	694	33,491	1:48
Security and conflict resolution	128	5,126	1:40
Teacher training	124	5,673	1:46

Source: data extrapolated from Mukhwana et al. (2016: 78)

These findings show that the required number of lecturers has not equally matched the increase in student numbers. In the social sciences, CUE recommends a full-time staff–student ratio of 1:18, while in the arts and humanities the ratio is 1:15. The maximum workload is 40 hours per week, which includes teaching, preparation for examination papers, marking of examination scripts, tutorials, preparation for teaching, supervision of academic work, administrative work, and research/research assignments (CUE 2014). The true picture of how schools and departments operate in the institutions further complicates these ratios. In the schools of arts and social sciences in the four universities, most lecturers service the School of Education in arts-based courses. Due to the large numbers the School of Education attracts, this overcrowds the various departments offering arts courses. The few numbers of lecturers cannot match the student numbers and classes are consequently congested with students whose attention is on passing of exams and graduating at the detriment of quality learning and practise. Facilities in all the universities remain limited with inadequate lecture halls, libraries, and workspaces for both students and lecturers.

The high numbers strain lectures in teaching and learning activities and marking of exams. One lecturer noted that 'teaching has now become mechanical and students now rely more on Google or handouts that we place in cyber cafes around the institutions. Walk around and you will see the adverts of handouts on the business premises'. Another lecturer stated:

> Because of high number of students per class, the students never get one-on-one attention from lecturers. For the big classes those seated at the back of the lecture hall may not see the board or hear. We do not have electronic screens

> to project. Tutorials have been abandoned and lecturing is done for the sake of class attendance, not learning. For huge classes, the only option is lecturing, which again is cumbersome since one has to shout in the absence of PA system. It is also not easy to identify students who miss classes.

The lack of attendance implies that although in the end all students sit for end of semester exams, some do not meet the 80 per cent class attendance requirements. Lecturers who taught over 150 students mainly in common courses complained of burn out that in the end compromised quality of teaching, administration of exams, marking, and performance of students.

For classes that moved far beyond the required size, part of the mechanisms that were in place was expansion of learning facilities. In almost most all the universities visited, construction is going on to expand lecture halls, accommodation facilities and office spaces. In addition, most institutions have leased spaces in strategic towns to cater for large numbers and at the same time diversify education. In spite of these efforts, the need for infrastructural development to accommodate the increasing numbers was emphasised. This was especially so at UoN, MMUST and Moi. The deans, heads of department, and lecturers felt that there was need for spacious and modern lecture halls, accommodation units, office spaces, and workshop spaces. Further, advancement of ICT had redefined the physical teaching and learning spaces by opening up opportunities for ODeL, e-learning, e-resources and digitalisation of systems such as enrolment, registers, and entry of students' marks. In line with this, a top leader in one of these universities during a follow-up oral interview said that at his university they had taken into consideration:

> expansion of teaching and learning facilities, embracing other innovative modes of teaching such as e-learning, which do not require physical space, partnership between university and development partners to improve teaching facilities and infrastructure, lobbying for government exchequer to increase funding to universities and employment of adequate teaching staff.

This speaks to the need to consider the role of transformational leadership. Furthermore, although the picture presented above does not particularly lend itself to a favourable environment for lecturers' creativity and innovation, the situation is not entirely bleak and some innovative avenues are being pursued, as discussed further below.

Pedagogy in an Era of Massive Enrolment and the Role of University Managers

Literature indicates that pedagogy in the twenty-first century has shifted from transmissive pedagogies, where the main focus of action is to transmit knowledge to learners, to participatory pedagogies that 'involve a break away

from the traditional pedagogy to promote a different view of the learning process' (Oliviera-Formosinho and Formosinho 2012: 9). Given the massive enrolment in Kenyan public universities, field data showed that course content for big undergraduate classes is often delivered through the lecture method. Some lecturers supplemented this method with public address systems and PowerPoint presentations to reach the large numbers, while others integrated improved personal learning environment. As one lecturer in one of the two big universities explained:

> 'The lecture method is important for these big classes, but it can be complemented through the use of class discussions and group assignment for effective coverage of course content and in helping students master the content'.

Given the large number of students, the lecture method was also associated with challenges regarding lack of adequate spaces, face-to-face interaction, individual learner attention, and inability of the lecturer to account for the students who attend classes. These issues are integral to broader concerns raised by Scott (2015: 1), who argues for the need to rethink pedagogy for the twenty-first century.

As already noted, managers in these universities implementing strategies to accommodate the expanding number of students, but not much on improving the teaching and learning processes. The lecturers interviewed indicated that management never consults them in decisions regarding teaching and learning, and they are never warned of increased course loads, unavailability of teaching and learning resources, increased enrolments, and other pertinent issues. Innovation for teaching is left to them and any challenges faced as well as complaints from students are considered their responsibility. These facts do not support a transformational approach to teaching and learning in institutions that need to devise mechanisms for change. Seemingly, on this aspect, the transactional approach to managing teaching and learning activities is therefore largely at play. In 2020, lecturers from four public universities went to court, with the support of their workers' unions, to protest the increased teaching load, which is against the CUE's set criteria for workload allocation. As the battle for justice on the workload and other related issues continue, the need for innovation is increasingly imperative.

Discussions on innovation – and innovativeness – in teaching and learning primarily focused on the use of ICT. For instance, one lecturer said that 'innovation is the integration of ICT and other technologies to support teaching and learning. It could also mean the use of other teaching and learning techniques such as problem-based learning techniques'. Another explained that 'lecturers innovate through organisation of students into

groups for self-learning and research, and simplifying teaching to encourage students' involvement'. Yet another advanced the reasoning that 'innovating for teaching and learning entails thinking beyond the traditional approaches of pedagogy, taking care of students to ensure that these pedagogies favour them'. Some argued that when lecturers innovate to meet the needs of their learners, they display their ability to take risks and sometimes look at failure as fuel for innovation in promoting the teaching and learning process. To them, therefore, bad teaching and learning experiences challenged them to create new and simplified approaches for easy consumption by learners. This process demands a focus on and harnessing of the potential of available mediums, and an ability to sensitise the learners on the use of the same.

For the purposes of this study, improved pedagogy was categorised into four areas: use of ICTs, personal learning environment, digitalised virtual learning environment, and improved teaching and learning environments, as adapted and modified from Hénard and Roseveare (2012). We sample a number of these to show how these compare across universities.

Use of ICT for innovative teaching and learning

ICT is considered one of the most important and crucial aspects in teaching and learning, with unanimous consensus on its impact across all institutions. However, there is slow uptake and adoption of ICT, and inadequacy of the same, in each of the institutions. Tools incorporating text, such as blogs, wikis, and Twitter, provides a useful snapshot of this. For example, 35.7 per cent mentioned that tools incorporating text are used at UoN, 22.7 per cent at Moi, 33.3 per cent at Kisii, and 26.7 per cent at MMUST (see Figure 3).

The use of tools that require images and photos, like Flickr and Instagram, reduced across UoN, Moi and Kisii but increased for MMUST, which is branded a science and technology university. A follow-up on this showed that those in favour of the use of images and photos were affiliated to departments like design and textiles, and communication and media technology. Comparatively, in all four institutions, there seemed to be a lack of laboratories and workshops for creativity. Only at Moi did evidence of these facilities emerge.

These findings are demonstrative of the lack of comparative expansion of physical facilities to match the expansion of student numbers. CUE provides the specifications for necessary physical facilities and managers need to find modalities to work with the government and the private sector to improve them. In the era of digital media, the need to avail facilities that can transmit the same to students either in the face-to-face or through proxy modes remains important.
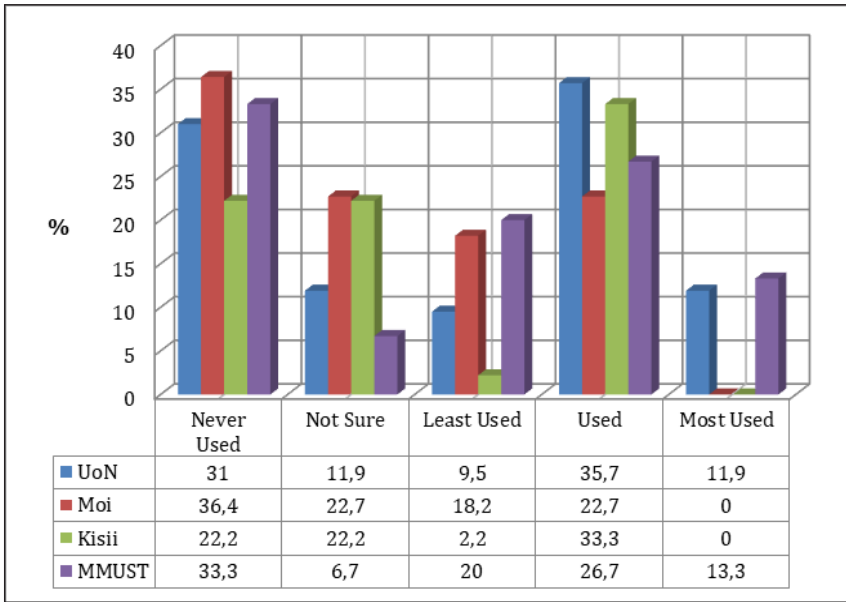
	Never Used	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
UoN	31	11,9	9,5	35,7	11,9
Moi	36,4	22,7	18,2	22,7	0
Kisii	22,2	22,2	2,2	33,3	0
MMUST	33,3	6,7	20	26,7	13,3

Figure 3: Innovative pedagogies in use – tools incorporating text (blogs, wikis, Twitter)
Source: authors' field data, 2018

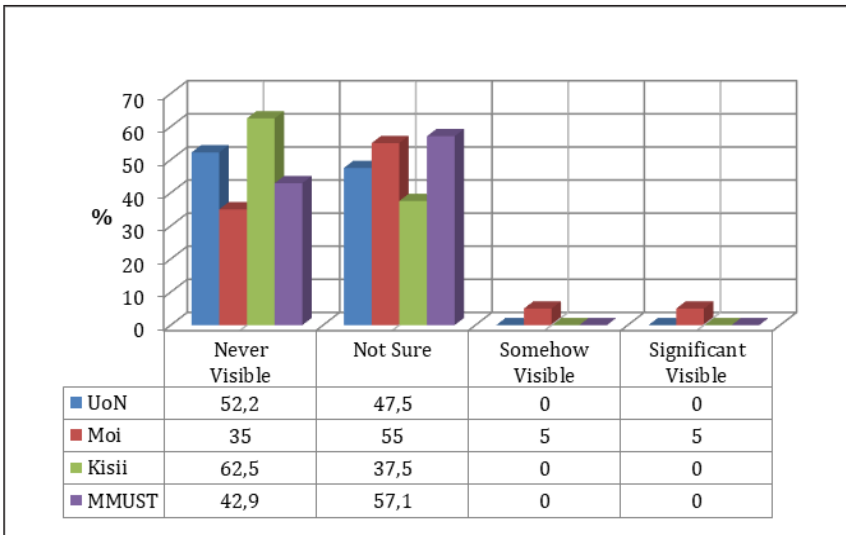|	Never Visible	Not Sure	Somehow Visible	Significant Visible
UoN	52,2	47,5	0	0
Moi	35	55	5	5
Kisii	62,5	37,5	0	0
MMUST	42,9	57,1	0	0

Figure 4: Laboratories for creativity (e.g. multimedia, auditorium, theatre, smartboards)
Source: authors' field data, 2018

Although most students and lecturers were able to access the Internet at various hotspots within the institutions, it remains unclear how its supply and connectivity has transformed teaching for courses with large numbers of students. Many hailed Internet connectivity for ease of sharing handouts and information, reaching out to research and discussion groups virtually, and brainstorming of tricky topics. For classes with over 150 students, it was noted that social media, including WhatsApp and Telegraph, to communicate, were largely used. In such cases, the class representatives would create the group and invite class members and the course lecturer to join. The platform would then be solely used to communicate class issues and share ideas concerning the course. The challenge, however, was in carrying out meaningful teaching and learning within these large groups, which ideally would require a well-set learning management system that can control course discussions, debates, assignments, and any other form of asynchronous engagement that is tailored for out-of-class learning processes. There seemed to be no innovation around this, and the universities only provided learning management systems for the purely online courses only. Those taking full face-to-face courses could only learn through physical models, with a few instances using mobile phone digital platforms, such as the WhatsApp groups, to keep conversations among the lecturer and learners going.

Across the institutions, the study revealed that reliance on ICT meant that lecturers delegated most of the work to students. They were asked to read the shared materials and sometimes discuss on their own. The lecturers would also use the same mode of communication to arrange with students on whether they should appear for class or not. This, in certain cases meant laxity on the part of the lecturer. Without stringent measures to ensure class attendance, circulating notes online also implies that the students have access to course documents and therefore can just read on their own without availing themselves for tutorials and discussions. The vibrant photocopying activities at nearby shopping centres could not go unnoticed: their doors and windows were littered with advertisements of available course handouts. It therefore seemed that students readily received course handouts, but it is unclear whether this set-up meant less work for the teacher and more work for the learner. We also wondered if the outlines and handouts ever changed over the year or whether they were recycled. The quality of learning activities was in question, so was the role of regulating authorities in the university.

CUE is clear on the standards and guidelines needed for teaching and learning in the universities. Their 2014 standards and guidelines stipulate all the necessary guidelines. These are used to evaluate university performance. Seemingly, given the challenges of increased enrolments, universities may

not meet these required standards and are likely to do the bare minimum in order to fulfil CUE quality standards. To address quality issues, university managers need to deal with these challenges. For instance, as Avolio and Bass (1993) suggests, the managers should motivate lecturers to carry out their tasks in a way that is not just meant to meet CUE requirements, but in ways that motivate the learners to move towards critical thinking and problem solving. The managers should further raise the enthusiasm of the staff to accomplish collective tasks and foster confidence in their own ability to complete their task and achieve greater goals. This way the CUE guidelines will efficiently be met.

Personal Learning Environment

This category is intended to provide a picture of whether lecturers encouraged critical thinking using individual or collaborative self and guided learning as well as problem-based and project-based learning. Problem-based learning was widely used, as seen in Figure 5. The attraction towards this approach was justified by an indication that it enhanced creativity to explore talents that are useful for job markets.
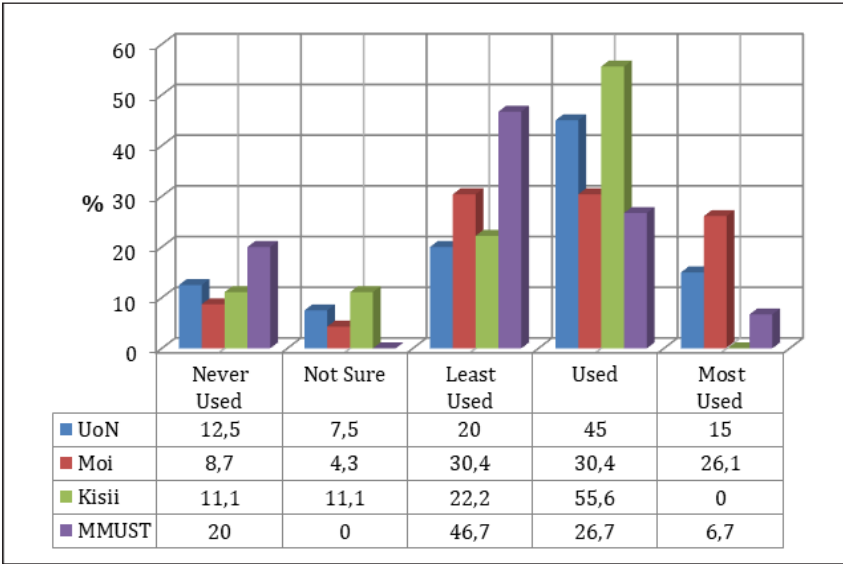

	Never Used	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
■ UoN	12,5	7,5	20	45	15
■ Moi	8,7	4,3	30,4	30,4	26,1
■ Kisii	11,1	11,1	22,2	55,6	0
■ MMUST	20	0	46,7	26,7	6,7

Figure 5: Innovative pedagogies in use – probem based learning
Source: authors' field data, 2018

Self-directed and lifelong learning also seem to have been favoured more at MMUST and Kisii than UoN and Moi universities, as Figure 6 shows.
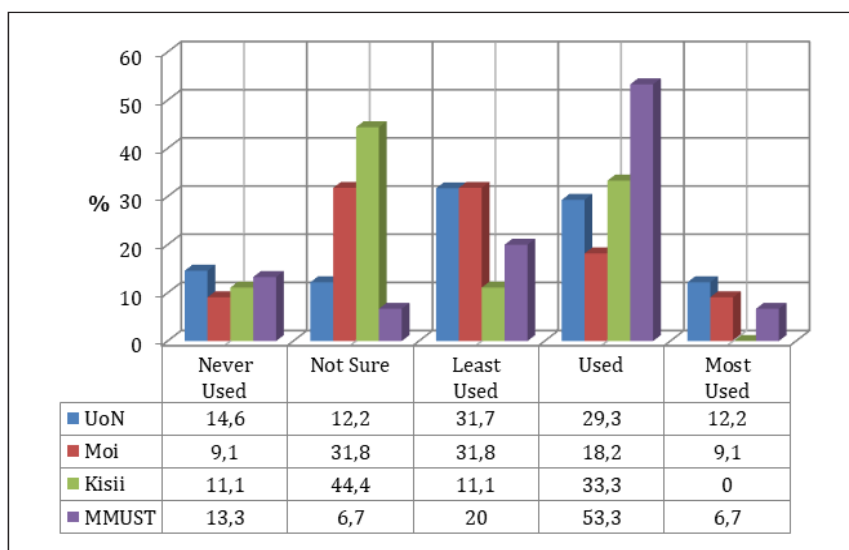
	Never Used	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
UoN	14,6	12,2	31,7	29,3	12,2
Moi	9,1	31,8	31,8	18,2	9,1
Kisii	11,1	44,4	11,1	33,3	0
MMUST	13,3	6,7	20	53,3	6,7

Figure 6: Self directed learning

Source: authors' field data, 2018

Heads of departments, DVCs, and VCs argued that many of the newer institutions suffered from staffing shortages. This observation also extended to universities that had low staffing capacity and were forced to rely on part-time lecturers, who often also teach in other universities, either as part-timers or permanent employees. Students are therefore encouraged to innovate ways to carry out learning activities with minimal supervision for the purpose of developing their own intellectual capacities. Although this is helpful in certain contexts, it is not in courses that are more practical, or with particularly complex and specialised topics.

Hiring of part-time lecturers had been decentralised to deans for fast-tracking of appointments. However, the notable challenge is that some of those hired to provide part-time services were also permanent and pensionable members of staff in other universities. Many of the remainder did not have the right qualifications. For example, some were secondary school teachers with no experience or qualifications teaching at the university level. Most had master's degrees. This is somewhat disastrous as those hired from other universities were already overloaded with work from their home institutions, while the others lacked crucial skills. Our comparative analysis showed that newer universities were more likely to suffer from staffing challenges.

The failure of the part-time lecturers and lack of experience in university teaching has implications on pedagogy, which is fundamental to any educational institution (Bruner 1996; Hodgkinson 1991; Mortimore 1999;

Starratt 2004; Vygotsky 1997; Webster 2009). This is not just failure on the part of university management, but also the Ministry of Education and CUE. Once the Ministry allows for increased enrolment without a deliberate follow-up to understand how students are trained and to ensure training meets the standards set by the Commission, then all three dockets fail. This follow-up by the Ministry and CUE should also take into account the resources allocated by the government, through the Ministry, to the various institutions. If capitation is low, university management is left with little choice but to find alternative means of survival of the institutions. If, for instance, there is not enough capitation to allow for sufficient employment of lecturers to meet the ratio required for the number of students enrolled, then managers are likely to recruit part-time staff to teach.

Digitalised Virtual Learning Environment

On digital learning, the four universities indicated the availability of ODeL, use of e-resources, and online courses. Although this was highlighted as a solution to the high number of students because it reduces congestion and encourages faster delivery of services, this did not seem to resolve the congestion within institutions. A combined analysis showed that all four universities had both virtual learning centres and satellite campuses. MMUST, which is smaller and newer than UoN and Moi, surprisingly led in this aspect. Although at the time of data collection some of these satellite campuses were closing, from the interviews there was a clear sense that these had served the institution well and had to some extend reduced the physical overcrowding.

Overall, university managers seemed to agree that pedagogies that involved digital learning helped in blended learning (virtual and face-to-face), as appears on Figure 7. To them, this has improved teaching and learning by enabling access to e-learning resources. The common courses taught in all the universities were conducted through blended and full online approaches.

Some of the tools that were in use for e-learning included Zoom, Google Meet, that were used to facilitate eLearning on learning management systems. Lecturers teaching online used innovative strategies such as electronic cases, online simulations, chats, and discussion forums to engage their students. For online courses, the learning management systems were set in a way that these strategies and tools would be readily accessible to students. UoN led in this aspect with an aggregate of 77 per cent for used and most used categories. UoN is a more established institution and likely has the capacities required, although Moi, which is equally established, did not seem to fare well in this aspect (see Figure 8).
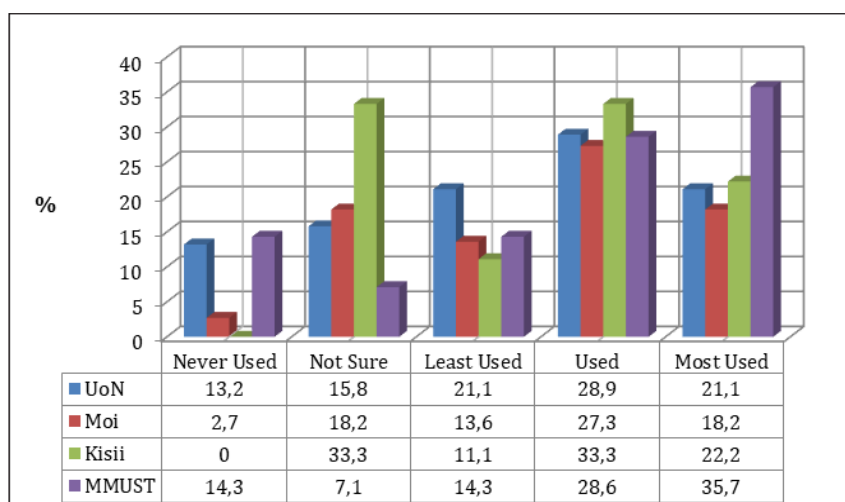
	Never Used	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
UoN	13,2	15,8	21,1	28,9	21,1
Moi	2,7	18,2	13,6	27,3	18,2
Kisii	0	33,3	11,1	33,3	22,2
MMUST	14,3	7,1	14,3	28,6	35,7

Figure 7: Blended learning

Source: authors' field data, 2018

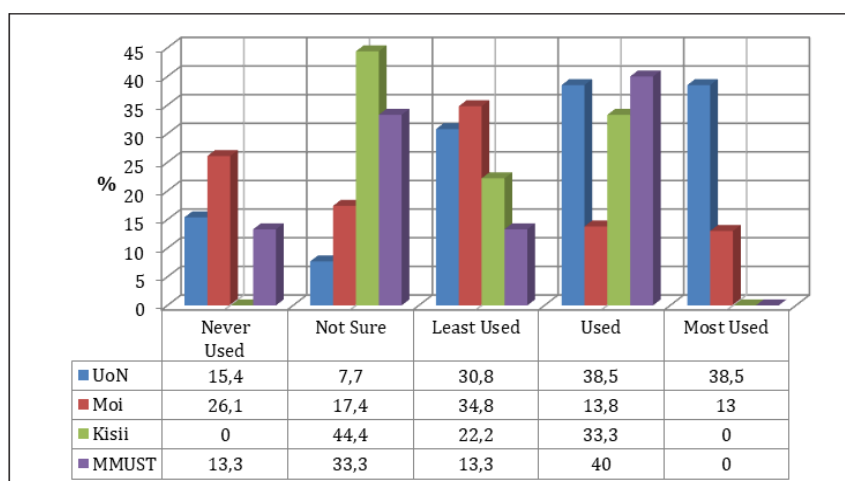|	Never Used	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
UoN	15,4	7,7	30,8	38,5	38,5
Moi	26,1	17,4	34,8	13,8	13
Kisii	0	44,4	22,2	33,3	0
MMUST	13,3	33,3	13,3	40	0

Figure 8: Use of e-cases and other digital media

Source: authors' field data, 2018

The qualitative data that accompanied the use of online teaching and learning methods showed that there was need for capacity building to keep the staff up to date with the emerging methods and technologies. Some of these methods and technologies were in use in the examination processes. For instance, for efficiency of communication of examination results, in all but one university, the managers had enforced a system for uploading course marks onto the servers

where students, using their personal identity numbers, could access their scores. This was deemed necessary because all other university processes seemed to be going digital. Notably, these are processes that required capacity building for members of staff.

Both the members of staff and the management were asked to indicate the existence of retooling for capacity building of teaching staff. At UoN, 45.5 per cent noted that this is not done at all. At Moi, 36.4 per cent said capacity building did not take place. At Kisii, while 25 per cent were not sure, 10 per cent indicated that the training does happen sometimes. Across the universities, where capacity building did take place, this was through self-support in workshops, seminars, and conferences. Staff explained that they used their own resources to attend workshops and seminars, conduct research and collaborate. In this regard, both at UoN and Moi, 39 per cent agreed to this aspect while at Kisii and MMUST, 19.5 per cent and 17.1 per cent respectively agreed that they built their own capacities. Seemingly, in all the universities, there is an effort on the part of staff, but this is more pronounced in the larger universities.

University managers argued that in an era of limited funding to universities, even CUE guidelines encourage members of staff to obtain their own funding, scholarships or fellowships in order to build their own capacities and that of their students. In fact, these initiatives, as a directive from CUE, were awarded points during reviews for promotions. According to the lecturers, innovations for teaching and learning have no place for awards in the system of academic rewards, especially promotion. This approach to motivation for capacity building and achievements of members of staff is transactional and problematic, as it is dependent on contingent reinforcement: management only awards when a certain achievement has been met (Bass and Bass 2008). Such an approach is likely to work for a few who are motivated by the material award, but not those whose primary aim is coaching and mentorship (Bass and Riggio 2006). Consequently, if innovation for teaching is not rewarded, which lecturer will care to innovate? The question then is whether the environment can be improved, by the joint efforts of lecturers and managers, so that the challenges faced in handling the many courses and numbers of students can be adequately resolved.

Improved Teaching and Learning Environment

How did lecturers innovate for an environment that facilitated teaching and learning? And how did management facilitate mechanisms to help lecturers improve teaching and learning? A number of activities were mentioned during our research in the institutions.

Student evaluation through programme ratings and students' learning experiences took place across the four universities. One of the clear roles of university management, through the office of the DVC in charge of academic affairs, was to facilitate end-of-course evaluation in which students rate the programmes they had been enrolled in. This evaluation is intended to help lecturers consider their approaches to teaching as well as course content. On the latter, they indicated that CUE had mandated universities to review course content after one cycle, that is, after every four years of a course. Student reviews partly helped them re-think and re-organise content. Overall, as Figure 9 shows, it was evident that this was a commonly used approach to help improve teaching and learning activities.
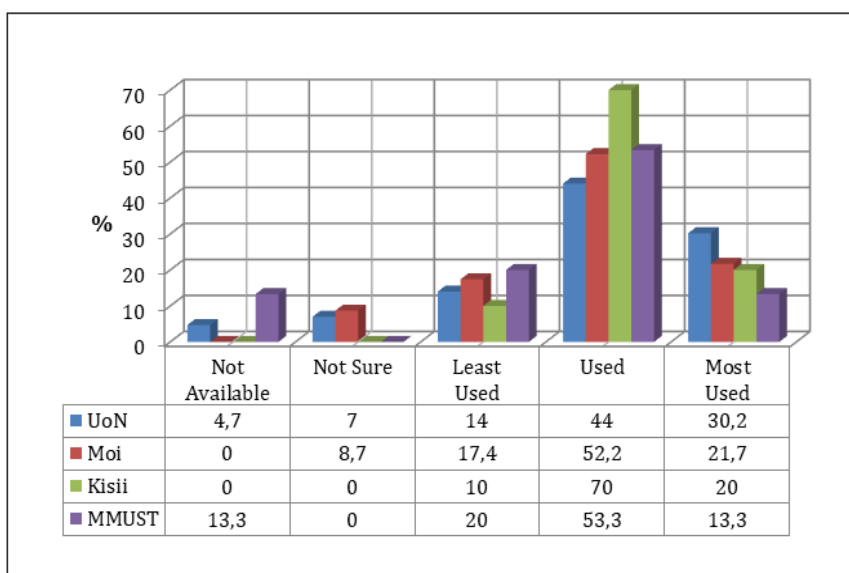

	Not Available	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
■ UoN	4,7	7	14	44	30,2
■ Moi	0	8,7	17,4	52,2	21,7
■ Kisii	0	0	10	70	20
■ MMUST	13,3	0	20	53,3	13,3

Figure 9: Student evaluations (programme ratings, evaluation of learning experiences)

Source: authors' field data, 2018

A number of lecturers expressed concerns that student evaluations were not necessary, given the massive numbers. Nevertheless, the evaluations seemed useful for the broader concern over quality, of teaching and learning, and, of programmes. MacNeill et al. (2003) argues that successful classroom pedagogy requires that teachers understand how students learn. Such an understanding should give them autonomy to design, implement, and assess educational activities that meet the needs of individual students. They note that the role of managers should be informed by teacher practice and reflection. This should therefore help managers empower lecturers to exercise professional responsibility and discretion, and to demonstrate credible

knowledge of learning and teaching processes. This is markedly different from the aforementioned transactional nature of contingent reinforcement.

The students' peer reviews enabled lecturers to carry out self– and peer reviews in order to analyse what the students thought of teaching strategies, and the programmes, and adjust accordingly. Subsequently, the reviews from students were analysed at either departmental level or at the office of the academic registrar under the supervision of the directorate of quality assurance and thereafter communicated to lecturers to facilitate self-evaluation and review. The exercise tended to be cumbersome for the large classes and as such it was observed that superficial analyses were conducted for large classes. In some cases, students' reviews were collected but never analysed.

Peer review was a common exercise especially in reviews of curriculum and programmes as well as setting and moderation of examinations. The heads of departments indicated that this ensured fairness not just in setting examinations but also in marking of the same. Apart from Kisii, where this exercise was somehow used sparingly in the university, a combined figure of over 40 per cent seemed to agree that in innovative pedagogy self- and peer reviews were necessary.
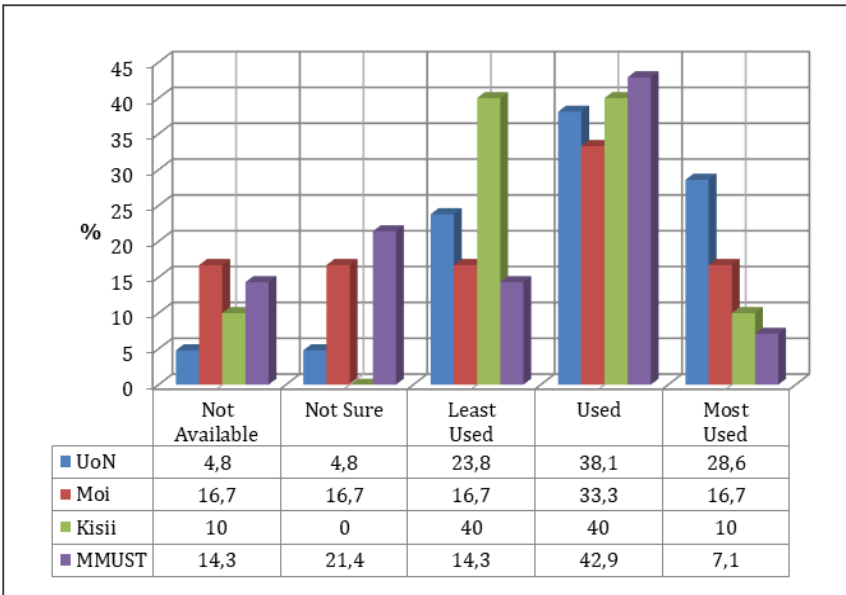

	Not Available	Not Sure	Least Used	Used	Most Used
UoN	4,8	4,8	23,8	38,1	28,6
Moi	16,7	16,7	16,7	33,3	16,7
Kisii	10	0	40	40	10
MMUST	14,3	21,4	14,3	42,9	7,1

Figure 10: Instructor self-reviews and peer revi
Source: authors' field data, 2018

How then do the university managers support student, self-, and peer and curriculum review exercises? This particular approach is transformative in improvement of pedagogy. Fortunately, it is a requirement from quality

standards and guidelines of universities for students to evaluate the teaching process and the programmes. It is also mandatory for lecturers to self- and peer evaluate. The management therefore had to comply. Deans and heads of departments spearhead this process through established review systems and processes. This practice seemed active in all four institutions with curriculum review committees' establishments. In each department, there is an officer in charge of quality assurance.

The challenges raised, however, and which seemed to counter the processes necessary for transformative leadership, were that the VCs directly appoint all managers, including deans, directors, and heads of departments. Collegial voting that allows for peers to elect those deemed able to steer well the academic leadership process has no place in these institutions. The appointments do not translate to fairness but are meant to serve the interests of the leaders. It does not allow for election of those considered academically qualified to manage academic crises. This diminishes what would have otherwise been considered the right attitude, motivation, and heart to work towards institutional goals – it kills the mandate of transformative leadership (Marron and Cunniff 2014).
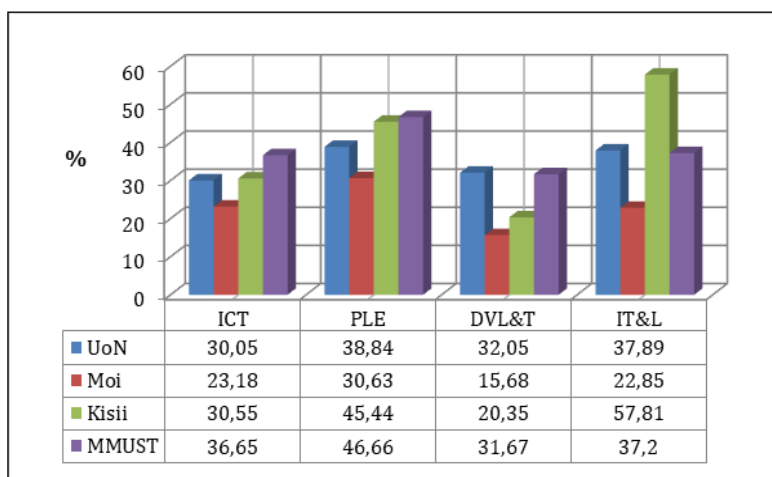

%	ICT	PLE	DVL&T	IT&L
■ UoN	30,05	38,84	32,05	37,89
■ Moi	23,18	30,63	15,68	22,85
■ Kisii	30,55	45,44	20,35	57,81
■ MMUST	36,65	46,66	31,67	37,2

Figure 11: Use of innovative pedagogy
Source: authors' field data, 2018

In the end, we did a cross analysis of the four categories to see which pedagogical category seemed more in use and which category was least used (Figure 11). All the four categories did well in UoN, MMUST and Kisii. Generally, personal learning environment (PLE) scored better followed by improved teaching and learning environment (IT&L). This is understandably so given the challenge of staffing and the fact that lecturers' mandate is to develop critical thinking

for the learners, thus, more application of PLE pedagogies. The explanation given for improved use of IT&L was that aspects under this category, including student, self- and peer evaluation, were mandated by CUE and thus required by regulations. Digitalized virtual learning and teaching (DVL&T) scored the lowest, an indication that most universities relied on face-to-face.

Indicators of Success or Failure in Innovative for Teaching and Learning

This study has shown that innovation for pedagogies exist in the universities albeit with variations. The question is whether they are effective and whether there are certain indicators that can help conclude with a measure of certainty that there is innovation in teaching and learning activities. The key indicators sought included: students' access to lecturers; range of communication and collaboration through learning platforms; re-designing of curricula; bridging teaching with research; re-thinking of student workload and teaching load; continuous upgrading in pedagogy; creation of innovative learning platforms; providing guidance to students using new methods; assessing impacts; and documenting effectiveness of the teaching delivered. We pick three to exemplify how they were rated.

Re-designing of Curricula

In 2016, there was a directive by CUE that universities review their curricula every four years. This was to ensure that the courses offered at the universities met the market demand and that the programmes' structures followed certain criteria, as defined by the 2014 CUE standards and guidelines for universities. Subsequently, the activity of curriculum review seems vibrant across all the universities, as seen in Figure 12.
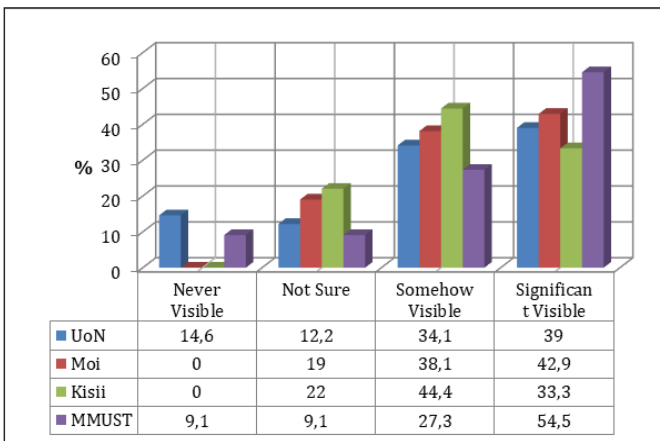
	Never Visible	Not Sure	Somehow Visible	Significant Visible
UoN	14,6	12,2	34,1	39
Moi	0	19	38,1	42,9
Kisii	0	22	44,4	33,3
MMUST	9,1	9,1	27,3	54,5

Figure 12: Re-designing of curricula
Source: authors' field data, 2018

Continuous Upgrading of Pedagogy

Upgrading of methods of teaching and learning was somewhat visible, and seemed not to be determined by the nature of the institution. Both old and new institutions showed mixed results, as can be claimed of Moi and MMUST in Figure 13.
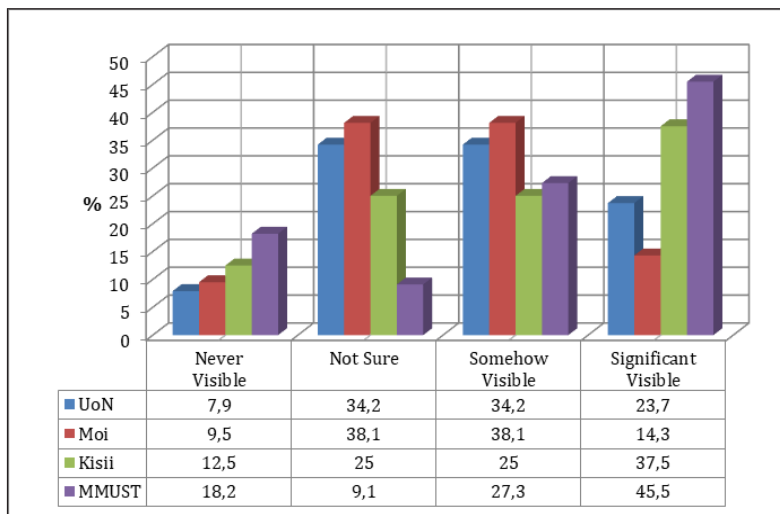
	Never Visible	Not Sure	Somehow Visible	Significant Visible
UoN	7,9	34,2	34,2	23,7
Moi	9,5	38,1	38,1	14,3
Kisii	12,5	25	25	37,5
MMUST	18,2	9,1	27,3	45,5

Figure 13: Continuous upgrading in pedagogy
Source: authors' field data, 2018

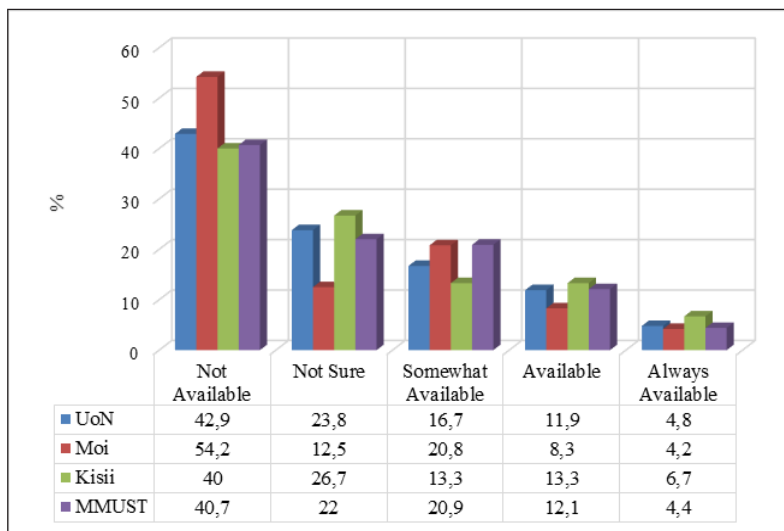|	Not Available	Not Sure	Somewhat Available	Available	Always Available
UoN	42,9	23,8	16,7	11,9	4,8
Moi	54,2	12,5	20,8	8,3	4,2
Kisii	40	26,7	13,3	13,3	6,7
MMUST	40,7	22	20,9	12,1	4,4

Figure 14: Availability of pedagogy funds
Source: authors' field data, 2018

A follow-up on this revealed that innovating for pedagogy seemed to rely on the efforts of an individual rather than university management. Funds were not available for such innovations (see Figure 14). This was blamed on university management for failing to support innovations that required financial resources. These concerns rhyme with Nabwire's (2016) observations on the challenges of using innovative pedagogies. These include time constraints, lack of equipment, universities not willing to adapt change, fear of change, lack of recognition and lack of interest by authorities towards adaptation innovative pedagogies.

Further, there were concerns around incentives for lecturers. Some DVCs argued that the universities always aimed at employing more qualified staff and retained the more experienced in university culture and practice. The managers indicated that they motivated the experienced researchers through study leaves, scholarships and promotions, where they merited. These provided the staff time to further improve their skills. Their views, however, differed with those of lecturers, who thought that the opportunities available were politicised with only a few benefiting. A case in point is one lecturer who argued that, in most cases, promotions were not granted on merit:

> Appointments and promotions are never on merit. Even with availability of clear CUE guidelines, it is so demoralizing to see the lecturers connected to top managers get recruited and/or reviewed for promotion even without the best qualifications. They rise quickly to management positions within shortest time while some of us who work hard never get rewarded. Can this kind of discrimination motivate one to innovate?

In summary, university managers determine to a great extent the success or failure of innovations for teaching and learning. Public universities require a transformational approach to leadership that allows for motivation, autonomy, attitude change and an inclusion of individual differences (Bass 1985), which in totality would contribute towards achievement of institutional goals and, specifically, the success of teaching and learning in the era of increased enrolment. Augmentation of transactional leadership is also necessary in certain individual circumstances that favour a 'carrot and stick' approach (Bass 1985).

Conclusion and Policy Implications

In the last three two decades, the expansion of universities and increased number of student enrolments has necessitated a restructuring of the university environment. Our study findings have shown that although there is some evidence of innovations in teaching and learning, the environment under which these institutions operate challenge the managers with regard to

providing the necessary support to the academic staff for useful pedagogical innovations. Lack of funds, staff, facilities, and expertise challenges the applicability of a transformational approach to pedagogy when it is needed most. Evidently, the issue of budgeting for universities should be taken more seriously. The managers should vouch for financing towards the support of pedagogy that speaks to the needs to students in an increasingly technological era. Furthermore, there is need to allocate budgets that finance the resources and materials stipulated in CUE guidelines.

Innovative managers need to create intentional opportunities and ensure that lecturers are aware of strategies for resource allocation for programmes and departments within their schools/faculties as this will help inprove expectations. Strategies should be developed in a transparent manner with inclusivity from relevant constituencies. Furthermore, it seems that the background of top university managers, most of whom have academic backgrounds, does not necessarily translate into the appropriate support in order to achieve these ends. At present, it seems that the 'carrot and stick' approach is predominantly at play, and a lecturer only gets rewarded for very specific aspects including teaching experience, research, publications, and supervision of postgraduate students. None of the managers seem to push the debate beyond this list or motivate the lecturers to innovate for teaching and learning. The managers may wishto take it upon themselves to learn from the field by ensuring that they visit classrooms frequently, providing feedback on instructional methods and techniques, supporting revision and improvement of the curriculum, and encouraging staff development. Additionally, the Ministry of Education needs to employ strategic and capable managers who possess the qualities to transform these institutions into learning and innovation hubs.This may mean thinking beyond professorial VCs

Regarding the numbers, it is evident that obtaining an adequate student–lecturer ratio is currently unattainable. The regulating body – CUE – should set up mechanisms to address this and other crises. More doctoral students need to graduate and be mentored to teach at the university level, which would likely narrow this ratio. Furthermore, 'moonlighting' – which refers to the process of lecturers teaching multiple courses in multiple universities – should be restricted. Certain directives that ensure there is quality teaching should accompany this restriction.

In short, the quality of university education is presently not at its best, and its transformation will require a serious change of collective attitude and mandate from all stakeholders. This includes rethinking the structure of management, admission criteria, programmes offered, and increased and consistent state support for these institutions. The tertiary education

sector in Kenya has a number of other institutions, such as the Technical Vocational Educational and Training Institutions, which should also be revamped, and students encouraged to take up courses instead of attending already overcrowded universities. The labour market should also encourage the employment of students with skills from these tertiary institutions. These steps will likely lower the oversubscription in Kenyan public universities.

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