KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION

THEME: RE-ENGINEERING EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18TH – 20TH MAY 2015

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT, POLICY AND CURRICULUM STUDIES

VENUE: KENYATTA UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE CENTER

PROGRAM AND BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
International Conference on

'Re-Engineering Education for Sustainable Development'

18th – 20th May 2015

Kenyatta University Conference Centre (KUCC)
Nairobi, KENYA
CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THEME: ‘Re-Engineering Education for Sustainable Development’

Sub-themes:
- Enhancing quality in education
- Educational reforms and governance
- Research, innovation and knowledge transfer in education
- Application of ICT in education
- Resource mobilization and utilization in education
Higher Education – New Solutions

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Abstract

A study by Nganga (2014) who studied employers across the East African region, found that graduates lacked employability skills - technical mastery and basic work–related capabilities. Nganga indicated that “at least half of graduates produced by East African universities are ‘half-baked’ for the job market”. The question that begs to be asked is, what went wrong? What could have produced the situation? Is it financing and the cost of education? It is now known that education at higher education level is self-financed and although governments give subsidies, they may not be sufficient. The universities have to be innovative and entrepreneurial in funding their programmes. Could they have forgotten their role of scholarship …… in their pursuits of self-sufficiency? There are also the many private Universities besides the - the high enrolment, the availability of lecturers, the facilities and the programmes. What about the curriculum and the programmes, are they relevant to the world of work? Are the employers and industrialists, the customers of the university products involved in the design of curriculum? Have they afforded students pupilage opportunities and talked to their lecturers or is there a disconnect with the university management. Is innovation and creativity being compromised by the speed of churning out large numbers of graduates? What about the quality of education? Is it possible that the best students are preferring education cross the border and staying and working in their host countries because of lack of opportunities in their own countries and thereby causing brain drain? What about harmonization of education across the region? This paper attempt to elucidate on the reasons why the situation is as pointed out with a view to suggesting new ways of handling higher education in East African Region.

Key words: University education, East Africa, quality of education, university graduates, world of work