# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN KENYA'S HIGHER EDUCATION: GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

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**DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

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## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and to my knowledge has not been presented for a degree or any award in any other University. I declare that all information sources have been acknowledged and referenced accordingly.

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## DEDICATION

This PhD thesis is dedicated to my late father Shadrack Agida who served as my greatest inspiration throughout my education, my loving mother Peris Mbayagi Agida and my mother in love Agnes Wairimu Mahehu both of whom constantly prayed for me. My husband Nicholas Kagondu, my children Lisa Wairimu, Wahome Ndirangu, Mahehu Brian , Muthoni Faith and my lovely grandchild Wangeci Arya all of whom were steadfast in their support throughout my PhD journey. Special dedication goes to my spiritual Parents Bishop Jack Kamere and Reverend Emily Kamere who prayed and motivated me throughout my PhD Journey.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AACSB : Association to Advance Collegiate Business Schools
AS : Academic Staff
AU : African Union
AUC : African Union Commission
COYA : Company of the Year Award
CUE : Commission for University Education
DEEWR : Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DeKUT : Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
DK : Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
DU : Daystar University
EAC : East African Community
EABC : East African Business Council
EFMD : European Foundation for Quality Management Development
EHEA : European Higher Education Area
ENQA : European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ESG : Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European
EUR-ACE : European Accredited Engineer
EQUIS : European Quality Improvement System
EALA : East African Legislative Assembly
EFMD : European Foundation for Quality Management Development
FKE : Federation of Kenya Employers
GDP : Gross Domestic Product.
GoK : Government of Kenya
HE : Higher Education
HEFASA : The Higher Education Facilities Management Association of South Africa
HEIs : Higher Education Institutions
HEA : Higher Education Area
ICC : International Chamber of Commerce
IIEP : International Institute of Educational Planning
INQAAHE : International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IUCEA : Inter-University Council of East Africa

| | |
|---|---|
| IQA | : Internal Quality Assurance |
| JK | : Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology |
| KC | : KCA University |
| KCPE | : Kenya Certificate of Primary Education |
| KCSE | : Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education |
| KM | : Kenya Methodist University |
| KESSP | : Kenya Education Sector Support Programme |
| KUCCPS | : Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service |
| KQA | : Kenya Quality Award |
| LAPSSET | : Lamu Port Southern Sudan Ethiopia Transport Corridor. |
| MU | : Moi University |
| OECD | : Organizationfor Economic Cooperation and Development |
| QAA | : Quality Assurance Agency |
| QAS | : Quality Assurance Staff |
| QA | : Quality Assurance |
| R&D | : Research and Development |
| SP | : St. Paul's University |
| SRC | : Spearman Rank Correlation. |
| ST | : Students |
| STEM | : Science Technology and Mathematics |
| TU | : Technical University of Kenya |
| TQI | : Teaching Quality Institute |
| TQM | : Total Quality Management |
| UON | : University of Nairobi |
| UNESCO | : United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| USAID | : United States Agency for International Development |
| QAPs | : Quality Assurance Practices |
| QMS | : Quality Management Systems |
| SAR | : South African Rand |
| USDE | : United States Department of Education |
| WCU | : World-Class Universities |

## ABSTRACT

The capability of HEIs to serve as drivers of economic competitiveness is reducing in different developing countries due to numerous constraints which interfere with their quality. This PhD research investigated QAPs in Kenya's HEIs and interrogated the efficacy of the frameworks used to foster teaching and learning at Programme level; examined the effectiveness of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs with respect to the inputs, processes and outputs of education; investigated the challenges that hinder implementation of QAPs in the HEIs and given the gaps, suggested improvements drawing from best practice global quality management tools to reinforce academic quality in Kenya's HEIs. Perceptions on eight dimensions of quality were sought from respondents in the study. Response rates were 93 % for Students, 61 % for Academic Staff and 89% for Quality Assurance Staff. The Students and Academic Staff were used as the control group to corroborate the findings from the staff of the Quality Assurance Directorates who are custodians of quality assurance in Kenya's HEIs. Questionnaires styled on a 7 point Likert scale: 1= Strongly Disagree: 7= Strongly Agree and interviews were administered to respondents, coupled with document analysis. Differences in weighted responses of respondents were then calculated to determine gaps in the QAPs in each HEI sampled. Pearson's Correlation Analysis was carried out on responses of Academic Staff and Students to confirm results of the weighted averages. Results indicated there were gaps in the 8 dimensions of quality investigated and each of Kenya's HEIs are at different levels on the quality continuum hence have room for improvement. The most challenged dimension was research and publication. The greatest challenges to the implementation of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs included inadequate resources for quality assurance and inadequate commitment from University administration. Amongst the policy implications include review of Curriculum at both Basic Education and in HEIs in Kenya.

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Academic staff** **:** Any person appointed to teach or to do research at a university or any other employee designated as such by the University Council.

**Alumni** A member of the convocation of a University

**Cabinet secretary** **:** TheCabinet Secretary for the time being responsible for matters related to University education in Kenya

**Curriculum** **:** According to CUE (2014), curriculum means any documented programme of study

**Private university** **:** A University which is not established or maintained out of public funds.

**Public University**: A university established and maintained out of public funds

**Quality** "fitness for purpose "was adopted as the operational definition of quality in Higher Education in Kenya (CHE, 2008)

**Module II:** Students who are not admitted as Government sponsored hence are self-sponsored

**Stakeholder:** A person or group of persons involved in an education, training, and research institution and with vested interests for the benefit of such an institution.

**Student:** Any person registered to learn in a University or an institution offering University education

**University:** A University to which a charter has been granted under the Universities Act (GoK, 2012)

**Standard:** The reference point against which different aspects of the Programme and Institution are evaluated for quality (CUE, 2014)

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.0. Introduction

The purpose of Chapter one is to provide the background of the study. It provides an overview of the importance of Higher Education and the growing importance of quality of education as an agenda for HEIs in both developed and developing nations. The Chapter looks into the concepts of quality and quality assurance in Higher education. It explores into Kenya's Higher Education landscape and its governance systems. This is followed by a presentation of the statement of the problem, the study objectives and research questions. It concludes by providing the significance of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and chapter summary.



## 1.1. Background of the study

The quality of Higher Education has undoubtedly become a high profile agenda in many boardrooms in the 21st century due to the changes and challenges that now face the entire education systems in the world (Singh, 2007; Lemaitre, 2007). HE is a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy in both industrialized and developing countries (Pillay, 2011).Meek *et* al. (2009) fears that the capability of HEIs to provide this role is reducing in different developing countries as a result of numerous inherent constraints which hinder the working and interfere with the quality of HE .

According to Dill (2010), formal quality assurance in HE, initially introduced in a few developed countries (U.S.A and Western Europe) in the 1980s and 1990s, has rapidly radiated to other developed and developing countries. Marwa (2014) observes that

Kenya's HEIs likewise are increasingly experiencing a wave of unprecedented demands from their stakeholders (students, staff, government, employers and society). Wanzala (2013) observes that despite the existence of Regulatory agencies, quality control remains one of the most critical issues in the history of higher education in Kenya. In agreement, Wanjohi (2011) points out that the elements of access, equity, quality, affordability and relevance have since independence dominated education reforms in Kenya. Wanzala (2013) asserts that there is a common consensus that quality is low, academic fraud is rampant, efficiency is weak, relevance is questionable and wastage is significant in both Private and Public HEIs in Kenya.



### 1.1.1. The concept of quality

Mishra (2006) observes that quality is a much debated term in research and that to some, "it is like beauty that lies in the eyes of the beholder".Vidovich (2001) describes quality as ever changing, to be likened to a chameleon. To illustrate the slippery and elusive nature of quality many authors have cited the words of Pirsig (1974, pp.163-164)

> Quality ….. You know what it is, yet you don't know what it is. But that is self, contradictory. But some things are better than others, that is, they have more quality. But when you try to say what the quality is, apart from the things that have it, it all goes poof! There is nothing to talk about it. But if you can't say what quality is, how do you know what it is or how do you know that it even exists? If no one knows what it is, then for all practical purposes it doesn't exist at all. But for all practical purposes, it really does exist…….What else are the grades based on? Why else would people pay fortunes for some things and throw others in the trash pile? Obviously some things are better than others ….but what is the "bitterness"? So round and round you go, spinning mental wheels and nowhere finding any place to get traction. What the hell is Quality? What is it?

Mishra (2006) acknowledges that the concept of quality is amorphous and contextual and ranges from "standard" to "excellence" and can be operationalized in individual,

institutional and national practice. The author argues that quality is considered as excellence which is similar to what Green and Harvey(1993)call exceptional and that excellence is a performance stage of exclusiveness that is distinctive from many others and stands out as demonstration of 'Zero defects' and highest level of satisfaction of the stakeholders.

According to Marwa and Zairi (2008) the concept of quality is defined as satisfying customers' requirements continuously and delighting the end customer. Granroos (2005) defines it as "what customers perceive it to be".



### 1.1.2. Concept of quality in Higher Education

Vroeijenstijn (2006) viewed quality from the stakeholder's perspective and argued that quality is in the eye of the beholder and any definition of quality must take into account the views of various stakeholders. Vlasceanu and associates (2007) similarly pointed out that quality in higher education is a multi- dimensional, multi-level and dynamic concept that is related to the contextual settings of an educational model , to the institutional mission and objectives as well as specific standards within a given system , organization, programme or discipline.

Quality in Higher Education may depend on its infrastructure, industry-institute interaction and research activities (Mallesham, 2005). It may also involve encompassing input, process and output (Sahney *et* al., 2004) where input includes students, faculty, infrastructure and staff; process encompasses teaching and learning while employment, exam results and satisfaction constitute output.

Saitoti (2003) posited that the major determinants of quality education include curriculum content, relevant instructional materials and equipment, physical facilities, conducive learning environments, the quality of teaching force and assessment and

monitoring of learning achievements.Ngware *et* al. (2006) observes that according to the Kenya Education Master plan and Training1997-2010, quality is not mere passing of examinations or certification but the development of independent, analytical, creative potential of the individual including critical imagination, spiritual and ethical values.

Harvey and Green (1993) arguing from a stakeholders view on what quality is, identified five discrete but interrelated ways of thinking about quality as follows:

- Quality as exceptional: This notion is related to the traditional and elitist academic view that perceives quality as something special and distinctive. From an educational perspective, it epitomizes excellence, high level performance, passing a minimum set of standards unattainable by most. Quality therefore, in this view is achieved if the standards are surpassed. However, HEIs may be driven into doing selective intake if the focus on exceptionally high standards is pursued.
- Quality as perfection: Quality is perceived as a consistent or flawless outcome and focuses on the specifications of processes. According to this view, it is assumed that if consistency can be achieved, then quality would be attained as a matter of choice. Watty (2003) argued that this dimension of quality is not always applicable to HEIs since none of them could soberly aim at producing identical or defect-free graduates.
- Quality as fitness for purpose: Conformity with institutional missions as well as capacity to fulfilling customers' requirements is the principal perspective underlying this dimension of quality. Harvey (2006) argues that fitness of purpose is an interpretation that is linked to the adequacy of the quality related to intentions of an organization.
- Quality as value for money: This view perceives quality in terms of return on investment or expenditure. The dimension embodies efficiency, effectiveness and

accountability and focuses on how inputs are efficiently used by the process in such a manner that they produce the desired outputs.

- Quality as transformation: Quality as transformation is viewed in terms of change of the learner from one state to another. In educational terms, transformation refers to the enhancement and empowerment of the students or the development of new knowledge through the learning process. This notion of quality assurance presupposes a fundamental purpose of higher education in terms of transforming the life experience of students.

In this study, "fitness for purpose "was adopted as the operational definition of quality in Higher Education in Kenya (CHE, 2008)

### 1.1.3. Kenya's Higher Education Sector

The Higher Education Sector in Kenya comprises of two sub-sectors namely the Public Higher Education Sub Sector and the Private Higher Education Sub Sector.

#### 1.1.3.1. The Public Higher Education Sub-Sector in Kenya

Olel (2006) observes that Higher Education in Kenya started with the establishment of the Royal Technical College of East Africa in 1956. According to Ooro (2009), the Royal Technical College of East Africa was meant to provide instruction in courses leading to the Higher National Certificate offered in Britain and to prepare matriculated students through full time study for University degrees in engineering and commercial courses not offered at Makerere University.

Following the establishment of the University of East Africa in 1963, the Royal Technical College of East Africa became its constituent college, besides Makerere and Dar-es-salaam. Later, when the University of East Africa was dissolved, the University of Nairobi with its constituent College Kenyatta University was established through an Act of Parliament. .Ngome (2006) argues each of the East African countries thereafter

concentrated on developing their own national Universities. The University College of Nairobi was later renamed the University of Nairobi (Chacha, 2002; Mwiria *et* al., 2007).

To mentor Universities, a colonial model – the Asquith model was adopted. The University of Nairobi for example was responsible for the conception of Kenyatta University College which became autonomous in 1985. Kenyatta University later mentored Jomo Kenyatta University College of Agriculture and Technology (JKUCAT) into a fully-fledged University (Ooro, 2009). By the year 2009, the University of Nairobi had grown to be the largest University in Eastern and Central Africa with over 30,000 students. Literature shows it had the highest concentration of scholars and academic programmes housed in 14 faculties, 7 institutions, over 100 departments through six campus Colleges headed by principals (Mwiria *et* al., 2007). By 2012, the government had established 7 other Universities.

Moi University was the second to be established following recommendations of the Presidential Working Committee (GoK, 1981) with the aim of developing degree programmes in critical scientific and technical fields and also offering programmes that are practically oriented. In 1985, Kenyatta University (KU) was established and today offers degree courses in various fields including education, physical sciences, social science, business studies, environmental sciences, law, engineering, medicine and agriculture.

Egerton University followed closely in 1987 as the fourth public university in Kenya. Having begun as a small school in 1939, the institution grew into a College in 1950 and started offering Certificate and Diploma courses. Later in 1979, USAID jointly with the Government of Kenya funded the expansion of the College culminating in its gazettement as a Constituent College of University of Nairobi (UON). According to Mwiria *et* al. (2007), Egerton University offers many degree programmes but is a

renowned institution for its agriculture programmes. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) was the fifth University to be established in Kenya. Its origin dates back to 1981 when it started as a middle-level technical College through funding assistance of the Japanese Government for two decades. In 1994 it became fully fledged and now offers a variety of degree programmes in Engineering.

Established as the sixth University in Kenya, Maseno University's history dates back to the first decade of the 20th Century when the Church Missionary Society established it as a Mission Centre and expanded it to cater for learning and agricultural activities. It was later to become a Teacher Training College (Siriba Teachers Training College) and a Government Training Institute. The two institutions were handed to Moi University in 1990 and renamed Maseno University College (MUC). MUC remained a Constituent College of Moi University until the year 2000 when with a student population of 4300 was elevated to a Full Fledged University status (Mwiria*et*.al. 2007).

The seventh Public University in Kenya was established in 2007 and named Masinde Muliro University of Science Technology (MMUST). The University offers courses in the faculties of Science, Engineering, Education and Social Sciences. Currently, the Public Higher Education sector in Kenya comprises of 22 Public Universities and 9 Public University Constituent Colleges, (CUE, 2014).



### 1.1.3.2. The Private Higher Education Sub-Sector in Kenya

The 1980's and 1990's were years for the emergence of Private Higher Education institutions in Kenya. The Private Higher Education sub-sector in Kenya has also experienced rapid growth with the number of institutions rising from 1 in 1970 to 15 in 2012 (CUE, 2012).Except for a few institutions like the United States International University (USIU), most Private Universities in Kenya are religiously controlled. The Curriculum of most of these institutions is also largely geared towards the arts and

commercial courses. Most of them lack the resource capacity to adequately address the needs of courses in ICT or other sciences besides seriously lacking adequately trained manpower to deliver courses that they provide (Chacha,2004)

Just like elsewhere in Africa, Private University expansion in Kenya epanded due to the Public University's system's failure to meet the demand for Higher Education. Currently, the Private Higher Education sub sector in Kenya comprises of 17 Chartered Private Universities, 5 Private University Constituent Colleges, 12 Private Universities with Letters of Interim Authority (LIE) and 2 Registered Private Universities which came into existence before the establishment of the Commission of Higher Education in 1985 and are at various stages of development of resources and facilities required for full University accreditation (CUE, 2014).

#### 1.1.3.3. Governance of Universities in Kenya

The enactment of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) has tremendously transformed the Higher Education Sector in Kenya (CUE, 2013). The Universities Act (GoK, 2012) brought the establishment, governance and administration of both Public and Private Universities in Kenya under the same legal framework. Consequently, all the individual Acts of parliament under which some of the Public Universities operated were repealed and the Universities re-accredited through Charter Award after undergoing institutional audits (CUE, 2014)

According to the Universities Act (GoK, 2012), each University in Kenya is governed in accordance with the provisions of its Charter granted under the Act and Statutes made by its Council. The Universities Act further stipulates in section 35 that a University shall establish the following organs of governance or their equivalent.

- A Council whose mandate shall include employing staff, approving the Statutes of the university and causing them to be published in the Kenya gazette, approving policies of the University, approving the budget, and in the case of a

Public University recommending the appointment of the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, and Principals of Constituent Colleges and also undertaking other functions that may be applicable according to the Act.

- A Senate which shall be in charge of all academic matters of the University and undertake functions assigned to it as specified in the charter.
- A University Management Board which shall be responsible for implementing policies of the University, assisting in the day to day management of the University and undertaking such other functions as may be spelt out in the University's Charter (GoK, 2012)

The Universities Act (GoK, 2012) stipulates that the Council of a Private University shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of its Charter and with approval of the Commission for University Education.

Literature shows there has been an increase in the number of HEIs in Kenya which has simultaneously been matched by a similar trend in student enrolment. According to GoK (2008), the rapid increase has been exacerbated by the introduction of module II programmes that have triggered an increase in student population from 72, 551 in the year 2003 to 97,107 in 2008. According to Riechi (2010), this number grew to 100,107 in 2010. Mutula (2002) acknowledges that Kenya's HE sector faces many challenges that are well documented. Confirming this view, Chacha (2004) lists the challenges facing Kenya's HE sector as: research and publication, leadership and management, staff remuneration, funding, ICT capacity and utilization, quality and standards, jobs, further training, student welfare, gender equity, internationalization of education and access.

Marwa (2014) asserts that whereas some challenges are being resolved and /or are being addressed, others simply remain unresolved as fresh ones emerge negatively impacting on the deliverables of Kenya's HEIs. A number of studies have focused on implementation of quality management in HE in African (Kenya included) settings but

little investigation into the efficacy of the quality assurance frameworks applied and a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of quality assurance practices applied has been done (Materu,2007).

This study investigated the current QAPs and interrogated the efficacy of frameworks used in Kenya's HEIs to foster student learning, teaching and academic offerings. The study examined the effectiveness of QAPs in light of the growing clamour for quality in Kenya's HEIs with respect to educational inputs, educational processes and educational outputs and inquired into the contextual issues that promote or hinder the implementation of formal QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. The study examined best practice global quality assurance tools and how they compare with those applied in Kenya's HEIs and on the basis of gaps, analyzed opportunities for improvement that can be applied to reinforce the existing quality assurance practices.



## 1.2. The Statement of the Problem

Despite the efforts by the government of Kenya to expand University education by injecting colossal sums of money into HE, literature shows that a lot of the studies have dwelt on the reforms in education and challenges of management and only a few of them have investigated and mapped the QAPs that each of Kenya's HEIs are employing with respect to student learning and teaching as well as academic offerings. This study was therefore informed by the need to empirically investigate how Kenya's HEIs are managing quality of teaching and learning and academic offerings at programme level and the efficacy of the frameworks used. The study examined the effectiveness of these frameworks, the gaps in the implementation of the QAPs and ultimately shed light on the challenges and opportunities that exist for continuous improvement.

## 1.3. Study objectives and research questions

The main research objective of the study was to investigate the status of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs and establish their efficacy, appraise best practice global quality assurance models applied, determine the gaps and propose improvement interventions to reinforce quality assurance practices in respective institutions in a bid to improve institutional academic offerings.

### 1.3.1. Research objectives

This study was operationalized, through the following sub-objectives

i) Investigate the current QAPsand interrogate the efficacy of the frameworks used in Kenya's HEIs to foster student learning/teaching and academic offerings.

ii) Examine the effectiveness of QAPsin light of the growing clamour for quality in Kenya's HEIs with respect to educational inputs, educational process and educational output

iii) Investigate the possible factors that enable or hinder the implementation and practice of formal QAPsin Kenya's HEIs and suggest improvements

iv) Consider the gaps between actual QAPsin Kenya's HEIs and best practice globally and explore alternative tools that can be applied in reinforcing academic quality in HE and the ease with which they can be adopted in Kenya

### 1.3.2. Research Questions

i) What are the current QAPs in Kenya's HEIs and how effective are the frameworks that are used to foster student learning, teaching and academic offerings?

ii) What is the effectiveness of QAPs in light of the growing clamour for quality in Kenya's HEIs with respect to educational input, educational process, and educational output?

iii) What are the possible factors that enable or hinder the implementation and practice of formal QAPs in Kenya's HEIS and how can improvements be made?

iv) Given the gaps in the actual QAPs and the best practice quality assurance tools globally, which alternative quality assurance tools can be recommended to reinforce academic quality in Kenya's HEIs? Which is the way forward?



## 1.4. Significance of the Study

The study was helpful in establishing the status of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. Theoretically, this study bridged the research gap in the area of quality assurance in Higher Education in the context of a developing country. Kenya has experienced unprecedented growth in its Higher Education sector. The study sought to investigate how Kenya's HEIs are assuring quality within such rapid and exponential growth.

The research also created awareness of key stakeholders regarding the problems in the development and implementation of quality assurance and the areas that need improvement within Kenya's HEIs. The study results benefited policy makers, implementers, development partners, involved in HEin Kenya by providing useful information necessary for growing and providing quality assurance capacity needs for Kenya's HEIs.

## 1.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study faced a number of drawbacks during its execution. Amongst them was hostile respondents who required to be pleaded with to secure their participation in the survey. Insufficient funds also presented a serious challenge in conducting the research in the eight Universities in Kenya. The researcher cannot forget the

rescheduling she had to do to secure interview sessions with the Academic Staff and the Directors of Quality Assurance which lengthened the time scheduled for the data collection period.

## 1.6. Delimitations of the study

The study focused on Full-time Academic Staff, Quality Assurance Staff and final year Students in session only. This is because it was considered their experiences with quality assurance matters could provide the necessary information required for the research. The study also delimited itself to 4 Public Universities and 4 Private Universities in Kenya.

Quality assurance in higher education is a multi-faceted phenomenon. There are therefore future research opportunities for including other stakeholders like administrative staff, employers, Staff of Higher Education Regulatory agencies, Alumni of the institutions, all Students, Government Agencies, and Professional Bodies amongst others. The research concentrated on cross sectional survey. There are opportunities for future research through longitudinal studies.



## 1.7. Chapter summaries

Chapter one posed the introduction to the study. It looked at the concept of quality generally and higher education in particular. It explored the background of Universities in Kenya and the challenges they are facing in regard to growing quality. It covered the problem statement, the research objectives and the research questions of the study.

Chapter two reviewed the literature of the study. The chapter looked at the theoretical orientations of the study, the importance of higher education to economic development,

emerging trends of quality assurance networks and the quality assurance tools that have been used to grow quality in higher education globally. Also explored into are international accreditation bodies, quality assurance initiatives in some of Kenya's HEIs and the challenges they face in implementing quality in higher education. The chapter also provided the Conceptual Framework of the study.

Chapter three presented the methodology as well as the research design of the study. The study applied a mixed methods research methodology. The study was a cross sectional study that was descriptive and correlational in nature. TheChapter described the population of the study, the sampling design, sampling frame and sample sizes for the study.It also looked at the tools employed in data collection which included questionnaires, interviewing, document review and observation. It also covered data analysis.

Chapter four looked into the reporting, interpretation and discussion of the empirical findings of the study. It explored into case by case analysis of the QAPs of Kenya's HEIs and ranked the HEIs on the basis of gaps to establish best practice institutions in QAPs among them on the basis of quality dimensions studied. It also looked into case by case analysis of each of the attributes on the dimensions surveyed in order to determine aspects of good practice or challenges that present opportunities for improvement. The Chapter also explored the challenges that Kenya's HEIs face in their efforts to implement quality management.

Chapter five looked into the summary of findings of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research. It also looked into managerial and policy implications of the findings

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the arguments in literature on quality assurance in Higher Education. The review seeks to determine what has been done and what remains unaccomplished in studies on HEIs. The chapter explores into the quality assurance tools and models that have been employed in quality assessment and the connectivity between HE and economic development of nations.

The chapter provides a description of the global trends in demand for quality assurance in HEIs and an exposition of experiences of selected countries on approaches to quality assurance. The role of international accrediting bodies in quality assurance and challenges facing Africa's HEIs generally and Kenya's HEIs in particular are also discussed. The chapter looks into the quality assurance initiatives of WCU's, quality assurance initiatives of Kenya's HEIs and the barriers to the implementation of quality assurance in HEIs. It also provides the conceptual framework for the study. The chapter ends with a discussion of the challenges facing the implementation of quality assurance practices in Kenya's HEIs and the chapter summary.



## 2.1. Theoretical considerations

This study was rooted in organizational research on quality management in Higher Education as aspects of organizational change. The study has therefore contributed to the theory on organizations generally and to studies on quality management in both the business world and in HE in particular. Organizational theories have their roots in the Open Systems Theory and lay a lot of emphasis on the importance of an organization's

environment (Mulu, 2012).The Contingency theory and the Institutional perspective based on the Open System framework are organizational theories that offer a theoretical explanation on how organizational contexts affect the practice of quality assurance in HEIs and were applied in this study.

### 2.1.1. The Organization as an Open System

The focus of this study was on Organizational Theories which have their roots in the open systems perspective (Mulu, 2012). Child (1972) in agreement with Daft and Steers (1986) argued that the core of open systems perspectives is underpinned by the idea that organizations are complex adaptive systems that operate and constantly interact within a given environmental context and their interaction with their environment is vital for their survival and success.

According to Scott (2001), organizational studies acknowledge that organizations are embedded in multiple environments that are both technical and institutional and to which they are expected to respond. The open systems perspective provides a useful basis of understanding organizational environments in the context of changes in the Higher Education landscape (Mulu, 2012).

### 2.1.2. Universities as Open System Organizations

Studies on the relationship of the Open Systems Theory as it relates to HEIs have been carried out by many researchers. Birnbaum (2000), viewed Colleges and Universities as open and dynamic systems composed of patterns of interacting elements and subsystems loosely or tightly coupled to each other or to the environment and that to learn how they work, it is essential to view them as organizations and therefore as systems and also as inventions.

Universities generically have characteristics that are similar to those of other organizations such as goals, hierarchical systems and structures, officials who carry out specific duties, decision making processes that set institutional policy and a

bureaucratic administration that handles routine business (Baldridge, 1999).Some distinguishing characteristics that affect a university's adaptation to change include goal ambiguity, task complexity, specific professional and administrative values, and environmental vulnerability (Clark, 1998).

The Contingency Theory and the Institutional Theory based on the open system framework offer a theoretical explanation on how organizational contexts affect the practice of quality assurance in Universities. The contingency theory is underpinned by premise that the best practices depend on the contingencies of the situation implying that there is no one best way for all organizations while institutional perspectives emphasize the importance of the institutional environment of the organizations.

Many researchers, while acknowledging the apparent discrepancy between the two theories, allude to their interrelation and complementariness in shaping the environmental context of organizations (Donaldson, 1995; Drazin & Van de Ven, 1985). According to the two theories, organizations operate within a context that ultimately affects the way they are structured and how they undertake their activities. The two theories however hold different views in the way they interpret how organizations respond to contextual demands for either rationality or legitimacy. In this study, some elements of both theories were applied in explaining organizational level practices in quality assurance.



### 2.1.3. Contingency Theory

The main thrust of Contingency Theory is to understand the interrelationship within and among subsystems as well as between organizations and their environments. The Contingency Theory explains how organizations adopt to their immediate operating contexts. According to the theory, the best way for an organization to organize depends on the environmental context that it operates in.

Galbraith (1973) states that the two fundamental assumptions of the Contingency Theory are first, that there is no one best way to organize and second, one way of organizing is not equally effective under all conditions. Drazin and Van de Ven (1985) therefore advised that the proposition that the performance of an organization depends on the 'fit' between its properties and its relevant context is a central theme to the Contingency Theory. The notion of 'fit' holds that there is an optional fit between an organization and its environment. Fredericks *et* al. (1994) asserts that an effective organization is optimally adjusted to specific environmental circumstances. In this regard, a closer fit between the organization and the environment leads to better organizational performances whereas a misfit leads to organizational problems.

Organizations become more complex in efforts aimed at attaining adaptability and survival when the circumstances around them become more uncertain (Ashby, 1956; Burns & Stalker, 1961). Uncertainty is another contingency concept that is useful in analyzing organizational change. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) observed that uncertainty and rate of change in an environment does influence the development of internal features in organizations. According to Clampitt and Williams (2004), uncertainty is the inherent state of nature pervading organizational life which results when information is limited, ambiguous complex, unpredictable, or probabilistic. The variance in the organizational response to the environment can partially be explained by differences in the degree of uncertainty and complexity of the environmental demands (Bastedo, 2005). The Contingency Theory focuses on the interface between the organization and its task or technical environment.

Gupta *et* al. (1994) identifies the task environment or technical environment as the context immediately surrounding the organization which is often described as stable or dynamic, single or complex. Additionally, Lenz (1986) posits that the task environment

also includes organizations which influence the goal setting and goal achievement of an organization directly.

Studies have identified organizational size, age, location, technology, leadership, goals and culture as some contingency variables that affect organizations (Donaldson, 2001; Henderson, 1999; child; 1972). Many researchers have applied the Contingency Theory as a tool for investigating the extent to which organizational characteristics explain and predict organizational practices (Donaldson, 2001). A study by Michelle (2006) on online policy implementation in HEIs revealed that the implementation of online learning policy is affected by the degree of 'fit' between the organizational structure and the policy.



### 2.1.4. Institutional Theory

Organizational contingencies may not be sufficient to provide an explanation as to how organizations perceive and deal with their environmental expectations. Institutional Theory asserts that organizations are social systems that are shaped and influenced by the context of the larger social and political framework of norms, values and rules (Meyer & Rowan, 1991). The institutional theory provides a complimentary insight into the influence of organizational environment. The institutional theory assumes that the environment exerts a lot of influence on how organizations operate. Institutional theorists argue that organizations exhibit inertia and resistance towards change when the changes proposed are not congruent with the existing norms, values, beliefs and tradition (Scott, 2004).

An organization's environment can be categorized into two; the task environment and the institutional environment (Oliver, 1997; Hall, 1977). According to Hall (1977), the task environment consists of the limited number of factors that directly affect an organization, whereas the institutional environment involves an unlimited number of

factors that influence all organizations in the society and which are also called general societal environment.

In concurrence, Meyer and Rowan (1997) stated that organizations design their formal structures according to the prescriptions of myths in the institutional environment in order to acquire legitimacy which in turn increases their chances of survival. As Oliver (1997) put it, institutional theories have the assumption that organizations seek legitimacy and approval. Oliver (1991) and Scott (1995) argue that organizations obtain external validation of legitimacy by designing their policies, structures, rules and regulations that conform to the prevailing expectations of their institutional environment. Scott (1995) defines legitimacy as the degree to which actions by organizations in a given field are accepted as appropriate and useful by the broader public.

Institutional Theory perspectives have been applied in empirical studies in the field of Higher Education. A study by Scizmadia (2006) on the introduction of quality management in Hungarian HEIs applied Institutional Theory and found that organizational characteristics (such as organizational complexity, bureaucratic and political decision making processes leadership amongst others influence the pace and scope of the implementation of quality management systems in higher education institutions

Extant literature shows both the Contingency Theory and the Institutional Theory have been applied in higher education studies globally. However, few of the studies have focused on analysis of QAPs, the efficacy of the frameworks used, the effectiveness of the QAPs on the quality of student learning and academic delivery in Kenya's Higher Education system and the challenges of implementing the QAPs which this study sought to address.

## 2.2. Concept of quality Assurance

According to Mulu (2012), the implementation of quality assurance depends on the diversity of perspectives on what counts as quality hence there is no universally accepted conceptual framework on quality assurance in HE. INQAAHE (2005) defines quality assurance as "all those attitudes, objects, actions, and procedures which through their existence and use and together with the quality control activities, ensure that appropriate academic standards are being maintained and enhanced in and by each programme.

Vlãsceanu*et* al. (2007) views quality assurance as:

> An all-embracing term that refers to an ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining and improving) the quality of a higher education system, institution or programme. As a regulatory mechanism, quality assurance focuses on both accountability and improvement. Quality assurance activities depend on the existence of the necessary institutional mechanisms preferably sustained by a solid quality culture. Quality management, quality enhancement, quality control, and quality assessment are means through which quality is ensured.

According to Kenya's CHE (2008), quality assurance in HE is the means by which an institution or Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) can guarantee that the standards and quality of educational provisions are being maintained and/or enhanced and that they relate to the continuous process of evaluating the quality of an education system, institution or programme.

IIEP (2007) observes that many systems make distinction between internal quality assurance (intra-Institutional practices of monitoring and improving the quality of

HEIs) and external quality assurance (Inter-or Supra-institutional schemes of assuring the quality of HEIs)

### 2.2.1. Internal Quality Assurance

According to IIEP (2007), Internal Quality Assurance refers to the policies and mechanisms implemented in an institution or programme to ensure that it is fulfilling its own purposes and meeting the standards that apply to Higher Education in general or to the profession or discipline in particular.

### 2.2.2. External Quality Assurance

According to IIEP (2007) external quality assurance refers to the actions of an external body, which may be a quality assurance agency or anybody other than the institution that assesses its operations or programmes, in order to determine whether it is meeting the agreed or pre-determined standards.



## 2.3. Quality Assessment Toolsand Models

Research shows that globally, a range of quality management models developed for industry have been adopted or tested within HEIs (Becket and Brooks, 2008). The tool commonly drawn is Total Quality Management (TQM) which has the potential to encompass quality perspectives of both the internal and external stakeholders (Cruickshank, 2003). The applicability of TQM models to HEIs has been debatable. Rosa and Amaral (2007) claimed that applying TQM principles, tools and concepts in HEIs is not an easy process though it does provide a pathway to excellence in HEIs. This section discussed some selected models of quality management and their use in Higher Education Institutions.

### 2.3.1. Malcolm Baldridge National Quality Excellence Award (MBNQA)

The MBNQA was established in 1987 by the United States Congress and named after the former secretary of commerce, Malcolm Baldridge. The purposes of the Award are to:

- Promote awareness and understanding of the importance of the quality movement to a nation's economy.
- To recognize companies for exceptional quality management and achievement
- To share information on successful quality strategies and benefits derived from implementation of these strategies.

Initially, the award was given to USA companies for their outstanding performance in three categories i.e. manufacturing, service and small business (Khan, 2010). Education and healthcare were incorporated in the award programme in 1999.

The MBNQA criteria are seven categories which any organization can use to improve its overall performance and include; Leadership; Strategic planning; Customer and market focus ; Information and analysis; Human resource focus; Process management; Business results. Using the Baldridge criteria leads to better employee relations, greater customer satisfaction, higher productivity, increased market share and improved profitability of an organization (NIST, 2013).

The Baldrige criteria are underpinned by the following set of core values and fundamental concepts. The core values and concepts embody the beliefs and behaviours that symbolize high performing organizations and include: Visionary leadership; Customer-driven excellence; Organizational and personal learning; Valuing employees and partners; Agility; Focus on future; Managing for innovation; Management by fact; Public responsibility and citizenship; Focus on results and creating value and; Systems perspective. The criteria provide a system perspective for managing an organization to achieve excellence in the organization.

### 2.3.2. European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence model (EFQM)

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model was introduced in 1992 as a framework for assessing organizations for the European Quality Award. A range of criteria was developed that built on those that were used by the MBNQA against which organizations were assessed but additionally included features of business results and impact on society. The EFQM excellence model® (which is a registered trade mark) has been described by EFQM as:

> A practical tool that helps organizations establish an appropriate management system that measures where they are on the path to excellence and helps them understand their gaps and then stimulate solutions. As a self-assessment and planning tool, the EFQM is used to find out where the organization is, where they want to go, what they should improve and how to get there. Regardless of size, culture, tradition or background, to be successful, HEIs needs to deliver excellence in all areas with fewer resources to an ever more demanding global customer base thus the need to develop more effective and efficient management practices (EFQM, 2003).



The EFQM Excellence Model for HE version is a practical tool to support the analysis and prioritization of improvement opportunities within HEIs. The EFQM adopted the principles of TQM. It is a non-prescriptive framework based on nine (9) criteria, five referred to as enablers and four referred to as results and which include: Leadership; People; Policy and strategy; Partnership and resources; Processes; People results; Customer results; Society results; Key performance results. The enabler criteria look for approach whereas the result criteria look for excellence of results and their scope. In terms of results, the questions aim at defining the organizations' actual performance against its own targets, and if possible the performance compared to competitors and 'best in class' organizations (Porter & Tanner, 2004).

The model is based on the principle that customer satisfaction and positive impact on society are accomplished through leadership driving policy and strategy, people management and processes that lead eventually to excellence in business results (Porter & Tanner, 2004).

### 2.3.3. The Balanced Score Card

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC), a prescriptive framework developed by Kaplan and Norton in (1992) is a tool designed to enable an organization implement its strategy by translating it into concrete and measurable operational terms. It is a system of linked objectives, targets and initiatives that collectively describe the strategy of an organization and how the organization can achieve it. It is a framework that depicts the processes an organization employs to foster consensus, alignment, and commitment to the strategy by the management team and the people within the organization.

Kaplan and Norton (2004) argue that the traditional accounting measures like return on investment and earnings per share can give misleading signals for continuous improvement and innovation which are demanded for competitiveness today. The founders focused on the fact that managers needed a balanced presentation of both financial and operational measures hence propounded four perspectives as the drivers of future performance thus: how do customers see us ( Customer perspective), What must we excel at ( Internal perspective), can we continue to improve and create value? (Innovation and learning), how do we look at shareholders? (Financial perspective).The BSC shows the financial measures of an organization and complements them with operational measures on customer satisfaction, internal processes and the organization's innovations and improvement. The operational measures serve as the drivers for future financial performance.

The advantages of adopting the BSC include: it is useful in translating strategy into focused operational measurable terms, it helps focus management time and effort on key

issues and creates a basis for a consistent decision making process, it facilitates strategic implementation in an organization, it provides the management team with the means to coalesce around a common strategic agenda, gain focus, alignment and build consensus.

### 2.3.4. International Organization for standardization (ISO) 9001: 2008 Standard

The ISO 9000 standards are a set of written guidelines and international standards of quality management system that have been developed and published by the international standards organization (ISO, 2008).According to Lagrosen and Lagrosen (2006), the ISO 9000 standard is the most frequently used model of quality management used in HE as it contains a vast number of criteria that organizations should comply with to be certified.

According to ISO (2008), the ISO 9001 standard consists of the following eight requirements with the first three providing general information about the standards and the last five dealing with how to implement the standard:Scope, Normative reference, Terms and definitions, Quality management system, Management responsibility, Resource management, Product realization, Measurement, analysis and improvement.

According to ISO (2008), the ISO 9001 quality management system is based on the following eight principles : Customer focus, Leadership, Involvement of people, Process approach, System approach to management, Continual improvement, Factual approach to decision making, Mutually beneficial supplier relationships. Hoyle (2003) states that the implementation of ISO 9001 quality management is based on four pillars thus:

- Say what you do--------- (Document what you do)
- Do what you say-------- (Do what you document)
- Prove it ---------- (Monitor and measure )

- Improve it ---------- (Take corrective and preventive actions)

The purpose of continuous improvement is achieved through the Deming's cycle of Plan (P), Do (D), Check (C) and Act (A) i.e. PDCA cycle ( Khan, 2010). However, being ISO certified does not imply that an organization is of high quality but does prove that it works in a systematic manner in achieving quality (Lagrosen & Lagrosen, 2006).

### 2.3.5. SERVQUAL Model

The SERVQUAL metric is an instrument that has been effectively applied to gauge service quality (Marwa, 2008). A creation of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1998) and based on the gap theory (Parasuraman *et* al., 1985), the SERVQUAL diagnostic suggests that a consumers' perception of the service quality is a function of the difference between their expectations about the performance of service providers (particularly, excellence/best practices companies) and the assessment of the actual performance of a specific firm within that class (Cronin & Taylor, 1992).

The diagnostic has been used as an instrument of assessing service quality in different settings (Stafford, Prybutok, Wells, & Kappleman, 1999; Nitecki, 1997; Cook & Heath, 2001). The diagnostic has been found to have a customer approach to conceptualizing and measuring service quality.

Bateson (1995) argues measuring service quality is difficult due to its unique characteristics: intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and perishability. Naik *et* al. (2010) asserts that customer perceptions of service quality result from a comparison of their service expectations before and after their actual service experience. Vazquez *et*al. (2001) observed that the service will be considered excellent if perceptions exceed expectations; it will be regarded as good or adequate, if it only equals the expectations, the service will be classified as bad, poor or deficient if it does not meet them.

The SERVQUAL scale has been tested and /or adapted in a great number of studies conducted in various service settings, cultural contexts and geographic locations like the quality of service offered by a hospital (Babakus & Mangold , 1989), a dental school, patient clinic , Business school placement centre, tyre store and acute care hospital (Carman, 1990).

### 2.3.6. Rankings

University rankings also called league tables and report card (RC) are lists of cetain groupings of institutions (usually but not always within a single national jurisdiction) comparatively ranked according to a common set of indicators in descending order (Usher and Savino, 2007). Jabnoun (2009) contends that ranking of Universities reflects the quality of HEIs and their contribution to research. Though Universities try to downplay the importance of University ranking, Anthony (2007) advised ignoring it is not a solution because HEIs are critical for advances in engineering, medicine, business, science, technology and other fields and therefore ranking can help HEI managers to benchmark certain components of University education.



Some of the organizations that conduct worldwide university rankings include:

i) **Academic Ranking of World Universities** (ARWU) compiled by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University and now maintained by the Shanghai Ranking Consultancy. Its initial purpose was to measure the gap between Chinese Universities and "World Class" Universities.

ii) **Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings**: Published for the first time in March 2011, the rankings are based on a survey of 13,388 academics over 131 countries – which is the largest evaluation of academic reputation to date.

iii) **QS World University Rankings**: The QS rankings use peer review data collected from scholars and academics and recruiters. These two are worth 40 per cent and 10 per cent of a university's possible score respectively. The QS

rankings also incorporate citation per faculty member data from Scopus, faculty/student ratios, and international staff and student numbers.

iv) **G-factor:** G-factor Ranks University and College web presence by counting the number of links from other university websites, using Google search engine data. G-factor is an indicator of the popularity or importance of each University's website from the combined perspectives of other institutions.

v) **Webometrics:** The Webometrics Ranking of World-Class Universities is produced by Cybermetrics Lab (CCHS), in Spain. It offers information about Universities according to their web presence (an assessment of the scholarly contents, visibility and impact of Universities on the web). The ranking is updated every January and July of each year



In this study, a comparative analysis of the results of Webometrics Ranking of HEIs to establish those that globally occupied the top positions was done. Table 1 depicts the results of the top ten WCUs according to Webometrics within the months spanning February 2012-February 2013 and August 2014.

**Table 1: Top Ten World-Class Universities (Feb 2012-Aug 2014)**

| World ranking | World Class Universities as at 2/1/2012 | Country of origin | World Class Universities as at 2/2/2013 | Country of origin | World Class Universities as at 13/8/2014 | Country of origin |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Harvard University | USA | Harvard University | USA | Harvard University | USA |
| 2 | Massachusetts Institute of Technology | USA | Stanford University | USA | Massachusetts Institute of | USA |
| 3 | Stanford University | USA | Massachusetts Institute of Technology | USA | Stanford University | USA |
| 4 | Cornell University | USA | University of Michigan | USA | Cornell University | USA |
| 5 | Columbia University New York | USA | University of Pennsylvania | USA | University of Michigan | USA |
| 6 | University of California Berkeley | USA | University of California Los Angeles UCLA | USA | University of Califonia, Berkeley | USA |
| 7 | University of Pennsylvania | USA | University of California Berkeley | USA | Colombia University | USA |
| 8 | University of California Los Angeles UCLA | USA | Columbia University New York | USA | University of Washington | USA |
| 9 | University of California San Fransisco | USA | Cornell University | USA | University of Minnesota | USA |
| 10 | University of Cambrige | UK | University of Minnesota | USA | University of Pennsylvania | USA |

Table 1 indicates that within this period, the top ten positions were occupied by the same Universities mainly from the USA. Harvard University consistently took position

one (1) while Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University simply interchanged position two and three. Others in the top ten league included University of Stanford, Cornell University all from the USA while University of Cambridge from the UK took 10th position in January 2012.

None of Kenya's HEIs was listed among the top 100 WCUs within the period reviewed. The University of Nairobi, though rated as the best in Kenya and 9th in Africa in the Webometrics Ranking in February 2014 assumed position 1167 internationally.Maseno University which took position 2 nationally in July 2013 assumed position 2053 among the WCUs and worse still declined to position 7381 globally in February 2014 and 6th position nationally.

Table 2 depicts the results of Kenya's top ten Universities nationally in the Webometrics Rankings in July 2013 and February 2014 accordingly.

**Table 2: Webometric Ranking of Kenyan Universities (Feb 2012 - Feb 2014)**

| Jul-13 | Jul-13 | | Feb-14 | Feb-14 | Feb-14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| National Ranking | World Ranking | Name of University | National Ranking | World Ranking | Name of University |
| 1 | 1624 | University of Nairobi | 1 | 1167 | University of nairobi |
| 2 | 2053 | Maseno University | 2 | 2907 | Kenyatta University |
| 3 | 3489 | Kenyatta University | 3 | 2984 | Strathmore University Nairobi |
| 4 | 4803 | Moi University | 4 | 4218 | Egerton University |
| 5 | 5143 | Egerton University | 5 | 4947 | Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology |
| 6 | 5166 | Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology | 6 | 7381 | Maseno University |
| 7 | 6487 | Strathmore University Nairobi | 7 | 7571 | African Virtual University |
| 8 | 7295 | African Virtual University | 8 | 7882 | Moi University |
| 9 | 10222 | United States International University | 9 | 9200 | Kenya Methodist University |
| 10 | 11687 | Catholic University of eastern Africa | 10 | 9909 | Taita Taveta University |

Table 2 indicates the University of Nairobi that took position 1 in July 2013 was position 1624 globally and only improved to position 1167 in February 2014. Maseno University

was position 2 nationally but took position 2053 globally in July 2013. Maseno University dropped to position 6 in February 2014 nationally and position 7381 globally.

According to Webometrics Ranking of World-Class Universities, some of the criteria that determine University ranking include;

i) Number of study programmes by level (bachelor, specialist)
ii) Number of Student winners of international Student academic competitions
iii) Number of staff publications other than articles in scientific Journals, namely monographs, textbooks, manuals and others
iv) Number of certificates on discoveries and patents for inventions obtained by the university research officers and Scholars
v) Total value of the training and laboratory facilities of the Universities in US dollars
vi) Proportion of teaching staff having doctoral degrees
vii) Number of staff who have been awarded honorary doctorates from foreign Universities.
viii) Number of professors who are members of the international and national academies of sciences as of the last academic Year
ix) Characteristics of 'socially significant' activities of the Graduates, e.g. being prominent in culture, business, politics, Being government officials or executives of international organizations
x) Number of various kinds of publications by the faculty (Articles, textbooks and manuals, monographs, etc.)
xi) Internationalization of Universities e.g. the foreign student and staff proportions. In particular, indicators of short-term mobility of staff and Students, measuring incoming and outgoing streams or both

xii) Number of pages on the academic website of the University

xiii) Number of rich files *(.pdf, .ppt, .doc and .ps)* published

xiv) Number of published papers retrieved from Google Scholar.

The findings on the dismal performance of Kenya's HEIs in rankings were further echoed by the report by Wesangula (2014) which indicated that the 2014 Times Higher Education World Reputation had revealed that none of Kenya's HEIs made it to the top 100 list of WCUs while Harvard University once again emerged the top WCU.



According to the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) report in 2014-2015, the top ranked Countries continue to be dominated by the highly advanced western economies and several Asian Tigers. For the 6th consecutive time, Switzerland led the top 10 world economies while Singapore was ranked as the 2nd most competitive economy in the world. According to the GCI report 2014-2015, Switzerland's top notch academic institutions , high spending on R&D, and strong cooperation between the Academic and business community contribute to making it a top innovator. The GCI report for 2014-2015 ranked Singapore 2nd overall for the 4th consecutive time with its competitiveness being attributed to its strong focus on higher education. The GCI report indicates half of the 20 lowest ranked Countries are Sub-Saharan Countries (Kenya included).

The findings in Table 2 therefore paint a grim picture for Kenya's Development efforts. Literature shows their exists a strong correlational relationship between a country's economic growth and its investments in research and development propelled through HEIs if the experiences of Switzerland and Singapore are anything to go by.The implication therefore is that Kenya's HEIs have potential for improvement.

Ranking of Universities just like those in other fields are widely criticized but are gaining popularity all over the world. Dill and Beerkens (2010) argue that though

validity of rankings is widely questioned, the growing interest in ranking results suggests that there exists lack of much needed information on academic quality. Rauhvargers (2013) portends that rankings are criticized because they almost entirely measure institutional reputation and hardly educational experience. According to the Berlin Principles (2006), rankings should not be the only external assessment tool and should take into account the diversity of institutional contexts using comparable criteria.



## 2.4. Higher Education and Economic Development

Education (HE) is a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge –driven global economy in both industrialized and developing countries (Pillay, 2011). Jabnoun (2009) observed that countries that were ranked by the World Economic Forum in 2007 as the top ten most competitive countries were found to be home to 213 out of the top 300 WCUs. Bloom *et* al. (2006), in concurrence with Tilak (2003) contended that HE can enhance the economic development of poor nations through technological catch-up. This probably explains why governments in the developed economies, having realized its criticality, have been seeking to increase participation rates in Higher Education (Srikanthan& Dalrymple, 2005; UNESCO, 2004).

Carnoy (2006) argues that sustainable economic growth depends on the "higher- end" of HE to generate the necessary human capital and research, like the great effect realized in the application of agricultural technologies in India. Corroborating this view, Kanpur and Mehta (2004) asserted that the green revolution in India would not have been possible without local research, teaching or training and knowledge application.

HEIs are the progenitors of social change through the generation and dissemination of knowledge and new ideas especially in the context of globalization (Taylor, 2008).

Society and HE are considered to be mutually constitutive and co-evolving (Zaglul & Juma, 2006). Bruegel (2007), a Brussels based think-tank argued that investing in HE and research was essential to allow the economy to contribute and benefit from leading edge innovation. Ooro (2009) was however confounded by the minimal importance attached to research in Africa's HEIs compared to developed countries yet the greatest contribution to the development of the human race comes from research.

Mazzoleni (2008) argued that the remarkable economic growth of the Asian Tigers such as Brazil, China, Korea and Taiwan was underpinned and to a large extent driven by critical investments in a number of areas including: Strategic reforms that had a focus in modernizing HEIs; policies that were supportive of STEM fields; collaborative investments in academic research (R&D) and clear links between HE and the economy. According to Gardner (2011), investments in higher education in these countries specifically targeted rapid expansion of University systems, increased student enrollment generally but specifically in STEM education, funding the development of public research laboratories, funding research activities in collaboration with the private sector and establishing incentives that encouraged foreign-based scientists to return home. These initiatives created the requisite synergies for the establishment of a large skilled pool of talent that has largely been driving research production, technological innovations and consequently the economic growth of these countries (Nyangau, 2014).

Though contextually different from the aforementioned Tiger nations, Kenya stands to benefit from similar models of investing in HE and in research and development to spur economic growth if the experiences of such countries are anything to go by (Nyangau, 2014). Unfortunately, studies by Meek *et* al. (2009) showed that the capability of HEIs to provide this role is reduced in different developing countries as a result of numerous inherent constraints which hinder the working and interfere with the quality of higher education. For Sub-Saharan Africa, qualified human capital remains scarce compared to

the continent's development needs, a situation that has hindered growth and undermined the foundation for sustainable development (Altbach, 2013).

Vision 2030 (GoK, 2007) is Kenya's vehicle for accelerating the transformation of the Country into a rapidly industrializing middle income nation, realizing a sustained 10% per annum growth rate in its GDP by 2012/2013 financial year. While acknowledging that Kenya's human resources are inadequate and are poorly trained to be integrated into the job market, Vision 2030 seeks to turn the country into a knowledge-led economy wherein the creation, adaptation and use of knowledge are critical factors for rapid economic growth (GoK, 2007). This probably explains why Mhlanga (2008) asserted that the traditional role of a University is to generate high quality knowledge and disseminate it in a way that it contributes to the development of society. Intriguingly, Ngome (2003) decried the poor dissemination of research findings in Kenya in particular and Africa as a whole due to the absence of research journals.



### 2.4.1. Summary on Higher education and economic development: Lessons for Kenya

Higher Education is a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge –driven global economy in both industrialized and developing countries (Pillay, 2011). Jabnoun (2009) observed the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2007 showed that the countries ranked as the top ten most competitive in the world were found to be home to 213 out of the top 300 WCUs.

Table 1 (see section 2.3.6) revealed Kenya's HEIs performed dismally in the Webometrics Ranking results, implying they critically fell short of ingredients that drive WCUs. Consequently, these institutions cannot perform their role of driving development in Kenya's economy effectively unless if it is accompanied by corresponding reforms in Higher Education.

Given the myriad challenges facing Africa's HEIs generally (see section 2.8) and Kenya's HEIs in particular (see section 2.9) there is urgent need for reform through effective quality assurance mechanisms if Kenya is to tap from the gains of HE. Though contextually different, Kenya stands to gain from borrowing the experiences of the Tiger nations like Brazil, China, Korea and Taiwan by initiating reforms targeting the HEIs for them to effectively drive growth.

There are efforts that point to reform initiatives in Kenya which mirror those that were taken by the Tiger Nations. The enactment of the Universities ACT (GoK, 2012) and the subsequent reforms in Kenya's HE which include and are not limited to the enactment of the Universities Standards and Guidelines (CUE, 2014) , the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) all aim at revitalizing Kenya's HEIs with a view to making them more relevant to the Country's development needs. These reforms if well implemented may facilitate the realization of Kenya's development dream as enshrined in Vision 2030. If the challenges in higher education are not well addressed, then the warning by Mbirithi (2013) that the growing concern and fear poor quality in Kenya's HEIs will undermine its usefulness as a key tool for driving development in the global economy is not far from the truth.



## 2.5.Global Trends in Demand forQuality Assurance in Higher Education

According to INQAAHE (2015), many groups of quality assurance agencies have formed networks on the basis of geographical regions or other characteristics such as agencies in small states or agencies for professional bodies. This section explores some of these networks.

### 2.5.1. International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) was established in 1991(INQAAHE, 2014). It is a world-wide association of over 200 0rganizations active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in HE. It provides a forum for the discussion of global issues such as cross border education that go beyond national and regional boundaries. According to INQAAHE (2015), objectives of this organization include:

- To promote good practices in the maintenance and improvement of quality in Higher Education;
- To facilitate research into the practice of quality management in higher education;
- To provide expertise and advice to assist in the development of new Quality Assurance Agencies: facilitate links between accrediting bodies especially in so far as they operate across national borders;
- To assist members in determining the standards of the institutions operating across national borders;
- To assist in the development and use of credit transfer schemes in order to enhance the mobility of students between institutions within and across national borders and;
- To enable members to be alert to dubious accrediting practices and organizations.



### 2.5.2. Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)

The APQN was founded in 2003 and its objectives include:

- To promote good practice in the maintenance and improvement of quality in higher education in the Asia-Pacific region;

- To facilitate research in the region into the practice of quality assurance in higher education and its effectiveness in improving quality of higher education in the region;
- To provide advice and expertise to assist the development of new quality assurance agencies in the region;
- To assist APQN members determine standards of institutions operating across national borders;
- To permit better informed international recognition of qualifications throughout the region;
- To assist in the development and use of credit transfer schemes
- To enhance the mobility of students between institutions both within and across national borders.

### 2.5.3. The European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

According to ENQA (2015), ENQA is an umbrella organization representing quality assurance organizations from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Some of the participating countries include Germany, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, United Kingdom, France, Finland, Australia, Malta, Greece, Netherlands, etc. Initially established as European Network for Quality Assurance in 2000, the organization changed its name to European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in 2004. Its membership criteria are identical with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). It disseminates information on experiences, good practices and new developments in the field of quality assessment and quality assurance in Higher Education to stakeholders who include public authorities, higher education institutions, students and quality assurance agencies. Its goals include:

- To encourage and develop the exchange of information and experience on quality assurance;

- To function as a policy forum for developing and proposing standards, procedures, and guidelines for quality assurance;
- To fulfill requests for expertise and advice from European Ministers of Education, public authorities and other bodies associated with EHEA.
- To facilitate quality assurance activities in the area of transnational higher education and e-learning;
- To promote the development and implementation of effective peer review systems for quality assurance and accreditation agencies

### 2.5.4. ASEA Quality Assurance Network (AQAN)

According to INQAAHE (2015), the AQAN was established in July 2008 and its objectives include the following:

- To enhance and sustain higher education systems in the South East Asia region through quality assurance practices;
- To harmonize the national quality assurance frameworks of the member countries ;
- To promote and share good practices of quality assurance in higher education in the region;
- To collaborate on capacity building of quality assurance in the region;
- To share information on higher education and facilitate exchange and mutual recognition of qualifications within the region and between it and other parts of the world;
- To ensure effective association with other international quality assurance networks and higher education organizations.

#### 1.1.1.1. Progamme Planning and Management

Programme Planning and Management dimension was defined by five key variables used to measure quality in Kenya's HEIs. Table 3 provides a summarized view of the gaps on weighted averages of responses on each of the attributes surveyed on programme planning and management in each of the HEIs sampled. Qualitative data was also analyzed to obtain a deeper understanding of this dimension in Kenya's HEIs and to confirm the findings of the quantitative data.

**Table 3: Gaps on Progamme Planning and Management Dimension**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Programme planning and management | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| PP1 | Programme aligned with the overall institutional mission and vision | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 0.5 |
| PP2 | Allocates sufficient resources to support the programme | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | -1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 0.6 |
| PP3 | Has programme coordinator(s) for ensuring quality of the programme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2.3 | 2 | 1.1 |
| PP4 | Mode of delivery takes account of the needs and challenges of all targeted students | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 0.8 |
| PP5 | Students are involved in curriculum evaluation | 0 | 0 | 0 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | -1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 0.6 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 0.4 | 1.6 | 1.0 | -0.6 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 1.0 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 0.6 | 2.8 | 1.8 | -1.0 | 2.6 | 3.2 | 0.6 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 0.2 | | | |

Effective quality assurance requires that an institution's programmes be aligned to its vision and mission. Findings in Table 3 suggested that DU, MU, JK and TU emerged strong on the alignment of their programmes to their institutional mission and vision (PP1). However, KM and DK registered the highest gaps on this attribute between Quality Assurance Staff and Students. The results confirmed findings in **Error! Reference source not found.** that Kenya's HEIs were deficient in the clarity of their vision and missions.

On allocation of resources to support programmes (PP2), results showed DU was strongest followed by MU. SP had the highest gaps hence was the most constrained on this attribute followed by DK. All the other Universities sampled revealed varying levels of gaps in regard to allocating resources to programmes (PP2). The findings were indicative that the Universities were constrained in complying with CUE Standards PROG/STD/04 on structure of academic programmes and Standard PROG/STD/19 on the requirement for programmes to be supported by current and relevant resource materials.

Interviews with Students in all the other Universities surveyed revealed a commonality in their sentiments that the Universities did not allocate enough resources to programmes. The Students argued that the internet was slow and computer facilities were inadequate given that the ratio recommended is 1:1 for computers to students,(Focus Group discussion, SPU, 2014**).**The findings corroborated results in section 4.13.1.3 that revealed challenges in access to computer resources and the internet in Kenya's HEIs. Interviews with Students revealed there were deficiencies in the availability of up to date books and journals in the sampled Universities.

The results indicated the Universities sampled were constrained in assigning Coordinators to programmes (PP3).The implication was that Kenya's HEIs were

challenged in complying with CUE Standards PRO/STD/16 on Management and Administration of an academic Programme. The results echoed the contention by Kilonzo (2011), Mario *et* al (2003) and Mutisya (2010) that that there is a shortage of Academic Staff in Kenya's HEIs with a majority of them being qualified at Masters level with no research or teaching experience. The results confirmed findings in section 4.13.2.2 that Kenya's Universities were constrained in the adequacy (TL2) and the qualifications and competency (TL1) of Academic Staff. As aptly argued by one academic staff member in an interview session at DK:

> The University has a serious shortage of resources both in infrastructure and human resources. Student numbers have grown exponentially from time of inception of this institution as a University College to date without much corresponding increase in resources. The problem has been exacerbated by the failure of the government to correspondingly increase its funding to HEIs (AS-DK, 2014)

Confirming this, reports by Wesangula (2014) indicated that statistics from CUE in 2013 showed the number of Professors in Kenya's oldest HEIs had risen from 238 in 2010 to 265 in 2013 while student population over the same period rose from 140,000 in 2010 to 218,832. This implied the population increase in student numbers of 78,832 over this period was accompanied by a paltry increase of 27 Professors only. According to the report, the Student- Lecturer ratios had consequently worsened thus for UoN it was 36:1, while KU with a student enrollment of 61, 928 had a Student-Lecturer ratio of 65:1. CUE Standard PROG/STD/17 on University Staff recommends a full time staff to Student Staff ratio of 1: 10 for applied sciences, 1:15 for arts and humanities, 1:7 for medical and allied sciences, 1:10 for pure and natural sciences and 1:18 for social sciences. The results therefore were indicative there was room for improvement.

Some of the approaches that Kenya's HEIs had taken to address deficiencies in academic staff wasby partnering with research institutions to increase their staff capacities. For example, the Daily Nation on February 2, 2015 page 5 reported that the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) had partnered with five HEIs to provide merit-based scholarships to Africans in health research, urban health, and research and evaluation methodology. Amongst the institutions benefiting from the programme was Moi University from Kenya, University of Gothenburg, Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development, and the University of Marwick.

The government was also facilitating electronic communication and collaboration among students and staff in Kenya's HEIs. Mwangi (2013) for example reported that the government of Kenya had launched the Kenya Education Network Trust (KENET) that was described by the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology Mr. Fred Matiangi as a national research and education network that would promote the use of ICT in teaching, learning and research in Kenya's HEIs. HEIs were therefore shifting to e-learning platforms.

Table 3 indicates MU was strongest amongst sampled HEIs on how its delivery modes take account of all targeted Students (PP4). DK and SP however emerged with highest challenges on this attribute. The results echo the findings of a study by Kasozi (2006) which indicated that the increasing number of students in HEIs was unmatched by facilities and consequently impacted adversely on the quality of HEIs. There were overall country gaps an all attributes which pointed to room for improvement.

#### 1.1.1.2. Infrastructure

The quality of student learning is influenced by the provision of adequate physical resources. In this study, the infrastructure dimension was measured using six attributes.

Effective QAPs require that lecture spaces be adequate, lecture halls have internet access and projectors to allow for power point presentations among other attributes.

Table 4 presents results of an analysis of gaps in responses on each attribute of the infrastructure dimension in each of the Universities sampled in the study. The results in the table also portrayed the overall gap on each attribute in Kenya's HEIs which was computed as an average of the sum of gaps on each attribute in all the Universities studied.

**Table 4: Gaps on Infrastructure Dimension**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Infrastructure | QAS/A | QAS/S | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/S | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/A | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/S | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| IN1 | Has sufficient lecture spaces for the programme. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 0.5 |
| IN2 | Lecture halls have internet access & projectors to allow for power point presentations | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 0.9 |
| IN3 | Laboratory facilities are adequate for the programme | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | -1 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2.9 | 2.4 | 1.1 |
| IN4 | Staff have access to computer resources and the internet | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 1.4 |
| IN5 | Lecture halls are well maintained and secure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | -1 | 2.3 | 1.8 | 0.5 |
| IN6 | Students have access to electronic library resources | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | -1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.4 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 0.1 | 1.5 | 1.3 | -0 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 0.4 | 3 | 3.2 | 0.2 | 2.5 | 1.7 | 0.8 | 2.4 | 1.9 | -1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | | | |

Teaching and learning are directly influenced by the quality of the facilities (Schneider, 2003). Table 4 revealed DU was favorably rated on sufficiency of lecture spaces for its programmes (IN1). The highest gaps were observed at JK, DK and TU. One lecturer interviewed at JK avidly put it this way;

> Student admissions have been increasing without a corresponding increase in the lecture halls. There is pressure on the University to become entrepreneurial in order to supplement the declining government funds pushing it into admitting many students in the module II Courses. Besides, the government has forced institutions into admitting more than declared capacities for programmes in order to fulfill political promises without considering the implications on resources (IAS-JK, 2014)

Interview data with focus groups of Students sampled confirmed that Universities were admitting Students beyond their capacities. The findings confirmed the assertion by Gudo*et* al. (2011) that public Universities in Kenya suffer from a shortage of learning physical facilities. Confirming this, Okewo (2014) reported the Engineering Board of Kenya cited crowded lecture halls and the unacceptable ratio of Lecturers to Students as one of the reasons it had to put on hold the accreditation of Engineering Programmes in some of Kenya's HEIs.

Likewise, Fortunate(2013) reported Moi University to have been put under provisional accreditation for its School of Law by the Council of Legal Education due to noncompliance blamed on lack of qualified lecturers and congestion in lecture rooms. This implied the institutions were challenged in complying with CUE Standard PROG/STD/18 on Facilities and Equipment for Academic Programmes.

Observations revealed DU was strong on internet accessibility and provision of projectors in lecture halls for teaching (IN2). According to Mjema *et* al. (2005), the

application of information technology promotes the operational responsibilities of quality management and hence enhances quality output. The findings corroborated results in section 4.12.9 where DU was ranked the best on QAPs. A focus group of Students interviewed at KM witnessed that internet access at the University was challenged because of connectivity issues which were attributable to low bandwidth and compounded by the unreliability of electric power which was prone to frequent breakdowns. The findings were consistent with Gudo *et* al. (2011) who observed that Public Universities in Kenya lack adequate internet facilities for effective learning and teaching.

Results revealed the HEIs had challenges in access to computer resources and the internet by Staff (IN4). The results were consistent with findings by Manyasi (2010) whose study that investigated increased access to Kenya's HE found that most institutions had a few computers reserved for use by lecturers. The highest gaps on this attribute were observed at SP. Results indicated DU had low gaps implying it was making progress on this attribute.

The HEIs were challenged on adequacy of laboratory facilities (IN3). The attribute had the highest overall country gap. One Lecturer at SP interviewed submitted:

> We are unable to teach practical subjects due to lack of inadequate laboratory infrastructure, chemicals let alone asking students to write term papers. Internet access remains a challenge as access to computers is a challenge (IAS-SP, 2014).

The results confirmed fears by Okwakol (2008) that Universities in Kenya carry out only half of recommended experiments because 55% of their laboratory equipment is unsuitable for experiments. JK was observed to have the lowest gap on this dimension followed by DU and MU which was indicative the institutions were progressing well on this attribute.

There was evidence that Kenya's HEIs were making progress in access to electronic Library resources by Students (IN5). The lowest gaps were observed on this parameter which also registered the lowest country gap. Student interviews revealed that the Universities were opting to subscribe to journals rather than buying books as it was cheaper and also in response to the shifts in programme delivery modes witnessed in a number of HEIs as a majority mount their courses on E-learning platforms.

Kenya's HEIs had devised various mechanisms to cope with the challenges in infrastructure. The most common was the use of shifts in both teaching hours for various Courses and in Semesters. One lecturer at JK described the situation as follows:

> The teaching timetable runs from 7a.m to 7p.m daily and Semester schedules overlap and run continuously without a break. This has been happening since the University enlisted into the Government's accelerated admission programme that was aimed at cutting delays in Students' admission into the HEIs after their high school (IAS-JK, 2014)

The sentiments were in concurrence with those raised by a lecturer at DK;

> It is difficult to tell the beginning or the end of a semester. This situation has led to fatigue for both Lecturers and the Students since teaching, setting examinations, marking examinations, processing of the results have now become continuous activities for the Lecturers (IAS-DK, 2014)

Other approaches devised as coping mechanisms include renting of spaces. This was common for the Satellite Campuses of most Universities. As regards laboratories and workshops, HEIs have entered into MoUs with industry where Students go for laboratory practicals or workshop experience and also with other Universities. Interviews with focus groups of students at DK and TU revealed they use laboratories and workshops in the older Universities. There were overall country gaps on all

attributes which was indicative that Kenya's HEIs were facing challenges in provision of infrastructure for teaching and learning hence room for improvement.

### 1.1.2. Educational Process

Educational process refers to all organized actions and means used to deliver educational programmes, activities and services that facilitate the transformation of the learner. This section looked into components of the educational process which included Curriculum development dimension, teaching and learning dimension and assessment dimension. Section 4.13.2.1 to 4.13.2.3 provides an analysis of the attributes on each of these dimensions surveyed in the educational process.

#### 1.1.2.1. Curriculum Development

Curriculum refers to planned learning experiences offered to students. The quality of the curriculum is crucial in defining the quality of teaching and ultimately the quality of the outcomes. In this study, the Curriculum development dimension was operationalized through six variables to measure QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. Table 5 presents the gaps on each of the attributes used to measure quality of Curriculum development dimension in each of the sampled HEIs. An average of the gaps on each attribute was computed to obtain the comparative overall country gaps hence its strength in Kenya's HEIs.

**Table 5: Gaps on Curriculum Development Dimension**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Statement | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| CD1 | The curriculum clearly specifies target learners for the programme. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1.2 | 2 | 0.6 |
| CD2 | Modules/courses in the curriculum are coherently planned and well sequenced. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4 | -1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 0.3 |
| CD3 | Curriculum is well balanced in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3.7 | 1.3 |
| CD4 | Employers were involved in the development of the curriculum. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 0.5 |
| CD5 | Alumni were involved in the development of the curriculum. | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 4 | 4 | -1 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 0.7 |
| CD6 | Students were involved in the development of the curriculum | 1 | 2 | 1 | -1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1.8 | 2.3 | 1.2 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 1.3 | 0 | 1.3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2.7 | 3 | 0.3 | 2.5 | 1.9 | -0.6 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0.2 | | | |

Table 5 revealed DU, MU, JK, TU, SP and KC had progressed in terms of ensuring the clarity of their curricular in specifying target learners (CD1). According to observations, DK and KM were the most challenged Universities in the conciseness of their curricular in specifying target learners (CD1).

DU, MU and JK had the lowest gaps in the coherency and sequencing of courses in their programmes (CD2). This implied these Universities were making progress in compliance to the CUE Standard PROG/STD/12 that requires academic Programmes to be systematically presented. SP and DK had the highest gaps on CD2 which was indicative that they were struggling on this quality attribute.

Table 140 revealed the highest overall country gap on Curriculum dimension was observed on the balance of knowledge, skills and attitudes curricular (CD3). This confirmed findings that the Universities had challenges in coherently planning and balancing courses in their curricular (CD2). Interview data from focus group discussions with students indicated most curricular focus on theory leaving out practical knowledge of the subject which most employers insist on. The findings resonated with the report by Maina (2014) that indicated the Executive Director of the Federation of Kenya Employers, Jackline Mugo had raised alarm that local graduates, some holding Masters Degrees were not creative at work, lacked diligence and the skills in their areas of study to make them competitive in their workplace.

Findings indicated DU and JK had progressed in involving employers in the development of curricular (CD4). However, the rest of the institutions had challenges. DK was observed to have the largest gaps followed by TU, SP and KC. The second highest overall country gap on Curriculum was observed on involvement of employers in the development of curricular (CD4). This probably explains why Meyer and Bushney (2008) argued that many Universities in Africa continue to perpetuate

academic programmes that do not meet quality requirements according to industry demands. The findings were in concurrence with Muindi (2014) who reported the Engineering Board of Kenya to have decried Kenya's HEIs to be using outdated Curricular that can barely produce engineers who meet the demands of the current market.

KM, DU and MU were portrayed to have made progressin involvement of alumni in the development of curricular (CD5). Findings in table 140 revealed involving alumni in curriculum development (CD5) had the third highest overall country gaps. Equally, students were not involved in curriculum development (CD6). Interview data from students at DK confirmed they had not been involved in curriculum development in the University. The findings were in consonant with findings from a study Paul *et* al. (2014) of Zimbabwe's Universities that concluded that HEIs should do an assessment of their alumni to obtain valuable information about their academic offerings, quality improvement and appropriate delivery modes.

There were however initiatives that were being devised to improve Curricula development in Kenya's HEIs. One such measure was through partnerships between universities and industry players. For example, Mburu (2014) reported Safaricom Limited to have partnered with Strathmore University to set up the Strathmore Academy to offer a Master of Science Degree in Mobile Telecommunication while the Kenya Maritime Authority had partnered with JKUAT and Pwani University to offer training for the envisaged LAPPSET project in Kenya. Dedan Kimathi University of Technology had partnered with Geothermal Company to set up a Masters Degree in Geothermal Energy Technology (DeKUT, 2014).

Other initiatives include a project by the IUCEA which jointly with the East African Business Council , the National Councils and Commissions for HEIs have developed

programme benchmarks that are aimed at harmonizing the structure, quality, and delivery of University Curriculum within the EAC (IUCEA, 2014). Through the approach, benchmarks for engineering, natural sciences, human medicine, and agriculture have been developed (Nkunya, 2014) while others are underway.

Surveys have also been instituted by Stakeholders of HEIs to provide data on graduate employability in Kenya's HEIs. Gakii (2014) reported an ongoing study commissioned by the British Council to determine how typical Universities in Africa and the United Kingdom fared on graduate employability. According to the report, the study is expected to offer insights into whether curriculum, research training and other pedagogical methods can be improved in order to produce employable graduates. Similarly, three major Universities in Kenya have partnered with IBM in an initiative that will help universities strengthen their educational programs so that graduates can compete at the top of any industry (IBM, 2015). Lecturers at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Riara University and Strathmore University will not be charged to access to an extensive library of IT curricular for computer science, business and other degree Programmes and will be participating in ongoing training opportunities (IBM, 2015).



A strong legal framework has also been developed to regulate Curriculum development in Kenya's HEIs. Originally, Curriculum development and quality of Programmes in Kenya's public Universities was the responsibility of individual Senates. The enactment of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) brought the management of all HEIs in Kenya under the CUE. HEIs are now required to comply with the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) and the Universities Standards and Guidelines (CUE, 2014) in regard to Programme accreditation.

The Universities are expected to undertake Programme audits as spelt out in CUE Standards PROG/STD/20 on Programme Audit. Already the CUE is accrediting

programmes of Universities through a process of Programme evaluation and site evaluation to confirm supporting resources for the Programmes. Additionally, the Universities are expected to seek accreditation from relevant Professional Accrediting Professional agencies both locally and internationally according to the CUE Standard PRO/STD/06.

However, Table 5 revealed gaps on all attributes of Curriculum dimension which was suggestive there was room for improvement.



#### 1.1.2.2. Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are central to purposes of HEIs. At undergraduate level, the quality of student learning experience, the breadth and depth of learning achieved by students depends on the quality of the teaching processes. In this study, the teaching and learning dimension was operationalized through eight attributes used to measure QAPs in Kenya's HEIs.

Table 141 presents results of an analysis of gaps in responses on each attribute of the teaching and learning dimension in each of the Universities sampled in the study. The results in the table also portrayed the overall country gap on each attribute on this dimension which was computed as an average of the sum of gaps on each attribute in all the Universities studied.

**Table 6: Gaps on Teaching and Learning Dimension**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Teaching and learning | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| TL1 | Programme has qualified and competent teaching staff. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 1 |
| TL2 | The programme has adequate teaching staff | 2 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3.8 | 4 | 1 |
| TL3 | Variety of teaching and learning methods used | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 1 |
| TL4 | Has procedures for inducting teaching staff into teaching methodologies. | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 2.8 | 1 |
| TL5 | Students consult with teaching staff in small groups | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 1 |
| TL6 | Institution has policies and procedures that guide development of the curriculum. | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 3 | 1 | -2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 1 |
| TL7 | Teaching and learning includes industrial placements and practical trainings for students | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 1 |
| TL8 | Students provided with academic support | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 0.7 | 1 | 0.3 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 0.2 | 2.4 | 1.4 | 1 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 0.4 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 0.6 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 0.2 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 0 | | | |

Table 6 indicates DU, MU and JK provided industrial placements and practical training to their Students (TL7) as well as academic support (TL8). Interview data with students at JK revealed that the University had established linkages with employers in industry who provided students with opportunities for industrial placements. Similar sentiments were expressed by students at DU in Focus group interview sessions. The implication was that the HEIs had progressed in complying with CUE Standard INST/STD/09 on Quality of Teaching.

DU was rated strong on adequacy of teaching staff (TL2) hence emerged as an example of good practice amongst the HEIs sampled. All the other Universities revealed serious challenges in adequacy of teaching staff (TL2). The results echoed the assertion by Kilonzo (2011, Mario *et* al. (2008) and Mutisya (2010) that Kenya's HEIs have a shortage of Academic Staff most of whom are qualified at Masters level with no research or teaching experience. Confirming this, Mburu (2014) revealed that Kenya's Public HEIs are facing a huge staffing gap and many Lecturers prefer to teach in the Private Universities which offer better remuneration than the Public Universities.

Interview data with Students at JK revealed they have perennially missed lectures in the first week of every semester due to lack of Lecturers required in some of the units. The response pattern across the Universities by the Academic Staff was similar with many alluding to the heavy dependence on part time staff. This was indicative the HEIs were challenged in complying with CUE Standard PROG/STD/17 on provision of University Staff for Academic Programmes. One Academic Staff at MU argued:

> There is shortage of Staff which is partly attributable to the poor remuneration which Universities in Kenya have suffered from for a long time. This is especially critical in public Universities which have constantly been engaged with Academic staff Unions (UASU) in salary negotiation that appear to yield no results. As a consequence, many lecturers have migrated to other countries while

> the few who are left behind engage in part-time teaching famously called 'moonlighting' to make ends meet (IAS-MU, 2014)

The overall gaps displayed in Table 140 revealed the HEIs were challenged in terms of the qualifications and competence of Staff (TL1) and in providing teaching staff with teaching methodologies (TL4). Additionally, the institutions were constrained in employing a variety of teaching and learning methods (TL3). When interviewed, one Academic Staff at KM had this to say:

> A majority of the lecturers at the University have little if any training in pedagogy and therefore most of them employ the lecture method of teaching because it is considered to be faster and easier. It calls for minimal preparation (IAS-KM, 2014).

The findings confirmed the observation by Sifuna (2010) that the shortage of quality faculty in Kenya's Public Universities has been persistent despite the growth registered in the recent years. One lecturer interviewed at MU explained that they are faced with large student numbers to teach which makes the lecture method the most attractive to apply. One Chairperson of Department at MU in an interview intimated the following:

> Physical resources are not adequate to facilitate any small class teaching arrangements anymore. With increased student numbers and a stagnant resource growth, all tutorial rooms in the University have slowly been converted to offices for Lecturers and other Staff (IAS-MU, 2014)

Results of interview data with Lecturers in all Universities sampled were unanimous that most of the teaching staff hold Master Level Degrees which is the minimal academic qualifications for teaching undergraduate courses as stipulated in the CUE Standard PROG/STD/17 on University Staff. According to the lecturers, it is not surprising to find tutorial fellows hired to teach some of the very complex units in science-based courses such as Engineering. The findings were corroborated by the

reports by Okewo (2014) who indicated the Vice Chancellor of Maseno University, Professor Dominic Makawiti to have decried the scarcity of qualified personnel in Kenya's HEIs, a situation that was forcing them to employ Masters Holders as Full-time Lecturers to spearhead research and supervision.

Results indicated DU and JK were strong in providing opportunities to Students to consult with lecturers in small groups (TL5). This was suggestive the two institutions had made progress in complying with CUE Standard INST/STD/09 on quality teaching. However there was evidence the rest of the HEIs sampled faced challenges in providing opportunities to students to consult with lecturers in small groups (TL5).

Analysis of interview data of lecturers at DK indicated a common perception that the University had been making efforts to provide tutorial sessions for the students but inadequate funds had made it impossible to hire teaching assistants for the purpose. The findings were congruent to intimation by Ndirangu and Udoto (2011) that Kenya's Public HEIs have discontinued tutorials due to insufficient funds required to hire academic staff to teach increased student numbers. Gudo *et* al. (2011) feared that Private Universities had never institutionalized tutorials.

There was similarity in interview responses from Students in the Universities that the shortage of Academic Staff had also negatively impacted on the assessment methods employed in the HEIs. There was also shared perception by Academic Staff interviewed in all the HEIs that there was a growing tendency of poor work culture among the staff which manifested in lack of commitment and engagement. Staff shortage was more acute in the newly established Universities.

One Academic Staff interviewed at KC witnessed as follows:

> We have less than six Professors in the entire University. A majority of the Lecturers are Holders of a Master's Degree and in some instances even Bachelor's Degree though some are pursuing their Doctoral Studies. Moreover, the culture dominating now is one of economic competition rather than academic competition. Money has become very important and professionalism has been relegated to the backyard. This challenge exacerbates the problem of quality management in our Universities. Most Academic Staff avoid project work that requires constant supervision by the lecturer and prefer lecture method of teaching (IAS-KC, 2014)

To cope with inadequacy of Staff, a number of Universities had mounted e-learning Programmes where common units were being taught by one lecturer. Others were using video conferencing facilities like Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT, 2011) to access Lecturers from UK, USA among others. Other approaches included hiring lecturers from abroad. These findings were corroborated by reports that Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and Technical University of Mombasa were hiring engineering Lecturers from the United Kingdom, Netherlands, India, Korea and China (Mwindi, 2014). This said however, the findings were indicative there was room for improvement in Kenya's HEIs.

#### 1.1.2.3. Assessment Dimension

Assessment is an important process used to ascertain educational quality by determining whether learning outcomes were achieved and the extent to which they were achieved. Assessment plays a critical role in the educational process by shaping the learning approach of learners and driving their engagement with the learning process.

In this study, the assessment dimension was operationalized by five parameters. Table 7 depicts the gaps in perceptions of respondents on each assessment attribute in the Universities studied. It also provides the overall country gaps on each attribute which was derived as an average of the sum of all gaps on each attribute in the eight Universities studied.

**Table 7: Gaps on Assessment Dimension**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Assessment | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QSA/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| A1 | Institution has systems in place for external examiners | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2.4 | 3.2 | 1 |
| A2 | Students provided with clear information on mode of assessment | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 3 | -1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 0.9 |
| A3 | Assessment methods are designed to measure how well learning outcomes have been mastered | 1 | 2 | -1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 1.1 |
| A4 | variety of assessment methods are used in the programme | 0 | -1 | -1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | -1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | -3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 1.3 |
| A5 | Marking and grading criteria are consistent and clear. | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | -1 | 2 | 1.5 | 0.6 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 0.8 | 1 | -1 | 1.4 | 2 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 0.2 | 2.2 | 2 | 0.8 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 0.2 | 2.8 | 1.8 | 1 | 2.6 | 2 | 0.6 | 4 | 4 | -0.2 | | | |

Stephani (2005) advised that assessment is integral to student learning and that it essentially drives the curriculum. The picture depicted in Table 7 revealed DU was strong in its system of external examiners (A1) followed by DK while SP emerged with the highest deficiencies in this attribute. Interview data with Academic Staff at DK revealed the following:

> The University has always engaged external examiners in the moderation of both the draft examinations and the final Examination scripts. Analysis of the reports is then done and informs deliberations of the Senate on examinations. They are also used to inform Departmental Examination Board decisions in regard to improvement strategies in teaching as advised by the External Examiner (IAS-DK, 2014).

Policies reviewed at the Universities indicated most HEIs commit themselves to engaging global external examiners but the practice on the ground suggested otherwise. Interviewed, one Academic Staff at TU submitted:

> Funds don't permit us to hire external examiners every semester so we appoint them annually. The limitation has now worsened as we now hire them from the region and not internationally (IAS-TU, 2014).

The other Universities had varying levels of gaps on this attribute which was suggestive they face challenges in the external examiner system (A1). There was uniformity in responses from all Academic Staff interviewed in the Universities that there was minimal engagement of external examiners from the international community. Forfeiting input from the international community hurts an institution's quest for global reputation. The input from external examiners is one of the best strategies of aligning the Curriculum to international trends. The findings corroborated the contention by Gudo *et* al. (2011) that the external examination system was dysfunctional in Kenya's Private Universities where examinations were internally moderated while in Public

Universities, the system was full of challenges. One Academic Staff interviewed at SP submitted:

> The University doesn't hire external examiners because they are expensive. Before, external examining was a sacred exercise that formed part of an Academic's contribution to knowledge dissemination. These days, it has been commercialized (IAS-SP, 2014).

Conciseness of assessment methods in measuring the mastery of learning outcomes by students (A3) was observed to be best at DU and at JK. SP emerged the most challenged on this attribute. On the overall, table 141 illustrated the attribute registered the second highest gap on the assessment dimension. According to CUE Standards PROG/STD/04 on structure of an Academic Programme, HEIs are expected to align the expected learning outcomes to the course content, mode of delivery, material and equipment and assessment. The results indicated that only DU and JK had made some progress on this quality aspect amongst HEIs surveyed. The assessment methods were deficient in measuring learning outcomes (A3) yet content of curricular is derived from Learning Outcomes. The findings were suggestive that most of Kenya's HEIs were not accomplishing their goals and objectives and hence were not effectively contributing to the Country's development Strategy, Vision 2030 from which they derive their strategic direction.

There was consensus in the response pattern in interviews with students across the Universities that courses with a practical component to a large extend tended to be theoretically examined due to inadequacies in practical materials and laboratories. Analysis of interview data with one Chairperson of a Department at JK revealed the following reflection:

> Summative examinations may be appropriate for assessing certain modules depending on the subject matter but on the overall, they are the least useful in

assessing skills of creativity, critical thinking, communication and presentation all of which are the skills most employers now demand from our graduates (IAS-JK, 2014).

The findings demonstrated that the HEIs were constrained in employing a variety of assessment methods (A4). DU and MU registered low gaps which implied they had made progress on the path to excellence in using a variety of assessment methods.

On the overall, HEIs in Kenya emerged constrained on the diversity of the assessment methods they employ. Equally, the Universities were challenged in the consistency and clarity of the marking and grading criteria (A5). The findings echoed the assertion by Ndethui (2007) whose study at Kenyatta University revealed that teaching and assessment methods were a constraint in the promotion of reading habits among Undergraduate students. Analysis of interview data from lecturers across all the Universities revealed uniformity in their responses that the Assessment process in Kenya's education system was flawed right from the lower tiers of Primary and Secondary level education.

Confirming this, Kiogora (2014) reported Kenya's Ministry of Education Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 had highlighted concern by Researchers that the Country's summative assessment at the end of primary and secondary cycle was inadequate in measuring abilities of learners. Admission into Kenya's HEIs for many students is pegged on results from the Secondary School. The implication was that deficiencies acquired at the lower education system spill over into Kenya's HEIs where students carried on the culture of acquiring good grades and marks at the expense of competencies relevant to the job market as happens in the lower tiers of the education system. In corroboration, Ihucha (2014) reported findings of a survey by the IUCEA and the East African Business Council to have established that the state of HEIs in the EAC reflected the lack of competence in primary and secondary schools that had unfortunately now permeated

into Universities and was diluting the quality of the region's human capital base. Interviewed, one Academic Staff at TU had this to say:

> A majority of the students are ill prepared for the tough courses and the level of critical thinking expected of them at University level. Coupled with lecturers who are equally challenged on pedagogy skills, the end result is a learning process which perpetuates rote memorization of facts as happens at the lower tiers of the education system as the complains by stakeholders allude to now (IAS-TU, 2014).



According to the CUE Standards PROG/STD/02, Undergraduate Degree Programme should: Provide a broad knowledge base in a discipline involving critical thinking and analytical understanding of theories, principles and concepts; Provide learners with comprehensive range of cognitive and analytical skills, demonstrate problem solving skills and; enhance society consciousness. Unfortunately, results in table 141 were suggestive that Kenya's HEIs had difficulties in compliance with this standard.

Commenting on the constraints facing Kenya's HEIs, Wasangula (2014) reported Professor Kubasu to have been irked by the culture of Students in Kenya's HEIs whose quest is to acquire papers and not knowledge while the Academic Staff concentrated on making money. Sentiments by Professor Kubasu pointed to the inadequacies in the assessment systems in Kenya's HEIs. In collaboration, Ihucha (2014) reported findings of a survey by the IUCEA and the East African Business Council to have revealed that employers indicated that graduates from the HEIs within the EAC lacked self-confidence at work, couldn't apply the knowledge learned and normally wanted to be told what to do. This put to question the credibility of the assessment system in Kenya's HEIs.

Experiences from elsewhere indicated that there were alternative approaches to assessment that yield better results compared to what Kenya is following. For example,

Kiogora (2014) reported that Students from Korea, Singapore, Japan, and Hong Kong performed best in the OECD Programme for international Student Assessment (Pisa). Pisa measures the competencies of 15 year olds in reading, mathematics, problem solving financial literacy and Science in 65 countries. These Countries are reputed for placing emphasis on teacher training which has contributed to competency development in Students. Results in table 139 revealed Kenya's HEIs not only had inadequate academic Staff (TL2) but were also challenged in their qualifications and competencies (TL1).

Several initiatives were being pursued to enhance the quality of assessment in Kenya's HEIs. Among them was the development of Curricular that stipulate the learning outcomes which makes learning learner- centred. The Curricular were required to be accredited by the CUE upon confirmation that they comply with the third Schedule of the Universities Guidelines and Standards (CUE, 2014). The Universities were also expected to file returns on examinations, assignments, examination malpractices to the Cabinet Secretary for Education. In corroboration, Oduor (2014) reported a requirement that Kenya's HEIs file returns to the Cabinet Secretary for Education detailing information on management of examinations including Thesis supervision.

There were also initiatives already launched to review the assessment methods applied in Kenya at both Primary and Secondary School through the Basic Education Amendment Bill. According to Oduor (2015) the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development Director (KICD), Dr. Jwan had conceded that Kenya's Curricular for Primary and Secondary School had gaps. The report indicated the Basic Education Amendment Bill sought to ensure that assessment was tailored to determine if learners had mastered prescribed competencies and not competing against one another.

The Kenya Government through support from development partners is also revamping laboratories and workshops in HEIs in order to strengthen teaching and learning of

practical oriented courses. One such initiative is support by the African Development Bank (ADB) extended to Dedan Kimathi University of Technology to set up the most modern training facilities in engineering in Eastern Africa with a view to enhancing practical training through capacity development (DeKUT, 2014). Under the programme, the University has set up state of the art workshops and laboratories which cover training needs for Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering.

According to Kenya's Education Master Plan (MOEST, 2007), quality education should demonstrate a shift from passing exams to encompass discovery of talents, development of analytical, cognitive and creative potential enhanced by prudent utilization of resources. Even with this advice, the situation doesn't seem to have changed 8 years down the line. This is suggestive there exists potential for improving assessment practices in Kenya's HEIs.



### 1.1.3. Educational Outputs

Output is a measure of an organization's performance. The next section presents the results of data analysis concerning educational output. In this study, educational output in Kenya's HEIs was measured in terms of Research, publication and innovation and Programme results. Section 4.13.3.1 and 4.13.3.2 provides both quantitative and qualitative findings on these dimensions.

#### 1.1.3.1. Research, Publication and Innovation

Effective QAPs in teaching and academic offerings feeds from the research arm of Universities. The research dimension in this study was operationalized through five variables. Table 8 depicts the gaps in perceptions of respondents on each attribute on research, publication and innovation for each of the Universities studied. It also provides the overall country gaps on each attribute which was derived as an average of the sum of all gaps on each attribute in the eight HEIs studied.

**Table 8: Gaps on Research, Publication and Innovation**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Research Publication and Innovation | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| RP1 | The institution has a research policy and publications policy | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1.6 | 2 | 0.6 |
| RP2 | Staff and students publish their research in accredited academic journals. | 5 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 4.3 | 4 | 1 |
| RP3 | University supports students & staff to present their research at national and international conferences | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | -2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2.6 | 3 | 1.3 |
| RP4 | University has a sufficient budget to support research work by staff and students. | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 | -2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 1 |
| RP5 | Institution rewards students & staff for their research | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 0.5 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 2 | 2 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.8 | 0.8 | 1.8 | 2.3 | 0.5 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 0.0 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 0.2 | 3.1 | 2.4 | 0.4 | 3 | 3.4 | 0.4 | 4 | 4 | 0.0 | | | |

The University goal of providing quality education is only achievable through the provision of competent staff and effective teaching both of which are functions of active research (Mbirithi, 2013).Table 8 depicts gaps on all attributes surveyed which was indicative the Universities were constrained on all the quality aspects on the research, publication and innovation dimension. Encouragingly, there was evidence of progress in regard to development of policy to support publications and research work (RP1) at DU, MU, JK, KM and TU. Juran (1974) one of the fathers of quality management, argued that an integral part of a management's commitment to quality is the development of policy. The Universities had therefore made progress in complying with the CUE Standard INST/STD/03 on Governance and Management.

Kenya's HEIs were constrained in the support accorded to Staff and Students to publish their research (RP2) as reflected in the overall average country gap. SP and KM emerged the most challenged on this attribute. Equally challenged was support to staff and students to present their research in national or international Conferences (RP3). Responses from Academic Staff interviewed revealed that most Universities in Kenya don't have funds even to run national conferences leave alone international Conferences. The findings were congruent with the assertion by Wesangula (2014) that teaching conditions at Kenya's local Universities were not conducive for research for both the teaching Staff and the Students. The findings echoed Bloom *et* al. (2005) who lamented that Africa accounts for less than 1.5% of the total publications in international scientific journals which unfortunately is still declining.

Analysis of Academic Staff interview responses revealed majority of them submitted they were constrained in publishing because they were overloaded with teaching duties, research budgets were low and remuneration was poor. One academic staff interviewed at TU submitted:

> Academic Staff are poorly remunerated and the society doesn't recognize or respect people on the basis of their academic excellence or competence in

teaching but on the basis of their material gain. This has driven many staff into part time teaching to bridge their personal budget deficits and research has been relegated to the periphery (IAS-TU, 2014).

These findings corroborated results in section 4.13.2.2 that indicated Kenya's HEIs have inadequate Academic Staff who are also have deficiencies in their qualifications and competencies. Okewo (2014) confirmed the fear that a number of Kenya's HEIs were grappling with a shortage of Professors and Doctorate degree holders who were needed to spearhead research in the HEIs.

Table 8 revealed the Universities had insufficient budgets to support research (RP4) and were challenged in terms of rewarding Academic Staff and Students for their research work (RP5). The results were in consonant with the assertion by Ooro (2009) that the poor visibility of Kenyan researchers is evidence that the Country suffers from a shortage of the requisite structural and financial mechanisms for research. A report in the Mail Guardian on July 31, 2015 carried results of the first ranking by Times Higher Education (THE) Africa of the top 30 of Africa's approximately 2,600 Universities. The report revealed that HEIs from Egypt and South Africa dominated with only 2 Universities of the EAC namely Makerere University in position 3 and University of Nairobi in position 8 featuring in the top 30 of Africa's top 30 HEIs. The results were described by THE as a snapshot of the research strength of the HEIs.

According to findings in section 4.13.1.3, Kenya's HEIs had inadequate laboratories (IN3) and inadequate lecture facilities (IN1). This is probably why Wesangula (2014) reported Professor Okanya, a Biochemistry Lecturer in one of Kenya's HEIs to have lamented that Kenya's HEIs allocate a paltry sum of money to research while their lab equipment was of the cold war era. Prof. Okanya argued that this state of affairs was a hindrance to the Universities competing with others globally. This therefore partly

explains the dismal performance in the Ranking by Webometrics of Kenya's HEIs (see Section 2.3.6).

There are several initiatives focused on addressing the research predicament that Kenya's HEIs face. This encompasses development of supportive legal and institutional frameworks. According to CUE Standards INST/STD/010, HEIs are expected to provide evidence of promoting quality research and innovation. Already, CUE has developed guidelines incorporating research as part of teaching load for Academic Staff and additionally harmonizing the promotion criteria in the Universities in Kenya.

Oduor(2015) for example reported that a stakeholders meeting dubbed 'blue sky' of Vice Chancellors, Chairpersons of Kenya's HEIs and Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies had proposed the re-introduction of the requirement that all lecturers and Professors publish scientific papers in peer reviewed journals in Kenya or beyond. The government of Kenya also enacted the Anti-Counterfeit Act in 2008 which has enhanced the intellectual property Rights for Researchers (ICC, 2014).

The Government has also re-engineered and restructured the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) in order to strengthen it as a driver of research in Kenya. NACOSTI issues research grants to researchers and is a repository for research in Kenya. Universities are also now expected to form linkages with industry and also inter-University linkages as prescribed in the Performance contracting guidelines 12th edition (GoK, 2015).

The overall average country gaps revealed MU and JK were strong on the research dimension hence could be emulated by other HEIs. Overall weighted scores demonstrated SP faced the greatest constraints in the research dimension. Table 143 revealed the overall country gaps were indicative Kenya's HEIs were challenged on all attributes of Research, publication and innovation hence had room for improvement.

#### 1.1.3.2. Programme Results

The Programme Results dimension in this study was operationalized through five variables. Table 9 presents findings of analysis of gaps in responses of respondents on the attributes that measured Programme Results in the eight Universities sampled. The table also depicts the results of the overall country gap on each attribute measured on the Programme Results dimension in Kenya's HEIs.

The overall country gap signified the most challenged attribute and therefore the opportunities for improvement. The overall country gap on each attribute was computed as an average of the sum of gaps on each attribute in all the HEIs studied.

**Table 9: Gaps on Programme Results**

| | | DU | | | MU | | | JK | | | KM | | | DK | | | TU | | | KC | | | SP | | | Overall country gap on attribute | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S/N | Programme Results | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST | QAS/AS | QAS/ST | AS/ST |
| PR1 | Student progress is monitored throughout the programme and early warning is provided to students | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | -3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 1 |
| PR2 | Completion rates per cohort within the duration of the programme are acceptable | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | -4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | -1 | 3 | 4 | 2.4 | 2.7 | 1.9 |
| PR3 | University has linkage with potential employers that facilitate graduate employment. | 1 | 0 | -1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | -1 | 5 | 3 | -2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | -3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2.5 | 1.8 | 1.3 |
| PR4 | University has a structured system for feedback from the labour market | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | -1 | -1 | 4 | 3 | -1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | -3 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 1.9 |
| PR5 | University has a structured system of feedback alumni | 1 | 0 | -1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | -3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | -4 | 2.3 | 1.4 | 1.7 |
| | Overall average Gap per University | 1 | 0 | -1 | 1.4 | 0.8 | 1 | 1.6 | 0 | -1.6 | 2.4 | 2.2 | -0.2 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 0.6 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 0.8 | 3.8 | 2.8 | -1.0 | 3.0 | 1.6 | 0.4 | | | |

According to Table 9, the greatest challenge faced by Kenya's HEIs is the completion rates per cohort (PR2). The attribute scored the highest country gap on the Performance Results Dimension. JK and TU had the highest gaps which implied they faced the greatest challenges on this attribute. There was uniformity in interview responses from focus groups of Students at JK and TU that the problem is attributed to financial difficulties that most students face due to the cost sharing policy in HEIs enacted by the Kenya Government. One Academic Staff from TU had this to say:

> A majority of the Students come from poor families especially those who are admitted as Government Sponsored Students. With the rising cost of living and no increase of funds by the Higher Education Loans Board, many students are increasingly being forced to abandon their studies (IAS-TU, 2014).

Kenya's HEIs also faced difficulties on linkages with employers to facilitate graduate employment (PR3). The attribute had the second highest overall Country gaps on this dimension. The findings affirmed results in table 138 which indicated the HEIs were challenged in involving employers in curriculum development (CD4). Table 144 revealed the Universities were challenged in establishing linkages with employers (PR3), have deficiencies in the structures for feedback from the labour market (PR4) and also feedback from alumni (PR5). Interviewed, one Academic Staff at KM submitted:

> We don't have proper linkages with industry which hampers their involvement in curriculum development activities in the University. The Alumni Association from which the University can draw useful feedback is also young (IAS-KM, 2014).

Employers and Alumni constitute a critical component of stakeholders for HEIs. The findings were suggestive that the HEIs were challenged in complying with the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) Chapter 48 clause 7 which requires HEIs to develop Curricular and submit to the CUE a needs assessment report. The clause is

suggestive that HEIs undertake consultation with stakeholders. The HEIs were consequently producing graduates with deficiencies in the skills, knowledge and attitude (CD3) required by the labour market as findings in table 138 revealed. Confirming this, Ochieng (2014) reported findings of a survey by a Washington based Results for Development Institute that indicated that one-third of Kenyan Companies had contracted or planned to contract external providers to manage skills shortage among fresh graduates.



There are some initiatives being pursued by Kenya's HEIs to address challenges they face in mobilizing resources for Programmes. Some of the Universities have established linkages with industry players and employers. Analysis of interview data with Academic Staff from across the Universities surveyed revealed that many of the HEIs have entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with both local and international Collaborators. The MoUs always encompass an educational element in terms of knowledge exchange. The Universities Act (GoK, 2012) chapter 42 also requires HEIs to establish Alumni Associations which can provide structured mechanisms for obtaining useful feedback from alumni. Results of an interview with a Chairperson of Department at DK had this to say:

> We have been employing our best graduates as tutorial fellows and hence have been able to tap from their experience as alumni by involving them in facets of Curriculum Development or in any other matters of institutional improvement where their experience may apply (IAS-DK, 2014).

The IUCEA in collaboration with the East African Business Council (EABC) established a partnership in 2012 to promote the link between knowledge generation and human resource produced by HEIs in the EAC region (IUCEA, 2014). The first academia-private sector partnership forum and exhibitions dubbed "Higher Education Forum and Exhibitions "was held in Arusha in Tanzania in October 2012.

Table 144 indicated Kenya's HEIs were challenged in monitoring student progress (PR1). Analysis of interview data from Students across the Universities pointed to a link between the poor completion rates in Kenya's HEIs to the growing trend of missing marks in the Universities. Corroborating this, Maina and Okari (2015) reported the plight of a Doctoral Student who had sued a public university in Kenya after his results went missing in what the newspaper described as a common complaint in public Universities especially in the months before graduation ceremonies. Findings indicated DU, MU, JK, KM and TU were making progress in monitoring progress of their Students. However, KC emerged most constrained on this attribute followed by SP. The results affirmed findings in table 137 which revealed the two institutions were faced with the greatest challenges in their management information systems for managing student data.

Legal provisions have also been enacted by the Government of Kenya to support processes of monitoring student progress in HEIs. The Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014), Chapter 17 stipulates that every University in Kenya shall undertake an institutional self-assessment on the achievement of its objectives. Kenya's HEIs currently are expected to file returns to the CUE on total student population in programmes, progression rates of students and graduation rates. Affirming this, Oduor (2014) reported the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Professor Kaimenyi to have required Vice Chancellors to furnish his office with information on missing marks and administration of Continuous Assessment Tests. This was suggestive that mechanisms were being developed to enhance monitoring of students' progress hence completion rates in the HEIs. This said though, the findings were indicative there was room for improvement in Kenya's HEIs.

## 1.1. Factors that hinder Quality Assurance Practices in Kenya's Higher Education Institutions

The third objective of the study was to investigate the possible factors that enable or hinder the implementation of formal QAPs in the Universities and suggest improvements. Despite Universities making individual efforts to grow quality, findings in Sections 4.12 and 4.13suggested that the institutions are far from realizing a quality culture necessary for attaining a World-Class status. Section 4.14 explored into some of the barriers to the growth of quality in Kenya's HEIs'. Perceptions of the Staff of the Quality Assurance Offices and Academic Staff from each of the sampled Universities were surveyed.

The weighted averages of each of the Universities were analyzed individually first to obtain the aspect considered to be the greatest impediment to implementation of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. The higher the weighted average score on the Likert Scale, the greater the parameter was considered a constraint to implementation of QAPs in the HEIs. Overall Country average was then obtained by computing the average of the sum of the individual weighted means of the HEIs sampled. The overall Country average provided the overall picture of the weight of each challenges as an impediment to the implementation of quality management initiatives in the Universities sampled. Table 145 depicts an analysis of quantitative data on weighted averages of responses of respondents on the challenges faced by Kenya's HEIs in their quest to grow quality.

**Table 10: Factors That Impede Implementation of Quality Assurance Practices in Kenya's HEIs**

| | | Key: QAS : Quality Asssuance Staff ; AS: Academic Staff | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | DU | | MU | | JK | | KM | | DK | | TU | | KC | | SP | | Overall Country Averages | |
| S/N | Statement | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS | QAS | AS |
| C1 | Inadequate financial resources to implement quality assurance activities | 5 | 5.4 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 |
| C2 | Inadequte commitment from University administration | 5 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6.5 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 |
| C3 | Insufficient time for quality assurance practices by staff members | 5.0 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 6.2 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 5.9 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 5.5 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 6 | 6 |
| C4 | Policies of the Commission for University education (CUE) | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1 | 2 |
| C5 | The Universities Act (GoK,2012) | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1 | 2 |
| C6 | Low commitment and support of academic staff | 2.7 | 2.5 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 6.8 | 5.9 | 6.0 | 6.3 | 7.0 | 5 | 5 |
| C7 | Inadequate training for staff on quality assurance practices | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 6.5 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 6.5 | 7.0 | 5 | 5 |
| C8 | Inadequate support from non-teaching staff | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 6.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 5.3 | 7.0 | 5 | 5 |
| C9 | Insufficient financial incentives for academic staff engaged in quality assurance activities | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 5.2 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 5 | 6 |
| C10 | Inadequate commitment and engagement of students | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 6.0 | 4.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 6.9 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 6 | 5 |
| C11 | Inadequate understanding of quality assurance systems by university community | 4.5 | 4..0 | 5.5 | 4.0 | 6.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 5.0 | 6 | 5 |
| C12 | Inadequate personnel for quality assurance office | 5.0 | 4.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 5.0 | 6 | 6 |
| | **University Averages** | **3.7** | **3.7** | **4.3** | **3.9** | **4.8** | **4.7** | **5.1** | **5.0** | **5.3** | **5.0** | **5.7** | **5.5** | **5.6** | **5.4** | **5.7** | **5.7** | 5 | 5 |

Table 10 revealed that the greatest impediment to implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs includes; inadequate financial resources (C1), inadequate commitment from University administration (C2), insufficient time for quality assurance by staff members (C3) and inadequate personnel for quality assurance office (C12). The four parameters had the highest overall Country averages as scored by both the Quality Assurance Staff and Academic Staff in the sampled Universities. The next section explores these factors in detail according to the empirical findings.



### 1.2.1. Inadequate Financial Resources

Table 10 reveals that both Quality Assurance Staff and Academic Staff at SP strongly agreed that the University was constrained by the adequacy of financial resources allocated for quality management (C1). The findings confirmed the results in Section 4.12.9 which revealed SP was ranked the most challenged amongst Universities sampled on the efficacy of the QAPs. The University had the highest overall University gaps between perceptions of all the respondents in the study. Additionally, the University also scored poorest on governance as revealed in Section 4.13.1.1. Analysis of qualitative data showed consensus amongst Academic Staff at SP that the University rarely conducted Student evaluation of Teaching effectiveness (SETE) which is widely applicable in Universities globally and is slowly gaining currency amongst Kenya's HEIs. Student evaluation is useful in obtaining feedback on the accomplishment of learning outcomes. Interviewed, one Academic Staff at SP had this to say:

> Student surveys of teaching effectiveness are rarely done because of the cost of paper and printing. Moreover, the Quality Assurance Office is grossly understaffed making it difficult for the few staff in the office to do any meaningful analysis of any survey data (IAS-SP, 2014).

Other institutions that registered high weighted scores on the inadequacy of financial resources included MU, KM, DK, KC, JK and TU. One staff of the Directorate of Quality assurance at JK submitted the following:

> There is a serious shortage of resources in the University which is a threat to quality management. Student numbers have spontaneously increased over the years, programmes have also increased but there is no corresponding increase in both the human resource capacities and infrastructure required for the programmes. The University Management has consistently complained about the ever dwindling financial support from the Government that has worsened the situation (IAS-JK, 2014).

However, some of the Academic Staff interviewed attributed the problem of inadequate financial resources to improper utilization of the budgets allocated to public HEIs by the administration. One academic Staff at MU pointed out the following:

> There has been a series of standoffs between Vice Chancellors of Public Universities in Kenya with their Staff over nonpayment of money entrusted to them as Salary increases for the staff in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) reached between Management and Staff. The money had been utilized for other purposes other than what it was expected to. This pointed to the general underlying problem of resource misallocation facing our HEIs (IAS-MU, 2014)

Observations showed DU had the lowest weighted scores hence faced the least obstacles in the adequacy of financial resources allocated for quality management. The findings were congruent with results in Section 4.12.9 which revealed DU was ranked overall best amongst the HEIs in QAPs. The University emerged the best on governance dimension registering the lowest gaps as observed in Section 4.13.1.1. According to Hernard and Mitterle (2008), governance is a major leverage tool for quality in all aspects of Higher Education. Additionally, the institution also emerged the best on teaching and learning dimension as revealed in Section 4.13.2.2 and also on

infrastructure as revealed in section 4.13.1.3 which confirmed its strength in the allocation of financial resources for QAPs.

### 1.2.2. Inadequate Commitment from University Administration

Leadership is important in fostering a culture of quality throughout an institution. Harvey and Foster (2007) argued that leadership is the art of influencing human behavior towards the goals of an organization. Table 10 reveals inadequate commitment from University administration (C2) also posed as one of the greatest obstacles to implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs. The findings corroborated the assertion by Mehralizadeh *et* al. (2007) that inadequate support from University management and structural support were the major barriers to the implementation of internal evaluation in Iran besides inadequacy of the budget and resources needed for self-evaluations.

The findings revealed that SP emerged the most challenged in the commitment to QAPs by its administration. The findings corroborated results in Section 4.13.1.1which revealed the University's involvement of staff and students in governance structures (GM2) development of policy and policies for quality assurance (GM3) had deficiencies. This may explain why the University's vision and mission were not clear to the respondents (GM1). Brown (2013) noted that while strategic plans are developed by Senior Management, the effectiveness of their implementation lies with the extent to which the rest of the staff get engaged in the organization.

The findings also indicated that DU had the best commitment to quality management from its administration. Results in Table 10 indicates the University enjoyed commitment and support from its academic staff (C6) compared to all the other HEIs. The University also had adequate staff for its Quality Assurance Office (C12). The findings were suggestive DU's system of governance and management was an example of good practice as revealed in Section 4.13.1.1 which other HEIs can borrow from. At

the time of the study, Students at DU were busy undertaking elections for their Students' representatives who sit in the University Senate. Csizmadia *et* al. (2008) found that the higher the commitment of HE leaders, the faster the pace of quality management implementation and the wider its scope.

### 1.2.3. Insufficient Time for Quality Assurance Practices

According to Table 10, insufficient time for QAPs (C3) emerged as another great impediment to implementation of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. Analysis of interview data from Academic Staff of the sampled HEIs revealed a commonality in their perception that Lecturers were few and overloaded with teaching duties. This hampered their capacity to undertake extra quality assurance duties that they were expected to perform.

Implementation of QAPs calls for Academic Staff with appropriate qualifications, professional competence, motivation and commitment to the programmes they are assigned to teach. Findings in Table 141 revealed the Academic Staff in Kenya's HEIs were not only insufficient in number (TL2) but also had inadequate qualifications and competencies (TL1). The findings were corroborated by Okewo (2014) who reported the concern raised by the IUCEA that the exponential growth of HE in the EAC had not been matched by a corresponding growth of resources resulting into shortage of lecturers and learning resources. This probably is what had consequently caused constraints in consultations between staff and students in small groups (TL5) which is an important quality assurance aspect. However, interview data from the Directors of Quality Assurance showed they opined that majority of the Academic Staff had a poor work culture and generally lacked the willingness to undertake their quality assurance responsibilities as they engaged in part-timing.

According to Table 10, DU had the least challenges amongst sampled Universities in regard to the sufficiency of time for QAPs. The findings were an anomaly to the results in Table 10 on teaching and learning at DU which revealed the University suffered from deficiencies of not only the size of the Academic Staff (TL2) but also their qualifications and competence (TL1). Nevertheless, observations in Table 145 showed there was general understanding of QAPs by the University community at DU (C11). Besides, the University staff had received training on QAPs hence understood quality management better than their counterparts in the other sampled Universities.

Table 145 revealed insufficient time by Academic Staff was a great impediment to quality management at both JK and SP. The results revealed the Academic Staff at SP lacked commitment and support for QAPs (C6) although findings in table 141indicated the institution had the greatest deficiency on adequacy of Academic Staff (TL2) amongst the HEIs sampled. The implication was the few staff at SP had a high teaching load hence limited time dedicated to QAPs.

### 1.2.4. Inadequate Personnel for the Quality Assurance Office

According to Table 10, lack of enough personnel for Quality assurance Offices (C12) emerged as one of the greatest deterrents to the implementation of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. Statistics of Staff in the quality Assurance Directorates as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.** revealed all the sampled HEIs together had a total 38 staff only which confirmed findings that revealed the administration in the most of the Universities had poor commitment (C2) towards QAPs. There were inadequate financial resources (C1) to support implementation of QAPs. The findings were in concurrence with results in **Error! Reference source not found.** on governance and management which revealed Kenya's HEIs have deficiencies in the development of quality assurance policies and procedures (GM3) and Table 141 on provision of adequate resources for teaching and learning. Ooro (2009) observed that policies are a

precursor to reforms. Interviewed, one Quality assurance Staff at KC submitted the following:

> The Quality Assurance Office is a one man's show. One has a big title but no corresponding authority to implement decisions on quality that can improve the institution. In most cases, the rest of the staff tend to view the office with suspicion and a majority have the view that its motive is to spy on the other staff (IAS-KC, 2014)

The problem of inadequate quality Assurance Staff is compounded by the shortage of teaching staff (TL2) as depicted in Table 141 and which emerged as a common phenomenon observed in the Universities surveyed. As witnessed by one staff from the Quality Assurance Directorate at TU:

> The staff –student ratios are extremely high in some programmes and many Academic Staff take on extra loads in what is now famously referred to as "internal part-timing" which is teaching load that is allocated over and above the recommended thresholds by the Commission for University Education (IAS-TU, 2014).

The findings were in consonant with the assertion by CHE (2011) that one of the challenges facing implementation of quality assurance was inadequate personnel.

#### 1.2.5. Inadequate Understanding of Quality Assurance Systems

Findings in Table 10 indicated Kenya's HEIs were challenged in implementing QAPs due to inadequate understanding of quality assurance systems by the University communities (C11). According to the results, DU had the best understanding of QAPs. The most challenged Universities on this factor were DK, KC and SP. The findings were in consonant with the results of Huang and Lin (2002) who posited that inefficient knowledge and understanding of TQM concept is one of the greatest challenges of implementing quality management.

Analysis of interview data revealed a commonality in responses of Academic Staff that they had not been trained on QAPs making it difficult for them to understand them. Observations in Table 145 revealed DK, KC and SP scored badly on the adequacy of financial resources for implementing quality management (C1). This may be the reason these institutions faced challenges in their quest to train their staff on QAPs. Salahedin (2003) concluded that inadequate infrastructure, poor training, and workers reluctance to get involved in decision making, and an insufficient knowledge base were forces that inhibited TQM implementation in Egypt.



### 1.2.6. Inadequate Commitment and Engagement of Students

Table 10 indicated commitment and engagement of students (C10) was a barrier to implementation of QAPs. CHE (2011) argued that Resistance/inertia amongst some staff, students and management was a constraint to quality implementation in East Africa's HEIs (Kenya included). Interviewed, one Academic Staff at KM submitted:

> Many of the students we have are weak intellectually and many of them are here to obtain the degree certificates regardless of their quality. These calibers of students need more academic guidance, support and follow up to be fully engaged in the teaching process. They are unable to contribute to the quality management process (IAS-KM, 2014).

There was consensus in interview data from Academic Staff across the Universities that implementing quality is not possible in an environment where the availability of qualified staff is difficult. Table 6 revealed Kenya's HEIs have challenges in the adequacy of Academic Staff (TL2) and also in their qualifications and competencies (TL1). One Professor at MU had this to say:

> Our Universities have Lecturers who don't have the passion for teaching and Students who lack the passion for learning. It is difficult to talk about quality assurance in such circumstances (IAS-MU, 2014).

### 1.2.7. Inadequate Financial Incentives for Academic Staff Engaged in Quality Assurance Activities

According to results in Table 10, inadequate financial incentives for Academic Staff engaged in quality assurance activities were a barrier to quality management practices in Kenya's HEIs. The most challenged institutions were DK and TU while DU emerged strongest on this aspect. One Academic Staff intervened at DU submitted:

> The University has established an annual reward system where members of staff are recognized for excellence in teaching. This has stimulated many of them into engaging in quality teaching (IAS-DU, 2014)

There was evidence from interview data from Academic Staff across all Universities sampled that there were no reward systems for Staff that perform well and no penalties for those who perform dismally. This had made quality assurance appear to be an added responsibility to Staff with no corresponding rewards.

### 1.2.8. Policies of the Commission for University Education and the Universities Act (GoK, 2012)

Table 10 depicts policies of the Commission for University Education (C4) and the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) as enablers of the implementation of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs. Both parameters had scores inclined towards the lower end of the Likert Scale which confirmed the Institutional Theory that organizations undertake quality assurance for compliance purposes.

Interviewed, Academic Staff in the HEIs sampled revealed that there were efforts to create Quality Assurance Directorates in the Universities. According to the Universities Regulations (CUE,2014) Chapter 48 Clause 6(a) requires HEIs to establish functional and approved IQA system, develop IQA policy, appoint a Quality Assurance Officer and regularize peer review of their Academic Programmes. Results in Section 2.11

alluded to the formation of IQA systems in many of Kenya's HEIs which was suggestive there is continuous improvement.

Other factors that were an impediment to implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs include low commitment and support from Academic Staff (C6), lack of training of Staff on quality assurance practices and lack of support from non-teaching staff.

According to section 4.12.9, DU was ranked best in implementation of QAPs in Kenya's HEIs sampled. Correspondingly, results in Table 10indicated the University had the lowest impediments to implementation of quality management. These findings were in consonant with observations in **Error! Reference source not found.** which depicted the University had the lowest gaps on the governance and management dimension. The findings confirmed that soundness of governance structures where staff students and all stakeholders are engaged in governance creates an environment in which ingredients of quality management flourish.

On the contrary, SP which was ranked as most challenged in Section 4.12.9 faced the greatest challenges in the implementation of quality management as depicted in Table 145. Correspondingly, results in **Error! Reference source not found.** revealed the University emerged most challenged on the governance and management dimension amongst the HEIs sampled. This implied that governance drives quality management systems.

The findings confirmed that the Quality Assurance Staff in all the Universities understood the impediments to implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs more than the Academic Staff. This implied that quality assurance in Kenya's HEIs remains largely the concern of the staff in the Quality Assurance Directorates. The results pointed to the need for more capacity building initiatives on quality

management for Staff in the HEIs, recruitment of more qualified academic staff, and training of Academic Staff on pedagogy.

The Quality Assurance Staff understand quality management since capacity building in this area has targeted them. Moreover findings were indicative most of Kenya's HEIs have inadequate support from the leadership and have recently developed quality assurance frameworks which implied it is a new phenomenon. The findings point to the need for capacity building in quality assurance to ensure HEIs get more champions for quality initiatives.



## 1.2. Chapter Summary

Chapter four looked into the findings of the study. It begins with the analysis of QAPs of individual HEIs in Kenya followed by a comparative analysis of the QAPs between them. It presents findings on the effectiveness of the QAPs, the gaps and the challenges of implementing them in each HEI. The data was analyzed using weighted averages. The HEIs with low gap values were ranked higher than those with high gap values with respect to QAPs. The Spearman's ranking was additionally used to generally assess the level of commonality between the perception of Students and Academic staff regarding the quality dimensions studied. Due to their small population, Spearman rank correlation could not be undertaken for Staff of Quality Assurance Directorates versus Academic Staff and Students. The chapter concludes by looking at the summary of the findings.

The next Chapter five looked into the Summary, Conclusions and recommendations of the study.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.0. Introduction

Chapter five looks into the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations of the study. The study has established that different Universities in Kenya are on different trajectories of nurturing quality. It looks into opportunities for improvement, managerial and policy implications of the findings. It also provides suggestions for further research.

## 5.1. Summary of the Theoretical Orientation of the Study

The study sought to investigate QAPs in Kenya's HEIs, the efficacy of the frameworks used and the effectiveness of the QAPs, the challenges faced in implementing QAPs, the gaps and the opportunities for improvement. The purpose of this study was to provide policy makers, government, quality assurance practitioners, managers of HEIs with empirical information on QAPs. 4 Public Universities and 4 private Universities that are members of the IUCEA and have utilized the tool developed by the IUCEA & DAAD for measuring quality in teaching and learning were studied.

The study reviewed literature on theories of organizational management and relationship to HE studies, the role of HE and economic development, the challenges facing HE in Africa generally and Kenya in particular, the quality assessment tools applied in HE, the role of international accreditation bodies, quality assurance initiatives of some of Kenya's HEIs and the barriers to implementation of quality management in HEIs.

Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews, document analysis and observations. The study surveyed QAPs in Kenya's HEIs on the basis of 8 dimensions namely: governance and management, programme planning and management, curriculum development, teaching and learning, assessment, infrastructure, research, publication and innovation and programme results. The scales were adopted from AQRM but contextualized to fit the Kenyan context.

Analysis of QAPs of individual Universities sampled was done and findings showed each one of them was at different levels on the continuum of growing quality. Findings also showed each of the Universities face different barriers in their journey towards growing quality. The research showed some HEIs in Kenya were doing better on some dimensions than others which impacts on their quality management practices. The results confirmed the Contingency Theory which propounds that the best way for an organization to organize depends on the environmental context that it operates in (see section 2.1.3)

The research findings revealed the Universities surveyed were responding to the pressure to grow quality following the enactment of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) and Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014). Results indicated HEIs were affected by other factors such as legal frameworks, global demands, and societal demands for them to play their roles in economic development. The research confirmed the Institutional Theory (see section 2.1.4) that asserts that organizations are social systems and hence are shaped and influenced by the context of the larger social and political framework of norms, values and rules (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).



## 5.2. Summary of findings

The first objective of the research sought to investigate the current QAPs and interrogate the efficacy of the frameworks used in Kenya's HEIs to foster student

learning/teaching and academic offerings. The key findings on this objective were as follows:

- Each of Kenya's HEIs was at different levels of growing quality and therefore at different trajectories on the quality assurance continuum.
- The weakest dimensions in quality in Kenya's HEIs were research, publication and innovation followed by governance and management amongst dimensions surveyed.
- Some HEIs like DU have made good progress on some quality dimensions in Kenya's HEIs hence are examples of good practice for benchmarking purposes for those lagging behind like SP.
- Ingredients of quality are beginning to sprout in Kenya's HEIs but there are numerous challenges in their diffusion.
- There are challenges facing the quality assurance framework currently being applied to grow quality in Kenya's HEIs.



The second objective of the research sought to examine the effectiveness of QAPs in light of the growing clamour for quality in Kenya's HEIs with respect to educational inputs, educational process and educational output. Section 5.1.1 to section 5.1.8 looks at the major findings on each dimension studied:

### 5.2.1. Governace and Management

- Governance and management was the second most challenged dimension in Kenya's HEIs.
- Kenya's HEIs faced obstacles in their governance and management. All attributes surveyed on this dimension had gaps.
- DU emerged strongest on the diffusion of its vision and mission and in involvement of staff, students and stakeholders in governance.

### 5.2.2. Programme Planning and Management

- There was evidence that Kenya's HEIs were challenged in allocating adequate resources to Programmes hence deficient in complying with CUE Standard PROD/STD/04 on structure of Academic Programmes and PROG/STD/09 on requirements for relevant resources be allocated to support Programmes.
- The HEIs faced impediments in assigning Coordinators to Programmes hence were challenged in complying with CUE Standard PROG/STD/16 on management and administration of an Academic Programme.

### 5.2.3. Curriculum Development Dimension

- Involvement of employers in Curriculum development was a challenge in Kenya's HEIs but DU and JK emerged as examples of good practice on this aspect.
- Among the initiatives that Kenya's HEIs have embraced to improve Curriculum development is the use of partnerships between HEIs and industry players.
- Other initiatives of enhancing quality of curricular include the enactment of supportive legal frameworks that include the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) and the Universities Standards and Guidelines (CUE, 2014) which provide benchmarks of excellence in curriculum development. Kenya's HEIs are now required to submit their curricular to the CUE for peer review of the Programme content coupled with site visits for verification of requisite academic resources before any Programme is accredited.
- Linkages with industry such as that between the IUCEA and the East African Business Council are aimed at strengthening relevance of curriculum through dialogue on required competencies at regional level.

- DU and JK emerged as examples of good practice in providing industrial placements and practical training to their students and facilitating consultation between lecturers and students.

### 5.2.4. Teaching and learning

- Insufficiency of Academic Staff (TL2) and inadequacy of their qualifications and competency (TL1) emerged as major challenges in Kenya's HEIs. Majority of Staff were engaged in part-time teaching which impacted negatively on quality of HEIs.
- Kenya's HEIs faced difficulties in providing tutorials to students hence were challenged in complying with CUE Standard INST/STD/09 on quality teaching.
- Kenya's HEIs were deficient in pedagogy and don't employ variety of teaching methods.

### 5.2.5. Infrastructure

- DU emerged strong on sufficiency of Lecture Spaces (IN1) hence presents case of best practice in provision of good learning environment.
- Kenya's HEIs faced difficulties in providing sufficient lecture spaces for Programmes.
- Kenya's HEIs were confronted with challenges in access to computers and internet by staff and students (IN4) but DU had made progress.
- Kenya's HEIs were seriously challenged on adequacy of laboratory facilities (IN3). However, JK emerged as an example of good practice on provision of laboratory facilities.
- There was evidence Kenya's HEIs were making progress in providing electronic Library Materials to Students (IN5). This hinges on the drive by universities to shift to e-learning platforms that enable them to engage fewer Lecturers hence cut on costs.

### 5.2.6. Assessment

- External Examiners system (A1) in Kenya's HEIs was found to have flaws and international Assessors were inadequately involved in the Universities but DU and DK emerged to have made progress on this attribute.
- Assessment methods in Kenya's HEIs were found to be inadequate in measuring masterly of learning outcomes (A3).
- Variety of assessment methods (A4) were not being applied hence HEIs were deficient in complying with CUE Standards PROG/STD/06 on Academic Organization and Structure.

### 5.2.7. Research, publication and innovation

- Kenya's HEIs have made progress in developing policies to support publications and research. This was evident at DU, MU, JK, KM, and TU. This implied the Universities had made effort to comply with CUE Standard INST/STD/03 on governance and management.
- There was evidence Kenya's HEIs were most constrained in providing support to Staff and Students to publish their research work (RP2) and to present their research findings in conferences (RP3)
- Kenya's HEIs were constrained by inadequate research budgets to support research.

### 5.2.8. Programme Results

- Findings portrayed Kenya's HEIs faced challenges in completion rates per cohort which was partly attributable to decreasing funding to Students by the Government and also low pass rates in successive semesters of learning.

- HEIs were found to be constrained in their systems of linkages with employers (PR3) and feedback from alumni (PR5) hence were challenged in complying with Chapter 48 of the Universities Regulations (CUE,2014)
- There were challenges in the system of monitoring student progress (PR1) in Kenya's HEIs

## 5.3. Key findings on challenges to quality assurance

The third objective of the research was to investigate the factors that militate against implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs. The findings revealed that the following were the greatest impediments to the implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs:

i) **Inadequate Financial Resources.** Observations revealed DU which faced the least challenge in the adequacy of financial resources allocated for quality management emerged overall best in QAPs amongst Kenya's HEIs that were surveyed (see 4.12.9). This pointed to a correlation between provision of financial resources and quality management in Kenya's HEIs.

**ii) Inadequate Commitment from University Administration.**

Inadequate commitment of the administration to quality management practices is a great impediment to quality management in Kenya's HEIs. Support from the leadership is critical for any quality assurance initiatives to succeed.

**iii) Insufficient Time for Quality Assurance by Staff Members.**

The results indicated staff lacked commitment and support for quality assurance practices which may partly have contributed to insufficient time that also emerged as a barrier to quality implementation.

**iv) Inadequate Personnel for Quality Assurance Office.**

Kenya's HEIs were challenged in the adequacy of staff for the management of the quality assurance units in terms of the numbers and their competencies.

**v) Lack of General Understanding of Quality Assurance Systems**

Kenya's HEIs were challenged in implementing quality assurance practices due to the poor understanding of quality assurance systems by the University communities (C11). According to the results, DU emerged the best amongst the sampled Universities in the understanding of QAPs.

vi) Other factors that were observed to be barriers to the implementation of quality management in Kenya's HEIs included: inadequate commitment and engagement of students, lack of financial incentives for academic staff engaged in quality assurance activities, lack of training for staff on quality assurance practices, and low commitment and support of academic staff.



## 5.4. Opportunities for improvement

Findings show that Kenya's HEIs have opportunities for improvement of the quality assurance practices. Section 5.4.1 to 5.4.8 looks at the opportunities for improvement that can be embraced by Kenya's HEIs to reinforce quality in academic offerings:

### 5.4.1. Governance And Management

According to findings in section 4.12, Kenya's HEIs were most challenged on governance and management. Policy development and procedures that support quality also emerged to be weak in the HEIs. Juran (1974) argued that an integral part of a management's commitment to quality is the development of policy. The opportunities for improvement therefore include:

i) The Universities should make professional development including organizational learning aspects an integral part of institutional planning (KRA, 2005). Student involvement in governance is one of the key features of WCUs like University of Cambridge and University of Stanford (see section 2.10).

Mwiria *et* al. (2007) suggested the following reforms specifically on governance in order to inculcate a culture of excellence in Kenya's HEIs: Make positions of Deans and Heads of Departments elective; Promote regular formal and informal contacts between University administration and staff through use of in-house newsletters; Strengthen Staff and Student associations and; engage all stakeholders in the management of the Universities

ii) Strengthen the work of the CUE. Though the CUE was formed under a legal structure, findings point to weaknesses that still abound in its operations. The Commission should be empowered with more qualified personnel with the capacity to provide oversight over Kenya's HEIs.

iii) Strengthen accountability mechanisms for Kenya's HEIs. This can be done by CUE devising and implementing requirements from HEIs such as publishing graduation rates and student satisfaction surveys, publishing quality of faculty and their research productivity among others (Lederman, 2013).

iv) Kenya's HEIs should re-engineer mechanisms for policy implementation. According to the results, progress has been realized in developing policies such as research and publication, quality assurance policies and procedures by HEIs but there are challenges in implementation. The enactment of the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) and the Universities Act (CUE, 2014) particularly point to the quest for growing quality in Kenya's HEIs through policy support. The results implied that Kenya's HEIs were challenged in complying with these Standards.



### 5.4.2. Programme Planning and Management

Kenya's HEIs were found to be challenged in allocating resources to support programmes. Additionally, quality assurance is hampered by the challenges the institutions face in deploying Coordinators to manage the quality of programmes. In confirmation, Muindi (2014) indicated the Registrar of the Engineering Board of Kenya

(EBK) had voiced the Board's dissatisfaction with the Engineering graduates from Kenya's HEIs. There was room for improvement by the Universities by:

i) **Forming networks of excellence**- Findings in this study demonstrated that some of Kenya's HEIs were doing well on certain frontiers of quality. For example, MU and JKUAT were doing well in research and had good laboratories (see section 4.12.7). Such institutions if provided with government support could be strengthened to become National hubs or even regional hubs hence Centres of excellence that can network with others to serve their quality assurance needs.

ii) **Strengthening the process of Strategic planning in Kenya's HEIs**. Kenya's HEIs should be funded on the basis of their ability to realize their strategic plans which incorporate planning for Academic Programmes as a key component.

### 5.4.3. Curriculum Development

The greatest challenge facing Kenya's HEIs on Curricula was balancing of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students should learn (see section 4.13.2.1). The Universities had challenges in involving employers in curriculum development and even other stakeholders like alumni and students (see section 4.13.2.1). Opportunities for improvement exist as follows:

i) Programme Accreditation-There are regional and international accrediting bodies that Kenya's HEIs should hook themselves to and consequently tap from the advantages that come with such networking (EQUIS, 2014,).

ii) The process of curriculum design and review should include formulation of learning outcomes that are pragmatic in consultation with stakeholders.

iii) Development of an effective assessment framework where learning relative to Learning Outcomes is assessed as is the practice in Australia (see section 2.6.3).

iv) Diversity- Universities should understand their niches and formulate Academic Programmes that meet the needs of their stakeholders. Universities can run joint academic programmes as is the case with Bradford NIMBAS (SOM, 2008) which

can enhance learner experience, create a pool of shared resources and shared expertise in the HEIs.

v) The CUE should strengthen institutional Audits in Kenya's HEIs to ensure they comply with regulations and standards on Curriculum development stipulated in the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) and Universities Standards and Guidelines (CUE, 2014).

**vi)** Enhancement of Research Capabilities of Kenya's HEIs. Building supportive infrastructure as in University of Stanford (see section 2.10.2) would go a long way in bolstering research capacities of these institutions. Academic Research breeds new Knowledge for the creation of life-changing innovations and key areas of competition (Kane and Hassan, 2010). A recent study indicated Kenya's public investment in R&D is below 1% of its GDP (Urama, 2010).Kenya's HEIs can emulate supportive R&D policies and incentives that have spurred tremendous growth of the Semi-Conductor industry in South Korea (Johnson, 2002).



### 5.4.4. Teaching and Learning

Results revealed the biggest challenge facing Kenya's HEIs on this dimension was the adequacy of the academic staff coupled with weaknesses in their qualifications and competencies (see section 4.13.2.2). Muindi (2014) reported that some of Kenya's HEIs like Kenyatta University, JKUAT, and TUK were recruiting lecturers from UK, Netherlands, India and China amongst others to supplement their Academic Staff needs. This was suggestive that there was room for improvement particularly in:

i) Competence development- The Universities should place more attention on effective induction mechanisms, internships, strategic staff placements, collaborative bilateral staff capacity building (Mutula, 2002). Wanzare and Ward (2000) advised that training of staff should be priority in Kenya's HEIs.

ii) There is need to improve the academic environments in Kenya's HEIs. This will enhance the motivation of the staff and reduce brain drain that has affected Kenyan HEIs.

iii) Kenya's HEIs should enhance training in Post graduate programmes so that there is less concentration of training at undergraduate programmes. To start with, the HEIs can merge and therefore create a pool of resources and jointly mount programmes that support post graduate training. For example, efforts reported by the Nation Newspaper on May 19 2014, in which Maseno University had been accredited to offer the Strategic and National Security Studies Programme with the Danish Defence College should be emulated by other Universities.

iv) Enhance Faculty development- Kenya's HEIs should aim to develop a critical mass of qualified facultywith PhD qualifications. Marwa (2014) in a comparative analysis noted that the Lancaster University Management School had on the average 70%-80% PhD holders in its eight departments and favorably compared with Bradford School of management with an average of 80%. On the contrary, EAC's Business Schools rated dismally with many scoring an average of 11% -35 % except for Strathmore Business School which had80% PhD holders.

### 5.4.5. Infrastructure

The results showed Kenya's HEIs had insufficient lecture spaces for programmes. Moreover, provision of internet access and projectors in the lecture halls was equally a challenge. The Universities have room for improvement by:

i) Providing standard ICT tools that are supported in the intranet, electronic virtual reference library resources (Kyalo, 2007). Kenya's ICT strategy should focus on the strategic indicators of ICT in Kenya's HEIs and development of ICT human resource (Marwa, 2014).

ii) Automation of Library Services. There are advances reported in the digitalization of Library resources in Kenya's HEIs (Kavulya, 2003). There is need for robust ICT

policies and investments in technology to yield superior teaching and research tools (Marwa, 2014).

iii) Develop networked lecture rooms with internet and projectors for an enhanced learning environment for Students.

iv) Strengthen relationships with industry and /or private organizations through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) for them to participate in developing infrastructure in the Universities.For example, Kenyatta University has partnered with Africa Integras in a project designed to provide beds for 9,350 undergraduate students, 500 postgraduate students and 150 married students (HEFASA, 2015).

v) Create partnerships with industry, research institutions and even other HEIs in order to leverage on their workshops and laboratory capacities. For example, DU, MU and JK emerged with superior offerings for workshops which other Universities can utilize for teaching by establishing joint partnerships (see section 4.13.3.1). This is supported by CUE Standard PROG/STD/18 on Facilities and Equipment.

vi) Create centres of excellence so that resources for certain disciplines are concentrated and enhanced within specific Universities. Currently, all Universities in Kenya offer virtually all programmesleading to duplication and consequently poor utilization of resources.

### 5.4.6. Assessment

Findings showed Kenya's HEIs were most defective in the practice of external examiner system and the assessment methods were inadequate in measuring the mastery of learning outcomes. The Universities were found to be deficient in the variety of assessment methods employed to assess Student learning (see section 4.13.2.3). This implied the examination systems in Kenya's HEIs do not provide adequate feedback in regard to the realization of institutional vision and mission. There are opportunities for improvement by:

i) Developing Partnerships. Closer cooperation between the Universities and Industry should be nurtured to yield networks of mutual benefit to both (KRA, 2005). This will promote joint curriculum development by articulating learning outcomes in Programmes that are responsive to the fast changing industry needs and provide feedback to aid in curriculum reviews.

ii) Initiate strong external examiner system as in the case of the University of Cambridge where two external Examiners are utilized (see section 2.10.1).

iii) Institute measures where evidence is produced on the achievement of learning outcomes. The Graduate destination surveys in the UK and Australia's model of test of learning serve as examples of good practice that can be embraced to reinforce the assessment dimension in Kenya's HEIs.

iv) Initiate admission tests into University programmes as is the ACER practice in Australia (see section 2.6.3). Corroborating this, Kiogora (2014) noted that Musau Ndunda, the Secretary General of the Kenya Parents Association had recommended a total overhaul of Kenya's Education System which he argued doesn't incorporate the administration of Psychometric Assessment to assess Students' Careers before they joined University.

v) Initiating standardized credit transfer mechanism for all Universities to track student progress. According to Teferra and Altabach (2004), credits are HE's common currency that provides a simple but broad tool for tracking a student's academic success.



### 5.4.7. Research, Publishing and Innovation.

Kenya's HEIs on the overall were challenged in the research dimension which emerged most challenged amongst all the dimensions studied (see section 4.12). The HEIs were most deficient in their capacity to publish in accredited journals. They were also deficient in presentations of their research work at either local or international conferences. This can be improved by:

i) Establishment of Higher Education Research Incubators (NEPAD, 2005) which will spur a research culture within Kenya's HEIs.

ii) Bilateral Co-operation in research. Kubler (2005) advised that Kenya's HEIs work towards attracting more research cooperation with UK Universities. Kenya's HEIs can borrow the practice from reputed WCU's like University of Stanford which had 5,100 externally funded projects and independent laboratories that accounted for 10% of Stanford Research (See section 2.10.2)

iii) Setting up well-funded research Centres and research incubator platforms by way of working paper series (Hammond *et* al., 2007)

iv) Setting up National research Councils like the Higher Education Funding Council of the UK which funds high quality teaching and research (see section 2.6.2).

v) Research policies- The Universities should embrace robust research policies that nurture and nourish the local talents (Akampumuza *et* al., 2007). Where the policies exist, then efforts should be directed towards enhancing capacities for implementation and accountability.

vi) Establish well-resourced research Centres. Kenya's HEIs can emulate practices of WCUs like University of Stanford with several dedicated research centres (see section 2.10.2)

### 5.4.8. Programme Results

Findings revealed Kenya's Universities had poor completion rates in the programmes (see section 4.13.3.2). The Universities also had weak feedback mechanisms from the employers, alumni and even Students. The opportunities for improvement include:

i) Student evaluation of teaching effectiveness. This is applied in the UK. The University of Stanford conducts online student evaluation of teaching whose results are available within 72 hours and are used to provide information to students to select courses and provide overall information on quality of courses for salary setting, promotion and curriculum development (see section 2.10.2).

ii) Strengthen Internal Quality Assurance Units in Kenya's HEIs. Many of the internal quality assurance units don't have adequate staff andthose who are recruited into the units lack the requisite capacities to serve as quality assurance officers (Materu, 2007). There is need to buildcapacities of these units for them to play their role effectively.

iii) Fortify the Regional Quality Assurance Body (EAQAN). One of the objectives of EAQAN the regional Quality Assurance body under the aegis of the IUCEA is to build capacities of member states in quality assurance. Through collaborations, the Universities can tap from the scarce expertise in some fields and utilize them to grow quality.



## 5.5. Managerial implications

One of the implications of this study is that even with the enactment of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) and subsequent rolling of the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014) and the Universities Standards and Guidelines (CUE, 2014), quality assurance continues to be evasive in Kenya's HEIs. This study raises the following critical managerial implications that these institutions should embrace in order for them to strengthen and re-engineer their IQA approaches and remain relevant within the regional and global HE environment:

i) **Governance and management**: The government should facilitate and stimulate adoption of internal quality enhancement systems in the Universities through institutional audits. Though there are gains already on this front in Kenya through policy enactment (see section 2.6.8), there is still need to strengthen checks over the implementation processes. This is a feature of the more developed nations like U.K (see section 2.6.2) where HEIs are expected to provide information to the QAA (QAA,2014) in regard to their study

Programmes, Student Progress files which include the transcript, a personal development Plan and individual Student Records.

ii) **Aligning quality management initiatives to corporate strategy**. HEIs should ensure robust QA initiatives are pursued alongside other strategic organizational initiatives. HEIs should learn from best practice and become learning organizations. This can be achieved through inspections and creation of accountability mechanisms for compliance by HEIs. Internal quality management systems should be owned by the academia.

iii) **Involvement of top leadership**: There is need for Universities to devise mechanisms for involving top management in driving their IQA agendas. Such support should be anchored in elaborate University policies and initiatives.

iv) **Universities should institutionalize self-assessment**: The CUE should operationalize periodic checks of the institutions to ensure they comply with the spirit of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012). Inspection exercises should be reinforced and Universities encouraged to present evidence of accomplishment of institutional objectives which will compel them to undertake continuous self-examination and hence maintain and enhance the quality of their programmes. Good practice can be borrowed from the UK that has institutionalized subject reviews (see section 2.6.2). Self-assessment is an emerging trend in China (see section 2.6.7) which is reputed to be one of the world's tiger nations (see section 2.4).

v) **Universities can also grow quality using other tools for quality assessment.** Section 2.3 revealed there are TQM tools that have successfully been applied globally to spur quality and catapulted institutions to developing a competitive edge. These include the MBNQA, the EFQM, the Balanced Score Card (see section 2.3). For Kenya, HEIs can start by adopting the Organization Performance Index (OPI) developed by the Kenya Institute of Management. OPI has benchmarked with the EFQM and measures quality on parameters that are

similar to those used by EFQM (see section 2.3). Marwa and Zairi (2008) suggested a National quality Award modeled along the Brazilian National Quality Award and integrated elements from KQA and COYA to spur TQM practices and provide a national platform to disseminate knowledge and foster competitiveness.

vi) **There is need for Kenya's HEIs to undertake Programme accreditation.** HEIs can pursue accreditation with national agencies like the CUE and regulatory bodies or international agencies like EQUIS, AMBAS and AACSB. Accreditation provides an institution with opportunities for self-assessment enabling it to identify gaps and create strategies for addressing them. Initiatives like those reported by Gicobi (2014) that Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology had been accredited by the Kenya Nutritionists and Dieticians Institute to offer Diploma and Degree Programmes for nutritionists and dieticians signals a step in the right direction which other HEIs should emulate.

vii) **Development and /or strengthening of collaborations and networks between HEIs themselves and /or between the institutions and industry**. HEIs stand to benefit from industry research funding, feedback about curriculum, internship opportunities for students and staff, training and industry input on human capacity development, provision of supporting infrastructure for teaching purposes by industry. For example, a review of teaching arrangement at DeKUT revealed the institution has partnered with the Government's CID Headquarters in providing laboratories and equipment for practical exposure to students taking the Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Security management.MU and JK were found to have superior offerings in research which other HEIs can leverage on (see section 4.13.3.1).

viii) **Strengthen research capacities**. There is need for Universities through ICT, to create collaborations with research institutions in more developed Nations like the USA and UK which have got the best research funds in the world in terms of

quantity and sources. The Universities also need to nurture research by establishing research incubators (NEPAD, 2005). Other approaches include establishment of working paper series to grow research capabilities. HEIs can strengthen research by organizing colloquiums, conferences and allocating more funds. Kenya's HEIs should emulate good practices from University of Stanford which has several dedicated Research Centres and Institutes to support research, has dedicated Staff to the research Centres, 5100 externally sponsored projects and a research and a budget of $ 1.35 billion (Stanford, 2014). Besides, the University had 2000 Post-Doctoral Scholars and independent laboratories that account for 10% of Stanford research. Stanford (2014) reported the University received more than $ 87 million from 622 licensed technologies unlike Kenya's HEIs that rely largely on government funding for research.

ix) **Develop mechanisms within HEIs that support the growth of a strong professional culture that values competence, merit in job placement, and specialization in academic deliverables**. For IQA initiatives to flourish, Kenya's HEIs must establish strategies for building critical skills in QA of their staff. Kenya's HEIs should emulate practices like establishing a Higher Education Academy for accrediting professional development programmes in teaching and learning as is the case in U.K (see section 2.6.2). Likewise, Kenya's HEIs can emulate best practices of WCUs like University of Cambridge or University of Stanford. This will promote meritocracy in Kenya's HEIs and deter practices reported by Wesangula (2014) that Kenya's public HEIs were marred with turf-wars by Deans and Chairmen of Departments , a situation that had created a Club mentality that made it difficult for anybody more qualified than them being hired.

x) **Enhance ICT capacities**. That the fastest growing nations in the world today are knowledge driven is no doubt and Kenya's HEIs should strengthen their ICT capacities in order to keep up with global competitiveness. This is a feature of WCUs like Stanford that has an information Technology Service that

facilitates students registration , access to grades while faculty are provided with class lists, can enter student grades, upload documents for students and access their course evaluations (see section 2.10.2). Marwa (2014) in a study of business schools in East Africa noted that they were far from embracing the use of ICT and its associated benefits like automation of libraries.

xi) **Kenya's HEIs need to devise mechanisms for Staff recruitment that takes cognizance of professionalism and scholarly contribution**. Section 2.10.2 revealed that Stanford Lecturers are recruited on the basis of Scholarship, research impact, creativity and innovation (Stanford, 2014). The University had a total of 2043 faculty members out of whom 22 were Nobel laureates.

xii) **Competence development**. Kenya's HEIs should devise mechanisms for competence development of its Staff. This can be emulated from India that has developed strong internal quality assurance systems that encourages peer review or mentorship of Staff by experienced Professors besides having compulsory teacher training for all HEI lecturers (see section 2.6.6).



## 5.6. Policy implications

i) Results indicated some HEIs were doing well like DU in involvement of Staff and Students in governancewhile others lagged behind like SP (see section 4.12.1). The implication was that the HEIs were challenged in complying with the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) Chapter 41 Clause 2 (a) which stipulates that every University shall have a Students' Council. Interview data with Students in section 4.13.1.1 revealed that Students confirmed the HEIs had made progress in establishing Student Councils. However, there werechallenges with implementation of the functions of these Student Councils as enshrined in the Universities Act. Supporting this, Oduor (2014) for example reported Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Education, Professor Kaimenyi, to have asked HEIs to

adequately involve students in management in order to end the rampant student strikes. There is need for the CUE to devise accountability mechanisms for Universities on how they involve Students in governance. This is one of the tenets of WCUs like University of Cambridge (see section 2.10.1) where Students are represented in Departmental and Faculty Boards and in the Council.

ii) Results revealed Kenya's HEIs were challenged in development of QA policies and procedures. Review of literature in Section 2.11 revealed there is progress in establishing QA Units in a number of Kenya's HEIs. However, findings in section 4.14.2 indicated others were lagging behind due to inadequate commitment from University administration. The CUE should enforce compliance by undertaking institutional reviews of the IQA systems of the HEIs as happens in the UK (see section 2.6.2). Although this practice is provided for in the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014), results were indicative there are challenges with implementation.

i) Institute and operationalize periodic checks of the institutions to ensure they comply with the spirit of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012). Alluding to this, the the closure of various University Campuses by the CUE as reported by Karanja (2015) points to one measure that will stimulate growth of ingredients of quality enhancement in Kenya's HEIs if carefully undertaken. Requirements for Universities to accredit their programmes, inspection exercises by the CUE should be fortified. Universities should be compelled to present evidence of accomplishment of institutional objectives and hence be encouraged to undertake continuous self-examination and enhancement of the quality of their programmes.

ii) Provision of resources and infrastructure for both IQA systems and external QA systems. Inadequate provision of QA resources for growth of QA systems

within HEIs and even the CUE as an external QA agency partly explains the challenges in management of quality as revealed by the study.

iii) Kenya's HEIs are deficient in the number and quality of Academic Staff. Confirming this, Wesangula, D. (2014 observed that statistics from the CUE indicated the number of Professors in Kenya's oldest public HEIs was raised by 10% in 3 years against a corresponding increase in Student population of 56%. This pointed to the need for the Government to enact policies that support human resource capacity building in the HEIs. For example, initiatives such as those reported by Okewo (2014) that the CUE had enacted the 'Doctoral Rule' that requires that only PhD Holders teach in HEIs would go a long way in enhancing quality of academic offerings in Kenya's HEIs.

iv) The Education Curriculum should also be reviewed at the primary and secondary school levels. Qualitative findings pointed to gaps in the accomplishment of learning outcomes at both primary and secondary school levels to be contributing to gaps in the learning outcomes at HEIs. For example, Michira (2014) reported findings of a survey by UNESCO which had concluded that lack of competence at the lowest levels of the learning ladder was a contributory factor to the challenges in the grasping of concepts higher up the education ladder hence resulting into poor quality of graduates. Encouragingly, some progress has been made on curriculum review front. In attestation, Oduor (2015) reported the KICD to be already undertaking curriculum review of the Basic Education in Kenya in a framework referred to as "Transforming Society through Curriculum" and which is projected to be piloted by October 2016.

v) Results indicated that assessment methods lacked diversity in form and don't adequately measure mastery of learning outcomes in Kenya's HEIs. The deficiencies were partly attributed to challenges in the assessment procedures employed at the Primary and Secondary level of education in Kenya. There is need for a policy shift in assessment in Kenya's education system cutting across the entire education system. Currently, there are efforts aimed at addressing

these gaps through an ongoing curriculum review exercise.Oduor(2015) observed that the Basic Education Amendment Bill 2014 proposes introduction of a new system of evaluation dubbed competency –based assessment which points to a policy shift that could do away with KCPE and KCSE. Kiogora(2014) for example reported that Finland that had topped the Pearson report in 2012 and is acclaimed across the globe as a leading nation in education does not administer any mandatory examinations to students until the age of 16. Finland according to the report uses assessments of basic education to monitor progress and these are not graded scored or compared but are instead descriptive and utilized to inform feedback and assessment for learning.

vi) The results revealed Kenya's HEIs were deficient in teaching and learning methodologies. Small group teaching, a key feature observed at University of Cambridge reputed as a WCU (see section 2.10.1) was observed to be dysfunctional in Kenya's HEIs. There is therefore need for a shift in policy to make pedagogical training compulsory for Lecturers in Kenya's HEIs. This is the practice in India (see section 2.6.6) and UK (see section 2.6.2. Survey findings by UNESCO indicated incompetence of primary teaching staff in Kenya was a key contributory factor to illiteracy amongst primary school graduates of whom 40% were unable to read a single sentence (Michira, 2014). At the Basic education level, the shift should be towards a re-engineering of teaching methodologies since recruitment of teachers for the Basic education level in Kenya is on the basis of their presumed successful completion of pedagogical training in the teacher training colleges or Universities.

vii) The Government should establish continuous capacity building at the Basic Education level in Kenya to ensure learning becomes learner –centred. The study established that teaching at Kenya's Basic Education level was not learner –centred and hence created deficiencies in the assessment processes (see section 4.13.2.3). Confirming this, Oduor (2015) reported an ongoing Basic Education

curriculum review process that sought among others to transform instruction in Kenya's primary and secondary schools from a teacher –centered approach of disseminating information to learner-centered collaborative, inquiry and discovery based learning. Findings of a survey by Pearsonand published in the year 2014 that revealed that students from Korea, Japan, Hong Kong performed best in a programme for International Student Assessment (Pisa) carried out in 2012 by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The OECD's Pisa which measures competencies of 15 year olds in reading, mathematics and science with an optional assessment of creative problem solving , financial literacy found the top performing countries to be from Asia which place great emphasis on selecting and training teachers. The report indicated the teaching profession is highly valued in Finland, with emphasis placed on quality of teachers who undergo a five year training programme including a MasterDegree. This is in sharp contrast to Kenya where according to Michira (2014), a typical primary school teacher holds a certificate or diploma qualification and scored an average of Grade C in secondary school level.

viii) Develop and implement policy regimes that continuously nurture the growth of research and publishing in Kenya's HEIs. Already, the Government has developed a supportive policy framework, the CUE Standard INST/STD/010 which require HEIs to show evidence of promoting research. Furthermore the CUE has developed guidelines that incorporate research work into the workload for Academic Staff. Ongoing efforts as reported by Oduor (2015) where , an education forum dubbed "blue sky "that brought together Vice Chancellors, Chairpersons of University Councils and education stakeholders from Kenya's HEIs that pushed for the sacking of lecturers who fail to publish in a year should be strengthened.

ix) Kenya's public HEIs draw their budgetary support from the government but until the enactment of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012), there was no clear criteria for appropriating the funds amongst the Universities. Kenya's HEIs

could emulate the practice from the UK which runs a Performance Budgeting Scheme that considers: the number and type of students of an institution, the subjects taught and the amount and quality of research undertaken and reports of National Student Surveys. Other countries that run Performance budgeting Schemes and conduct teaching evaluation to inform HE funding arrangements which can be emulated include Australia, China, and USA.

x) The Government of Kenya should consider developing a central portal for research that will nurture research in Kenya's HEIs by providing a central reference point for research recommendations that can be pursued by upcoming researchers.

xi) There is need for the Government of Kenya to develop a philosophy for education. Kenya's education sector has been driven by several education commissions and Sessional Papers that tend to be driven by the vision of the ruling party and hence change once the Country's leadership changes. Oduor (2015) affirmed this when he observed that Curriculum review debate in Kenya had raged on for a long time, with many of the review committees pointing to the need to review assessment methods, de-emphasize cut-throat competition amongst schools and hence reform the system to make it responsive to the changing needs of the country.



## 5.7. Contributions to Knowledge

Many past studies on QAPs in Kenya's HEIs have focused on the challenges facing Higher Education. The following was the contribution of the study to knowledge:

i) The study investigated the frameworks used to assess quality in Kenya's HEIs and their effectiveness hence took stock of the HEIs on the quality continuum. The study therefore provided information on the best practices on quality dimensions for in -within Country benchmarking.

ii) The study mapped the quality assurance practices within the institutions and established the deficiencies for HEIs to focus on hence opportunities for

improvement given that quality management is premised on continuous improvement.

iii) The study provided empirical data for researchers and policy makers on the impediments to quality management which consequently provides a foundation for developing strategies on quality management in HEIs.

iv) The contention behind this research was that understanding the tools for assessing quality and their effectiveness is important in order to explore approaches or other tools that can be used to reinforce quality in HEIs.

v) The Research provided some suggestions on customized solutions for growing quality in Kenya's HEIs and hence other developing Countries.

vi) The research provides information to policy makers on the core issues to focus on that are central in establishing world-class Universities in Kenya to enable them compete with their counterparts globally and eventually earn Kenya her rightful place in global competitiveness.

## 5.8. Recommendations

Results of this study provide an increased awareness to all parties in HEIs with empirical information on how to address quality assurance in Kenya's Higher Education. The results can equip managers of Quality assurance at institutional level and also at national level with critical information on what to focus on in order to address quality assurance challenges in Kenya's HE. The following are the recommendations that were derived from the results of the study:

i) It is recommended that HEIs be undertaking Alumni surveys and involve Stakeholders in Curriculum development. Even with the implementation of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012), Kenya's HEIs continue to grapple with quality challenges. The findings showed that Kenya's Higher Education graduates lack skills and competencies required for the job market.

ii) Findings revealed Kenya's HEIs have poor research capacities. It is recommended that incentives for research be introduced in order to catalyze research in the Country. Kenya could borrow funding models like the Higher Education Funding Council from UK to ensure that research funds become competitive and rewards the best.

iii) The findings indicated that each of Kenya's HEIs has made progress towards growing quality but there exists potential for improvement. Findings in table 1 showed that Kenya's HEIs were ranked poorly by Webometrics comparedto their peers globally. There is therefore need to explore the use of other globally tested tools of quality management like the EFQM, MBNQA to reinforce quality management in the institutions.

## 5.9. Key Limitations of the Research

This study was cross sectional and used data obtained at a specific point in time. It would be useful to undertake longitudinal studies over a long period of time to be able to determine variations in perceptions over time. Quality is premised on the principle of continuous improvement.

The study also targeted only three stakeholders namely Students, Academic Staff and staff from Directorates of Quality Assurance. Quality in Higher Education is multidimensional and hence it would be useful to engage other stakeholders like Government, Senior Administration of HEIs, Employers, and Alumni etc.

The research assessed quality on the basis of eight dimensions of quality. Quality is defined differently and the definition is what shapes the quality assurance approach. It would be useful to assess quality using other inputs like quality of students, students support etc.

## 5.10. Suggestions for Further Research

A number of issues that emerged in this research pointed to implications that are suggestive that they need further research. The following are recommended for further investigation:

i) This research was a correlational study that focused on quality assurance practices of academic deliverables within the institutions. It would be useful for a longitudinal study to be undertaken to provide more insight on the perceptions of respondents on quality over long periods of time.

ii) The research concentrated on only three categories of Higher Education stakeholders namely the staff, students and the Quality Assurance Officers. Quality is a moving target and is premised on the principle of continuous improvement. It would be worthwhile to undertake an investigation that captures perceptions of other constituencies like the Government, the Commission for Higher Education, the Alumni, and the Employers etc.

iii) It would be useful to undertake an investigation that would compare the private Higher Education and Public Higher Education. Literature shows Kenya's private HEIs have been under the supervision of the CUE since its formation.

iv) This research showed there are gaps in the quality assurance practices in Kenya's HEIs. This is despite the fact that Kenya is expected to play a leading role in driving the EAC common market area despite the quality assurance challenges it faces as revealed in this research. It would be useful to undertake research on quality assurance practices, gaps and opportunities for improvement in the EAC.

v) The findings revealed that Research in Kenya's HEIs was the weakest dimension yet economic development of many nations is driven by advances in science and technology that is spearheaded by HEIs. It would be useful to undertake research into the challenges HEIs face in their research mandates

vi) The findings also revealed that the greatest impediment to implementation of quality was support from the leadership. It would be worthwhile for an

investigation into the role of leadership in quality management within Kenya's HEIs.

## 5.11. Conclusions

Study results revealed there are efforts towards growing quality in each of the Universities sampled. The study established that Kenya's HEIs were facing varying levels of deficiencies in quality management. The findings revealed research, publication and innovation dimension faces the highest deficiencies on the dimensions of quality studied followed by governance and management. The findings revealed Kenya's HEIs continue to grapple with quality management even after the enactment of the Universities Act (GoK, 2012) and subsequently the Universities Guidelines and Standards and the Universities Regulations (CUE, 2014). The findings pointed to the need for a policy shift towards creating capacities for compliance with the quality assurance regimes. The Universities should explore use of other tools for self-assessment like EFQM, MBNQA that have been applied in transforming organizations tremendously in the UK and USA respectively.

## 5.12. Chapter Summary

Chapter five looked into the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations of the study. The study established that different Universities in Kenya are on different trajectories of nurturing quality. It looked into opportunities for improvement and managerial implications of the findings. It also provided suggestions for further research.

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