Quality Assurance in Ghanaian polytechnics:
perspectives and strategies of rectors, vice rectors and
quality assurance officers

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
School of Education, Faculty of Arts
The University of Adelaide
September, 2015
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Abstract

This study investigated the perspectives of Ghanaian rectors, vice rectors and quality assurance officers’ on quality assurance, their origins and their quality assurance strategies. Underpinned by symbolic interactionism, a qualitative methodological approach via in-depth interviewing of twenty key informants and document analysis was used to establish how they defined their situations and addressed problematic situations in quality assurance.

The findings revealed that respondents’ quality assurance perspectives had internal and external dimensions. Their internal quality assurance perspectives covered human resources, teaching and learning, and management whilst their external quality assurance perspective focused on institutional, national and global contexts. These embraced achieving institutional goals, delivering quality programmes, achieving national development, protecting national economic interest, equipping students with international competencies and enhancing mutual recognition of credentials globally. It emerged that, their perspectives on quality assurance originated from interactions with each other, from group life and reference groups. It was also discovered that their quality assurance strategies focused on staff and students but in different ways.

The study concludes by generating substantive and formal propositions on quality assurance in polytechnics and public funded higher education institutions. A recommendation for further research into quality assurance perspectives of vice chancellors, pro-vice chancellors and quality assurance directors of Ghanaian universities is made. A similarly designed study be used to explore how quality assurance rhetoric of rectors, vice rectors and quality assurance officers’ matches the actual institutional experience.
Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of The University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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Patrick Swanzy
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the assistance and contributions of persons and institutions, without which this thesis would not have been completed.

My deepest appreciation goes to the rectors, vice rectors and quality assurance officers’ of Ghanaian polytechnics who participated in this research. This study would not exist but for them.

I am indebted to the University of Adelaide for an international scholarship for my PhD study.

I am highly indebted to my supervisors Dr. Anthony Potts and Professor Tania Aspland for their scholarly guidance. My special appreciation goes to Dr. Potts for his constructive criticisms, creative inputs and speedy feedback which helped shaped this thesis. Sir, you have been a great mentor.

I am grateful to the administrative staff of School of Education, for their invaluable services rendered in support of my PhD study at the school.

I also express my gratitude to my PhD colleagues especially Giang, Che yee, Elizar and Michelle for their friendship.

Lastly, I express my warmest appreciation to Charity (wife) and Mushia (daughter) for their support and patience, and their acceptance of the fact that I was often occupied and not available to do the things that fathers usually do.