



Leadership Development Schemes for Middle-level Academics in Merged Universities: The Case of Kyambogo University

George Wilson Kasule*

Abstract

Does the current generation of middle-level academics in most African universities, for example deans and heads of departments, adequately possess the leadership competence required to handle prevailing and future university obligations and challenges? In response to this question, this article, through a systematic literature review, explores the status quo of leadership competence of middle-level academics; factors that hinder leadership competence development; and measures needed to enhance leadership competence in African universities established out of mergers such as Kyambogo University in Uganda. Here, it is established that the status quo of leadership competence of middle-level academics, e.g., heads of departments, need improvement; and factors that hinder leadership competence development of middle-level academics can be perceived in two dimensions, i.e. “Institutional Factors” (e.g., poor working conditions, ineffective bureaucracy, etc.) and “Personal Factors” (e.g., lack of commitment, corruption etc.). Measures needed to enhance the leadership competence of academics include upgrading university facilities, adequately involving academics in university decision-making processes, and depoliticising university management and leadership, among other things. The article concludes that middle-level academics, such as Deans and heads of departments in African universities like Kyambogo, must do all it takes to improve their leadership competence, with other factors remaining constant if they want to meaningfully address the numerous grave challenges facing university education on the African continent.

Keywords: Leadership development, middle-level academics, merged universities

* Senior Lecturer, Head of Department, Educational Planning & Management, Kyambogo University, Uganda. Email: gwkasule@kyu.ac.ug; gwkasulem@gmail.com

Résumé

La génération actuelle d'universitaires de niveau intermédiaire dans la plupart des universités africaines (doyens, chefs de département) possède-t-elle les compétences en leadership nécessaires pour gérer les obligations et les défis actuels et futurs de l'université ? En réponse à cette question, cet article, à travers une revue systématique de la littérature, explore les compétences en leadership des universitaires de niveau intermédiaire, les facteurs qui entravent le développement des compétences en leadership, et les mesures nécessaires pour améliorer les compétences en leadership dans les universités africaines, créées à partir de fusions comme ce fut le cas avec l'Université de Kyambogo en Ouganda. Ici, il est établi que les compétences en leadership des universitaires de niveau intermédiaire, par exemple les chefs de département, doit être amélioré; et les facteurs qui freinent le développement des compétences de leadership des universitaires de niveau intermédiaire peut être perçu en deux dimensions, à savoir les « Facteurs institutionnels » (par exemple, les mauvaises conditions de travail, la bureaucratie inefficace, etc.) et les « Facteurs personnels » (par exemple le manque d'engagement, la corruption, etc.). Les mesures nécessaires pour améliorer les compétences en leadership des universitaires comprennent la modernisation des installations universitaires, la participation appropriée des universitaires aux processus décisionnels de l'université et la dépolitisation de la gestion et du leadership universitaires, entre autres choses. Le document conclut que les universitaires de niveau intermédiaire tels que les doyens et les chefs de départements des universités africaines telles que Kyambogo doivent faire tout ce qui est en leur pouvoir pour améliorer leurs compétences en leadership en restant constants sur d'autres facteurs s'ils veulent s'attaquer de manière significative aux nombreux grands défis de l'enseignement universitaire africain.

Mots-clés : développement du leadership, universitaires de niveau intermédiaire, universités fusionnées

Introduction

The leadership and management of new universities often established from mergers inevitably face many challenges. Part of these challenges stem from a lack of established cultures of good institutional governance practices. The level at which this is most noticeable is in the management of academic programmes. In established institutions with sound governance practices, the Senate oversees academic programmes. The Senate is supported in this role by departmental and faculty boards headed by middle-level academics who have gone through various mentorship schemes. Operation and leadership of universities established out of mergers in Uganda leave a lot to be desired. For instance, a few years back at Kyambogo University, a

vice chancellor was fired by the University Council for disrespecting it by refusing to take its orders and also for his “autocratic leadership style” and failure to create a good working environment with staff (Talemwa 2012). Similarly, Kasozi (2013) argued that Kyambogo has failed to stabilise since its inception in 2003. I strongly agree with Kasozi’s (2013) avowal because the leadership problems at Kyambogo have persisted (e.g., see Namubiru, Onen & Oonyu 2017). This could be attributed to the fact that newly established universities in Uganda, whether established out of mergers or through conventional means, lack the critical mass of senior academics to mentor emerging academics (Kasozi 2016; Mushemeza 2016). Moreover, qualified senior academics often opt to remain in established universities, leaving the new generation of universities to confront the challenge of developing academic programmes and/or mentoring younger academics to various academic and institutional leadership positions. What this means in Uganda’s context is that often, younger academics, who would otherwise not qualify to serve as heads of departments and deans end up taking up such responsibilities in the new merged universities (see Report on Investigations into Mismanagement and Corruption at Kyambogo University, 2015). What then happens? Do the merged/new generation universities design innovative ways to ensure that their middle-level staff acquire the requisite capability to shoulder responsibilities that might be beyond their competence? If not, what exactly happens in these institutions? Thus, the current generation of both top and middle-level academics at the university, particularly the deans of faculties and heads of departments, need support to develop leadership competence required to handle the leadership challenges of the university. Kyambogo University, the focus of this article, was established in 2003 by the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001 by merging Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo (UPK), the Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK) and the Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE), all of which had divergent missions.

As the practice is with the merger of institutions, Kyambogo took on the assets and liabilities of the three phased out institutions (i.e., UPK, ITEK, and UNISE), including teaching staff, to execute the university’s core tasks of teaching, research and community service. It is beyond the scope of this article to comment on whether all the integrated teaching staff, had the requisite academic and professional qualifications. What is relevant is that university duties and roles have their own intellectual and professional demands which not every person can adequately perform. For instance, the Report on Investigations into Mismanagement and Corruption at Kyambogo University (2015) indicate that the reasons given for the failure to have all courses taught by accredited faculty were flimsy.

Some of the reasons given include that Kyambogo University feared that if programmes were given to the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), they would be pirated and made public; the unsettled period after the merger could not allow the accreditation process to proceed; many lecturers were part-time and not interested in writing programmes; lecturers demanded extra payments to write out the academic programmes; and it took too long for programmes to reach NCHE for accreditation. This article provides insight regarding the status quo of leadership competence of deans and heads of departments; factors that hinder leadership competence development of deans and heads of departments; and the measures needed to develop leadership competence of deans and heads of departments in a university established out of merger, using Kyambogo as a case study.

The Problem

The need to have effective academic and administrative leadership in a university as a catalyst for high quality teaching, research, innovation and community development engagement, regardless of context, cannot be over-exaggerated (Tagoe 2013). This is particularly salient in universities such as Kyambogo where some of the teaching staff integrated into university service did not have the requisite academic and professional qualifications (Kasozi 2013). Accordingly, up to 2019 some of the heads of departments were Masters degree holders who assumed headship without any training in higher education management and leadership. This raises serious doubts as to whether these heads of departments who neither had doctoral and/or professorial level qualifications had the competencies to execute the demands of academic and institutional leadership at their level. Moreover, in Uganda's context, universities established out of merger are prone to have more academic and administrative leadership challenges (e.g., lack of adequate competent staff and difficulty in finding sufficient funding for infrastructure development and capacity building) than those established through conventional means (Kasozi 2016; Mushemeza 2016). That is not to mention the divergent institutional cultures and academic and professional backgrounds the integrated staff bring with them to the newly established university (McBain 2012).

The Concept of Mergers in Higher Education

Mergers have traditionally been associated with the private sector amalgamation of business entities of varying sizes and organisational cultures (Baloyi & Naidoo 2016). The merger concept is widely accepted as

one of the most important strategic tools used to achieve specific business objectives (Skodvin 2014). However, away from the business perspective, we see that the demands for greater efficiency, higher quality, and reductions in public budgets have meant that more countries are looking closely at the structure of their higher education systems, and this has often resulted in extensive reforms, including mergers (Skodvin 2009). For instance, several countries, including the UK, Australia, Norway, Denmark, Finland, China, USA, South Africa and Russia have used mergers as an instrument to restructure their higher education system (Skodvin 2014; Stewart 2003).

Azziz, Hentschke, Jacobs, Jacobs and Ladd (2017) advance that some countries undertake systematic mergers of their higher education institutions motivated by the belief that “bigger is better.”. However, Tevis (2015) argues that too much debt, staggering amounts of deferred maintenance, and decreased state support for public higher education institutions are some of the common reasons for mergers in higher education. Meanwhile, Wende (2013) presents a divergent view that global competition and prestige is driving universities in many countries to redefine their institutional profile, often encouraged by governments that seek to increase system diversity, thus resulting in various types of inter-institutional collaboration, including actual mergers.

For the case of Kyambogo, the government’s original vision on the merger of the three institutions (i.e., UPK, ITEK and UNISE) was to form a greater polytechnic, specialising in advancing professionalism in science, technology and teacher education, and embracing the former institutions as constituent colleges for purposes of retaining the special characteristics and core competences of those institutions (Inspectorate of Government, 2015). This agrees with McBain’s (2012) assertion that cultural challenges must be addressed during any merger process if such a merger is to succeed. Apparently, there was deviation from the original vision/concept of the merger of UPK, ITEK, and UNISE (Kasozi 2013). This is not unusual as the literature indicates that despite mergers becoming an increasingly important part of corporate strategies, not all attempts to undertake mergers are successful (Refsnes 2012). This is buttressed by Frantz (2014) who points out that numerous organisational mergers fail because the post-merger integration process fails. Accordingly, there is a need to assess whether the planned key strategic outcomes of the merger of UPK, ITEK and UNISE have been achieved, as well as assessing the extent to which, post-merger, the harmonised policies, procedures and systems are working successfully at Kyambogo University.

Methods

Systematic literature review method was employed for this study to answer the following questions:

- What is the status quo of leadership competence of middle-level academic, e.g., deans and heads of departments in universities established out of the merger, taking Kyambogo University as a case study?
- What factors hinder their leadership competence development?
- What measures are needed to develop their leadership competence?

This method was considered appropriate for the study because it allows the researcher to understand the breadth and depth of the existing body of work regarding a particular phenomenon and identify gaps to explore (Xiao & Watson 2017). It also enables the researcher to evaluate the validity and quality of existing work against a criterion to reveal weaknesses, inconsistencies and contradictions of the phenomenon under investigation (Pare, Trudel, Jaana & Kitsiou 2015; Xiao & Watson 2017). Moreover, systematic literature review in social science research is highly acknowledged because it ensures a replicable and transparent procedure for determining what is currently known or stated about a certain occurrence, and for identifying the sources to include in the review (Kumar 2011). Finally, it broadens the researcher's knowledge base in the study area and makes it possible to contextualise the study findings (Kumar 2011).

Formulation of inclusion and exclusion criteria

In order to get a credible list for the systematic review, inclusion and exclusion criteria were formulated. The inclusion criteria were as follows: a) relevance of each publication, i.e., each publication should be about leadership competence development for middle-level academics in merged universities in Africa, and Uganda in particular; b) peer reviewed articles; c) only publications written in English were considered, as that was the author's only international language; d) the literature search time span was limited to the years 2000-2019, as it is within this period that debates about developing quality university leaders have become a top priority for academics, researchers, governments, policy makers, and other stakeholders (for example, see Ayebare *et al.* 2017; Black 2015; Briggs 2001; Boer, Goedegebuure & Meek 2009; Deuren 2013; Mouton & Wildschut 2015; Yizengaw 2008). This made it possible to get a broad overview of the recent research on the quality of leadership in both conventional and merged universities in Africa, Uganda being no exception. Publications reporting on financing in higher education and research productivity in African

countries, among other things, were beyond the scope of this review, and as such were excluded from the review.

Development of a Search Strategy

In order to develop a search strategy that would lead to insight into academic and administrative leadership competence status quo, factors that hinder academic and administrative leadership competence development, and mitigation measures needed to develop academic and administrative leadership competence of deans and heads of departments at Kyambogo, various search terms were identified as being the most informative. The search descriptors included status of leadership in universities established out of merger, quality of university leaders, competence of university leaders and capacity building for university leaders, each in combination with Africa and/or Uganda. Quotation marks were employed to search for phrases. The search strategy focused on title, abstract and keywords, so as to get publications with a clear focus on leadership development of academics in merged universities in Africa and/or Uganda.

Identification of relevant publications

Four data bases were searched: The Web of Science® (WoS), Scopus, Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) and Google Scholar. The abstracts of the publications resulting from the foregoing search strategy were screened for relevance. If the abstract provided insufficient information, then the full text was perused to determine whether or not the publication was in line with the inclusion criteria. Subsequently, twenty publications were found to have information on the quality of leadership in African universities. After perusing these publications, the author – through content analysis technique – deemed fourteen (70%) as containing useful information for the study. The literature search made it possible to gain insight into the academic and administrative leadership competence status quo; factors that hinder academic and administrative leadership competence development; and mitigation measures needed to develop academic and administrative leadership competence of deans and heads of departments at Kyambogo. This is presented in the results and discussion section.

Results and Discussions

This section features some sources for the results regarding the status of leadership competence of middle-level academics, factors that hinder their leadership competence development, and measures that are needed to

develop leadership competence of middle-level academics in universities established out of mergers, such as Kyambogo.

Leadership Competence Status Quo of Middle-level Academics at Kyambogo University

Findings from several documents, such as the Inspector General of Government Report on Mismanagement and Corruption at Kyambogo University (2015)¹ speak in detail regarding the leadership competence of deans and heads of departments at Kyambogo University. Deans and heads of departments are mandated to ensure that there are no examination leakages and other academic malpractices. However, complaints about these issues have been rife over the past few years. For instance, records of the proceedings of the Appointments Board which sat on 14 April 2014 showed that a technician in the Department of Engineering, a senior lecturer in the Department of Mechanical and Production Engineering, an assistant lecturer in the Department of Civil and Building Engineering, and a part-time lecturer in the Department of Mechanical Engineering were found to have solicited money from students for awarding students higher marks, expeditious marking of examination scripts by outsiders, passing the course, and ensuring that students successfully defended their presentations.

The four members of staff were recommended to the University Council for the termination of their contracts. However, in most cases, the culprits got “off the hook” due to the fact that investigation processes were deemed faulty. Accordingly, as a matter of urgency, this should be of concern to the University Senate because bodies such as the Inspector General of Government do not have the capacity to fully investigate the aforementioned academic cases due to their technical nature. Such investigations also require the cooperation of both errant students and lecturers in order to come to any concrete findings.

The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001, Section 53² indicates that deans, directors and heads of departments are supposed to be elected by the academic staff from among senior members of the faculty, institution, college or other academic body, in accordance with procedures proposed by the Senate and approved by the University Council. Meanwhile, for new academic bodies, the vice chancellor is mandated to appoint the dean, director or heads of departments to serve for two years. The Inspector General of Government Report on Mismanagement and Corruption at Kyambogo University (2015) indicates that regulations/guidelines for the election of deans, heads of departments and directors were passed by the University Council in 2012 and followed in the elections held in 2013.

The report further indicated that the majority of faculties and departments lacked members of staff qualified to be nominated as deans and heads of departments. It was also found that there were insufficient members of academic staff to fill the positions available because the minimum qualification required to fill these positions is that of a senior lecturer.

For one to qualify to become a senior lecturer according to Kyambogo University Human Resources Manual (2014), the candidate needed to possess a PhD in a relevant discipline; have three years of teaching or research in a reputable institution; have three recognised publications in the area of his or her specialisation; have supervised at least one graduate student to completion; and be involved as a member of a communal club, society or association. However, due to the limited numbers of academic staff with the requisite qualifications to take office as deans, directors and heads of departments, Kyambogo University has faced challenges in identifying staff to fill the positions in question as required by the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001.

Consequently, most of the deans, directors and heads of departments are in acting capacity, appointed and/or recommended for appointment by the Appointments Board by the vice chancellor. Hence, Kyambogo needs to address concerns around governance at both unit and institution-wide levels through the establishment of representative committee structures, transparency in decision making, genuine consultative processes, and open channels of multi-directional communication (Mushemeza 2016).

However, in Kyambogo's context, it is important to note that because the deans, directors and heads of departments are elected by colleagues in their faculties/departments or others and serve in acting capacity, they owe an allegiance to those who elected them. As such, in many cases they are held hostage and cannot make firm decisions or discipline staff in their departments, especially if they plan to seek re-election after the expiry of their tenure, which is only four years and without renewal or extension.

Consequently, attempts to discipline errant members of academic staff are met with resistance and the deans, directors and heads of departments, more often than not, are forced into a position of surrender. For instance, the Inspector General of Government Report on Mismanagement and Corruption at Kyambogo University (2015) indicates that, at its meeting held on 17 April 2014, the Appointments Board observed that most heads of departments and deans were hesitant to take formal action against persons under their supervision because they were in office in an acting capacity.

This situation needs to be mitigated at the earliest possible opportunity because it grossly impairs effective performance management of academic

staff in a department/faculty. The summary of the leadership competence status quo of middle-level academics, e.g. deans, directors and heads of departments in an African university, such as Kyambogo, is presented in the ensuing Table below.

Table 1: Leadership competence status quo of middle-level academics in an African university such as Kyambogo

Status quo of leadership competence of middle-level academics in an African University such as Kyambogo	Findings	Source
	- Most universities in Africa critically face a challenge of limited capacity of governance, management and leadership.	Deuren 2013. <i>Capacity Development in Higher Education Institutions in Developing Countries</i> . Mouton & Wildschut 2015. <i>Leadership and Management Case Studies in Training in Higher Education in Africa</i> . Yizengaw 2008. <i>Challenges of Higher Education in Africa and Lessons of Experience for the Africa - U.S. Higher Education Collaboration Initiative</i> .
	- Leadership competence levels of university leaders is low.	Ayebare <i>et al.</i> , 2017. Appointing and Removing Academic Staff in Public Institutions: The Level of Autonomy at Kyambogo University, Uganda.
	- Most of the current university leaders especially in Africa lack appropriate leadership behaviour to handle ever-changing demands in the higher education sector.	Black 2015. <i>Qualities of Effective Leadership in Higher Education</i> .
	- Most Deans of Faculties and Heads of departments are under-prepared for the job they take up.	Boer, Goedegebuure & Meek 2009. <i>The Changing Nature of Academic Middle Management: a Framework for Analysis</i> .

The finding in Table 1 support Ogunruku's (2012) assertion that higher education institutions in Africa, such as Kyambogo, lack competent academic leaders to efficiently coordinate and manage the present and future. Similarly, several authors (Deuren 2013; Mouton & Wildschut 2015; Yizengaw 2008) all concur that most universities in Africa, Kyambogo being no exception, face a critical challenge of limited capacity of governance, management and leadership. For example, universities such as Makerere, that were seen as a success story for a premier university in Africa in recent decades regularly face closures due to staff and student unrest, mismanagement and poor leadership, among other things (Halvorsen 2016).

The results of this article, together with submissions of other scholars, such as Oanda and Sall (2016) affirm that the challenge of university governance and leadership – as identified by the 2000 World Bank report – still exist as a key limitation in the efficiency of most universities in Africa, such as Kyambogo. The findings in Table 1 concur with Wall (2015) who advances the notion that in the absence of administrative training, academic deans lack the breadth and depth of administrative leadership competence. Further, the situation of academic leaders, including vice chancellors, deans of faculties, and heads of departments, etc., lacking the breadth and depth of administrative leadership competence is grave as, revealed in Table 1. This is supported by the Centre for Higher Education Transformation's (2002) affirmation that the quality of higher education institutional staff and university managers are also lacking in a number of these competency areas.

For instance, Namubiru *et al.* (2017) established that Kyambogo University leadership lacked a shared vision and common strategies for managing transformation beyond the challenges of being non-collegial and heavily bureaucratic in nature. Furthermore, they also found that the university had myriad of leadership challenges, such as personality clashes amongst leaders; the problem of red-tape in decision making; a shortage of funds and other resources; and the interference by external agents in the affairs of the university. Namubiru *et al.* (2017) lucidly affirm that the kind of leadership exercised at Kyambogo University since its inception is partly responsible for the challenges the university is experiencing to date.

Findings herein are in accord with Ayebare, Kisiga, Gitta, Betihamah and Kimoga (2017) who indicate in their study that the appointment and removal of academic staff in Kyambogo University was not in line with what is provided for in the university's Human Resource Manual and national guiding acts, laws and standing orders of the Government of Uganda. This is a vivid indication that the leadership competence of the university

managers and leaders is debatable. Accordingly, Kyambogo University management and leadership should take heed to Salmi's (2009) supposition that talent, abundance of resources and appropriate governance are key aspects for creating a world-class university, which Kyambogo aspires to be, as suggested by its vision (i.e., To be a Centre of Academic and Professional Excellence).

Furthermore, the findings in Table 1 agree with Floyd (2009) who states that academics, more often than not, move into middle-level management and leadership roles with little or no training in management and leadership. As such, they struggle to adequately manage and lead key aspects of their role. This is buttressed by Boer, Goedegebuure and Meek's (2009) avowal that most deans of faculties and heads of departments are under-prepared for the job they take up. This inevitably requires deans and heads of departments to acquire various sets of skills, values and knowledge in order to be effective middle-level managers and leaders. In today's higher education environment, the need to develop and support good leaders and managers is critical if institutions want to operate effectively and efficiently (Floyd 2016). In summary, Table 1 suggests that the leadership competence of leaders in African universities such as Kyambogo needs improvement.

Table 2 reveals the factors that hinder leadership competence development of middle level academics in African universities like Kyambogo. These factors can be categorised into two areas: personal and institutional. However, the available literature (see Asiimwe & Steyn 2013; Floyd 2016; Megheirkouni 2016) present factors that hinder leadership competence development of middle level academics in African universities in amalgamation. This article details factors such as poor working conditions, ineffective bureaucracy, poor politics, limited academic freedom, heavy work-load, poor remuneration, government interference, inadequate funding, centralisation of authority and decision-making, poor technology infrastructure, organisational culture, and climate as institutional factors.

Meanwhile, factors such as lack of commitment, corruption, conflicting values in the institution, weakness in technology use, and lack of time value are perceived as personal factors. In this light, we see that the findings in Table 2 tend to suggest that factors that hinder leadership competence development of middle level academics in African universities, such as Kyambogo, are more institutional than personal. This perhaps is premised on the fact that previous research has concentrated more on bringing out factors hindering effective management and leadership from the institutional dimension, with less emphasis on the personal.

Table 2: Factors hindering leadership competence development of middle-level academics in an African university such as Kyambogo

Factors hindering leadership competence development of middle-level academics in an African university such as Kyambogo	Findings	Source
	- Poor work environment (physical & social) - Ineffective bureaucracy - Poor politics - Limited academic freedom - Heavy work loads - Poor remuneration - Corruption	Altbach 2011. <i>The Academic Profession: The Realities of Developing Countries.</i>
	- Government interference - lack of commitment - inadequate funding - Poor remuneration - Internal politics - Lack of commitment - Unnecessary bureaucracy - Conflicting values in the institution - Centralisation of authority and decision-making	Asimwe & Steyn 2013. <i>Obstacles hindering the effective governance of Universities in Uganda.</i>
	- Middle-level academics' limited authority and/or participation in decisionmaking	Boyko & Jones 2010. <i>The Roles and Responsibilities of Middle Management (Chairs and Deans) in Canadian Universities.</i>
	- Poor technology infrastructure; - Weakness in technology use - Political and economic conditions - Lack of time value - Organisational culture and climate	Megheirkouni 2016. 'Factors influencing leadership development in an uncertain environment'.

Table 3: Measures to enhance leadership competence of middle-level academics in an African university such as Kyambogo

Measures needed to enhance leadership competence development of middle-level academics in an African university such as Kyambogo	Findings	Source
	- Provide adequate salaries and a stable career path - Upgrade university facilities - Adequately involve academics in university decision making processes. - Depoliticise university management and leadership - Provide adequate academic freedom - Provide targeted education and training in higher education management and leadership	Altbach 2011. <i>The Academic Profession: The Realities of De-veloping Countries.</i>
	- Ensure more operational autonomy - Ensure effective delegation - Ensure adequate provision of funds to the university	Asiimwe & Steyn 2013. <i>Obstacles hindering the effective governance of Universities in Uganda.</i>
	- Provide clear definition between academic and administrative roles.	Briggs 2001. 'Aca- demic middle manag- ers in further educa- tion: reflections on leadership', Research in Post- Compulsory Education.
	- University structure and culture should both be well aligned in an organisation for leadership effectiveness	John & Chattopad- hyay 2015. <i>Factors Impacting Leader- ship Effectiveness: A Literature.</i>

Table 3 reveals that there are a number of measures that can be undertaken to enhance the leadership competence of middle-level academics in African universities, such as Kyambogo. The finding concurs with Otaala (2014) that middle-level academics need to acquire knowledge and skills, such as using technology effectively to improve access to knowledge. Thus, they can ably provide academic and professional leadership to the students and staff under

their jurisdiction. Similarly, the findings in Table 3 are also in agreement with Tagoe (2013) that providing leadership training can be useful in enhancing the leadership competence of university middle-level managers. Tagoe (2013) asserts that university leaders at all levels regardless of context ought to learn “to do more with less”. This is premised on the fact that according to the author’s experience and observation, more often than not, university managers at Kyambogo have a tendency of giving lack of adequate resources as an excuse for not performing their duties effectively. Nonetheless, when they are put to task to show what they have managed to do with the supposedly limited resources, they hardly show any substantial work and/or development. This kind of scenario ought to be mitigated without any compromise.

The findings in Table 3 are in accord with the work of Mayer *et al.* (2011) and Nakimuli and Turyahebwa (2015) who share the same conviction that effective university managers and leaders require targeted and appropriate training. This is owing to the fact that university education is experiencing changes in the form of expansion, diversification of provision, more heterogeneous student bodies, new funding arrangements, increasing focus on accountability and performance, globalisation, mobility and collaboration (Nakimuli & Turyahebwa 2015). Hence, prospective university leaders need to be provided with continuous professional learning and development in essential knowledge and skills if they are to perform their duties effectively.

The findings in Table 3 also correspond with Namubiru *et al.* (2017) that for African universities such as Kyambogo to function effectively and efficiently, there is a need to ensure that the university managers and leaders have a shared vision, employ a collegial kind of leadership, and are supportive to different units as well as individuals at the university. This is buttressed by Black (2015) who ascertains that in this climate of change, higher education institutions like Kyambogo are required to consider how to develop their leaders and establish what is regarded as appropriate leadership behaviour to enable them adapt to new circumstances in the higher education sector. Simala (2014) argues that as pressure continues to mount for universities such as Kyambogo to embrace change, academic and administrative leadership demands made upon middle-level academics are ever on the increase. Accordingly, Shahmandi *et al.*’s (2011) assertion speaks volumes in arguing that today’s leaders, regardless of context, need to have new knowledge, abilities and skills to effectively cope with the constant organisational changes. Hence, leaders in African universities, such as Kyambogo, are implored to follow suit. Moreover, it is irrefutable that competent leadership in a university is key to providing high quality

education, research, and community service (Shahmandi *et al.* 2011). In the final analysis, it is hereby deduced that the measures needed to enhance leadership competence of middle-level academics in African universities such as Kyambogo, must address the prevalent institutional deficiencies such as poor working conditions, ineffective administrative structure and unnecessary bureaucracy (Kasule 2015).

Conclusion

Middle-level academics, such as heads of departments at Kyambogo, need support to enhance their leadership competence so as to have the skills required to address the challenges facing the university. As a first step, middle-level academics charged with academic and administrative leadership roles ought to be aware of the effect of institutional and personal factors on their leadership performance, and take appropriate mitigation measures. It is indisputable that no university can be better than the quality of its leadership. Accordingly, university education stakeholders need to develop and implement measures that address the institutional and personal factors limiting leadership competence development of academics at all levels, not only middle level academics.

As a policy measure, this study suggests that prospective university managers and leaders at Kyambogo, from the heads of departments to the vice chancellor, be required to undergo training in higher education management and leadership. According to the findings herein, it has been established that the literature about personal factors affecting leadership competence development of academics in African universities, such as Kyambogo, is scarce. As such, a detailed phenomenological study, involving the deans of faculties and heads of departments to profile these personal factors, is necessary. Additionally, there is need to delve into how institutional and personal factors, affect middle-level academics' management and leadership competence and the associated pragmatic mitigation measures if we want universities in Africa, such as Kyambogo, to be managed effectively.

Notes

1. https://www.igg.go.ug/static/files/publications/IG_Governance_Report_on_Kyambogo_2015_2.pdf
2. <https://ulii.org/system/files/legislation/act/2001/2001/universities%20and%20tertiary%20institutions%20Act%202001.pdf>

References

- Altbach, P.G., 2011, 'The Academic Profession: The Realities of Developing Countries' in P.G. Altbach (ed), *Leadership for World Class Universitie: Challenges for Developing Countries*, (pp. 205-223), Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Asiimwe, S. & Steyn, G.M., 2013, 'Obstacles hindering the effective governance of Universities in Uganda', *Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 17-27.
- Ayebare, J., Kisige, A., Gitta, E., Betihamah, J. & Kimoga, J., 2017, 'Appointing and removing academic staff in public institutions: the level of autonomy at Kyambogo University, Uganda', *International Research in Higher Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 101-109.
- Azziz, R., Hentschke, G.C., Jacobs, B.C., Jacobs, L.A. & Ladd, H., 2017, 'Mergers in Higher Education: A proactive strategy to a better future?', Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/oj.2015.42006>
- Baloyi, M.C. & Naidoo, G., 2016, 'Higher education mergers in South Africa: a means towards an end', *African Journal of Public Affairs*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 9-19.
- Black, S.A., 2015, 'Qualities of effective leadership in higher education', *Open Journal of Leadership*, 4, pp. 54-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/oj.2015.42006>
- Boer, H.D., Goedegebuure, L. & Meek, V.L., 2009, *The Changing Nature of Academic Middle Management: A Framework for Analysis*.
- Bolden, R., Gosling, J., Marturano, A. & Dennison, P., 2003, *A Review of Leadership Theory and Competency Frameworks*, Exeter: University of Exeter.
- Boyko, L. & Jones, G.A., 2010, 'The roles and responsibilities of middle management (chairs and deans) in Canadian universities', in Meek V., Goedegebuure L., Santiago R. and Carvalho T., eds., *The Changing Dynamics of Higher Education Middle Management*, Springer, Dordrecht: Higher Education Dynamics.
- Briggs, A. R. J., 2001, 'Academic middle managers in further education: reflections on leadership', *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 223-236.
- Centre for Higher Education Transformation, 2002, *Capacity Building Initiatives in Higher Education*, Sunnyside: comPress.
- Chikere, C. & Nwoka, J., 2015, 'The systems theory of management in modern day organisations - A study of Aldgate Congress Resort Limited, Port Harcourt', *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, vol. 5, no. 9, pp. 1-7.
- Conraths, B. & Trusso, A., 2007, *Managing the University Community: Exploring Good Practice*, Brussels: European University Association.
- Council on Higher Education, 2016, *Reflections of South African University Leaders, 1981 to 2014*, Cape Town: African Minds & Council on Higher Education.
- Creswell, J.W., 2002, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, Upper Saddle Creek, NJ.: Pearson Education.
- Deuren, R.V., 2013, *Capacity Development in Higher Education Institutions in Developing Countries*, Maastricht, The Netherlands: Maastricht School of Management.
- Fiedler, F.E., 1978, 'The leadership game: matching the man to the situation', *Organisational Dynamics*, 4(3), pp. 6-16.

- Floyd, A., 2016, 'Supporting academic middle managers in higher education: do we care?', *Higher Education Policy*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 167–183.
- Floyd, A., 2009, 'Life histories of academics who become heads of department: socialisation, identity and career trajectory', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leicester.
- Frantz, T.L., 2014, 'A behavioral theory of the merger: dynamics of the post-merger integration process', Unpublished PhD Thesis, Carnegie Mellon University.
- Gill, R., 2006, *Theory and Practice of Leadership*, London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Halvorsen, T., 2016, 'Higher education in developing countries: peril and promise, a decade and a half later: Development lost? *International Journal of African Higher Education*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 80-95.
- Hersey, P., Blanchard, K.H. & Johnson, D.E., 2001, *Management of Organisational Behaviour – Leading Human Resources*, 8th Ed., New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India.
- Inspectorate of Government, 2015, 'Report on Investigations into Corruption and Mismanagement of Kyambogo University – Volume V: Governance', Retrieved from https://www.igg.go.ug/static/.../IG_Governance_Report_on_Kyambogo_2015_2.pdf
- John, S. & Chattopadhyay, P., 2015, 'Factors impacting leadership effectiveness: a literature review', *Arabian Journal of Business Management Review*, vol. 5, no. 6, pp. 1-5.
- Joseph, E.E. & Winston, B.E., 2005, 'A correlation of servant leadership, leader trust and organisational trust', *Leadership & Organisation Development Journal*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 6-22.
- Kasozi, A.B.K., 2013, Merging Kyambogo University was a mistake. Retrieved from https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/.../merging-kyambogo-university-mistake.
- Kasozi, A.B.K., 2016, *The National Council for Higher Education and the Growth of the University Sub-sector in Uganda, 2002–2012*, Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa.
- Kasule, G.W., 2015, 'Impact of work environment on academic staff job performance: Case of a Uganda university', *International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 95-103.
- Kirkpatrick, S.A. & Locke, E.A., 1991, 'Leadership: do traits matter?', *Academy of Management Executive*, vol. 5, no.2, pp. 48-60.
- Kumar, R., 2011, *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginner*, 3rd Ed., London: SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Kyambogo University Human Resources Manual, 2014, Retrieved from <https://kyu.ac.ug/downloads/Final%20Approved%20HR%20Manual%20March%202015.pdf>
- Lord, R.G. & Emrich, C.G., 2000, 'Thinking outside the box by looking inside the box: Extending the cognitive revolution in leadership research', *Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 551-579.
- Marshall, S., 2008, 'Leading change at the middle: Stories of higher education middle leaders 'success'', Unpublished Masters Degree Thesis, Unitec, Institute of Technology.

- Mayer, P., Wilde, M., Dinku, A., Fedrowitz, J., Shitemi, N.L., Wahlers, M. & Ziegele, F., 2011, *Challenges for Faculty Management at African Higher Education Institutions*, Osnabruck: University of Applied Sciences. Retrieved from https://www.che.de/wp-content/uploads/upload/Challenges_for_faculty_management_at_African_higher_education_institutions_Mayer_et_al_2011.pdf
- McBain, L., 2012, 'College and University Mergers: An Update on Recent Trends', American Association of State Colleges and Universities: A Higher Education Policy Brief, May 2012.
- Megheirkouni, M., 2016, 'Factors influencing leadership development in an uncertain environment', *Journal of Management Development*, vol. 35, no. 10, pp. 1232-1254.
- Mele, C., Pels, J. and Polese, F., 2010, 'A brief review of systems theories and their managerial applications', *Service Science*, vol. 2, no. 1-2, pp. 126-135.
- Mouton, J. & Wildschut, L., 2015, *Leadership and Management Case Studies in Training in Higher Education in Africa*, Cape Town, South Africa: African Minds.
- Mushemeza, E.D., 2016, 'Opportunities and challenges of academic staff in higher education in Africa', *International Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 236-246.
- Nakimuli A. & Turyahebwa, A., 2015, 'Institutional efficiency in selected universities in Uganda', *Journal of Education and Practice*, vol. 6, no.10, pp. 90-96.
- Namubiru, G., Onen, D. & Oonyu, J., 2017, 'University leadership during times of significant transformation: A case of Kyambogo University in Uganda', *Journal of Education and Practice*, vol. 8, no. 10, pp. 78-85.
- Northouse, P.G., 1997, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc.
- Oanda, I. & Sall, E., 2016, 'From peril to promise: repositioning higher education for the reconstruction of Africa's future', *International Journal of African Higher Education*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 52-78.
- Ogunraku, A.O., 2012, 'Leadership and governance in higher education: Challenges and prospects of developing the next generation of university leaders, academics and researchers – The management models', Paper delivered at the Consultative Policy Dialogue on The Future and Relevance of Nigeria Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions: Towards Higher Education Transformation, held at CVC/AVCNU Conference Hall, Abuja, Nigeria.
- Otara, A., 2014, 'The Academic Dean and the Challenges of Meeting Changing Expectations within a Competitive Higher Education Environment in Africa', *JHEA*, 12 (1), 133-150.
- Owens, R.G., 2004, *Organisational Behavior in Education: Adaptive Leadership and School Reform*, 8th Ed., Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Pare, G., Trudel, M.C., Jaana, J. & Kitsiou, S., 2015, 'Synthesising information systems knowledge: a typology of literature reviews', *Information & Management*, vol. 52, no. 183, p. 99.
- Refsnes, F.O., 2012, 'What explains mergers' success or failure?: The role of organisational structures, strategies and external environments in mergers –

- empirical evidence from two contrasting cases', Unpublished Masters Thesis, Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture, University of Oslo.
- Russell, R.F., 2001, 'The role of values in servant leadership', *Leadership & Organisation Development Journal*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 76-84.
- Salmi, J., 2009, *The Challenge of Establishing World-class Universities*, Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Schofield, A., 1996, 'Strengthening the skills of middle management in universities', A study undertaken within the framework of the UNESCO/ACU-CHEMS Joint Action Plan in Higher Education Management, Paris.
- Simala, K.I., 2014, 'Deanship, leadership dilemmas and management challenges facing the social sciences in public university education in Kenya', *JHEA*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp.1-26.
- Skodvin O., 2014, 'Merger as an instrument to achieve quality in higher education – rhetoric or reality?', Paper presented in Track 1 at the EAIR 36th Annual Forum in Essen, Germany, 27-30 August 2014.
- Skodvin, O., 2009, 'Mergers in higher education – success or failure?', *Tertiary Education and Management*, vol. 5, pp.65-80.
- Stewart, G., 2003, 'College mergers: lessons to be learned from other sectors', *Research in Post- Compulsory Education*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 305-327.
- Tagoe, C.N.B., 2013, 'Challenges of university administration and management in West Africa', Association of West Africa Universities, Ougadougou, Nov. 4-8, 2013.
- Talemwa, M., 2012, 'Kyambogo celebrates Ndiege exit', *The Observer*, November 2, 2012, Retrieved from <https://observer.ug/news-headlines/21893-kyambogo-celebrates-ndiege-exit>
- Tevis, M.M., 2015, 'Reflections on the termination of two universities and the creation of a new university', *Journal of Philosophy & History of Education*, vol. 65, no. 1, pp. 109-122.
- Wall, K.J., 2015, 'Administrative development for academic deans in the California State University system', Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, California State University, San Bernardino.
- Wende, M.V.D., 2013, 'On mergers and missions: implications for institutional governance and governmental steering', Draft paper for the WCU-5 Conference Global Outreach of World-Class Universities: How It is Affecting Higher Education, 3-6 November 2013, Shanghai, China.
- World Bank, 2002, *Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education*, Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Xiao, Y. & Watson, M., 2017, 'Guidance on conducting a systematic literature review', *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, pp. 1-20.
- Yizengaw, T., 2008, *Challenges of Higher Education in Africa and Lessons of Experience for the Africa-U.S. Higher Education Collaboration Initiative*, Washington, DC: National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.