A Governance Approach to the Management of Quality Assurance in the University for Development Studies, Ghana

Richard Nalarb Yakubu
University for Development Studies, Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Tamale, Ghana, E-mail:yanarichard@gmail.com
Suuk Laar
University for Development Studies, Institute of Interdisciplinary Research and Consultancy Services, Tamale, Ghana
Gilbert Ansoglenang
University for Development Studies, Office of the Principal, Navrongo Campus, Navrongo, Ghana

Abstract: The study examines the structure of governance of quality assurance in the University for Development Studies, Ghana. The study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design. The data was obtained through in-depth interviews and document study. Three staff of the Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance and 13 Faculty/School Quality Assurance Officers were interviewed. The study revealed that quality assurance governance in the University has evolved over the years and there is devolution of quality assurance activities to the Quality Assurance Officers and Committees in the Campuses of the University. However, what remains unresolved is the full implementation of the governance structure as stipulated in the Quality Assurance Policy of the University. The paper recommends that there should be key appointments of qualified personnel to fill the staff gap to make the quality assurance governance structure functional. It is further recommended that the independence and integrity of the Quality Assurance Committees at the Faculty/School and Departmental level need to be ensured by excluding Deans and Heads of Departments from the Committees.

Keywords: Quality assurance, governance, higher education institutions, Ghana

Introduction

The human capital of a nation, which is the most important factor of production, ensures the economic success of the nation. The quality of human capital is, in turn, influenced and fuelled by the quality of the educational system. Human capital, which is expressed in the form of knowledge, skills, creativity and cherished social values is obtained from the quality of education given to the population (Pavel, 2012). The quality of knowledge provided by higher education institutions (HEIs) is a crucial component of national competitiveness and the comparative advantage in higher education. Quality education does not only sharpen the minds and skills of individuals but also fosters the transformation agenda of countries. Therefore, countries can attain their sustainable development through the development of their human capital (World Bank, 2004).

The plethora of changes in the field of higher education is fuelled by political, economic and socio-cultural forces that have occurred in the second part of the 20th century. These waves of changes among others include funding regimes, educational technologies, greater diversity of students as well as diversity of academic programmes to match with industrial needs (Požarnik, 2009; Coughlan, 2015). At the same time, these changes have triggered a concern about the quality of education offered by universities (Massy, 2003; Amaral, 2007; Martin and Stella, 2007; Becket and Brookes, 2008). This has necessitated a formal approach to dealing with quality through schemes of quality assurance in comparison to what it was required in the conventional elite universities (Brennan and Shah, 2000). Accordingly, many countries across the world have embraced formal quality assurance structures with the resolve to standardise and improve quality of their higher education systems. Notwithstanding, the non-existence of consensus over what constitute quality, formal quality assurance at the moment is a topical component of reform and policy in HEIs so as to

meet the expectations of both internal and external stakeholders of educational services (Kennedy, 2003).

The establishment of Quality Assurance units and structures has been common across the tertiary education landscape worldwide. In Ghana, all tertiary institutions irrespective of whether they are publicly or privately owned must establish quality assurance structures. This requirement is in tandem with the mandate of the National Accreditation Board (NAB) that the establishment of Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) is a statutory requirement in tertiary institutions in Ghana (NAB, 2011). In the case of the University for Development Studies, the Quality Assurance Unit came into being in the year 2008 following consultations with the relevant stakeholders of the University.

There are several studies on quality assurance in universities but there is no empirical study on the governance approach to the management of quality assurance in a multi-campus University setting such as the University for Development Studies. Some recent empirical studies by Seniwoliba and Yakubu (2015) as well as Seniwoliba (2014) focused on quality assurance in public universities in general. Other studies such as Okae-Adjei (2012); Tsevi (2014) and Boateng (2014); as well as Badu-Nyarko (2013) highlighted quality assurance in polytechnics, private tertiary institutions and distance learning respectively. The studies carried out by Seniwoliba (2014) and Okae-Adjei (2012) in particular were general and mainly focused on the student lifecycle framework; Tsevi (2014) analysed the institutional and accreditation of academic programmes; Boateng (2014) assessed barriers within private tertiary institutions in Ghana on quality assurance; and Badu-Nyarko (2013) ascertained quality assurance in undergraduate distance education in the University of Ghana. Seniwoliba and Yakubu (2015) also looked at quality assurance policies in a Ghanaian university with particular reference to the University for Development Studies.

In the light of the areas examined by the studies above, this study aims at examining the governance aspect of the implementation of

internal quality assurance of the University for Development Studies. The study will be beneficial to the research community as it contributes to the management of quality assurance in a multi-campus university setting. This paper is structured in the following order: the section after the introduction is the literature review on quality and quality assurance in the higher education setting. This is followed by the nexus of governance and quality assurance. The subsequent section sheds light on the method and results, while the final section presents the conclusions and offers some recommendations regarding the management of quality assurance in the University for Development Studies.

Literature Review

Quality and Quality Assurance

Quality has increasingly become a very important aspect of HEIs across the world. This is based on the strong justification that attaining competitive advantage in the midst of massification and internationalisation of higher education requires quality in the training of students. In the case of Ghana, quality of higher education is not a new idea and has been an implicit concern since the establishment of Ghana's first university (University of Ghana) in 1948. Chacha (2002) therefore, thinks that universities worldwide are expected to ensure quality and excellence, responsiveness, equity, effectiveness and efficiency in educational services provisioning, good institutional governance and management of resources in a manner that fosters excellence.

The word 'quality' has its foundation in the industrial and commercial setting in the 1980s and has found its way into the field of higher education (Okae-Adjei, 2012). As a result, quality has no absolute definition in the context of higher education. Therefore, the relative

definition of quality requires judgement against a set of benchmarks or standards (Crozier et al., 2006). Quality is a value judgement with diverse interpretation by educational stakeholders such as governments, non-teaching staff, teaching staff and students, among others. Quality can be likened to beauty, which is based on personal judgement (Doherty, 2008).

In spite of the difficulty in defining quality in higher education, Mishra (2007) contended that the whole concept of quality revolves around some focal ideas such as quality as *absolute* (quality considered as a standard that can be measured across a scale), quality as *relative* (described relative to specific situations), quality as *a process* which embraces procedures and outcomes of the system, and quality as *a culture* which is imbibed by organisations as a transformative drive towards the attainment of the organisational goals. Mishra noted that HEIs are more inclined to quality as a culture although other thematic areas of quality have a special place in the educational institutions. Harvey (1997), on the other hand, identified five distinguishable aspects of quality with respect to higher education. These five aspects of quality are: quality as exceptional, quality as perfection, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money as well as quality as transformation. Some of these definitions of quality have produced ambivalence among a host of scholars in their application in the educational setting. For instance, the aspect of quality as perfection cannot be applied to higher education because institutions do not aim to produce graduates that are free of defects or meet all the dynamics of the labour market (Watty, 2003).

The definition of quality by different stakeholders leans on the multi-dimensional, multilevel and dynamic nature of the concept. This in turn relates to the circumstantial milieu of the model of education, vision and mission of institutions and specific standard set forth in a given system as well as the academic discipline (Pavel, 2012). Therefore, countries are likely to define quality differently based on their specific higher education policy and goals. This paper adopts the

definition of quality as *fitness for purpose* which embraces the concept of meeting prior agreed guidelines or standards which may be defined by legal, institutional, academic/professional bodies and/or quality assurance agencies (Materu, 2007). In the different arena of higher education, fitness for purpose differs greatly by field and academic programme. However, fitness for purpose demands the delineation of the purpose as well as development of criteria referenced judgement (Doherty, 2008).

A multiplicity of factors affect quality in tertiary institutions which include but are not limited to the following: the vision and goals of the tertiary institution, teaching staff talent and specialisation, admission procedures and standards of assessment, the environment for teaching and learning, the employability of the graduates produced (i.e. the relevance of the graduates on the labour market), the quality of the library facilities including stock and e-learning materials, quality of laboratories for practical sessions, the effectiveness of management, governance structures and leadership (Seniwoliba, 2014). It is therefore imperative that HEIs put mechanisms in place in order to assure stakeholders of the quality of the education offered to students. Pavel (2012) noted that concerns about the quality of higher education are not a recent phenomenon because the various components of higher education such as governance, contents, pedagogical forms and the services provided have taken place in relation to assessments, monitoring, and improvement of quality. He added that what was new covers those developments which border on quality assurance and its management.

Quality assurance in universities as service organisations is relevant to stakeholders including students, parents/guardians and the government and it is an important aspect of the audit process. This is because quality assurance offers confidence in the value of higher education system and as a means to reverse decline in quality as result of dwindling resources, proliferation of the private sector into tertiary education provision, poor governance and inadequate qualified

academic staff to mention but a few (Materu, 2007). While quality assurance is noted to be important in higher education, the conceptualisation of quality assurance and quality management is still a contending question among stakeholders. Quality assurance is a deliberate and systematic process of the review of an institution or programme to ascertain whether or not agreed upon standards of education, scholarship, and infrastructure are met, maintained and enhanced (Hayward, 2001).

Quality assurance in the university system can be considered from two dimensions. The first aspect is the internal quality assurance while the second part is the external quality assurance. The internal quality assurance aims at ensuring that an academic programme or institution has laid down policies that guide its standards and objectives in its operations. The external quality assurance, on the other hand, is usually carried out or conducted by external agencies to keep the integrity of the tertiary institution system in check. The external quality assurance mechanisms usually involve accreditation, quality audit and quality assessment (Tsevi, 2014).

Accreditation usually involves the process of self-study and outside quality assurance review of higher education in order to ascertain that an institution and/or its programmes meet a set of rudimentary standards of quality and the need for improved quality (Seniwoliba, 2014). The process is intended to ascertain as to whether or not an institution has attained or exceeded basic publicly verifiable standards which are set by external bodies (such as NAB, NCTE, or other professional bodies in the case of Ghana) on the one hand and whether institutions are realising their documented mission and purpose on the other. The procedure commonly comprises a self-evaluation, a peer review process and a visit to the premises of the institution. The successful completion of the processes with satisfactory outcomes leads to programme or institutional accreditation by the external body (Seniwoliba, 2014). In short, accreditation output normally leads to a yes/no decision, although graduation can be possible. It is a widely used

method of quality assurance in both the global North and South (Viktoria, 2005).

Quality audit is also a process of appraisal or scrutinizing an institution or academic programme to ascertain whether the programme curriculum, academic staff, and infrastructure meet its outlined goals and objectives (Seniwoliba, 2014). The evaluation of an institution or its programmes is usually carried out by taking into consideration the mission, goals, and stated standards of the institution in question. The team of assessors are more concerned about the success of the institution in achieving its stated goals. The main areas of the audit are the accountability of the institution and programmes. Again, the process normally consists of a self-evaluation, a peer review and a visit to the premises of the institution. The audit can equally be self-managed or conducted by an external body (Seniwoliba, 2014). On the whole, a quality audit is carried out to ascertain the extent of accomplishing specified explicit or implicit goals and stated objectives of the institution (Viktoria, 2005).

A quality assessment is a periodic review of an institution or academic programme by a panel of experts upon which a final report is issued. It is a rigorous endeavour that requires institutions to prepare well in advance before the commencement of the assessment process. Quality assessment is a model of quality assurance involving managing agent(s), self-evaluation, external peer review and publication of reports. In a more germane manner, quality assessment seeks to improve the accountability of institutions to its stakeholders (Baryeh, 2009). Quality assessment is a quantitative evaluation about the quality based on graded judgement and seeks to answer the question "how good are your outputs?" (Viktoria, 2005, p.5).

In Ghana, the external quality assurance body is the NAB responsible for ensuring quality and improvement in higher education institutions. By and large, the NAB undertakes its external quality assurance responsibility by both institutional and programme accreditation. By this, HEIs are required to meet threshold

requirements that can be verified through self-study from documents prepared by institutions, accompanied by a visit of a panel of experts from the Board (Tsevi, 2014).

The American Society for Quality (2017) posits that quality assurance is a basic aspect of the audit function. This is due to the fact that quality assurance is used to match attained quality in contrast to the established standard for quality with the aim of determining deviations and to set in motion measures to deal with such deviations. As a result, the audit function cannot be carried out without recourse to quality assurance as a prelude to the audit decision. In the same way, audit of a higher degree which is a final product in the case of universities as service organisations should be carried out in the light of quality assurance. It is also important to point out that quality control and quality assurance have been used interchangeably in many domains but are not exactly the same. In the field of corporate audit, quality control and quality assurance are two intrinsic functions. Whereas quality control is characteristic of a product company, quality assurance on the other hand relates to a service company such as the university in the field of corporate audit (Ngwakwe and Ngoepe, 2017).

It is also important to stress that there are rudimentary principles that should be taken into account in quality assurance assessment such as reliability, validity, transparency, fairness, credibility, and academic integrity.

Governance and Quality Assurance Nexus

Governance is a cross-cutting issue that permeates all sectors of development and a major policy concern of the 21st century higher education (Kennedy, 2003). It is a key issue not only in higher education but the society at large. The way and manner in which organisations are managed and directed as well as organisational values are clear manifestations of what they stand for and function in society. It is a fact that the structure of governance of HEIs such as universities was not

questioned for the larger part of the 20th century (Kennedy, 2003). However, at the later part of the same century, major changes in higher education were undertaken including governments position on how universities were administered as well as the role of universities in national development. The demand for more accountability and intensified scrutiny of outside stakeholders challenged the conventional values of universities (Kennedy, 2003). Therefore, universities were required to meet the expectations of external stakeholders as part of shaping their focus in nation building.

According to Hénard and Mitterle (2010), the issue of governance in higher education has been required because of the following reasons: expansion in the tertiary education sector; diversity in the provisioning including programmes diversification and private sector participation; new pathways of delivery including distance and e-learning; heterogeneity of student composition including more females and mature students; ongoing internationalisation of higher education; and research and innovation which have leveraged new knowledge production. These factors continue to shape the focus of universities worldwide so as to meet the needs of the dynamic knowledge driven society.

Good governance in institutions of higher learning is an integral part of their success. Good governance as an extension of the concept of governance is simply a system which attempts to maintain the integrity of the value of an educational system while concurrently placing universities in relation to their bigger environment. This is to ensure that the educational system is responsive and accountable to external communication, demands and expectations of stakeholders (Hénard and Mitterle, 2010). There is no doubt that good governance can make institutions of higher learning more effective and efficient while maintaining the quality in the training of students.

It is impossible to decouple governance issues from quality in HEIs today. Universities have increasingly been expected to demonstrate greater accountability to stakeholders. This is because universities are

funded by tax payers' money and there is the need to ensure value for money or responsible use of public resources in the operations of universities. The trajectory of greater public accountability and transparency has developed parallels towards the autonomy of universities. These ideas reflect the recognition that the public has a keen interest in institutions of higher learning which should be in tandem with the benefits that are associated with the autonomy of universities. Therefore, the public interest as a matter of fact should necessarily be sustained in terms of guaranteed academic standards and quality, equity in student admission procedures and increased accessibility of students from less endowed families as well as ensuring internal efficiency in the use of public funds (Hénard and Mitterle, 2010).

There are many ways of ensuring universities are accountable to their constituents. One of the surest ways is through the adoption of quality assurance frameworks. These frameworks set out benchmarks and commitments against which the quality of universities can be measured. Apart from these quality assurance frameworks, performance-related funding, the interplay of the market forces and the involvement of outside stakeholders in the governing councils and/or bodies (i.e. having external representatives that would offer advice and support to the institution with regards to its mandate to society and provide constructive criticism on institutional results) are other aspects of maintaining the accountability of universities to their clientele (Hénard and Mitterle, 2010).

The issues of governance in universities, on the one hand, and of quality assurance, on the other, can be integrated and considered as two sides of the same coin in order to advance the course of complementarity among stakeholders. Quality instruments and tools in universities can serve as a catalyst of good governance and improve quality. The design and recommendation of appropriate governance arrangements in universities is likely to provide an opportunity for the state and intermediary bodies (such as quality assurance agencies,

university councils and donor/funding bodies) and HEIs to discuss pertinent issues for mutual benefit. The engagement of these stakeholders to discuss autonomy, accountability and delineation of responsibility expected by each stakeholder could widen the implementation of national regulations, explore new areas of autonomy and identify vital elements that could facilitate efficient governance of HEIs (Hénard and Mitterle, 2010).

Methodology

Research Design

For the study on the governance approach to the management of quality assurance, we used a qualitative descriptive research design. As posited by Bhattacherjee (2012), a descriptive research normally aims at conscientious observation and detailed notes taking on the phenomenon under study. Among the qualitative research approach, a case study method was employed to obtain the needed data for the study. The case study method is an approach of inquiry whereby the researcher conducts an in-depth study on a phenomenon of interest which could be a programme, an activity, an event, a process, or person(s) by the use of various procedures of data collection (Stake, 1995, cited in Creswell, 2003).

Sampling Technique and Data Collection

The researchers employed a non-probability technique of purposive sampling in order to obtain the primary data for the study. Purposive sampling technique involves the selection of participants for a study through the use of the researcher's special knowledge or expertise. The selection of the participants was based on the assumption that such participants possess certain attributes that make them suitable in eliciting appropriate response for the study. Purposive sampling is often

used in cases when the goal of the research is to give a detailed account of a situation instead of generalisation (Glassner et al., 1983, cited in Berg, 2001).

Documents published by quality assurance agencies such as NAB and NCTE were reviewed, coupled with the guidelines and reports produced by these agencies. The researchers also searched the official websites of the quality assurance agencies that provided further useful and detailed information which were related to the subject matter of the study. The Acts of Parliament of the Republic of Ghana which established these agencies were equally taken into account in the study. Apart from the aforementioned sources of information, the researchers also consulted books, journal articles and reports relevant to the study.

Interviewing was employed as the major method of primary data collection. In specific terms, unstructured interviews were carried out with three staff of DAPQA and 13 Faculty/School Quality Assurance Officers in the various Campuses of the University using semi-structured questionnaires. The flexibility that presents itself during interviews aided the researchers in being able to probe respondents for further explanation and probable clarifications when it was necessary.

Data Analysis

The study used a qualitative data analysis. It involves analysing non-numeric (qualitative) data from interviews and transcripts. In qualitative data analysis, much emphasis is placed on understanding the phenomena of interest in the social setting of the study (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Bearing this in mind, the researchers therefore, employed thematic analysis. It was carried out by data cleaning in the first instance. At this stage, the data collected was edited to deal with all errors and uncompleted statements in the course of filling the interview schedule. The researchers then read through the descriptive statements of the respondents in order to identify patterns of responses. This formed the basis for coding and categorisation of responses. The

analysis was then carried out based on the themes that emerged from the data.

Results and Discussion

Quality Assurance in the University for Development Studies

The research revealed that quality assurance in the University for Development Studies has evolved over time. The study showed that the formal approach to quality assurance in the University came into existence following a workshop that was organized on 29th April, 2008 for key stakeholders. The workshop paved the way for the establishment of the Quality Assurance Unit which was to fulfil one of the requirements of the PNDC Law 317 and its subsequent amendment into NAB Act 744, 2007. Act 744 stipulates that tertiary institutions should establish Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) within a maximum of five (5) years from the date of first accreditation. The Unit was therefore established as reported, based on the need to ensure quality teaching and learning in the University by improving academic standards, ensuring value for money and improved service delivery. Furthermore, it was envisaged that the image of the University could be boosted within and outside the country as well as make the graduates of the University more competitive in the global labour market through rigorous training and intellectual development acquired in the University.

The study showed that the internal quality assurance structures of the University have metamorphosed over the eleven years of their existence. The Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (DAPQA) as it is known today was originally called Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) in 2008 at its inception under the Office of the Vice-Chancellor. From QAU in 2008, the word "Academic" was added as a prefix to the original name, which gave it a new name Academic Quality Assurance Unit (AQAU). Since there was the need for the Unit to assume

more functions, the Unit was subsequently changed to the Directorate of Academic and Quality Assurance (DAQA). It is important to state that quality cannot be assured in the University without proper planning. A respondent stated that according to the view of the Management of the University, a new name of the internal quality assurance structure that embodies quality and planning was needed. Therefore, the current designation as "Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (DAPQA)" was adopted to reflect the new role of the Directorate in the University for Development Studies.

The functions of DAPQA as stated by the respondents and captured in the University Statutes and the Quality Assurance Policy of the University include:

➢ Vetting of examination results on behalf of the Academic Board;

➢ Orientation of newly appointed or upgraded (from Senior Research Assistants to either Assistant Lecturers or Lecturers) teaching staff;

➢ Students' assessment of courses and teaching staff;

➢ Monitoring of beginning of lectures at the various Campuses of the University;

➢ Vetting of proposals for new programmes to NCTE and NAB for approval and (re)accreditation respectively;

➢ Investigating appeals made by students for alleged involvement in examination malpractices; and

➢ Other duties assigned to the Directorate by the Vice-Chancellor.

Besides the above functions, the respondents also stated that the Directorate has been assigned a further responsibility of coordinating and handling affiliation request from non-charted tertiary institutions to the University.

Governance of Quality Assurance in the University for Development Studies

The study found that the management and governance of quality assurance in the University has undergone tremendous changes. The study showed that the governance of quality assurance in the University can conveniently be categorised into two phases as explained in the following subsections.

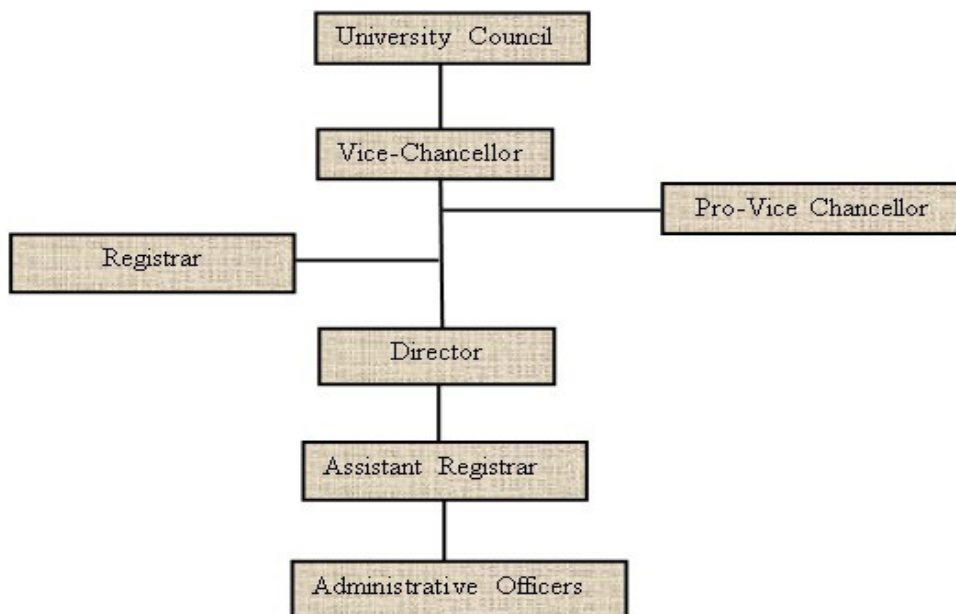Governance of Quality Assurance from the Period 2008 to 2014

The research found that the governance of quality assurance between 2008 and 2014 had a top-down approach. During this period, the DAPQA at the Central Administration was directly responsible for overseeing all quality related issues across the Campuses of the University. None of the staff or officers at the Campuses had specific role to play in the quality assurance activities of the University. Some functions of the Directorate which were to be carried out in the Campuses were done by staff of the Directorate or other staff selected by the Directorate to do so. For instance, the monitoring of beginning of lectures at the various Campuses of the University in the Tamale and Nyankpala Campuses were carried out by staff of DAPQA while in the Navrongo and Wa Campuses, Research Fellows from the then Institute of Continuing Education and Interdisciplinary Research (ICCEIR) had to carry out the exercise on behalf of DAPQA. The interaction with staff of the Directorate revealed that in order to sustain the zeal of staff engaged to perform assignments on behalf of the Directorate, they had to be motivated upon completion of the assigned task such as the monitoring of beginning of lectures exercise. In the case of student assessment of courses and lecturers, the researchers were informed that DAPQA had to rely on the benevolence and cooperation of Faculty

and/or School Officers to administer the appraisal forms to the students.

The respondents stated that other functions of the DAPQA were carried out solely by staff of the Directorate who had to sometimes travel to the Campuses to perform these functions such as investigations of appeals made by students for alleged involvement in examinations malpractices or other constituted investigations at the instance of the Vice-Chancellor or Management.

The respondents indicated that during this period, the issue of quality assurance was nascent and this has reflected in the initial organigram or governance structure of quality assurance in the University. At the time (from 2008 to 2014), the governance structure was quite simple with forward and backward linkages of communication among University Officers. The Director as the Head of Quality Assurance Structure of the University reported directly to the Vice-Chancellor or in their absence, to the Pro-Vice Chancellor. The University Council as the highest decision making body could demand from the Vice-Chancellor to draft a report on any quality assurance issue it was interested in or required. The Director in carrying out their assigned duties was assisted by an Assistant Registrar and by Administrative Officer(s).
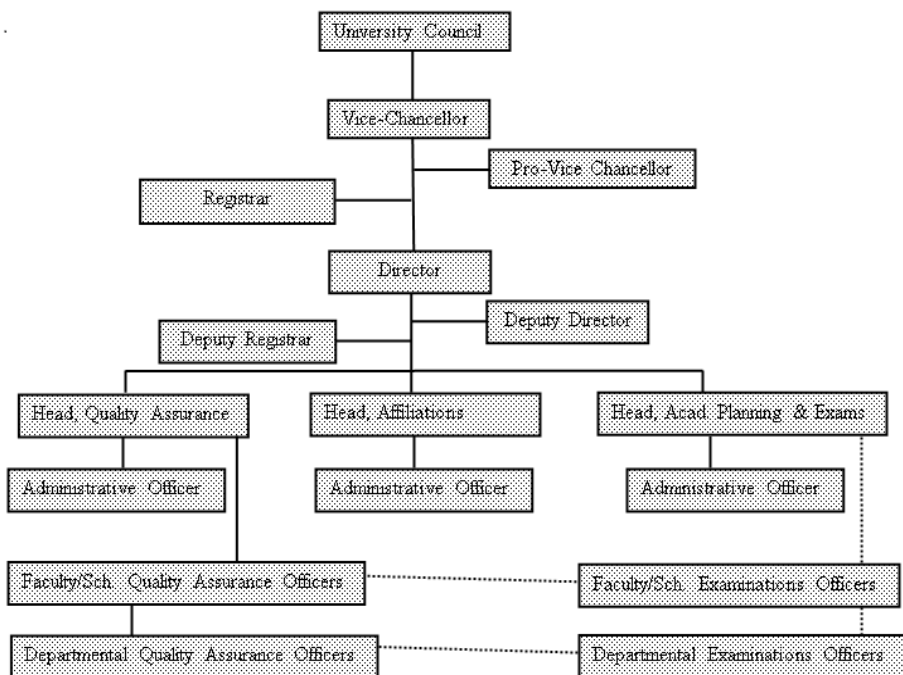
Figure 1: Governance structure of quality assurance from 20018 to 2014 in UDS (Source: Authors Construct, 2019)

The respondents further stated that, although the issue of quality assurance was nascent during the period under review, more and more was being demanded from tertiary institutions by NAB and NCTE. As a result, the then AQAU had widen its scope to cover all aspects of quality assurance in the University.

Governance of Quality Assurance after 2014
The respondents stated that after 2014, the third successive Director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance initiated measures for the radical transformation of the governance of quality assurance in the University. According to the respondents, the initiatives culminated in the restructuring of quality assurance governance and its evolution from Directorate of Academic and Quality Assurance (DAQA) to the current designation as DAPQA. The respondents said the first ever Quality Assurance Policy handbook of the University was published in

October 2015 to give meaning and entrench a quality assurance culture in the University. This policy document, according to the respondents, was approved by the Executive Committee of the Academic Board, which ushered in a bottom-up approach to the governance of quality assurance in the University. The functions of DAPQA were therefore devolved to the Faculties and/or Schools and even to the academic departments. This placed DAPQA at the Central Administration as a coordinating body of quality assurance issues from the various Campuses of the University.

Figure 2: Governance structure of quality assurance after 2014 in UDS (Source: Modified from Quality Assurance Policy, 2015).
NB: Key partners in quality assurance in the various Campuses of the university.

As shown in *Figure 2*, the governance structure of quality assurance has been decentralised from the University Council level as

the highest decision making body to the academic units. The University Council has an important role to play in defining the policy direction of quality assurance in the University through strategic decisions. Decisions such as having a *world-class* University are founded on a quality teaching and learning environment.

The respondents noted that it was important for the Management of the University such as the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor as well as Registrar to prioritize the use of the resources of the University, which should reflect in providing quality teaching and learning. The respondents were of the opinion that the Admission Committee which has the responsibility of admitting Students into the University and which has members of Management and Director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance as members should ensure that admission is based on quality of the applicants. This is because the quality of the students (input) ultimately determines the quality of graduates (output). The academic units (process) will then refine the students to produce graduates (the end product). This is a manifestation of the assumption that quality assurance is everybody's business in the University.

The Operationalization of the Governance Structure of Quality Assurance in the University for Development Studies

The study revealed that the governance structure for safeguarding quality assurance in the University has not been fully realised although modest gains have been made in implementing the structure. The study showed that there is no Deputy Director at post to assist the Director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance in ensuring quality as enshrined in the Quality Assurance Policy document of the University. In terms of the day-to-day running of the Directorate, a Deputy Registrar was required but, at the moment, the place is occupied by an

Assistant Registrar. In fact, the entire highlighted area in *Figure 2* has not been implemented.

The Campus respondents who were purposively selected confirmed that indeed, there are Faculty/School Quality Assurance Officers who are responsible for overseeing and coordinating quality assurance activities in their respective Faculties/Schools. The Campus respondents further stated that there was equally Departmental Quality Assurance Officers who are in charge of quality assurance activities in their various Departments. In terms of their role, Departmental Quality Assurance Officers were to assist and report to Faculty/School Quality Assurance Officers on matters that are likely to compromise quality teaching and learning in their respective Departments.

The study found that there were two types of Committees in place in the campuses meant to ensure that quality assurance issues are dealt with dispassionately. These were Faculty/School Quality Assurance Committees and Departmental Quality Assurance Committees. The Faculty/School Quality Assurance Committees consisted of the Dean of the Faculty/School as Chairman, the Faculty/School Officer, Faculty/School Quality Assurance Officer, Faculty/School Examination Officer and Departmental Quality Assurance Officers in the Faculty/School. The Departmental Quality Assurance Committees on the other hand consisted of the Head of Department (HoD) as the Chairman, Departmental Quality Assurance Officer, Departmental Examinations Officer and two Senior Members from the Department who are appointed by the HoD.

Implication of the Governance Structure on Quality Assurance in the University for Development Studies

It is clear from the previous section that there is lack of full implementation of the quality assurance structure of the University. These gaps in the implementation of the structure might not lead to the

full realization of the goals and objectives of the institutionalization of quality assurance in the University.

The composition of the Quality Assurance Committees at the Faculty/School as well as the Departmental levels also raises concern and could be detrimental to ensuring quality. The fact that School/Faculty Quality Assurance Committees are chaired by Deans whereas Departmental Quality Assurance Committees are chaired by HoDs can compromise quality. The reason is that Deans are chief examiners in the Faculty/School and chair of the Faculty Board of Examiners. At the same time, they are those who chair the Quality Assurance Committees of the Faculties/Schools. These double roles of Deans could result in conflict of interest situations and jeopardise quality in the Faculty/School. The same applies to the HoDs who are chief examiners in the Departments. In the similar vein, HoDs chair the Departmental Quality Assurance Committees. Furthermore, the HoDs are given the power to appoint two Senior Members of the Department to be part of the Departmental Quality Assurance Committees and this has the tendency to lead to bias in the selection of members of the Committee. This might lead to the exclusion of potential Senior Members in the Committee who HoDs consider to challenge the status quo in terms of quality assurance in the Department.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has revealed that there has been considerable effort in shaping the governance of quality assurance in the University for Development Studies. However, what remains unresolved is the full implementation of the governance structure. As stated earlier, key appointments have not been made to ensure the full operationalization of the governance structure of quality assurance. Deans and HoDs who double as Chief Examiners and Chairman of the Quality Assurance

Committees in their Faculties/Schools and Departments respectively might not promote the independence and integrity of the Committees.

In order for the University to achieve its objective of becoming one of the reputable public tertiary institutions in Ghana, the paper recommends that there should be key appointments of qualified personnel to fill the staff gap to make the quality assurance governance structure functional.

It is further recommended that the independence and integrity of the Quality Assurance Committees at the Faculty/School and Departmental level need to be ensured by excluding Deans and HoDs from the Committees. These Committees should be chaired by Faculty/School and Departmental Quality Assurance Officers in the case of Faculty/School and Departments respectively. This would offer Faculty/School Quality Assurance Officers the autonomy to report anything untoward that could compromise quality in the Faculty/School to the Director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance for action to be taken.

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