

Research Productivity in Kenya

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Introduction

- Available statistics indicate that Kenya is losing ground as a producer of scholarly content both globally and regionally.
- The trend is worrying and is an indication of less scholarly work in the country.
- Efforts are being made to address this challenge but clear results are yet to be obtained this far.

Philosophy

- Most scholars in Kenya publish merely to cope with the pressure to “publish or perish”.
- The scholars are not interested in scholarly work for the sake of it but because they must do it to survive.
- Many times you hear scholars saying they have stopped publishing because they have exceeded expectations.

Factors Affecting Productivity

- The philosophy of publishing merely to remain in the system.
- Heavy teaching loads (some universities have positions for research professors).
- Heavy administrative and committee duties hogging research time.
- Poor remuneration leading to scholars going for consultancies and part time work.

Factors Affecting Productivity

- Commercialisation of university education leading to “money mindedness”.
- Inadequate funding and facilitation of research projects.
- Inadequate research and publishing skills amongst scholars.
- Poor incentives and rewarding framework for research excellence.

Factors Affecting Productivity

- Lazy mentality where scholars want to harvest the most with least effort (predatory journals).
- Professional associations have not prioritised research production.
- Academic departments and universities do not have scholarly journals.
- There is no acceptable framework to assess research excellence in Kenya.

Remedies

- Reduced teaching load.
- Networking and co-authoring.
- Training and mentorship on research.
- Increased funding of research.
- Incentive and reward schemes for researchers.
- Create positions of research professors.
- Establish departmental journals.

Remedies

- Establish research facilities (laboratories).
- Reduce the number of universities (save cash).
- Create industry-university research linkages.
- Enhance intellectual property rights.
- Develop research policies and ethics.
- Align research to development agenda.
- Create research excellence framework.