



Achieving Quality Assurance Of Polytechnic Education In Ghana: The Role Of Stakeholders

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Abstract:

Quality assurance in higher education is by no means only an Africans concern. All over the world there is an increasing interest in quality and standards, reflecting both the rapid growth of higher education and its cost to the public and the private purse. Accordingly, if Ghana is to achieve its aspiration to be the most dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the Sub Saharan , then its Polytechnics should demonstrate that it takes the quality of its programmes and awards seriously and is willing to put into place the means of assuring and demonstrating that quality. This study sought to assess and examine quality assurance of Polytechnic education in Ghana by specifically looking at the role of stakeholders in achieving such quality assurance.

As a result two hundred (200) respondents were sampled from four Polytechnics with three (3) local industries from each Polytechnic environs. Fifty (50) academic and management staff were also selected from each Polytechnic to have a balance views from these stakeholders.

The sample was constituted using stratified sampling techniques from five main strata (stakeholders) with each stratum comprising fifty (50) randomly selected students, academic staff and management. Questionnaires were employed to collect primary data from the respondents.

Together with the other secondary data analysed, it was found out that, there is a strong view that specific opportunities and support for students to attain their personal goals are not provided by the Polytechnics, they lack smoothing progression of its academic lesson plan due to frequent strike actions by the Polytechnic Teacher Association of Ghana (POTAG), which have a negative effect on the Polytechnic's interactions with its stakeholders. The study also revealed that there is no evidence of development of public information systems, which has led to negative perception on quality of Polytechnic education in Ghana.

It was concluded that the quality assurance level of the Polytechnic is only fairly good and therefore requires some improvement. As a result it was recommended that local industries and other stakeholders should not just offer sponsorship to the students, but also inject rigour of the real business world to help boost the quality standard of the Polytechnics in Ghana.

Key words: *Quality Assurance, Stakeholders, Polytechnic in Ghana*

1.Introduction

Higher educational system all over the world is moving very fast into an era where the end-users of the products of higher education are demanding relevance and the need for special skills from the products of these institutions. Today, it is not enough to hold a certificate, it is important to be able to exhibit skills to carry out some services. Polytechnics in Ghana therefore need to ensure that the Inputs, Process and Outputs of these institutions through appropriate quality assurance programmes.

In 1963, the technical institutes were re-designated as polytechnics to run non-tertiary programmes. The Tamale and Ho technical institutes were elevated to polytechnic status in 1984 and 1986 respectively. The Cape Coast Polytechnic which was planned as a polytechnic was opened in 1986. In 1987, a committee was constituted by the government of Ghana dubbed, University rationalization committee to develop proposals for reforming the management, structure of academic institutions and funding of tertiary education in Ghana. Following the submission of the committee's report, the government issued a white paper in 1991 on the Reforms to the Tertiary Education System. The White Paper gave prominence to Polytechnic education and in 1993, following the promulgation of the Polytechnic Law, 1992 (PNDCL 321), the Polytechnics were upgraded to tertiary status. In line with government's policy of making the Polytechnics regionally based institutions, the Sunyani, Koforidua, Wa and Bolgatanga Polytechnics were also established. In 1994 the Polytechnics commenced the running of HND programmes. Using empirical data and a conceptual model, the results of this study indicate that quality assurance in the Polytechnics in Ghana is only fairly good due to neglected role of the stakeholders. It is accepted that educational institutions have many customers: students, staff, faculty, alumni, donors, and others. The role of the private sector in Polytechnic education in Ghana is desirable. It should not just about offering sponsorship or internship to the students, but also for injecting the rigour of the real business world.

2.Literature Review

2.1.Quality and Quality Assurance

2.1.1.The meaning of Quality

Attainment of quality within higher education in a competitive environment requires an emphasis on offering courses that reflect target customers and market demands) as well as using efficient processes.

The philosophy that quality assurance in higher educational institutions is student-centric with the aim of meeting market demands seems a laudable idea. However, market demands and target students expectations and needs are mostly not clearly defined by educationalist. Measurement of students and prospective students' needs as and procedures for courses delivery is critically important if the ultimate goal of academic quality depends on the target market's subjective comparison as posited by quality assurance expert like Jacques (1999).

Student's expected quality consists of expectations like safe lecture rooms which they do not verbalize because they assume that such expectations would be evident once admitted into the institution. Critical analysis into these expectations may not even bring them out. However, students will be dissatisfied if these assumed expectations are not met. Even so, if the expectations become parts and parcels of the course delivery, students will find it difficult to know. This according to Davies (2007) makes quality assurance in higher education a major challenge.

Exciting academic quality constitutes attributes of the service contributed by educational managers.

It is important to know that, assessing quality assurance in Polytechnic education in Ghana, the criterion of fitness for purpose' is a highly subjective term, the interpretation of which may vary from individual to individual. The perception of academic quality or service from the point of view of students, parents and other stakeholders may be different from that of the producer. The problem of the producer is aggravated by the fact that the number of students may be too large, and each one may have a different perception of quality. Therefore, third party such as a quality certification agency has to decide about the quality of the courses, lecturers, lecture theaters and the general academic environment. However, these quality certification agencies, according to Elliot, (2003) are mostly influenced by the producers.

2.1.2. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is based upon approach rather than a reactive approach. It emphasizes upon failure prevention rather than failure detection. It is an organization – wide policy that hinges upon proper planning.

Quality assurance is based upon the following three principles:

- ‘Quality is organization – wide’ – each functional department and activity must be assigned specific quality related responsibilities.
- ‘Right first time’ – failure prevention rather failure detection (be ready to face anticipated problems through proper planning).
- ‘Proper communication and cooperation’ - every employee in the organization must understand his role in terms of ensuring quality in his sphere of activity and also, his role in interfacing with other departments / people in achieving the same objective.

Quality assurance can be achieved in higher education by developing, operating and maintaining a well – document quality system.

2.2. *Types of Quality Audits*

There are three types of quality audits, namely. First party (internal), second party (external), and third party (extrinsic) audits.

2.2.1. First party quality audit

First party quality audit represents quality assurance unit at the various Polytechnics.

It is necessary that they are well trained for conducting this exercise. Also, it is important that they have no bias against the functional department being audited.

2.2.2. Second party quality audit (external audit)

The second party quality audit as the name suggests, is performed by the purchasing organization upon the supplier organization. The idea here is to have an assessment of the supplier’s processes in order to have confidence that the supplier would be able to good services of an agreed quality level on a sustained basis.

2.2.3.Third party quality audit (extrinsic audit)

This kind of audit is performed by the certification and supervisory bodies such as National Accreditation Board (NAB), National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX) on the applicant institutions seeking such certification. These bodies use freelance auditors registered with them, who have no commercial interest or involvement with the institutions to be audited.

2.2.4.Institutionalization of Quality Assurance in Polytechnic Education

All the Polytechnics have institutionalized quality assurance and are assessed by National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Board for Professional and Technician (NABPTX) as the main quality assurance agent in Ghana. NABPTEX for example has taken steps to coordinate the appointment of moderators for the various Polytechnics.

2.2.5.Teaching Strategies

According to Mann (1998) meeting the needs of students by improving quality is the key mandate of all educational managers and this mandate depends on the teaching strategies. This assertion was supported by Trowler (2005) who consider the learners' experiences through curriculum and teaching as the main goal of the concept of quality in higher educational institutions. Polytechnics in Ghana should not just meet the needs of students, but should employ effective teaching strategies to help exceed students' expectations. Zahorik (1997) intimated that higher educational managers should reach a middle ground where learning is mutually satisfying and presented as expected through unique and effective teaching strategies.

2.2.6.Lecture room pedagogies

Lecture room pedagogies constitutes traditional lecture, lecture notes, power point presentations , simulation exercises, class discussion, group assignments, and student presentations and virtual classroom learning. With the growth of technology and its prominence in higher education, there is lack of agreement on how technology-based pedagogies should be used to enhance the educational process (Yulong and Runyon, 2004). Research on the use of technology in higher education and studies of the direct link between the technology-enhanced pedagogies in the classroom and student learning

are both limited and conflicting. Schacter (1999) suggested cautious optimism for a positive relationship between the use of technology and student educational achievements.

College students' Expectations while Smith (2001) indicated faculty costs and time might outweigh the benefits of technology to student learning. Still other researchers have found no significant difference in student performance by using technology-enhanced pedagogies in classrooms (Rankin and Hoas, 2001; Spinelli, 2001).

Clark et al. (2001) assessed 14 educational technology tools and reported nine were positively associated with student learning. Alon (2003) found internet-based experiential exercises increased international business skills and abilities while Krentler and Willis-Flurry (2005) reported an enhancement in student learning, as demonstrated by stronger course performance, through the use of technology enhance pedagogies.

2.2.7. Public Awareness of quality in Polytechnic Education in Ghana

Public awareness on the role and nature of polytechnic education are not clearly understood in Ghana. Some members of the public felt that the polytechnics are duplicating what the universities are doing. Lack of understanding of the career-oriented nature of polytechnic education has been responsible for these misconceptions. Frequent strikes and threats of strike by Polytechnic Teachers Association of Ghana (POTAG) and other associations and unions within the Polytechnics community in Ghana have led to a negative public perception of Polytechnic education in Ghana.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. The role of stakeholders in achieving Quality Assurance

Anyone who affects or is affected by the actions of the Polytechnic is classified as a stakeholder.

Stakeholders of educational institutions are not only the academic board, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents, but employers, community groups and leaders, prospective students, religious bodies, society, media, etc. The performance of these stakeholders is critical in ensuring quality assurance in the Polytechnics' mandate of preparing graduates better for practical work with grounded theoretical and applied training to meet the manpower supply needs of the country.

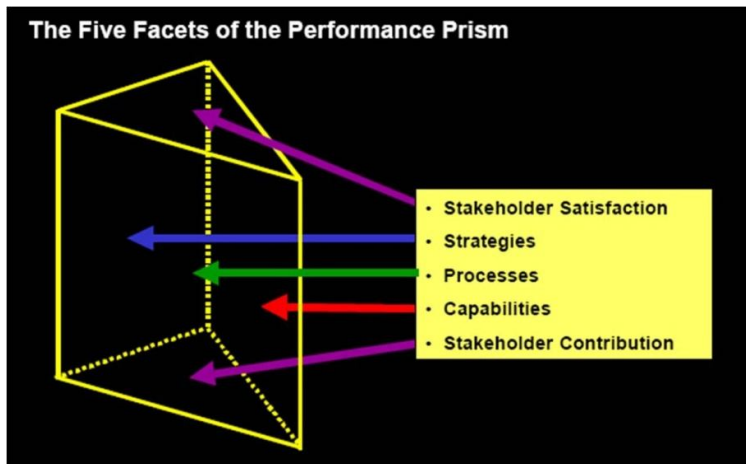


Figure1: The five facets of the Performance Prism

Source: Neely, Adams, and Crowe, (2001)

- Stakeholder Satisfaction (What are the key needs and wants of the students, parents, lecturers, employers, society, etc?)
- Strategies (What critical pedagogical strategies do the Polytechnics require if they are to provide quality education in order to satisfy the needs and wants of these stakeholders?)
- Processes (What processes can help meet the needs of the stakeholders?)

A process is the collection of sequential and logically related activities that lead to a certain value (that fulfill certain aims derived from the quality goals). Executing a process by delivering its objectives will result in certain outcomes. The effectiveness of the process must be measured by comparing the attained process outcomes with the process intended outcomes or benchmarks that set the level of the requested quality involved in that process. According to Thune (2005) the external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

- Capabilities (What capabilities do the Polytechnics need to operate and enhance these processes?)
- Stakeholders' Role (What roles do the Polytechnics require from its stakeholders if they are to provide and maintain quality education?)

Stakeholders	Their needs and wants	Their Role/ Contributions
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality education • Conducive academic environment • Effective career guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public awareness –raising, and advocacy
Lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement • Teaching and learning skills • Financial and non-financial benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of curricula to meet modern standards • Generate income for the Polytechnic • Establish a well-defined career path for students • Redirects teaching, learning and research to the needs of industries by reviewing curricula together with the private sector
Management (Academic Board, Quality Assurance Officers, Faculty Deans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements • Financial and non-financial benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their role is to prepare the elements of the process, its procedures and its evaluation methods • Administrate the execution of the procedure. • Systematically evaluate at the end of the process cycle the degree of achieving the objectives, attainment of intended outcomes and the fulfillment of the aims of that process.
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality education for their children • Responsible and skillful adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public awareness –raising, and advocacy • Provision of financial and material resources

Stakeholders	Their needs and wants	Their Role/ Contributions
Local industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality manpower for competitive advantage • Responsible and skillful workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public awareness-raising, advocacy and lobbying • consultancy and input into policy formulation • participatory learning and action entrepreneurial initiatives and training • management models and approaches development and sharing of practices of sustainable production and consumption

Table 1: Stakeholders of Higher Education needs and Role in achieving Quality Assurance

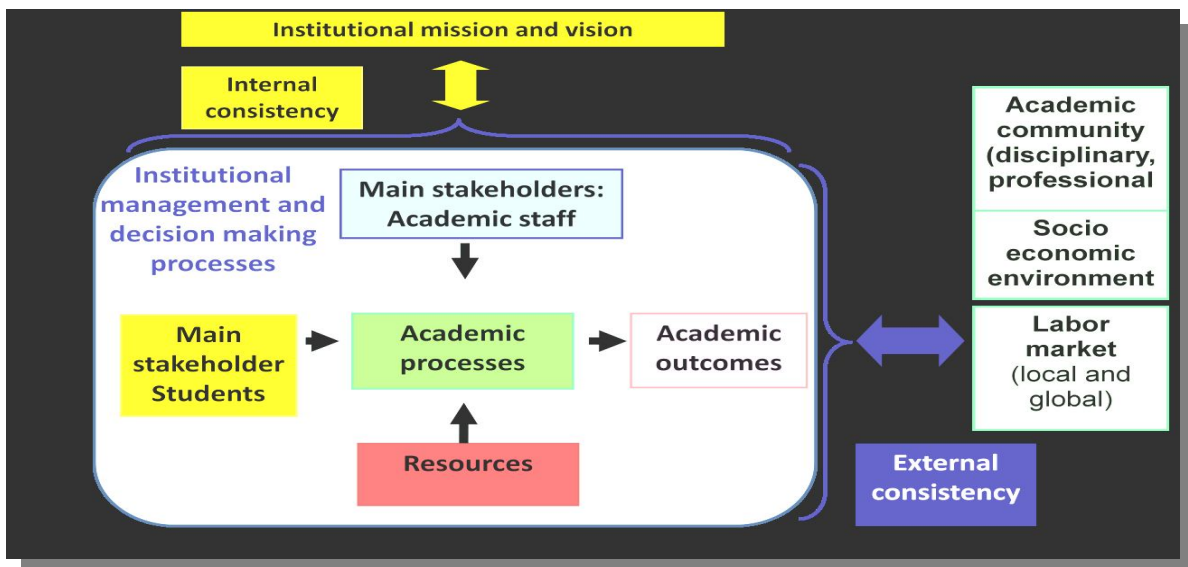


Figure 2: Factors influencing Quality Assurance in Higher Education
Source: Jung, (2005)

The above figure clearly brings out the various factors which influence Quality Assurance initiative in higher education. These factors according to Jung (2005) can go a long way in ensuring successful implementation of quality assurance in higher education.

However, Cooper and Foy (1967) posits that if these factors can hinder the implementation of quality assurance if not well managed and monitored.

3.1.1. Internal consistency

Internal consistency is set by the institution itself and consists of the Strategic Direction (Vision, Mission, Goals, Values Internal by-laws, regulations, rules and policies).

The Polytechnics should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement. The academic outcome according to Elliott (2003) is to meet the needs of both local and global labour market.

3.1.2. External consistency

External consistency is set by bodies outside the institution. Examples are the National and International Standards, Guidelines, Codes of Practices, Benchmarks, Accreditation Criteria.

These are set by national and international bodies such as NAB, MoHE directives, QAA-UK, ABET (for Engineering & IT programs), ACM (for IT subject areas) and ISO9000 Standards.

4. Research Methodology

Echtner and Ritchie (1991) argued that a combination of structured and unstructured methodologies is necessary to accurately measure the research phenomenon. Thus, following Echtner and Ritchie (1991) principle, both the structured and unstructured approaches were used in this study. In order to gain new insights, a descriptive and exploratory research strategy was chosen. Furthermore, a deductive approach was chosen to complement the exploratory research design of the study.

5. Data Analysis And Discussions

In order to test the identified hypotheses and examined the relative importance of the dimensions for assessing quality assurance, regression analysis was employed. The results are shown in table II.

A list of 11 statements which reflected both positive and negative evaluations of the Polytechnics were placed on the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to rate the various attributes of Polytechnic in order to obtain a profile of Polytechnic service quality (on a scale of 4 for strongly agree, to 1 for strongly disagree). Table 2 shows the

mean score and standard deviation for these attributes. In all, respondents are very positive about Staff willingness to listen to individual students' point of view, the service encounter provided by non-teaching staff and communication materials. However, the Polytechnics environments are perceived as not enabling the students to take responsibility for their personal development. Furthermore, there is a strong view that the Polytechnics' lessons are not progressed as plan and also specific opportunities and support for students to attain their personal goals are not provided by the Polytechnics. Such factors are likely to have a negative effect on the Polytechnics' quality assurance. However, it is interesting to note that the dimension of safety and hygiene lecture rooms were earlier identified as being relatively unimportant to the students when attending lectures.

Attributes	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
Staff are willing to listen to your individual point of view	2.6334	0.9931	1
Non-teaching staff, and communication materials are accessible to you	2.5921	1.1395	2
Staff provides prompt and timely service to you	2.4001	1.0634	3
Your complaints are constructively handled.	2.3006	1.0279	4
The lesson progressed as plan	2.2231	1.0224	5
The Polytechnic environment enables you to take responsibility for your personal development	2.2102	1.0212	6
Specific opportunities and support for you to attain your personal goals are provided	2.1832	1.0119	7

Table 2: Factors students look for when assessing quality assurance of the Polytechnics

5.1. Importance of attributes determine the quality of the Polytechnics by Students

In deciding which attribute will determine the quality assurance of the Polytechnic, the students were asked to rank factors that they consider most important. Each attribute was rated on a Likert 4-point scale (ranging from 4 = extremely important; to 1 = not important). A mean score and standard deviation for each attribute were calculated. From Table 3, sufficiency and availability of Audio Visual Aids / equipment and Sufficiency and modernization of text books and journals at Library are perceived as extremely

important. A substantial proportion of respondents are interested in the practical and critical thinking lesson plan, availability of teaching quality evaluation by students and adequacy of extracurricular activity to enhance student's development. Safety and hygiene of lecture rooms was generally considered less important, which is particularly interesting as it suggests that, at present, Safety and hygiene of lecture rooms (which is considered of particular significance in developed countries) is relatively unimportant in a developing country context.

Attributes	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
Sufficiency and availability of Audio Visual Aids / equipment	3.0744	1.0362	1
Sufficiency and modernization of text books and journals at Library	2.6804	1.0813	2
Availability of practical and critical thinking lesson plan	2.5487	1.1277	3
Availability of audit and evaluation system for teaching quality	2.4054	1.3232	4
Availability of teaching quality evaluation by students	2.3384	1.0892	5
Adequacy of extracurricular activity to enhance student's development	2.3342	1.0795	6
Adequacy, Safety and Hygiene of lecture rooms	2.3259	1.0752	7

Table 3: Relative importance of attributes determine the quality of the Polytechnics

Table 3 What factors do you look out for when you attend lectures?

		Course offered (HND Marketing)	I seldom think about practical and critical thinking when choosing a course
Course offered	Pearson	1	.012
Correlation			.131
		.	50
(HND Marketing)	Sig. (2-tailed)	50	
	N		

Table 4: Correlation between course offered (HND Marketing) and the need for practical and critical thinking lesson plan

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

The results of the above table indicate that there is no statistical relationship between the course offered (Marketing) and its practicality to the students. This means that the respondents do not rate Marketing as practical hands- on training course.

		Course offered (HND Electrical Engineering)	I seldom think about practical and critical thinking when choosing a course
Course offered	Pearson	1	-.442(**)
Correlation	(HND Electrical Engineering)		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	50	50

Table 5: Correlation between course offered (HND Electrical Engineering) and the need for practical and critical thinking lesson plan

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

The results of the above table indicate a significant statistical relationship between Electrical Engineering and critical thinking orientation. This means that the respondents consider the course as practical hands- on training course.

		Course offered (HND Building Technology)	I seldom think about practical and critical thinking when choosing a course
Course offered Correlation (HND BT)	Pearson	1	-.431(**)
		.	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	50	50
	N		

Table 6: Correlation between course offered (HND Building Technology) and the need for practical and critical thinking lesson plan

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The results of the above table indicate a significant statistical relationship between the course offered (HND Building Technology) and its practicality to the students. This means that the respondents rate it as practical hands- on training course.

		Course offered (BSc Computerized Accounting)	I seldom think about practical and critical thinking when choosing a course
Course offered Correlation (BSCA)	Pearson	1	.010
		.	.128
	Sig. (2-tailed)	N	50
	N		

Table 7: Correlation between course offered (BSc Computerized Accounting) and the need for practical and critical thinking lesson plan

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The results of the above table indicate that there is no statistical relationship between the course offered (BSc in Computerized Accounting) and its practicality to the students. This means that the respondents don't rate BSc in Computerized Accounting as practical hands-on training course just as the results of the HND Marketing course. Therefore, the combination of theoretical and applied learning is recommended to be in the ratio of 40:60 for all programmes offered by the Polytechnics in order to achieve its mandate. Again, B-Tech in Computerized Accounting should have been run by the Polytechnics instead of BSc, which could have provided different results.

The findings also indicate that sizes of lecture rooms were found to be too small in two of the sampled Polytechnics for effective interaction between Lecturers and students.

Teaching methods were found in all the Polytechnics to be traditional, depending on white boards and a limited use of audio visual aids like projectors.

All the sampled Polytechnics had quality assurance unit for improving teaching and learning without depending on National Accreditation Board for comments on their quality.

Funding was found to be inadequate, research findings were not systematically published in scientific journals, and in-house publishing facilities was not available in the sampled Polytechnic. However, members of Polytechnic Teachers Association of Ghana (POTAG) published through one journal called JOPOG, which most respondents (teaching staff) indicated that it is not managed in a manner it deserves.

All the sampled Polytechnics have Postgraduate research units, but lacks research equipment to operate effectively and efficiently.

In the majority of cases, the scores assigned to factors like motivation, management structure and systems and ICT for independent teaching and research were found to be either average or low. Therefore, the level of quality assurance at the Polytechnics in Ghana remains serious challenges that needed to be addressed by all stakeholders.

Stakeholders should be integral part of the institutional evaluating process. Quality assurance may be external or internal. A number of inter-related factors have been linked to the evolving significance of quality assurance in the past decade. The first of such factors has to do with the decline of academic standards against the background of massive interest and popular subscription to higher education in most countries. This is both in the developed and developing countries. Second is the loss of confidence in the traditional academic quality management capacities of key stakeholders. Third is the

declining or at best, stagnating government funding of higher education as well as the pressure to increase efficiency in public expenditure. Also, there is the increasing competitiveness in the higher education sector (Chureewan, M. 2001). Additional to the above, Jung (2005) has identified the following reasons for the enhanced importance of quality assurance in recent times:

- Increased access in higher education which is putting pressure on institutions and system to diversify in order to cater for student population
- Increasingly global demand for discovering new ways of doing things.

The above factors have therefore made the introduction of quality assurance in institutions of higher education globally imperative. Many countries, regions and international agencies have therefore established agencies to regulate quality. Chureewan, M. (2000) concur that quality assurance in developing countries is increasingly becoming an important aspect in higher education systems as a way of adopting a more self-regulating oriented approach to relationships between government and institutions, as in the case of other Western countries.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
Very good	2	4	4
Good	11	22	26
Neutral	2	4	30
Poor	8	16	46
Very poor	27	54	100
Total	50	100	

Table 8: Relationship between the Polytechnics and the local industries

Source: Author's Field work, May 2012

In finding out how the Polytechnics relate with the local industries in ensuring Quality Assurance, it was revealed that, the majority of the respondents rated the relationship between them and the Polytechnics as very poor. This represented fifty-four percent (54%) of the responses. This was followed by twenty-two percent (22%) of the sampled local industries, who perceived relationship between them and the Polytechnics as superior. Only four (4%) of the respondents apparently remained neutral to the responses. This showed that there is a big relationship gap between the Polytechnics and

the local industries, which are classified as a major stakeholder in ensuring Quality Assurance and the mandate of the Polytechnics in Ghana.

The results indicate that the Polytechnics are not doing well in engaging the local industries.

6. Conclusion And Implications

Educationists in institutions of higher learning are in many cases aware of the growing importance of quality assurance to all stakeholders. The achievement of improved academic quality to meet the needs and wants of stakeholders is the key to competitive success and requires investment in time and money. However, much of the research in this area has been undertaken in a developed country context and there is little research to address the role and the needs of in a developing country context. The results of this study show that students who are classified as number one stakeholders look out for sufficiency and availability of Audio Visual Aids / equipment, modernization of text books and journals at Library and are also interested in the practical and critical thinking lesson plan. Though the Polytechnics are perceived to provide unique service encounter through both teaching and non-teaching staff, however, the Polytechnics environments are perceived as not enabling the students to take responsibility for their personal development. Furthermore, there is a strong view that specific opportunities and support for students to attain their personal goals are not provided by the Polytechnics, they lack smoothing progression of its lesson plan which may due to frequent strike actions by the Polytechnic Teacher Association of Ghana (POTAG), which have a negative effect on the Polytechnic's interactions with its stakeholders. This study presents a more understandable picture of quality assurance in different dimensions and as such, provides a workable hypothesis for future studies of higher education quality assurance in a developing country context. In particular, it highlights the factors which are important to stakeholders in Polytechnics in a developing country.

The findings from this study have some significant implications for the development and maintenance of quality education and standards amongst Polytechnics in Ghana.

The management of the Polytechnics in Ghana has to accelerate the development of their planning and delivery capacity in order to respond to and be ready for the new challenges and tasks facing them within the emerging development assistance framework.

A lot needs to be done to address the problem of relationship gaps between the Polytechnics and the local industries this by engender ownership and active participation by the local industries.

Also, Lecturers should be seen as part of the community, preparing students for the workplace, and hence there should be concerted efforts made to facilitate interaction between the students and the local industries, with Lecturers and other staff members acting as liaison.

The role of the private sector in Polytechnic education in Ghana is desirable. It should not just about offering sponsorship to the students, but also for injecting the rigour of the real business world.

Finally, one major issue with national agencies involved in Quality Assurance in Ghana is that they are government funded, and their staff and operations are financed by the government. Due to this, their activities and output have been questioned, in some situations. In some countries, the agencies appear to be set up only for private institutions, with government institutions immune from their oversight. This is however evidently not the situation in Ghana. One of the most critical needs for establishing effective quality assurance systems in Polytechnic education in Ghana is human capacity development. It is therefore essential to provide training courses on quality audit procedures and techniques of quality assessment for staff of national quality assurance agencies, peer reviewers, internal quality assurance coordinators, as well as for academic staff involved in institutional self-evaluation activities.

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