Balancing Internal and External Quality Assurance Dynamics in Higher Education Institutions

A Case Study of University of Ghana

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Abstract

The idea of integrated approach to quality assurance has been advanced as the best model to balance accountability and improvement orientation of quality in higher education. However, this quality assurance model has been approached delicately partly due to the perceived conflicting relationship between internal and external quality assurance systems, and the propensity of this relationship to create tensions and conflicts rather than harmony and alignment in quality assurance governance structures. This research seeks to explore the relationship between internal and external quality assurance system, as a way of understanding how this relationship affect integration of the two systems. The study thus, attempts to develop an approach to holistic implementation of quality assurance using Johan P. Olsen (2007) four governance models as the theoretical foundation. Using deductive research approach, the study is built on three hypothetical assumptions: (i) Quality assurance is a steering instrument for governance of higher education institutions. (ii) The co-existence of internal and external quality assurance creates tensions within higher education institutions. (iii) Desired quality is achieved when both internal and external systems are aligned to the governance system within which they operate, and also, appropriately coordinated in an integrated manner. The study employed qualitative research strategy, using semi-structured interviews and document analysis as data collection instruments to aid the study answer the research questions. Findings of the research to a very large extent confirm the theoretical assumption made. The study thus, proposes that, integrated approach to quality assurance should be two-step process. Firstly, there is the need for the governance structure of the two quality assurance systems (internal and external) to be properly aligned to conform to the respective internal governance structures before they are integrated on a common platform that promote independence, responsibility and accountability. This is because whilst the study recognizes the need for the universities to have control over internal quality process, there is still the need for universities to be responsible and externally accountable for their own internal quality assurance strategies.
Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to the following special people in my life.

   My Wife, Deborah Paintsil
   My Son, Kweku-Sekyi Adom Paintsil
   My Good Friend, Abeka Patrick
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You are the source of my inspiration. Thank you for sharing your life with me. I love you all.
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Abbreviations

NAB    National Accreditation Board
L.I    Legislative Instrument
QA     Quality Assurance
QAS    Quality Assurance System
IQA    Internal Quality Assurance
EQA    External Quality Assurance
HE     Higher Education
HEI    Higher Education Institution
UG     University of Ghana
UCC    University of cape Coast
KNUST  Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0. Chapter Introduction

Globalization, the advent of information communication technology, and the emergence of knowledge economy, has increasingly created space for global competitiveness of national economies. The quest for knowledge and the knowledge economy has become a critical sector for the development of national economies and also a source of future prosperity of nations (Thune, 2000, p. 32). The worth of nations is no longer measured by the wealth of its’ natural resources but fundamentally, by their capacity to generate, process and apply efficiently, knowledge-based information (Castells, 2000). The knowledge economy is therefore a major arena and framework for global competition.

Central to this global competition and the essential role of the knowledge economy is the growing recognition of the critical role of higher education institutions (HEIs). Higher education institutions provide the ideological framework, the infrastructure as well as the needed intellectual environment necessary for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Though they are built on historical traditions and practices, higher education institutions in recent years has come under immense pressure to respond to the changing global circumstances (Thune, 2000) in order to remain relevant in the development and transformation of societies. Consequently, higher education institutions have global expectations to not only provide quality education, but also to match the intellectual demands of the present and the future expectations of society. In view of these developments, the quality of faculty, quality of teaching and research, pedagogy, management and governance of these institutions, have become more relevant for sustainable knowledge creation for socio-economic development.

The pursuit of quality in higher education has also been triggered by other factors besides the change demands of time. This includes national budget constraints, which are reducing availability of funds for higher education expenditure; the varying opinions on the purpose of higher education, and increasing public and private participation in the higher education sector. Furthermore, massification of higher education (Altbach, 1999; Tight, 2012), changing dynamics in the governance and funding of these higher institution (Zechlin, 2010), and the changing public roles and interest in higher education (HE) (McGuiness, 2005) have created fundamental challenges. These challenges include higher student enrollment, inadequate
funding, gradual withdrawal of state and the emergence of new actors in the governance of HE, marketization of higher education and greater public demand for efficiency and accountability on these institutions. Against this backdrop of challenges which are self-evident in many higher educational systems in Africa, particularly Ghana (Ayile, 2011), the study of quality assurance, especially in the institutional context, is of great importance. This is because, understanding the dynamics of quality assurance could be fundamental in repositioning higher education institutions to adequately respond to the changing tides in order to facilitate national growth and development. This is also because quality assurance is a potential transformative instrument with many intrinsic values.

Generally, systems that are created to manage and assure quality could be referred to as quality assurance (QA) systems. The traditional role of quality assurance systems is to ensure that standards of quality, required of or aspired to by organization is achieved and maintained to serve a specific purpose. In the field of higher education, there are two main quality assurance systems which according to literature, should work together to achieve a desired quality (van Vught, 1994); (Thune, 1996); (Horsburgh, 1999); (Harvey & Newton, 2004); (Ayile, 2011). This is made up of external quality assurance (EQA) and internal quality assurance (IQA). Though they should be mutually reinforcing, a cursory review of these two QA systems reveals significant differences in their structure which suggests that they are potentially conflicting. For example whilst EQA focuses on compliance and accountability, IQA is concern about improvement and enhancement (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999). The fundamental question of interest to this research is; how could these two systems with potential conflicting relationship coexist to achieve the desired quality?

This study is premised on the assumption that issues of institutional quality assurance should not be studied in isolation, but within the context of the both internal and external governance structures which often than not, act as the instrument for steering both internal and external quality assurance strategies. Described as bottom-heavy (Clark, 1983) and loosely coupled (Weick, 1976) organization, higher education have been noted as an organization with distinct governance characteristics. The specific governance structure acts as catalysts that influence all aspects of university life and serve as the foundation upon which all other sub systems within the university governance structure are built.

Quality assurance systems could be studied from two perspectives. Either as a stand-alone system, which only serves as a check on predetermined standards; or as an integrated system
that forms part of the bigger governance framework. It is thus, suggested by this research that, quality assurance in higher education institutions unlike other traditional organizations, should not be a stand-alone system that has no connection with the governance framework. Rather, quality assurance needs to be an integral part of the larger governance system and should go beyond “rationalizing the production process” (Stensaker, 2000, p. 82) or standardizing output to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Also critical in a bigger perspective, is the interrelationship between the different quality assurance systems (internal and external) in relation to their defined operational environment. It is therefore argued that, quality assurance systems in higher education institutions need to appropriately interact with, and aligned to its operational environment (governance framework) to ensure appropriate and adequate response to both internal and external quality needs.

This work has been greatly influenced by a number of research works in higher education especially in the area policy, governance and quality assurance (Clark, 1983); (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2000); (Harvey & Newton, 2004); (Stensaker, 2007); (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999), and the work of Ayile (Ayile, 2011). However, a framework that offers institutional governance approach to the study of quality assurance has been adopted as the theoretical foundation for this research. This approach to study quality assurance, seeks to explore how institutional quality assurance strategies could respond to the governance dynamics in higher education. That is, the ability of the internal quality system to respond to external quality demands and also fit into institutional strategic policies, culture and implementation strategies adopted to achieve strategic institutional goal. Consequently, this research adopted the four steering models of Olsen (Olsen, 2007) as the analytical instrument to explore the relationship between internal and external quality assurance systems and the possible tensions and alignments that could affect the integration of the two quality assurance systems.

Olsen’s four governance models offer deeper insight into the dynamics of institutional governance, which provide a better way to understand the alignments and tensions between different governance systems and the possible consequential effects on integration. To this end, Olsen’s governance models would be employed in this study to better understand the governance principles underlying the relationship (tension and alignments) between internal and external quality assurance and the consequential effects on their integration. It is the expectation of this study that studying this relationship will provide the needed insight to
improve the understanding of how higher education institutions (Universities) appropriately respond to the governance dynamics of these two quality assurance systems.

1.1. Research Problem

Quality assurance systems manifests at both the national and institutional level, in the form of an external and an internal quality system. The external quality assurance system provides the national framework within which the various institutional internal quality systems operate. Though these two quality assurance systems in effect are supposed to work together to achieve a single goal, they show a number of significant differences in their structure and mode of operation.

In Ghana for instance, the external quality assurance system is regulated by the National Accreditation Board Act, 2007, (Act 744). National Accreditation Board (NAB) is mandated as the main government agency to license and regulate the activities of Universities to ensure the adherence to, established quality standards. These established quality standards are usually universally agreed standards which is designed to ensure the compliance and accountability. The compliance and accountability objective of the NAB is achieved through process of accreditation, strict enforcement of regulations and monitoring of the various higher education institutions.

The internal quality assurance system on the other hand, is managed by regulations and administrative laws enacted by the respective higher educational institution. These regulations have no legitimacy national application effect, but are restricted to the various institutions and its processes and systems. Thus, operation and management of and internal quality assurance system is at the discretion of the of the higher education institution, which usually carries out this mandate in the context of available institutional resources and capacities.

It could therefore be inferred from the above that, the quality assurance systems in Ghana operates at different levels; the National and Institutional levels, with different regulations and objectives, to achieve a unified goal. The seeming conflicting relationship between the external and internal quality assurance undoubtedly, is a potential challenge for coordination and integration of the quality assurance processes, and also, a potential risk to the effective functioning of the internal quality assurance system in the Ghanaian Universities.
Recent studies have shown that stakeholders have negative perceptions about the work of NAB. Stakeholders in Ghana’s HE sector perceive that, NAB’s work does not provide value for money; does not empower the learner; and does not promote effective teaching and learning. Essentially the NAB has failed in discharging its mandate of ensuring quality (Ayile, 2011). However, as commented by Ayile (2011) in his studies challenges these perceptions and argues that they are misplaced because "they do not fall within the scope of NAB’s EQA methodology and that makes it challenging for NAB to resolve them" (Ayile, 2011, p. 95). It is therefore not surprising that though higher education institutions (HEIs) are complying with the regulations of NAB, perception of low quality of the higher education in Ghana still is a raging debate among stakeholders. This condition perhaps could be attributed to the potential conflicting relationship between the two quality assurance systems, which poses a challenge in attaining the expected quality in the higher education system in Ghana.

1.2. Objective of Research
Approaching from the governance perspective, the single objective of this research is to explore the relationship between internal and external quality assurance as an attempt to provide some preliminary evidence about the impact of this relationship on their integration. In order to investigate the dynamics of this relationship, the study has been designed to be guided by one main research question which is intended to be explored by four sub questions as presented below.
1.3. Research Questions

1.3.1. Main Research Question

1. What are the alignments and tensions between internal and external quality assurance at the University of Ghana?

1.3.2. Sub Research Questions

a. What are the possible theoretical models for understanding the role of EQA?

b. How does EQA in Ghana related to the theoretical models of QA?

c. How is the IQA of UG related to the theoretical models of QA?

d. How does the IQA system of University of Ghana linked to the EQA system?

1.4. Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized into six chapters. Chapter one contains the general introduction of the study. It describes the background to the study, states the research problem, the research questions and also, the objective of the study. Chapter two contains the empirical context of the study. It presents brief background information about the University of Ghana (UG), National Accreditation Board (NAB) and a thematic overview of the Republic of Ghana. Chapter three deals with the review of relevant literature, presents the theoretical foundation of the study. In chapter four, the methodology for the research is introduced. It presents the analytical framework for data analysis and interpretation, philosophical background of the research, the research strategy, approach and design, as well as data collection methods. Also, chapter four gives highlight of the ethical issues of the research as well as the challenges and limitations of the data collection. Chapter five of the study presents the analysis of empirical findings. Finally, chapter six present discussions of finding, conclusion, reflections on the study and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO: EMPIRICAL CONTEXT

2.0. Chapter Introduction
This chapter presents the background of the study in two sections. The first examines the history of quality assurance in Ghana. The intention here is to establish a basis for understanding how the idea of quality assurance has intentionally and unintentionally been developed over the years in the University of Ghana and NAB. The second section will focus on the broader context, and will cover a brief thematic overview of Ghana with particular reference to her political history, geography, demography, economic and governance structures. These two sections essentially provide the time and space for appreciating quality assurance systems in Ghana and the specific case of the University of Ghana.

2.1. Historical Background of Internal and External Quality Assurance in Ghana
The University of Ghana was founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast. This was based on the recommendations of the Asquith Commission on Higher Education in 1943 which recommended among other things the setting up of higher educational institutions in collaboration with the University of London. This was taken forward by the Elliot Commission, which recommended the setting up of a university in Nigeria for West Africa rather than in Gold Coast. Local opposition to this recommendation resulted in the setting of the University College of Gold Coast in 1948. The University College of Gold Coast, which later became University of Ghana (UG), was founded by Ordinance on August 11, 1948 for the purpose of providing and promoting university education, learning and research. In the early 1961 however, the republican government approved recommendations of an international commission tasked to oversee the transition of the University College to a full-fledged university, capable of awarding its own certificates. Subsequently, University of Ghana Act, 1961 (Act 79) was passed, to established the authority and autonomy of the University of Ghana (UG).

The quest to ensure quality, and the interplay of external and internal quality assurance in the quality assurance process, is clearly manifested in the history of University of Ghana. Though unstructured, there were glimpses of this quality assurance processes in the governance arrangements, leadership and the management structures of the University. For instance, the affiliation of University of Ghana, then as a University College, to University of London and the consequent external examination of certificates by the latter, approval of courses and examination by University of London, constituted an unstructured way of ensuring quality of
the former from without. On the other hand, the establishment of Inter-University Council with the mandate to approve all academic appointments was internal quality strategy to guarantee the quality of academic staff. Additionally, the appointment of professional and experienced leaders to manage the business of the University at the inception stages, contributed immensely to the development of appropriate academic cultures and structures to ensure effective management and quality enhancement. These arrangements though not formally organized as internal and external quality assurance strategies, contributed greatly for the College to maintain the high academic standards associated with the Universities in Britain (UG, 2015).

Another dimension of the external quality assurance is the political environment within which the university operated. The state provided the needed social, economic, and political climate for growth of the University of Ghana. More specifically, funds were available to support both infrastructure and human capital needs of the University. Also, low student–teacher ratio as a result of low student enrollment created conditions for effective teaching, learning and supervision. Furthermore, the stipends and the descent accommodation given to students at the University contributed to meeting their individual basic needs of the average Ghanaian student hence it freed them to focus on their academic expectations and pursue excellence.

The early part of post-independence era saw an increase in demand for access to higher education. Also there were demands for skilled and trained labor force to help develop the new independent state. Consequently, additional universities were built to expand access. Among those established were, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and University of Cape Coast in 1952 and 1962 respectively (KNUST, 2015; UCC, 2015).

Efforts to expand access to university education were direct response to the growing demands of higher education. Manuah et al., (2007) believe that this was to reduce illiteracy, and also, to train the needed human capital to support the socio-economic and political transformation process of the country (Manuah et al., 2007). However, the negative social, economic and political conditions caused and made severe by the regular periods of military intervention slow down government efforts and as result, affected the expansion process. These military interventions contributed to bad political and administrative governance, disregard for rule of law, and economic decline, with the education sector, particularly higher education suffering many ripple effects. These conditions weakened and affected the quality of higher education in Ghana. Manuah et al., (2007), argue further that budget cuts and the inability of
government to pay the wages of both academic and non-academic staff affected recruitment and weakened the quality of faculty.

Again, Sawyerr, (1994) also corroborates with Manuah et al., (2007) and contends that, government interference in the internal processes of universities and poor working conditions created dissatisfaction, lowered working morale and consequently, contributed to a mass exodus of faculty abroad for better rewards. As these emerging negative social, economic and political conditions coincided with the increasing enrollment in university and a decline in the quality was inevitable. Consequently, the internal process of higher education institutions in Ghana and their governance arrangements were thrown into disarray, thus affecting the overall quality of higher education in Ghana.

Government has responded in various ways to these quality demands of the universities. In 1993, the National Accreditation Board Law, 1993 (PNDCL 317) created a National Accreditation Board. This was based on the recommendations of a University Rationalization Committee and a Government white paper on the Reforms of Tertiary Education System, which was published in 1991. NAB was to serve as an independent coordinating body with the mandate to regulate, manage and monitor tertiary education in Ghana of which the universities are critical component. In other words, NAB was specifically created as external quality assurance arm of the Ministry of Education. The establishing legal authority of the National Accreditation Board (PNDC Law 317) has since been revised through the National Accreditation Board Act, 2007 (Act 744) and Tertiary Institutions (Establishment and Accreditation) Regulations, 2002 (L.I. 1700). In 2010, the L.I 1700 was replaced by L.I 1984. By these legal instruments, NAB has the powers of a Higher Court to enforce compliance to its regulations, and also, apply punitive sanctions such as withdrawal of accreditation and prosecution of institutions, which flout its regulations.

Unlike the internal quality assurance process in UG, which seems to be an evolutionary process, the creation of NAB was a deliberate national policy. The creation of NAB was recognition that, beyond stable socio-economic and political stability, governance of higher education is critical to attaining quality standards. The creation of NAB was an attempt to streamline the management and operations of tertiary institutions to conform to set standards and best practices. Consequently, NAB assumed the responsibility of an external quality assurance agency under well-structured guidelines and regulations. By extension, one can safely assume that, the creation of NAB was a reinvention of the pre-colonial external quality
assurance arrangement, where University of London as a mother institution, was responsible for the regulating the operations of the University College of Gold Coast to conform to best practices.

Thus, the creation of NAB marks a transition from an unstructured colonial external quality system to one of greater structure. The mandate of NAB includes accreditation of public and private (tertiary) institutions with regard to the contents and standards of their programs, and publication of the list of accredited institutions from time to time (L.I 1984, 2010). Though the NAB has been successful in using the accreditation processes as an external instrument to structure, manage and streamline the operations of higher education in Ghana, it has not been so successful in coordinating the internal quality processes of these institutions. Consequently, there seem to be a missing link between the internal quality practices of institutions and the external quality requirements of the accrediting body. This could be the misconception fueled by stakeholder’s of a decline in quality higher education in Ghana (Ayile, 2011).

NAB is a public organization under the Ministry of Education, and a creation of Law. The purpose of NAB among is to contribute to better management of tertiary education in Ghana as an accreditation and quality assurance agency. NAB is managed by 15-member board includes representatives from key stakeholders in the HE sector of Ghana. These are listed below:

1. The Chairperson
2. The Executive Secretary of NAB
3. 2 representations from Ministry of Education
4. 1 representation from the Attorney General’s Department
5. 1 representation from Public Service Commission
6. 2 representations from public Universities
7. 1 representation from accredited private Universities
8. 1 representative from other accredited private tertiary institutions
9. 1 representation from association of recognized professional bodies
10. 1 representation from association of heads of public polytechnics
11. 1 representation from National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE)
12. 1 representation from National Board of Professional and Technical Examinations
13. 1 representation from West African Examination Council
A chairperson who is appointed by the government chairs the Board. The Board has an Executive Secretary who is accountable to the Board and functions as the chief operation officer responsible for the day-to-day administration of the agency. Historically, the NAB has been financed by government subventions, service charges, donations from philanthropists, and return on investments by the Board.

2.2. Overview of Ghana

2.2.1. Brief Political History of Ghana
Colonized by the British for over a century, Ghana was originally known as Gold Coast in apparent reference to the abundant gold on the land. Prior to its colonization, Ghana had existing political systems working among the various kingdoms and tribal groupings that existed. Along with the political organizations existed a sense of political culture, which had their democratic principles including accountability particularly among the Akan political system (HSG, ND). The colonization of Ghana as part of the British Empire beginning in 1844 began a subtle process of political reorganization of the different kingdoms. These kingdoms were eventually merged into a single colony the Gold Coast, which remained united after independence. Despite the colonization of Ghana, the people remained politically conscious and demanded to be part of the process for decision making in the colony. The chiefs were the first to play major roles in national level political governance. However, with time, their roles at the national level were eventually taken over by the educated elites. The involvement of the educated elite in the governing processes played a critical role in reorganizing the struggle for independents, which was eventually achieved in 1957.

From the time of independent to the early 1980, Ghana underwent different political administrations ranging from Authoritarian Military Regimes to Parliamentary Democracy. Political instability and regime insecurity was the main feature of the period. The tenure of civilian administrations were truncated by different military regimes to the extent that from 1966 (the first republic) to the beginning of the fourth republic (1992) no single civil government completed their tenure of office.

After winning independence in Ghana, the Conventions People Party (CPP), under the leadership of Prime Minister, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah formed the first government of the independent country. Ghana continued to have the Queen as the Head of State until 1960,
when she became a Republic with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah as the First Republican President. The CPP government was more leftist inclined and lasted for six years from July 1, 1960 and February 1966. The National Liberation Council (NLC) in a military coup led by Lt. General Ankrah and later by Lt. Gen. Afrifa overthrew the CPP government and Dr. Nkrumah was subsequently exiled. The NLC had its own internal struggles which saw General Ankrah replaced by General Afrifa who at the end three years of the NLC, organized elections to return Ghana to civilian rule. In elections, the Progress Party (PP), which has its roots in the United Gold Coast Convention and its leader Dr. K.A Busia, won the elections. He subsequently became the Prime Minister while Edward Akuffo Addo became the Head of State. The second Republic which began in 1969 was essentially a parliamentary executive government.

After 2 years in power, Progress Party government, which was leaned towards the political right, was overthrown by another military regime led by General I. K Acheampong. Subsequently the National Redemption Council (NRC) on January 13, 1972 was formed. The NRC later transitioned into the Supreme Military Council (SMC), and later SMC II. The leader of the new government, Supreme Military Council II (SMC II) General Akuffo, was to change the face of leadership of the same military regime. Although the SMC II was making arrangements to return the country to civilian rule, the junior ranks in the Armed forces successfully staged a Military Uprising in 1979 which toppled the SMC II. They junior ranks, led by Ft. Lt. J. J. Rawlings and others formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The excesses of this military regime led to the execution of some senior officers including General A.A. Afrifa, General I.K. Acheampong and General Akuffo.

The AFRC continued the roadmap to the civilian administration, which was started by the SMC II and handed power over to the Peoples National Party (PNP) to begin the third republic. The third republic had its roots in Nkrumah's CPP and therefore was ideologically inclined towards the left. The third republic fell on 31st December 1981 when the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) under the leadership of Ft. Lt. Rawlings toppled the PNP government. The PNDC ruled for eleven years and under that regime started from the political left and moved to the right. In 1991 a referendum for a new republican constitution and later general elections were held. The PNDC transitioned to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) under the leadership of Ft. Lt. Rawlings, organized, contested and won the election to begin the fourth republic as the President of the Republic of Ghana.
The NDC, which is a social democratic government the first time in the history of Ghana, successfully completed its mandate and continue to serve for another term after winning the 1996 election. After completing its second term, NDC handed over power to another democratically elected government, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) who won the general elections in 2000. This was the first political turnover of one civilian administration to another. The NPP claim to be political liberals and inclined towards the right also formed two governments after it won the 2004 election. In 2008 the NPP was voted out of power after the NDC won the general elections in two rounds of voting. The political governance structures of Ghana’s young democracy were again put to test when a sitting president died after midway through his mandate in 2010. There was however a successful process for change of leadership without creating a vacuum and without plunging the country into a political crisis for lack of political leaderships.

In summary, the political history of Ghana reveals a lack of political consolidation in the governance system that was supposed to be the engine of national growth and development. The weak, inconsistence, polarized and unstable political governance systems triggered by successive military interventions have ensured that the economy had not had the right environment for investment and for growth. There frequent lack of political continuity has also negatively impacted the social and economic development programs of successive governments. The failure of successive governments to also continue the work of the previous government has also resulted in several abandoned and uncompleted projects and its huge financial implications.

Significantly, each regime change marked the beginning of a new national development agenda that was fueled by different policies, and driven by different ideological beliefs. The outcome was a system of disjointed policies, inconsistent vision and ineffective policy coordination. Besides the attendant corruption allegations on successive governments, both military and civilian, funding for social infrastructure such as health and education has always been affected, leading to the crippled capacity of the public institutions such as the Universities to function effectively. The political history of Ghana thus, tells a story of compromised quality of system governance right from the beginning of First Republic which invariably affected all aspect of social life including the education sector.
2.2.2. Geography, Culture and Demography

Ghana is situated in the equatorial region of the globe, with the Greenwich Meridian crossing the country. Three francophone countries share international boundaries with Ghana. Cote d’Ivoire to the West, Togo to the East and Burkina Faso to the North. On the south is the Gulf of Guinea, which is part of the Atlantic Ocean. Ghana covers a total landmass of about 238,537km², just a little smaller in size, compared to the United Kingdom. Ghana is a multi-cultural country with different ethnic groups spread across the country. These ethnic groups are made up of different tribes with different ways of life, languages, traditions and festivals. Festivals are very important social event. They are the embodiment of the social fabric of the people and a mark of the cultural heritage. Some festival celebrated in Ghana includes; Deer hunt festival of the Afromt people in Winneba near the Coast, and Homoho of the Ga people of Accra.

The Akans are the biggest ethnic group constituting about 47.5% of the total population. Others are Mole Dagbani 16.6%, Ewe 13.9%, Ga-Dangme 7.4%, Gurma 5.7, Guan 3.7%, Grusi 2.5%, Mande 1.1%, and other ethnic groups 1.4% (GSS, 2012). In terms of religion, there are three main groups of which Christianity is the predominant making up about 71.2% of the total population. This is followed by the Islam faith, which makes us about 17.6%; and thirdly by the African Traditional Religions which constitute about 5.2%. Other minor religions total about 0.8%, and about 5.3% of the population who belong to none of the three religions (GSS, 2012).

Ghana has a population of 24,658,823 (GSS, 2012). This figure represents an average growth rate of 2.5% and 30.4% increase over the last census in 2000. With this trend it is estimated that it will take approximately 28 years for the population of the country to double (GSS, 2012). Male and female population distribution stands at 12,024,845 and 12,633,978 respectively. The paradox of the population growth trend is that; it is inversely related to economic growth. The situation is a major source of threat to sustainable development and an indication that, it may be naturally difficult for the economy to adequately finance the social infrastructure such as education, hospital and roads needed to support the growing population.

2.2.3. Administrative Governance

Ghana is a Republic that practice representative democratic governance, hybrid of the British and the America political governance system. Multiparty election is conducted every four years to elect members of the Parliament and the President. The elected President is the Chief
Executive Office of the State, and he is ultimately responsible for the day to day running of the State. The Chief Justice is the head of the Judiciary. They are the custodians of the constitution and the laws of the land. Parliament is the law making body with the Speaker as the head. Political governance is based on decentralization governance system. Ghana is divided into 10 administrative regions. These regions are further divided into 170 districts, which are made up of 164 districts/municipals and 6 metropolitan areas (GSS, 2012). Though there are proliferations of local languages (about 46 spoken languages) English is the official language for administrative governance and the medium of instruction in all school.

### 2.2.4. Economy of Ghana

The economy of Ghana is diversified in nature. It is structured into three major sectors. The agriculture sector, which includes fishing and forestry, the industrial sector that includes manufacturing, mining and recently, the oil and gas industry, and thirdly the services sector which includes but not limited to the telecommunication industry, banking and other financial services.

Historically, the structure of the Ghanaian economy is built around the primary trade commodities in agriculture, mining and forestry for the bulk of her foreign exchange and employment. However, the Services sector has shown consistent growth to become the largest economic sector hitting Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution of 51.9% in 2014 (GSS, 2015.p.5). The challenge with the services sector however is that; because most of these industry players are foreign, capital flight take huge chunk of the GDP contribution outside the country, reducing their real impact on the economy.

In 2007 an off shore petroleum exploration identified significant oil reserves for commercial viability. Thus, a new economically significant resource was added to the agriculture, mining and forestry. However, commercial drilling was expected to begin in the later part of 2010 and since then, oil has become additional resource for foreign exchange contributing 33.8% to GDP between 2010 and 2014 (GSS, 2015).

Like many developing countries, the Ghanaian economy is predominantly agrarian. Agriculture sector is the biggest single employer of the working population within the economy (GSS, 2014). The sector, according to 2010 census summary report, employs about 41.5% of the economically active population (GSS, 2012. p.10) and significantly contributed 29.8% GDP (GSS, 2015.p.5). Consequently, cocoa production has and continues to remain
the single largest contributor to the Ghanaian agriculture sector. Ghana is currently the second leading producer of cocoa in the world after losing the first spot to neighboring Cote d'Ivoire over a decade ago due to increasing smuggling of cocoa beans from Ghana to Cote d'Ivoire where cocoa sells for almost 50% more than in Ghana (GSS, 2014). Also, the mining sector has been a traditional contributor to the economy since colonial days. It is the oldest sector for international trade. Export of gold, diamond, bauxite and manganese contributed about 3.2% to GDP in 2014.

Similar to the political history, the growth pattern of Ghana’s economy has not been consistent. In 2008, Ghana’s economy had its highest GDP growth of 7.3% but fell to 6.2% at the end of 2009. Since then, the GDP growth continues to fluctuate. For instance, in 2014 non-oil GDP stood at 4.1% and a rising inflation rate, which currently hovers between 16.5% and 17.1% (CEPA, 2015; GSS, 2014). Cost of living continues to be on the ascendancy. In July 2007, a new currency, Ghana Cedi (Gh₵) was introduced after the redenomination of the old currency (Cedi-₵).

Interestingly, statistics on the poverty index in Ghana shows that about 25% of the population lives below the poverty line as at 2013 and out of this statistic about 10% of the total population is extremely poor despite the abundance of natural resources (GSS, 2014). One reason could be the fact the large informal sector has not been effectively captured by national statistic. The employment sector is made up of 54.2% of the economically active population. Out of this figure, 5% represents the unemployed population. The informal sector remains the biggest employer of the economy with 86.1%, formal sector 7% and the public sector employing about 6.3% (GSS, 2014). Life expectancy in Ghana now is about 66 years (CIA, 2015).

In summary, the Ghanaian economy reveals a stressful situation. Evidence of this includes a declining and unstable GDP growth, increasing population, increasing public expenditure over revenue mobilization, high unemployment particularly among the youth and increasing unsustainable public debt (CEPA, 2015). This is a reflection of the austerity measures taken by the government to ameliorate the worsening economic conditions or perhaps a justification of the lack of required investment in higher education and other sectors of the economy, which invariably affects the effectiveness of these public institutions.
CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.0. Chapter Introduction
This chapter is presented in two sections. The first section is a review of literature on the topic. Literature of scholars in the field of quality assurance and governance are reviewed to offer scholarly discussion on the significance and the direction of the research. The second section of this chapter presents the conceptual framework, or the theoretical underpinnings of the research. According to (Bryman, 2012, p. 20), theories are important in research to provide the backcloth and the rationale for the research and also, the framework for understanding social phenomenon and offer interpretation for research findings. This section thus, explains Olsen’s (1988, 2007) four governance models and the implication on for the research.

Literature Review

3.1.0. Introduction
Historically, the idea of quality has been an evolutionary concept originating from the Japanese business community in the 1950s and 1960s. Between 1960s and the 1980s this evolutionary process gradually expanded into the American and European business worlds before finally spread its influences into the public in the 1990s and by extension, into higher education. During this period, quality was conceived as an idea of rationalizing the production process and the standardization of outputs to ensure efficiency and effectiveness (Stensaker, 2000). Hence quality became key principle in the production process and also, an essential instrument for competitive advantage in the business sector. In the public sector however, it became the instrument for ensuring efficiency (Stensaker, 2007).

In higher education sector, this conception of quality have been reemphasized in recent times by the recognition that, the concept of quality has become “one of the most dominating and influential ‘meta-ideas’ globally over the last 20 years, invading both the private and the public sector” (Stensaker, 2007, p. 99). This period saw the adoption of business oriented quality assurance models such as Total Quality Management (TQM), the ISO 9001: 2000 and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence models as a tool to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the knowledge generation process (teaching, learning and research). Today however, there is considerable departure from the mere adaptation of business models of quality assurance, to the development of models that reflects
the changing dynamics and the complexities of quality issues of higher education. This new trends which may have been caused by structural misfit of the business quality assurance models justifies the need to beyond a pure application of business quality assurance models to alternative models that are flexible and integrated enough to reflects the peculiarities of higher education organizations.

3.1.1. Defining Quality in Higher Education
One noticeable feature in the academic discourse on quality is the paradox of the definition of quality. Though a “poorly defined and loose concept”, (Stensaker, 2007, p. 100) the idea of quality is positively perceived, and generates a lot of interest among actors in the higher education sector. The “elusive nature” of quality (Ayile, 2011, p. 19), suggests that the idea of quality assumes subjective meaning and contextual interpretation, depending on the individual’s judgment values and the circumstance. Again, the “blurry nature” of quality (Thune, 2000, p. 109) implies that, the idea of quality cannot be given a specific meaning, but within a given context, other shadow meanings could be used interchangeably. Thus, the idea of quality in higher education carries no universal meaning but has different definitions and understanding relative to the circumstance or context.

Contextual definitions of quality require that in the national context, quality be defined by the State, while education institutions define quality in their context. In the context of this study however, quality, theoretically assumes a four dimensional definition, which reflects Olsen’s four governance models that provides the basis of the analytical framework for the study.

3.1.2. Internal and External Quality Assurance in Higher Education
Though the contentions on expert definition of quality are very deep, one common point of convergence is that, the ideas of quality assurance in practice, serves dual purpose; accountability and improvement (Stensaker, 2007; Harvey & Newton 2004). This notion of quality has greatly influenced the nature, structure and operation of quality assurance systems and also, influenced how internal and external quality assurance processes are perceived.

3.1.2.1. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)
Smeby and Stensaker (1999) have proposed a framework for analyzing the tensions between improvement and accountability (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999). In this framework, six indicators related to internal and external dimensions of quality reveals a significant insight, which suggests that internal quality assurance (improvement orientation) provides a more
flexible and viable option to ensure institutional competitive advantage, and opportunity for institutional growth. Firstly, the independent manager of an internal quality system has the capacity to initiate all decisions and determine which fields to be evaluated. This situation makes it easy to integrate internal quality assurance strategies with institutional strategy to ensure better results. Also, the absence of standardized evaluation methods promotes flexibility of internal quality system, and creates better room for the independent managers to adjust to changes in the immediate environment of the institution at the appropriate time. Again, the opportunity to nominate evaluators from within the institution provides opportunity to select people who are loyal, dedicated and understand the organizational culture in order to guarantee better output.

Furthermore, effective evaluation and monitoring of quality assurance process is guaranteed since the independent manager is involved in the day-to-day management of the institution. Finally, internal quality systems make room for choice. That is, processes could be easily varied to suit the institution's desired quality assurance approach. Though the above discussion suggests a critical role internal quality assurance could play to ensure institutional competitive advantage and growth, its importance is less likely to be emphasized by the public (Ayile, 2011) and to certain degree, the higher education institutions. This could be due to lack of legitimacy and weak “social authority” (Stensaker, 2007, p. 105) that make the organization of internal quality assurance discretionary rather than legally required enterprise. As a result, expenditure on such internal quality assurance system is likely to be perceived as extra financial burden rather than a positive future investment.

Internal quality assurance systems primarily focus on curriculum development, teaching, learning and research, which traditionally have remained the core instruments in the knowledge production process. However, the means to achieve this has undergone various phases of transformation over the years. There are changes from teacher centered to student centered learning; a push for changes in curriculum design; application of information communication technology in teaching delivery, promotion of social centered approaches to learning, and the development of evaluation approaches to monitor both teacher and student performance (Brew, 2006; Barnett et. al., 2001; Neumann et el, 2002; Nerland, 2012). This is a great indication of the quest to constantly improve the knowledge production process to ensure that higher education institutions stay tuned to the changing intellectual demands made by stakeholders. As such, the call for the adoption of strategic management (Leslie, 1996;
Navarro & Gallardo, 2003; Zechlin, 2010) and New Public Management (NPM) (Meek, 2003) approaches to governance of higher institutions of learning says a lot about the desire to perfect the operations, in order to appropriately manage, coordinate and satisfy the expectations and the changing demands of internal actors.

3.1.2.2. External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Again, in the framework for analyzing tensions between internal and external quality assurance (EQA) (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999), it could be realized that EQA focuses primarily on compliance and accountability. It requires that standards set by legitimate external bodies that serve as guide to the operations of higher education institutions. This is achieved mostly through process of accreditation and peer review. External quality assurance usually operates at the national level and has fixed and universal regulation which is applied to all relevant institutions under their legal jurisdiction without or with little consideration to specific quality needs of these institutions.

The accountability orientation of quality assurance appears to be deeply rooted in stakeholder’s financial contribution and participation in the quality assurance process. The greater the involvement of stakeholders, the greater accountability is demanded from institutions regulated by the external quality systems. For example, in the USA, research has shown that the accountability demand from stakeholders (private and government) rises, as more private funds are committed into the business of higher education (Mcguinness, 2005, p. 1-16). Though scholars like (Valimaa 1994) and Newton (2000) against the backdrop of government budget cuts, have argued against this notion, and questioned government accountability claims with the argument that, government accountability claims do not match government rhetoric in the quality area; Stensaker (1998) and Kogan (2005) on the other hand, have shown the critical role of governments in controlling and promoting quality through evaluation and accountability related measures (Stensaker 2007, p. 106).

Again, it is interesting to note that, the shifting of financial responsibilities of government to higher education institutions seems to create new dynamics in the distribution of authority among stakeholders. Though the role of the State seems to be forever present in the management of quality in higher education, higher institutions are assuming more autonomy as they move towards financial independence. They are developing the ability and the capacity to adopt New Public Management (NPM) strategies to ensure efficiency, and competitive advantage over resources in order to remain relevant globally. In response to this
strife for survival, the race for success is left to the fittest. Higher institutions are therefore forging more alliances with stakeholders who were hitherto passive players, giving them greater authority to participate in the governance process. For example, students are becoming very core and powerful in determining the financial fortunes of higher education institutions (Clark, 1983). The financial contribution of industry to academic research and their role as the sources of employment is earning them the space to indirectly influence changes in curriculum and direction of academic research. Thus, as the demand for accountability increase, stakeholders by virtue of their active participation and the provision of resources (financial, technical, etc.) become more empowered to play key roles in shaping the future of universities.

Though the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system is a potential tool for major transformation in the higher education sector, it is also clear from the above discussion that increasing stakeholder’s participation in the sector has further strengthened the demand for accountability orientation of quality assurance. Political pressure from government to ensure policy compliance, the industrial push for practical or applied knowledge development, students and parents quest for value for money, and increasing call for accountability, are indications of a combined force of financial, political, economic and social pressure (Zechlin, 2010) pushing the higher education institutions to go beyond the internal operations in order to meet the diverse expectations of its external stakeholders. In this context, the dilemma of higher institutions is striking a balance between the internal and external quality demands, and expectations of stakeholders in the quality assurance processes. This is a realistic concern at the center of quality assurance management processes. To this end, the quest for a balance between internal and external quality assurance may require that, there is flexibility in both internal and external quality assurance systems to ensure adaptability, coordination and integration.

3.1.3. Integration in Higher Education System: Work, Belief, Authority and Integration

Work requires division of labor, and the nature of division of labor requires coordination to make it meaningful in an organizational setting. In higher education, setting, work is fundamentally organized around professional field of study (disciplines) and in a bottom-heavy or loosely coupled manner (Clark, 1983; Weick, 1976). The loosely coupled nature of HE governance suggests that authority structure, which is born out of division of labor, is more likely to be horizontal in nature. Horizontal authority structure unlike bureaucratic
vertical structure will promote independent and weaken interdependended of the various production sectors (disciplines) of the higher education system. Thus, the faculty of science, education and languages although will be working under a unified institutional goal, what happen at each faculty is not dependent on the other. This suggest that to achieve integration under higher education governance structure, perhaps requires more efforts than the traditional business setting which is driven by a common purpose and process.

Organized around bottom-heavy and loosely coupled structures, work seems to be symbolically disintegrated under the higher education governance system. However, they are held together by beliefs, which serve as magnet that binds the different independent units or sectors of the higher education system together. The belief system of the academic profession, act as a universal protocol, which form the embodiment of the academic profession, thus shared by the different sectors or the disciplinary cultures of the academic profession. For example, in the knowledge production process, free and systematic enquiry, publication, application of intelligence, rationality, logical coherence, learning, commitment to scholarship and reliability of data are primary values that cut across every sector irrespective of the disciplinary differences. Beliefs thus, are the invisible magnets that bind the loosely coupled higher education system.

According to Mintzberg, (1979) every human activity (work) fundamentally depends on two opposing requirements; division of labor and coordination. Division of labor is formal mechanism for defining, organizing and distributing task in an organization (Clark, 1983; Mintzberg, 1979). Work arranged and organized around knowledge specialties in higher education systems is the foundation of the organizational structure, which forms the basis for task allocation, responsibilities and authority within the higher education institution (Greenberg, 2011). However, for these independent part of the governance structure to work together, requires coordination to harmonize processes to achieve set objectives.

The authority structure in higher education seems to be parallel in nature. The presence of designated authority and living authority (Clark, 1983, p. 107) in the higher education governance structure creates two complex independent authority structures that run side by side. While institution leaders by virtue of their administrative authority hold designated authority, the academic core by virtue of their professional or scholarly expertise, hold living authority. As a result, a mix of competing ideas, power struggle, battle for control and recognition has become a regular feature of governance of higher institutions. However,
these different authority structures could be linked together by symbolic unifying magnet, organization culture, which is rooted in the belief system (Clark 1983) of the organization. The belief system represents the aspirations of groups of people, thus has the capacity to bring together divers organizational forces to foster organizational integration. The commitment of the academic community to scholarship (knowledge generation and distribution) suggests the possibility of integrating process in governance when it is appropriately planned. In a similar fashion, integrated quality system could be conceptualized despite the seemingly diversity of the elementary components of the two quality assurance systems. (see also figure 1.1)

3.1.4. Integrated Approach to Quality Assurance

The idea of an integrated quality assurance system is not a new phenomenon. Integrate approach to quality assurance has been discussed as more appropriate strategy to achieve best quality outcomes (Harvey & Newton, 2004). Again, it is suggested in recent quality assurance studies on Ghana that, the integration of external and internal quality assurance systems is the best approach to achieve “desired quality” (Ayile, 2011, p. 96). This approach for example has been used in several quality evaluation processes in the field of higher education at both national and institutional levels across Europe. For instance, in analyzing the quality evaluation process among the Nordic countries, Frazer (1997) asserts that, both self-evaluation and external evaluation have been standard procedure in the national quality assurance processes among the Nordic countries in particular, and Europe in general. In a similar fashion, Stensaker (2000) argues that, among the Nordic countries, and Europe in general; national quality evaluation process over the years have focused on both securing and improving higher education (Stensaker, 2000).

It is suggested from the above discussion that quality assurance strategies work better by integrating the internal and external quality needs. While the internal quality assurance focus is mainly on enhancement, external quality assurance focuses on accountability, but with implied enhancement intent. Integrated quality assurance could thus be discussed in what the author refers to as Inter-dimensional approach and Intra-dimensional approach. These two-step approaches reflect the dynamic and interdependent relationship that could exist between external and internal quality assurance and how in practice, this relationship works. Intra-dimensional approach sees integrated quality assurance as purely localized relationship that only uses external quality requirement as vehicle to develop internal strategies. Inter-dimensional approach on the other hand, is the fusion of the internal quality and external
quality systems that signify a symbiotic relationship with the aim of balancing accountability and enhancement.

Though the idea of fostering a positive relationship between internal and external quality systems have been presented in various forms as ideal approach to effective quality assurance strategy, the question of how this integration process should be pursued, has not been adequately explored. Perhaps, this may be due to the bottom-heavy (Clark, 1983) nature of higher education governance structure and the potential divergence between internal and external quality assurance system, which poses a threat to integrated quality assurance strategies.

3.1.5. Dealing with fundamental challenges to integration of QA systems
The complex nature higher education governance system provides set of fundamental threats to the integrated approach to quality assurance. For example, task proliferation, multiplicity of beliefs system, interplay of different stakeholders interest, and the seemingly lack of “mutual influences” (Clark, 1983, p. 70), creates a complex interplay of different actors with different interest, views and approaches to quality assurance. Managing these conflicting interest, views and approaches, make the idea of integrating internal and external quality systems a daunting task if not impossible.

Additionally, the distribution of tasks which is organized under a parallel authority structure, coded in the academic values or disciplinary culture of the academic profession, creates situations that increase the complexities to comprehend the idea of integrated quality assurance system as compared to the traditional models of organizations. Furthermore, the apparent conflicting relationship between internal and external quality systems (see also figure 1.1) does not seem to present common ground for integration. While external quality systems usually, do not seek to interfere in the internal quality systems, they are hardly influenced by internal quality systems.

A close view of the above-mentioned challenges to integrated approach to quality assurance in higher education, suggests that, these challenges could be essentially rooted in the relationship between governance structure of the internal quality assurance system, governance structure of the higher education institutions, and how the two are related to the governance structure of the external quality assurance system. Thus, for higher education institutions to appropriately respond to the dynamics of their environment, these hurdles need
to be addressed in order to coordinate and align its operations and structures with other external governance structure. This is because fundamentally, the governance structure provides the mechanism for steering the quality assurance systems. It is therefore imperative that, sub systems (quality assurance system) within governance systems of higher institutions be properly coordinated and aligned with the governance system within which it operates.

**Conceptual Framework**

**3.2.0. Introduction**

Literature in organizational studies has it that the dynamics of organizational reforms rather becomes more complex as new frontiers of reforms are broken. Again, Brunsson & Olsen, (1993) have contended that the dynamic nature of the operational environment of organizations make organizational reforms a complex web with rather low capacity to provide solutions to the intended questions it seeks (Brunsson & Olsen, 1993). One reform leads to another; organizational reforms thus, reveal more question than providing solutions to problems it intended to address (Brunsson, 1993; Heller, 1995)

Globally, higher education reforms have become a subject of profound interest to many scholars. The idea that internal and external organization and system of governance of higher education affects performance (Maassen & Olsen, 2007), may have justified the politics of university reforms, and created competing dogmas when it comes to the functions of the university and how it should be structured and governed. The unending cycle of efforts for university reform perhaps could be supported by the aforementioned situation and explained by the view that, the impacts of university reforms have conflicting consequences for competing legitimate interest. “The impact of higher education reforms process invariably, affects the distribution of benefits, burden and life chances and creates losers and winners” (Olsen, 2007, p. 12).

Likewise, the idea of quality assurance has been viewed from different dimensions and expressed in different forms in academia, suggesting the complexity of the quality reform process. However, in view of the complex dynamics of the University as an organization, it is most unlikely to solely understand institutional quality assurance processes in isolation, or only by its environmental conditions. Also critical to the quality reform process, is the
understanding of the tensions and alignments between both internal and external quality assurance systems in the context of the adopted governance system.

Three major contributions to studying governance dynamics in higher educational institutions have been advanced by Burton Clark (1983), (Olsen, 1988, 2007) and van Vught (1989). Clark’s three dimensional approach to governance in higher education is represented as the famous coordination triangle (Clark, 1983) that link the state, the academic oligarchy and the market. He presents this as a continuous triangular relationship, with each end of the triangle representing an extreme way in which higher education could be governed. Van Vught’s two-dimensional model to governance in higher education suggests a state control and state supervision model (van Vught, 1989). He advances that the extent of state control or involvement in the regulation of higher education significantly differentiates the two models. Johan P. Olsen however suggests a four-dimensional model of higher education governance. According to Olsen (Olsen, 1988, 2007) higher education can either be steered through severing state, institutional, supermarket or the corporate pluralist governance models.

Though Olsen’s governance model was advanced to understand system level governance of higher education, it is adopted to understand the theoretical basis for analytical understanding of the dynamics between internal and external quality assurance systems. Olsen’s governance model among other things provides an extra dimension, which better reflect the roles, influences and the interactions of key actors within governance environment. This model thus, better represents the complex realities of higher education governance, and also, reflects modern thinking of global changing dynamics in higher education governance.

The relevance of Olsen’s model to this research is seen in the fact that quality values are intrinsic to the proper functioning of any governance system or model. The interpretation of quality could therefore be made and applied irrespective of the governance level though the dynamics could be different. Thus, Olsen’s theoretical framework is used in this research to conceptualize different idealistic perspectives of quality assurance models in order to explore the dynamics of the relationship between internal and external quality assurance. This research is therefore underpinned by three major assumptions:

1. Quality assurance is a steering instrument for governance of higher education institutions.
2. The co-existence of internal and external quality assurance creates tensions within higher education institutions.
3. Desired quality is achieved when both internal and external systems are aligned to the governance system within which they operate, and also, appropriately coordinated.

In order to operationalized and test these assumptions, which form the basis of the research questions, the following theoretical view is presented as the basis for developing analytical framework used to understand four different institutional quality assurance models based on Olsen’s governance model.

3.2.1. THE STATE MODEL: Instrument for national political agendas

From the state governance model perspective (Olsen, 2007), higher education institutions are seen as state-operated entity. Thus, the organizational structures, culture, beliefs and practices of the universities are a complete reflection of state policies that are enforced through stringent regulations and legislative instruments. The state governance model thus, considers higher education institutions as integrated part of politically structured social system designed to achieve specific national objective. This suggests that, the content of curricula, standards of academic operations, and other critical internal academic processes are own and controlled by the state. Similar to van Vught’s state control model (van Vught, 1989), the state thus, assumes unitary authority to control, direct and influence the governance process in higher education institutions.

By extension, the state governance model makes no distinction between public higher education institutions and other public institutions that are part of the state structure and are governed with the similar stringent rules and regulations of the state. The university under this model could therefore be seen as any government organization with a specific mandate within the context of the centralized governance structure. Consequently, members of the university community are considered as civil servants or permanent state employees under the guide of procedures.

Another dominant feature of the state governance model is the respect for bureaucratic order. Bureaucracy represents the hierarchy of formal structures of communication and processes with explicit delegation of authority to offices and positions, which are coordinated under codified processes (Clark, 1983). The bureaucratic structure of the state governance model suggests that, decision-making process is controlled by the state or its agency. Decisions are
thus, carried out in a top-down hierarchical mode, which focuses on how set goals are achieved (process) rather than the achievement of the goal itself.

The founding and funding roles of the state, grants her the legitimacy to control and coordinate the knowledge production processes. Control and coordination is achieved by using policy instruments to control organizational inputs (students, staffs and resources), which in most cases are linked to conditional funding and national budget. As a result, the university’s mission, aims, and development become dependent on the “shifting political priorities and funds more than scholarly dynamics” (Olsen, 2007, p. 31). Consequently, the state gains indirect control over the professional and technical lives of the universities and can make critical decision concerning curriculum, teaching and research. For example, the state may determine the type and content of program of study, admission criteria, staffing, and examination procedures. Unfortunately, these outcomes of the state governance model most often than not, runs parallel to some of the traditional values of the university as learning institution. This is because; state governance model strengthens the legitimacy and authority of established political systems rather than advancing the traditional principle of self-governance, academic freedom and free enquiry.

Under the state governance model, the state function either as the main or sole financier of the education system. Funding thus becomes a steering instrument and a mechanism for distribution of resources. By this function, the state uses budgetary controls to determine how, where, and on what to spend resources of the university. Unfortunately, in the light of strict accountability expectations of the state, state control of funding according to Dobbins et al. (2011), curtail institutional discretion to use funds for strategic needs or preferences in order to control the allocation of itemized budget for state-specific objectives (Dobbins et al., 2011). It is therefore argued that until universities become financially independent, strategic change in the universities under the state governance model could only be realized through changes in the political objectives of the democratically elected government. This view is explained by the fact that under the state model, constitutive regulations defines the institutions and their roles, competence, social and political relationships, and responsibilities (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007). Assessment of higher education is therefore based on political correctness which is usually expressed in accountability and compliance to set rules designed to achieve specific national objectives.
The relationship between state and the universities in the context of funding, could be explained by the resource dependency theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Originally theorized as management and organizational behavior concept, Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) argued that the behaviors of organizations are shaped by the availability of external resources upon which the organization relies for survival. Similarly, it is suggested that universities under the state governance model, is more likely to respond positively to the controls and directions of the state, which provides of critical organizational resources (Funding). A typical example of a state governance system according to Vught and Westerheijden (1994) was the French higher education system established during the nineteenth century that was characterized by intense struggle for autonomy by the academic core (Vught & Westerheijden, 1994).

One potential challenge of state governance model is that, the model and how it operates seems contradictory to the traditional ideals of the university- Humanistic Bildung, Science and Scholarship (Wissenschaft) and freedom (Einsamkeit) (Olsen, 2007; Anon, 1970). As evident in the European universities in the 19th centuries the State governance model has the potential to breed conflicts between the state and the academic core (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007). The clash between accountability requirements of state and autonomy and freedom of the academic core create tensions that could potentially affect good governance and quality of the knowledge production process. This is because; the state governance model in it pure form sees the academic staffs as mere civil servants who only contribution to academia is to support the skewed political agenda of the state and not for academic scholarship. University is seen more as a tool for national development than the light bearer of the intellectual fabric of society. Thus, the state governances approach could place restrictions on the intellectual capacities of both academic staffs and students to explore their potentials outside the defined national educational context. Though the governance process under the state model is considered to be bureaucratic and characterized by slow and inefficient decision-making processes, as long as procedures are complied with, satisfaction is achieved and quality is thus, defined.

From the above discussion, one can safely infer that the state model is built on the assumption that, strict compliance to predetermine process all other things being equal, will result in the achievement of a corresponding predetermined goal. Processes are considered important as a means to an end. A quality assurance system designed to function in this governance mode should therefore have a well-defined goal with specific predefined processes to achieve
specific goals. In this quality assurance model, there is commitment to the process rather than the outcome of set goals. Thus, in the context of this study, the ability of the quality assurance system to independently enforce its regulations to ensure compliance and accountability to set standards are of critical essence in developing an ideal internal and external quality assurance system.

3.2.2. INSTITUTIONAL MODEL: A rule-governed community of scholars

The institutional governance model (Olsen, 2007) is best illustrated by the relationship between state and the Humboldtian Universities in the 19th centuries. Built on the ideals of Science and Scholarship (Wissenchaft), Freedom (Einsamkeit) and Humanistic Bildung (Anon, 1970; Olsen, 2007), Humboldtian ideals of university suggest that, the ultimate goal of science and scholarship is attainable as long as academic freedom is guaranteed. Hence, the corporate identity of the University depends on unobstructed commitment to learning and scholarship, and is driven by the pursuit of academic excellence, knowledge and the development of individual’s talents and natural abilities to serve society.

The institutional model could be seen as a governance model fundamentally designed to protect the academic values and traditions of the universities against the immediate circumstances, internal or external of the operating environment. It is thus argued that, the objective of the institutional model is to promote academic scholarship through controlling, regulating and enhancing the content of internal academic processes (teaching, learning and research). Hence, free and systematic enquiry, application of intelligence, publication, rationality, logical coherence, learning and commitment to scholarship remains core values around which the corporate image, identity and culture of the university are developed. Under this model, education is seen as public good, which should be made available to all who need it.

The institutional model usually functions as a pact between the state and the academic community. The nature of this relationship determines the autonomy structure and the strategic direction of the university. In institutional governance model, the state steers from distance (Jongbloed, 1999, p.144) by providing the framework that drives the mission of the University whilst academia takes control of the internal process of the University. Unlike the bureaucratic organizational structure of the state governance model, the institutional model is
built on the collegiate or the chair system (Clark, 1983). The chair system is built on horizontal collegial authority structure, which grants professorial chair the substantive autonomy to regulate the internal institutional processes without intervention of the state. Thus, contrary to the provisions of the state model, the higher education institutions have the capacity for example, to freely determine admission criteria, decide the type of program to run and it content, and also defined their own strategic mission. Coordination is achieved through agreed conventions rather than stringent codified regulations of the state. Consequently, the academic core in a bottom-up decision-making structure gain absolute control over the content of the academic process. In other words, academic goals, programs, the research profile and curriculum are delegated to the level of the universities and/or faculties (Dobbins et el., 2011). The academic oligarchy or the institutional governance model thus, exhibits weak university management, strong self –regulation, and collegial control by the professoriate chair, especially with regard to internal academic work (teaching, learning and research).

Though the state still remains the major source of funding, funding mechanisms under the institutional model is generally driven by self-controlled budget that grants the Professoriate Chair greater discretion over allocation of resource. University budget are not integrated with national budget. The Universities have their own budget, which is to be financed, by the state. Institutional budgeting thus, centered on negotiation between the state and the universities rather than imposition from the state. Though greater financial discretion is allowed under this model, the financial dependency on the state creates conditions necessary for the state to use financial regulations to constrain self–government of the chair system. However, it could be noted that with a collective effort, the chair system has the ability to curtailed state interference due to their control of the content of the academic process.

Under this model, change in higher education according to Gornitzka and Maassen (2000) is a product of historical processes and evolution rather than reform a process (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2000). Thus, change is slow but effective when targeted at rules, culture and beliefs of the academic profession rather than administrative or managerial influence. The criteria for assessment are the effects of the pedagogical process on student learning outcome, individual behavior, societal norms and culture. In terms of Van Vught’s (1989) two dimensional governance models, the institutional model could be associated with the state supervision model. An example of the institutional governance model is the British higher education governance system in the nineteenth century that was characterize by self-governed
community of scholars.

Potentially, the efficiency of the institutional governance model could be affected by the structure of the chair system. The chair system promotes collegiate authority and makes it easy for academics to protect and promote their interest in the respective field of study and control, rather than pursue the collective interest of the university. This situation makes the governance system seem rather segmented and could potentially, creates huge challenges for coordination and integration of knowledge production processes. Consequently, the system breeds disagreement, segmented controlled processes, and resistance to change that could deepen institutional bureaucracy.

As such, the idea of free access to knowledge could create higher and uncontrolled participation in higher education, and cause deterioration in the teaching and learning processes, which will eventually affect the quality of the entire knowledge production process and output. Free enquiry connotes unrestricted access to knowledge for all who qualify. However, in the era of massification and reduction in government funding for higher education, unregulated access to knowledge could in itself, compromise the quality of knowledge and knowledge production processes. Overcrowding, high student-teacher- ratio could be a potential spin-off problem, which could compromise the quality of free scholarly enquiry.

Another potential challenge of the academic approach to higher education governance is whether academic freedom, which forms one of its central pillars, could be guaranteed in the wake of reducing government funding and the drive towards entrepreneurial university (Clark, 1994a). Declining financial role of the state create the need for alternative funding. This need has necessitated the alliance of new partnerships between the universities, industry and society at large. This new partnership suggests an inclination towards the stronger marketing model where the authority and the autonomy of the academic core could be challenged. Consequently, it is suggested that, a quality assurance system designed under this model should at least focus on technical difficulties that inhibit the pursuit of pure and free search for knowledge.

3.2.3. SUPER MARKET MODEL: Service enterprise embedded in competitive market
The supermarket governance model is fundamentally driven by the notion that university functions more efficiently when it operates as a business unit. The university under this
governance model is considered as a service enterprise where knowledge is produced, packaged and offered to the competitive service market for sale. Consequently, focus of the knowledge production process shifts from knowledge acquisition to knowledge utilization and with greater emphasis on performance, efficiency and customer service. Universities thus, actively engaged in the consumer market to compete for students, the academic job market to attract best staff and in the institutional market to build reputation for sustainable growth (Clark 2004a).

Unlike the institutional and the state model, the supermarket model consider access to knowledge as a private good that should be available for the privilege few who can afford it. There is therefore a direct relationship between services and the demand for those services. Criteria for assessment in this model are “efficiency, economy, flexibility and survival” (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2000, p. 272). In essence, the focus of this model is attaining optimum operational performance from established systems, in other to minimize cost and maximization profit. To enhance profit maximization, it is expected that established systems could swiftly, timely and adequately respond to change dynamics of it operating environment to guarantee continuous transformation.

Central to this economic orientation of the supermarket governance model is the role of customers (students and employers). Students’ financial contributions are the fundamental to the financial wellbeing of the University. Students’ control the most critical organizational resources (financial), and their capacity to “vote by their feet” (Clark, 1983, p. 163) makes them powerful and inalienable agents of change, critical to the survival of the University. Another group of customers are the industry who serve as the source of employment for the graduates and also double as consumers of knowledge. The job placement role of industry justifies the profit-making notion of the super market governance model. Students are willing to invest in their education with the hope reaping the benefit in the job market. Thus, students are prepared for specific need of the job market. As critical primary stakeholders, the role of students and industry have direct influence on changes in academic program, content or structure to reflect the current demands of the market. The direct relationship between demand and supply of graduate suggests a stronger partnership between the student, industry and educational institutions, which seem to be interdependent.

For the reasons of social legitimacy and survival (Stensaker & Norgård, 2001) in the competitive market, universities under this model are expected to be highly flexible to swiftly
adopt themselves to continuous change in their environment (Navarro & Gallardo, 2003). Structural flexibility provides managers the capacity to make deliberate choices favorable to their cause in response to change dynamics of a specific market (consumer market, reputational market, financial market or the labor market) condition. Also, critical to the survival and competitive advantage of the University, is the production, preservation and utilization of information and knowledge. Information and knowledge of the market serve as a private strategic asset, which when properly developed and managed, creates opportunities and advantages to capture and control untapped resources in the market. For example, with appropriate information, strategic decisions on which program to run, area of research to pursue, pricing, and other marketing indicators such as quantity and quality could be appropriately determined in the competitive market.

Another characteristic of the super market model is the active use of diversified funding system. Alternative funding from school fees, donation, sale proceeds, patents, and other market sources, are usually distributed through output-based funding models such as performance-based or contract funding. Unlike input-based funding which is argued to be bureaucratic and capable to destroy strategic intent, (Nkrumah-Young & Powell, 2008) output-based funding model allow the universities to strategically align financial governance to intended outcome of it operations. It is thus required that the financial governance strategy of universities should be proactive and flexible to respond to the change dynamics of the working environment in order to be competitive and functional.

Again, since the Funding under the supermarket model is mainly built on diversify income from private sources, universities operating under the super market governance model are more independent, and this strengthens their steering capacity. This is because unlike the state or the institutional model, the super market governance model receives no direct government financial support, and it’s relatively able to win itself from direct government control and interventions. However, it is imperative to note that the financial independence of the Universities does not suggest the absence of state in the market. The State through it agencies assumed gatekeeper role of the market by using quasi-marketing instruments such as tax incentive and subsidies to stimulate competition while ensuring quality, equity, transparency and accountability (Ferlie et al. 2008). In certain cases, however, other regulative policies such as price ceiling and external accreditation mechanism could be used to protect the market and students from exploitation, and also to assure quality of service and performance.
In effect, state agencies and universities become deliberate designers of mutual adjustment, both seeking to define the market (Clark, 2004a, p. 363). In this State-University relationship, the state control the regulatory framework for the market, whilst the University, though may be constrained by the market forces, could strategically positioned themselves to manipulate the market to their advantage.

The absence of state direct financial support and the profit making orientation of the super marketing governance model, affirms the view that the university under the marketing model is “governed and changed by their sovereign customers” (Olsen, 2007, p. 32). A quality assurance system designed for this model of governance should therefore focus on satisfying the perceived needs and interest of customers (students and industry). Definition of what constitute quality thus remains a value judgment of students, industry and other independent actors whose actions and inactions have direct bearing on the financial fortune or any other private gains to the universities. Thus, an ideal quality assurance system under this governance model should focus on strategies to improve on the conditions that can promote the economic returns of the institutions. In this regard, issues of student’s enrollment, institutional image, branding, ranking and strong partnership with industry becomes some of the critical components of this system.

### 3.2.4. CORPORATE-PLURARIST: Internal representative democracy

Changing external environment in higher education has significantly expanded the size and complexity of higher education governance, and places the universities under pressure to respond to multiple demands of increasingly vocal, influential and divers stakeholders (de Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009). These changes have undoubtedly influenced the management and governance processes of the universities and created conditions necessary to adapt governance model that allow strategic actors to be actively engaged in a complex process of balancing competing interest in pursuit of single strategic mission of the Universities. The corporate pluralist governance model is predicated on this idea, and built on the concept of representative governance (democracy).

The concept of democracy, though debatable, has apparently become the order of modern political governance. In higher education the idea of democratic governance model represents the recognition that the University functions not only as an education institution, but also as a political institution with vested interest and various stakeholders. Hence, it is argued that the democratic governance model is centered on internal representative governance with the
intent to balance representation and participation. That is, how key constituencies in the University community are represented and integrated to actively participate in the governing process of the University.

According to de Boer and Stensaker (2007), the idea of representative governance (democracy) could be conceptualized on three fundamental pillars. According to the authors, the interest groups in the various constituencies of the University should have the right to elect eligible candidates to represent their interest. Secondly, the elected representative should have their authority legitimized to guarantee their formal participation. Finally, decision-making process should not be centralized but defused, ideally in a way to ensure balance of power (de Boer & Stensaker, 2007, p. 100). These three requirements bring to light two important ideals of representative democracy, *fair representation* and *active participation*. It is thus argued that, for representative democratic system to effectively function, it may not be enough to have a representation but a fair one. Again, it may also not be enough to participate but an active participation that keeps power or authority structure balanced.

Unlike the state model where state assumed a unitary authority to influence and control the governance process, the corporatist model views the university as an institution where vested interest of stakeholders (government, students’ groups, staff unions, alumni, industry, etc.) are organize and managed to further the cause of the University. However, like the bureaucratic state model, procedural and authority rules are significantly valued because they represent the formal organizational arrangement within which the authority of the individual constituencies of the University is distributed.

Another notable characteristic of the corporatist governance model is that the wellbeing of the university as an organization is seen under the microscope of the wellbeing of all other individual groups or constituencies within the university. This situation makes negotiation and consensus building a very critical governance instrument. Governance is organized around boards, councils and committees of interest groups of the university community. Change is attained through diplomacy rather than an assertion of one’s authority. Member’s capacity to cause change most often than not, depends on their ability to negotiate, build consensus and alliance with other organized groups of the University community. Autonomy thus, is negotiated.
The corporatist governance model seems to be founded on the notion that representative democracy has an intrinsic value that contributes to individual worth, self-belonging, and could positively influences organizational performance. By extension, representative democracy could ensure good citizenship, reduce resistance, and promote acceptability and support for institutional policies and strategies. However, in practice, this idea could be self-defeating in the sense that, the corporatist model in the context of developing democracies, may promote representation and not necessarily participation. The organizational tension dynamics (Middlehurst, 1992) created by unequal power structure and the apparent lack of proportional representation weakens the capacity of some constituents to be effective. In such situations, power imbalance become dominant, and the ideals of the representative governance are sacrificed for political expediency.

Though respective constituencies of the university community will be given the opportunity to participate in the governance process, their relevance could not be felt because the idea of democratic university at this point, has become a symbolic value than reality (de Boer & Stensaker, 2007, p. 113). The minority constituencies (usually students and non-academic groups) are denied fair representation that cripple their capacity to negotiate, build winnable alliance and consensus to contest policy decisions and also, promote their interest. This is because; by natural designed the academic constituencies, which share common interest, are usually the dominant group. The disproportionate distribution of membership affects the voting right and consequently, the capacity of the minority groups to be effective. Hence, the weak and smaller constituencies will have their say but the strong and powerful academic groups will always have their way. Change is organized around changes in power dynamics, alliances and interest.

Another challenging issue concerning the corporatist model is the way decisions are made. As argued by Greenwood (2011) “Organizational decisions are influenced by those who bring to the decision process their interpretation of priorities and preferable outcomes” (Greenwood et. al., 2011, p. 342). Decision-making based on majority voting thus, reflects the understanding and interest of the majority group and not necessarily the interest of the university. Thus, there is the challenge of guaranteeing the correctness of the majority decision. Decision making process especially in a loosely coupled governance system such as the University is more likely to be driven by the member’s desire to protect the vested interest of their respective constituencies rather than collective interest of the University. Thus, the
representative democracy, contrary to popular assumptions of promoting participation and stability, could still lead to power struggle and battle for influence and control, which could potentially create tensions and resistance in the governance structure of the Universities. This position perhaps is made clearer when de Boer and Stensaker (2007) argues that “the opening up of the governance structure of the university to others other than professors exposed university conflict to a greater extent than before” (de Boer & Stensaker, 2007, p. 114).

Again, the decision-making structure under this model, which is designed to reflect the interest of internal constituencies, may not be swift and flexible enough to respond timely and adequately to external changes to satisfy the demands of the society. Internal power struggle and tensions may delay the decision-making process. A quality assurance system designed after the democratic governance model should therefore be centered on balancing formal representation and participation. That is, how the quality assurance process is representative of the various constituencies of the university community, and how the representations of these constituencies are in practice effective (participatory). The dynamics of quality assurance system in this governance model should also focus on effectiveness of the formal arrangement and organization of the quality assurance process, which reflects and represent the different constituencies of the university community.

*Figure 2.3.1: Summary of Theoretical Representation of Olsen’s Governance Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTIONAL-Academic Quality Assurance System</th>
<th>STATE- Accreditation System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Knowledge Production and Distribution</td>
<td>National Agenda- National Growth and Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus: Qualification of academic staff, admission requirement, teacher-student ratio, curriculum etc.</td>
<td>Focus: Processes and procedures. Hierarchical governance structure, absolute power barriers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORPORATIST-Democratic Quality Assurance System</th>
<th>SUPER MARKET- Marketing Quality Assurance System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction of Stakeholders’ Interest</td>
<td>Quality of Output (Students) and Industrial relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus: Integrated quality assurance approach- How balanced is the stakeholders’ representation and participation. Equity of power distribution and stakeholder rights</td>
<td>Focus: Issues of Skills of graduates and employability, relationships between academia and employers, Marketization of HE, Education as private good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s construct
3.3. Reflection on the theoretical foundation of the study

One quick observation of the above analysis is that, Olsen draws clear distinctions between the different governance models in its strictest sense based on authority and organizational structure, which demonstrates the power dynamics and the control over critical organizational resources; mechanism of change; and the strategy for evaluation. Comparing to Clark’s triangle of coordination (Clark, 1983, p. 143) Olsen’s governance model represents the extreme corners of Clark’s triangle of coordination where power and control is absolute. Also, it could be observed that university governance could be steered either by internal forces or actors internal within the university governance set up as in the case of the Institutional and the Corporatist governance model where by design, authority resides in academics and partners respectively or by external actors as in the case of State and Marketing governance model where the State and market forces are main agents of change.

Another observation is that, the dynamics of these ideal governance models as presented by Olsen revolve round the role of the state in higher education. The state plays a central role in university governance either directly as exemplified by the State model or indirectly by providing structures and policies within which other governance models function. The role of the state in higher education governance is a weaving thread that creates links between the various governance models and makes it possible for their coexistence. Thus, the influence of the state could be seen in the Institutional, Corporatist and even the Marking model where the governance structure, philosophy and operations are direct opposite to that of the state. Consequently, it is argued that, viewing university governance in it strictest form as presented by Olsen in practice may be challenging, as the exclusivity of these models may not be guaranteed.

Though these models have different structures and path for achieving strategic organizational goals, merging different aspects of the various governance models in a logical and consistent way as presented in the hybrid model (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2000) could be a more practical approach to understand the dynamics of university governance. Again, though authors like Dill (1992) have argued for the distinctiveness of higher education governance models and cautioned against the general tendency to blur the distinct governing models into a collection of integrating mechanisms (Dill 1992, p. 1327), allowing more diversity in university governance where the academic core could still play active roles is essential in ensuring that
universities appropriately respond to institutional complexities in order to satisfy the diverse interest of multiple actors.

One thing that comes to mind when we talk about the hybrid governance model is the idea of coordination and awareness, which inherently, are fundamental to integration. As described by Strauss, (1985) and Schmidt, (1994) coordination involves “meshing, allocating, relating and scheduling of activities, actors and resources with respect to each other” (Wasson et al., 2000). Thus, the ability to logically engineer the coexistence of these governance models requires a deliberate effort to define, organize and synchronize different elements of governance forms to achieve specific purpose. This also, it requires awareness information. Awareness is defined as “an understanding of activities of others, which provides the context of your own activity” (Dourish & Bellotti, 1992, p. 1). Thus, in integrating these governance models, a perfect understanding of how the respective governance models work could be critical to maximize task interdependence, enhance coordination and make the integration process a workable approach.

In summary, one could argue from the above analysis on the Olsen’s governance model that, the development of steering mechanism in universities has been historical, and have been pushed forward by a more obvious and less controversial factors which are rooted in political, ideological, economic, scientific and demographic changes over the years. From the Humboldtian times to date, higher education governance seems to reflect the change dynamics of its operating environment, which has set university governance on a path of continuous revolution into the unknown. It is therefore onerous of managers of our time to identify themselves with the past and embrace the ever-changing dynamics of university governance and perhaps, avail themselves for the next phase of the governance revolution.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.0. Chapter Introduction
In this chapter, a step-by-step process of selecting the methodology that was used to answer the research questions in order to achieve the research objectives is conducted. Also in this chapter, the research methodology is reviewed and justification offered at every phase of the research process why particular research strategy, approach and design, as well as data collection methods and analysis were chosen. In addition to providing the philosophical basis of the research, ethical considerations and issues of validity and reliability, this chapter also presents the analytical framework for the study, which forms the basis of data analysis and interpretation.

4.1: Analytical framework
In other to understand the relationship between internal and external quality assurance system and how they work within the context institutional and system governance structures respectively, the following indicator will be used as benchmarks to identify and distinguish an ideal quality assurance system within the various governance models as presented in chapter three. The framework is presented on the basis of the hypothetical assumptions made, the research questions, reviews literature and the theoretical foundation of the research. Consequently, this analytical framework forms the instrument for data analysis and interpretation, and the basis for drawing logical conclusions from findings of the research.

The model is presented in a table form with two headings representing the horizontal and vertical axis. The vertical axis presents the four ideal quality assurance models which reflects Olsen’s four governance models (State, Institutional, Super Market, and Cooperate Pluralist). This is marched with selected indicator representing the governance characteristics of the four ideal quality assurance models. These are; (i) Primary objective of the QA system (ii) Organizational structure of the QA system (iii) Decision-making process of the QA system (iv) Control and evaluation process and (v) Funding mechanism of the QA system. The two axes together provide the basis of understanding the nature of the four ideal QA models within the context of specific governance model as presented by Olsen (2007). The analytical framework thus, presents different regulatory models for quality assurance.
Figure 3.4.1: Different Regulatory Models of Quality Assurance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QA Models and Governance Dynamics</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Primary Objective</th>
<th>Organizational Structure</th>
<th>Decision-Making Process</th>
<th>Control and Evaluation Process</th>
<th>Funding Mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State QA Model</td>
<td>Quality academic process</td>
<td>Quality bureaucratic administrative process</td>
<td>Controlled by external quality assurance agency</td>
<td>Quality of accreditation process</td>
<td>Quality of budgeting process controlled by State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional QA Model</td>
<td>Quality academic standards &amp; learning outcome</td>
<td>Quality collegiate self-governance</td>
<td>Control by academically driven IQA Unit (Faculty)</td>
<td>Quality of peer review process</td>
<td>Quality of budget negotiation between the academics and state.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Market QA Model</td>
<td>Quality service to the consumer market</td>
<td>Flexibility and responsiveness of the quality assurance process</td>
<td>Controlled by administratively driven IQA Unit (Management)</td>
<td>Quality of reputation, prestige and cooperation with stakeholders. (Students &amp; Industry)</td>
<td>Quality of diversified and sustainable funding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate Pluralist QA Model</td>
<td>Satisfy Stakeholders interest</td>
<td>Quality democratic governance</td>
<td>Controlled by administratively driven IQA Unit (Trustees)</td>
<td>Quality balance between representation and participation</td>
<td>Quality of budget negotiation process by board of trustees.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Construct based on Olsen (2007) governance model

4.2. Philosophical Background of Research

Research philosophy according to Bryman and Bell (2015) refers to the primary view according to beliefs of the researcher that aids in developing knowledge and its’ nature. That is to say, whether a researcher could be seen as positivist, interpretivist, realist or pragmatist depends on the ontological, epistemological and axiological orientation of the researcher that connects researchers' perspective be it research design, tools for data collection or data analysis techniques adopted in the research (Seth, 2014). While the researcher agrees with Bryman (2012) that connection between research philosophy and research methods are not absolute (Bryman, 2012, p. 618-619), it is the researchers view that, philosophical orientation
of the researcher is critical to provide clearness of study and also aids the researcher to identify appropriate design that will yield desirable outcome. Research philosophy thus, forms a fundamental guide to the researcher’s judgment concerning the role of value in the research, the nature of reality, and processes of obtaining what constitute acceptable knowledge in the field of discipline.

This research is hugely influenced by constructivist ontological perspective that project reality as subjective phenomenon that is socially constructed through social interactions. Consequently, the research is built on interpretivist epistemological foundation. According to interpretivist research traditions, human experiences could be understood by studying how people construct, interpret and view reality from their own perspective. Consequently, it is suggested by this research that, understanding of the processes of internal quality assurance at UG in relation to the operations of the external quality assurance system of NAB, could be constructed from the lived experiences of managers and other key actors involved in internal quality assurance processes. Lived experiences of actors in the quality assurance processes could provide understanding to the perceived tensions and alignments between internal and external quality assurance systems, and the possible effects on their integration.

According to Bryman (2012), there is lack of objectivity in the interpretivist research tradition as compared to the positivist tradition, and this undermines interpretivism. However, it is argued that Interpretivist methodology employed to collect data via interviews, provides real-time opportunity for the researcher to engage respondents in deeper and critical investigation that allows processes to be well understood, analyzed and interpreted for better understanding of social phenomenon. It is therefore suggested that, allowing researcher to engage members of social groups to interpret the world around them is critical in creating meaning and understanding especially in social research where meaning is not inherent in but constructed.

Consequently, it is further argued that, judgment on the objectivity of research could not be only base on the epistemological orientation of the researcher as suggested by critics of interpretivism, but significantly, by the researcher’s commitment to ethical rules governing the entire research process. This is because; the intrinsic human centered nature of research makes it difficult if not impossible to assume absolute objectivity as long as interpretation of data cannot be avoided in social research. Lack of objectivity in social research thus, could not be exclusive to interpretivist research tradition as long as one cannot entirely separate the researcher from the research. Rather, violation of ethical rules regarding a particular research,
Regardless of the epistemological orientation of the researcher, (positivism or interpretivist), could affect the objectivity of the research outcome.

4.3. Research design

Research design has been defined as the “framework for the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2012, p. 46). Research design thus, constitutes the instrument that guides the researcher in determining how to answer the research question or questions. Be it experimental research design, cross-sectional/survey, comparative study or case study, the choice of research design according to Yin (2013), depends on the research questions posed, the extent of control investigator has over actual behavior of events, and the experience of the researcher (Yin, 2003). In a similar fashion, Patton (2015) has argued that research design could be constrained by “availability of resources, time, and the complexity of the real world that do not yield easily to your design parameters” (Patton, 2015, p. 244). It is therefore argued that, the choice of research design should satisfy both the technical requirements of the research as well as potential practical challenges on the field.

In view of this, critical steps were taking to ensure that this study meet the technical and the practical expectation of the research design chosen for the research. Technically, since this research has been primarily focused on conducting in-depth study on the internal quality assurance process at the University of Ghana in relation to the external quality assurance process of NAB, single case study design was considered more appropriate to provide detailed and factual analysis of patterns in data for the study. Using semi-structured interviews as the main instrument for data collection, it was possible to explore both facts and critical views of respondents to enrich our understanding of the research topic. As such, potential practical field challenges such as time constraint, proximity, easy access to data, and the need for information-rich sample were considered for the choice of the case for the study.

Aside being the premier and a model University with possible deep history in quality assurance, the University of Ghana was also selected as a case for the study due to it closeness to NAB (about 5 minute’ drive). Within the limited time for the data collection, it was important that other institutions related to the research ware kept close to facilitate easy access. Also, to facilitate easy access to information, the University of Ghana was selected as a case partly due to researcher’s affiliation to the institution. The researcher’s alumnus status was considered as strategic advantage to gain access to former professors through them.
certain interview appointments were secured at a very short notice especially, when there was the need for replacement.

Conscious of different perspectives and definition for what constitute a case (Patton, 2015, p. 259-260), a case in the context of this research has been defined as an empirical unit bounded by time and place. This research thus, was designed to use the University of Ghana as test case to conduct an in-death study on the internal quality assurance process and how it relates to the external quality assurance process of NAB. Hence, single case study was chosen as most plausible and appropriate to describe and explain how internal and external quality assurance operate and relate in order to understand the possible tensions and alignments between them.

Whilst the researcher admits contemplating using comparative research design to conduct this study, the idea was rejected on the basis that, he was unable to establish the kind of relationship that existed between internal and external quality assurance systems prior to the research. Hence, proceeding with comparative study would have amounted to making unscientific conclusion that there is a “contrasting relationship” (Bryman, 2012, p. 72). Aside, comparative study would have potentially derailed the intent of the research to conduct detailed study on this topic. This is because the focus of the research was not to compare similarities and differences between internal and external quality assurance but among other things, to determine the kind of relationship and its effects on integration of the two quality assurance systems. Similarly, though multiple case studies could have offered the needed in-depth study on comparison basis, resources constraint (time and funds) made it unsuitable for this study at this time.

4.3.1. Selection of Case for the Study
Case selection is very central to qualitative research in the sense that unlike quantitative research, which usually uses large sample, qualitative research uses relatively small sample which suggest that selected case or cases should be “information-rich” (Patton, 2015, p. 264) to provide substantial evidence adequate to answer questions being investigated. Aside the technical and practical considerations enumerated in the preceding section, the case for this study was selected based on three criteria. Firstly, the institution should be a public university. Secondly, it must have a functioning IQA unit, and lastly, it must not be newly established so that the institution’s relationship with other external actors could be established. University of
Ghana, being the oldest and the premier University in Ghana was considered ideal to be selected for the study for the above reasons.

4.3.2. Sampling

Time, resource and other research constraints make it difficult if not impossible to conduct research based on the whole population. That is why sampling in research is very important. Sampling could be defined as the process of selecting a part of the population from which inferences are made based on evidence from the sample. Generally, sampling could either be probabilistic, which is usually aligned to quantitative research or non-probability usually, aligned to qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). Though non-probability sampling techniques such as quota and purposive sampling are criticized for the tendency of making the research process bias because it is not objective (Saunders et al, 2012), it is the best option for qualitative research especially Case study where enquiry is focused on in-depth studies based on relatively small sample size. Non-probability sampling allows you to select relevant and information rich samples so that data errors could be minimized.

In the light of the above observation, purposive sampling technique was deemed appropriate and therefore chosen for this research since generalization was not the focus of the research. Again purposive sampling was used to ensure appropriateness of the sample relative to the research question and the objective of the research. Consequently, interview respondents were selected from principal officers, Unit heads of selected Colleges and Departments as well as managers of the internal quality assurance systems of the University of Ghana. Sampling was done based on two criteria. First, respondents should have senior level management or administrative experience. Second, respondents should have considerable knowledge about the quality assurance processes of the University of Ghana. In total, nine (9) respondents were purposively selected and interviewed from the University of Ghana. It should be also mentioned that, though the University of Ghana was the case for the study, two senior officials from NAB were also interviewed to provide understanding of the work of NAB. This was done to develop the context for data analysis, which provided the basis for analyzing the relationship (tensions and alignments) between the internal and external quality assurance systems.
4.4. Research Approach

Saunders et al., (2012) refers to research approach as the way of thinking that researcher employs in order to assist in finding solution to the research problem. According to the authors, there are two major types of research approach based on either inductive or deduction research approaches. This research used theories in governance as a vehicle to explore the relationship between internal and external quality assurance systems and their potential consequences on integration. The research thus, built on three theoretical assumptions stated in chapter three. The research though qualitative in nature is theoretically driven thus, deductively inclined. By deductive research approach, this research used field data to verify the hypothetical assumptions made in chapter three which was the basis for making presumptions from the findings in reference to the adopted theory in chapter four. Though deductive in nature the sample size was not representative enough to generalize the findings especially in the context of the quality assurance systems in Ghana. However, it is the strong view of the researcher that knowledge formed from this research could present an empirical source for future studies for a profound understanding of the topic, and greater impact on academia in the near future.

4.5. Research Strategies

Research strategy has been defined as “the general orientation to the conduct of social research” (Bryman, 2012, p. 35). Theoretically, qualitative and quantitative methods have been identified as two main strategies for research. While they seem to complement each other, they significantly differ in terms of data collection, analysis and interpretation methods, as well as procedures for reaching conclusions. Quantitative research strategy employs data collection tools like questionnaires to assemble data that are mainly numeric, analyze them using statistical tools. Qualitative research strategy on the other hand, mostly use non-quantitative techniques like interviews and focus groups as a way to collect data, analyze data by considering ideas and patterns that surface, and use words rather than figures to present outcome (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015; Bryman, 2012).

Although these distinctions reveal a potential opposing relationship between the two research strategies, they are however not mutually exclusive. The research strategies could be combined to design a mixed method research strategy. Mixed method has been defined as an integration of qualitative and quantitative research methods within a single study (Bryman, 2012, p. 628). The fundamental assumption underlining this approach is that the strengths of
the two strategies will offset and complement the weakness for better results. Though this assumption has been challenged by scholar like J.K. Smith (1983 in Bryman 2012), mixed methods is highly recommended (Bryman, 2012). However, due to limited time for data collection, and the inability to guarantee the response rate of quantitative data (survey) within that short time, the researcher found mixed methods unfit for this study. With the intention of understanding how respondents perceive, construct and interpret the internal quality assurance processes at the University of Ghana, in view of the external quality assurance requirements, qualitative research strategy was dimmed appropriate to investigate this research topic through the lived experiences of respondents. Though qualitative research strategy has been criticized for lack of objectivity, it is flexible (Bryman, 2012). Flexibility presents to the researcher the opportunity to conduct open and detailed study of lived experiences of people through their own perspective by paying attention to how they describe and express meaning in specific social context. Qualitative research thus, put the research into contextual perspective that enhances meaning, understanding and interpretation of data.

4.6. Research method

Research method is defined as the technique or specific instrument used to collect data for analysis and interpretation (Bryman, 2012). In this research, multiple data collection approach (data triangulation) was adopted to use both interviews and document analysis to enhance the data collection process and also improve data integrity. Semi-structured other than structured or unstructured interviews (Bryman, 2012) was used to ensure control but less restriction on participant’s responses in order to get the needed details and also avoid bias. Hence, the interview was based on a mix of open-ended and closed questions, which was intended to pursue the fact and also seek the opinion of respondents. Document analysis was done from two different sets of data; Official policy document on quality assurance from both UG and NAB and other supplementary administrative documents. The decision to triangulate data was based on experts’ view that different sources will complement each other and fill in the information gaps that might exist between the two data sources (Bryman, 2012; Patton 2015).

4.6.1. Interview Process

Qualitative interviews were conducted in Ghana between January 26 and February 23 2015. The time frame for the interviews was strategically chosen to coincide with early part of the second semester where presumably, there is lesser workload on potential respondents. This was done to enhance the researcher’s chances of getting interview appointment from potential
interviewees and also have sufficient time to explore the interview with these respondents who on a normal working day are very busy. In all nine (9) respondents from UG were interviewed as primary respondents for the research and two (2) other respondents from the NAB. Respondents form NAB only provided the context and the basis to analysis the relationship between the internal and external quality assurance processes. Thus, though this research is a single case study of the University of Ghana, it was necessary that the external quality assurance process was taken into account.

The interviews were face-to-face verbal interactions between the researcher and the respondents in which the former led, controlled and directed the conversation to pursue answers to specific topics in relation to the research questions. The purposive nature of the sampling process meant, potential respondents were pre-determined, categorized into specific units that were relevant to the research question. This was done to ensure that respondents bring different perspectives that will adequately respond to the research objective. Also, identified respondents were served with letters describing the nature of the study and their role. Interview appointments were then booked with those who indicated their availability and their willingness to participate in the study. Furthermore, before questions were asked, respondents were briefed about the objective of the research in order to put the interview discussion in to proper perspective. Respondents were then reminded of their rights to refuse questions that might compromise their personality or office. They were also assured of confidentiality of information provided and also, appropriate usage of the data collected. Finally, consent to record the interview was sought and those who allowed for audio recording were recorded. All eleven respondents except one accepted to be recorded.

The interviews were carefully guided by the use of interview guide. The interview guide ensured among other things that, respondents were asked similar questions in the context of respective involvement in the internal and external quality assurance processes. In other to ensure clarity in response, questions were structured into three categories. This includes the main question; alternative question; and follow-up questions. Questions were asked sequentially from simple and general to complex and specific questions. Though the sequence of the interview guide was followed, the flow of the interview in certain cases was interrupted severally by other members of staff who came in to ask, bring or briefly engage with the respondents. On the average each interview lasted 30 minutes. The longest was 40 minute and the shortest duration was 26 minutes. In addition to digital recording, salient points of
discussion were recorded in a notebook. Also, notes about the setting of the interview, location, mood and interest of interviewee were taken after each interview as a reference of the context the interview was conducted.

Generally, the interviews were conducted in a very conducive atmosphere. Most of the time, respondents were ready and willing to share their thoughts on the questions. The interview was more of an interactive conversation rather than question and answer session. Aside the official interview sessions, some respondents went further to share their personal perspectives on other unrelated but relevant discussion on academic, social and even national issues. These unofficial sessions were discovery moments, which later proved to be very useful. It provided a deep insight that enhanced the researcher’s understanding and appreciation of the empirical context of the study.

4.6.2. Document Analysis

Though interview was chosen as the main research methodology, critical documents were sought for to modulate and complement the interviews through systematic document analysis method. Document analysis was done from two different sets of data; Official policy document on quality assurance from both UG and NAB that provides an overview and by extensions, expectations of the quality assurance processes. Other administrative documents such as Basic Laws of UG, Strategic Policy University of Ghana, were used to supplement the quality assurance policy documents. This was done to give meaning and also, to understand the context within which the internal quality assurance policy operates. In the case of NAB however, the administrative document (L.I 1984) which detailed specific procedures designed to operationalize the quality assurance strategy (NAB Act 2002 (Act 744) was also used for the same purpose.

To avoid the temptation of assuming the “living reality” of organizational documents, the researcher examined the documents with an open mind and treated them as means to an end and not an end in itself taking into consideration, the content and the context in which the documents was produced. The analysis was based on content analysis. Content analysis provided an opportunity to compare expectations and actual outcome of the quality assurance processes to enhance understanding of the process.
4.6.3. Challenges in Data Collection

The researcher encountered a number of challenges especially, in getting appointment for the interview. Also, some of the scheduled appointment had to be cancelled and rescheduled by respondents in the last hour due to call to “official duties”. The researcher adopted a flexible and proactive way to deal with this problem. Being aware also of the time constrain the researcher strategically decided to do no more than two interviews in a day, to be able to make up for call backs. In so doing, the researcher was able to reschedule any unplanned interview within the day without affecting scheduled appointments.

Another major challenge the researcher faced in the interview process was the dilemma of either disclosing the interview questions to respondents or sharing a copy with them. Some of the respondents requested for the interview question in other to prepare for the interview. Sensing the possibility of this request compromising the genuineness of responses, the researcher rather chose to reemphasize the import of the research. The researcher also provided a list of themes for the interview so that respondents could be aware of the general areas of the interview.

Finally, the researcher unfortunately was unable to interview any of the board members of NAB who form the critical component of the external quality assurance system. This was because, by the governance structure of NAB, board members are not resident employees of NAB. They are private individuals and experts representing different constituencies or stakeholder groups in the external quality assurance process (Act 744, 2007). To complement for their unavailability, the researcher resorted to rely on official document (L.I 1984, 2010), which provided information on the functions of the board as well as detail review of the external quality assurance processes to complement interviews from other NAB senior officials. However, two senior official of NAB were interviewed.

4.6.4. Limitations of Data Collection Process

A major limitation of the interview process was that during the interview some respondents were providing only official views by reading responses from the Internet. Critical opinion of such respondents were thus, not attained. However, the effect of this problem was significantly minimized during the data management phase. The researcher adopted to do a follow up telephone conversation specifically for those respondents to clarify their views which eventually got them to shed some light on their personal perspective on the questions.
The interview selection process was partly influenced by past experience with the case (study area) and researcher’s networks with specific college, departments and individuals. Though this strategy was to avert the difficulty in getting interview appointments, it could be argued that this approach could potentially compromise the objectivity of the sampling process. However, the researcher’s selection of senior level management staff capable of giving authoritative response to the questions counterbalances that potential bias in the sampling process and maintains the integrity of the data collected.

Rescheduling of some scheduled appointments put a lot of pressure on the researcher especially when rescheduled interview time was either too close to the next interview appointment. Though all questions were covered during each interview session, the in-depth of some of the interviews were possibly affected because the researcher in certain cases had to hasten the interview to make the next appointment. The researcher in such situations was not able to do details probe and follow other lead, which may have affected the depth of some responses and the amount of data collected. However, in all cases, the interview guide was followed through to cover all questions.

Unfortunately, the time for data collection coincided with the time when Ghana was experiencing a national energy crisis (electricity) problem and was in a load-management regime program. The erratic nature of the power supply affected the planning and ultimately cost the research. The erratic nature of the power supply affected the planning and ultimately cost the research. The researcher could not honor some appointments because he could not be reached on phone to confirm the meeting. Those lost appointments could not be rescheduled hence data from such potential respondents were not captured and could not inform this work.

4.7. Data Analysis
Data analysis could be understood to mean a systematic process of reducing and extracting meaning from raw data. This research was built on Bryman’s data analysis model (Bryman, 2012, p. 13). Data analysis procedures were thus, categorized into four phases; data management phase; thematic analysis phase; coding and interpretation phase. Data management phase, involved processes of data screening and search for irregular pattern in data in order to correct palpable data errors. Digital audio recordings were reviewed several times with the interview transcript to ensure that omissions, deviations and misrepresentation were corrected to guarantee data accuracy. Also, data which were seen to represent only official views were detected by comparing responses to information provided by institution’s website. Through extensive reading of the transcript and other field notes, core themes and
sub themes were created as the basis for thematic analysis for the research. Data analysis phase also involved processes of sense-making to create meaning out of data without losing the original value of data. In order to achieve this, data analysis was carefully guided by the context of the study and the analytical framework for the research.

At the coding phase, interview transcripts were categorized and labeled to make data more meaningful. Using the research questions and the basic assumptions for the research as point of reference, interview transcripts were categorized into five thematic areas, which fundamentally reflect the theoretical framework and the underlying literature used for the research. This was done to ensure that data is interpreted in the context of adopted theory for the research. Coding was therefore done based on five fundamental pillars of the theoretical framework, which also served as the basis for data interpretation. These included: primary objective, organizational structure, decision-making process, control and evaluation and funding mechanism. Finally, at interpretation phase, data was linked to the research question, basic assumptions, theoretical underpinning of the research as well as reviewed literature to make sense of the data.

4.8. Ethical Consideration
The commitment of a researcher should not only be limited to subject matter of investigation, but also to the human sensitivities in order to identify ethical issues and feel responsible to act appropriately in response to such issues. Ethical issues in research thus, raised entirely different and complex questions of the place of good in the conduct of the research. As open and subjective the notion of ethics in research, it remains the most credible identification of what constitute acceptable behavior in the range of role, setting and circumstance in qualitative research (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 243). Ethical issues were highly considered in the conduct of this research. Ethical protocols were therefore planned alongside the research design. This approach made it easy for the researcher to anticipate possible ethical challenges and design appropriate measures to remedy them. Using interviews as the main research tool, anonymity, consent, confidentiality, and accurate representation of data were the main ethical issues of focus to the researcher.

It was ensured that respondents voluntarily accepted to participate in the study by confirming their acceptance to a written request for interview appointment. Prior to each interview, respondents were fully informed about the purpose of the study, how the data collected will be used and their right not to answer questions that may compromise their personality or
office. These were done to ensure that information was provided at the free will of the respondents. Furthermore, anonymity was guaranteed by concealing the names of the respondents and where possible, the specific offices. Though all except one respondent seemed concerned to be revealed, anonymity was still considered critical to prevent possible trace of specific quotes to specific respondents. Anonymity was achieved through alphanumeric coding system adopted to represent the offices and the respondents respectively. To further strengthen anonymity, sample units with small numbers were carefully selected to conceal the collective identity of members. For example, three out of the five principal officers of the University of Ghana were selected for the research for this reason. Also, phrases or words, which could identify the respondents, were intentionally represented by ‘XYZ’. The list of interviewees is presented below:

**Figure 4.4.2: List of Interviewees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Number of Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Principal Officers - UG</td>
<td>P1, P2 and P3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Internal Quality Assurance Unit- UG</td>
<td>Q1 and Q2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Heads of Department A (Sciences)</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Heads of Department B (Humanities)</td>
<td>D2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Provost - College A (Sciences)</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Provost - College B (Humanities)</td>
<td>C2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>National Accreditation Board (NAB)</td>
<td>N1 and N2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s construct

Finally, to ensure accurate representation of data, digital audio recording of the interview and field notes were carefully reviewed several times in other to guarantee accuracy in transcription. This was evident in the use of direct quotes and excerpt from interview. Other documents used were analyzed with an open mind to avoid misinterpretation and misrepresentation, or be influenced by preconceived ideas of the researcher. To avoid plagiarism, the researcher ensured that appropriate quotation and referencing were done to give credit to works of others used in this research.
4.9. Validity and Reliability

Considering the diversity of the Ghanaian higher education sector and the selected sample, critics of the case study research design could argue that this particular study produces a limited view on the topic. They could furthermore fault the approach by challenging grounds for establishing reliability or generalizing the results in the national context. However, unlike quantitative research where reliability and validity extensively depends on the sampling process and data collection instruments, the researcher is the research instrument in a qualitative research (Patton, 2002). Reliability and validity thus, depends on the ability and efforts taken by the researcher to minimize the effects of the weakness of data and data collection processes on the outcome of the research.

To this end, the use of semi-structured interview questions made it possible to seek for fact as well as critical opinions of respondents which were essential in understanding the topic from the perspective (lived experience) of the respondents. This approach helped the contextual interpretation of fact to elicit the true meaning and relevance of the practices of quality assurance. The interview guide was pre piloted to check possible ambiguity, complexity and inconsistencies to enhance credibility of the data collection instrument. Also, the use of triangulation as validity procedure (Creswell & Miller, 2000) strengthened the data collection method by collaborating evidence collected through multiple data sources, specifically, interviews and documents. By providing different perspectives on specific themes or “data point” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127), the adoption of data triangulation as a validity process minimized data errors compensated for the weakness of each data sources used. Again, the raw data was reviewed several times by the researcher to ensure that there was consistency in responses and reporting of data. Though time constraint made it difficult to send transcribed data to respondents to review, in cases where there was data ambiguity, the researcher crosschecked with respondents for clarification so that the intended meaning of respondents was preserved.

As admitted in the opening statement of this section, generalizability of this research to other cases in the national context may be problematic, even though efforts were being made to preserve the credibility of the findings. Thus, external validity may not be totally guaranteed by this research. Though generalization has not been the focus of the research, the study may still provide useful lessons, which may be replicated in other cases similar to this study.
CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.0. Chapter Introduction
This chapter provides an overview of findings from thematic analysis of interviews from sampled respondents and documents analyzed. Document analysis was done from two main sets of data; Official working policy that explains quality assurance process and by extension, the expectations of the internal and external quality assurance systems; and legislative instruments that established the external quality assurance system. Data was analyzed and presented in two parts with each part reflecting external and internal quality assurance respectively. Again, the presentation follows the structure of the research question in chapter one, and also fours themes derived from the interviews.

Interview Themes:
- Operations of QA system
- Organization of QA system
- Funding of QA system
- Assessment of QA system

PART I- External Quality Assurance (EQA) - (National Accreditation Board-NAB)
Part I of Chapter Four presents an analysis of raw data (interviews and document analysis) on the EQA system managed by NAB. Interviews were conducted from two principal officers from NAB. On the other hand, document analysis was done from two official documents; the establishing Act, NAB Act, 2007 (Act 744), and the Tertiary Institutions (Establishment and Accreditation) Regulations, 2010 (L.I. 1984).

5.1.1. Findings Based Definition of Objective, Functions and Operations of EQA System

a. What is the objective of EQA processes?
The importance of this question was to understand the intent and the focus, of the EQA process of NAB. Analysis on responses indicated that NAB has multifaceted roles in the EQA process. However, the main objective of the EQA system is to ensure that universities are accountable to stakeholders and also committed to maintaining high quality standards. It was noted that these objectives of the EQA system is achieve through the development of benchmarks for accreditation and quality assurance to ensure that the universities operate in an environment that promotes quality teaching and learning.
N1 explained: “our responsibility as national QA agency is ultimately to ensure that our universities are operating with best standards that bring the best out of them and made them productive to society. Also we expect that stakeholder in the education sector get value for money, so we protect their interest by ensuring that the institutions deliver quality and nothing else. We set minimum standards of operation for the institutions, monitor and also evaluate their activities”. N2 also answered; “well, it’s like our name speak volumes of what we do here. We do accreditation of institutions and programs for both public and private universities to ensure that quality standards are maintained. We are also responsible for determine equivalent of diploma and other certification awarded by institutions within and outside Ghana, advises the president on issues of Charter and publish list of accredited institution in the country.

b. How does the NAB achieve the objectives of the EQA process?

The purpose of this question was to understand the operational processes of the EQA system. The analysis of responses to this question revealed two approaches to EQA; accreditation and post accreditation process, which are organized around two different procedures. The accreditation process is organized around legal controls, which is embedded in a very strict, and well-documented regulations and processes enshrined in the Tertiary Institutions (Establishment and Accreditation) Regulations, 2010 (L.I. 1984). The accreditation process includes application and submission of application documents by institution, assessment of application by NAB Board, inspection and evaluation of physical facilities, certification of application, which allow the institution among other things to establish financial and administrative structures, and lastly, accreditation (NAB, 2010). It was noted that though there was representation from the universities on the NAB Board, the EQA process is entirely owned and controlled by NAB. NAB develops and dictates the rules for the universities to follow. N1 explained: “yes, NAB does not operate in a vacuum; we operate with very strict regulations provided by the NAB Act 2007, (Act 744) and enforcement regulations in L.I 2010, (L.I 1984,). So we have the legal authority to enforce our regulation and sanction institutions that do not follow due process. We can deny your application, suspend or even evoke your accreditation. And without it you cannot function”.

On the other hand, post accreditation process (Quality Assurance) involves the provision of flexible guidelines within which the universities are supposed to develop their own internal quality assurance policies and strategies. Post-accreditation processes include data
management, academic audits, institutional audits, ranking of institutions and programs, monitoring and evaluation, research and documentation, capacity building for staff of IQA Unit of recognized universities in Ghana and support services (NAB, 2015). Responses also indicated that NAB’s quality assurance process is a partnership between NAB and the universities, with the latter having greater control over the system.

N1: “…actually, there are differences between accreditation and quality assurance process, unlike the accreditation which requires strict compliance of our rules, in the QA process we only provide the guidelines to the universities to follow so it is flexible. At this stage we are interested in knowing the growth processes of the universities. We believe that the university after accreditation should be evolving, grow and change with time, and monitoring that growth process is quality assurance. So if you have a Unit that serving as that eye on what you were set up to do, say ABCD, are you achieving it, can you do something different and if you are even doing it, are we doing it effectively and efficiently. So if you have a unit with such function we may call it QA Unit and the entire process is a QA process”

c. Is the establishment of IQA Unit a mandatory requirement for all accredited universities?
The import of this question was to explore the relationship between external and internal quality assurance system of NAB and the University of Ghana respectively. Findings suggested an assumed relationship between the two quality assurance systems. Respondents explained that there is a level of involvement of NAB in the IQA process but not in it strictest sense as in the accreditation process. The analysis of findings suggested that IQA process is more generic rather than a prescriptive guideline. This is because whilst respondents positively affirm the question, they offered however that, the content of the IQA system is subject to the discretion of the University. Interestingly, document analysis did not show any provision made in the NAB regulations (L.I 1984, 2010) that makes the establishment of IQA Units mandatory. These were expressed in the following quotes:

N1: “Yes, it is NAB requirement that every university should have IQA unit. But if you don’t have it at the start of accreditation, three years from the grant of accreditation you should have something in place. NAB is also a bit careful in being prescriptive of the nature of the quality assurance unit or department institutions should have because, it is our belief that every structure within the institution is towards quality assurance. So if you are setting up a quality assurance unit in any institution you should be clear in your mind what functions you want such quality assurance department to play otherwise it will end up usurping the powers of
other organs of the institutions”.

Further analysis of responses on how NAB coordinates the activities of IQA Unit interestingly revealed a bureaucratic system of communication that suggested a weak coordination between the two systems. N1 explained: “In our work we don’t deal directly with the IQA units or departments of the institutions. We engage the leadership and they have to hold some responsibilities on the IQA department of the university. However, in our thinking as Board, we expect the IQA units to be the first check on quality in the institutions before an external body comes in”. Supporting this view, N2 explained; “…our responsibility is to the university so we do not directly engage the IQA units but through the university leadership we ensure that they deliver quality. The thing is we don’t want to interfere in the internal affairs of the universities but at the same time we expect high quality. So from us we expect the IQA units to be the first call of contact in quality assurance within the institutions so that they can for example, scrutinize program content, assess how teaching and learning is taking place or check how the institution is achieving or not achieving its own strategic target from their strategic plan before we go in”.

5.1.2. Findings on Organization of External Quality Assurance at NAB

a. How is the organization of EQA of NAB structured?

Document analysis revealed that NAB Act, 2007 (Act 744) remains the main document from which NAB is officially steered. Analysis also indicated that NAB has been organized under two-level organizational structure, the Board, which serve governance function, and the Executive Secretary who is the administrative head. According to Section 1(1) and 2(1&2) of Act 744 the 15-member Board is the highest decision making body responsible among other things, to grant accreditation to both public and private universities, advise the President on the grant of charter to private tertiary institutions and also, carry out any other function assigned by the Minister of Education. According to Act 744 Section 1(2) and Section 14(1), it is the President of the Republic who appoints the Chairman and the Executive Secretary. However, according to Act 744 Section 14(1&2) and Section 3(1) the Executive Secretary is the only permanent member of the Board. He is the secretary to the Board and also responsible for the day-to-day operations of NAB. Respondents from the interview also indicated that, the Executive Secretary has two deputies, each responsible for Quality Assurance Unit and the Accreditation Unit respectively.
Document analysis on Act 744 further revealed that NAB operates a representative governance system with significant state presence. Section 1 (1) of Act 744 determines the composition of the NAB Board, which includes representatives from universities, professional associations, the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders. Interestingly, out of the 15 members Board, the State directly appoints four members including the Chairman of the Board and the Executive Secretary which represents the heads of the two-level governance structure respectively. The others State appointees are two Board members appointed by the Ministry of Education. The document analysis further suggested that, the State is the single most powerful constituency of the Board. Four nominations to the Board give the State the single largest voting block over representations from other constituencies. The Board is ultimately responsible to the Minster of Education, which controls the policy direction of NAB. Also, the governance structure of NAB suggests a hierarchically arranged system with strict processes for engagement. Duties and responsibilities of all members have been expressed in a codify regulation. Hence, it is argued that the organizational structure of NAB has some similarities to the traditional model of public administration.

b. How is decision-making regarding accreditation and QA made?
In analyzing response given to this question, it was found out that decision-making is a complex mix of technical and administrative exercise of committees, which is built on expertise, evidence and NAB regulations. The process includes documentation, payment, assessment, vetting, decision and reporting. It was also noted that all decisions taken during the accreditation process is made by a committee or the Board. Hence, dialogue and consensus building is seen as an important instrument in the decision-making process. It was also noticed that program accreditation requires more expert input as compared to institutional accreditation. Though it surfaces later in the document analysis that, the use of committee is only a recommended in Act 744 section 6 (1&2), interview analysis suggests that committee-based decision-making has become an institutionalized practice. The following are excerpt of the interviews that summarized the decision-making process.

N1: “program accreditation is strictly technical issue, so we normally constitute experts to vet the application documentation before they send them to the Board. The institution is then made to pay application fees. If the documents are complete, then a panel of experts from outside NAB is constituted to deal with the application. So they talk and debate the issues and then they submit a report to us. When the report from the experts gets to us we also vet it to
see whether they have filled the prescribed form for gathering information from the experts. This is done at the secretariat level and we are careful not to touch the technical content but ensure we have all the information that we needed to proceed with our work. The report is sent back to the experts for correction in case there is a problem and later sends it back to the institutions to react or response to it. Then both the institutions respond and the expert report are sent to the accreditation committee of the Board for analysis and recommendations to the board for final decision”.

When both respondents asked of institutional accreditation, they explained that a committee of the Board does the institutional accreditation locally. However, both respondents indicated that the committee where needed, seeks the expert opinion on technical issues especially in with respect to; physical facilities, finance and library. Again, when respondents were asked whether decision of the NAB Board could be described as political, academic, economic or technical, there was no simple answer. N1 indicated: “No! No! No! we are not into politics or economics; we are purely into academic issues but our decisions are very technical”. N2: “well, the decision of the Board could be described as Academic decisions. You know, the thing is almost all the Board members are academics”. There was thus, a split view on this question.

c. **Is the decision of NAB final and Binding?**

The import of this question was to explore the extent of independence and the autonomy of the NAB. Analysis of the responses suggested a positive response to the question. Respondents indicated that though the NAB Act, 2007 (Act 744) legally grants the Board authority to enforce their regulations, in practice, the current constitutional arrangement on how public universities are established poses a challenge that makes the State-agency complexity more visible. It was noted that unlike private universities, which rely on NAB’s accreditation for legitimacy and existence, the legitimacy and legal existence of public universities is rooted in an Act of Parliament. Thus, the public universities technically exit before accreditation begins.

N1 explained: “the law grants us the power to enforce all our regulation so you can only challenge the decision of the Board legally through an appeal process”. N2: “We have classified our requirements into fatal and non-fatal indicators. For the fatal indicators if you even miss one criterion you are not getting accreditation. It does not matter who comes to say what, but with the public institutions, that is where we have a bit of issues particularly the
new once because, they are established by law (Act of Parliament) and once the law is passed, it means the institution has been legally set up. Do you see that? So what we do is that, we usually do not, in fact by our practice, give institutional accreditation to the public institutions. What we do is that when it comes to program level where we have to accredit we will require all the things that I have told you which relates to institution accreditation. So in principle we say we don’t accredit the institutions but we do. We cannot close the institution but we can stop the affected program. We did that to a number of public universities, even University of XYZ we close down their medical school when they started without following the due process”.

d. How are the leaders of NAB selected?
It was clear from the analysis of the responses that leaders could be selected by two different ways. Either by appointment by the sitting President, as in the case of the Chairman of the Board and the Executive Secretary or a nomination by representative of recognized special constituencies as in the case of other Board members. As such, it was noted that though there were no written down qualification of leaders, the technical and academic nature of the work has created a conventional guide for the appointments of leaders. All Board members except the Attorney General’s representative, representatives from the Public Service Commission, Association of Professional body and surprisingly, the Executive Secretary had significant professional academic background.

N1 explained: “The head of NAB is selected by the board and presented to the President through the public services commission for approval. But the board will advertise for a vacant position get the people, the public service commission people will interview and select the person and make submission to the government to consider and approve. About the Board, the government appoints only three people on the board; the chairman and two others one of whom must be a lady and then the rest are representative of special constituencies”. It was noted however that this view of the respondents is contrary to the Section 14 (1), of Act 744, which requires the Executive Secretary also to be appointed by the President.

When asked to describe the leadership orientation of NAB Board in terms of Academic, Business, Political and Trusteeship, both respondents agreed that, the NAB Board could represent both academic and trusteeship. This they explained: N1 “Well, I would say that they are stakeholder’s representatives who are also academics. In fact, the government appoints some but those that the government appoints are academics. Government wouldn’t bring
anybody who is not academics; you can’t function in the board”. N2: “the Board represents different stakeholder groups but all the presentation except the one from the Architect and Engineering Association, the public services commission and the chief executive of NAB are academics”.

**e. What are the main drivers for change with regard to EQA?**

In answering this question, respondents explained that the Board could initiate process of change in any form but within the confines of the NAB Act 2007 (Act 744) that established NAB. Respondent suggested that Act 744 is the source of authority of the Board, as it specifies the functions and powers of the Board. It was noted that within the framework of their legal mandate, NAB has power to drive change through the use of regulations as exemplified by the Tertiary Institutions (Establishment and Accreditation) Regulations, 2010 (L.I. 1984). However, the document analysis also revealed that the Minster of Education has the capacity to assign any responsibility to the Board to execute (Act 744 Section 2(e). This suggests that change could be driven in two ways, either by change in State EQA policy direction or changes in NAB regulations.

N2 explained: “Act 744 is the guiding legal document of what we do here. We are like a vehicle to execute the demands of the national quality assurance policy, so we cannot entirely deviate from the direction the state wants to go although the Board can initiate policies for change”. N1: “the NAB Board is autonomous; once it is appointed they are given the mandate by the various legal instruments available to do their job. The government provides the general policy direction but it is the Board who sort of implement the mandate. We have regulations in our L.I which has legal enforcement, and through these regulations we can do a lot of things”.

When asked about the independence of the NAB, N2 had this to say: “NAB is very independent and our decisions are final. However, NAB decisions could be appealed by the institutions through the ministry of Education if they think we have not justly dealt with them, but ultimately, the appeal will come back to us to review the merit of the case together with the Minister”. To press further, respondents were asked if the State could interfere in the EQA processes, and both respondents replied in the negative. N1 explained: “…Oh no! Well, intervene fine but not interfere. Yes, the government can intervene and that is when an institution has made an appeal but if the institution has not made any appeal, government has no business jumping into our work”.

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5.1.3. Findings on the Funding mechanism of NAB

a. How do the activities of NAB get funded?
Document analysis and the interview responses revealed that, NAB has multiple sources of funding as provided by NAB Act 2007 (Act 744) Section 17 (1&2). However, these alternative sources have not been adequately explored by NAB, hence their dependence on government subventions. The government is responsible for both administrative and operational expenditure of NAB, which is financed through input-based funding model incorporated into national budget under the Ministry of Education. Surprisingly, it was also noted that though both respondents agree that funds received from State were not adequate, they identified low capacity of skilled manpower as the major challenge of NAB.

N1 commented; “The source of funding for NAB is purely government. But of course government has urged us to operate on cost recovery basis so we let the institutions pay services we offer them. It is not a full cost though but they pay significant amount of it. The ultimate thing is progressively getting them to pay everything. For now, government is the main source of funding and other service fees and charges. But if you ask me, I will say the money is not the main issue, it is the same everywhere. Our greatest concern is the staff. It is not that we don’t have, but their expertise. As you can see there a lot of young staff around but are not trained with the kind of expertise we need to work. We need to develop their capacity to be efficient”. N2: “just like any state institution aligned to a specific Ministry, we are under the Ministry of Education. So every year we prepare our budget and send it to the Ministry, defend it and receive the money when it is available. The money is not enough but that is not much of a problem. We need to strengthen our staff capacity”.

b. Who controls how to utilize funds receives form the State?
Interestingly, analysis of the response to this question revealed varying views of the respondents. Whilst ‘N1’ offered that NAB total control over funds, ‘N2’ raised the issue of inadequate releases compared to what is approved. N1: “We prepare budget for the securing of the funds. Government has limited resource so it will demand strict budget from you and we have to go for defense and all that, but once the money is given to you, you have the liberty to use it per the specifics in your budget”. N2: “are we in control? We prepare budget and all that but we don’t get what we request for so you are forced to adjust your program to suite what government provide and that seriously affects how run our business”
5.1.4. Findings on the mechanism for assessing the EQA system

a. How does NAB assess the EQA system?

The import of this question was to understand the mechanism for assessing quality and also the focus of the assessment process. The analysis of responses to this question suggested that EQA is assessed through two-level assessment strategy, performance evaluation and peer review. Performance evaluation process requires that universities submit report of activities at end of the academic year. In addition to this, re-accreditation is required by the universities every five years through peer review process to ensure that accredited institutions are complying with the tenets of the accreditation. This was explained in the following quote.

N1: “…every five years the accredited institutions are supposed to be re-accredited. So our experts go and do the assessment on the field, and we see this assessment as a peer review exercise because the people they are going to see are also experts in their own field. But before this, the accredited institutions are expected to give us report on their activities every year so that we can monitor what they do before they come back for re-accreditation in five years”.

b. What does the NAB look for when doing assessment of EQA system?

Responses from both respondents suggested that the EQA process of NAB focuses on two things; (i) accountability and compliance to set standards, and (ii) growth of the universities. It was however evident from the analysis that EQA focus on accountability and compliance has stronger and well-defined process and criteria for measuring tangibles as enshrined in L.I, 2010 (1984). On the other hand, detailed process of the EQA focus on growth was not so visible in the L.I, 2010 (1984) though highlights were given in Section 25(1&2). This was explained in the following quotes:

N1: “The issue of accreditation is like a checklist of minimum quality requirement. It is like do you have this or that so invariably; we are looking at whether the universities meet minimum criteria in terms of quality of staff, resources, finance, physical facilities etc. On the other hand, quality assurance is looking at addition or improvement in these standards”. Supporting this view, N2 also explained: “like I told you from the beginning of this discussion, accreditation is whether the institutions meet our criteria, so the focus is compliance. As for the quality assurance we want to see how the institution is growing”.

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PART II-Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) System - (University of Ghana-UG)

Part II of Chapter Five presents an analysis of raw data (interviews) from the IQA system. Data was collected from three principal officers from the university central administration, two managers from the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQA Unit) and four Unit Heads from two colleges and two departments, representing the sciences and the humanities. Similar questions asked in the first part (PART I) of this chapter were asked in this part. Again, the approach to data presentation was the same as the same as first part of this chapter.

5.2.1. Findings Based Objective, Functions and Operations of IQA System –UG

a. **What is the objective of IQA processes?**

Analysis of responses to this question indicated a uniform view from all respondents. All nine respondents suggested that the purpose of the IQA system is to achieve and maintain higher academic standards in teaching, learning and research. However, further analysis of data revealed an interesting pattern in the responses. Seven out of the nine respondents used the phrase “world-class” in their response in apparent reference to the strategic vision of the University (UG, 2014). It was again realized from the analysis that, the UG quality assurance policy has a wider scope and application which is intended to instill the culture of quality in all aspects of the university’s life. The IQA Units is only responsible for an aspect (academic quality) of the quality assurance policy.

For example, P1 noted: “if you look at our mission and vision of the University, first of all, our vision is to obtain a world class status and then two, our mission is the create an enabling environment for the UG to be the center of attraction for the delivery of cutting edge research as well as higher quality teaching and learning. So, all these measures that we have put in place including the IQA processes are in line with our vision”. P3: "Our IQA measures encourage effective teaching and research that will propel the UG to be one of the world class universities both in Africa and the world”. D2 explains that; “for us we are an academic unit so, as far as we are concerned the IQA processes of the university is to help us achieve academic excellence”. Q1: “the major objective of the IQA processes is to achieve and maintain higher standards that are applicable to higher education and ensuring that university is using the best practices for academic work. This will ensure that the university’s mission of attaining world class status will be realized”.

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b. How is the objective of the IQA process achieved?

Analysis of the quality assurance policy document revealed that IQA process is organize around five main strategies, which could be grouped into academic and administrative quality assurance strategies; and are designed to enhance both academic and administrative work. The strategies include course and departmental evaluation, internal and external peer review, feedback support system, inclusiveness and participation and evidence based assessment (UG, 2009). Specifically, these strategies include but not limited to course validation, exam standardization and modulation, service monitoring and review, as well as external examination evaluation.

Interestingly, analysis of the interview responses reviewed other quality assurance strategies, which are not captured in the QA policy document. For example, some respondents mentioned peer observation, faculty mentorship program, pedagogical training and inter-disciplinary research collaboration as key process in the IQA strategies adopted to achieve the objectives of the quality assurance system. Opening up other dimensions and expectations of the IQA system, respondents C1, P1, P2 and P3 stressed the importance of credible recruitment strategy, strict adherence to academic and ethical standards of the university, effective coordination, student services, discipline and honesty as critical ingredient of the IQA process. Thus, data from both sources (document and oral/Interview) suggest that, the IQA mechanisms for achieving the objectives of the IQA system do not have universal application. Different units have different approaches depending on the quality assurance needs.

Though quality assurance policy document of the University of Ghana also mention working with NAB as one of the external peer review strategies, the document however did not suggest the involvement of NAB is a requirement from EQA system. Interestingly, it was also noted that among the nine respondents, only one respondent mentioned the involvement of NAB in the IQA processes. Data thus seem to suggest a loosely coupled relationship between the internal and external quality assurance strategies. The following quotes illustrate this point:

Q1: “Yes, there is strategy for both internal and external peer review. So there will be internal review panel for course validation, departmental validation, and then off course, you also allow in external peer review, which usually will come from NAB. But where the university feels like there is a need for external peer review that does not necessarily has to be NAB, we
can bring in others. Part of this is the external examiner system. Q2: “we train newly appointed lecturers and also give series of periodic seminars to the old once in the system”. P1: “In terms of research, we have created an office of Research, Innovation and Development so we have put structures, guidelines, and policies to guide our colleagues in the conduct of the experiment and research, teaching and in publication”. C1: “What happens in quality of teaching and learning hinge on the quality character of the individuals in the university, and what runs through all the Units of the institution. So quality is something that should become a measure of all that we do; the recruitment strategies, respect for the ethics of the academic profession, discipline and honesty and not just how we teach or conduct examination”. C2: “we have mentorship programs to groom young faculty, and also do a lot of teaching and research collaboration with other discipline and industry to streamline our programs”.

c. Is the establishment of IQA Unit a deliberate University policy or a requirement from NAB?

Interestingly, analysis of responses of all five respondents suggested that the idea of quality assurance and the establishment of the IQA Unit of the University of Ghana were purely institutional policy initiative and not a requirement from NAB. It was also noted that whilst some respondents assigned historical reasons, others adduced the autonomy of the university as the reason for holding to this view. Interestingly, some respondents expressed total disbelief of this question and were unwilling to entertain the idea that IQA of UG was a response to NAB directives. This was evident from the facial and body language of most respondents. University of Ghana quality assurance policy states that IQA Unit was established in 2009, 16 years after NAB came into existence (UG, 2009). This suggests that both UG and NAB have historically coexisting without any formal internal quality assurance structure. Sample views expressed by respondents are as follows;

P1: “Not at all, I will say that, it is part of the UG strategy as enshrined in our statutes. If you look at the basic laws of the university, it is written black and white by the council. It is not out of pressure or anything from external agency, it is, and has been part of university strategy since the inception of the university”. Q1: “No I wouldn’t say it was external requirement. It was part of the efforts in trying to make sure that the whole unit moves towards higher standards. So it is not from outside, it something which we see as best practice and therefore it got established”. C1: “we have been here since 1948, how were we managing our affair
before the NAB came. We are very independent and we don’t need someone to tell us how to do our job”.

5.2.2. Findings on Organization of the IQA Unit at University of Ghana

a. How is the organization of IQA Unit structured?

Analysis of responses suggests that the IQA system of UG is hierarchically structured to operate under four-layer governance structure. At the top of the structure is the University Council, which is in charge of quality assurance policy formulation. Below Council is the office of the Pro Vice Chancellor Academics and Student’s Affairs, responsible for the supervision. The IQA Unit manages the IQA process and the various academic Units serve as the implementation Units of the IQA process. Interestingly, it was noted that apart from the main quality assurance policy, specific processes of implementation of the IQA strategies are not documented. The approach has been more of appeals and negotiations between the IQA Unit and heads of academic units. Analysis also revealed that the absence of legal framework or official protocols for implementation, most of the time plunged the IQA process into legitimacy and operational crisis. Q2 explained: “…. Our decisions are not laws but conventions we have to abide so it does not come with any sanctions. I wouldn’t say they are punitive measures but corrective measures to bring those going astray back on line….”, “…You know, sometimes it is very difficult, and we cannot go directly to lecturers so we do so through the head of departments (HODs). We go to their HODs plead with them to take the instructions down so that they will not see us as foreign people trying to implement instruction on them. In fact, that is the most critical area that they don’t like”.

b. How is decision regarding Internal Quality Assurance process taken?

Analysis of responses on this question revealed a very complex four-level top-down hierarchical decision-making structure- Policy level, Supervision level, Management level and Implementation level. Quality assurance policy decisions are taken either at the University Council or the Academic Board. The IQA Unit under the supervision the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic and Students affairs) ensures that the Academic Units implement the policy. Significantly, it was noted that the IQA Unit, which is supposed to manage the IQA processes does not have adequate authority to enforce its regulations. Data showed that the bureaucratic decision-making process is a great worry for the IQA Unit. The quality assurance process was described as follows:
Q1: “In an event we want to implement a policy or program, we come up with the information here and then pass it on to the Pro Vice Chancellor and Deans to have a look for their inputs. And then once they have their input we pass it on to the Department. Sometimes we leave to the Deans to pass it to the Department but the Pro Vice Chancellor in charge of academic affairs usually will have the first look at it before we send it out. This approach is not as effective as we want it”.

Also, when respondents were asked whether decision of IQA Unit is binding on all Units under the IQA framework, they provided very interesting answers. Responses suggested that decisions of the IQA Unit are binding on all Units within the framework of the IQA process; however, the decisions are not legally enforceable. For example, Q1 explained: “if the decision is part of the policy and within our mandate then it’s final and binding. But you should also understand that the academic environment is a treacherous terrain and because of academic freedom enjoyed by the faculty, it becomes very difficult to do certain things, so sometimes you become helpless and there is nothing you can do. That is why we normally work with the Deans; we don’t go directly to the faculty”. Q2: “Our decisions are binding but do not come with any sanctions. They are not laws but conventions we have to abide to, that is why we try as much as possible to take our lecturers through series of seminars and training for them to be acquainted with the quality guidelines of the University. Of course, there is something but I wouldn’t say punitive measures but corrective measures. If someone is going astray then it is the Pro Vice Chancellor’s responsibility through the Deans and the HODs to guide that person come to the right path. Sometimes it is very difficult; we cannot go directly to lecturers so we do so through the HODs. We go to their HODs plead with them to take the instructions down so that they will not see us as foreign people trying to implement instruction on them. In fact, that is the most critical area that they don’t like”.

c. How are the leaders of IQA Unit selected?
Findings on suggestions from respondents showed that leadership position of the IQA Unit of the University of Ghana is by appointment and not through election. Responses showed that the appointment is competitive internal process open to only qualified senior members of the academic community. The process involves advertisement of vacant position, interview, vetting and approval. It is required that prospective candidates pass all the process before appointment by the University Council. As such, it was noted that aside competency, the academic rank is very critical for selection; candidate must be of professorial rank. Q1
explained: “When there is vacant position it is internally advertised and qualified applicants are shortlisted for interview by an ad-hoc search committee. The best candidate is then sent to the academic board for vetting before taken to council for approval”.

Also, respondents described the leadership orientation of the IQA unit as more of Academic in nature as compared to being business, political or trusteeship. Q2: “the leadership position of this office is academic in nature. In fact, you must be an academician of professorial rank to qualify. The thing is you are going to deal with academics so you should be one of them to understand their thinking else you will not succeed”. In a similar fashion, respondents agreed on the question that decisions of the office of the Director of the IQA unit are also academic in nature and not political.

d. What are the main drivers for change with regard to IQA?
In responding to this question, respondents suggested that change in the IQA process is more likely to be to one-way direction; from the top. It was realized that the governance structure of the IQA system made it difficult if not impossible, for the IQA Unit to cause change. Analysis of data showed that, the IQA Unit has limited mandate within the bigger institutional quality assurance strategy. Aside, there are no codified and enforceable operational regulatory instruments to cause change, but conventions, which are difficult to enforce. This was explained in the following quotes:

Q1: “Our office is responsible for implementing aspect of the quality assurance policy strategy of the University. We cannot do anything outside our mandate, because we will not have the legal authority to act. I must add however that in the cause of our work, when we see the need for any change in the policy direction which is outside our mandate, we can petition the University council through the Pro Vice Chancellor Academics for them to look at it”. Q2: “We can initiate change in the implementation process but not the policy itself. Our job is to ensure that what is in the quality assurance strategy is implemented to achieve results. And because our decisions are not laws but conventions, it sometimes hamper’s our ability to take certain initiatives. But we do cooperate well with the Pro Vice Chancellors to cause change”.

5.2.3. Findings on the Funding mechanism of IQA System

a. How does the IQA Unit get funded for it activities?
Analysis of the responses from all nine respondents showed that all administrative and academic units involved in the various phases of the IQA processes (Policy, Supervision,
Management and Implementation), mainly rely on the central administration of the University for resources to execute their obligations. It was however noted that, whilst some Units have alternative sources of funding, others do not. Further analysis on alternative funding revealed a complex dynamics of funding mechanism at UG. Respondents at the higher level of the university’s governance structure (Some principal officers and the Colleges) expressed positive views on alternative source of funding. However, it was noted that, the views were stronger at academic and administrative Units where research is major part of their work. As such, the analysis also revealed that, some Units were adopting interesting business models to generate extra financial resources. From commercialization of research, running of printing press, operation of transportation business to running of special programs alongside the traditional academic program at a commercial rate. In terms of disciplinary distinction, the sciences had a stronger positive view on alternative source of funding. Interestingly, all respondents asserted that funds received are usually inadequate. Input-based budgeting remains the only mechanism for distribution of funds to the Units, the nine respondents claimed. Samples of responses are giving below:

P1: “We all depends on the University and the government of Ghana for our subversion but the University itself has an idea of internally generating funds from which a certain percentage go the various office and projects. For example, some percentage of the students’ fees comes to my office. We also receive grants. Other University services generate additional funds to supplement what we receive from the government. We send our budget and when money is approved we use it”. “Oh! But you were once a student here you know it, the money is not enough at all. That is why we are putting in efforts to make the University visible to the industry and the general public. So the University has created a center called Technology Development and Transfer Center where we partner with the industry and sell ideas and technologies developed by the University to the local industries and organization for a fee”.

Q1: “We get our funding from the central administration. We budget, every year and present to the administration. We have no other source of funding”. “As for the money everybody knows it’s not enough”. Q2: “We rely solely on the University’s budgetary allocation to us. We present the budget for the academic year and the University gives the money to run”. C1: “you know, we have institutes and schools which are into ABC research. We partner with the ministry of XYZ and individuals’ business in the production sector of our field and we get some money from there.” C2: “We largely rely on the central administration to run, but some
of our schools and faculties run sandwich programs at commercial rate and that generate extra income for us. We also have a printing press or a publishing house, which give us some extra income. We sometimes also rent out our vehicles to generate extra income for the school” D2: “the money we receive is not just enough”.

b. Who determines how, where and when to use these funds?
Analysis of the response to this question revealed a divided view between the respondents. Five out of nine respondents agreed to have control of the funding they receive from the central administration. The analysis also revealed that respondents in favor of the question were those who have alternative sources of funding and those at the leadership position of the University. For example, respondent P1, C1 and C2 claimed to have absolute control of funds received from the University. P1: “We have total control over monies receive from the University. Also projects monies, donations received from alumni, industry and grants from multinational and international organizations”. On the contrary, academic and administrative Units that have no alternative funding sources argue that they do not receive what they request so they are not in control. D2: explained: “how can we be in control of what we receive from the University when they give less than one-third of what we need to function. Indirectly, they are telling us to cut our operations so they are in control”. Other three respondents advanced similar positions. Another interesting revelation on this question was that, respondents who alluded to greater control of funds also argued that, spending is relative to budget presented to the central administration. Spending outside the presented budget thus, require justification of expenditure.

5.2.4. Findings on the mechanism for assessing the IQA system

a. How does IQA Unit assess the IQA system?
The analysis of responses to this question suggests that student course evaluation is the main mechanism for assessing the IQA system of the University of Ghana. It was also revealed from the analysis that, the focus of the assessment process is to improve teaching and learning which according to respondents Q1 and Q2, is the main purpose of the IQA system. Responses also identified low participation as major problem facing the course evaluation process. It was interesting to note that, this problem was attributed to introduction of online assessment platform. As such, some respondent from academic units involved in the evaluation process expressed their dissatisfaction of the system by describing it as unfair, unproductive and confusing.
Q1: “There are a lot of challenges on student participation and we are working hard to resolve them. When it was paper based there was higher response rate because you go to the class room stand there with them and do it, but now it’s online and its kind of voluntary so whether they do it or not is a little bit difficult to control”. D2: “I think the assessment methodology used by the quality assurance unit is problematic. Look, I thought a class of 150 students and they called me that 3 students had evaluated me and are dissatisfied with my approach to the course. I mean how can 3 students be representative of 150?” C2: “for me I think the assessment process is unfair, you will have few students doing the evaluation and they will use that as part of your assessment for promotion”. D1: “the thing is not working, last semester I logged in myself and evaluated my own course and that is what the quality assurance department brought to me as the outcome of my evaluation. Secondly, some of the questions they ask on the course evaluation form, we don’t know whether they are evaluating the course or the lecturer. Question like; did the lecture provided course outline at the beginning of the lecture? Did the sequence of lectures follow the outline? I think we should be serious with this electronic evaluation if we want a fair and better outcome”.

b. What does your Unit look for when conducting quality assessment?
Though all nine respondents in principle agreed that the quality of the academic standards (teaching, learning and research) remains the focus of the assessment process, some of them expressed the view that quality assessment should go beyond teaching, learning and research. For example: C1: “… quality assessment should not be limited to only teaching and learning and research but the entire life cycle of the University. There should quality evaluation on administrative staff, student services; I mean all aspect of the University life including finding a way to evaluate the character of the student we train”. D1: “ideally the quality evaluation process should be expanded to cover other aspects of the academic life so that will more comprehensive”.
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.0. Chapter Introduction
This chapter of the research has been structured into two parts, discussion and conclusion. Built on the analytical framework, the discussion section of this chapter reviews and provides interpretation to the research findings based on the research questions, theoretical assumptions, and the primary objective of the research. The discussions compare findings to adopted theory and literature in order to provide explanation for unexpected patterns of results and the reasons behind patterns found in the findings.

Also, the discussion is focused on three main indicators that presented significant amount of data adequate to represent full view of the governance characteristic of both internal and external quality assurance system. Discussions of this research thus, emphases on the primary objective, financial governance and the organizational structure of both internal and external quality assurance system. However, since the objective of this research is to explore how the Universities could respond to the internal and external quality assurance dynamics, the discussion will be limited to the Case (UG) and emphasize on the IQA system whilst providing highlights for the EQA as a context for better understanding. The conclusion section of this chapter on the other hand, will present the research outcome. This includes; logical reflection on the entire study, recommendations and weakness of the study. Consequently, this chapter is organized around research questions 1b, 1c and 1d.

The analysis of the relationship between University of Ghana and NAB confirmed that there is an assumed working relationship between the two institutions and by extension, the internal and external QA systems, which suggest that there is a weak link/relationship between the internal and external QA system. Findings also showed some weaknesses in both internal and external quality assurance process. Furthermore, there was significant evidence that, the coexistence of the two QA systems creates tensions. Contextualizing these findings in relation to integration of both quality assurance systems, the research concluded that, the weak relationship between internal and external quality assurance adversely affect the effectiveness of the integration process.
6.1. Discussions

6.1.1. How can the EQA in Ghana be positioned theoretically?

6.1.1.1. Primary objective of EQA system

Based on the three main indicators selected for the discussion, it can be suggested that the EQA system is built on a state governance model. The objective of NAB is to achieve national education quality aspirations, which is designed to focus on the governance of the academic process rather than the content. The EQA system thus, concern about the quality of administrative process that provide the environment for quality academic work. Consequently, both interviews and documentary evidence revealed that, issues like number of staffs, physical infrastructure, financial and administrative structure, library and books are some of the critical indicators required for accreditation. The EQA process thus seems to protect public interest by ensuring that universities are credible to operate. Again, the EQA processes is deeply rooted in rigid regulations intended to ensure compliance and accountability rather than quality improvement. Findings from research data showed that the accreditation process has been codified and given a legal backing that makes compliance non-negotiable. NAB legislative instrument, 2010 (L.I 1984) and Act 744 respectively, provides detailed procedures for the accreditation processes and also, recommends punitive actions for the violation of the regulations. Thus, the objective and the processes for accreditation, is driven by accountability and compliance orientation of quality (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999) which according to Gornitzka and Maassen (2007) is more aligned to the state governance model (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007).

6.1.1.2. Funding Mechanism of the EQA Systems

Although findings indicated that NAB Act 2007 (Act 744) made provisions for alternative sources of funding for NAB, it was noted that NAB has not been able to adequately explore these alternative funding sources. As a result, NAB mainly dependent on state funding. As indicted by Clark (2004a), financial self-reliance of organization depends on a broad portfolio of income sources; NAB’s inability to adequately explore alternative income streams and their over reliance on the state, has led to certain consequences. The founding and the funding role of the government increase the steering capacity of the state and legitimize the state’s steering from distance. The fusion of NAB’s budget into the state budget suggests that the state could use financial governance to control the operations of NAB. The financial governance of NAB thus shows more signs of the state governance model.
6.1.1.3. The Organizational Structure of the EQA System

Findings suggested that the organizational structure of NAB is built on principle of representation and participation. According to NAB Act 2007 (Act 744) the composition of the Accreditation Board should be made up of representatives from the State, private and public higher education sector, public service commission, professional associations and examination bodies. Meaning, in principle, the organizational structure of the EQA system follows the democratic version of higher education governance as described by de Boer and Stensaker (2007), that allows vested interest of different actors from different constituencies of the University to be pursued by representation (de Boer & Stensaker, 2007).

However, a critical look at the composition of this governance structure rather reveals a very interesting situation. Out of the fifteen members Board, government or the state has four direct appointees. This includes two appointments from the Ministry of Education, the Chairperson of the Board and the Executive Secretary of NAB. Indirectly, the government is also represented by two state agencies (The Attorney General Department and the Public Service Commission) that are likely to subscribe to government views with respect to specific policy direction of NAB. Hence, the composition of the accreditation board seems to create a power imbalance that favor and empower the state to exert more influence and control over NAB.

With single majority representation on the Board, the state has the better capacity to effectively negotiate and built support for its views on specific policy direction or issue regarding the accreditation process. Although findings provided no evidence of external state interference, the structural composition of the NAB seems not to prevent a potential political interference and abuse. The state through it majority representation on the Board, could internally and legitimately, interfere in the accreditation process. Hence, it is argued that though the governance structure of the accreditation system has been organized in democratic governance model, in practice, it is exhibits the very strong state governance model as described by Gornitzka and Maassen (2007).

6.1.2. How can the IQA in the University of Ghana be positioned theoretically?

This question has been answered based on the three primary indicators of the analytical framework for the research. These are primary object, financial governance and the organizational structure of the IQA Unit at the University of Ghana. Summary from findings
suggest that the IQA system of the UG is organized around hybrid governance model (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2000), with strong characteristics of the state model and weak institutional model. Comparing it to the famous triangle of coordination (Clark, 1983), the IQA system of UG could be placed in-between the state and the institutional model but closer to the extreme corner of the state. The complex mix of state and institutional governance model creates misalignment between the governance structure of the University and the IQA Unit. As a result, there is tension between the IQA Unit and the academic core at the implementation level of the IQA process.

6.1.2.1. Primary objective of IQA system

Every organization has an objective. The objective of an organization is the reason for it existence. The objective of an organization thus, drives the organizational vision, structures and the process to achieve the vision. It is suggested therefore that there should be logical links between how organizational structure is defined; the vision of the organization; and the processes adopted to achieve the vision. In a similar fashion, the sub units within an organization ideally should reflect the vision of the parent organization and also, be in tune to its processes to achieve the overall objective. It was therefore not surprising that seven out of nine respondents defined the objective of the IQA processes in the context of the strategic vision of the UG to become a “world class research intensive university in the next decade” (UG, 2014)

Interpreting the quote from Q1

“The major objective of the IQA processes is to achieve and maintain higher standards that are applicable to HE and ensuring that the University is using the best practices for academic work (teaching, learning and research). This will ensure that the university’s vision of attaining world class status will be realized”

and P3;

"Our IQA measures encourage effective teaching and research that will propel the University of Ghana to be one of the world class universities both in Africa and the world”,

It is suggested that improving the knowledge production process to match best practices is key to the IQA process. The IQA system of UG thus, reflects a flexible process, which is built on principle of trust, mutual respect, freedom and choice rather than strict regulations. It was
also realized that the specific quality evaluation processes adopted were very consistent with the teaching, learning and research aspirations of the IQA process. The IQA recognizes the autonomy of the academics and uses multiple quality assurance evaluation process based on internal and external peer review, course evaluation, training in pedagogy, and exams modulation. These processes reflect the quest for continuous improvement of the content of academic programs and the knowledge production process. The objective of the IQA process also reflect more of what the academics consider as most important rather than student or state aspirations - as in the case of supermarket and the state governance model respectively. It is therefore argued that the primary objective of the IQA process of the University of Ghana is likened to the improvement orientation of quality assurance (Smeby & Stensaker 1999), which is more associated with the institutional governance model (Olsen, 2007).

6.1.2.2. Financial governance of the IQA system

Like any other organization, Universities require funding to accomplish their mission. Again, one could safely assume a symbiotic relationship between funding and Quality especially in the context of higher education. Funding has been identified as one of the core components of university governance that has direct impact on access and the quality of institutional processes, output and outcome (Dobbins et al., 2011). Quality on the other hand is determined by the ability of the university to generate additional funding outside the traditional government sources to enhance and sustain high standards.

However, research has it that, it is not only enough to have funds available to execute institutional programs, also critical is how these funds are well distributed among the various academic and administrative units of the university. According to Nkrumah-Young and Powell (2008), “public funding, through resource allocation models influences HEIs’ behavior according to how funding reaches them” (Nkrumah-Young & Powell, 2008, p. 245)

Resources allocation mechanism or model could thus be seen as a strategic instrument for government to determine which public university receives what, when and to which sector. Resources allocation model thus, establishes the nature of financial relationship between the government and public universities. It could be realized however that, whether this relationship is built on strict or flexible financial regulations, resource allocation mechanism promotes accountability, reduces potential financial conflict between the State and public universities and also, provides avenues for the universities to make strategic choice within the complex environment they operate.
Budgeting has been identified as one of the common resource allocation instrument used by government to distribute funds to higher education institutions, and it can be either input-based or output-based. Jongbloed (1999) has defined institutional budgeting as “set of procedures and decisions relating to resources allocation by central administration to different department or unit of an organization” (Jongbloed, 1999, p. 143). Input-base budgeting such as earmarked funding and negotiated funding, though argued to be effective accountability instrument for higher education institutions in developing countries, it is associated with the rigid state control and bureaucracies which result in inefficiencies and waste (World Bank, 2000). It is also characterized by slow decision-making process and inefficiencies that undermines principle of good governance. Consequently, it is argued that the accountability notion of the State governance model which creates excessive controls, could limit the ability of the universities to utilize funds in pursuance of specific strategic mission other than government national educational policy direction. This situation could result in a deficit in institutional innovation and growth.

In recent years however, there has been a gradual shift of state funding mechanism from the bureaucratic input-based to performance oriented output-based funding to promote accountability, innovation and growth. This is because while it is agreed that output-based funding is a way to reduces States political control of funding and allow universities to control the financial inputs in reference to the strategic mission and operations, they are still linked to state budget to ensure that within the context of institutional financial freedom, accountability is not lost. The flexible nature of output-based funding suggests that, the State only provides the financial direction and allow the public universities to strategically adopt to the change dynamics of it operational environment in order to make relevant choices that will promote quality, innovation, growth and also, strengthen their competitive position in the higher education market. Though (Nkrumah-Young & Powell, 2008, p. 257) have argued that the output-based funding may create “ethical dilemmas” which may also affect quality, looking at the dynamic nature of the environment public universities operates, output-based funding appears to be strategically advantageous in promoting both accountability and innovation that will ensure quality and growth.

Though output-based funding has been argued to be more appropriate to support effective strategic management, accountability and transparency without compromising quality and efficiency (Nkrumah-Young & Powell, 2008), the IQA Unit of UG operates on the input-
based budgeting (itemized budgeting). Input-based budgeting is characterized by strong external control, bureaucracies and slow decision-making process, which limits the ability of the IQA Unit to freely operate and make strategic choices regarding its operations.

As evident in the findings, the IQA Unit of UG depends solely on the University central administration for its funds and the University is heavily financed by the State. Without any alternative sources of funding to augment the required resources for its optimum operation, the IQA Unit is placed under severe constrains which impair their effectiveness. The funding mechanism of the IQA Unit is thus consistent with funding process in the state governance model (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007) which according to Dobbins et al. (2011), rather empowers the state and curtails institutional discretion to utilize funds for strategic needs.

6.1.2.3. Organizational structure of the IQA system

“Every human activity from the making of pots to placing of man on moon gives rise to two fundamental and opposing requirements: division of labor into various tasks to be performed; and coordination of these tasks to accomplish the activity” (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 3). Division of labor and the idea of coordination of task require that organizations be put into formal structures to support task distribution and processes to achieve specific organizational objective. In his analysis on the nature of entrepreneur universities, Clark (2004a) also argued that the “capacity of an institution to be highly proactive must be rooted in altered organizational foundations, an organizational framework that encourages fluid action and change-oriented attitudes” (Clark, 2004a, p. 357). Consequently, it is argued that to achieve operational efficiency and effectiveness, organizational structure need to formalize, specify and simplify the operational processes of organization to reflect the size, resource, mission and the operational environment of the organization. Moreover, the fact that organization is a single cell with multiple units that need to communicate with each other requires that, organizational processes is properly coordinated together to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Thus, to a very large extent, the quality of any organizational system or sub-system depends on how resources and processes are effectively structured and coordinated.

Findings from the organization of the IQA system suggest that, IQA system is modeled on bureaucratic top-down hierarchically governance structure consisting of four levels, namely policy; supervision; management; and implementation. However, findings from the IQA processes suggest that in practice, the hierarchical structure does not run a full course from policy to implementation. It was noted that because of bottom-heavy nature of university
governance structure, the top-down hierarchical structure truncates at the management level (where the IQA Unit is located) and changes into a reverse order (Bottom–up). Whilst findings showed two-way communication (top-down and bottom-up), between the Council, Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor Academics and the IQA Unit, communication between the management and implementation levels was a single channel communication from the IQA Unit to the Deans. The Deans do not directly communicate back to the IQA Unit but through the Provost at the Supervision level of the IQA governance structure. The structure of the IQA system thus, exhibits characteristics of two governance models. On one hand is a hierarchical bureaucratic State governance model that control the quality assurance processes (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007). On the other hand, the structure of the IQA system exhibits characteristics of the Institutional governance model (Olsen, 2007) which is organized around collegiate chair system that controls the content of the IQA process the at the implementation level. Other characteristics of the State model seen in the organizational structure of the IQA system are that, the head of the IQA Unit is appointed by the University council rather than elected by Electoral College.

The nature of the organization structure of IQA system at the UG places the IQA Unit in a complex web in the quality evaluation process. While the IQA Unit is expected to exert some level of control on academic activities through quality evaluation process, they are at the same time expected not to interfere in the teaching and learning process. Though findings showed no significant control of the IQA process over teaching and learning processes, there were strong concerns of potential resistance to the quality evaluation process by the academic core at the implementation level of the IQA process. Thus, the IQA Unit of the University of Ghana recognizes the autonomy of the academic profession as a hindrance to their capacity to enforce their regulations. As expressed by Q1 and Q2, (see 5.2.2b Chapter five) this was a source of worry that significantly affects the work of the IQA Unit. This finding is consistent with scholarly view that, “pattern of institutional complexity experienced by organizations is never completely fixed and that the nature of that complexity is fundamentally shaped by processes within organizational fields” (Greenwood et al., 2011, p. 318). The complex IQA process seems to have created institutional complexity that unfortunately impede the work of the IQA Unit.

Also, there seem to be functional loosely coupling (Weick, 1976) in the organizational structure of the IQA system. Though the IQA Unit claims to be responsible for ensuring quality if teaching, learning and research (see Q1 and Q2 in 5.2.1a, Chapter five), it emerged
from the data analysis that there was no specific strategy in the IQA process for research at the Unit. Rather, policies on quality assurance in research are managed by a different independent academic Unit, which has no collaboration with the IQA Unit. Findings thus, suggest weak cooperation and coordination between quality assurance strategies for teaching and research. The organizational structure of the IQA system is a mix of complex internal process that creates internal tension between the academic core and the IQA Unit and consequently, affects the effective functioning of the IQA Unit.

*Figure 5.6.1: Organizational Structure of IQA System-University of Ghana*

Source: Author’s Construct

**Note:**
1. Arrows indicate the relationship between the administrative and academic Units in the IQA process.
2. Single and Double arrow heads indicate the nature of the relationship (reciprocal / Non-reciprocal)
3. Dashed and full arrows indicate the strength of the relationship (Weak / Strong)
6.1.3. Relationship between Internal and External Quality Assurance

Findings suggested assumed relationship between the IQA and EQA. This is an indication that the EQA system has little influence on the IQA system. According to the findings, there is weak formal relationship between the IQA system and the EQA system. Rather than deliberately planned system of coordination and cooperation, it was noted that the relationship between IQA and EQA is loosely coupled (Weick, 1976). The relationship is built on belief that “all organizational processes of the university are geared towards quality”. Interpreting the above quote form N2 (See 5.1.1c, Chapter five), also suggest that NAB recognizes quality as a fundamental value of the governance and organizational processes of UG. This view is consistent with the argument that quality is intrinsic to the governance process of higher education (Middlehurst, 1992).

Considering the intrinsic value of quality, NAB’s view that governance and organizational processes of UG are geared towards quality could be logically justified. However, in practice, quality assurance seems to be conditioned on other factors other than quality itself. Ensuring quality thus, requires the need for deliberate efforts to combine resources and strategies to provide the needed environment. Findings suggested that NAB soft view on this principle, has created a vacuum that has rather empowered the UG to independently conduct its IQA activities without rescores to any established EQA protocols, but within the context of the available institutional strategies and resources. Perhaps it was not surprising when all nine respondents suggested that IQA process of the UG is strictly an internal institutional process, which has nothing to do with the EQA process of NAB. However, the danger is that, the absence of NAB in the IQA processes, especially in the context of inadequate intuitional resources, IQA though ideally desirable, could become a matter of choice and intuitional priority rather than commitment to specific quality assurance strategy that could be monitored and evaluated for improvement.

Though to a certain degree, there is recognition from NAB that, the two quality assurance systems are not mutually exclusive (see N1 and N2 at 5.1.1c, Chapter five), findings from the UG showed strong, independent, and disconnected IQA system, which could not be effectively coordinated and integrated. Interestingly, all nine respondents suggested that the establishment of the IQA Unit of UG and it operations was an independent institutional policy initiative and had nothing to do with NAB regulations or requirements. The historical reasons assign to this view suggest that the UG view quality assurance as traditionally inherent in the
governance process. This view is consistent with the progressive dimension of quality assurance system (Stensaker, 2007) that recognizes quality assurance as naturally embedded principles in higher education governance.

On the other hand, NAB claims that IQA is a requirement of the external quality assurance process places the two quality assurance systems into conflict of attribution. Though these conflicting views between NAB and UG seems to support the idea that the concept of quality in higher education could sometimes emerge as a mandatory regulations of governmental reforms, or voluntary adaptation of HEIs (Stensaker, 2007), it is very unlikely that the two quality assurance systems could exist without any form of formal relationship as perceived by UG. Thus, the views expressed by the respondents from UG could be best interpreted as claim of institutional independence and autonomy, which in a way demonstrate the presence of strong institutional governance model at the UG.

These findings are the contrary to popular scholarly views that sees the IQA process as part of the EQA process (van Vught, 1994; Thune, 1996; Smey & Stensaker, 1999; Harvey & Newton, 2004). Indeed, this view is reinforced in a much clearer form when Stensaker (2007) argued that, “government mandatory requirements are important driving force behind exiting and new forms of quality assurance schemes” (Stensaker, 2007,p.113). Thus quality assurance, whichever form will require that it operate within the framework of national quality assurance policy and strategy.

It is therefore argued that, while this research recognizes the general difficulty for the EQA system to engage with the teaching, learning and research processes, total independence of the University of Ghana to handle the IQA process could cause functional imbalances in the national quality assurance strategies. Consequently, it is further argued that the conflicting views expressed by respondents, though could be factual, signifies that both institutions (UG and NAB) have little appreciation for the interconnectedness of the two quality assurance systems, making the two institutions less willing to effectively coordinate their activities. This is because whilst UG sees NAB involvement in the IQA process as control and encroachment on the institutional autonomy, NAB is less willing to know what goes on in the organization and process of the IQA. Rather, NAB seems to be interested only in how UG responds to quality evaluation process and not how UG engages it environment to manage the quality enhancement enterprise (Harvey & Newton, 2004).
Conclusions

6.2.1. Conclusion on the objectives of the IQA and EQA system

Discussion on the objectives of the two quality assurance systems suggests that they are fundamentally built on different objectives that fit into the accountability and improvement orientation of quality assurance (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999). Though findings also suggested that these different quality orientations are not mutually exclusive, it is argued however that, ideally the coexistence of internal and external quality assurance should be based on a collective consciousness. A consciously developed relationship between internal and external quality assurance could mitigate tensions that exist between the two quality assurance systems at UG and NAB.

The objectives of the two quality assurance systems produce tension between institutional autonomy and the quest for accountability. The existing tensions between the internal and external quality assurance systems also suggest lack of awareness (Dourish & Bellotte, 1992) between the two quality assurance systems. This is a worrying sign that demonstrate weak coordination and cooperation that could negatively affect integration of the two quality assurance systems. Again, the tension brings to bare the critical question, should the State intervene in the wake of strict EQA system and high perception of falling quality education in Ghana (Ayile, 2011)? Perhaps yes, the state should intervene and not interfere. By state intervention, it is argued that NAB should play a supervision role in the IQA process by ensuring that adopted IQA strategies are adhered to and implemented to achieve intended objectives of the IQA system of UG. It is therefore argued that through collaborative efforts, UG and NAB could establish formal coordination mechanism that could strengthen cooperation between internal and external QA processes. This could ensure that the IQA strategies of UG are better aligned and connected to EQA to achieve the set objectives.

In view of processes and the objectives of the two quality assurance systems, it is argued that, IQA system of UG is built on internally designed flexible process that aims at promoting quality enhancement and improvement. It is therefore more likely to be aligned to the institutional governance model, where autonomy and self-governance is seen as central to guarantee quality of teaching, research and learning (Olsen, 2007). On the other hand, the EQA system is built on non-negotiable regulations that ensure compliance and accountability to set standard. Consequently, the EQA system is most likely to be aligned to the State governance model where strict adherence to set standard is key in achieving system objectives.
6.2.2. Conclusions on financial governance of the IQA and EQA

Findings suggest there is alignment in the funding mechanism used by both quality assurance systems. Rather than output-based funding model like performance-centered budget that link institutional budgeting to achievement of specific institutional targets, both quality assurance systems operate input-based budget where fund allocation is based on expenditure on specific inputs, which are usually linked to indicators such as staff numbers, student numbers, and specific operational cost. Thus, the budgeting mechanism of the two QA system are closely linked to the state governance model, were financial governance function on principles of transparency and accountability and are usually fused with national budget (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007). Though there was general recognition of the need for additional funding sources, it was realized that both the IQA and EQA systems has not adequately explored that opportunity hence their total reliance on State funding which apparently is inadequate to support their operations. Findings on the limited alternative funding and the reliance on state funding are consistent with Clark argument that, “financial self-reliance lies in a broad portfolio of income sources” (Clark, 2004a, p. 358).

As such, the existing financial relationship between the State and NAB, and the University of Ghana and the IQA Unit could be viewed as a case of resource dependency (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The State and the University of Ghana respectively, guarantee the flax of critical resources (financial) to both quality assurance systems. This situation creates a dependency syndrome that enhances the likelihood of the two quality assurance systems to be directly and indirectly subjected to external control from the State or the University. This is however, not to suggest that financial independence of the two quality assurance systems will automatically guarantee operational Independence. It is however argued by this study that, financial independence could create opportunity for NAB and the IQA Unit of UG to develop their capacities to make strategic choices that could make them more effective to execute their mandate.

6.2.3. Conclusions on the organizational structure of IQA and EQA system

Unlike the organizational structure of the EQA system, which is built primarily on the state governance model, the IQA is a mix of state and the institutional governance model. The hybrid governance system of UG has created misalignment between the UG governance structure (which is institutional model) and the governance structure of the IQA system. The challenge of this misalignment is manifested at the implementation level of the IQA process where the bureaucratic state modeled IQA structure, cannot fit into the bottom-heavy
institutional governance structure of the University. The governance structure of the IQA system thus creates tension between accountability requirements of the IQA system and academic freedom on the other hand. Consequently, the core function of the IQA system, which is to ensure a balance between academic freedom and academic output through evaluation is affected. The IQA Unit is not able to effectively coordinate the implementation of the quality assurance process. The relationship between the organizational structure of the two quality assurance systems and their respective institutional governance system is depicted in the diagram below:

*Figure 6.6.2: EQA and IQA System in Respective Institutional Governance Structures*

![Diagram showing the relationship between EQA and IQA systems in different institutional governance structures.](image)

**Source: Author’s Construct**

Note: Full and Dash arrows indicate strong and weak alignment of IQA and EQA governance model. Light shade arrows indicate insignificant relationship between internal and external QA and the respective governance models.

Relating the governance structure of both quality assurance systems reveal a great concern on integration of the two quality assurance systems. There seem to be lack of mutual understanding created by communication gap between the two quality assurance systems. There is no direct communication between the IQA Unit of UG and the NAB. Communication is routed through the central university management at the policy level of the IQA process. This arrangement delay communication process between the EQA and IQA and unduly makes the IQA system reactive. The passive involvement of the IQA Unit in the
communication process between NAB and the UG is more likely to affect awareness between the two quality assurance systems and ultimately affects the implementation of quality assurance policies between UG and NAB. This finding is consistent with Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2005) argument that shared awareness is one of the fundamental prerequisite for the implementation of holistic model for quality assurance in higher education (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2005).

6.3. Reflections on main conclusions of research

Considering the findings and the conclusion drawn, one could argue that, the initial assumptions of the research to a very large degree have been confirmed. The research has shown that the co-existence of internal and external quality assurance creates tensions rather than alignment at UG. This is because, while both quality assurance systems (internal and external) agree on the need for quality improvement, surprisingly, there are contradictory claims regarding the relationship between internal and external quality assurance. The contradictory claims project quality improvement/enhancement and accreditation (accountability and compliance) as independent stand-alone system rather than integrated system that are interdependent. This is an indication of lack of shared awareness between the internal and external quality assurance systems, which according to Srikanthan & Dalrymple (2005), is fundamental prerequisite for the implementation of holistic model for quality assurance in higher education (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2005. p. 77). Consequently, there exists unjustified concern that involvement of the NAB in the internal quality assurance process will create interference that will undermine the autonomy of the University of Ghana. This concern has created a vacuum and places the IQA process solely in the hands of University of Ghana. However, in the wake of limited financial and other resources, it is legitimate to argue that the quality needs of the University of Ghana will compete with other needs. The danger could be that, without any form of external involvement in the internal quality assurance process, quality could be intentionally but reluctantly sacrifice.

Also, this study has shown that quality assurance is a steering instrument for both NAB and the University of Ghana. However, evidence from the research suggests that the steering process is more effective in the state governance model than the institutional governance model. According to the findings, the state model is designed in a single hierarchical authority structure that guarantees alignment of the state-agency relations between NAB and the government of Ghana. This aligned relationship ensures that there is a smooth transition of
the quality assurance process from the policy level to implementation level. Again, with the benefit of legal and regulatory instruments, the EQA system is able to effectively steer the affairs of University of Ghana from distance. On the other hand, the hybrid governance system of the IQA Unit is misaligned with the internal governance structure of the University of Ghana—(which is purely institutional in nature and for that matter, bottom-heavy). The misaligned relationship creates smooth transition of the quality assurance process at policy and supervision levels but encounters difficulties at the implementation stage where the living autonomy of the academic core generates a form of resistance to the internal quality assurance process.

6.4. Recommendations

From the above discussion it is argued that, one of the ways of achieving “desired quality” (Ayile, 2011), is to focus on the dynamics of the relationship between the internal and external quality assurance within the context of the governance structure they operate. The two-step process requires that both internal and external quality assurance systems should first be aligned to the governance system within which they operate. This is to ensure that quality assurance could be organized within specific institutional context that avoid tension and also, stimulate harmony between the quality assurance processes (Policy, Supervision, Management and Implementation). Secondly, there is the need for the internal and external quality assurance system to be appropriately coordinated in a more integrated manner so that operations of the two quality assurance systems could be harmonized to coexist with little or no tensions.

It is further argued that, there is the need for University of Ghana to restructure its IQA governance structure to fit into the institutional governance model of the University. University of Ghana should rather form a network of IQA management between the four colleges and the IQA Unit. This approach will directly involve the main academic units in the management process of the IQA system. It is belief that a more decentralized the IQA management structure, could promote shared governance and ensures that IQA Unit is not seen as foreign enterprise among academia. It is thus, argued that with the involvement of the Provost of the colleges in the management of the IQA system, communication and coordination between the IQA and the academic core could be improved to facilitate implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the quality assurance policy and process.
Also, it is recommended that the IQA Unit should play active role in academic policy issues since the academic quality remains the main focus of the IQA policy. Consequently, it is suggested that the head IQA Unit who by institutional arrangement, is a senior academic of professorial rank, should be made a member of the academic board. This will empower and give the IQA Unit some leverage to effectively work with the Provosts form the colleges and the Deans who are also members of the academic board (UG, 2010). As such, it is believed that the elevation of the head of QA Unit to the Academic Board could ensure that quality assurance influence the academic decision at the policy level. This suggests that, academic policy initiatives, strategies for implementation, monitory and evaluation, could be easily discussed within the context of quality assurance policy for appropriate actions at the policy level. This will increase and expand the participation of the academic core in the quality assurance process and make internal quality assurance a collectively owned system and not to be seen as system of interference in the academic freedom and autonomy. Based on the above discussion, a new organizational structure for the IQA system of UG is presented in figure 7 below:

*Figure 7.6.3: Recommended Organizational Structure for the IQA System-UG*

Source: Author’s Construct

Note: A, B, C and D represent the four Colleges.
Finally, in order to effectively coordinate the IQA and the EQA system, it is recommended that NAB should engaged the University of Ghana as partner in the quality assurance business and together develop official structure that could allow NAB to monitor and evaluate the IQA process without encroaching on the autonomy of the University, and at the same time, not compromising on their standards. To do this, it is recommended that legislative instrument, 2010 (L.I 1984) should be amended to make IQA a mandatory requirement of the accreditation process. This will mean that universities as part of the accreditation and re-accreditation process will be required to present IQA policies and measurable implementation strategies to achieve them. It must however be reemphasized that, the IQA policies and strategies should be owned by the University of Ghana so that it will be aligned to the governance structure and the strategic vision of the University. This means that the NAB will only play a supervision and evaluation role to ensure that the UG is committed to implementing the agreed IQA policy and strategies.

Furthermore, to enhance the coordination process, though it is recommended that the University of Ghana should control the content (policy) and process (Strategy) of the IQA process, there is the need for an established relationship that links the outcome of the IQA process to re-accreditation process of NAB. Making the outcome of the IQA process as one of the fatal indicators (see N1 at 5.1.2c, Chapter five) for re-accreditation process could guarantee the legitimacy of the supervision and evaluation role of NAB, and promote credible IQA process at the UG. It is believed that by this approach, University of Ghana and NAB could be committed to the IQA process, which according to Smeby and Stensaker (1999) is more flexible viable option to ensure competitive advantage, and opportunity for institutional growth (Smeby & Stensaker, 1999). This is demonstrated in the diagram below.

*Figure 8.6.4: Integrated Framework for Achieving Desired Quality*

Source: Author’s Construct
From the figure 7.6.4, it is argued that to achieve “Desire quality” (Ayile, 2011) that balances accountability and improvement requires two-step integrated process. First and foremost, there is the need for structural alignment between the governance structures of both internal and external quality assurance systems and the parent organizational structure. This phase of the integrated quality assurance process is aimed at promoting internal coordination of structures and process that could reduce tensions among the quality assurance unit or agency and other units in the quality assurance process (Phase IA and IB). Secondly, there is also the need to have a common platform that can structurally integrate the IQA process and the EQA process to ensure that, whilst the University of Ghana controls the content of the IQA processes and strategies, they are monitored and evaluated by NAB to ensure balance between the quality needs of the University and NAB (Phase IIA and IIB). This means that whilst the IQA system focuses on improvement, the accountability requirements are also adhered to (IMPROVEMENT + accountability). Likewise, the EQA system should not focus only on accountability requirement but also interested and participate in the quality improvement process (ACCOUNTABILITY + improvement). This suggests that, there is the need for a shared governance of the IQA process that could balance institutional autonomy of UG and the accountability requirement of NAB.

6.5. Weakness of Research

The research has been built on the assumption that quality is independent of operation environment of the institution (UG). This assumption define quality in it ideal form. However, in the wake of numerous challenges facing UG especially very high enrollment and low financial capacity, it is probable that academic quality will be affected by other external factors. One could therefore argue that the inability of this research to account for these external factors may influence the outcome of the research. However, this omission is a deliberate design to explore how the University of Ghana in an ideal situation, should respond to the dynamics of internal and external quality assurance. It is therefore argued that the objective of this research has been achieved and the outcome is not influenced in this context.
Reference List


Documents Used for Analysis


Appendix A: Interview Guide

A. Internal Quality Assurance as University policy. (University Leaderships)
   1. Does the University of Ghana have IQA Unit or policy?
   2. Is the establishment of IQA Unit a deliberate institutional policy or a requirement from NAB? (Relating IQA and EQA)
   3. How does the University define internal quality? (Institutional Meaning of Quality)
   4. What is the goal or the objective of the IQA system established by the University? (Purpose of the IQA system)
   5. What are the specific processes required to achieve these goals?

B. IQA in Practice (Implementation)- Perspective from Provosts and Heads of Department.
   1. Could you briefly tell me what you do as the XYZ of the University? (function of academic units)
   2. How do you define quality? (Contextual meaning of quality)
   3. Could you briefly tell me about the IQA processes of the University? (Awareness of the IQA process)
   4. a. Do you think the IQA processes of the University affects the work of this office? (Relationship between the Institutional QA policy and the local level)
       b. How?
   5. What are the specific internal quality needs of this office?
   6. Does the internal quality needs of your office met by the IQA arrangement of the University? (Sufficiency of the IQA process)
   7. What would you say is the main purpose of the IQA processes of the office? (focus of the IQA process at the local level)

C. IQA in Practice (Management)- Perspective from IQA Unit.
   I. Funding: Sources and Distribution
      1. How is the work of this office funded? (Source of funding and how its obtained)
      2. Who decide on how to use these funds? (Control of resources)
      3. What form the basis of fund allocation to you outfit? (Resources allocation Mechanism)
      4. Does the funding institution able to meet your budget adequately? (Funds Sufficiency)
      5. What other sources of funding do you have? (alternative sources of funding and resource dependency)
II. Authority: Resource control and independence

1. What is the source of the authority to make decision / from where do you attain your authority to take QA decisions?
2. Are the decisions of the IQA Unit of UG final? (independence and interference)
3. (i). In your view, which the resources (Inputs) would you consider key to your work? (Control of strategic resources).
   a. Human resources
   b. Capital resources
   c. Financial resources
   d. Others ……
   (ii). How do you control these resources?

III. Organization of IQA: Objective, Structure, Change and Leadership

1. Which of the following statement would you say best describe the objective of the internal quality assurance process?
   a. Ensure quality of scholarship- (teaching, learning and research)
   b. Ensure skills transfer and employability of students
   c. Ensure accountability and compliance of government regulations
   d. To promote participation and protect the interest of stakeholders of the University.
2. What are the specific processes designed to achieve this objectives?
3. What are the processes of selecting leaders for this institution?
   (a. How is head of the IQA Unit selected- Election or appointment?)
   (b. Who is responsible for the selection of the head of the institution)
4. How would you classify or describe the leadership position of this Unit?
   a. Academics
   b. Political appointments
   c. Professional Businessmen
   d. Stakeholders representatives
5. What is the main cause for change in this Unit? (How change is initiated, the basis and who initiates)
6. Does the operation of the IQA system in any influenced by the regulations of NAB?
7. How is decision taken in this office? / Do you have specific processes for taking decision? (organizational structure of the IQA Unit)
8. How would describe the decisions made in this IQA Unit?
   a. Economical
   b. Political
   c. Academic
   d. Other ……
D. EQA in Practice (Management)- Perspective from EQA (NAB)

I. Funding: Sources and Distribution

1. How is the work of this office funded? *(Source of funding and how its obtained)*
2. Who decide on how to use these funds? *(Control of resources)*
3. What form the basis of fund allocation to you outfit? *(Resources allocation Mechanism)*
4. Does the funding institution able to meet your budget adequately? *(Funds Sufficiency)*
5. What other sources of funding do you have? *(alternative sources of funding and resource dependency)*

II. Authority: Resource control and independence

1. What is the source of the authority to make decision / from where do you attain your authority to take QA decisions?
2. Are the decisions of the NAB final? *(independence and interference)*
3. (a). In your view, which the resources (Inputs) would you consider key to your work? *(Control of strategic resources).*
   a. Human resources
   b. Capital resources
   c. Financial resources
   d. Others ……

   (b). How do you control these resources?

III. Organization of EQA: Objective, Structure, Change and Leadership,

1. Which of the following statement would you say best describe the objective of the NAB?
   a. Ensure quality of scholarship- (teaching, learning and research)
   b. Ensure skills transfer and employability of students
   c. Ensure accountability and compliance of government regulations
   d. To promote participation and protect the interest of stakeholders of the University.
2. What are the specific processes designed to achieve this objective?
3. What are the processes of selecting leaders for this institution?
   (c. How is head of the IQA Unit selected- Election or appointment?)
   (d. Who is responsible for the selection of the head of the institution)
4. How would you classify or describe the leadership position of this Unit?
   a. Academics
   b. Political appointments
   c. Professional Businessmen
   d. Stakeholders representatives
5. What is the main cause for change in at NAB? *How change is initiated, the basis and who initiates*

6. Is the establishment of IQA Unit a mandatory requirement for all accredited universities? *looking at the relationship between external and internal QA from NAB perspective*

7. How is decision taken in this office? / Do you have specific processes for taking decision? *organizational structure of the IQA Unit*

8. How would describe NAB’s decisions on quality assurance and accreditation process?
   a. Economic
   b. Political
   c. Academic
   d. Other…….