



**First Pan African International Research  
Congress on Knowledge Generation  
and Dissemination (PAIRC 2018)  
NEWSLETTER**

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# Research is the only recipe for sustainable development





Prof Maurice Amutabi, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Lukenya University, delivering a key note address at the First Pan African International Congress

# Research is the only recipe for sustainable development

*OUR UNIVERSITIES SHOULD ALLOW MORE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL TO ENSURE THAT THEY CAN BEGIN TO ALIGN TO A CULTURE OF RESEARCH*

**T**he Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Lukenya, Prof Maurice Amutabi pointed out that research is important in development. He made the remarks while giving his key note address at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018), on Wednesday 20 June 2018 at Grand Royal Swiss Hotel, Kisumu.

He said research plays an important role in propagating sustainable development. Prof Amutabi further said that the more a coun-

try spends money in research, the better opportunities for development. He mentioned that African countries are not spending on research. In Africa, the country that spends more money in research is South Africa at 1.8 percent of the GDP. France spends 8 percent whilst Switzerland spends 13 percent. Countries which spend more than 5% of their GNP/GDP on research are developed. The more our countries spend money in research, the more innovations and discoveries they are able to generate for sustainable development.



L-R: Prof Maurice Amutabi (Lukenya University), Prof Winnie Mucherah (Ball State University), Prof John Shiundu (MMUST), Dr Elphinah Ciske (WSU), Prof William Shivoga (MMUST), Ms Yonela Tukwayo (WSU), Prof Ipara (Kibabii University) and Prof Kenneth Simala (East African Kiswahili Commission)

“Our universities should allow more research activities at undergraduate level to ensure that they can begin to align to a culture of research. It is a pity that some universities still go with undergraduates and to some extent post-graduate, without the relevant level of research participation”, added Prof Amutabi.

Harnessing research output for sustainable development need training in research. In his presentation, collaboration and team work were seen crucial in terms of harnessing research output for sustainable development.

The attitude we assemble in criticizing our researchers is also important because it can either nurture or hinder a culture of research. We must begin to make publishing interesting in our institutions and avoid negative criticism. He reiterated the importance of linkages between universities and industries.

Prof Amutabi said the aim of research is pro-

ducing new knowledge and new ideas.

We seem to feel inferior in our existence. Africa must feel proud of its research output and not feel inferior of itself.

He told the delegates about promoting research culture and the importance of patents and trademarks which should be taken into consideration.

Prof Amutabi stressed the issue of monitoring the next generation of scholars because many research organisations need evidence of mentoring when they fund research. The other issue that came out was mentoring young generation without exploiting them.

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# Children from poorer families are likely to re-offend because they are less able to achieve their goals legally



Photo Above: University of Venda (Univen) Senior Lecturer, Dr Thizwilondi Mudau, making her poster presentation at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)

With a presentation titled 'A study of Multiple causes of recidivism among Youth Offenders at Thohoyandou Female/Juvenile Correctional Centre in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa', a University of Venda (Univen) Senior Lecturer, Dr Thizwilondi Mudau under the theme 'governance and economic development' said that recidivism has become a pressing and unrelenting problem all over the world. This came after she realised that there are many juveniles who have been in custody who often return to prison as re-offenders.

The study recommends that the

Department of Correctional Services should revise and improve its restorative programmes to promote reconciliation between the offenders and the victims. The study further recommended that, youth offenders should be assisted to learn to accept their poor background at home.

The study concluded that, recidivism among youth offenders is caused by multiplicity factors. Children from poorer families are likely to re-offend because they are less able to achieve their goals legally and because they value some goals such as excitement.

# Governance and management of human resources policies in a rural based South African university

Mr Tshililo Justice Manenzhe, Director Human Resources at the University of Venda (UNIVEN) presented his research paper entitled, 'Governance and Management of Performance Management Policy (Human Resources Policies) in a Rural-Based South African University'.

According to Mr Manenzhe, Universities are expected to generate knowledge and enhance scholarship to respond to the socio-political and socio-economic challenges through teaching/learning, research and innovation and community engagement. He further highlighted that, in order to meet this societal expectations, universities must have adequate financial, infrastructural and human resources. Therefore, without adequate resources, universities will find it difficult to fulfil their mandate.

He continued to emphasize that the apartheid policy of separate development, which the National Party Government institutionalized through the extension of the Universities Education Act of 1959, shaped the South African Higher Education landscape. He said as a result, the Act entrenched the racially segregated education. "The disenfranchisement of the African majority was one of the political agendas of the government of the day which culminated in the establish-

ment of five separate legislative and geographical entities, namely, the Republic of South Africa and four 'Independent Republics' and 36 Higher Education Institutions controlled by eight different government departments," he explained.

In explaining the historical overview of the University of Venda, Mr Manenzhe told the audience that UNIVEN was established as a product of the legacy of apartheid to serve the exclusive needs of black



Photo Above: Mr Tshililo Justice Manenzhe, Director Human Resources at the University of Venda (UNIVEN), South Africa

people, particularly Venda ethnic group in the so called "Independent Republic of Venda." "As a historically disadvantaged institution (HDI), UNIVEN experienced similar challenges of insufficient financial and human resources and support networks such as classrooms, laboratories, equipment and lack of policies and sporting as well as recreational facilities."

The Higher Education Act (101 of 1997) as the regulatory framework provides the ministry of education with a number of instruments that include amongst others: the council on higher education whose role is to advise the minister; particularly on quality assurance; the responsibility to allocate funds

in a fair and transparent manner; the authority to intervene in cases of maladministration through the appointment of an independent assessor, but with the CHE's involvement.

Mr Manenzhe said, despite all challenges of HDIs, UNIVEN strived for excellence. He told the audience that, in 2014 the University introduced performance management system in line with strategic objective number (6) Integrated Human Resources Management and Development of the University of Venda Strategic Plan 2012-2016.

He further expressed that the policy was introduced on 31 March 2014 to make provision for recognition, rewarding and encouraging excellent performance, while appropriate interventions were implemented to deal with poor performance. Initially, the policy was implemented at senior and executive management with the understanding that in the subsequent years, it will be cascaded to all levels of staff. He took the audience through policy development process and concluded his presentation by mentioning that the Human Resources Department at UNIVEN has been playing a pivotal role in advising how implementation of human resources management functions can be realized, including formulation of policies and procedures.

Manenzhe expressed that this led to the improvement of overall institutional effectiveness. "Sustained effectiveness requires the university to continuously manage performance with a view to maintain its competitive advantage in higher education as well as the public and private sector."



*On Photo: Prof Kenneth Simala, Executive Secretary, East African Kiswahili Commission, delivering a key note address at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)*

## Untying knots of knowledge around research outputs and sustainable development goals - Prof Kenneth Simala

In his presentation Prof Kenneth Simala, Executive Secretary, East African Kiswahili Commission indicated that research is the basis of development. Hence research output should be in the service of development of society.

Prof Simala highlighted that one of the factors that made Millennium Development Goals to fail is lack of relevant communication. He asserted that a comprehensive communication strategy is a necessary factor in disseminating research output. "As researchers we need to learn from each other as there is a great opportunity to complement one another" Prof Simala says. He made mentioned of need for the universities to move away from being the ivo-

ry towers. Researchers need to rethink in the way we apply our research.

Prof Simala observed that Research output should enhance understanding of development issues by mediating ideas across boundaries and between borders.

He added that there is a link between what we do and what the communities expect from us; hence we need to build bridges to enhance alignment between us and those that intend to impact.

We need to apply a new paradigm in dealing with our research objectives. We need to apply collaborative thinking and implementation.

When continuing with his presentation, he showed a need to adopt an attitude that supports the fact that research output should not remain theoretical but can be applied and implemented in the Millennium Development Goals.

"University roles which is teaching, learning, research and community engagement need to respond to SDGs. Universities are expected to develop and enhance relevant knowledge, attitude and skills to deal with the SDG. Universities are looked upon to lead in the production of efficient and effective professionals well suited to tackle the challenges that come with the SDG", says Prof Simala.

## Genetic characterization of HIV-1 vif and correlation with APOBEC3 variation in chronically infected South African treatment experienced patients



*Photo Above: Prof Bessong Pascal from the University of Venda, presented a paper on behalf of Ms Nontokozo Matume at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)*

Vif, an HIV protein, protects HIV from damage by a protein in our bodies called APOBEC3. Ms Nontokozo Matume, a PhD student in the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, University of Venda, South Africa, investigated changes in the APOBEC3 genes and how the changes compare with changes in the Vif gene.

She observed significant changes in the two genes in patients who have been infected for a long time. Her next investigation is to find out if these changes have an impact in the efficiency of HIV infecting new cells in these patients.



*Photo Above: Prof Asenath Sigot from (MMUST) making her presentation at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)*

## Acceptability of a mushroom enriched composite flour and porridge among infant/mother dyads (6-24 months) at Nabongo Dispensary in Kakamega.

In her presentation titled 'Acceptability of a mushroom enriched composite flour and porridge among infant/mother dyads (6-24 months) at Nabongo Dispensary in Kakamega, Prof Sigot told the delegates that Mushroom has been relished as a source of food and medicine throughout the world. She indicated that Mushroom powder has been incorporated in food supplements such as porridge flour.

She said that, you should look at the facial expression of the child when you give the child this porridge for the first time and their behavior as well. She noted that the porridge was generally accepted.

In conclusion she mentioned that the study concluded that both MMUSTMUG flour and porridge were acceptable among the study population and considering its nutritional benefits, it can be recommended as a complementary food.



*Photo Left: Displaying Mushroom porridge and other related products*

# A study discovers WhatsApp being the preferred social media platform for university undergraduates for political communication



In Action: Elvis Chamegere rendering his presentation at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)



Mr Elvis Chamegere, a Masters student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) presented a paper entitled, 'Media and Politics: Utilization of Social Media in Student Elections at Masinde Muliro University in Kenya'.

Mr Chamegere said that his research was influenced by the ideology that, the advent of social media has brought with it new ways of communicating and interacting. He further told the audience that the social networking sites have become quite popular in the recent past especially among the youth. He said these social networks are not only being accessed on computers but also on mobile devices.

Mr Chamegere continued to argue that the capability of social media to allow individuals to share their experiences, opinions and ideas is being seen as an enabler for political participation and democracy among the youth. He expressed that his study's specific objective was to assess the frequency of use of social media; analyse the type of social media used and to assess the effectiveness of social media on student's

elections. Survey design was used backed by Goffman's framing theory.

He further told the audience that his study found out that the social media that is frequently and mostly used is WhatsApp, followed by Facebook, making WhatsApp a preferred way of political communication among students and those who rigorously used social media in elections emerging victors. The study continued to argue that Conventional media has taken a centre stage in political communication with Television, radio and others taking the bigger share of political communication but social media is taking over as the driving force for political communication.

"Human interaction has been transformed and everyone is connected to the other in the vast network generated by the Internet. The Internet has made people global citizens by connecting millions across the World and spreading knowledge," he substantiated. He highlighted that the primary goal of this study was to define the utilization of social media with a sense of revealing the most useful social media tool. According

to the findings of his study, WhatsApp is the preferred social media platform for university undergraduates for political communication and generally online presence. The study again validated that WhatsApp offers university students the opportunity to send messages without limits and create groups that allow engagements within forums based on their affiliations and can easily and freely raise support or opposition.

The study recommended that the university management should develop short courses that will enhance the use of social media and laws that will manage the use of each media tool used by students. University lecturers could be encouraged to incorporate social media use in learning as a way of encouraging greater student use. He said, "With the world evolving, there is a need to encourage students to embrace the use of technology during elections but it should be done under guidelines and proper regulations. Law makers should formulate and pass laws that will effectively manage use of social media but not infringe on freedoms provided for by the Kenyan constitution.

## Government agencies, civil society and community members must work together to sustain peace among Kenyan sub-counties

'Opportunities for Sustainable Peace in Nyakach and Sigowet Sub-Counties of Western Kenya' was the title of the study conducted and presented by James Omondi. This Masters student of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) highlighted that ethnic conflicts have remained a major concern in the post-cold world war, and this has been seen through the conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s and in other parts of the world.

Omondi continued to explain that there have also been several attempts by various players including the United Nations to bring lasting peace in various parts of the world more so in Africa. He said Sub-Saharan Africa has been the most affected with ethnic conflicts bordering on struggles for political power and natural resources as well as other economic resources. "Rwanda, Uganda, Sudan and now South Sudan, Somali and Kenya are just a few countries that have been affected by ethnic conflicts," he said.

Focusing on his study, Omondi explained that Kenya as a country has had its fair share of ethnic conflicts since 1992 during the struggle of political pluralism. This researcher continued to observe that the conflicts have since then recurred over the years with similar conflicts experienced in 1992-1993, 1997, 2002 and 2007/2008 and in 2017. "Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties have been major hotspots for politically motivated ethnic conflicts since

1992 as he acknowledged the work by Nyongesa, 2016." The presenter continued to mention that, apart from Politics, the two sub-counties have also faced conflicts caused by cattle rustling, competition over land among other resources.

He pointed that, the major ethnic groups in the region are Luo and Kipsigis communities who have on many occasions found themselves on different sides of politics. Omondi explained that, other communities include, the Kisii and Luhya communities. This MMUST student who has already submitted his research work discovered that there are several initiatives that have been conducted by the government and other non-state actors in efforts to curb the recurrence of ethnic conflicts across the area including NGOs and religious leaders. "However, the conflicts have kept on re-emerging in various parts of the country despite all these initiatives."

He stated that the study sought to establish the presence of peace initiatives in Nyakach and Sigowet Sub-counties. Omondi elaborated that the findings of his study were that, peace initiatives present in the area included sporting activities, inter-community dialogue meetings that were organised by the faith based organizations through public barazas that were held at the chief's camps. He further said that, peace caravans were often common in the area especially during election periods and which were targeting the youth to maintain peace in the area. Omondi continued to express that social media platforms such as Facebook were used to reach out to the youth in the area to maintain peace.

"The Kericho Youth Bunge which is one of the major platforms NGOs provided humanitarian support to people displaced by the conflict and also supported activities that were aimed at restoration of peace in the study area through workshops,

dialogues and conferences," He said. Omondi said the use of police was the most common method used by the government to restore peace in the area. He further said that the humanitarian support was meant to help the communities to move on after the conflicts to avoid incidences of revenge attacks.

The study concludes that there are a number of peace initiative and opportunities for sustainable peace in Nyakach and Sigowet sub-counties. The peace initiatives in the area were mostly reactive to the conflicts, were poorly coordinated and thus failed to address the root causes of the conflicts thus leading to recurrence of conflicts in the area.

Omondi recommended that, there should be improved working relationship between the government agencies, civil society and the community members so as to make the peace initiatives more effective. Additionally, there is need for strengthening of the indigenous mechanisms of conflict resolution and the integration of this indigenous mechanism with formal mechanism including the judiciary.



Photo Above: Mr James Omondi, Masters student of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) rendering his presentation at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)



On Photo Above: Prof Isaac Odeo Ipara, Vice-Chancellor of Kibabii University, delivering a key note address at the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018).

## Language: an imperative recipe for generation and dissemination of knowledge

*AFRICAN LANGUAGES REMAIN AN IMPERATIVE RECIPE TO GENERATION AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

During his presentation, Prof Isaac Odeo Ipara, Vice-Chancellor of Kibabii University, emphasized that African languages remain an imperative recipe to generation and dissemination of knowledge for sustainable development. Language, knowledge generation, and knowledge dissemination have grown tremendously through globalization and the advancement of information technology. The main catalyst of this phenomenon has been globalization and the growth of information technology.

Prof Ipara further noted that language, knowledge generation and dissemination was affected from time of the scramble for Africa and the colonial history. During this

time, there was an introduction and transmission of colonial values through colonial languages such as English, Portuguese, French, and this has still continued even after independence.

The role of African Higher Education Institutions should be appreciated in leading the development of languages to levels where they can take their rightful position although complemented by other languages. Language enhances communication and interaction and remains an important role as a resource and commodity for interaction among various players. Prof Ipara contends that what seems to remain a challenge for African Higher Education institutions is that the political will to break

away from the colonial policy and practice of limiting mother-tongue education to lower primary classes, remains lacking.

In view of the critical place of language to mankind, it is clear that without language, the exchange of human resources as well as creation and sharing of information across borders, encouraged and accelerated by internationalization could not possibly occur; says Prof Ipara. In Europe, language is not a big problem as in Africa. Despite demonstrable improvement over the past decade, the creation of new knowledge in the form of patents and published research articles from Africa is far less than should be expected.



# FIRST PAN AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONGRESS

Hosted by Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology (MMUST), Kakamega- Kenya in partnership with University of Venda (UNIVEN) - South Africa, Walter Sisulu University (WSU)-South Africa; Botswana International University of Science & Technology (BIUST)-Botswana, and University of Ibadan (UI)- Nigeria.

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