Summary, Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

The overall aim of this study was to investigate the subject of students' involvement in the democratic governance of universities in Kenya. Specifically, the study aimed to: a) identify the extent to which students' participation in governance and decision-making processes are mainstreamed in important university policy documents and in governance structures and practices; b) assess the importance students attach to their involvement in governance and decision-making processes; and; c) establish the extent, adequacy and level of satisfaction with students' participation in governance and decision-making processes. In addition, the study sought to: d) document existing structural and material (rewards) incentives used by universities to nurture and entrench students' involvement in university governance and decision-making; e) gauge the extent of national political influence on student self-governance processes and to identify the impediments to effective students' involvement in university governance, from the perspective of different stakeholders. This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, discusses them and presents the key conclusions drawn from them and recommendations offered.

Summary of Findings

Three categories of respondents contributed to this study. The first, made up of 657 students distributed as follows: 456 from Kenyatta University (KU) and 201 from the United States International University, Africa (USIU) –A, and who comprised the primary sample. These included 46.2 per cent (304) males and 53.8 per cent (353) females. They ranged in age from under 21 years to those aged 51 and above and were spread across four schools as follows: Education (44.3 per cent), Business (25.1 per cent), Humanities and Social Sciences (19.8 per cent) and Science and Technology (10.8 per cent). Whereas 94.4 per cent of

them were undergraduate students, the remaining 5.6 per cent were postgraduate students. The majority of the primary respondents (90.4 per cent) were Kenyan nationals; the rest originated from 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). Data from the primary sample were supplemented with interviews conducted with four key informants (KIs) – two top management officials and two student leaders – spread evenly across the institutions covered by the study and from 27 student focus group discussants divided into four discussion groups, again spread evenly across the two universities. Whereas the KIs included three males and one female, the focus group discussants comprised 14 males and 13 females. The summary of findings in relation to the study objectives is presented below.

Mainstreaming of Involvement in Policy Documents, Governance Structures and Practices

To capture the mainstreaming of students' involvement in official university policy documents, governance structures and practices and in decision-making processes, the study analyzed the contents of university mission and vision statements, Charters and/ or Acts and student government constitutions; administered structured interviews to 657 students; conducted in-depth interviews with four KIs and held four focus group discussions with selected students. The results showed that, in principle, students were expected to participate in university governance. Whereas there was no direct connection between university mission and vision statements and students involvement in governance in the two institutions, 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. However, in practice, the situation varied from institution to institution. Whereas student representatives at KU sat directly in the Council and the Senate but were excluded from the Board of Management (the main internal governance structure), their counterparts at USIU were excluded from the Board of Trustees and only represented by proxy in the Management Council, the top internal decision-making organ.

Consistent with the overall picture obtained from the analysis of documents, the survey results showed that universities recognize students as pertinent members of their governance structures. Of the 657 respondents 69.3 per cent agreed that their university's policy on students' involvement in governance had a constitutional and legal basis. The respondents, nevertheless, pointed out that 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. To illustrate, only 54.8 per cent of the respondents agreed that the statutes governing their university made reference to students' involvement in the governance process and 46.3 per

cent felt that, in their university, students' involvement in the various governance structures and in decision-making was a matter of policy. These sentiments were corroborated by the data from KIs and FGDs which confirmed that both universities had mainstreamed students' involvement in governance in important policy documents, especially those listed above.

The results for the mainstreaming of students' involvement in governance in institutional practices presented a moderate picture, with less than 50 per cent of the survey respondents agreeing with any of the statements used to capture it. To illustrate, only 48.8 per cent confirmed that their university 'communicates the importance of students' involvement in governance to all members of the university community, 47.7 per cent supported the view that their university 'makes necessary amendments and revisions of policies on students' involvement in governance' and 45.6 per cent agreed that their university 'has put in place mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of policies on student involvement in governance', among others. These patterns were consistent with the views of student KIs and FGDs according to whom they were not aware of the existence of specific institutional practices that seriously promoted the inclusion of students in governance processes in their universities.

Importance Students Attach to Involvement

On the whole, the results of the structured interviews showed that students attached high importance to their inclusion in various governance structures and in varied decision-making activities. With reference to governance structures, 56.0 per cent, 65.2 per cent and 66.8 per cent, respectively, considered student representation in the University Council/ Board of Trustees, Board of Management/Management Council and/or in Senate to be of high importance. Turning to lower level structures, 73.4 per cent, 71.4 per cent, 74.1 per cent and 71.5 per cent of interviewees, correspondingly, felt that involvement in all university-wide committees, deans' committees, school-wide committees and all departmental-/ program-wide committees was of high importance. Similar trends were observed for decision-making activities, with relatively low percentages of the respondents feeling that student involvement was not important at all. Out of the 24 areas of decision-making analyzed, students' involvement in 21 of them was considered to be of high importance by over 60 per cent of the respondents. Only in the two areas of recruitment of faculty and staff and faculty appraisal and promotions did the proportion of students who considered involvement in them to be of high importance stand at less than 50 per cent.

The primary respondents considered the benefits of students' participation in governance and decision-making to outweigh the negative consequences; only 2.8 per cent considered involvement not to have positive consequences. The top three positive consequences of participation as identified by the study

subjects included: 'improved dispute resolution, stability and peace/ reduced student dissatisfaction and incidences of strikes'; facilitates better and more effective protection of students' interests and facilitates better and more effective protection of students' interests and welfare'. The top three negative consequences of involvement identified by the study subjects included that it: 'grows self-seeking leadership that does not represent students' interests effectively'; 'it is a waste of time: in reality students have no say on most matters that affect them, management does'; and it 'burdens students' leaders thereby undermining their academic performance'. In every case, the proportion of students supporting each consequence fell below the 30 per cent mark. The respondents offered a variety of remedies for the negative consequences of students' involvement in governance and decision-making. The top four of them included: 'increase level and breadth of student involvement especially in major decision making'; 'set clear limits for student power'; 'cultivate and nurture a more proactive student leadership that is always ready to engage with management' and 'develop policies against external political interference with overall governance, student leadership and university activities'.

Extent and Adequacy of and Satisfaction with Involvement

Asked to identify the top five decision-makers in Kenyan universities, the primary respondents listed the following: Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, University Councils and University Senate. Out of a list of 11 decision-makers, students' representatives were 9th, regular students 10th and faculty 11th. With specific reference to the extent of overall involvement in governance structures and decision-making activities, the results showed that it ranged from moderate to minimal. This was 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 various governances structures and in decision-making activities. Only two of the ten items utilized to measure overall involvement were supported by more than 60 per cent of the study subjects. Similar results were obtained for the actual level of students' involvement in the various governance structures and areas of decision-making.

The results from KIs and FGDs were not different; they showed that students in universities played minimal roles in governance in general and only influenced decision-making in a small way. The situation is direr at the USIU, where students do not sit on neither the Board of Trustees nor the Management Council, the top decision=making organs of the university. The informants reported that students' involvement in university governance processes in both KU and the USIU occurred mainly through self-governance organizations, especially students' government associations/ organizations/ unions, in this case the KUSA and SAC. In both universities, elected officials of the two organizations are mandated to represent

students in various organs of governance and decision-making. The minimal participation of students in governance and decision-making is compounded by the high levels of apathy towards students' government organizations, clubs and associations that pervades universities. However, it was evident from the survey, as well as KIs and FGDs results that the level of students' involvement tends to increase at lower (committee) level governance structures.

The ratings for the adequacy of students' involvement in the governance and decision-making processes supported the minimal involvement of students realized by this study. Utilizing seven indicators of involvement – that 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 – the bulk of the primary respondents rated students' representation ether as lacking or inadequate. These results were echoed by the KIs and the FGDs; in both universities which felt that, despite student representation at both the upper and lower levels of management, such representation was not effective. Concerning inclusivity, the study found that only KU had formal structures for catering for divergent needs, including gender, disability, and non-traditional students, among other social categories.

The results for satisfaction with students' participation in governance and decision-making revealed low levels of the same. Only 36.4 per cent of the primary interviewees expressed overall satisfaction compared to 63.6 per cent who reported being dissatisfied. The results for the analysis of different manifestations (or indicators) of student representation in governance and their involvement in different governance structures and decision-making activities were not that much different. Nevertheless, consistent with the outcome that students' involvement seemed to intensify as one descended to lower levels and structures of decision-making, the level of satisfaction tended to improve with lower-level decision-making activities.

Structural and Material Incentives for Nurturing Students' Involvement

The study documented the existence of a raft of structural and material incentives utilized by universities to nurture and entrench students' involvement in governance. These included student self-governance structures, especially students government councils/ associations/unions, clubs and associations. However, it was felt that these played a peripheral role, if at all, in overall university governance and decision-making. Other structural incentives included a special office for coordinating students' involvement in governance, formal appeal and complaint structures, periodic democratic elections, motivational guest speakers, public addresses or symposia, institutionalized channels of communication at all levels, retreats, leadership training and office space, among others. At the tail end were

material incentives, such as free transport, monetary allowances, tuition waivers, free meals and free accommodation.

Results for KIs and FGDS supported the existence of varied incentives for motivating students' participation in governance and decision-making. The data also pointed to the existence of KU-USIU differences, with the outcome that structural incentives were common (universal) to the two universities studied whereas material incentives were mainly confined to KU. Also, 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. The informants suggested that the combination of a wide variety of both structural and material incentives available to KU students was responsible for the high competition for nomination and election to positions of student leadership while the lack of the same, especially reward incentives may be responsible for the apathy characteristic of the USIU.

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

Results of the survey showed that, overall, national politics and political parties wielded tremendous influence on students' self-governance structures and processes, working especially through students' government councils/ associations/ unions. All of the 11 possible areas of influence analyzed by the study were greatly impacted on by national politics and political parties. The influence was greatest on student campaigns for elections, actual elections, set-up of governance structures, the choice of guests invited to student government activities and functions, social activities organized by student government, nomination process for elections, clubs/ societies/ associations meetings and activities, agenda for public discussion, debates and forums and student barazas/ kamukunjis. These results were consistent with those from KIs and FGDs. The informants 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.

Impediments to Effective Students' Involvement in University Governance

The study identified many and varied impediments to students' involvement in governance and in decision-making. For the primary respondents, the following are the top five: 'Mistrust of student leaders among students leading to apathy', 'lack of adequate recognition of students' role in university governance', 'limited power and authority among student leaders', 'fear of victimization by management among student leaders' and 'lack of transparency and a consultative democratic

process in university governance. The qualitative data collected for the study were consistent with or the quantitative data. However, the KIs and FGDs also identified other challenges undermining students' involvement in governance and decision-making processes, including apathy among students, the one-year term served by students in elective offices, the feeling among students that their opinions are not consequential, lack of interest in leadership roles among students in general and commitment to leadership among student leaders, balancing between academic work and leadership roles, lack of true democracy and constitutional rigidity. Based on the KIs and FGDs, some impediments were specific to either KU or the USIU; signifying some public-private sector differences. To illustrate, the large student population, large diversity of students' views and needs and high levels of political meddling were specific to KU. On the other hand, the failure to register with the Registrar of Societies in the country is specific to USIU. Those interviewed for the study suggested a variety of interventions that could be harnessed to address the challenges identified by the study.

Cross-University Differences

Further analysis using the Chi Square ($\chi 2$) as a test statistic, revealed the existence of significant differences in some of the areas focused on by this study. In terms of the extent to which students considered strategic/policy documents and institutional practices to mainstream student involvement in governance, significant differences were noted in both policies and practices. Within the context of policies, KU and USIU students differed significantly in their perceptions in all four areas analyzed; that is: policy having a legal basis; university's strategic plan prioritizing students' involvement, students' involvement being a matter of policy and; university having a published policy on students' involvement in governance. Relative to their USIU counterparts, KU were found to be more agreeable concerning the four policy areas analyzed. Similar results were obtained with respect to the practices brought under scrutiny, with KU students being more likely to support the views expressed. A look at cross-university differences in opportunities for students' participation in governance and decision making revealed significant differences only in two of the 10 opportunities focused on. USIU students were more likely to agree with the view that their university offered sufficient avenue for university-wide communication for students while their KU counterparts are more likely to be involved in policy formulation. With respect to actual involvement in governance, no significant differences were obtained between KU and USIU students. However, differences were observed in six of the 24 decision-making activities analyzed. USIU students were more likely to participate in decision-making related to orientation of new students, student assessment, faculty appraisals and promotions, graduation planning, student support and advising and support services.

Chi Square test results for importance attached to participation revealed that KU students attached greater importance to students' participation in the Senate, while USIU students attached greater premium to involvement in all departmental-wide committees. Concerning participation in specific decision-making areas, the results showed that KU students valued more involvement in formulation of university vision and missions, strategic planning, curriculum development, dispute resolution, disciplinary matters and closure and opening of the university. On the contrary, USIU students attached greater importance 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. The fourth area of cross-university comparisons was the adequacy of and satisfaction in involvement. Cross-university differences were observed only in input/ contributions during meetings and representation of students' issues; USIU students considered their leadership representation in these two areas to be adequate relative to their KU colleagues. Concerning satisfaction, the analysis revealed that KU and USIU students were equally dissatisfied with the overall students' involvement in the governance of their university. At the level of participation in governance structures, USIU students were more likely to be satisfied with involvement in University Council/ Board of Trustees, the Senate and in all departmental-/ programme-wide committees. Results for participation in specific areas of decision-making showed that USIU students were more likely to be satisfied with students' involvement in all programme-wide committees, admission of new students, orientation of new students, graduation planning, disciplinary matters, student support and advising committees, procurements, support service committees and closure and opening of the university.

Cross-university differences in inducements for enhancing involvement and in external political influence were also assessed. Concerning the former, significant differences were obtained in 10 of 18 motivators. Relative to KU, USIU was more likely to rely on provision of offices and persons responsible to coordinate students' involvement, periodic democratic elections, institutionalized channels of communication, students' self-governance structures, tuition waivers, free meals, leadership training and, invited guest speakers to motivate students to get involved in governance. On the contrary, KU was more likely to motivate students using free transport and public addresses or symposia. Turning to political influence, significant differences were obtained in nine of 12 areas of possible external political meddling, with external political meddling being more likely to occur at KU relative to USIU.

Discussion of Findings

This study had as its first objective to determine the extent to which official university policy documents as well as governance structures and practices or

mainstream students' participation in governance and decision-making processes. The results established that, indeed, students' participation in the governance of their universities was the subject matter of important university documents, especially Charters and/or Acts, Statutes and constitutions governing students' association. These documents identified students as important stakeholders who should be incorporated in institutional decision-making structures and processes. Paradoxically though, no substantial evidence was colleagues by the study supporting the underlining of such involvement by other important university policy documents (such as strategic plans) or the mainstreaming of it into university governance practices. This can be interpreted to be an indictment on the commitment of the top management of universities to actively involve students in governance. It could also be viewed as a pointer to tokenistic and political correctness approaches embraced by top management in dealing with the important subject of students involvement in governance.

Based on the results of this study, 69.3 per cent of the students interviewed supported the view that their university's policy on students' involvement in governance had a constitutional and legal basis. This not only underlined the fact that universities, both public and private, recognize students as pertinent members of their governance structures but also echoed the finding that charters establishing universities have sections specifically focusing on students' involvement in governance. The finding might also signify that those interviewed were familiar with the contents of the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 which delineates the Students' Council as one of the elements of the internal governance (administrative) structure of universities in the country. According to the Act, other elements of that structure include a Chancellor, University Council, the Senate, the Vice Chancellor assisted by a number of Deputy Vice Chancellors, Management Boards, Faculty Boards, and Departmental Boards (Republic of Kenya 2012).

Overall, the results of this study showed that students considered it important to be involved in the various governance structures in their university. However, the greater premium appears to have been attached to involvement in committees at the various levels (Deans, university-wide, school-wide/ faculty-wide and departmental-wide/ programm-wide) relative to top-level structures, that is, University Council/ Board of Trustees, Management Councils and Senate (see Table 5.3 for details). This could be interpreted to suggest that it is in such structures (committees) that students felt they made real impact as compared to high-level governance structures. This is consistent with the finding from in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussants that, especially in private universities, students' representatives in governance and decision-making processes do not exercise any real power. It can also be argued that students attached greater premium to committees because it is at this level that important

academic decisions that affect them directly are made. The results could also be considered to be the affirmation of the position taken by Zuo and Ratsoy (1999) that student representation on departmental committees appears to be the most strategic and potentially useful participative mechanism, because it aids problem solving at a local level, on issues that have an immediate impact on students, while offering the greatest potential for building a sense of community and social capital between staff and students.

That students should be involved in governance is not a moot issue. After all students are full-time and possibly the most important stakeholders in the higher education community; meaning that they should participate in and wield considerable influence on institutional governance procedures, processes and activities (Persson 2003; Luescher 2011). Despite this, the results of this study revealed that both public and private universities tend to be characterized by lukewarm (or pseudo) participation of students in governance. In both KU and the USIU, for example, students were not directly represented in the core internal decision-making organs, that is, the Management Board and the Management Council, respectively. Yet in all probability, these two organs make the most important decisions that affect the student body directly. The decision by the two institutions to exclude students from direct representation in the internal organs of governance is a serious indictment to the institutions' commitment to the democratization of the governance process in general and to entrenching students' involvement in that process in particular. It forces one to question the seriousness of the two universities studied in ensuring greater democratization of the governance process and in guaranteeing effective students. Involvement in the governance process. Consistent with Oggawa and Bossetrt (1995), we argue that for students to be considered as properly involved in the governance processes in their institutions, their (students') leadership should not only be involved in some matters and/ or some levels of governance. Rather, it should be adequately involved in major decision-making and at all levels of decision-making. In addition, and very important, the universities must allocate students adequate material and non-material resources needed for effective participation in governance.

That students were more visible in lower levels of decision-making testifies to the fact that public and private universities in Kenya in principle encourage the democratic governance while in practice they lean toward the authoritative paternalistic model of governance. This is an approach in which students are integrated into the institutional governance structure but given limited discretion for involvement on issues strictly concerning them (e.g., student services and teaching quality) and only in an advisory role rather than in a co-decision capacity. The approach manifests a 'management-controlled participation' as opposed to the open participatory process, thereby relegating students to the status of junior

members of the academic community who are not capable of contributing to decisions on an equal level as academics and administrators (Leuscher-Mamashela 2013). This failure by universities to practice what they preach has previously been observed by Johnson and Deem (2003) who argued that more often than not, incongruence between espoused and practical participation characterizes university institutions. Whereas university policy may emphasize student-centerdness, its practical implementation often focuses on 'managing the student body' more than responding to the experiences of the students. Argyris and Schon (1978) considered this to be an enduring aspect of social and organizational life.

The decision by universities to confine students' direct representation to lower levels of decision-making points to a university administration that might be well versed with the many arguments that have been advanced to rationalize why students should be excluded from decision-making. For instance, the transient nature of studentship, rapid turnaround of elected student officials (most serve a one-year term) (Klemenčič 2014; Task Force on Higher Education and Society 2000) and, the belief among management that students may not have the competence to provide constructive input in many areas of decision-making have been used to bequeath faculty and administrators authority over students in important areas of decision-making, leaving them to make major contribution only in areas affecting their lives in which they have the competence to provide constructive input. In this regard, a top management official who served as a key informant in USIU advanced the view that students did not merit direct representation in top-level organs of decision-making because 'they do not make much contribution.' Where administrators have authority over students in decision-making, their status as equal partners in the governance and decision-making processes of their institutions is weakened considerably. The explanations presented above, though, should not eclipse the fact that the total exclusion or feeble involvement of students in university governance in Kenya mainly manifests the failure of a democratic culture to take root in universities. This is rather paradoxical given that universities are the cradle of knowledge and, therefore, should be the best expression and practitioners of democratic principles. University administrators are drawn from the best academicians and presumably have the best understanding of democratic governance. In conformity with this, they are best placed to express (practice) democratic governance which should inherently include the inclusion of students on a co-decision basis.

Among the principles of good governance in universities is shared governance; others being academic freedom, clear rights and responsibilities, meritocratic selection, financial stability and accountability (Kauffeldt 2009). Also termed cooperative governance, it entails giving various groups of people a share in the decision-making process. In a university setting, the existence of shared governance denotes the involvement of all stakeholders, administrators, faculty

and students in the making of critical decisions affecting the institution (Kauffeldt 2009; Task Force on Higher Education and Society 2000). These are accorded a meaningful voice in policy formulation and in decision-making in general. The study results suggested that university administrators in both the public and private sectors do not take students' involvement in governance very seriously. In the two universities studied, the data suggested that the important principle of shared governance was not being accorded the seriousness it merits for the true democratization of decision-making to take root. Among others, this was evident from the tokenistic representation of students in important internal organs of policy and decision-making, which denied them the co-decision rights (see Klemenčič 2014) central to shared governance. The absence of shared governance in the institutions covered by this study is consistent with the findings of previous studies (see e.g., Kauffeldt 2009; Obondo 2000). Kauffeldt (2009) found the lack of cooperation in institutional governance to be rampant in many universities. Similarly, Obondo (2000) showed that in most cases university senates, faculty and management boards and committee structures do not include students; or even when they do, they are integrated as tokens rather than active participants in decision-making. As a result, students constitute one of the most vulnerable and least empowered groups of actors who must be involved in the transformation of Kenyan universities.

The results of this study provided no strong evidence that the exercise of power in students' self-governance as well as in overall university governance structures was shared among all stakeholders, with the leadership holding shared values, standards and ideals; delegating duties; learning from others and, most important, being change drivers (Basham 2010). Rather, they pointed to the existence of a conservative leadership that seeks to monopolize power and to be the source of most of the decisions that affect the stakeholders. The study also showed that both student leadership and the official university managers tended to achieve things alone instead of bringing on board all stakeholders, thereby defeating the very conception of participative leadership. This is consistent with Obondo (2000) who pointed out that, when it comes to governance, universities in Kenya tend to be characterized by individuals with vested interests who may hinder participation at different levels. The institutions, more so the top management, also tend to lack a culture of openness and frequent dialogue on issues, thereby disenfranchising some members of the decision-making organs. This renders it hard for the institutions to embrace change even when it is beneficial and necessary.

According to Mutula (2002) private universities have a democratic system of governance, where students are routinely involved in decision-making processes. These institutions are characterized by continuous dialogue among administrators, teaching staff and students, leading to reduced tension that may

result in strikes. The results obtained from the USIU appear to contradict Mutula's (2002) position. Indeed, than confirm the existence of a deep-rooted democratic culture, the study revealed that, like their counterparts in the public sector, USIU students' contribution to the governance of the institution was minimal. This was evident in a number of ways. First, students are not directly (actively) represented in top internal organs of decision making, that is, the Board of Trustees and the University Senate. Instead they enjoy proxy representation. Second, while students appear to be more active in lower levels of decision making, there is a general lack of interest among them in general and among their leadership, thereby watering down the extent of democratization of the decision-making processes. The study results also suggested that private universities are not completely immune from the meddling by management with student and staff organizations, including their self-governance processes, functions and their activities. As a matter of fact, the respondents from private universities suggested that it is the payment of fees and not the active representation of students in governance structures coupled with continuous dialogue between management and students that is mainly responsible for the absence of student strikes, demonstrations and riots that have become the hallmark of public universities.

One factor that obviously renders inadequate the representation of students in governance in USIU is the proxy representation students enjoy in top governance organs; the Board of Trustees and the Management Council. Although a top management official rationalized the absence of students' representatives in top governance structures by arguing that the students 'don't make much contribution', student interviewees as KIs and FG discussants felt that representation by proxy was very ineffective. The following voice from one of the focus group discussants summed up this ineffectiveness as follows:

> It is very hard to channel ones grievances through someone else. Yes, student *barazas* are held and SAC representatives periodically meet with the dean of students and the DVC, (Student affairs to raise issues affecting students for onward transmission to management council but at the end of it all not much is done to tackle the issues until they get out of hand.

We acknowledge that physical presence does not guarantee effective representation of students. Even proxy representation if actualized well can address students' concerns that bear on their capacity to achieve what brought them to the university. However, this calls for holding the proxy representatives of students accountable to ensure that they deliver the messages that are given to them by students and do so without contaminating them. As articulated by the students during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the proxy representatives of students in top-level management forums tend to do so selectively. As such, they decide on their own whether or not to convey students' concerns to top-level management, or when they do, what particular aspects of the students' voices they should pass to top

management. One way to hold proxy representatives accountable is to do a report-back of discussions on matters touching on students' academic and social welfare. More specifically, the proxies could transmit minutes of items covering non-censored students' matters to their constituencies for deliberations. Furthermore, for proxy representation to be effective, it calls for structures and systems for holding the proxy representatives accountable. Unfortunately, such structures and systems did not exist in any of the two universities covered by this study.

In USIU, the tighter control of students could be understood in terms of the business model that underpins the institution and, by implication, private universities in the country. These institutions while not necessarily driven by profit, do, nonetheless, operate along a business model. This means that intense student activism anchored on the trade union model, as exists in public universities would be disruptive and, therefore, "not good for business". This argument makes even more sense when viewed within the uniqueness of the education market. Unlike regular markets where buyers demand from sellers the best quality of goods that their money can fetch, in the education market both the buyer and the seller must work collaboratively to determine the quality of the final product delivered to the buyer. As a matter of fact, the very quality of the final product rests overwhelmingly with the buyer. Thus, the fact that students must work hard to ensure that they get value for their money (the fees they pay), bolsters the view held by students at USIU that student activism would not serve them well. As pointed out earlier, the majority of the students held the view that, "I am paying money for my education and, therefore, cannot risk being sent away".

Despite the fact that, on the one side, students are officially delineated as pertinent members of top-level decision-making organs in both public and private universities and, on the other side, the importance students attached to their inclusion in governance and decision making, the study results suggest that, in reality, students play minimal roles in the governance process. The results of this study suggest the existence of too much tokenism coupled with the tendency toward political correctness in the nurturing of students' participation in the governance processes in both the public and the private institutions studied. In addition, the corruption, lack of transparency and mismanagement that are the hallmark of Kenya's national psyche appear to have permeated university governance processes. Student leaders appear to be ready to be compromised by top management and to serve their own interests instead of the interests of their constituents. The above results support the findings of a study conducted by Menon (2005) focusing on the views of students regarding the extent of their participation in the management of their university and their satisfaction with the degree of this participation. The study revealed that students believed that their involvement in the management of their institution was very limited. This

applied to both high and low levels of decision-making, with their input being greater in less important decisions. The perceived limited involvement resulted in feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction among students, with the majority of respondents demanding a higher level of participation.

One of the practices that are recommended for universities to achieve good governance is data driven decision-making (see Task Force for University Education and Society 2000). It is argued that decisions anchored on adequate data are more objective, balanced and likely to be acceptable to the stakeholders concerned. Despite the exclusion of students from important decision-making university organs, universities continue to make decisions affecting students without scientific evidence or data collected from students focusing on their needs, desires, likes and dislikes. Yet any policy that is not anchored on authentic scientific research findings is likely to fall short or not address the situation adequately. It is often the case that exclusion is a basis for injustice and sometimes bitterness. Thus, decision making that excludes students is likely to trigger experiences of distributive injustice among students. As a consequence, the students may engage in justice-restoring behaviours such as go-slows, demonstrations and riots or violent confrontations, which have become a hallmark of many public universities not only in Kenya but also in other African countries (see e.g., Azikiwe 2016; Kiboiy 2013; Luescher-Mamashela 2005; Mohamedbhai 2016; Mutula 2002; Mwiria *et al.* 2007).

A visible feature of higher education in Africa as a whole and in Kenya in particular today is the transformation that university education has undergone, including the rising number of universities, expansion in enrolments and declining public funding, among others (see e.g., Gudo *et al.* 2011; Kaburu and Embeywa 2014; Kinuthia 2009; Munene 2016; Mutula 2002; Nganga 2014; Nyangau 2014; Odhiambo 2011; Okioga, Onsongo and Nyaboga 2014). These transformations ignite the need for universities to re-examine their governance systems to ensure effectiveness. In particular, stakeholder participation in governance must be accommodative of all institutional members, including students. This is imperative considering that stakeholder involvement in decision-making is one of the key principles in the practice of good governance (OCED 2003; Eurydice 2008). Involvement is the hallmark of shared governance; a process which gives various groups the opportunity to get involved in the management of the affairs of their organization either directly or through elected representation. Whereas many universities including those in Kenya, have expressed the desire to depart from the traditional models of governance in which one supreme leader exercised power in decision-making (Parrish n.d.), the capacity of these institutions to embrace truly representative (democratic) governance remains elusive (or a pipe dream). This was evident from the results of this study which showed that in both public and private universities the lack of transparency, accountability and commitment in

the management of students' participation in university governance is reflected through varied practices by top management as well as student behaviour and attitudes toward their involvement in governance. The following examples are quite illustrative, in this regard:

- The failure to grant students direct representation in the umbrella internal organs of decision-making, the Management Board at KU and the Management Council at USIU, instead electing by proxy representation.

- The manipulation of student government elections in both public and private universities by management to ensure that candidates of their choice occupy especially the strategic positions of president/ chairperson and secretary general. This could take forms such as the imposition (or handpicking) of candidates or the outright rigging of elections. Concerning the rigging of elections, one FGD at Kenyatta University had the following to say:

> You will never guess the length management is willing to go to ensure that compliant student officials are elected to lead KUSA. Management will handpick and promote the election of particular (read favorite) students especially for the positions of President and the Secretary as well as dangle goodies to compromise strong candidates who have massive support from the student body. In extreme cases, should management sense defeat, it will not hesitate preside over the rigging of the election by managing the printing and stuffing of ballots. In this regard, tales of management orchestrated printing of ballots for student elections in suspicious printing presses located in the industrial area of Nairobi abound.

Other factors that may hamper students' full and effective involvement into democratic governance processes and activities in both public and private universities, may include the following:

- The censorship or vetting of decisions made by student leaders despite the freedom of expression guaranteed by the constitutions underpinning student self-governance bodies.

- The high levels of apathy or the lack of interest in student mobilization that was evident in both KU and the USIU.

- Reliance on social networks that guarantee anonymity instead of speaking in open student forums to air grievances and matters affecting student welfare.

- The high levels of mistrust and lack of confidence that characterize the relationship between students and top management as well as student leaders and their constituents. Because of the mistrust students have of management, dialogue between students and management, though an essential and critical element of the governance process, remains a very delicate balancing act, if not altogether elusive.

- In the USIU, the failure by management to register SAC with the Registrar of Societies thereby denying it national recognition as well as the powers (or opportunity) to act like a union.

The study reveals that there exists general mistrust of student leaders and management by the general student body in both the public and the private universities in Kenya. This tends to undermine the confidence students have in their leaders, as well as it casts doubts about the credibility and effectiveness of students' participation in governance processes. In particular, it renders impotent the mobilization of the student community, through student self-governance bodies (in this case the KUSA and SAC) for governance purposes; it also compounds the apathy that students have towards involvement in decision-making. The existence of mistrust in the relationship between students and their leaders is supported by the results of a survey on democratic citizenship and universities in Africa conducted in three universities which showed that, while there was overwhelming student support for students' participation in representative management systems, the existing student unions faced a crisis of legitimacy. According to the study, student leaders were the least trusted people on campus, an observation that was made in the light of disputed election results and accusations of corruption (Luescher-Mamashela *et al.* 2011).

Our universities constitute a core pillar in the training of future leadership for the different sectors of the economy and society. Their actions negative behavior/ behavior and tendencies as recorded in the course of this study, may play a major role in the entrenchment of non-democratic non-transparent, corrupt and non-accountable leadership at the national level. But like the saying goes, 'one can only defecate what one has eaten'. In this regard, and consistent with Astin (2000) and May (2009), the leadership produced by institutions of higher learning are the product of the general governance practices that the students are exposed to. Based on the results of this study, students in universities in Kenya are not exposed to progressive governance cultures that inculcate in them democratic and transformative principles engendering effective participative (or stakeholder involvement in) decision-making. This was evident from students' experiences with self-governance structures as well as with the umbrella organs of decision making in their universities. This situation is a disservice to the country and, it may be concluded, does not augur very well for future quality leadership in the different sectors of the society, especially for the entrenchment of democratic ideals.

To reiterate, the study results suggested that students are not active participants in the governance processes in their universities even when they are directly represented in major decision-making organs. Rather, they are, for the most part, participant observers whose opinions are either silent or simply overlooked by top management. This was evident from the sentiments expressed by some of

the respondents that students' voices and/or opinions counted for very little, if at all, with respect to major governance matters including those affecting the social welfare of students directly. We argue that, while the lack of a democratic culture is the major factor affecting the level of students' participation in governance processes in Kenyan universities, extensive apathy or the lack of student interest in involvement in governance has a role to play. The study documented the existence of high levels of apathy regarding student mobilization for governance purposes in the two institutions that were covered by this study. This was reflected through the lack of interest in governance matters among the larger student community, the poor leadership demonstrated by students' representatives, the tendency for students' representatives to serve their own selfish interests as opposed to the interests of their constituents and the tendency for management to capture and compromise student leaders. The existence of apathy among students in Kenyan universities supports the views expressed by Klemenčič (2014: 399) that despite the significant legitimate power conferred on student governments as key university stakeholders through legislation and institutional rules and the significant coercive power of students' movements, the "majority of students rarely get politically engaged in student government, even though this involves only casting a vote in student elections" (Klemenčič 2014: 399). The apathy factor tends to be compounded by the tendency for student leadership to prioritize selfish interests over the interests of the larger student community and by the co-optation (or compromising) of student leadership by management that tends to prevail in many universities.

A major factor undermining students' interests and effective participation in governance was the lack of incentives to act as motivators. The situation though appeared to be worse in the private sector. The study showed that at the USIU the only incentive directly beneficial to the individual student leader was a certificate awarded at the end of one's term of office. On the contrary, at Kenyatta University students leaders enjoyed a wide range of benefits. In addition to adequately funding KUSA activities, the university provided a KUSA vehicle, a meeting hall, monthly allowances for officials and, imprest when officials go out for trips. Once elected, student leaders are treated to a one-week training session in a three-star hotel at the coast (North Coast Hotel) and to in-between retreats, during which they are schooled on governance and leadership.

As suggested above, the study revealed that students' elections in both universities studied were infiltrated by management to ensure a captured and co-opted student leadership. In both public and private universities, management infiltration of students' elections aims to produce a pro-management line-up and, more often than not, it culminates in rigged elections and the perpetuation of injustice among students. This snowballs into justice-restoring behaviours such as student militancy, demonstrations, and/or riots, thereby undermining the

peace and security necessary for a conducive learning environment. Alternatively, students, especially those in the private universities, may display apathy with regard to (lack of interest for) and commitment to student leadership. In public universities, the situation is compounded further by external interference from national political parties that desire to have a student leadership that furthers their political agenda within university campuses. The aim is to transport external interests, some of them coated with a personal/ selfish agenda, to the universities. Furthermore, political infiltration engenders control and manipulation, interference, confusion, contestation and disorganization.

Student elections, it should be underlined, are a democratic governance issue and a measure of the extent to which our universities are nurturing a democratic or participative culture. As such, any management interference with student election process through the imposition of candidates or the manipulation of outcomes is an indictment on management's commitment to the very democratization of university governance. It is our considered opinion that universities should be the champions of merit-based systems. In this regard, we consider the meddling in students' self-governance processes by university management to be both retrogressive as well as defeatist of the agenda of effective students' participation in the governance process in institutions of higher learning. Clearly, students' self-governance organs such as KUSA and SAC are the seed-beds for the entrenchment of a democratic culture among students in our universities. This being the case, management interference with the processes and activities (or functions) of such organs, e.g., by hand-picking candidates for various offices, aiding the rigging of elections, buying off (compromising) office-bearers and by intimidating (even harassing) non-conformist office holders, as was documented by this study, is tantamount to management sabotaging its very agenda of ensuring greater students' involvement in the governance process. As such, unless top management in our universities embrace a true democratic culture – a culture of real/ actual students' participation as opposed to shadow (or pseudo) involvement – the agenda of effective students' involvement in governance will remain a pipe dream. Stated differently, for students to take interest in and desire to be involved in the governance process in their universities, tokenism must be weeded out; meaning that their representatives should not only be seen to be part of the decision-making process; students should also actively contribute to shaping the agendas and debates focusing on matters affecting them and their universities at large.

Going by the USIU example, this study revealed that students' self-governance organizations in private universities lack the legal status necessary for them to gain national recognition and to embrace the trade union model in their activities like their public sector counterparts. The organizations, though anchored in negotiated constitutions, are not officially registered with the Registrar of Societies

in the country; thus their operations remain confined and regulated at the level of the institution. In lieu of this, it can be concluded that private universities in Kenya have resisted actualizing students' involvement in governance as stipulated in the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012. By implication, the university is flouting the same Act it has initiated revisions of its Charter to comply with, which is rather contradictory.

One of the critical offices in universities dealing with students' welfare, including their relationship with top management is the Dean of Students Office. This office is critical to university peace and security as well as to harmonious relationships between students and top management. Despite this, the study found that such offices are not only ill equipped to deal with student challenges of today but also that deans of students are excluded from the top management organs of the two universities covered by the study. Furthermore, the office of the Dean of Students lacks the significant autonomy necessary for it to have the kind of teeth to adequately address issues affecting students. In the light of the fact that deans of students are the frontline managers of students' affairs and social welfare – they are the first port of call for students, possibly more accessible to individual students than student government representatives – these are misnomers that call for urgent rectification. This position gains more credence when viewed within the context of the student apathy toward or lack of interest in self-governance processes and activities as well as the eroded student confidence in their leadership as recorded by this study.

Based on the findings of this study, university students and, by implications, their involvement in governance processes are a macrocosm of the larger Kenyan society. Despite the fact that most universities tend to discourage tribal associations and groupings, Kenyan universities, particularly those in the public sector, are characterized by both tribalism and diminished nationalistic sentiments. The situation is compounded by the infiltration of national party politics into the universities. Kenyan political parties have mainly fermented along ethnic lines. As such, their influence on and meddling with student mobilization for governance in universities has resulted in contestations for ethnic supremacy (dominance) in university decision-making structures. It is such ethnic competitions, coupled with the failure by most university managers to listen to and treat student voices with seriousness that has been responsible for violent tendencies in (public) universities, which has also been responsible for recurring closures of Kenyan universities. Furthermore, consistent with the national psyche, corruption appears to have permeated student politics in our universities, with funding from external networks partially influencing the outcome of student elections. The situation is compounded further by the lack of transparency and fairness in such elections as management strategies aim at ensuring that a leadership of its choice takes office. In some cases this has led to manipulation, including outright

rigging of student elections. The trends depicted by the study concur with the existing empirical evidence which suggests that the practice of student leadership in African universities is a mirror of the national political leadership, which in most countries is characterized by allegations of corruption, ethnic inclinations, managerial incompetence and mismanagement of recourses (Mapundo 2007).

Clearly, effective students' involvement in the governance process calls for a university leadership that is both transparent, accountable and democratic. Only this way will the leadership be integrative and representative of all stakeholders, including students. Furthermore all leaders will be able to actively drive the decision-making process and all members of the university community will come to know their roles and responsibilities and to execute them well for the attainment of the institutional goals (Brownlee n.d.). The results of this study suggest that the leadership practiced by both management and student leaders in our universities did not meet these criteria. As pointed out earlier (see Literature Review), a transformational leader is one who motivates others through a shared vision of where they want to go and what they want to achieve, shares power with others, learns from others, identifies with needs of others, responds to change quickly and is able to inspire others to also achieve and grow (see e.g., Parrish n.d; Gous 2003; Basham 2010). On the other hand, participative leadership engages everyone (all stakeholders) at the decision-making level (Diamond 2006; Obondo 2000). The leadership in students' self-governance structures and in the major organs of university decision-making did not meet these thresholds.

The study utilized the democratic theory to explain students' participation in university governance zeroing in on how key decisions are made and who makes them. The results showed that the governance of universities occurs within the ambit of liberal democracy. This is one aspect of participatory democracy, the other being direct democracy. As indicated in Chapter Three, in direct democracy stakeholders participate directly in the decision-making processes, whereas in liberal (or representative) democracy governing power is exercised by representatives elected by members through a voting system. Clearly, this study did not reveal any direct participation by the total student body in decision-making in the two universities where the study took place. This is understandable given that students constitute the mass of stakeholders in universities and any attempt to include each one of them in decision-making would render the whole process chaotic if not totally dysfunctional. In lieu of this fact, one would understand the decision by universities to lean towards liberal democratic practices in their attempts to democratize the governance process. While there is nothing wrong with the decision by universities to rely on the liberal (or representative) democratic model, it is the way this is exercised that makes it ineffective as well as it denies the institutions the opportunity to nurture a truly democratic culture that has been the goal of the democratization of university governance.

As evident from the results of this study, the practice of liberal democracy in universities in Kenya denies students the co-decision rights essential for a truly democratic culture to prevail. Through this study it became evident that the top administrations of universities are not committed to true democratization of decision-making. Rather than nurture equal partnership among all stakeholders, including students, they continue to rely on some form of pseudo representation of students in which the latter are excluded from some of the top organs of decision-making and only feature in lower levels of decision-making. Even when allowed to be involved, the evidence suggests that their voices are not taken seriously. Furthermore, it was found that management has continued to meddle in the governance activities of students including students' self-governance bodies. This takes many forms such as the manipulation of student elections and in some extreme cases the rigging of the same, the compromising of student leaders and, the intimidation of those who desire to stand firm. All these are detrimental to the permeation of a democratic culture in university governance.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study and guided by its very objectives, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, overall, universities in Kenya recognize, both in principle and practice, the importance of students' involvement in governance processes. In this regard, policies, structures and support systems exist for the enhancement of students' involvement in governance of both public and private universities. Second, the nature and level of involvement of students in the governance processes in universities in Kenya varies by category of university, whether public or private. The variations occur in terms of institutional policies and practices, level of students' involvement in various governance structures (including the level at which students are allowed direct representation), the nature of the representation (whether direct or indirect), the support systems that are in place to act as motivators to students, student perceptions of those support systems, and the effect of support systems on students' involvement.

A third conclusion emanating from the results of this study is that students are practically excluded from high-level organs of decision-making in universities in Kenya. In many cases they are not directly represented in such organs, and where direct representation takes place, the voices of student leaders are dimmed by top administrators. This relegates students' involvement in decision-making to lower levels of decision-making such as the school/faculty and departmental/ programme levels. Closely related to this is the conclusion that students' participation in university governance and in the making of key decisions that affect their academic and social welfare mainly occurs through students' self-governance councils/ unions as well as through students' participation in different committees (e.g. university-wide, school/ faculty and programme/departmental committees).

However, there are other avenues such as clubs, associations and societies that may also present them with opportunities to influence the governance process.

The fifth conclusion emanating from the results of this study is that despite attempts by universities to involve students in governance, Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, University Councils and University Senate remain the dominant players in the governance of institutions of higher learning in Kenya. Although students constitute the majority stakeholders in universities and despite the fact that both students and university administrators recognize the need for students' participation in self-governance and in the overall university governance structures, yet students continue to be alienated from the making of the bulk of the decisions that affect them and the functioning of their universities. While policies on inclusivity (participatory democracy) exist in many universities, the practice at the level of breach exceeds its observance.

Based on the findings of this study, it may also be concluded that students value their overall involvement in governance of their universities, including involvement in the various structures of governance and in the making of specific decisions that affect their academic and social welfare. In this regard, students have a good understanding of the positive and negative consequences of their integration into the governance process through their leadership/ elected representatives. They are also aware of the major impediments standing in the way of effective students' participation in the governance of universities. Another conclusion that derives from the results of this study is that there exists general mistrust of management and student leaders by the general student body in both the public and the private universities. Concerning the latter, the mistrust emanates from the belief among the larger student community that leaders are mainly serving their own interests as opposed to the interests of their constituents. This tends to undermine the confidence students have in their leaders; it also casts doubts about the credibility and effectiveness of students' participation in governance processes.

The eighth conclusion that can be drawn by this study is that student's participation in self-governance and in the governance of the university as a whole is not immune from the influence of national politics and political parties. If anything, universities in Kenya, more so those in the public sector, provide political parties with another arena for political contestation. Finally, on based the results of this study, particularly those focusing on the behaviours and actions of top university management, it may be concluded that top university management is not interested in the real and active students' participation in governance. What they are looking for is a captured/ co-opted/ domesticated student leadership whose involvement in governance is mainly tokenistic but gives the institution an image of political correctness. As a result, our universities are dotted with what for the lack of a better term, one may classify as "management-controlled participation" of students in the governance process.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, a number of recommendations are offered by way of growing and entrenching a truly democratic culture in the governance of Kenyan universities in general and in the involvement of students in particular. These include the following:

1. A paradigm shift must occur in our universities, both public and private, concerning the handling of students' involvement in the governance process. In particular, well calculated and deliberate steps must be taken to end the cultures of tokenism and political correctness that currently pervade our universities' handling of students' involvement in the governance process. For this to be judged to have taken root, management must elevate students, through their representatives, to the status of equal partners in the decision making processes. Only in this way will universities stem the apathy, lack of interest and the all too visible malaise characterizing both members of the student leadership and the larger student body in universities today with respect to participation in governance.

2. Universities, both public and private, must evolve specific strategies for the nurturing and entrenching of a democratic and participative culture among students as well as among all cadre of management staff. This should entail the development of well-structured courses focusing on the development of leadership skills among students to complement the current practices of teaching leadership skills to student leaders through induction retreats and experiences through extra-curricular involvements. These should form part of the common courses and the general education courses offered by public and private universities respectively and should be compulsory for (or required of) all students, regardless of their major. The courses should teach students leadership skills; enlighten them about the importance of leadership attributes such as transparency, accountability, integrity, participation and teamwork, among others; whilst enhancing the students' understanding regarding their leadership identity, ability, and willingness to lead. This will, certainly improve both student participation in the governance processes of universities and the quality of the leadership offered by those bequeathed the mantle to represent the student body in varied capacities of leadership. Further importance of the courses lies in the fact that higher education is expected to educate individuals so they can become leaders in their chosen profession and in society. The leadership courses should, therefore, supplement rather than replace the leadership retreats that the universities conduct for newly-elected members of students' self-governance bodies, which in the eyes of many students have been turned into a form of reward for accepting to be a student leader as opposed to being opportunities for sharpening leadership skills.

3. In the light of students' apathy towards involvement in governance, there is a need to review university policies on this subject matter to ensure that they truly actualize and nurture student participation in various levels of decision-making. This must be done in such a way that students are guaranteed that their voices count with respect to the making of major decisions affecting the running and operations of universities, as opposed to being participant observers as is currently the case.

4. To change the negative attitude students have toward involvement in university governance, universities should institutionalize teaching faculty, by way of encouraging faculty to discuss governance imperatives, including the advantages of effective students' representation, during their interactions with students in class. Similarly, the universities should impress on faculty who patron clubs to use the clubs as avenues for spreading the governance gospel to students. The mentoring of student leadership should also be encouraged at the lower levels of management especially at the departmental and faculty/ school levels. In this regard, deans, heads of department, and chairs of lower-level committees should be encouraged to accord student representation greater voices in decision-making.

5. An appropriate curriculum dedicated to inducting students into leadership roles should be developed and implemented in all universities, both public and private. All students who desire to join students' self-governance structures and/ or to represent fellow students in overall university governance structures should be required to have successfully completed that curriculum. The curriculum should not only teach leadership skills but also impart other important virtues of governance such as transparency, core values and ethics.

6. It is important to create incentives to motivate students to get involved in governance in universities. Given that both public and private universities in Kenya offer common courses and/ or general education courses, one way to reward those who participate in leadership is to create a leadership course at that level whose requirements can also be met through involvement in student leadership. Institutions, especially those in the private sector, should also consider introducing a monetary package and other non-monetary rewards to motivate interest in leadership positions among students.

7. Where it is absolutely necessary for universities to make decisions without involving students or their representatives, this should be done guided by adequate scientific evidence or data collected from students focusing on their needs, desires, likes and dislikes. Only in this way will the situation in question be addressed effectively, and will the propensity for violent conflict between management and students be averted.

8. Closely related to the above, where proxy representation must be used, it requires the development of structures and systems for holding the proxy representatives accountable. Such structures and systems did not exist in any of the two universities studied.

9. To guarantee effective students' involvement and the involvement of all other stakeholders in governance processes in our universities, the leadership of students' self-governance structures as well as those who sit in the top organs of decision-making bodies embrace a transformative as well as a truly participative form of leadership. This calls for active training and skilling in the two forms of leadership. In this regard, universities should be required to develop guiding manuals as well as provide the necessary training that would equip the leadership at all levels with the necessary competences to combine and practice the two forms of leadership effectively.

10. Finally, consistent with Obondo (2000), this study recommends that university management speeds up the widening of the representation and the active participation of students (and staff) in governing bodies, and strengthens student (and staff) associations if it wishes to strengthen democratization of university governance. This will in turn increase their propensity to identify with outcomes of the governance processes in these institutions and reduce the incidences of student and/or staff conflict with management.