
Findings

This chapter presents the findings (results) of the study. The chapter is organized into eight major sections. The first section focuses on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the study respondents, while the second section presents the profiling of the mainstreaming of students' participation in governance in institutional policies and practices, the third section focuses on the support for students' involvement in governance by university organizational structures. Sections four through six, on the other hand, focus on the support systems for enhancing students' involvement in university governance, the role of self-governance structures in students' participation in governance and the level of inclusivity of students' involvement in university governance, respectively. The impediments to effective student participation in governance are profiled in section seven while the final section (eight) focuses on cross-university variations in policies and practices pertaining to student participation in governance.

Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

A total of 657 students were interviewed for this study. Of this number, 456 students (69.4 per cent) attended Kenyatta University (KU) while the remainder 201 students (30.6 per cent) were drawn from the United States International University (USIU). Those interviewed included 46.2 per cent (304) males and 53.8 per cent (353) females. The age bracket of the interviewees ranged from under 21 years to those aged 51 and above. As evident from Table 5.1, the overwhelming majority (89.0 per cent) of them were aged 25 and below. Only 4.4 per cent were over 30 years old. Consistent with expectations, 80.8 per cent of the respondents reported being single (never married) compared to 11.3 per cent who reported being married. The remainder included 5.3 per cent who were cohabiting, 1.2 per cent separated, 0.8 per cent divorced and 0.6 per cent who were widowed. Analysis by national origins showed that the majority (90.4 per cent) of the study respondents originated from Kenya. Other parts of the world were represented as follows: Other East African countries (3.6 per cent), the rest of Africa (3.5 per cent), and the rest of the world (2.5 per cent).

The respondents were spread across five schools as follows: Humanities and Social Sciences (17.4 per cent), Business (21.8 per cent), Science and Technology (11.0 per cent), Education (41.2 per cent) and Health Sciences (8.7 per cent). Of the interviewees, 620 (94.4 per cent) were undergraduate students while the remaining 37 (5.6 per cent) were studying for postgraduate level degrees. The undergraduate students were spread across the first to the fourth (final) years of study. Whereas 6.6 per cent were doing their first year, 8.6 per cent were second years and the rest, 37.7 per cent and 47.1 per cent, were third and fourth years, respectively. The respondents included 86.5 per cent full-time students and 13.5 per cent part-time students; the part-timers included those who attended classes during school holidays (school-based students), open learning students as well as evening and/or Saturday students.

Table 5.1: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage
Below 21 years	94	14.5
21 – 25 years	484	74.5
26 – 30 years	43	6.6
31- 40 years	18	2.8
41 + years	11	1.6
Total	650	100.0

Mainstreaming of Involvement in Governance in Policy Documents, Governance Structures and Practices

The first objective of this study was to determine the extent to which official university policy documents, governance structures and practices mainstream students' involvement in governance and decision-making processes. This was captured through the analysis of university mission and vision statements and the Charters and/ or Acts establishing the various universities, structured interviews administered to 657 students, in-depth interviews with key informants (KIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with selected students.

The analysis of documents produced mixed results. Specifically, the results showed the lack of direct connection between university mission and vision statements and students' involvement in governance. On the other hand, the results revealed that, in principle, students are expected to participate in the governance processes in both public and private universities in Kenya. The Charters and/or Acts establishing and or governing universities have sections specifically focusing on students' involvement in governance. For instance/So to speak, article 16 (1) of the Charter granted to the USIU, the private university focused on by this study, states that:

There shall be a Student Affairs Council of the University which shall consist of all students and other such persons as may be provided by its constitution subject to the approval of the Chancellor and the Board upon recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor.

As for Kenyatta University, the public institution covered by the study, its KU Statutes 2013 and Charter list the institution's students' association as one of the governance structures of the university. The charter even goes further to state that two (2) members elected by the students' association will sit in the University Senate. However, they are not allowed to partake in some discussions. In particular, members of the students' association shall not participate in the deliberation of the senate, which the chairperson considers being confidential or which relates to examinations, grades and such other issues that may pose a conflict of interest.

The survey results for the mainstreaming of students' involvement in governance in institutional strategic/ policy documents and practices are presented in Table 5.2. Overall, the results show that universities recognize students as pertinent members of their governance structures. This was evident from the finding that 69.3 per cent of those interviewed agreed that their university's policy on students' involvement in governance had a constitutional and legal basis; only 18.4 per cent disagreed while 12.3 per cent said they were not aware. However, from the perspective of the interviewees, the practice of mainstreaming students' involvement in institutional strategic/ policy documents and practices may not be as explicit and/ or as widespread as the statements appearing in the charters and in the Acts establishing them would suggest. In this regard, only 54.8 per cent of the combined public-private universities sample interviewed for this study agreed that the statutes governing their university made reference to students' involvement in the governance process; the remainder included 23.3 per cent who disagreed and 21.9 per cent who reported being unaware.

Similarly, 50.5 per cent of students reported that 'student involvement in governance was one of the priority action areas stipulated in their institution's strategic plan, with the rest either disagreeing (27.7 per cent) or not being aware (21.8 per cent). Concerning whether or not students' involvement in the various governance structures and in decision-making was a matter of policy, 46.3 per cent of interviewees replied in the affirmative while 19.4 per cent and 34.3 per cent, respectively, disagreed or indicated that they were not aware. The interviewees were also asked to indicate whether their university has a published policy on students' involvement in governance, with 44.5 per cent agreeing, 23.3 per cent responding negatively and 21.9 per cent saying they were not aware.

Table 5.2: Mainstreaming of Students' Involvement in Governance in Institutional Strategic/ Policy Documents and Practices

	Item	Agree		Disagree		Not Aware		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Strategic/ Policy Documents								
1	My university's policy on student involvement in governance has a constitutional and legal basis.	455	69.3	121	18.4	81	12.3	657	100.0
2	The statutes governing my university make reference to student involvement in the governance process	358	54.8	152	23.3	143	21.9	653	100.0
3	My university's strategic plan has 'student involvement in governance as one of its priority action areas.	326	50.5	179	27.7	141	21.8	646	100.0
4	In my university student involvement in the various governance structures and in decision making is a matter of policy	301	46.3	126	19.4	223	34.3	650	100.0
5	My university has a published policy on student involvement in governance	286	44.5	169	26.3	187	29.1	642	100.0
	Institutional Practices								
6	My university communicates the importance of student involvement in governance to all members of the university community	315	48.8	169	26.1	162	25.1	646	100.0
7	My university makes necessary amendments and revisions of policies on student involvement in governance	309	47.7	164	25.3	175	27.0	648	100.0
8	My university has put in place mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of policies on student involvement in governance	293	45.6	220	34.3	129	20.1	642	100.0
9	My university provides opportunities for public debate of matters affecting student involvement in governance	220	33.9	214	33.0	215	33.1	649	100.0

Data from KIs and FGDs yielded results that were consistent with the views expressed above. In both universities student leaders and management officials indicated that there was no direct connection between the mission and vision statements of the two institutions and students' involvement in governance. This was best captured by the top management official interviewed at the USIU who was categorical that:

Clearly there is no place for governance matters in USIU's vision and mission. Student participation in university governance is not even implied in the institution's mission and vision statements. The USIU vision and mission are really about what the institution wishes to deliver to its stakeholders. The vision expresses what the university wishes to become, *'a premier institution of academic excellence with a global perspective.'* The mission, on the other hand, expresses the pathway the university is to take to achieve its vision. *That is, 'the discovery and application of knowledge, the acquisition of skills and the development of intellect and character in a manner that prepares students to contribute professionally, effectively and ethically as citizens of a changing and increasingly technological world.'*

On the contrary, the KIs and FGDs from both universities confirmed that the universities had mainstreamed students' involvement in governance in important policy documents. And consistent with the findings from document analysis, they revealed that the KU Charter, the KU Statutes 2013 and the KU Students Association (KUSA) constitution as well as the USIU Charter and the USIU Student Affairs Council (SAC) constitution identified students as pertinent members of (some) governance organs. The top management official who served as a KI in USIU was especially emphatic that:

Student participation in governance is mandated within the USIU Charter. The charter recognizes that students are an important stakeholder who must be involved in policy formulation and decision making at the various levels of the university. The top management of the institutions, therefore, have taken the necessary steps to ensure that such participation is not just mainstreamed into USIU's governance structures, policies and practices but is also protected and encouraged among students studying for various degrees.

Results regarding the extent to which universities mainstreamed student involvement in governance in their practices tended to contradict the message conveyed by the second part of the *verbatim* quote presented above that management not only mainstreamed students' participation in institutional practices but also protected that participation as well as encouraged students to be involved. As evident from Table 5.2, the respondents did not rate their universities any better with respect to the mainstreaming of students' involvement in governance in institutional practices. Less than 50 per cent of the respondents agreed with the statements targeting institutional practices. Specifically, only 48.8 per cent confirmed that their university 'communicates the importance of student involvement in governance to all members of the university community'; 21.6 per cent disagreed while 25.1 per cent reported

not being aware. Similarly, 47.7 per cent of the interviewees supported the view that their university 'makes necessary amendments and revisions of policies on student involvement in governance' compared to 25.3 per cent and 27.0 per cent who disagreed or were not aware, respectively. Another practice investigated by the study was whether the university 'has put in place mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of policies on student involvement in governance'. Whereas 45.6 per cent of the interviewees agreed with it, 34.3 per cent disagreed and 20.1 per cent said they were not aware. Asked whether their 'university provides opportunities for public debate of matters affecting student involvement in governance', only 33.9 per cent responded in the affirmative compared to 33.0 per cent who disagreed and 33.1 per cent who reported being unaware.

The patterns emerging above were consistent with the views of student KIs and FGDs who expressed that they were not aware of the existence of specific institutional practices that seriously promoted the inclusion of students in governance processes in their universities. This was underlined by a member of one of the FGDs conducted at USIU who had the following to say:

True, the university does make some feeble attempts to encourage us (students) to participate in the governance of the university. The problem though is that the level of patronage is rather high with management literally sending the message that students cannot be trusted to be the custodians of their own affairs. It appears that management believes that students most of the time need the visible hand of a big brother or big sister for them to be make the right choices. And this is where the management comes in to ensure that students are steered in the right direction, which essentially is management's direction or way.

These sentiments were echoed by a student KI interviewed at Kenyatta University who expressed that while the institution has put in place structures and policies to govern students' participation in governance, the practice itself sends the opposite message. According to him/her, that the university did not practice what it preached was evident from the level of management meddling with students' representation in decision-making, whose ultimate goal was to undermine effective involvement of students in the governance process.

Importance Students Attach to Involvement in University Governance

The second objective of this study was to assess the level of importance students in Kenyan universities attach to their involvement in governance structures and decision-making activities. Overall, results from structured interviews with students showed that they considered students' involvement (inclusion) in various governance structures as well as in varied decision-making activities to be important. With specific reference to involvement in governance structures, the results showed that the bulk of the respondents considered students' involvement in governance structures to be of high importance. Based on Table 5.3, of those

surveyed, 56.0 per cent, 65.2 per cent and 66.8 per cent, respectively, considered students' representation in University Council/ Board of Trustees, Board of Management/Management Council and/or in Senate to be of high importance. Only 17.4 per cent, 12.7 per cent and 12.3 per cent of the respondents, in the same order, opined that students' involvement in the three structures was not important at all. On the other hand, 73.4 per cent, 71.4 per cent, 74.1 per cent and 71.5 per cent of interviewees, correspondingly, felt that students' involvement in all university-wide committees, deans' committee, school-wide committees and all departmental-/ program-wide committees was of high importance. The proportions of respondents who felt that students' involvement in such structures was not important at all were quite low, standing at 9.1 per cent, 10.0 per cent, 8.6 per cent and 10.7 per cent, respectively.

Table 5.3: Importance Attached to Students' Involvement in University Governance and Decision-making

Item	Level of Low Importance						Total		
	Not at All		Low		High				
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Governance Structures									
1	University Council/ Board of Trustees	112	17.4	171	26.6	361	56.0	644	100
2	Board of Management/ Management Council	82	12.7	143	22.1	421	65.2	646	100
3	Senate	80	12.3	136	20.9	434	66.8	650	100
4	All university wide committee	59	9.1	113	17.5	475	73.4	647	100
5	Deans' committee	65	10.0	121	18.6	463	71.4	649	100
6	All faculty-/ School-wide committees	56	8.6	112	17.3	481	74.1	649	100
7	All departmental-/ programs-wide committees	68	10.7	113	17.8	454	71.5	635	100
Decision Making Activities									
1	Formulation of university vision and missions	89	13.7	114	17.5	448	68.8	651	100
2	Strategic planning	78	12.0	131	20.2	441	67.8	650	100
3	Academic planning	69	10.6	87	13.4	494	76.0	650	100
4	Formulation of policies	63	9.7	107	16.4	480	73.9	650	100
5	Admission of new students	126	19.3	143	21.9	383	58.8	652	100
6	Orientation of new students	70	10.8	117	18.0	468	71.2	650	100
7	Curriculum design	85	13.1	128	19.7	436	67.2	649	100
8	Curriculum approvals	70	10.7	134	20.6	448	68.7	652	100
9	Program reviews	66	10.1	128	19.7	458	70.2	652	100

10	Curriculum development	67	10.3	122	18.7	463	71.0	652	100
11	Quality assurance	60	9.2	118	18.2	472	72.6	650	100
12	Student assessment	65	10.0	86	13.2	499	76.8	650	100
13	Student evaluation	70	10.8	86	13.3	492	75.9	648	100
14	Grading policy	92	14.1	67	10.3	492	75.6	651	100
15	Recruitment of faculty and staff	223	34.3	165	25.3	263	40.4	651	100
16	Faculty appraisal and promotions	177	27.3	166	25.6	306	47.1	649	100
17	Dispute resolution	98	15.1	112	17.2	440	67.7	650	100
18	Graduation planning	78	12.0	97	14.9	474	73.1	649	100
19	Disciplinary matters	52	7.9	103	15.8	497	76.3	652	100
20	Student support and advising committees	49	7.5	100	15.4	501	77.1	650	100
21	Procurements	119	18.2	134	20.6	399	61.2	652	100
22	Support services committees (e.g. library, ICT)	58	8.9	110	16.9	481	74.2	649	100
23	Closure and opening of the university	85	13.2	104	16.1	456	70.7	645	100
24	Increment of tuition and other fees	86	13.2	68	10.5	496	76.3	650	100

The respondents were also asked to indicate the level of importance students attached to involvement in various areas of decision-making. In all, 24 areas were analyzed. As evident from Table 5.3, relatively low percentages of those interviewed opined that students' involvement in varied areas of decision-making was not important at all. The overwhelming support for students' involvement in decision-making was evident from the fact that over 50.0 per cent of the interviewees considered students' involvement in all areas of decision-making, save recruitment of faculty and staff (40.4 per cent) and faculty appraisal and promotions (47.1 per cent), to be of high importance. In particular, the results revealed that involvement in the following areas of decision-making was considered to be of high importance by over 70 per cent of those interviewed: academic planning (76.0 per cent), formulation of policies (73.9 per cent), orientation of new students (71.2 per cent), programme reviews (70.2 per cent), curriculum development (71.0 per cent), quality assurance (72.6 per cent), students assessment (76.8 per cent), student evaluation (75.9 per cent), grading policy 75.6 per cent), graduation planning (73.1 per cent), disciplinary matters (76.3 per cent), student support and advising committees (77.1 per cent), support services committees (74.2 per cent), closure and opening of the university (70.7 per cent) and increment of tuition and other fees (76.3 per cent).

The high importance students attached to involvement in governance was also echoed during KI interviews and focus group discussions. A student key informant from Kenyatta University captured the general mood with regard to the subject with the following words:

The core business of universities revolves around us (students). We are the majority stakeholder in the academic business. Therefore, our participation in policy formulation and implementation and in the making of any other decisions that impact on our lives is very important. Where all students cannot participate directly, then they should be involved through their representatives. Of course, if students are to participate effectively through representation, they must elect strong visionary leaders who cannot be intimidated or easily compromised.

The position expressed above was echoed throughout all focus group discussions and key informant interviews conducted with students at both Kenyatta University and the USIU. In a summative sense, the students were unanimous that their involvement in governance was paramount not just because it was a pertinent element in the democratization of university education, but also because it was one way of ensuring that universities fostered and upheld good governance practices.

Table 5.4: Positive Consequences of Students' Participation in Governance (N= 633)

	Consequences	Frequency	Per cent
1	No positive consequences	18	2.8
2	Improved dispute resolution, stability and peace/ reduced student dissatisfaction and incidences of strikes	285	45.0
3	Facilitates better and more effective protection of students' interests and welfare	275	43.4
4	Better learning environment characterized by streamlined programs and improved performance	228	36.0
5	Better cooperation between students and the university management	223	35.2
6	Opportunity for student to input to decision making	188	29.7
7	Nurtures future leaders/ equips students with leadership, decision making and problem solving skills	185	29.2
8	Good governance	166	26.2
9	Faster feedback to students whenever they have concerns/ streamlines communication between management and students	84	13.3
10	Fairness and equity	73	11.5
11	Better understanding of students' problems	53	8.4
12	Promotes feelings of acceptance and a sense of belonging among students	30	4.7
13	Nurtures a positive attitude towards leadership	11	1.7
14	Enables students to understand issues from university management's perspective and vice versa	10	1.6

Note: Do not total to 100%; respondents selected more than one consequence

Table 5.5 presents the results for negative consequences of student involvement in university governance structures and decision-making processes. Whereas 3.1 per cent of respondents did not consider involvement to have any negative outcomes, the leading negative consequence identified by the interviewees was that it ‘grows self-seeking leadership that does not represent students’ interests effectively’; it was listed by 28.8 per cent of those surveyed. This was followed by ‘it is a waste of time: in reality students have no say on most matters that affect them, management does’ (19.5 per cent); ‘burdens students leaders thereby undermining their academic performance’ 18.1 per cent); ‘prolongs and sometimes complicates the decision making process’ (17.1 per cent); ‘introduces unprofessionalism in decision making’ (14.1 per cent); ‘provides students with the opportunity to raise non-academic and other disruptive issues that may interfere with learning’ (13.6 per cent) and ‘increases the opportunity for external political meddling with university programmes and activities’ (11.6 per cent). The remaining seven (7) negative consequences of student participation in university governance were supported by less than 10.0 per cent of the study subjects (see Table 5.5 for details).

Table 5.5: Negative Consequences of Students’ Participation in Governance (N= 645)

Consequences		Frequency	Per cent
1	No negative consequences	20	3.1
2	Grows self-seeking leadership that does not represent students’ interests effectively	187	28.8
3	It is a waste of time: In reality students have no say on most matters that affect them; management does	126	19.5
4	Burdens students leaders thereby undermining their academic performance	117	18.1
5	Prolongs and sometimes complicates the decision making process	110	17.1
6	Introduces unprofessionalism in decision making	91	14.1
7	Provides students with the opportunity to raise non-academic and other disruptive issues that may interfere with learning	88	13.6
8	Increases the opportunity for external political meddling with university programs and activities	75	11.6
9	Student leadership, even the very best, is rarely appreciated by fellow students	52	8.1
10	Places too much power in students’ hands	43	6.7
11	Creates opportunities for corruption	40	6.2
12	Leads to internal rivalry among leaders, e.g. along ethnic and political party lines	30	4.6
13	Increases the opportunity for student-management conflict	23	3.6

14	Victimization of student leadership; e.g., expulsion whenever there is unrest	19	2.9
15	Manipulation of student leadership by management, including intimidation in some cases	15	2.3

Note: Do not total to 100%; respondents advanced more than one consequence

Respondents who opined that students' participation in governance had negative consequences offered a variety of remedies for those consequences. As evident from Table 5.6, the following emerged as the leading four (4) solutions as recommended by interviewees: 'increase level and breadth of student involvement especially in major decision making; e.g., increasing of fees' (35.2 per cent); 'Set clear limits for student power' (30.6 per cent); 'Cultivate and nurture a more proactive student leadership that is always ready to engage with management' (21.6 per cent) and 'Develop policies against external political interference with overall governance , student leadership and university activities' (17.8 per cent). Other solutions supported by at least 10.0 per cent of the respondents were: 'Develop policies against the intimidation of student leaders' (14.9 per cent); 'improve communication especially with respect to university policies' (14.7 per cent); 'Train students on leadership, democratic decision making and governance matter' (13.6 per cent) and 'Establishment of a body to monitor student governance activities' (13.3 per cent). See Table 5.6 for other solutions supported by less than 10.0 per cent of the respondents.

Table 5.6: Remedies for Negative Consequences of Students' Participation in Governance (N= 625)

	Remedies	Frequency	Per cent
1	Increase level and breadth of student involvement especially in major decision making; e.g., increasing of fees	220	35.2
2	Set clear limits for student power	191	30.6
3	Cultivate and nurture a more proactive student leadership that is always ready to engage with management	133	21.3
4	Develop policies against external political interference with overall governance , student leadership and university activities	111	17.8
5	Develop policies against intimidation of student leaders	93	14.9
6	Improve communication especially with respect to university policies	92	14.7
7	Train students on leadership, democratic decision making and governance matters	85	13.6
8	Establishment of a body to monitor student governance activities	83	13.3

9	Reduce workload for student leaders to enable them to balance leadership roles with academic responsibilities	54	8.6
10	Guarantee and protect transparent and fair engagement between student leadership and management	35	5.6
11	Create an environment in which students feel accepted and respected	28	4.5

Extent, Adequacy of and Satisfaction with Involvement in Governance

All universities in Kenya, whether public or private, are characterized by hierarchical governance structures. However, as illustrated below, minor differences in governance structures exist for the two universities analyzed for this study, and by implications for public and private sector universities:

Kenyatta University

University Council
Board of Management
Senate
Student Union/staff Union

United States International University

Board of Trustees
Management Council
Faculty/ Staff/ Students Councils

Despite the above, the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 offers a common framework for the governance and regulation of all universities in Kenya. In this regard, private universities, including the USIU, have already set in motion the process of amending their charters to comply with the recommendations of the Act. This means that it is just a matter of time before uniform governance structures characterize both public and private universities in the country. The Act delineates the internal administrative structure of universities to include a Chancellor, University Council, a Senate, the Vice Chancellor assisted by a number of Deputy Vice Chancellors, Faculty Boards and Departmental Boards (Republic of Kenya 2012).

Through its third objective, this study sought to establish the extent, adequacy and level of satisfaction with students' participation in governance and decision-making processes in Kenyan universities. It is to the presentation of the results that we now turn.

The Extent of Students' Involvement in Governance

As a preamble to the extent of students' participation in governance structures and decision making activities, the study sought views about who respondents considered to be the dominant (key) players in university governance and decision-making processes. In all, respondents were provided with a list of eleven possible players and asked to rank them from the most important to the least import. From Table 5.7 it is evident that the top five decision-makers included Vice Chancellor,

Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, University Councils and University Senate. These were ranked among the top five players by 81.8 per cent, 76.9 per cent, 73.2 per cent, 65.6 per cent and 48.9 per cent of the respondents, respectively. Other players included Registrars, Government/ State, Department/ Programme heads, students' representatives, regular students and faculty. Whereas Registrars were ranked among the top five decision-makers by 48.6 per cent of the respondents, the Government/ State was so ranked by 40.6 per cent of the study subjects. On the other hand, Department/ Programme heads, regular students, students' representatives, and faculty were ranked among the top five players by 37.5 per cent, 34.8 per cent, 29.9 per cent and 27.4 per cent, in that order. It is instructive to note that, going by its rating among the top five major decision-makers, student representatives ranked ninth out of the eleven players presented to the study subjects. Consistent with expectations, faculty and regular students received the least support.

Table 5.7: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Ranking of Major 'Players' in University Decision Making [N = 657]

	'Player'	Ranking										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Vice-Chancellor ¹	47.9	15.1	8.7	7.8	2.3	2.6	3.3	1.7	2.1	3.2	5.3
2	Deputy Vice-chancellors ²	18.6	24.2	16.7	6.7	10.7	5.0	2.9	3.0	4.3	3.5	4.4
3	Deans ³	30.9	6.1	11.3	15.2	9.7	7.2	7.0	4.1	3.5	2.3	2.7
4	University Council ⁴	19.2	12.0	10.0	11.3	13.1	10.2	5.9	7.5	2.6	2.7	5.5
5	University senate ⁵	13.9	7.5	5.5	10.2	11.6	13.2	12.6	9.7	6.7	2.7	6.4
6	Registrars ⁶	13.5	5.2	9.4	7.9	12.6	13.5	11.4	7.9	7.8	4.0	6.7
7	Government/ state ⁷	19.0	3.7	7.2	4.6	6.1	9.1	4.9	9.0	6.8	12.9	16.7
8	Department/ Program Heads ⁸	14.2	3.2	5.8	7.6	6.7	7.2	9.3	11.7	12.9	9.9	11.6
9	Student Representatives ⁹	14.0	6.5	5.6	5.5	3.2	3.8	4.1	3.0	4.7	7.5	42.0
10	Regular Students ¹⁰	12.2	6.1	4.9	3.0	3.7	5.3	7.3	11.1	12.6	23.0	10.8
11	Faculty ¹¹	11.3	3.3	5.2	3.8	3.8	7.6	12.8	14.9	21.2	6.5	9.6

To capture the level of students' involvement in governance, the study focused on the students' overall involvement in governance structures as well as their actual participation in specific areas of decision-making. Concerning the former, the results, as captured in Table 5.8, showed that despite the delineation of students as pertinent members of governance organs by important university policy documents and the high importance students attached to their involvement in the varied governance structures and in decision-making activities (see section 4.2 and 4.3), students' overall participation in governance and decision-making was moderate, sometimes minimal. Based on Table 5.8, only two of the ten items utilized to measure overall involvement were supported by more than 60 per cent of the study subjects. Specifically, 65.8 per cent and 61.1 per cent of

them agreed that their university offered sufficient avenues for university-wide communication for students and that in their university students wielded very strong influence on management decision-making, respectively. Whereas 59.8 per cent of the respondents agreed that students in their university were involved in policy implementation, 57.5 per cent, 56.7 per cent, 56.2 per cent and 52.3 per cent concurred that in their university student involvement in governance was mandatory, students were involved in policy formulation, students had a sufficient role in governance and that students wielded very strong influence on management decision-making, respectively. Less than 50 per cent of the interviewees agreed that their university had effective policies on students' participation in decision-making (49.9 per cent), that in their university students have effective mechanisms for providing input into all decisions (44.2 per cent) and that students in their university had a sufficient voice in university policies, planning and budgeting (42.0 per cent).

Table 5.8: Overall Involvement by Students in University Governance

	Item	Agree		Disagree		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	My university offers sufficient avenues for university-wide communications for students	428	65.8	222	34.2	650	100
2	In my university students constitute valuable sources of information on decision issues	402	61.6	251	38.4	653	100
3	Students in my university are involved in policy implementation	386	59.8	260	40.2	646	100
4	My university considers students participation in governance is mandatory	374	57.5	276	42.5	650	100
5	Students in my university are involved in policy formulation	368	56.7	281	43.3	649	100
6	Students in my university have sufficient role in university governance	364	56.2	284	43.8	648	100
7	In my university students wield very strong influence on management decision making	342	52.3	312	47.7	654	100
8	In my university, policies for student involvement in the decision making process are effective	323	49.9	324	50.1	647	100
9	In my university students have effective mechanisms for providing input into all decisions	287	44.2	363	55.8	650	100
10	Students in my university exercise a sufficient voice in university policies, planning and budget	273	42.0	377	58.0	650	100

The results for the actual level of students' involvement in the various governance structures and areas of decision-making were consistent with those realized for the overall participation. Based on Table 5.9, the study subjects rated student involvement as moderate. Concerning participation in governance structures only 24.7 per cent, 28.5 per cent and 34.5 per cent of the respondents considered student involvement in University Council/ Board of Trustee, Board of Management/ Management Council and Senate, respectively, to be high. Similarly, 37.8 per cent 41.3 per cent, 39.9 per cent and 37.1 per cent returned a verdict of high students' involvement in all university-wide committees, deans' committee, all school-wide committees and in all departmental/ programme-wide committees, in that order.

Concerning student involvement in specific areas of decision-making, Table 5.9 shows that the proportion of respondents who considered students' involvement to be high ranged from 15.2 per cent for recruitment of faculty and staff to 51.0 per cent for the orientation of new students. Of those surveyed, 45.5 per cent, 41.7 per cent, 39.4 per cent and 36.9 per cent considered students' involvement in student support and advising committees, graduation planning, student assessment and student evaluation, respectively, to be high. On the other hand, students' participation in support services committees (e.g. library and ICT), disciplinary matters, quality assurance, closure and opening of university, dispute resolution and academic planning were rated as high by 38.4 per cent, 36.1 per cent, 34.0 per cent, 33.0 per cent, 32.5 per cent, 32.2 per cent of the study subjects, in that order. The rating of students' involvement in all other areas of decision-making was considered as high by less than 30 per cent of the respondents (see Table 5.9 for details).

Table 5.9: Level of Involvement in Governance Structures and Decision-making Activities

Item		Level of Involvement						Total	
		Not at All		Low		High			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Governance Structures									
1	University Council/ Board of Trustees	222	34.5	263	40.8	159	24.7	644	100
2	Board of Management/ Management Council	201	31.1	262	40.4	184	28.5	647	100
3	Senate	168	26.2	252	39.3	221	34.5	641	100
4	All university wide committee	156	24.2	245	38.0	244	37.8	645	100
5	Deans' committee	135	21.1	241	37.6	265	41.3	641	100
6	All School-wide committees	141	22.0	244	38.1	256	39.9	641	100
7	All departmental-/program-wide committees	146	23.4	247	39.5	232	37.1	625	100

Decision Making Activities									
1	Formulation of university vision and missions	267	41.3	201	31.1	178	27.6	646	100
2	Strategic planning	229	35.5	241	37.4	175	27.1	645	100
3	Academic planning	209	32.4	229	35.4	208	32.2	646	100
4	Formulation of policies	221	34.3	242	37.5	182	28.2	645	100
5	Admission of new students	280	43.1	182	28.1	187	28.8	649	100
6	Orientation of new students	126	19.4	193	29.6	332	51.0	651	100
7	Curriculum design	297	45.8	186	28.7	166	25.5	649	100
8	Curriculum approvals	309	47.6	180	27.7	160	24.7	649	100
9	Program reviews	267	41.1	204	31.4	179	27.5	650	100
10	Curriculum development	270	41.7	190	29.4	187	28.9	647	100
11	Quality assurance	240	36.9	189	29.1	221	34.0	650	100
12	Student assessment	210	32.4	183	28.2	255	39.4	648	100
13	Student evaluation	225	34.8	183	28.3	239	36.9	647	100
14	Grading policy	340	52.4	147	22.6	162	25.0	649	100
15	Recruitment of faculty and staff	409	62.7	144	22.1	99	15.2	652	100
16	Faculty appraisal and promotions	374	57.4	146	22.4	132	20.2	652	100
17	Dispute resolution	192	29.5	247	38.0	211	32.5	650	100
18	Graduation planning	189	29.0	191	29.3	272	41.7	652	100
19	Disciplinary matters	199	30.5	218	33.4	235	36.1	652	100
20	Student support and advising committees	143	22.0	211	32.5	296	45.5	650	100
21	Procurements	277	42.9	192	29.7	177	27.4	646	100
22	Support services committees (e.g. library, ICT)	186	28.6	215	33.0	250	38.4	651	100
23	Closure and opening of the university	270	41.9	162	25.1	213	33.0	645	100
24	Increment of tuition and other fees	361	55.8	127	19.6	159	24.6	647	100

Results from KI interviews and FGDs were consistent with those presented above; in both cases it was pointed out that, practically, students in universities played minimal roles in governance in general and only influenced decision-making in a small way. The informants were emphatic that students' involvement in university governance processes in both KU and the USIU was mainly anchored on self-governance organizations, including student government associations/ organizations/ unions and other associations, societies and clubs. These are run by the students guided by a constitution. Whereas the Kenyatta University Students Association (KUSA)

is the umbrella student self-governance organization in KU, the university has a variety of clubs open to students, ranging from professional or discipline-based clubs, theatre groups, religious clubs (e.g. Christian Union – CU, Catholic Students Association, Seventh Day Adventist Students Association etc.). Operating under the coordination of KUSA, clubs and associations have specific mandates; some promote social interaction among members while others engage in community service. In USIU, on the other hand, the Student Affairs Council (SAC) is the lead student self-governance organ. Operating under SAC's coordination though are of 21 student centred discipline-specific, recreational (sports-related) and social welfare clubs. The clubs are central to the students' involvement in the university; they help students to cultivate leadership skills, to be involved in community service and, for discipline-based clubs, to supplement what is learn in class.

According to the KIs and FGDs, it was the constitutions establishing students' organizations, associations and clubs that clearly spelt out students' mandates in leadership and governance processes. For many students, the constitutions were their basic source of knowledge and understanding of their roles and activities with respect to university governance. In particular, the KIs and FGDs singled out KUSA and the SAC as the major organs through which students visibly exercised leadership roles. They pointed out that, in both universities, it is the elected officials of the two organizations who are mandated to represent students in various organs of governance and decision-making. On the contrary, the KIs and FGDs expressed that students' influence on university-wide policy through clubs and associations was minimal, if not completely lacking. This was best captured by one focus group discussant from USIU as follows:

Truth be told, we have all these clubs operating under the SAC at USIU. Their activities though center on students' academic and social interests as opposed to the governance of the university. What the clubs are involvement in has nothing to do with the day to day running of the university as a whole. While decisions made by top management such as those touching on finances may affect the running of the clubs, the decisions made by the clubs have no bearing at all on the governance of the university. Not even the SAC has that much influence on the decision making processes in the university. After all the council does not have direct representation in the main decision making organs of the university.

The situation is compounded by the high levels of apathy towards clubs and associations that pervades both KU and the USIU. Based on KI interviews and FGDs, most students did not belong to clubs. At KU, those who belonged to clubs tended to choose ethnic-based and religious-inclined clubs like the Christian Union.

The results of the survey suggested that the level of students involvement tends to increase at lower (committee) level governance structures. This was consistent with data realized from KIs and FGDs which also showed that, overall, students'

representation was higher at lower levels of university governance structures. However, the situation is direr at the USIU. Let us stress, once again, that while in principle top university governance structures encouraged the involvement of students, the reality was different. SAC officials (or their representatives) do not sit on both the Board of Trustees and the Management Council, the top decision-making organs of the university. Instead, they are represented by proxy, meaning that matters affecting students are articulated on their behalf by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs. The student KIs and FGDs were quite explicit that the top organs of decision-making are characterized by high levels of patronage and worthy decisions hatched by students are taken over by top management and pursued without further consultation with SAC. The situation was best captured in the words of the SAC Vice Chair who opined that:

The students are more on the receiving end. In most cases they are simply told what is best for as well as what is expected of them. Even when those in-charge of students' affairs meet with students in the name of collecting their views to take to top management meetings, they tend to come with preconceived ideas of what is best for the USIU students. One would not be exaggerating to dismiss such meetings as serving a political correctness purpose.

In the light of the foregoing, USIU students only enjoy direct representation in lower-level governance structures; that is, the SAC and other students' associations and clubs as well as in school and programme-level committees. According to the KIs and FGDs, at this level, the students' views are valued because they act as checks and balances for the university. As such, they are listened to and their views are conveyed to management. However, based on the sentiments of some of the student KIs and FGDs, the capacity of the students to influence and/ or shape important decisions remains minimal even at the lower level.

On the contrary, KU students are directly represented in both the higher and lower governance structures and wield greater influence on decision-making. Though excluded from the top internal governance organ, the Board of Management, the KUSA President and Secretary General sit in the University Council whereas two KUSA officials – the President and the Organizing Secretary – sit in the Senate, where they have the responsibility to present students' concerns directly to management and give feedback to the student body. What may cast doubts though is the extent and quality of participation by students' representatives in governance, as reflected through attendance of management meetings, articulation of students' issues, voting power and capacity to influence decisions, contribution of solutions to students' problems and the provision of feedback to their constituents. At the lower level, students' representatives sit in various structures, including school-wide and programme-wide committees. Bears testimony to that is the fact that, students are represented in disciplinary committees, bursary awarding committees, the quality assurance board, and

tuck shop suppliers' oversight committee, among others. They are also directly involved in the setting of semester dates, making decisions about the closure and opening of the university, the recruitment and evaluation of lecturers and in the recruitment of staff in deans' offices, as well as serving as school, departmental and class representatives.

The results from KI interviews and FGDs also suggested that the practice of operationalizing students' involvement in governance as stipulated in charters and/or Acts, Statutes, and constitutions governing students' associations differed across the sectors. For instance, in USIU, representing the private sector, students' involvement is not legally binding. Students operate mainly through the SAC which, unlike students' organizations in public universities, is not registered by the Registrar of Societies. As such, the council is not a legally recognized and binding entity. To quote the top official interviewed at USIU, 'SAC is only recognized within the USIU.' It would not be farfetched to describe the SAC as a tokenism organization whose goal is to make the institution appear to be politically correct with respect to integrating students in its governance process. While students elect their officials to represent their interests in the governance and decision-making process, those officials do not exercise any real power and rather than participate directly in decision-making they do so by proxy by channelling their concerns and contributions to management council through the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs who articulates them on their behalf. On the contrary, the KUSA is a legal and binding entity. It is registered with the Registrar of Societies and, therefore, is recognized beyond Kenyatta University. It can employ the trade union model in championing the welfare of the students. However, it is the level and effectiveness of the organization's representatives in governance that remains a moot issue.

Furthermore, the study revealed an apparent lack of awareness among most students of how they are involved in governance beyond students associations – the KUSA and the SAC – whose officials are voted in office to represent them within the university. To illustrate how deep-seated this problem is, one student in an FGD at KU expressed that s/he was hearing about the KUSA constitution for the first time during the focus group discussions. By way of explaining this state of affairs another FGD participant from KU had the following to say:

Students have many issues, other than governance, preoccupying them including, security, fees, bus fare in the shuttle services (too high need to be reduced), availability of space in the hostels (many buildings are coming up yet accommodation continues to be a major issue in KU) and long queues at the health unit.

Adequacy of Students' Involvement in Governance and Decision-making

The respondents were also asked to rate the adequacy of students' involvement in the governance and decision-making processes utilizing a number of seven select indicators, at is: attendance in meetings, input/ contributions during meetings, representation of student issues, voting power, ability to influence decision-making, capacity to contribute solutions to problems faced by students, and feedback to students. As evident from Table 5.10, the bulk of those interviewed rated students' representation either as lacking at all or inadequate. Only 39.4 per cent, 34.6 per cent, 34.4 per cent and 45.8 per cent of respondents considered student leadership's attendance of meetings, input/ contributions during meetings, representation of students' issues and voting power, respectively, to be adequate. Similarly, 24.7 per cent, 30.1 per cent and 32.2 per cent of interviewees concurred that student representatives' ability to influence decision-making, their capacity to contribute solutions to problems faced by students and the provision of feedback to students, in that order, were adequate.

Table 5.10: Adequacy of Involvement in Governance and Decision-making

Activity	Adequacy of Involvement						Total	
	Not at All		Inadequate		Adequate		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1 Attendance in meetings	86	13.2	309	47.4	257	39.4	652	100
2 Input/ Contribution during meetings	99	15.2	327	50.2	226	34.6	652	100
3 Representation of students' issues	96	14.8	324	49.8	230	34.4	650	100
4 Voting power	81	12.4	272	41.8	298	45.8	651	100
5 Ability to influence decision making	165	25.3	326	50.0	161	24.7	652	100
6 Capacity to contribute to solution student problems	126	19.3	330	50.6	196	30.1	652	100
7 Feedback to students	140	21.5	302	46.3	210	32.2	652	100

The inadequacy of students' involvement in governance and decision-making documented above was supported by qualitative data gathered for the study. Based on FGDs held with KU students, despite student representation at both the upper the lower levels of management, the focus group discussants felt that such representation was not effective. This was evident from the fact that 'issues took too long to be addressed, thereby discouraging students from airing their grievances. At the same time, attendance of meetings (e.g. departmental meetings) and consultative forums among student representatives was very poor, in some cases totally lacking. According to these informants, student leaders were mainly preoccupied with gratifying their personal and management's needs as opposed to being effective representatives of the student body.

In USIU, on the other hand, students were less concerned about the effectiveness of their leaders. The institution is characterized by the lack of student interest in being involved in governance. This was evident through the rampant apathy among regular students that translated in to a lack of enthusiasm about participation in governance and, consequently, to limited or no competition for prospective leadership positions; the students seemed to be attracted by extra-curricular activities and entertainment, rather than by matters touching on their welfare. One of the focus group discussants summed up the situation using the following words:

Students are not interested in the SAC positions because there are no incentives to attract them. Most officials go in unopposed, thereby making the SAC a moribund institution. As a result, in the eyes of many students, SAC Suks!

The rampant apathy among students was also reflected in the fact that, despite the provision for a public *baraza* (forum) once every semester for students to meet with their leaders to air their views on issues affecting them, the meetings tended to be poorly attended. To quote the Vice Chair of SAC, ‘Students don’t turn up, which I think boils down to lack of interest.’ From the perspective of some of the KIs and FGDs, the rampant apathy (or lack of interest) that characterized USIU students could partly be explained in terms of the fear of expulsion from the university due to activism. To quote one KI participant: ‘Most students say “I’m paying (money) for my education and, therefore, I cannot risk being sent away”.’ Another possible explanation of the rampant apathy could be the top-down management style practiced by the institution. However, a top management official interviewed for this study suggested that lack of student interest may be due to the fact that they (students) are contented with the services they receive from the university.

Another measure of adequacy of students’ involvement in decision-making analyzed by this study was the extent of inclusiveness of students’ representation in self-governance and in the overall university governance structures. The study focused on 10 criteria of inclusivity. At the broad level we focus on the existence of a diversity policy and the observance of that policy during elections.

On the other hand, at the more specific level we focused on age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, study programme and year of study representation during elections. The results are presented in Table 5.11. Based on the Table, in principle universities have diverse policies governing student representation in the governance process. Of the interviewees, 64.5 per cent affirmed the existence of such a policy. A comparable proportion (60.8 per cent) of respondents concurred that the election of student representatives to university governance structures catered for the diversity of the student body.

At the more specific level, the study showed that only criteria such as year of study, mode of study, and gender were major considerations in student representation in university-wide governance structures and in student self-governance structures. Of

those interviewed, 57.1 per cent, 53.9 per cent and 53.7 per cent, correspondingly, agreed that these must be observed in such representation. All other factors analyzed were supported by less than 50 per cent of the respondents with the following receiving support from between 40.0 and 49.9 per cent of the interviewees: Age (47.6 per cent), nationality (46.9 per cent), study programme (46.9 per cent) and disability (40.8 per cent).

Results from KI interviews and FGDs showed that KU had formal structures for catering for divergent needs, including gender, disability, and non-traditional students, among other social categories. The KUSA constitution has provision for electing representatives for gender, disability, faith groups (catholic, SDA, protestant), school-based, graduates, hostels (congress man / congress woman), school and class representatives. For instance, students with disabilities are represented in KUSA by the special needs secretary (a position that is voted by all students) and by a nominated member to congress. Whereas KU also has a centre for students with disabilities, such students are given a tuck shop to do business, given hostel accommodation on the ground floor and have access to other services. Similarly, the KUSA board has established positions for both postgraduate and school-based students.

Table 5.11: Extent of Inclusivity of Students' Involvement in University Governance

Area of Influence		Agree		Disagree		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	It is university policy to observe diversity in representation of students in various governance structures	403	64.5	222	35.5	625	100
2	The election of student representatives to university governance structures caters for the diversity of the student body	381	60.8	246	39.2	627	100
3	Year of study must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	356	57.1	278	42.9	624	100
4	Mode of study must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	338	53.9	289	46.1	627	100
5	Gender must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	333	53.7	287	46.3	620	100
6	Age must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	300	47.6	330	52.4	630	100
7	Nationality must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	291	46.9	329	53.1	620	100

8	Study program must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	293	46.9	332	53.1	625	100
9	Disability must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	243	40.8	353	59.2	596	100
10	Ethnicity must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	236	38.0	385	62.0	621	100
11	Sexual orientation must be observed in the representation of students in overall university governance and student self-governance structures	213	35.8	382	64.2	595	100

On the contrary, the USIU does not have specific structures to ensure inclusivity in SAC participation. According to the KI interviews, no gender, age, ethnicity or disability considerations are provided, meaning that no special seats are reserved based on gender, age, disability, special needs or any other social characteristics. However, at the club, association or society level such needs may be accommodated, depending on the mandate of the group. However, the university encourages every student to vie for SAC seats irrespective of nationality, ethnic background, gender, social status etc. This explains why females tend to dominate SAC leadership.

Satisfaction with Involvement in Governance Structures and Decision-making

With respect to satisfaction with students' involvement in governance, only 36.4 per cent (215) of the interviewees expressed overall satisfaction with students' involvement in the same, as compared to the 63.6 per cent who said that they were dissatisfied. To further demonstrate the level of satisfaction or its lack thereof, the study further analyzed different manifestations (or indicators) of students' representation in governance as well as their (students') involvement in different governance structures and decision-making activities. Concerning the former, the results were not that much different from those for overall satisfaction. As evident from Table 5.12, 49.9 per cent were satisfied with student leadership's attendance of meetings, 47.6 per cent with input/contributions during meetings, 45.3 per cent with the representation of students' issues and 56.5 per cent the leadership's voting power. On the other hand, 36.6 per cent expressed their satisfaction with the ability of student representatives to influence decision-making, 40.6 per cent with their capacity to contribute to the solution of problems faced by students and 44.2 per cent said they were satisfied with student representatives provision of feedback to the general student body.

Table 5.12: Satisfaction with Students' Involvement in University Governance Processes

Item		Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Attendance in meetings	324	49.9	325	50.1	649	100
2	Input/ contributions during meetings	309	47.6	340	52.4	649	100
3	Representation of student issues	295	45.3	356	54.7	651	100
4	Voting power	367	56.5	282	43.5	649	100
5	Ability to influence decision making	237	36.6	411	63.4	648	100
6	Capacity to contribute to the solution of problems faced by students	264	40.6	387	59.4	651	100
7	Feedback to students	287	44.2	362	55.8	649	100

The results for the level of satisfaction with students' involvement in different governance structures and in different areas of decision-making are presented in Table 5.13. From the Table, it is evident that, like for both overall satisfaction and satisfaction with different manifestations of involvement, the levels were generally moderate, falling in the 40/50 in percentage. With reference to students' involvement in various governance structures, only 44.4 per cent of the interviewees reported being satisfied with students' participation in the University Council/ Board of Trustees while 45.3 per cent were satisfied with involvement in the Management Council and 50.8 per cent expressed satisfaction with involvement in the Senate. Whereas 48.8 per cent said they were satisfied with participation in all university-wide committees, 52.9 per cent, 52.0 per cent and 53.2 per cent expressed their satisfaction with students' participation in the Deans' committee, all faculty-/ school-wide committees and with all departmental-/ programme-wide committees, respectively. These results mirror those for levels of involvement that tended to suggest that students' participation was higher in lower-level structures.

The findings for satisfaction with involvement in various areas of decision-making were not that much different – again the bulk of them lay between the 40s and 50 per cent bracket. Based on Table 5.13, satisfaction levels ranged from 38.4 per cent for increment of tuition and other fees to 62.5 per cent for 'orientation of new students'. Satisfaction with orientation of new students was followed by satisfaction with participation with graduation planning (57.6 per cent), student support and advising services (55.8 per cent), student evaluation (54.9 per cent), recruitment of new faculty (54.9 per cent), closure and opening of the university (54.5 per cent), admission of new students (54.3 per cent), dispute resolution (54.3 per cent) and faculty appraisals and promotions (54.2 per cent). Other areas of students' involvement in decision-making with which over 50.0 per cent of the respondents expressed satisfaction included disciplinary matter (53.8 per

cent), student assessment (52.6 per cent) and formulation of university vision and mission (51.9 per cent). The proportion of respondents satisfied with students' participation in the remaining 11 of the 24 areas of decision-making focused on by the study stood at less than 50.0 per cent (see Table 5.13 for details).

Table 5.13: Satisfaction with Involvement in Governance Structures and Decision-making Activities

Item		Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Governance Structures							
1	University Council/ Board of trustees	287	44.4	360	55.6	647	100
2	Management Council	292	45.3	353	54.7	645	100
3	Senate	329	50.8	319	49.2	648	100
4	All university wide committee	315	48.8	330	51.2	645	100
5	Deans' committee	343	52.9	305	47.1	648	100
6	All School-wide committees	336	52.0	309	48.0	645	100
7	All departmental-/ programs-wide committees	336	53.2	296	46.8	632	100
Decision-making Activities							
1	Formulation of university vision and missions	334	51.9	309	48.1	643	100
2	Strategic planning	306	47.2	342	52.8	648	100
3	Academic planning	303	46.8	344	53.2	647	100
4	Formulation of academic and other university-wide policies	281	43.4	366	56.6	647	100
5	Admission of new students	352	54.3	296	45.7	648	100
6	Orientation of new students	405	62.5	243	37.5	648	100
7	Curriculum design	318	49.2	329	50.8	647	100
8	Curriculum approvals	316	48.8	331	51.2	647	100
9	Program reviews	308	47.6	339	52.4	647	100
10	Curriculum development	313	48.5	333	51.5	646	100
11	Quality assurance	318	49.0	330	51.0	648	100
12	Student assessment	341	52.6	308	47.4	649	100
13	Student evaluation	357	54.9	293	45.1	650	100
14	Grading policy	278	42.7	372	57.3	650	100
15	Recruitment of faculty and staff	356	54.9	292	45.1	648	100
16	Faculty appraisal and promotions	352	54.2	297	45.8	649	100
17	Dispute resolution	353	54.3	297	45.7	650	100
18	Graduation planning	373	57.6	275	42.4	648	100
19	Disciplinary matters	348	53.8	299	46.2	647	100
20	Student support and advising committees	361	55.8	286	44.2	647	100

21	Procurements	301	46.5	346	53.5	647	100
22	Support services committees (e.g. library, ICT)	343	52.7	307	47.3	650	100
23	Closure and opening of the university	353	54.5	295	45.5	648	100
24	Increment of tuition and other fees	249	38.4	400	61.6	649	100

Results realized from KI interviews and FGDs supported the finding presented above. Overall, both categories of informants felt that students' involvement in the governance of their universities was not effective. According to them, attendance of policy and decision-making meetings by student representatives tended to be characterized by tardiness and even when the representatives attended such meetings, for the most part they served as silent observers rather than as active debaters. The informants also opined that student participants in decision-making meetings appeared not to have the capacity to articulate students' issues. The KI and FGDs from Kenyatta University, where students had direct representation in top organs of decision-making, were especially categorical that their representatives did a shoddy job. As one FGD participant put it:

The colleagues we have elected to represent us especially in top organs of decision making, like the Senate, appear to lose their voices during deliberations. They do not articulate students' issues as expected and their ability to influence decisions is minimal if not totally lacking. Matters are not made any easier by the fact that they have no voting power. More often than not, their inability to input into solutions to problems facing students is heightened by the tendency for management to compromise some of them right from the time of electing them and also to intimidate those who appear to be firm. Are we surprised that the representatives rarely give us any meaningful feedback? The answer is a categorical no!

The situation was not much different at the USIU where students are represented by proxy in the major organs of decision-making, with students only allowed direct representation in lower levels (school, and departmental/ programme levels) of decision-making. Even at the lower levels, the KIs and FGDs felt that their representatives were not assertive enough. Furthermore, most student representatives were habitually absent from key meetings that deliberated on important matters affecting students. In this regard, a student key informant at the USIU had the following to say:

The university allows us to elect representatives to most of the school-wide and program-wide committees. Those we elect though do not appear to understand their roles and responsibilities and tend to take them very lightly. Absenteeism is the norm and even when present, our representatives tend to give up the co-decision rights they are supposed to enjoy. The general trend is one where decisions end up being made with hardly any input from students.

Incentives for Enhancing Students' Involvement in Governance

This study had as its third specific objective to document existing structural and material (reward) incentives utilized by universities to nurture and entrench students' involvement in governance. The results are captured in Table 5.14. Consistent with earlier findings, student self-governance structures, including student government councils/ associations/unions, clubs and associations, emerged as one of the structural incentives relied on by both KU and the USIU, and by implication by public and private universities in Kenya. A total 77.7 per cent of the survey respondents indicated these structures were available either sometimes or often/ always. It will also be remembered that earlier in this study, KIs and FGDs stressed that students' involvement in university governance processes in both KU and the USIU was mainly anchored on self-governance organizations, particularly student government councils/ associations/unions – that is, the Kenyatta University Students Association (KUSA) and Students Affairs Council (SAC) at USIU, respectively. This qualifies such structures to be a key avenue for students' participation in university governance and decision-making. At the realm of clubs, both KU and the USIU boast a wide variety of academic and extra-curricular clubs and societies (e.g., academic discipline, sporting/ recreational and social welfare-related clubs, associations and/or societies).

Self-governance structures perform a number of functions (or mandates) for students. These include representation of students in top organs of governance, moderation of top management and other high-level organs of decision-making, catering for students' welfare, tackling academic concerns (issues), ensuring quality assurance of student programmes and services, participation in the recruitment of faculty and staff and budgeting and finance. Membership to student self-governance organizations as well as to clubs is mainly voluntary. However, for professional/ subject-related (academic) clubs, sporting clubs, national associations, recreational associations and ethnic associations certain predetermined qualities (e.g., area of study, nationality, ethnic background and disability, among others) hold sway. To become an official in most student self-governance structures is contingent upon a number of factors: being popularly (democratically) elected, programme of study (for discipline-specific clubs), ethnic and national background (for ethnic and national associations), in some cases academic standing and disability and minority status (more so in KU). Despite the proliferation of self-governance structures and the important role they play in student representation in governance and decision making, data from KIs and FGDs suggested that the bulk of students were not active members of or showed no interest in such structures. Further, it was the considered opinion of the two categories of respondents that other than student government councils/ associations, clubs, other associations and societies played a peripheral role, if at all, in overall university governance and decision-making.

As evident from Table 5.14, other structural support mechanisms used by universities to grow and entrench students' participation in governance and decision-making that the survey respondents said were available either sometimes or often/always included the following: a special office for coordinating students' involvement in governance (90.0 per cent), formal appeal and complaint structures (88.9 per cent), periodic democratic elections (88.8 per cent), motivational guest speakers (86.3 per cent) and public addresses or symposiums (86.9 per cent). Also making the list of structural incentives were institutionalized channels of communication at all levels (85.7 per cent), retreats (79.9 per cent), office space (85.0 per cent), legal/policy frameworks governing students' involvement in governance (80.5 per cent), leadership training (74.6 per cent), short and long refresher courses (66.5 per cent) and mainstreaming of governance issues in the curriculum and other activities (66.5 per cent). On the other hand, the list of material incentives included free transport (30.9 per cent), monetary allowances (62.5 per cent), tuition waivers (55.5 per cent), free meals (44.5 per cent) and free accommodation (40.6 per cent).

Data from KIs and FGDs supported the existence of varied incentives for motivating student participation in governance and decision-making. The qualitative data also suggested that, in both KU and the USIU, support systems have a major bearing on the level and quality of students' participation in governance among students as a whole and particularly among student leaders. The qualitative data also pointed to the existence of public-private university differences in terms of incentives for enhancing students' involvement in governance. While structural incentives were shown to be common (universal) to the two universities studied, of course in varying qualities and proportions, material incentives – such as free food, free accommodation, sitting allowance, monthly monetary allowances, opportunity for international travel, and a direct budget controlled by the student leadership – were mainly confined to KU. This most probably explains the result that, while student KIs and FGDs from KU expressed satisfaction with the incentives available for promoting students' involvement in governance, their counterparts in USIU were quite dissatisfied with the same. Furthermore, it can be deduced that it is the combination of a wide variety of both structural and material incentives available to KU students that is responsible for the high competition for nomination and election to positions of student leadership that was recorded by this study. On the contrary, the study found that 'it is a job' trying to fill vacant student leadership positions at USIU.

Table 5.14: Incentives for Enhancing Students' Involvement in University Governance

Support Services		Level of Availability						Total	
		Not at all		Sometimes		Often/ Always			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Structural Incentives									
1	Existence of student self-governance structures	144	22.3	198	30.7	303	47.0	645	100
2	Special office to coordinate student involvement in governance	64	10.0	208	32.4	369	57.6	641	100
3	Formal appeal and complaints structures	71	11.1	207	32.2	364	56.7	642	100
4	Periodic democratic elections	108	11.2	218	34.0	352	54.8	642	100
5	Reliance on motivational guest speakers	86	13.7	222	35.2	322	51.1	589	100
6	Public addresses/symposiums	82	13.1	231	36.8	315	50.1	628	100
7	Institutionalized channels of communication at all levels	92	14.3	252	39.3	298	46.4	642	100
8	Retreats	128	20.1	234	36.7	275	43.2	637	100
9	Provision of facilities (e.g. office space)	96	15.0	279	43.6	265	41.4	640	100
10	Legal/ policy frameworks	125	19.5	289	45.1	227	35.4	641	100
11	Leadership training	162	25.4	261	41.0	214	33.6	637	100
12	Short and long refresher courses	213	33.5	224	35.2	199	31.3	636	100
13	Mainstreaming of governance issues in the curriculum and other activities	210	33.2	244	38.5	179	28.3	633	100
Material Incentives/ Rewards									
14	Free transport	209	32.6	234	36.5	198	30.9	641	100
15	Monetary allowances	241	37.5	209	32.5	193	30.0	643	100
16	Tuition waivers	286	44.5	183	28.5	173	27.0	642	100
17	Free meals	356	55.5	145	22.6	141	21.9	642	100
18	Free accommodation	381	59.4	124	19.3	136	21.3	641	100

Note: Do not total to 100%; each respondent identified multiple incentives

Level of Influence of National Politics on Students' Self-governance Processes

The fifth specific objective of this study was to gauge the extent of national political influence on students' governance processes in Kenyan universities today. Overall, the

survey results showed that national politics and political parties wielded tremendous influence on students' self-governance structures and processes. This is particularly so for students' government councils/ associations/ unions. As evident from Table 5.15, overwhelming proportions of the respondents affirmed that all of the 11 possible areas of influence analyzed by the study were greatly impacted on by national politics and political parties. As expected, the influence was stronger on students' campaigns for elections, with 78.7 per cent of the interviewees supporting the existence of such influence sometimes or often/ always. This was followed by actual elections (75.4 per cent), set-up of governance structures (75.2 per cent), the choice of guests invited to students' government activities and functions (75.2 per cent), social activities organized by students' government (73.8 per cent), nomination process for elections (73.4 per cent), clubs/ societies/ associations meetings and activities (73.0 per cent), agenda for public discussion, debates and forums (72.9 per cent) and students' *barazas/ kamukunjis* (72.1 per cent). Other areas of influence identified by the study subjects were formulation of constitutions and other legal frameworks (66.7 per cent) and the representation of students' grievances (66.0 per cent).

Qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions substantiated the trends manifested through the survey results. In particular, both categories of respondents concurred that national politics had trickled down, especially to the public universities, where the agenda and dynamics of student politics coalesced along the lines of the major political parties; with the dominant national political parties – most recently The National Alliance (TNA) party, the United Republican Party (URP) and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) – wielding the greatest influence. As a result, students' electioneering and governance processes tend to reflect the trends in national politics, currently dominated by two political alliances: the Jubilee Alliance and the Coalition for Reform and Democracy (CORD). The situation was best summed up by one of the key informants as follows:

Universities have become another battle ground for our major political parties and political alliances. These not only front the candidates who contest leadership seats but also fund the electioneering process, provide the campaign agenda, influence the outcome of the elections as well as mentor the leadership that is elected. As a result, what happens within student governments tends to be a microcosm (or mirror image) of our national politics.

To illustrate, Kenya held its national elections in March 4, 2013. The elections were hotly contested by CORD and the Jubilee Alliance. Although the final declared results gave the Jubilee Alliance the win, CORD challenged the outcome declaring that the results had been manipulated in favour of their rival contestant. This led to a court drama that culminated with a confirmation of the Jubilee Alliance's victory. This plot was to be replicated during the University of Nairobi students' government elections held in Mid-April 2013. Consistent with the

March 4, 2013 national elections, the contestation was between CORD-allied and Jubilee Alliance-allied students. The outcome also mirrored what happened at the national level with Jubilee Alliance-allied students carrying the day. Like their counterparts in national politics, the CORD-allied students cried foul, declaring that the elections were rigged in favour of Jubilee Alliance-allied contestants.

Table 5.15: Influence of National Politics on Students' Self-Governance Processes

Area of Influence		Level of influence						Total	
		Not at all		Sometimes		Often/ Always			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Campaign for elections	141	22.1	168	26.3	330	51.6	639	100
2	Actual elections	157	24.6	161	25.2	320	50.2	638	100
3	Student barazas/ kamukunjis	178	27.9	178	27.9	281	44.2	637	100
4	Nomination process for elections	169	26.6	186	29.3	280	44.1	635	100
5	Set up of governance structures	158	24.8	205	32.2	274	43.0	637	100
6	Choice of guests invited to student government activities and functions	156	24.8	223	35.4	251	39.8	630	100
7	Social activities	166	26.2	224	35.3	244	38.5	634	100
8	Clubs/ societies/ associations meetings and activities	172	27.0	234	36.7	231	36.3	637	100
9	Agenda for public discussion, debates and fora	171	27.1	234	37.0	227	35.9	632	100
10	Representation of student grievances	216	34.0	222	35.0	197	31.0	635	100
11	Formulation of constitutions and other legal frameworks	213	33.3	257	40.2	169	26.5	639	100

Impediments to Effective Students' Participation in Governance

The final objective of this study was to identify the impediments to effective students' involvement in University governance from the perspective of different stakeholders. The study showed that these were many and varied. Table 5.16 reveals, among the leading impediments to effective students' involvement that of the 24 impediments identified by the survey respondents, the following ranked among the top five: 'Mistrust of student leaders among students leading to apathy' (73.8 per cent), 'lack of adequate recognition of students' role in university governance' (65.7 per cent), 'limited power and authority among student leaders' (62.7 per cent), 'fear of victimization by management among student leaders' (59.0 per cent) and 'lack of transparency and a consultative democratic process in university governance' (54.8 per cent). These were followed by impediments such as 'compromising of students leaders by management' (48.2 per cent), 'lack

of financial, physical and other supportive resources' (43.7 per cent), 'inadequate grievance and appeal structures' (41.1 per cent), 'management's tendency to impose decisions while ignoring students' inputs' (39.4 per cent) and 'lack of leadership capacity among students' (36.5 per cent).

Other impediments to effective students' participation in university governance that were listed by at least 25.0 per cent of the interviewees were as follows: 'intimidation of student leaders by management' (35.6 per cent), 'management's lack of awareness of and/or insensitivity to students' needs' (35.4 per cent), 'poor communication between students' leaders and the general student body' (34.4 per cent), 'inadequate constitutional/legal basis to facilitate student participation in governance' (31.4 per cent), 'representation of individual rather than the group's interests by student leadership' (27.9 per cent), 'poor implementation of students' involvement policies and strategies' (26.7 per cent) and 'external interference especially by politicians and political parties' 26.0 per cent). For other less popular impediments to students' involvement in leadership listed by the study respondents, see Table 5.16.

The qualitative data gathered from key informant interviews and focus group discussions supported the trends identified from the quantitative data. However, the KIs and the FGDs also identified other challenges undermining students' involvement in governance and decision-making processes. Ranking highly in this regard was apathy among students, as manifested through poor attendance of meetings. Indifference to governance process makes it difficult for student leaders to gather issues from different students and give feedback to the students, among others. The KIs and FGDs also singled out the one-year term students in elective offices served as another stumbling block to effective representation. According to them, 'one year is too short to make a difference'. Further, the KIs and FGDs identified the feeling among students that their opinions are not consequential as an additional impediment to student involvement in governance. For instance, , in USIU, it was expressed that student leadership was always on the receiving end of management and had no business investing time in decision-making structures and processes. In the words of the vice Chair of SAC, 'students' leaders are KYMs (*kanda ya mikono*), literally translated to mean manual labourers. Other impediments unique to the KIs and FGDs included:

- Lack of interest in leadership roles among students in general and commitment to leadership among students of student leaders.
- Balancing between academic work and leadership roles: student leaders often find it hard to attain such a balance.
- Lack of true democracy: despite the mainstreaming of students' involvement in governance in important university policy documents, students enjoy dwindling freedom to assemble and to voice their concerns. In KU, for example, some students lamented that 'kamukunjis (student open forums) do not exist anymore. If caught holding one you are expelled.'

- Constitutional rigidity: in KU example, FGDs indicated that the KUSA constitution was very rigid and tended to alienate the students. According to them, the university uses the constitution to kill student motivation for involvement in governance matters.

The results from KIs and FGDs suggested that some of the impediments to effective students' participation in governance were specific to either KU or the USIU; signifying some public-private sector differences. In particular, the challenge of a large student population that made it impossible to mobilize and represent everyone's needs was unique to KU. Closely related to this was the large diversity of students' views and needs, which rendered it difficult to harmonize and represent them effectively. In addition, political meddling is especially rife in public universities, in this case KU. Based on the KIs and the FGDs, although politicians are only involved when invited as speakers, some sponsor the students' campaigns as evidenced by the expensive posters that students make. Some of the aspirants meet with politicians in town. Earlier (see section 5.6), some of the KIs and FGDs were captured lamenting about trickling down of national politics to the especially public universities where the agenda and dynamics of student politics coalesced along the lines of the major political parties: which contrasts with the situation at USIU where political meddling with students electioneering activities is minimal, if not totally non-existent, because it is against the SAC constitution.

Table 5.16: Impediments to Effective Students' Participation in Governance (N= 630)

	Impediments	Frequency	Per cent
1	Mistrust of student leaders among students	465	73.8
2	Lack of adequate recognition of students' role in university governance	414	65.7
3	Limited power and authority among student leaders	395	62.7
4	Fear of victimization by management among student leaders	372	59.0
5	Lack of transparency and a consultative democratic process in university governance	345	54.8
6	The tendency for student leaders to be compromised by management	304	48.2
7	Lack of financial, physical and other supportive resources	275	43.7
8	Inadequate grievance and appeal structures	261	41.4
9	Management's tendency to impose decisions while ignoring students' inputs	248	39.4
10	Lack of leadership capacity among students	230	36.5
11	Intimidation of student leaders by management	224	35.6

12	Management's lack of awareness of and/or insensitivity to students' needs	223	35.4
13	Poor communication between students leaders and the general student body	217	34.4
14	Inadequate constitutional/legal basis for to facilitate student participation in governance	198	31.4
15	Representation of individual rather than the group's interests by student leadership	176	27.9
16	Poor implementation of students' involvement policies and strategies	168	26.7
17	External interference especially by politicians and political parties, often leading to the balkanization of student bodies into parallel camps	164	26.0
18	Excessive bureaucracy	157	24.9
19	Inadequate feedback mechanisms to student leaders	156	24.8
20	Internal manipulation of student leadership by management	147	23.3
21	Lack of adequate information about the importance of student participation in university governance	114	18.1
22	Poor enforcement of students' involvement policies and strategies	104	16.5
23	Failure by university to honor most agreements reached with students	82	13.0
24	Lack of regular amendments/ revision of policies governing students involvement in governance to make them current	68	10.8

Note: Do not total to 100%; each respondent selected multiple impediments

Similarly, in USIU despite the Charter elucidating that students should be involved in governance, one of the major impediments to their active participation is that SAC is not registered with the Registrar of Societies and therefore lacks (legal) recognition beyond the university. This is unlike KUSA, and other public sector university students' governance organizations/ unions or associations which, being registered entities, operate like trade unions and, hence, have the capacity to aggressively champion students' interests and welfare. Another impediment to effective participation that applies only to USIU is the lack of direct student representation in all top structures of governance and decision-making, i.e., the Board of Trustees and the Management Council. As pointed out earlier, unlike their KU counterparts whose representatives sit in the University Council and the Senate, students at USIU have no direct representation in any of the two top governance structures. Another challenge affecting students' involvement in governance in USIU was inadequate support systems (or incentives). In particular, the data showed that USIU lacked especially material rewards for motivating students to take on leadership positions and to play the roles associated with them with commitment and zeal.

The survey respondents proffered a variety of remedies for overcoming the impediments to effective student participation in university management. As evident from Table 5.17, in all, 12 remedies were tendered. Topping the list was recommendation to ‘nurture and entrench a culture of student involvement in governance and decision making’; it was offered by 65.1 per cent of the study subjects. This was followed by suggestions to ‘improve management communication of policies and other issues affecting students’ (49.0 per cent), ‘reward student leaders who have excelled in their duties to nurture greater interest in leadership among students’ (39.8 per cent), ‘create external structures for students to appeal management decisions’ (37.5 per cent) and ‘guard against manipulation and intimidation of student leadership by university managements’ (37.4 per cent). Completing the list of top 10 remedies were the following: ‘greater autonomy, respect for and recognition of student leadership organizations’ (34.0 per cent), ‘reduce bureaucracy where necessary to improve efficiency’ (32.7 per cent), ‘greater management honesty, openness, transparency and receptivity when dealing with student leaders’ (32.4 per cent), ‘increase university physical and financial support to student leadership bodies’ (31.7 per cent) and ‘organize frequent training sessions for student leadership’ (30.9 per cent). The remaining two remedies were supported by at least 20.0 per cent of the respondents (see Table 5.17 for details).

Table 5.17: Overcoming Challenges to Effective Students’ Involvement in Governance (N= 621)

	Remedies	Frequency	Per cent
1	Nurture and entrench a culture of student involvement in governance and decision making	404	65.1
2	Improve management communication of policies and other issues affecting students	304	49.0
3	Reward student leaders who have excelled in their duties to nurture greater interest in leadership among students	247	39.8
4	Create external structures for students to appeal management decisions	233	37.5
5	Guard against manipulation and intimidation of student leadership by university managements	232	37.4
6	Greater autonomy, respect for and recognition of student leadership organizations	211	34.0
7	Reduce bureaucracy where necessary to improve efficiency	203	32.7
8	Greater management honesty, openness, transparency and receptivity when dealing with student leaders	201	32.4

9	Increase university physical and financial support to student leadership bodies	197	31.7
10	Organize frequent training sessions for student leadership	192	30.9
11	More effective implementation of policy decisions emanating from student-management cooperation	171	27.5
12	Educate students, especially freshmen, on the importance and relevance of student involvement in governance	126	20.3

Note: Do not total to 100%; each respondent provided multiple solutions

Testing for Cross-University Differences

Given its focus on both the public and the private sectors of University education in Kenya, this study considered it prudent to assess the following: cross-sector differences in policies and practices on students' involvement in governance; opportunity for and level of student involvement in governance; importance attached to, adequacy of and satisfaction with involvement in governance; support services for enhancing student involvement in governance and for differences in external political influence. In this regard, further analyses were carried out using the Chi square (χ^2) as the test statistic. In all cases the assessment of significance utilized a 2-tailed test. Table 5.18 summarizes the significant cross-university (or cross-sector) variations obtained from the cross-tabulation analyses. The detailed results are presented in Appendix II, Tables A21 to A29.

Policies and Practices on Students' Involvement in Governance

The examination of cross-university differences in policies and practices focused on five strategic/policy documents and four institutional practices (see Table 5.2). The aim was to establish the extent to which the KU students differed from their USIU counterparts in terms of the extent to which they felt that strategic/policy documents and institutional practices mainstreamed students' involvement in governance. As evident from Table 5.18, significant differences were noted in four of the five policies and in all four of the practices analysed. Specifically, relative to their USIU counterparts, KU students were found to be more agreeable that their university's policy on students' involvement in governance had a legal basis; their university's strategic plan had students' involvement in governance as one of its priority areas of action; in their university students involvement in governance structures and decision-making was a matter of policy; and that, their university had a published policy on students' involvement in governance. On the contrary, USIU students were more likely to disagree with and/or not to be aware of their institution's mainstreaming of students' participation in governance in strategic/policy documents.

The regarding practices were not different from those about policies. The said results showed that, relative to their USIU counterparts, KU students were more likely to support the views that their university communicated the importance of students' involvement in governance to all members of the university community; made the necessary amendments and revisions to policies on students' involvement in governance; had put in place mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of policies on students' involvement in governance; and that, the university provided opportunities for public debate/ discussion of matters affecting students' participation in the institution's governance process.

Table 5.18: Significant Cross-University Differences in Policies, Practices and Students' Involvement in Decision-making

Policy/ Practice/ Activity	χ^2 Value	d.f.	p-value
Policies and Practices on Students' Involvement in Governance			
My university's policy on student involvement in governance has a constitutional and legal basis.	27.197	2	.000
My university's strategic plan has 'student involvement in governance as one of its priority action areas.	8.637	2	.013
In my university student involvement in the various governance structures and in decision making is a matter of policy	25.936	2	.000
My university has a published policy on student involvement in governance	8.083	2	.018
My university communicates the importance of student involvement in governance to all members of the university community	7.092	2	.029
My university makes necessary amendments and revisions of policies on student involvement in governance	5.971	2	.050
My university has put in place mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of policies on student involvement in governance	22.913	2	.000
My university provides opportunities for public debate of matters affecting student involvement in governance	12.408	2	.002
Opportunity for Involvement in Governance and Decision-making			
My university offers sufficient avenues for university-wide communications for students	12.978	3	.005
Students in my university are involved in policy formulation	21.941	3	.000
Level of Students' Involvement in Governance Structures and Decision-making			
Orientation of new students	33.638	3	.000

Student assessment	10.364	3	.016
Faculty appraisal and promotions	15.430	3	.001
Graduation planning	29.636	3	.000
Student support and advising committees	9.491	3	.023
Support services committees (e.g. library, ICT)	19.262	3	.000
Importance Attached to Involvement in Governance Structures and in Decision-making			
Governance Structures			
Senate	7.823	3	.050
All departmental-/ program-wide committees	7.872	3	.049
Decision Making Activities			
Formulation of university vision and missions	11.503	3	.009
Strategic planning	12.690	3	.005
Academic planning	15.033	3	.002
Orientation of new students	8.462	3	.037
Curriculum development	11.171	3	.011
Recruitment of faculty and staff	11.785	3	.008
Faculty appraisal and promotions	9.430	3	.024
Dispute resolution	13.228	3	.004
Disciplinary matters	10.947	3	.012
Student support and advising committees	10.042	3	.018
Closure and opening of the university	14.530	3	.002
Adequacy of Student Involvement in Decision Making Activities			
Input /contributions during meetings	13.094	2	.001
Representation of student issues	9.788	2	.007
Satisfaction with Participation in Decision-making			
Governance Structures			
University Council/ Board of trustees	12.413	3	.006
Senate	8.667	3	.034
All departmental-/ program-wide committees	8.196	3	.042
Decision Making Activities			
Admission of new students	7.896	3	.048
Orientation of new students	9.018	3	.029
Graduation planning	20.882	3	.000
Disciplinary matters	9.555	3	.023
Student support and advising committees	11.766	3	.008
Procurements	9.966	3	.019
Support services committees (e.g. library, ICT)	23.431	3	.000
Closure and opening of the university	13.932	3	.003

Support Services for Enhancing Students' Involvement in Governance			
Special office to coordinate student involvement in governance	13.404	3	.004
Periodic democratic elections	11.331	3	.010
Institutionalized channels of communication at all levels	12.555	3	.006
Existence of student self-governance structures; i.e. clubs and associations	74.548	3	.000
Tuition waivers	40.026	3	.000
Free meals	18.390	3	.000
Free transport	14.123	3	.003
Leadership training	19.362	3	.000
Public addresses/symposiums	8.669	3	.034
Invited guest speakers	12.205	3	.007
External Political Influence			
Clubs/societies/associations meetings and activities	8.087	3	.044
Nomination process for elections	25.937	3	.000
Campaign for elections	41.771	3	.000
Actual elections	27.525	3	.000
Set up of governance structure	25.195	3	.000
Student barazas/kamukunjis	19.746	3	.000
Agenda for public discussion, debates and for a	14.399	3	.002
Social activities	8.423	3	.038
Personal matters	9.859	3	.020

The above results mirror the earlier finding that USIU students are mainly represented in governance through proxy whereas at KU there is a strong element of direct representation of students in the university's governance structures. They are also consistent with the high levels of student apathy to the governance process identified at the USIU. As a matter of fact, that apathy it is which is, most probably responsible for the high proportions of USIU students who either disagreed or were not aware of the existence of policies and practices in their university that mainstreamed students' involvement in governance structures and processes.

Opportunity for and Level of Students' Involvement in Governance

Chi-square tests were also conducted to assess for cross-university differences in opportunities for students' participation in governance and decision-making as well as in the actual involvement in governance structures and decision-making. In all 10 opportunities, seven governance structures and 24 decision-making activities were analysed. The results revealed significant differences only in two of

the 10 opportunities focused on. That is, relative to KU students, USIU students were shown to be more likely to agree with the view that their university offered sufficient avenues for university-wide communication for students. This finding is consistent with the fact that the university operates based on an open-door policy that allows students to file their grievances with any office. On the contrary, KU students were found to be more likely to be involved in policy formulation compared to their USIU counterparts. As pointed out earlier, this is a reflection of the more direct representation of KU students in the governance structures of their university.

Concerning students' actual involvement in governance structures and in decision-making activities at the various levels of governance, the chi-square tests did not reveal the existence of cross-university differences in students' involvement in the seven governance structures spotlighted. However, differences were observed in six of the 24 decision-making activities analysed. In particular, USIU students were shown to be more likely to participate in decision making related to the following: orientation of new students, student assessment, faculty appraisals and promotions, graduation planning, student support and advising and support services (e.g. library and ICT). A closer look at these areas of decision-making reveals that they are at the lower echelons of the governance structure of the university; in other words, they are lower level decision-making activities. As such, the results support the earlier findings that USIU students enjoy proxy representation at the upper tier of governance and decision-making but are directly represented at the lower levels (that is, school and departmental/ programme levels) of decision-making.

Importance Attached to Students' Involvement in Governance and Decision-making

The analysis of the "importance" criteria spanned both the governance structures and specific decision-making areas focused on by this study. In all, seven structures and 24 areas of decision-making were analyzed. The results revealed cross-university differences in two structures and 11 areas of decision-making (see Table 5.18). In terms of structures, KU students were shown to attach greater importance to students' participation in the Senate, relative to their USIU counterparts. On the contrary, USIU students appeared to attach more importance to their involvement in all departmental/ programme-wide committees. These findings echo those documented earlier that whereas KU students have direct representation in upper structures of governance and decision-making, USIU students only enjoy direct representation at the lower levels of governance and decision-making.

Concerning the importance attached to students' participation in specific decision-making areas, the chi-square analysis revealed that KU students were more likely to attach great importance to involvement in formulation of the

university vision and missions, strategic planning, curriculum development, dispute resolution, disciplinary matters and closure and opening of the university, a compared to USIU students. A closer look at these findings suggests that most of the decision-making ambits concerned touch on the upper echelons of the university's governance structures. With specific reference to dispute resolution, disciplinary matters and closure and opening of the university, it could also be argued that the importance KU students attach to them is a manifestation of the reliance of a union model of students' self-governance, the ever-recurring conflict between students and management and the consequent closures of the university, respectively. On the other hand, USIU students were found to attach greater importance than KU students to students' participation in academic planning, orientation of new students, recruitment of faculty and staff, faculty appraisals and promotions and student support and advising committees. Again, as underlined earlier, these are all lower-level areas of decision-making in which USIU students enjoy direct representation.

Adequacy of and Satisfaction with Students' Involvement in Governance

Differences in the adequacy of students' involvement in decision-making was measured utilizing seven items as follows: attendance in meetings, input / contributions during meetings, representation of student issues, voting power, ability to influence decision-making, capacity to contribute to the solution of problems faced by students and feedback to students. Cross-university differences were observed only in input/ contributions during meetings and representation of students' issues. Specifically, USIU students were found to consider their leadership representation in these two areas to be adequate relative to their KU equivalents. Otherwise, just like their KU counterparts, they did not evaluate their leadership's attendance in meetings, voting power, ability to influence decision-making, capacity to contribute to the solution of problems faced by students and feedback to students to be adequate.

The level of satisfaction with students' involvement in governance and decisions making was examined at two realms; at the overall (global) realm and the realm of students' involvement in specific structures and decision-making ambits. At the global level, the results showed that KU and USIU students were equally dissatisfied with the overall students' involvement in the governance of their university, χ^2 Value = 5.885; d.f. = 3; P-value = .117. Whereas 63.7 per cent of KU students expressed dissatisfaction with the level of students' involvement in governance, 61.7 per cent of their USIU counterparts did the same.

With respect to cross-university differences in the level of satisfaction with students' participation in specific governance structures and areas of decision-making, the chi-square analysis revealed significant differences in three of the seven governance structures and in eight of the 24 areas of decision-making analyzed.

At the level of governance structures, it was found that USIU students were more likely to express satisfaction with students' involvement in the University Council/ Board of Trustees, the Senate and in all departmental-/ programme-wide committees, as compared to their KU counterparts. Concerning the University Council and the Senate, the findings are rather baffling since students at USIU do not enjoy direct representation in the two bodies. However, they could also manifest a pass of confidence in the proxy participation that they enjoy. Results for participation in specific areas of decision-making showed that, relative to KU students, USIU students were more likely to be satisfied with students' involvement in the following areas: all departmental/ programme-wide committees, admission of new students, orientation of new students, graduation planning, disciplinary matters, student support and advising committees, procurements, support services committees and closure and opening of the university. Once again, the bulk of these are lower-level areas of decision-making in which USIU students enjoy direct representation.

Support Services for Enhancing Students' Involvement in Governance

The study also assessed for cross-university differences in support services available for the enhancement of students' involvement in governance and decision-making. Differences were examined for a total of 18 support services. As evident from Table 5.18, significant differences were obtained in 10 of the 18 support services analysed. Specifically, the study found that, relative to KU, USIU was more likely to rely on the following support services by way of motivating students to get involved in governance and decision-making: provision of offices and persons responsible to coordinate students involvement, periodic democratic elections, institutionalized channels of communication at all levels, students' self-governance structures, tuition waivers, free meals, leadership training, and invited guest speakers. The finding about periodic democratic elections and institutionalized channels of communication at all levels, may be interpreted within the context of the rampant management meddling with students' elections in public universities and the existence of an open-door policy at USIU, respectively. On the contrary, it was revealed that KU was more likely to rely on free transport and public addresses or symposia to increase students' interest in governance and decision-making.

External Political Influence

The final area of cross-university differences analyzed by the study was external political influence. As evident from Table 5.18, significant differences were acknowledged in nine of 12 areas of possible external political meddling as follows: Clubs/ societies/ associations' meetings and activities; nomination process

for students' elections; campaign for elections; set-up of governance structures; student *kamukunjis/ barazas*; agenda for public discussion; debates and forums; social activities and personal matters. In all cases, the results showed that external political meddling was more likely to occur at KU in comparison to the situation at USIU. The findings support the view advanced earlier in this study that being a private university, USIU is more insulated from external political interference. As a result, the students are less politicized and mainly concentrate on completing their studies.

Notes

1. Ranked among top five by 81.8 per cent of respondents.
2. Ranked among top five 76.9 per cent of respondents.
3. Ranked among top five 73.2 per cent of respondents.
4. Ranked among top five 65.6 per cent of respondents.
5. Ranked among top five 48.7 per cent of respondents.
6. Ranked among top five 48.6 per cent of respondents.
7. Ranked among top five 40.6 per cent of respondents.
8. Ranked among top five 37.5 per cent of respondents.
9. Ranked among top five 34.8 per cent of respondents.
10. Ranked among top five 29.9 per cent of respondents
11. Ranked among top five 27.4 per cent of respondents

