

Management of Public Universities in Uganda during the Transformation Process: A Case of Kyambogo University

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Abstract: This study investigated how management was exercised at Kyambogo University [KyU] (in Uganda) during its formation that involved the merger of three tertiary institutions and the period immediately thereafter. This was regarded as a period of significant transformation at the institution. The study was prompted by the rampant strikes and protests that the students and staff staged against the University's managers during that time. The researcher used the descriptive cross-sectional sample survey design to collect both qualitative and quantitative data through the use of surveys and interview methods from 44 administrators, 201 academic staff, 345 students, and 230 support staff. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis techniques. The study findings indicated that, at that time, although planning and decision-making processes were consultative in nature, they were not adequately participative and involving. These made key stakeholders feel alienated from management since their views were not reflected in the final decisions of the newly established University. Secondly, the study established that the University leadership at that time lacked a shared vision and common strategies for managing transformation besides being non-collegial and heavily bureaucratic in nature. Thirdly, it was established that the University was bedeviled with a myriad of management challenges related to, amongst others, personality clashes amongst managers; the problem of red-tape in decision making; the shortage of funds and other resources; and the interference by external agents in the affairs of the institution. However, the study also established that several efforts were made to avert the crises that the institution experienced at that time. It was thus concluded that the kind of management exercised during that time of transformation was partly responsible for the challenges experienced then, and probably today. The researcher, therefore, recommended that the University managers should adapt an organic organizational structure that calls for teamwork, participative - decentralized decision-making, and planning. They should often develop a shared vision, employ a collegial kind of leadership, and be supportive to different units as well as individuals in the institution.

Keywords: leadership, management, planning, decision-making, transformation, university

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