

## **Memoirs: Surviving the Academic Arena: My complex journey to the Apex.**

### **Abstract:**

**SURVIVING THE ACADEMIC ARENA: MY COMPLEX JOURNEY TO THE APEX** recounts the true story of Francis John Gichaga, a survivor, who from a humble background rose in the academic and management ranks to become a leading scholar and university manager during the turbulent years of transition to multiparty system of governance in Kenya. His narrative as Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi, depicts the turmoil of a public institution in Kenya during the difficult period in terms of economic sustainability and political upheavals. His ability to manage the volatile situations at the University was as unique as his ability to survive and thrive from humble beginnings. This is evident throughout the memoirs. The book teaches us never to give up in spite of seemingly insurmountable challenges. Readers will find the memoirs quite inspirational. Francis John Gichaga is Professor of Civil Engineering. He holds PhD in Highway Engineering (UON, 1980), MSc in Civil Engineering (UON, 1971), and BSc, Civil Engineering, Hons, (UON, 1968). He is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers of Kenya, and a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers in the United Kingdom. He has published widely in his areas of specialization – transport engineering and engineering drawing. He has served in many positions of responsibility including the position of Chairman, the National Council for Science and Technology, and honoured with several awards including the Highest Award of Honour by Soka University, Tokyo, Japan, in 1992. He became Chancellor, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in January 2010. "As I wrote the first draft of these memoirs, there was a change of government in Kenya, which brought degrees of freedom including bringing to light startling revelations about some of the excesses which were going on during those turbulent years. The revelations confirmed my earlier belief that I had survived at the helm of the University of Nairobi by the grace of the Almighty God to whom I am greatly indebted," Prof. Francis John Gichaga