

## **Abstract**

This book gives an interesting insight into the politics that face HE in Kenya, the history of public universities and the growth of private universities – many of which are only for the wealthy. The government wants to ensure equal opportunities for everyone and, just like HE in the UK, wants to widen access.

Throughout the book there are examples of mismanagement caused by political pressure and unco-ordinated planning. Staff to student ratios in the public universities are astoundingly low: as little as 1:12 owing to many courses with low numbers. The book describes how public universities are changing from being viewed with suspicion to being viewed more positively, yet also tells of mismanagement and a much needed staff development programme.

Private university research is based on four case studies. There are ongoing debates as to whether tuition fees are affordable for the average Kenyan. The private universities show that they are financially liquid and have sound management strengths.

A beauty of the book lies in its cover, featuring 12 different black Kenyan faces. They illustrate the struggles discussed in the book: access, inequality and limitation of choice – but does this image really capture the spirit of widening participation and an inclusive approach to a very diverse population?