



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

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Decolonisation of African Universities



Education is critical in promoting political, social and economic development of any country



Photo Above: His Excellency Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, Governor Kakamega County Delivering his Speech during the Official Opening of the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018)

IT IS CRITICAL FOR AFRICAN STATES TO DEVELOP MECHANISM FOR INCREASING RESEARCH FUNDING

Kisumu- On Tuesday, 19 June 2018, His Excellency Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, Governor Kakamega County gave a talk during the Official Opening of the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018). The official opening took place at the Grand Royal Swiss Hotel in Kisumu.

He gave credit to the Leadership of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) for working tirelessly by fostering close collaboration with the County Government of Kakamega at various levels including research and training programmes as well as organization of conferences, cultural events and related activities. The Honorable Oparanya mentioned that education is critical in promoting political, social and economic development of any country.

He told the audience that education is expected to provide an all-round development of its recipients to enable them overcome prevailing challenges and therefore play effective roles in their immediate society. He further expressed that, it is imperative that state and county authorities work hand in hand to deliver meaningful and adequate education to the citizens. To this end, excellence in academic work should never be an end in itself." Rather, society should focus on the relevance of knowledge, skills, and values it wishes its learners to acquire. This should be the focus not just in Kenya but also in Africa and the entire world. All our nations, especially in Africa, have made commendable efforts to direct their educational endeavours towards national goals and promotion of human values."

He highlighted that, it is the responsibility of academia to identify gaps which require attention, research and imple-

mentation to enable sustainable solutions to our society's key needs beyond social and political issues. Furthermore, His Excellency Hon Oparanya said that research plays a very crucial role in socio-economic development of any society and it can lead to improvement of the quality of peoples' lives e.g. by increasing life expectancy, enhancing agricultural productivity and food security and developing technologies that will simplify people's lives. "Research has been responsible for the economic prosperity currently enjoyed by all developed nations, he said."

In conclusion, His Excellency-Hon Oparanya spoke about fastening economic development in Africa. He said it is important for African states to have clear strategies of undertaking research and of establishing technology firms for prosperity. As such, he mentioned that it is critical for African states to develop mech-

anism for increasing research funding and accountability monitoring on the usage of research funds and also develop ways of attracting private sector to engage in research by promoting public-private partnerships through various arrangements.

“We will all be winners if we have peace on the entire continent. Peace should spread to Southern Sudan; Ethiopia and Eritrea; the Democratic Republic of Congo all the way to Central Africa Republic; from Saudi Arabia, Democratic Republic to Morocco, as well as Tunisia, Libya and beyond. We need to join hands and help heal our continent!

I urge you all as Ambassadors of our great continent, to pass this message of peace and development to your respective countries and communities, so that we can lift Africa and the world to higher levels of development otherwise we shall not reap the fruits of the various research work being undertaken by you without peace,” He concluded.



On Photo: Cultural dance group rendering performance outside the main hall where the official opening took place



(L-R) Kenya Government Officials and MMUST Vice-Chancellor, Prof Eng. Fred Otieno (Extreme left), Dr Jeremy Bundi, Governor Oparanya, Dr Peter Muthoka, Mr Peter Okwanyo and Jecinta Odhiambo, The Kakamega County Secretary. photographed in front of the entrance of the hotel where the congress official opening ceremony was held

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Africa has the ability to come to the top of Research ladder



Dr Peter Muthoka, the Chancellor, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)

Speaking at the Official opening of the First Pan African Congress, the Chancellor of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), Dr Peter Muthoka said that he is proud to have this Congress organized and hosted by his institution, MMUST, in collaboration with the national and international partners. He said that he was always wondering when will Africa move faster in developing and this was bothering him for many years. Dr Muthoka said that he hopes that the question will be addressed by this great congregation of brilliant men and women from the continent and beyond. "We need to come together in transforming our world, and work towards achieving the 2030 sustainable development goals."

Dr Muthoka observed that this is a very relevant theme at this stage of our development, "it is a theme well chosen" as he congratulates the organizers of this Congress. Dr Muthoka advised African academics and researchers to increase their efforts and improve on their personal and institutional performance at the local, regional, and global scenes. He said Africa has the ability to come to the top of the ladder. "As our Chancellor in the University of East Africa, Mwalimu Dr Julius Nyerere taught us from 1963 to 1966 that it can be done," he said.

Dr Muthoka highlighted that his personal conviction is that the slower development of Africa, and the performance of African academic and research institutions lies in the way knowledge is generated and managed. He said African academics need to explore further and make more discoveries. He further encouraged delegates to achieve the goal at hand because the future of Africa lies in the hands of all Africans. "Africa must take charge of its own knowledge and innovations for successful development, especially in this digital era." Chancellor Muthoka concluded his talk by mentioning that the Higher Education Institutions have been identified as key drivers of wealth and employment creation of a country since they are a hot beds of the best mind in the country. He said they are the hub of a country's productivity through innovation and creativity. "Consequently, academia need to collaborate with industry to educate and train entrepreneurs."

THE CONGRESS SHOULD ECHO THE SPIRIT OF PAN AFRICANISM

Prof John Shiundu from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology who is also the Co-Chairperson of the International Research Congress Scientific Committee, when setting the direction of the Congress on day two, pointed out to the delegates that the thought and ideas to organize the 1st PAIRC in Knowledge Generation and Dissemination were mooted at the 2nd UNIVEN – WSU International Research Conference which was held at the Ranch Hotel in Polokwane, Limpopo Province – South Africa in October 2016.

This was done in the spirit of Pan Africanism to integrate the universities, researchers and people of Africa. The Vice-Chancellors of the five

institutions namely: UNIVEN, MMUST, WSU, BUIST and UI agreed to institutionalise the Pan African International Research on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination to be held in the continent periodically.

Prof Shiundu indicated that the congress theme “Harnessing Research Output for Sustainable Development is relevant and timely given the myriad of developing issues Africa is experiencing currently. He further indicated that the sub-themes address various development factors which are indigenous knowledge, science and technology, language and communication, environment, climate and water.

In his address, Prof Shiundu

highlighted the gist and purpose of the Congress which should be seen in the context of identity, social, economic and political concerns of Africa. Prof Shiundu stated that the Congress and later similar congresses or conferences should echo the historical concerns of Africa and African people.

“This Congress should and must be used as a platform to promote collaborative research and production of knowledge among African countries, universities and scholars. As we deliberate and share experience, let us do that in the spirit of Pan Africanism”, said Prof Shiundu as he concluded.



Prof John Shiundu (right) setting the direction of the congress

Association of African Universities should put up a bold face and work towards decolonizing the publishing and patenting industry

WE NEED TO DEVELOP JOINT RESEARCH PROPOSALS THAT RIDE ON HARMONIZED MASTERS, DOCTORATE AND POST-DOCTORAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

Prof Eng. Fred Otieno, the Vice-Chancellor, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) when addressing delegates noted that this is an event of its own kind, which ushers in a knowledge-focused renaissance of Pan-Africanism, and forms basis for informed approaches towards developing this continent and its institutions. He said through interrogating the approaches they

hope to improve the lives of citizens of Kenya. "Our core mission is to generate knowledge and technologies that would guide the African continent to successfully implement the Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) by the year 2030." He observed that he has always decried the situation in the African continent. Prof Eng. Otieno further mentioned that, many Africans have remained illiterate and

condemned unemployment and poverty. He said hunger, disease and war still remain critical challenges in our society. "Our institutions, especially universities and research centres, have been struggling to sustain themselves amidst the possible threat of being rendered irrelevant in their functions, and a number of them are fighting against the risk of just ultimately collapsing into ruins. We should seek new



On Photo: Prof Eng. Frederick A. O. Otieno, MMUST Vice-Chancellor



On Photo: Dignitaries

ways to stem this decline.”

In his opinion, he said both decision-making and implementation are key to national, institutional and personal development. However, he pointed out that, decision-making and implementation require proper information that relates to the actual problem. Policy development and implementation in Africa needs to be driven through a structured system of knowledge

generation and dissemination. Prof Eng. Otieno said that, as a scholar, he is deeply concerned that many policies are developed without focusing on the information and situation on the ground; other policies are adopted from foreign sources and adapted without consideration of the actual problems and needs of African countries, their institutions and the people. He highlighted that this has made it very difficult for Africa to develop or adopt

different institutions and countries.”

He spoke about publishing and patenting, which are at the heart of the career of Academics, Researchers and Innovators.

Prof Eng. Otieno concluded by highlighting that African universities and research institutions have been rated very low in these areas, hence less competitive. “I am yet to be convinced that our huge amounts of manuscripts rejected by foreign journals are wholly substandard, and lack ideas that could at least help transform this continent. I also do not believe that our manuscripts are safe in foreign hands.”

He challenged African governments through the African Union and other networks like the Association of African Universities, to put up a bold face and work towards decolonizing the Publishing and Patenting industry.

FIRST PAN AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONGRESS

technologies that are appropriate for Africa. Africans have been trapped into a situation that condemns them to be less relevant in global transactions, while limiting their capacity to exploit their own resources.

“We need to develop joint research proposals that ride on harmonized Masters, Doctorate and Post-Doctoral exchange programmes. We also need to create opportunities for mobility of our Academics and Researchers between



Photo Above: Mr Peter Okwanyo Speaking on behalf of Ambassador Dr Amina Mohamed EGH

Kenya is proud to host this highly regarded research event

In her absence, Cabinet Secretary for Education in the Government of Kenya, Ambassador Dr Amina Mohamed EGH, sent a detailed speech to offer message of support as she could not be able to attend the Congress official opening due to other commitments.

In her speech, Ambassador Dr Amina Mohamed EGH said that the Government of Kenya is proud to host the First Pan African International Research Congress on Knowledge Generation and Dissemination in Africa (PAIRC-2018). She said this conference will serve as a platform for harnessing research output in addressing sustainable development goals. Dr Mohamed EGH thanked all the partners for such a great initiative.

She highlighted that Kenya is proud to host this highly regarded research Congress with full support from the Ministry of Education, an indication of the emphasis the Ministry places on research and education in general.

“For a long time, universities have been looked at as ‘ivory towers’ in terms of knowledge generation; producing knowledge ‘for knowledge sake’. We must strive to ensure that the knowledge created is used to roundly respond to the needs of society as well as inform relevant policies. A conference like this one must therefore concern itself with knowledge dissemination and use.”

Dr Mohamed EGH, further highlighted that we must not just

develop partnerships to produce knowledge, but have even stronger partnerships to share the knowledge. She said she therefore hopes that this congress will not just be another ‘talk shop’ but will come up with tangible recommendations to be christened ‘1st PAIRC Declaration’. This declaration could focus on key conference sub theme areas and act as a bench mark for future congress of this nature.

She concluded her speech by mentioning that a conference like this one is thus an important one as issues of empowerment, engagement and ethics are at the heart of any research.

“To this end, we need to develop competitive research globally as we pace towards the SDG’s.”

Consistently high prevalence of parasitic agents of infectious diarrhoea: The case of the Vhembe District in Limpopo



Photo Above: Professor Samie Amidou

Professor Samie Amidou gave an account of the prevalence of parasitic parasites in the Vhembe District (Limpopo, South Africa) as well as the factors that make those organisms to cause the disease. He showed that parasites such as *Entamoeba histolytica*, *Giardia lamblia* and *Cryptosporidium* are common among Humans, animals and the environment and there is potential for transmission of these pathogens between animals and humans although transmission from the environment seems to be the most common. The complex interaction between the host and the parasite leads to diarrhea, weight lost particularly among the female patients but also lead to growth shortfall among children. He also showed that the genetic characteristics of the people may also make them more susceptible to different pathogens and there is possibility to develop patients' specific treatments.

The congress is a very good opportunity to create collaboration among researchers in order to increase our understanding of the role of intestinal and other parasites on the health of our communities.



Photo Above: Dr Eunice Majanga

WOMEN TECHNICAL AGENDA REMAINS AT RISK

Whilst the UNESCO has in 2016, established an International Project on Technical and Vocational Training for Women, the future of this project remains bleak. The project is aimed at attaining, orientating and enhancing quality of technical and vocational training and education for all in support of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Dr Eunice Majanga of the University of Venda/MMUST has done research on the application of the Affirmative Action policy in enhancing women participation in the technical and vocational training of women.

The Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics has also identified the technical and vocational training and education as a key element for employability, innovation and sustainable development the aim of which is to improve access of women in technical education through development of specific programmes. This is done in an effort to increase enrolment of women thus promoting equity in education through the TVET institutions and the resultant effect being women empowerment and quality of life for women and girls.

In the study conducted in the western region of Kenya, Majanga discovered that there remains a high increase in enrolment of males compared to females and there are serious gender disparities in enrolment, access, retention completion as well as performance. Majanga established that the major influences to the above are cultural stereotypes on female performance, lack of role models as well as social cultural barriers. It has been established that part of these stereotypes related to the cultural beliefs amongst most communities that discourage women from enrolling for vocational career training opportunities. As a result, this creates gender inequalities.

Dr Majanga calls for effective policy intervention, mentorship programmes and support for job placement. This can only be done through intensive stakeholder engagement.



Photo Left: Dr P Buhere, from the Department of Educational Planning and Management at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

Infertility within universities must be challenged!

Just like a couple that has spent 20 years in marriage, and suddenly get a surprise pregnancy; they realize that they were capable of bearing a child! Many universities are unable to nurture the romantic moments within themselves. They stay with barren-like researchers, who yet they are so full of potential to bear children, they rather give up because of a number of factors; most of which have a negative impact on their research focus.

Many universities in Africa are currently handling uninspired and overworked lecturers. Such pressure coupled with increased students' enrolment and heavier workloads leaves no room for lecturers to explore their individual creativity or do more than classroom work.

In her study, Dr P Buhere, from the Department of Educational Planning and Management at Masinde Muliro University of Science and

Technology, sought to establish individual and institutional based factors that motivate academic staff to carry out research at universities. Academic staff in universities are factors of production for the universities, argues Buhere. "Their performance as teachers and researchers determines the quality of the graduates and the degree of research output they produce in these universities, and recognizing them is crucial in determining the motivation of this nerve center," says Buhere. It is so unfortunate that universities in Africa are currently handling uninspired and overworked lecturers.

Motivation and incentives are the only potential sources to unlock the research capacity within universities. The two aspects, having been re-iterated by several speakers at the congress, including the Vice-Chancellors' Roundtable discussions, calls for universities to begin to address issues of researcher motivation extensively.

Dr Buhere established that most research work in universities is carried out by academics between ages 41- 50, leaving out early career and advanced career academics. Furthermore, the study revealed that most of the academic staff are trained, capable, eager and willing to engage in research activities but are hampered by funding constraints as well as teaching overload and university politics. In short there are both individual and institutional factors that need to be urgently addressed in order to unlock the research capacity within universities. In fact, some of the researchers, only engage in research for purposes being lecturers, need for recognition or career projection. Some of the institutional factors that affect or even kill research appetite involves heavy loads in the form of large classes, non-effective or passive research policies as well as no rewards.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) work in the Spirit of Partnership



Photo Above: Prof. Peter Mbatl, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor Academics and Quality, Botho University in Botswana Delivering his speech

On the second day of the Congress, Prof Peter Mbatl, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor Academics and Quality, Botho University in Botswana, delivered a presentation as a follow-up of the Vice-Chancellors' Symposium which was focusing on the sharing of experience on their role in the promotion of research and knowledge dissemination.

"This is a follow up of the mandate that has been given to our institutions in calling up our institutions to play their role in enhancing the 17 Millennium Development Goals aimed at enhancing a better life for the future generations". Prof Mbatl noted. He further indicated that sustainable development involves development currently not adversely affecting future generation.

The African continent resembles a vibrant part of our globe as it embraces a

"We must create a degree of autonomy in our institutions notwithstanding the public accountability required"

variety of cultures, challenges and attractions. As a result, our institutions should assist in gathering knowledge that will ensure that living in these countries can be possible.

"We must create a degree of autonomy in our institutions notwithstanding the public accountability required", Prof Mbatl said.

Furthermore, we must enhance the required resources to enable our

institutions to perform to the required level in our economies.

With regards to the areas of improvement, he said universities must constantly review their curriculum to adjust to the different challenges faced by our governments.

Our universities must be held to high standards in the resolve of challenges facing our continent.

The national regime in research funding that relies on foreign donors must be done away with and be replaced by an autonomous funding system supported by government, industry and sustainable mechanisms to ensure that there is constant support for research objectives and the Millennium Development Goals.



On Photo: Prof Catherine Ngila, Deputy Director – Training, Academic and Linkages (TAL), Morendat Institute of Oil and Gas Delivering her presentation on the 4th Revolution

Harnessing Research Output through Sustainable Development: Fourth Industrial Revolution

WE SHOULD BE GUIDED BY AFRICANISM IN ALL OUR COLLABORATIONS.

In her opening remarks, Prof Ngila noted that African Union Agenda Vision 2063 highlighted strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent to accelerate the implementation of the past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development.

Prof Ngila indicated that we cannot escape from technology, but we must also enhance

human resources requirements.

She alluded to the fact that universities must play a key role in the socio-economic development of the continent.

Prof Ngila said there is a need for countries in Africa to start working together in enhancing industrialization which will be the key driver to economic development. She further said

that countries should also begin to consolidate their development strategies towards a green economy. We should be guided by Africanism in all our collaborations.

We need to be considerate of the unique challenges and environments embracing us, as we chat the way in developing our continent and meeting our Millennium Development Goals.

Effects Of Early Marriage On Internationalisation Of Higher Education Among Young Women In Vhembe District, South Africa



Photo Above: Dr Olusegun Obadire

Dr Olusegun Obadire presented on the effect of Early Marriage on Internationalization of Higher Education among young women in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. According to Dr Obadire, the study revealed that Early marriages are influenced by parents, religions, cultures, traditions, insecurity, political, poverty, and financial reasons. Many who already fall victim find it difficult to participate in international mobility because of their babies and husbands.

African Union (2015), says 10% of women in Zimbabwe and 7% in South Africa experienced violence during their pregnancy. There are legislations that prohibit any male over 18 years of age to enter into a marriage with a

minor and that anyone who directs or conducts a child marriage ceremony can be punished with up to two years of imprisonment or a fine (Act of Child Marriage, 2006) yet the practice continues unabated. The study used a theoretical framework of Modern radical feminist - the theory of patriarchy which sees the oppression of women as the most fundamental and universal form of domination, and its aim is to understand and end this; here 'patriarchy' is a key term.

Major findings from the study stated that it was difficult for many 'to participate in international studies because of taking care of babies' and families. The study also revealed that many 'experienced emotional stress and deprivation

after marriage' which later resulted into depression and stigmatization.

Many young women who are already married could not participate in international studies even if there is scholarship for them hence many could not break the cycle of poverty in their home front. The study recommended awareness creation on the negative effects of early marriages. Parents, traditional and religious leaders should encourage the young women to marry at least after their first university degree.

Provision of scholarship and mobility that accommodate women with their babies to travel abroad should be encouraged.



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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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