UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF SOCIAL, HUMAN AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

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Examination of National University Operating Standards within post-1995 Universities in Tanzania

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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ABSTRACT

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EXAMINATION OF NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OPERATING STANDARDS WITHIN POST-1995 UNIVERSITIES IN TANZANIA

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In an effort to ensure that universities possess the quality of being global, national and local (glonacal) institutions, some developing countries have engaged in setting standards and regulations to achieve the goal. However, unlike developed economies, the gap between the global and local contexts in which universities in developing countries operate is huge. As a result, there is a need to examine the dovetailing of national standards within the operating milieu of young universities in Tanzania. The study has three objectives: (i) to examine how national standards were formulated and enforced; (ii) to examine their relevance, in terms of how they encapsulated the 'glonacal concept' of the university, and their compatibility, in terms of how harmoniously they worked with inherent university values such as autonomy and creativity; and (iii) to use the opinions of students and academics to examine the extent to which the standards are reflected by the operating milieu in post-1995 universities, with a focus on resources.

Informed by a dialectic paradigmatic philosophical stance and a convergent parallel research design of a mixed methods approach, qualitative data were analysed using thematic strategy with the help of NVivo 11. For quantitative data, SPSS version 24 facilitated descriptive analysis to understand the milieu of universities in relation to standards, while correlation using Cramer's V assessed the relationships and their strengths for particular indicators related to standards across universities. The sample consisted of nine university officials, 225 academics, 1146 students from the four post-1995 universities and four officials from the Agency.

The study found that the formulation of standards constituted of policy borrowing and learning from external systems, and that the process of their construction was based on the selective participation of stakeholders. Their enforcement was found to have largely followed soft power approaches. Regarding their relevance, they were found to reflect predominantly global aspects. Despite some complaints, they were largely compatible with inherent university values such as autonomy and creativity. Lastly, notwithstanding the commendable efforts expended by both the Agency and universities, the operating milieu in universities were found to reflect poorly the desired goals of the standards.

These findings reinforce the theory that the dependence of developing countries' higher education systems on those of developed countries' systems through policy borrowing and learning has continued to cause stagnation in the achievement of their desired goals. Moreover, the findings confirm that, when applied to resource-constrained or mediatory characterised contexts, 'soft power' enforcement approaches are likely to result in precarious results associated with a relative lack of success or success may take longer than when their counterpart 'coercive' approaches are applied. Consequently, there exists a need to combine in a smarter way the application of soft power and coercive enforcement approaches and also the need for universities to learn how to enhance the learning experience in a resource-constrained context.

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Yohana Stephano William, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

Examination of national university operating standards within post-1995 universities in Tanzania

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission:

Signed: .....

Date: 3 December 2018 .....

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Definitions and Abbreviations

CI	Confidence interval
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Services
EAC	East African Community
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance
ERGO	Electronic Research Governance Online System.
ESG	European Standards and guidelines.
EU	European Union.
GLONACAL	Global, National and Local
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEAC	Higher Education Accreditation Council
HESLB	Higher Education Student Loan Board.
IUCEA	Inter-University Council for East Africa
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACTE	National Council for Technical Education
NPM	New Public Management Perspective
NSS	National Student Survey of United Kingdom
NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement of United States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
PCA	Principle Component Analysis
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TCU	Tanzania Commission for Universities
Tshs	Tanzanian Shillings
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WB	World Bank

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the problem and the aim of the study. Specifically, it covers: the background to the problem; a brief history of university education in Tanzania; management of universities in Tanzania; a statement of the problem; the purpose of the study; the research questions; the significance of the study; and the researcher's reflexivity and positionality in the study.

1.1 Background to the problem

In many countries, universities are regarded as autonomous institutions. That is, from the institutional perspective, they are independent to make decisions regarding their operations such as the formulation of mission, vision, design of programmes, admission of students and ensuring that quality education is provided without much interference from external forces (Huisman, 2009). However, when discussing the instrumental perspective of universities, Huisman (2009) also posits that universities cannot help being used as instruments of the policies and intentions of various external stakeholders, of which the strongest is perhaps the government of the country in which they are located. This means that, unlike other external forces, governments have significant influence and impact on the operation of universities.

The above argument further suggests that how governments go about organising and coordinating the provision of university education has enormous implications for the growth, outcomes and development of this crucial sector, and this therefore forms an important research agenda (Carnoy et al., 2013). This also means that forces emanating from the government, combined with those from the changing global higher education landscape and those from stakeholders such as students and employers, have substantially became the focal point of universities' operation in terms of everyday decisions that involve acting on and reacting to such forces. Specifically, forces from government may consist of laws, regulations and standards established with the intention of organising and governing the provision of university education, whereas forces from changes in the global higher education landscape may consist of globalisation, modernisation, marketisation and internationalisation.

The existence of such forces influencing university operations could also be argued to form the multidirectional efforts expended towards the provision of university education that

addresses the glonacal needs and hence creation of a glonacal university. By a glonacal university, it refers to analysis of a university in terms of being able to simultaneously achieve its goals in three dimensions which are local, national and global. Put forward by Jones (2008), as a local institution, a university should be able to addresses the needs of local community in which they are located such as admitting students from their localities, addressing needs from surrounding geographical areas or producing graduates that are able to address needs in different localities. As a national institution, it should produce skilled manpower and thinkers for various disciplines and occupations that in turn increase productivity and offer services that contribute to economic development of a nation (Jones, 2008).

Lastly, as an international institution, it should be internationally competitive, modern, recognised through rankings, able to attract both best and international students and faculty, and able to engage in activities that have global reach and international impacts (Jones, 2008). In this case, indicators of global nature may include flows of cross border or global flows such as: flows of people (students and faculties), flows of information and knowledge, flows of norms, ideas and policies, flows of technology, finance and other economic resources which according to Marginson (2008) are also exceptionally dynamic and uneven. The other indicator is the ongoing trend of building world-class universities across the globe (Alperin, 2013; Byun, Jon and Kim, 2012; Altbach, 2004).

It should be noted that, although there has been a movement towards the notion of a global university, there is also a caveat on this perspective. That is, being a global university or being able to address the global dimension should not imply or lead to stepping back at the local and national dimensions (Jones, 2008). In other words, a global university can and should simultaneously be a national and a local institution meanwhile a local university can and should also be a national and global institution. In this regard, the argument of a glonacal university matrix aims at providing a framework for looking at globalisation and internationalisation in higher education without losing sight of the local and national dimensions (Jones, 2008).

Along the same line of argument, it follows that the deliberate involvement of the government in this phenomenon implies that achieving the glonacal university goal is not an interest and a challenge to universities alone, but also to governments (Altbach, 2004). The evidence includes the considerable measures taken by many countries around the globe to make their higher education systems an important reform agenda focusing on

addressing the global dimension or character of a university (Lee, 2013; Alperin, 2013; Yang and Welch, 2011). As a result of this trend, old and newly established universities in both developing and developed countries are being compelled to have not only a good number of well-trained and qualified academics, but also modern facilities and conducive milieu for the provision of university education.

Nevertheless, achieving and maintaining standards in higher education systems that simultaneously address the international and local demands is not easy for either institutions or governments. It takes time, a high degree of commitment by both institutions and government and substantial investment (Yang and Welch, 2011). In fact, it has been found that even in countries with institutionalised quality systems and standards like the United Kingdom, United States and Germany, not all universities have managed to achieve these standards (Altbach, 2004).

A good example of the situation above can be drawn from the United Kingdom, where it was reported that some reputable universities were challenged to accommodate in halls their admitted students, thus some students were reported to be sharing single rooms, and some experienced difficulties in finding and in renting private accommodation (BBC, 2014). This example implies that setting or having standards and regulations governing or guiding the establishment and operation of universities does not necessarily guarantee the existence of a quality education system or standardised education system across the country. The fundamental argument is that, whilst it may be relatively easy to create good standards, it is much more difficult to ensure that the entire higher education system is operating to the set standards. Further, universities may comply technically with the regulations just to showcase and increase their legitimacy to the regulatory authorities, yet actual practice may tell a different story.

For developing countries, this is even a bigger challenge for several reasons. First, although it is true that one way to establish a quality and internationally competitive higher education system is through adoption of particular standards, the characteristics and requirements of a standardised higher education systems is still ambiguous (Salmi, 2009). That is, the definition of a university that meets the standards to be reputable is still contested and debated (Byun, Jon and Kim, 2012). Consequently, what sets of guidelines and standards are relevant and fit for purpose is contested, because ‘one size’ does not seem to fit all contexts. This situation may make universities in developing countries be in limbo with regard to what conditions constitute a good or standardised university.

Second, for effective institutionalisation and implementation of standards, there is a need for universities to recognise, understand and appreciate that the existence and adoption of such standards is part of the institutional definition, existence, vision and key factors in provision of quality education that addresses glonacal needs. This is because if the guidelines are not recognised by, do not seem to form part of the definition of what a university is, or are further seen to be imposed by government (top-down instead of bottom-up approaches), then some institutions, particularly those which feel that they have a competent governance structure and are able to exercise autonomy, are likely to circumvent them (Carnoy et al., 2013). This further implies that if the establishment of standards and guidelines is through a bottom-up approach, by being first locally and institutionally grounded, it is more likely to bring good levels of compliance than when established through a top-down approach (from international - national - institutions). That is, standards and guidelines are more likely to enhance the provision of education if they consider the wider contexts in which universities operate, which for developing countries is an important factor.

The third reason is that, due to their economic conditions, developing countries are unable adequately to invest and finance the establishment of high-end higher education systems (Ishengoma, 2008) that embrace all features of international standards in higher education systems. This means that, unlike developed countries, the gap is significant between the ideal or global and the contexts in which most universities in developing countries operate. The implication is that, if features of higher education in developed countries, such as those in Western Europe and North America, continue to dominate the recognition of good and standardised education systems, then there are limited opportunities for developing countries' higher education systems to get through. For this reason, it is then better for developing countries to focus on establishing and improving their higher education systems within a glonacal framework rather than focus on adopting guidelines and standards that largely reflect universities in developed countries (Alperin, 2013). Designing an eclectic model of standards and guidelines will not only allow universities in developing countries to adopt to the model seamlessly but also improve the provision of university education that serves their social, political, economic, scientific and technological needs, rather than pursue international standards and reputations. This is similar to the argument put forward by Deem (2010), that, in addition to universities being seen as an important sector for economic development, they are also institutions with an obligation to preserve a

broader range of social functions that include the cultivation of citizenship and preservation of cultural heritage.

Fourth, is it is argued that the internationalisation, modernisation and standardisation of higher education reflect the dominance of Western countries over developing countries (Alperin, 2013; Altbach, 2004; Yang and Welch, 2011). For example, the ranking of universities is argued to be biased and based on Western standards. According to Alperin (2013), statistics indicate that universities from North America and Western Europe have high standards and tend to make up at least 75% of the top 50 universities. This suggests that, no matter how good a university may be in a developing country, as long as it does not reflect the standards found in Western European and North American universities it is unlikely to be recognised as of 'high standard' or be ranked as a 'good university'. This makes the validity of existing standards questionable. Can it be true that only those features found in Western European and North American universities define quality university education or a good university? I argue that the concept of a good university should not be reduced to these measurements and is bigger than the features found in Western European and North American universities.

However, it should also be noted that the above arguments are not against the adoption of standards, international features, modernisation or the standardisation of university education in developing countries. As universities should prepare people to live and work in local, national and global contexts, then standardisation and internationalisation of higher education should be an integral part of the definition and existence of university and university education. To realise this goal, flexibility and adaptability should be regarded as important qualities of contemporary universities, particularly those in developing countries. These qualities will allow universities to embrace changes whilst at the same time valuing and maintaining their traditional characteristics.

In fact, it is difficult for universities completely to avoid pressure from the global environment that has a direct relationship with and therefore inescapably tends to affect what is happening in higher education, both at the institutional and national level (Carnoy et al., 2013; Mhlanga, 2013). That is why even the ranking of universities tends to favour institutions with strong international standards (Salmi, 2009). This argument implies that there are good things that could be learned by developing countries from the global environment as useful tools to enhance the context for provision of quality university education. What is important, as Meyer et al. (2006) assert, is recognising that

governments, as key players in the change process, have a powerful role in shaping higher education systems in their countries in response to institutional inertia, national economic contexts and international institutional environments. Therefore, having national standards that blend international and local features would ideally and in practice be a good package to govern the provision of university education in developing countries where resources are limited, rather than full and blindly adoption of the international package. A failure fully to meet the requirements of international standards does not necessarily lead to a lack of quality in education. Although adherence to standards may improve the contexts for provision of quality education, an improved context on its own is not synonymous with quality.

1.2 A brief account of university education reforms in Tanzania.

In the past two decades, before which universities were few and owned by the state, there has been a global shift in the provision of higher education. I argue that even developing countries are currently experiencing a surge of newly established government and non-government owned higher education institutions. For example, in Tanzania, university education has undergone considerable growth and diversification over the past two decades (Makulilo, 2012; Simon, 2010; Ishengoma, 2007). Before 1995, university education was provided solely by government-owned universities and was conceived as a public and social good whose operations could not be left in the hands of the private sector. From the 1970s up until 1995, the number of universities in Tanzania remained static at four. However, after the amendment of National Education Act No. 25 of 1978 in 1995, which amongst other things approved the establishment of non-government universities, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of universities. Several government university colleges that were under the supervision of older universities were transformed into autonomous universities. In addition, new government and non-government owned universities have been and continue to be established. For example, as seen in Table **1.1**, from 1995 to 2014, 21 universities (5 government and 16 non-government) were established.

Table 1.1 post-1995 universities recognised by TCU by 2015

S/N	Name of Institution	Type of Ownership	Year Established
1	Hubert Kairuki Memorial University	Private	1996
2	International Medical and Technological University	Private	1996
3	St. Augustine University of Tanzania	Private	1996
4	State University of Zanzibar	Public	1999
5	Tumaini University Makumira	Private	1999
6	Mount Meru University	Private	2002
7	University of Arusha	Private	2003
8	Teofilo Kisanji University	Private	2004
9	Muslim University of Morogoro	Private	2005
10	Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology	Public	2005
11	Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences	Private	2005
12	University of Dodoma	Public	2006
13	Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University	Private	2007
14	St. John's University of Tanzania	Private	2007
15	University of Bagamoyo	Private	2009
16	Ekernforde Tanga University	Private	2010
17	Tanzania International University	Private	2010
18	St. Joseph University in Tanzania	Private	2011
19	United African University of Tanzania	Private	2011
20	Katavi University of Agriculture	Public	2012
21	Mbeya University of Science and Technology	Public	2012

Source: Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)

Note: Private means non-government owned and public means government owned.

Moreover, as indicated in Table **1.2**, there has been tremendous increase in the number of government and non-government owned university colleges. From 1995 to 2014, 19 university colleges (15 non-government and 4 government) affiliated to old and new universities were established.

Table 1.2 post-1995 Universities colleges recognised by TCU by 2015

S/N	Name of Institution	Type of Ownership and affiliation	Year Established
1	Iringa University College	Private under Tumaini University Makumira	1996
2	Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College	Private under Tumaini University Makumira	1996
3	Tumaini University Dar es Salaam College	Private under Tumaini University Makumira	1997
4	University College of Education Zanzibar	Public under international University of Africa	1998
5	Moshi University College of Cooperative and Business Studies	Public under Sokoine University of Agriculture	2004
6	Ruaha University College	Private under St. Augustine University of Tanzania	2004
7	Mkwawa University College of Education	Public under University of Dar es Salaam	2005
8	Mwenge University College of Education	Private under St. Augustine University of Tanzania	2005
9	Dar es Salaam University College of Education	Public university of Dar es Salaam	2006
10	Stefano Moshi Memorial University College	Private under Tumaini University Makumira	2007
11	Stella Maris Mtwara University College	Private under St. Augustine university of Tanzania	2009
12	Archbishop Mihayo University college of Tabora	Private under St. Augustine University of Tanzania	2010
13	Jordan University College	Private under St. Augustine University of Tanzania	2010
14	Kampala International University	Private under Kampala International University of Uganda	2010
15	St. Francis University College of Health and Allied Sciences	Private under St. Augustine University of Tanzania	2010
16	St. Joseph University College of Agricultural Science and Technology	Private under St. Joseph University of Tanzania	2011
17	St. Joseph University College of Information Technology	Private under St. Joseph University of Tanzania	2011
18	Josiah Kibira University College	Private under Tumaini University Makumira	2012
19	St. Joseph University College of Management and Commerce	Private under St. Joseph University of Tanzania	2012

Source: Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)

Notes

* 'Private' means non-government owned, and 'public' means government owned.
*Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) has three clusters of recognised higher education institutions: universities, university-colleges and centres or institutes.
*These two tables do not include a third cluster, which consists of 3 government and 11 non-government centres or institutes that also award degrees.

The two tables, as summarised in Table **1.3**, below suggest that the general number of non-government owned universities in the country has already outstripped that of government owned. Until 2014, there were 28 universities in the country, of which only 11 were government and the remaining 17 were non-government. Second, the general number of non-government university colleges has also outstripped the number of government university colleges. While there were 19 university colleges, only four were government owned.

Table 1.3 Summary of government and non-government universities in Tanzania

	Government		Non-government		Total	
Cluster	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Universities	11	39.3	17	60.7	28	100
University colleges	4	21	15	79	19	100

Source: Tanzania Commission for Universities data

Apart from the increase in the number of universities, the enrolment of students across the three clusters has increased from academic year 2012/13 to 2016/2017. (See Table **1.4**.)

Table 1.4 Enrolment of students from 2012/13 to 2016/17 academic years

		Academic year				
S/N	Cluster	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
1	Universities	30,845	33,581	35,852	36,261	38,489
2	University colleges	7,765	10,491	11,825	13,829	12,219
3	University centres	-	342	494	1,154	1,759
Total		38,610	44,414	48,171	51,244	52,467

Source: Tanzania Commission for universities 2017 admission statistics.

Altogether, the tables suggest that, from 1995 to present, Tanzania has undergone major reforms in expanding the provision of higher education where the private sector is taking a lead, with the trend suggesting a prospect for more non-government universities to be

established in the future. Following this, although majority of students are seem to be in public universities (no specific data yet), it is possible to note that in the same former socialist country (Tanzania), non-government institutions have started to gain momentum in dominating the higher education system. The trend suggests that the country may follow countries like Mexico, Brazil and Chile, where non-government universities now educate more than half of the students, and countries like Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines, where over 70% of enrolment is in non-government universities (Rena, 2010).

The expansion of university education in Tanzania described above resulted in benefits of expanded access and participation in higher education. However, the expansion of any level of education, if not managed in parallel with an increase in resources such as academics, infrastructure and other teaching and learning facilities, may compromise the quality of education provided. Therefore, since universities are expensive to establish and operate, and governments and parents pay large sums of money for such level of education, then, their expansion needs to be managed effectively in order to provide quality education and to protect the interests of receivers of education, and the resources invested by government and by parents. One way to managing this is through the use of standards.

1.3 Management of universities in Tanzania

With regard to management of universities, Clark (1983) suggests a classical model that explains three ways (not mutually exclusive) for controlling, influencing and coordinating of behaviour of higher education institutions. The alternatives are: state regulation; professional self-regulation that Clark terms ‘the academic oligarchy’; and market forces (Clark, 1983). I argue that these alternatives operate concurrently in managing and influencing the behaviour of higher education system in Tanzania, as set out below.

Starting with state regulation, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) in Tanzania is in charge of overall educational matters and the formulation of educational policy. Its core functions are coordinated through various divisions and units depending on level (pre-primary, primary and post-primary) and type (adult and non-formal, special needs, vocational education and distance learning). These divisions and units include, *inter alia*, a higher education division that is in charge of higher education matters. Apart from these units and divisions, there are other educational agencies, authorities, boards, councils, commissions and institutes under the jurisdiction of MEST. For higher education, these

include the Higher Education Student Loan Board (HESLB) and the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU).

The HESLB is in charge of allocating loans to higher education students on the basis of their financial needs and collecting loan repayments after graduation and employment of the students. TCU is in charge of, i*nter alia*, supervising and overseeing the higher education legislative acts, policies and regulations developed by government/Parliament/ MEST, which universities must adopt to reflect the objectives and missions of both government and universities. The TCU also acts as an external quality assurance agency on behalf of the government. This role includes the evaluation of programmes and universities based on clearly defined and transparent criteria and procedures that they have established. Thus, the higher education system in Tanzania could be argued to be partly under the standard-based evaluation system as proposed by the Dublin Descriptors (Westerheijden, 2007). According to the Dublin Descriptors, standards-based higher education systems are those in which legal and external regulatory bodies (agencies) are established and evaluation of the performance of universities is based on the standards set by these bodies. That is, the legitimacy of universities is judged through the use of standards.

Second, regarding professional self-regulation or academic oligarchy, as put forward by Clark (1983), universities in Tanzania are acknowledged by statute and regulatory frameworks to be autonomous academic institutions. Therefore, autonomously and at their own discretion, within the national institutional frameworks, new ideas and important decisions come from within universities. They can establish their own systems of quality assurance, standards, and mechanisms to control and govern their operations. This means that universities' own mission statements could partly be taken as the standards for the self-defined purpose that universities have to achieve. According to the Dublin Descriptors (Westerheijden, 2007), this characteristic legitimises them to be mission-based institutions, hence they are evaluated on the basis of achievement of their own missions.

Third, apart from operating under academic oligarchy and being guided by regulations, universities also operate under the influence of global and market forces and ethos. This is because the majority of both government and non-government universities in Tanzania compete for students (through marketing and branding) and are influenced by market forces, including demands from students, the labour market and global forces such as modernisation and internationalisation. Consequently, universities have shifted their traditional impetus by increasingly becoming force absorbers, constantly adopting

entrepreneurial and organisational change behaviour. Evidence of such changes includes charging different fees for similar programmes, fees being contingent upon the perceived relevance of courses in the labour market and the perceived return on employability (value for money). Other changes include making decisions based on supply and demand forces in the labour market, the student market, the cost of production (pressure to reduce cost), and other market and economic forces.

This study primarily focuses on the state regulation of universities by specifically examining the dovetailing of national university standards within the operating milieu of post-1995 universities in Tanzania. This alternative and its associated specific measures taken to regulate the behaviour of universities will be examined in more detail than the other two. The following pages explain the different statutes and other regulatory measures in place to ensure that both already established universities and those that are to be established are managed to operate within the regulatory frameworks. The aim is to highlight how the measures create conducive environment for higher education in Tanzania to provide quality education that address both local and global needs and demands.

1.3.1 The state regulation of universities in Tanzania

To understand how universities have been established and regulated, a historical approach was adopted. Immediately after independence in 1961, Tanzania (at that time still Tanganyika) had no universities. The country was under the University of East Africa, which was established in 1963 as a University College of London. This university served Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. In 1970, it was split into three universities: University of Nairobi-Kenya; Makerere University-Uganda; and University of Dar es Salaam-Tanzania. This means that all universities in Tanzania were established after Independence.

Prior to the 1995 amendments, universities were being established by their own acts (each university had its own act to establish and guide its operation). During this era, Tanzania was following socialist ideals, therefore all universities established were owned by government. Until early 1995, there were four University acts for four universities: The University of Dar es Salaam Act of 1970; the Sokoine University of Agriculture Act of 1984; the Muhimbili University College of Health Science (Amendment) Act of 1991; and the Open University of Tanzania Act of 1992.

In 1995, an act to amend the Education Act No. 25 of 1978, namely the Education (Amendment) Act No. 10 of 1995 was passed. This established the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) and provided the procedures for accreditation of universities and other related matters. From this time on, non-government universities were to be established and accredited by HEAC, but government universities were still to be established by their own acts (Education Act, 1995). In 2001, Mzumbe as a government university was established by the Mzumbe Act of 2001.

However, in 2005, The Universities Act No. 7 of 2005 was enacted. This made provision for the establishment, composition and functions of the Commission for Universities, the coordination and rationalisation of the types and categories of universities, the promotion and financing of higher education, the establishment and governance of universities, and for other related matters (Universities Act, 2005). The act further amended the Education Act No. 10 of 1995 by repealing the whole of Part IX, which covered the establishment of the HEAC and the context under which it was to perform its mandate of accrediting universities. The Universities Act 2005 also repealed all five individual University Acts that had established the preceding five universities. As a result of the 2005 Act, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) was created and all universities, government and non-government owned, were now required to operate under the Universities Act 2005 and the guidance of the TCU.

Thus, the TCU was established as a government regulatory agency responsible for, *inter alia*: regular auditing of the quality assurance mechanisms of universities; monitoring and regulating the management and performance of universities; setting standards; accrediting and registering all universities; considering and making recommendations to the Minister regarding upgrading or downgrading the status of a university; providing guidance; evaluating and monitoring academic staff development and the physical infrastructure and programmes of universities; visiting universities; and inspecting and issuing penalties for certain offences (Universities Act, 2005; Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2013).

It is further stipulated by the 2005 Act that universities shall prepare and submit annual reports to the TCU. These reports should include a detailed evaluation of academic activities, the extent to which the prescribed standards are met and their audited financial accounts. Moreover, universities are to apply to TCU to be granted a Charter of Incorporation by the President of Tanzania in the manner prescribed under the Universities

Act 2005 and regulations made thereunder. In general, the aim of the Act is to ensure that government and non-government universities, both existing and new, operate within the equally regulated framework, to ensure an environment conducive for provision of quality education that is responsive to both local and global contexts and needs.

The Universities Act Cap 346 of 2005 requires the TCU to set standards to guide the operation of universities and the units within them. In fulfilment of this obligation, in 2012 the TCU issued standards and guidelines for various matters, including governance and administration of university institutions. These standards and guidelines delineated different clusters of university institutions such as universities, university colleges and universities centres. They further defined governance units operating within universities such as schools, colleges, faculties, departments and institutes (TCU, 2012b).

In addition to the above, there were standards for programmes offered by universities and for human resources. The standards for programmes offered included, *inter alia,* the existence and availability of approved number of programmes and courses to be delivered by universities, their modes of delivery and minimum number of students in respect of each programme. Standards for human resources included academics' dispositions and teacher–student ratios, depending on the mode of delivery and courses.

Another category included standards for physical facilities, technological resources and infrastructure needed for effective and conducive delivery of various programmes. In general, these include standards for seminar rooms, lecture rooms, lecture theatres, laboratories (depending on discipline, such as business lab, education lab, fine art lab, computer lab, physics lab, chemistry lab, botany lab, engineering lab, agricultural lab and other labs); workshops for carpentry, electrical, fine arts, masonry and plumbing, and standards for academic and administration, and administrative staff offices and buildings.

In addition, there were standards for facilities such as conference halls, student and staff common rooms, student accommodation facilities including common rooms, hostel management or warden offices, health and sanitation facilities such as ventilation, water supply, toilets, sewerage and solid waste disposal. Other standards cover recreational facilities such as football, netball, volleyball, swimming pools and other physical activity facilities. There were also standards for public safety measures such as fire safety.

Universities were further required to have strategic plans approved by suitable university governing bodies and validated by TCU, and to produce financial capacity and

sustainability reports indicating the percentage of income received from fees and from other sources, and the percentage of budget spent on personnel emoluments (TCU, 2012a). In general, the aim of these standards is to ensure that universities and their units are managed and operate in a more efficient manner. They also determine enrolment capacities of various units and therefore maintain the quality of teaching and learning that is desirable (TCU, 2012a).

The publication of these standards was followed by government notice (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2013) No. 226 namely the Universities General Regulations that, amongst other things, stipulated the general arrangement and regulations for the accreditation of universities, chartering procedures, admission procedures, and the general provision of university education. This document is consistent with section 22 of the Universities Act of 2005 that specifies procedures for establishing a university. Specifically, it stipulates that any person who would wish to establish or accredit a university will have to apply to the TCU and provide information to indicate the extent to which the university in question complies with the guidelines explained above. Upon receiving the application, the TCU verifies the particulars submitted by the applicant by reviewing the documents and visiting the proposed university to carry out inspection and assessment of facilities (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2013).

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Since the enactment of the Education (Amendment) Act No. 10 of 1995, Tanzania has witnessed a massive and rapid expansion of higher education institutions. Statistics show that from 1995 to 2014 the number of universities increased from four to 28. In addition, there are more than 19 university colleges. This increase suggests the government's willingness to widen access to university education.

However, to counter the effects of indiscriminate proliferation of higher education institutions and ensure that universities provide education that addresses global, national and local demands, minimum guidelines and standards were issued by Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) in 2012. The document stipulates arrays of conditions and standards under which university education should be provided, and how universities should be established and managed (TCU, 2012a). This was further followed by the government notice No. 226 through the Universities General Regulations (2013), which amidst other things stipulates the general arrangements and regulations for the registration,

accreditation and chartering procedures for universities, admission procedures, and the general standards for provision of university education.

The existence of such standards and regulations could be a good step towards enhancing the higher education system of a developing country like Tanzania. However, the approach to their formulation and enforcement, and the extent to which they are relevant to and compatible with young universities, have significant implications on the extent to which the operating milieu in the universities will actually reflect the standards guiding them. The latter may be problematic for two reasons. First, consistent with my argument that, like many other developing countries particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (with exception of South Africa), Tanzania could not be of exception in terms of having a problem of sound but in most cases 'paper tiger' laws, regulations, guidelines and policies. Second, universities are autonomous institutions with some mediatory power. This implies that government-driven reforms may encounter a considerable amount of resistance from them. Therefore, as argued by Huisman (2009), designing and successfully implementing higher education reforms in developing countries is a difficult assignment with no guarantee of success. This study therefore examines the dovetailing of the national universities operating standards established by the TCU within the operating milieu of post-1995 universities in Tanzania.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The majority of post-1995 universities in Tanzania were established prior to the establishment of the national standards in 2012 and the general regulations of 2013. In many cases, young universities in developing countries may be less resilient and financially inflexible than older universities. This means that although the standards set by the TCU may have created a foundation for a strong and quality university education system that addresses both local and global contexts and demands, the realisation of this goal may still be challenging for young universities.

The reasons are as follows. First, the formulation of standards will presumably have focused on fixing various 'under-the-hood' technical processes in universities, while enforcement may have encountered the relevance and compatibility issues and therefore affect the extent to which they are reflected in the operating milieu of young universities. Second, with the passage of time, the standards might or might not have gained support

from the implementers and therefore their reflections might or might not have started to be manifest.

These two reasons make a study like this imperative. Therefore, from the perspective of key stakeholders (policy makers, policy implementers, academics and students), the purpose of this study is therefore to examine: the approaches to formulation and enforcement of the standards; the relevance and compatibility of the standards with the post-1995 universities; and finally, the extent to which the milieu in which post-1995 universities are providing education (focusing on the teaching and learning resources for both academics and students and related matters) reflect the goals of the standards.

1.6 Research Questions

Examining the national university operating standards within the post-1995 universities in Tanzania, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Through what approaches were the national standards formulated and were to be enforced in post-1995 universities in Tanzania?
2. To what extent are they relevant to and compatible with the post-1995 universities in Tanzania?
3. To what extent does the milieu for provision of education in post-1995 universities reflect the standards?

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is of prime importance for the reasons below.

First, using the sample of universities selected, the study sheds light on the extent of relevance, compatibility and institutionalisation of the national university standards at an institutional level that may be reflected to universities across the country. The findings on these three aspects provide practical information on how smoothly or otherwise the standards may successfully be incorporated in universities.

Second, as a policy shaping and evaluation study, the dissemination of its findings through various channels including seminars, workshops and conferences with other higher education policy makers, government officials, and other stakeholders interested in the governance and regulation of higher education will provide an informative feedback mechanism. For example, on the extent to which the existing standards are appropriate;

how to improve their appropriateness where they fall short; and how successful are the approaches to designing and enforcing them. Consequently, the study contributes to informing the continuous improvement of both the standards and approaches to their enforcement. This means that the next set of improved standards associated with their improved enforcement approaches will stand a higher chance of being successfully incorporated in higher education institutions. The outcome is further improved practices and enhancing the provision of university education that meet local, national and international needs.

Third, this study forms part of broader higher education policy studies. Initially, there were studies on planning in higher education that focused on assessing the contribution of investment in higher educational to economic development and human capital (Enders, 2004). Later, policy development in higher education became the object of empirical analysis where attention was directed to contextual factors influencing policy development, particularly the role of law (Enders, 2004). Following that, policy implementation in higher education focused on the processes of formulation, reformulation and implementation of policies (Enders, 2004). This study falls within the spectrum of policy studies in higher education by contributing to latter studies related to studies on setting agenda for higher education policy formulation Gandara, Rippner & Ness (2017) and then evaluation of their implementation with the aim of understanding the ability of the sector in developing countries to set agenda, reinterpret, translate, adopt and transform policies to achieve both local and global agendas. Thus, the study is important because it sheds light on the extent to which the operating milieu of young institutions in a developing country may reflect the country's espoused policy. That is, the extent to which the micro institutional outcomes reflect the macro policy quality assurance that is under implementation.

Fourth, this study examines the relevance and compatibility of the national higher education regulatory framework, their enforcement process, and their reflections through conditions of the teaching and learning milieu. It follows that, when the findings and implications of this study are assimilated, they will act as stepping-stone towards achieving a vision of having a more efficient, effective, trusted and glonacal university education system in Tanzania. This is because the findings of this study shed light on the relationship between having appropriately designed national regulatory frameworks that consider the global, national and local contexts, accompanied by suitable approaches to enforce and institutionalise them. Such achievement may further reduce the need and number of people

going abroad to study, which has proved a substantial expense to individuals, organisation and country in general.

Fifth, the study used a dialectic stance of a mixed method research to examine the phenomenon from different dimensions by including policy makers, policy implementers and experiences of stakeholders targeted by policy. It follows that, the study empirically contributes to the theory and practice on how qualitative and quantitative research approaches could be usefully combined without stepping back at the rigor and procedures informing either approach to examine phenomena that involves diverse multilevel key stakeholders.

Lastly, the increased reputation, efficiency and trust will have positive implications for Tanzanian universities. The sector will be able to compete for and benefit from international students and scholarships that are a good source of income and more financially profitable than the current model of relying on fees from domestic students. This is already happening in universities in emerging economies such as South Africa, Malaysia, Hong Kong and South Korea.

1.8 Researcher's reflexivity and positionality

Educational research, like other social science research, aims, *inter alia*, at the construction of knowledge. However, in basic social sciences research, the knowledge building, acquiring and communicating processes (epistemological and methodological); the constructed knowledge itself (ontology); and the research agents (researchers and participants) are never neutral. Lack of neutrality is explained by the fact that when researchers, motivated by their own interest and curiosity about the phenomenon, engage and interact with participants in the production of knowledge within the contexts they inhabit, combined with the ways data are collected, analysed, interpreted and reported, all together, affect and shape the knowledge produced (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

It is therefore imperative for social science researchers to undertake self-reflection in order to recognise and be aware of the different identities and interactions that will position them in the field, in addition to affecting the process of conducting a research. Being conversant with their identities and positions improves the quality and validity of the research through efforts that might be taken to reduce the biases linked to their identities and positions. This is consistent with an observation by Guillemin and Gillam (2004), that one way to recognise the limitations of the knowledge produced and to ensure rigour and

trustworthiness of the research is to understand the influence of the identities, interactions and positions of the researchers.

Various factors such as researchers' histories, social and cultural capital, language, education, age, ethnicity, class, gender and even prior knowledge relating to what is being researched could assign researchers varied identities and hence affect their position in relation to interaction with participants and the way they investigate the realities they are interested in (Giampapa, 2011; Johnson & Duberley, 2003; Mercer, 2007). Consequently, and more importantly, identities and positionalities may affect differently the research processes such as gaining access to the study site, the interactions with research participants, collection of data and communication of research findings (Lunn, 2010; Mercer, 2007).

The extent of sharing the above characteristics between the researcher and the researched or the extent to which there are clear differences between the research and the researched may be said to indicate whether the researcher is an 'insider' or 'outsider' researcher (Mercer, 2007). However, Mercer also argues that researchers have no single status, but instead have a status set or identities that are always relative and cross-cut by other differences. As a consequence, the insider/outsider dichotomy is not mutually exclusive but instead forms a continuum (Mercer, 2007). Following this argument and by referring to the realities in terms of what happened during my data collection, I consider myself to be, on the one hand, a partial insider researcher, while on the other hand a partial outsider researcher.

1.8.1 As a partial insider researcher

As highlighted above, being an insider researcher is determined by various factors include the researcher's shared knowledge and identities with the research subjects (Giampapa, 2011; Johnson & Duberley, 2003; Mercer 2007). To some extent, I considered myself as a partial insider researcher in this study. The identities that positioned me as a partial insider researcher were more of inherent intersections, as Mercer (2007) calls them, and they constitute the following. First, I completed my Bachelor's and Master's degrees at one of the oldest, largest and public-funded universities. Second, I am a member of the academic staff of a university in my country; and third, I was a doctoral student at one of the Russell Group universities in the United Kingdom.

Being a former student, an academic staff member of one of the universities in the country, and a PhD student in a UK university, together have exposed me to various experiences regarding the contexts in which different types of universities – large, small, old, young, modern and sophisticated, from both within and outside my country –provide education. Having the above orientation and knowledge about universities made me consider myself as a researcher who investigates institutions that I am familiar with through membership. This characteristic is the opposite of an outsider researcher, who does not have intimate knowledge of the collective group being researched (Mercer, 2007). This, apart from being the factor that instigated my study, is also an evidence that I am acquainted with, if not informed by, at least some prior knowledge and insights regarding various environments in which university education may be provided. These environments reflect different levels of standards for provision of education. Therefore, as has been argued before, prior knowledge of the researcher about the researched or by being associated with the group of people or organisations under scrutiny (Giampapa, 2011; Johnson & Duberley, 2003) could position a researcher as an insider. Therefore, within these contexts and through my own reflection of prior knowledge relating to the research subjects, I could partly position myself as a partial insider researcher in this study. However, the extent to which I was an insider researcher in this study did not have a profound effect during my data collection such as overcoming information bias due to being treated (by the researched) as a colleague who knew a great deal already.

1.8.2 As a partial outsider researcher

As highlighted above, the insider/outsider dichotomy is a continuum with multiple dimensions (Mercer, 2007). That is, it could range from simply sharing one's lot with the research subjects at the same time as being well known to them, to sharing one's lot with research subjects without being well known by them, to having nothing to share with them at the same time as being quite unknown to the research subjects. This means that, in addition to researchers' own feelings (even certainty) about sharing their identities and knowledge with the research subjects, participants' feelings and attitudes towards the researcher, the nature of the study itself may have implications for the researcher's identity and hence position the researcher as an insider or outsider.

In this study, despite having some knowledge about the research subjects and the contexts in which different types of universities operate, I had feelings that participants perceived me as an outsider researcher due to the following reasons. First, the nature of the study

itself provoked feelings of uneasiness on the part of some respondents. This is because some of the questions during the interviews with both Agency and university officials shed light on issues that they perceived to be sensitive or provocative in the sense that I was seeking information in order to judge them and their performance. The feeling of being a stranger and detached from the research subjects points to being an outsider researcher (Mercer, 2007).

Second, although I have been working and studying in the same sector, I have not studied or worked in any post-1995 universities. Consequently, I acknowledge that I had little practical knowledge of the organisational culture regarding the context under which the researched post-1995 universities in Tanzania provided education. Hence, combining the nature of the study, not being associated with any of the institutions under scrutiny in this study, and not being known by the research subjects, made me an outsider researcher, despite my general knowledge about universities. This situation could be explained by the hard work that I had to expend to create sufficient rapport with informants as a prerequisite to carrying out successful interviews in terms of reducing the risk of obtaining distorted, superficial or counterfeit information from participants due to being perceived as an outsider. The efforts extended to securing access to study sites and even consent from potential subjects to participate in interviews, which insider researchers tend to enjoy more often (Mercer, 2007).

Chapter 2 Literature review

Due to the inherent traits of universities in responding to global, national and local demands, the first part of the literature review examines the concept of a university as a global, national and local (glonacal) institution and its interactions with the standards. This provides an account of how universities, even in developing countries, cannot circumvent responding to the forces emanating from global, national and local contexts. Second, analyses on how the global higher education standards are negotiated at the national level (being nationalised) to ensure suitable standards for the system are formulated is presented. Accordingly, this section provides an account on the processes of borrowing and diffusion of global higher education ideas and policies within the national states through policy learning, negotiation and mediation. Third, assuming the national standards have been formulated through the prior process, a discussion on how universities respond to such formulated standards by their governments is presented. In this part, the tension between university autonomy and state regulations is the focus. Including in these analyses, is how the concept of loosely coupled systems, as a form of autonomy, could be used by universities to manage their interactions and linkages with other systems, including compliance with standards and regulations from government. Following the challenges of governing universities that apply variety kinds of autonomy, including loosely coupled concept, the last part of literature review presents arguments for why governments may still seek to regulate their universities.

2.1 Discourses on glonacal nature of university and the standards

In an interconnected world, higher education systems, the institutions within them, educational policy makers, quality assurance agencies and the standards guiding the provision of university education are all supposed to interact simultaneously in a glonacal context (Hou, Chen & Morse, 2014). Moreover, as organisations that have existed for long time in the world, both historical development and the concept of university suggest that universities serve and play multifaceted roles that legitimise them as glonacal institutions (Hou, Chen & Morse, 2014; King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013; Meyer et al., 2006; Enders, 2004). However, due to increased forces of globalisation, modernisation and internationalisation in higher education, there has been a global shift on the foci regarding these three roles in determining the contexts through which universities should operate. The trend suggests that, due to increased globalisation, internationalisation and

modernisation forces, the foundations and values of universities that have existed for many years are now being challenged and even being redefined by these forces at different levels.

For example, Enders (2004) comments that, although universities are recognised as international institutions, the fact that they are born within national states means that their regulation, funding and consequently operations are significantly nationally based. That is, they are responsible and accountable to national demands, including addressing the macro-economic demands of countries such as educating the workforce. In other words, universities are at the heart of a nation's goals in terms of training students to become functioning citizens who will play a significant role in the development of the countries that they belong to (Enders, 2004). In addition to economic importance, universities in their local countries have, for a long time, been appreciated for their significant role of contributing to the transmission of national culture to future generations.

However, due to increasing forces of globalisation, marketisation, competition, modernisation and internationalisation in university education, universities are undergoing a fundamental shift in their inherent character. One that is clearly visible is the ongoing trend of universities to become global institutions at the expense of local contexts and demands. The argument is that, unlike before, the attention and emphasis of universities are now on global frames that substantially supersede those of the national and local contexts. Consistent with this argument, Zgaga et al. (2014) assert that, in the past two or three decades, the focus of higher education and the discussions surrounding them have been transferred from national to the international or global level. By the same argument, Meyer et al. (2006) specifically observe that, within contemporary higher education systems, the meanings and characteristics of concepts and structures such as student, professor, university or graduate are locally shaped in minor ways, but have a substantial global meaning. This trend is consistent with the globalisation phenomenon under which the world is influenced to become increasingly a global village in terms of social, political, economic, technology, knowledge and other aspects of life. Following suit, countries and perhaps universities find themselves tacitly or explicitly setting standards to guide the provision of university education that focus on meeting the demands of global forces.

As a result, the trend has been argued to cause more than half the countries in the world to adopt quality assurance standards and frameworks with the aim of making their higher education systems better for global needs more than local needs (Jarvis, 2014; Martin

2007). It has occurred through the formulation of national quality assurance frameworks and standards that cover a broad range of aims, including the establishment of modern universities, improving reputations of universities, having adequate facilities and infrastructure, having robust university management teams, and having highly qualified academics. All of these significantly reflect the existence of global pressure associated with the assumption that, if universities complied with national standards, they would have been tacitly complied with global standards and hence serve the needs of the global, national and local contexts. In particular, the globalisation of higher education has been argued to aim at developing global knowledge economies in which national particulars are increasingly subsumed within the universal particulars (universalisation of particulars) and consequently achieve the particularisation of the universe (Hou, Chen & Morse, 2014; King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013; Lumumba, 2006). The argument is also consistent with the claim by Stensaker (2007) that globalisation as a theory assumes that ideas and concepts could be theorised and launched as universal means to universal problems and therefore could be adopted to function within institutions or organisations independent of their characteristics such as size, culture or level of technology. The main argument is therefore that, in the current trend, national standards are not only national but also global.

However, this generic model of setting standards has been contested and argued not to be universally compatible with many higher education systems (Billing, 2004). That is, their origin and perhaps the way they are formulated may cause universities to have negative attitudes towards them. This means that, no matter how good the standards could be, if their origin and approaches to their formulation are not the result of a general consensus reached by key stakeholders including universities, the standards may not gain adequate legitimacy and hence affect their effectiveness in achieving their intended objectives. The idea applies even to the standards formulated through policy borrowing and learning approaches that tend to include careful translation and then transposing of some best principles, and standards developed by other successful higher education systems, regions, countries or by adopting those promoted by some international and supra national bodies such as World Bank, UNESCO, European Union (EU), Bologna Process, Lisbon Strategy and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Therefore, as many developing countries have embarked on formulating standards to guide the provision of higher education with the intention of addressing glonacal demands, an examination of the extent to which the standards fit developing countries' institutions is imperative. This is because, unlike developed countries, developing countries have

particularities and contexts, such as their social, cultural, political and economic environments, that are complex and tend to suggest that the standards do not suit the local conditions (Jarvis, 2014). Moreover, since most of them operate under severely economically constrained contexts, higher education institutions in developing countries face even more challenges in relation to implementation of quality assurance programmes, and this should not be taken for granted (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012). The fact that universities are global institutions (in terms of being able or required to address global needs in addition to those of local and national (Jones, 2008)) and thus have much to share, does not sufficiently legitimise the standardisation and harmonisation of their operating milieu. The argument is that, just as two people are never exactly the same, neither are any two countries or universities. The specifics are always *sui generis*. An example of such diversities in universities put forward by Brennan and Osborne (2008) includes: culture (which is complex); mission; subject mix; proportion of residential and commuting students; those related to reputations such as research and teaching; those related to environment they operate such as split site versus campus locations, quality of space and surroundings, characteristics of adjacent towns and locations in relation to them, and others such as those related to curriculum. As a result of these diversities, approaches to dealing with them should be standardised with caution in order to achieve the glonacal goal. That is, care should be taken in setting quality standards that first reflect the unique and important conditions of the institutions, then the country itself and finally international considerations.

2.2 Nationalisation of global higher education policies

As it has been argued earlier that, although universities are recognised as global institutions but the fact that they are born within national states means that their regulation and consequently operations are significantly nationally based (Enders, 2004). From this argument, it follows that, an understanding on the ways through which global higher education ideas are negotiated and mediated to arriving at appropriate national standards seems to be an important part in this study. Consequently, this section examines some of such diffusion activities (mediation, negotiation and interpretation) that take place at national level to formulate the standards prior their presentation to universities for enforcement.

2.2.1 Diffusion of global higher education policies at national level

The adoption of global higher education ideas to become national higher education standards, policies and practices is a process that involves various activities. Some literature describes the process of diffusing global policy and ideas in a country through negotiations amongst policy makers at national level as domestication or nationalisation (Alasuutari, 2009; Alasuutari & Qadir, 2013). According to Alasuutari (2009), this process involves creating and harmonising of global scripts brought into the country through discussions and considerations. Therefore, what seems to be the most important is achieving the diffusion in dual objectives: isomorphism, in terms of being similar with wider global trends, and at the same appropriateness, in terms of being fair by considering the capabilities of the sector (actors), in this case universities, to adopt changes (Meyer, 2010). If this process is successful, the end result is called naturalisation (Alasuutari & Qadir, 2013).

As the interpretation, negotiation and mediation of such global scripts to fit the respective sector at the same time maximising the isomorphism agenda is not easy, then an understanding on how such processes could lead into an efficient diffusion is important as such processes significantly contribute to the success or failure of the diffusion. In light of this, there is a need to highlight on how at the national level such policies (higher education) could be debated amongst policy makers and political elites that are in position to negotiate policy reforms in the country. That is to say that, the diffusion of global higher education policies to become national higher education policies does not take place through uncritical debating, passive acceptance and consequently unthinking enactment of such policies. Rather, I argue that the policy making at national level involves critical discussions for advocating (justifying), negotiating and mediating of such global policies and ideas. In other words, national policies are not simply enacted in a new nation but they become nationalised gradually through debates taking place amongst policy makers and actors. This also means that countries do not diffuse global policies or models by simply imitating what other countries have successfully done. Instead, they are able to establish the justifications as why the ideas are important and the ways they could work in new contexts they are to be applied.

Describing the process, Alasuutari & Qadir (2013) suggest four stages. First, the domestication or nationalisation process starts by introduction of a global policy or idea in the country. That is, the domestication is triggered by bringing or improving awareness of

a new idea or policy by revealing information on similar ideas or models from other successful countries or by cross-national comparison (Alasuutari & Qadir, 2013). This stage is similar to first stage in the process of generating rationalised myths of organisational structure namely 'the elaboration of complex relational networks' by Meyer and Rowan (1977). Explaining how diffusion of policy in higher education could take place, Gandara, Rippner & Ness (2017) included experts (and other formal institutional arrangements) to play roles of translating and using research evidence to promote and disperse these new ideas to the actors and public as intermediaries. On the same, Meyer and Rowan (1977) posit that the stage involves introducing and describing how the myths such as principles of universalism, contracts, restitution and expertise originated from other contexts could be applied in different ones. That is, they provide impeccable link between the local/national context with other or global trends.

The second stage of the process is the so-called political field battle at national level, which is a rhetorical by nature through which local actors attempt to convince others or each other by means of rational arguments and discussions relating to the new global idea or policy model (Alasuutari & Qadir, 2013). Normative pressure may be used at this point of diffusion as intermediaries may attempt to convince others that the adoption of the new policy should be viewed as a norm or best practice (Gandara, Rippner & Ness, 2017). Therefore, it is through this stage that the direction of policy in a country and at national level is determined.

The third stage is the result of the previous stage, battle field amongst policy makers and influential actors in the country, where a new global policy or idea is either accepted or rejected in national policy discourses. When the idea is accepted, it would be strengthened through formal institutional arrangements and the actors would also be acculturated to adopt (Gandara, Rippner & Ness, 2017). However, the diffusion at the institution level (by actors) may still face some mediation. This process of policy mediation at the institution level or by actors is discussed further in the next chapter, the conceptual framework of this study that also shows the success levels of diffusion overtime due to some mediation and other factors. However, when actors accept the policy, then the final stage is actors and people within that country to consider the new global idea or policy model as local because the domestication process has enabled them get used to the new global policy or model and forget its exogenous origin. This stage of domestication or nationalisation process means acceptance of the model and it is also referred as naturalisation (Alasuutari & Qadir, 2013).

2.3 University autonomy versus enforcement of standards

All over the world, the history of relationships between universities on the one side and governments and other stakeholders on the other side is complex and changing (Traianou, 2015; Rosa & Amaral, 2007). One of the objectives of this study is to examine how universities at the micro level respond to macro government regulations and standards for their own benefit and the benefit of the entire sector as perceived by the standards makers. It is therefore useful and necessary for this literature review to explore how universities may exercise their autonomy in responding to government regulation. Therefore, this section examines how universities, as autonomous, distinctive, yet also responsive educational institutions may handle their relationships with government and respond to their intervention. Moreover, it investigates the impacts of such relationships on their operations, and if the concept of loosely coupled systems by Weick (1976), termed loose coupling by Stensaker (2007), seems to best fit this purpose.

The presentation of this section is therefore divided into three main parts. First is why the loosely coupled concept fits this study. This is followed by a brief presentation of the dichotomy of perspectives embedded in the concepts. Finally, the section focuses on one side of the dichotomy, the advantages of loosely coupled over tightly coupled approach in regulating universities so that the objectives of both the government and universities are realised.

2.3.1 Why loosely coupled concept in this study?

The idea of educational organisations as ‘loosely coupled systems’ was brought forward by Weick (1976) when analysing the linkages among schools’ internal functions and players in the US education system. The basic premise of the analysis was to show how schools and their subsystems are loosely connected and therefore do not function with tight linkages, as it might have been thought. The general argument is that, although subsystems and their functions are responsive to the overall demands of organisations for survivor, prosperity and doing what they were meant to do, they should also be seen as large self-functioning subsystems that are sensitive and tend to preserve their individual powers, identities and some evidence of their physical or logical separateness (Weick, 1976). This implies that, although the use of heteronomy in management of institutions and rationalised practices and procedures such as planning, division of labour, laws, standards, regulations, authority in the office, job descriptions, coordinated structures, consistent evaluation and reward systems tend to contribute to the realisation of organisational goals

and objectives, they still do not adequately explain what goes on within the organisations and may have blinded many practitioners and researchers (Weick, 1976).

The failure of rationalised practices to adequately explain the behaviour of educational organisations is due to the fact that while some parts of organisations may have been heavily rationalised and be well-functioning, other parts may prove be intractable to analysis and improvement through rationalised procedures and practices (Weick, 1976). This idea is supported by Meyer and Rowan (1977) who argued that ceremonial conformity to rules occurs when organisations build the gap between their formal structures and actual work activities by being loosely coupled systems which facilitate them to buffer their formal structures during uncertainties of technical activities. As a result, despite the existence and enhancement of rationalised and institutionalised procedures, the adoption of science, technology, new approaches and the tightening of rules to enhance performance in educational institutions, performances may still decline, remain the same or improve to a degree, yet not in proportion to the effort expended by each unit in the organisation. In other words, the focus of institutions becomes to dramatically fulfilling and reflecting the overall goals and rules, termed as institutional environment or rules by Meyer and Rowan (1977), instead of demands of their work activities.

One of the things that could explain such observations is to view education organisations as loosely coupled institutions with subsystems that are strong enough to considerably influence the performance of entire organisation in both positive and negative ways (Weick, 1976; Rowan and Meyer, 1977). Therefore, contrary to theoretically tightly coupled or heteronomous systems where discretion is limited and subsystems abide strictly by and function in accordance with the set laws and rationalised procedures, practice tends to suggest that, loosely coupled systems have subsystems that are inescapably strong and influential. It follows that, various things tend to happen in an organisation. For example, according to Meyer and Rowan (1977), structural elements are only loosely linked to each other and to activities, rules are often violated, decisions are often unimplemented, or if implemented have uncertain consequences, technologies are of problematic efficiency, and evaluation and inspection systems are subverted or rendered so vaguely. Consequently, what acts as a glue to hold the organisation together, regardless whether the organisation achieves its goals or not, is argued to be the loosely coupled system itself (Weick, 1976). That is, assuming that organisations and subunits in them know what they are expected to

do, are acting in good faith and properly towards achieving the overall goals, allow them to work in a loosely coupled structure.

Although the focus of Weick was on analysing how the internal parties of non-university educational institutions behave at the micro level, this concept seems valid and useful in understanding the behaviour of universities, as it has been used by Stensaker (2007). On one hand, it facilitates understanding of how universities as autonomous institutions in less controlled higher education systems establish and handle relationships and connections with other systems or institutions, including, in this study, state regulations. On the other hand, the concept explains how universities may (inevitably) function as an alternative to autonomy when operating in highly controlled or centralised higher education systems where heteronomy supersedes autonomy.

In general, the concept illustrates how universities, depending on the degree of autonomy/heteronomy that they display in their connection with other systems, particularly government, may still exercise their autonomy or operate as loosely coupled systems to retain some of their identity and separateness when responding to national standards and regulations (Weick, 1976; Meyer & Rowan 1977; Orton & Weick, 1990). The concept provides a systematic analysis of how and why universities may still operate as autonomous, responsive and distinctive organisations even in highly standardised or regulated contexts (Ferlie, Musselin & Andresani, 2008). The implication of the above argument is that, in all circumstances, universities have discretion in making attachments to other systems, including the government, not only to be strong but also circumscribed, infrequent, weak in their mutual effects, unimportant and/or even impermanent, and yet achieve the overall organisational or sectorial goals (Weick, 1976; Stensaker, 2007).

The idea is consistent with Deem's (2010) description of the challenges of direct control over academics in universities due to their leverage of using academic capital that encompasses both academic and scientific power to either explicitly or implicitly play research games. Consistently, universities have the same leverage of using the capital/power rooted in expertise and know-how in dealing with forces from different sources including governments. In other words, changes in universities are still influenced by the autonomy (regardless of its degree) that universities possess through their leaders who act as change agents and determine their balance of allegiance, to themselves as universities and to other stakeholders and forces such as government and global forces (Wallace et al., 2010).

Moreover, the arguments above imply that, regardless of the fact that universities are open systems and hence are connected to other systems and institutions such as: government ministries, regulations, other universities, employers, parents, external quality assurance institutions, studying any sets of relationships between universities and other systems is complex and will always present novel issues that researchers ought to be aware of. According to Weick (1976), the complexities found in loosely coupled systems tend to give researchers access to novel and unseen images available in organisational theory. That is, they help to explain how various issues (minor or major) may appear and be coupled or decoupled over time, depending on the needs of the groups, and yet the groups in the system continue across time. An understanding of the expectations of each group, how they are theoretically tied to function together to achieve a common goal while they differ in other issues, helps to avoid an inappropriate portrayal of systems to suggest unity, integration, coordination and consensus.

It follows from the above discussions, the interactions between universities and national standards satisfy the conditions for the application of the loosely coupled concept in this study as supported by Orton and Weick (1990) that, universities are both distinctive and responsive organisations, hence making a loosely coupled system. This is because, according to Orton and Weick (1990), if organisations are neither responsive nor distinctive they cannot make a system but instead make a non-coupled system, while if organisations are distinctive but non-responsive they would make a decoupled system.

Therefore, the concept is useful because an objective of this study is to examine the degrees of coupling between two parts that play a critical role in enhancing the university education system in Tanzania. One part consists of those who establish policy, regulations and standards governing universities operation and therefore have a mandate to offer rewards or sanctions with regard to performance. The second part consists of technical core activities performed in and by universities in accordance with their academic oligarchy and directives from the standards setters in order to achieve desired objectives. These technical activities consist of a range of tasks, subtasks and roles that may be translated and performed differently by individual universities to achieve their objectives.

2.3.2 The dichotomy of perspectives within the concept

Unlike a theoretical tightly coupled system that suggests a nucleus situation, characterised by loyalty of universities to government interventions, excessive integration and consensus between them, the concept of loosely coupled systems is dichotomous. On the one hand,

the concept of loosely coupled systems explains the difficulties that may be experienced in managing inherently autonomous institutions such as universities. In this case, the concept carries a negative connotation by focusing on how universities may use their autonomy and mediatory power to be relatively unresponsive to government interventions. That is, universities as institutions are intractable to government regulations and hence may behave in an unhealthy way for the development of the higher education sector.

On the other hand, the concept explains how universities' functions could be performed well by viewing the relationship between universities and government as loosely coupled, rather than theoretically tightly coupled. That is, in order to increase the chances of government interventions being successful, a consideration of university autonomy through the application of loosely coupled system should not be ignored. It follows that the explanations provided hereafter take mildly supportive accounts to explain how loosely coupled systems could not only be a useful but an inevitable management approach to regulate the behaviour of universities successfully so that the objectives of both government (policy/regulations) and universities (values/identities) are realised.

2.3.3 Advantages of adopting loosely coupled in regulating universities

First, according to Weick (1976), loosely coupled systems allow organisations in networks or subsystems in organisations to continue to exist. This is because loosely coupled systems reduce the probability of organisations or subsystems responding to or complying with each little change in the environment, as would be the case in a tightly coupled system. It gives power to universities to take time, rethink and even do research to enhance their rational decision-making process on what changes, as commended by intervention, should be adopted in order to improve their functioning. The ability and power of universities to contemplate an intervention, understand their core objectives and respond in a way that enables them to realise the government's intention and their own mission make them intellectual performers and think tanks (Bajenova, 2016), rather than compliant audiences. Being intellectual performers not only empowers and strengthens identity, autonomy and criticality of universities in making decisions but also strengthens the realisation of government policies as well.

Second, Weick (1976) argues that loosely coupled systems may provide the advantage of a more sensitive sensing mechanism in educational organisations. To clarify, a priori, Weick (1976) draws a metaphoric expression from Heider (1959) (cited in Weick (1976)) who suggests that perception is most accurate when a medium that contains many independent

elements that are internally less constrained senses a thing. To bring this down to earth, the example was given of sand as a better medium than rock to display wind currents. Weick (1976) argues that sand is a better medium because it has more elements, which are more independent among themselves, than rock. Using this analogy, it could be argued that universities, through loosely coupled systems, preserve more independent-sensing mechanisms than if they were to operate in tightly coupled systems characterised by a high degree of interdependence and an internally constrained environment. If universities were to lack this sensitive sensing mechanism by being tightly coupled, they would be responding to government regulations uncritically and hence increasingly become vulnerable to producing what Weick (1976) calls faddish responses and interpretations. By contrast, the argument is that, when universities function autonomously, they become more deeply engaged, self-determined, and productive, henceforth generating desirable human capital and wellness (Bajenova, 2016; Thorsten, 2008).

A third advantage is that a loosely coupled system is good for localised adaptation (Weick, 1976). The argument is that if universities are loosely coupled in networking with government interventions and other authorities they are connected to, then they are more able to adjust and manoeuvre the interventions to fit the local and unique contingencies in their localities. Weick (1976) argues that the antithesis of localised adaptation is standardisation of the whole system, and that the greater the standardisation of the system, the less will be the ability of loosely coupled systems to exhibit the benefit of localised adoption.

The fourth advantage suggested by Weick (1976) is that in loosely coupled systems universities can preserve their identity, uniqueness and separateness, and these are important to the overall system during times of radical change. The idea is that when the government imposes radical changes, it is through university autonomy that universities may be able to retain a greater number of transformations and solutions than would have been the case had they operated as a tightly coupled system. The underlying premise is that loosely coupled systems provide good solutions to problems that may arise if adaptation precludes adaptability. That is, if the entire university system has to fit nicely into the new intervention, then some resources that may appear to be useless in the new environment may be wasted, even though they may have been crucial to a modified environment. Therefore, through loosely coupled systems, at times of unprecedented change universities may preserve more diverse ways to respond by being able to use their autonomy to

preserve some resources, their identity, uniqueness and separateness while adapting to the new environment.

The fifth advantage is that loosely coupled systems are not only good for localisation of adaptation but for localisation of unique problems, hence avoiding the spread of problems to the entire system (Weick, 1976). If an adaptation to a new intervention introduced to universities misfires in those institutions that adapted first, then the problem would be checked through loosely coupled systems, sealed off and therefore would not damage the entire university system. This is because other universities and the system in general may notice the problem resulting from adaptation to the intervention by other universities and prevent the trouble from spreading by either not engaging in adapting or taking necessary measure to counteract or contain the effects of the adaptation, consequently justifying their being as think tank institutions (Bajenova, 2016).

A sixth advantage is that universities are linked to and expected to satisfy many stakeholders: employers; students; parents; government; and others (Dill 2001). In case anything goes wrong with the implementation of the intervention and it happens that, in one way or another, stakeholders are affected, then universities are accountable. This means that they have to make a case for themselves and for stakeholders (which should even be stronger) with regard to the implementation or effects. In a loosely coupled system that provides room for self-determination by universities, this is more possible than would be the case in a tightly coupled system (Weick, 1976).

For example, the intervention may come from the government or an agency. In a loosely coupled system, the interventions are expected to be translated and institutionalised by universities in order to make sure they fit different stakeholders' diverse interests (Bajenova, 2016). However, it may happen that the interventions may have difficulties in meeting every stakeholder's expectations or may have unintended consequences. Loosely coupled systems provide room for universities not only to be able to link and fit the interventions with the diverse interests of stakeholders, but also to justify with considerable negotiations that the intentions of the translated and implemented interventions were for the benefit of stakeholders. Therefore, in case a stakeholder complains, the university may explain how the intervention was designed to correspond with the stakeholder's desire or interest. Since the intervention would be explained to have good intentions to the stakeholder, the stated intentions of the intervention serve as surrogate for both consequences and good reasons as to why it should have been implemented. Acting as

autonomous institutions, this decreases the burden of accountability on the state for the intervention it formulated and shifts some of the burden to universities. The opposite would be true if universities were operating in tightly coupled system.

2.4 Discourses on why governments may regulate higher education

Studies conducted in developing countries including Sub-Saharan Africa indicate that both governments and higher education stakeholders support the intervention through national standards and quality frameworks that guide the provision of university education (Utuka, 2012; Materu, 2007). As in developed countries, stakeholders (students, staff and policy makers) in developing countries viewed national standards and quality assurance frameworks as beneficial to institutions and to those who work and study in them because they contribute significantly to the provision of a trusted, quality and competitive university education (Rodman, Biloslavo & Bratoz, 2013; Cho & Palmer, 2013; Utuka, 2012; Oyewole, 2009; Materu, 2007).

However, in addition to stakeholders' support, there are various other factors causing governments around the globe to seek to regulate the operation of universities and the provision of university education. These factors can be divided into two major categories: internal factors emerging from within the national higher education systems or contexts; and factors from outside the national higher education systems or contexts. Selected factors, which need not be mutually exclusive, are explained below.

It is presumed that, due to economic turbulence and financial instability, many governments have experienced difficulties in funding adequately their higher education systems. Consequently, academic institutions, including those historically heavily funded by governments in their countries, are increasingly being compelled to diversify their income generation sources by adopting an entrepreneurial model. According to Perellon (2007), when universities adopt the entrepreneurial model, academics tend to act as if higher education institutions are private companies providing a particular product to students, and students could be regarded as consumers of education (education as a product), therefore students have to pay for educational services.

In addition, due to increased financial instability and the fact that universities need to be allocated a considerable amount of money, there has been a debate on whether it is fair for taxpayers' money to be used unconditionally and in the absence of accountability to fund universities and students (Jarvis, 2014; Blackmur, 2007). For example, in Tanzania,

whether students are enrolled in government or non-government owned universities, most students are financed by loans from government, which is taxpayers' money that could be used for other economic and social activities, such as health, water and transportation. Due to prevailing economic hardship and the use of substantial sums of taxpayers' money to fund higher education, governments may decide to devise regulations to make universities accountable for the money that they receive, including providing education that contributes to national economic development and the welfare. Furthermore, regulations can be used as a means to ensure that students, especially those funded by taxpayers' money, seek admission to universities that have been registered and comply with government regulations. This forms part of the protection of consumers of education (students) against market failure (Blackmur, 2007). It also conforms to two reasons for why government may exert pressure to organisations: social fitness – to make organisations more socially fit by producing and delivering safe and quality products and services, and economic fitness – being accountable and rational in terms of value for money and protecting taxpayer money (Oliver, 1991).

Due to higher education liberalisation and transformation policies, there has been a recent proliferation of universities (Jarvis, 2014; Lumumba, 2006; Jegede, 2012). This has caused a shift from a small number of universities for an elite class or 'cream' students to mass higher education that widens access to include those who were previously excluded (Dill, 2007). It also led universities to market themselves and compete for fee-paying students. The worst-case scenario is when proliferation leads to 'diploma mill' institutions. For example, there have recently been complaints around the globe about academic malpractice such as grade inflation, particularly among the non-government universities, due to over-reliance on part-time academics who tend to favour students in order to keep their jobs (Ishengoma, 2007; Bachan, 2017; Sonner 2000). The consequences of such compromised university education include production of incompetent graduates with poor critical thinking and problems-solving skills, unable to respond to the challenges and opportunities in work and society.

To counter this, governments set standards and regulations to control the mushrooming of universities by ensuring that universities provide education in a milieu that meets the set standards and regulations. Adherence to government standards and regulations is an approach intended to guarantee that universities provide quality education. However, it makes both students and their parents less vigilant, less critical and less discerning in matters relating to choices of university. They simply rely on basic information such as

whether or not a university has been registered and complies with the government regulations and standards (Blackmur, 2007). Therefore, over-reliance on such system may be risky, especially when the performance of internal quality assurance mechanisms within universities and of the state agency in charge of ensuring that the standards and regulations are complied with are weak and inefficient (Blackmur, 2007). For example, if the agency is weak, there is a chance that an accredited university or programme is not up to the expected standard.

External factors are related to the wider liberalisation and internationalisation of higher education that is also associated with the increase in commercial cross-border and internet based (e-learning) higher education (Jowi, 2009). Over the past two decades, there has been an increase in the number of people who have been awarded higher education qualifications through (internet-based) distance education from universities that are not locally based, or from foreign universities that have established branches and campuses in other countries (Stella & Gnanam, 2004). The problem is not actually these forms of learning, rather that some cross-border institutions and e-learning higher education programmes are untrustworthy and offer poor-quality programmes and educational experiences (Perellon, 2007). Tanzania, like other African and developing countries, is home to various foreign-based universities. Therefore, to safeguard students from being victims of such experiences, many governments including those from the developing world have been taking measures to ensure that such institutions are registered, accredited and provide a trustworthy education.

The existence of unregulated higher education systems not subject to standards may result in a fragmented higher education system. That is, if provision of quality education mainly relies on university-based quality assurance mechanisms and trust in university autonomy, there is a possibility of providing education at different quality levels, forming a spectrum from (probably) high quality to low quality. This argument is based on the fact that, regardless of the existence or absence of regulations, in both developed countries (where university education is well coordinated) and in developing countries, more than one category of university tends to exist. For example, in the United Kingdom, some universities belong to the Russell Group while others do not. In the United States, researchers tend to classify institutions into three strategic orientations: ‘prestige-based’, being those universities already with high level of prestige and readily recognised throughout the world; ‘prestige-seeking’, being those universities seeking to become prestige; and ‘reputation-based’, being those universities seeking to satisfy customer needs

(Dill, 2007). Although the UK and the US higher education systems have explicitly been used as examples, these categories of cartel-like groups of universities are increasingly becoming prominent and evident (by history, legacy or efforts) in many countries. There is a plethora of evidence to support this argument from countries with well-established higher education systems, such as Italy, Australia, The Netherlands, South Africa and others.

However, in developing countries, these categories take a different form and have different impacts. It is common to observe the existence of few, normally older, government owned and well-funded universities that tend to possess a degree of 'monopoly power' in the sector, compared to their counterpart non-government owned and more recently established universities. Therefore, the existence of such arrangement in developing countries has adverse effects that exceed those in developed countries or those with well-coordinated higher education systems. In developed countries, these categories may have no serious impacts and probably do not indicate anything significant in relation to quality. This is because, due to these countries' well-coordinated higher education systems, the governments and citizens may have indifference demand for education based on such arrangements. For example, although, attending a university with high reputation based on rankings or international recognition such as Oxford, Cambridge or Harvard would be better but expensive, then attending any other Russell Group or even non-Russell Group universities does not make a significant difference in the quality of education provided.

The consequences of these categories in developing countries are adverse for the following reasons. Education is a complementary good, in which students are both inputs and consumers (Dill, 2007). One of the characteristics of complementary goods is that an increase in demand for one will increase the demand for the other, and vice versa. This means that an increase in students as input for training in universities would lead to an increase in students as consumers who are paying for the education provided, and vice versa. This further means that, if a university manages to increase the number of students, then it would increase the revenue generated through fees collected from students. Then, the money may be reinvested to enhance the environment for teaching, learning and other facilities. Consequently, the existence of such categories of universities in developing countries promotes: the reputation of few and normally big and old universities; the reputation of the categories they belong to; and the reputation of their students and graduates. Further consequences include: attracting more students to enrol at such universities; and influencing the labour market to have different and fragmented

perceptions about the quality of education offered by different universities, that will in turn affect the employability of graduates from these universities.

Furthermore, the existence of such categories in developing countries may create a differentiated demand for higher education that would allow high-reputation universities to charge higher fees. It should be noted that if such universities charge higher fees than others, there is a likelihood that such universities educate children from powerful socio-economic families and therefore become instrumental in exacerbating inequality in society. The increase in financial capacity due to money generated from marginal fees would result in increased ability for these institutions to spend more on resources and facilities such as halls of residence for students, eating facilities, internet facilities, computers, laboratories and other facilities that in turn increase not only their reputation but the quality of education provided in a significant way compared to their lower-reputation counterparts. The existence of these categories could therefore be argued to bring unintended results in developing countries, more than in developed countries.

To counteract the situation above, governments in developing countries may seek to have standards and regulations for the purpose of both enhancing and harmonising the provision of higher education. Existence of national standards in this case could be used as a useful measure to minimise market failure and monopoly, set benchmarks for quality, while at the same time to enhance the reputation and credibility of the entire higher education system of a country. Stensaker (2007) argues that the system of setting standards and benchmarks provides a prism through which universities can examine their own practices and routines, making them become more efficient and quality/standards-minded.

However, it should be noted that paying too much attention to adherence to standards by universities may result in unintended outcomes, including the following. First, since the standards set out levels of acceptable behaviour and, in their own right, are not goals but a means to achieve goals, then focusing on compliance may cause some universities to become rule-orientated. This will in turn cause them to ignore important considerations that could potentially improve the quality of education provided, which is the ultimate goal. This means that a university might comply with minimum standards through having the necessary facilities and resources but, if there is no optimum utilisation of such facilities and resources, then the intended or expected quality goals may not be achieved.

Another reason for the establishment of national university standards and guidelines is related to manpower planning and the production of human capital. Countries around the

globe recognise the link between the contribution of human capital in economic development and the role of higher education. Developing countries, like developed countries such as the United Kingdom and France, have intervened in their higher education systems through designing higher education policies and regulatory frameworks with the intention of, among other things, making higher education contribute significantly to economic development by producing the required human capital (Traianou, 2015).

Thus, higher education policies may be established by government as a means to check and balance the supply of human resources for the needs of the country (Traianou, 2015). For example, if there is a scarcity of human resources in certain cadres, the government may strategically plan to tackle the situation by influencing the higher education system to produce the required human resources to fill the gap.

Next, universities may collectively behave like firms in the economy. Instead of being displeased with existence of national regulations and standards, they might actively promote the creation of such standards in order to enhance or safeguard their values and presence (Blackmur, 2007). This industrial idea of seeking regulation from the government is basically a rejection of the claims made by the new welfare economics of the Chicago and Virginia theories. The new welfare economists were criticised for being based on the supply side. They argue that governments are essentially benevolent and tend to intervene or act in ways that secure public interests or maximise social welfare by addressing inefficiencies and asymmetries through efficacious measures and instruments such as laws, standards and regulations (Blackmur, 2007).

As a reaction to this, the Chicago and Virginia theories came up with a demand-based counter-argument and asserted that regulations and standards may be sought by an industry and may be designed to operate primarily to benefit or protect the industry itself, rather than public interest or maximisation of the public welfare (Blackmur, 2007). This means that universities might lobby the government to establish policies, standards and regulations that empower and protect them. Hence, the existence of regulations and standards in higher education could be a result of their own lobbying and pressure on the government, rather than vice versa.

It should be noted that the above reasons are not exhaustive as there could be other reasons as to why governments may decide to regulate higher education systems. Regardless of the variety of reasons, it should be noted that when governments regulate any aspect of higher education, the major aim is to ensure that quality university education is provided, if

possible in dignified contexts. Therefore, it could be argued that regulations and standards intended to address different issues, such as accreditation processes; protecting consumers of higher education (from lack of information or inability to process information well and make rational choices); value for money; production of qualified human resources for the labour market; university entry standards; student-staff ratios; student-facilities ratios; qualification of academics and other standards guiding the milieu for the provision of university education, all taken together are linked to the goal of improving the quality of university education. Simply put, governments tend to introduce national quality assurance measures to monitor universities to ensure that they self-regulate their behaviour within parameters acceptable to the government (Rosa & Amaral, 2007).

Chapter 3 Theoretical and conceptual framework

Forming an extension of the literature review, this chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study. Using theories that seem applicable to the context of the study, the theoretical framework explains how the global templates and hegemonic ideas in higher education exert their influence on (developing) countries to get engaged in establishing national standards to guide their university education systems. Meanwhile, the conceptual framework is interconnected with the theoretical framework by assuming that, the success of enforcement of the standards formulated by being informed by theoretical frameworks is subjected to the reciprocity interactions between the standards setters on side and the universities (leaders) on the other side. That is, the conceptual framework provides an account of how universities may respond to standards using varied degrees of autonomy as such as loosely coupled concept and mediatory power. The end of this process is an account of the extent to which the standards have been able to achieve their intended goals, in terms of being reflected within the operating milieu in universities.

3.1 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on how the coexistence and operation of global templates or hegemonic ideas in higher education particularly the dependency trap theory, the globalisation theory and a group of other forces (modernisation, marketisation, internationalisation, Europeanisation (Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy)) inform the development of the national standards that are to be institutionalised by universities to guide the provision of quality university education in developing countries. The section starts by discussing the influence and implications of the dependency trap theory on the setting of standards for the provision of university education in developing countries. Next, the contribution of globalisation theory to the establishment of national standards and regulations in developing countries is presented. The contribution of this theory is presented in a dichotomous way: the role of globalisation from above in the establishment of regulations and standards; and the role that globalisation from below plays in cancelling out the effects of globalisation from above, to create a balanced environment for provision of quality university education. The final part, as for the above two theories, presents the influence of a group of forces (modernisation, marketisation, internationalisation and Europeanisation - Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy).

3.1.1 The dependency trap theory

In the context of this study, the dependency trap theory describes how and why higher education policies, structures and practices in developing countries have been largely derived from and are still dictated, shaped by and based on those of developed countries or global hegemonic ideas (Martin & Griffiths, 2012; Meyer et al., 2006; Mazrui, 1975). In general, the theory examines how most developing countries are still caught up in the trap of dependency in various dimensions, such as politics and economics (funding). However, this study draws on educational context with particular interest in higher education, and therefore uses part of the broad theory to explain how higher education systems in developing countries depend on and are modelled to reflect the education systems of developed countries. That is, to describe how higher education systems and institutions in developing countries have continued to build their foundations by adopting policies, practices, management structures and even curricula of universities in developed countries.

One of the major reasons that is argued to have contributed to the higher education systems of developing countries to fall into the dependency trap is an unequal distribution of resources which gives developed countries a financial advantage over developing countries. These conditions limit the ability of developing countries to adequately fund their higher education systems as it happens in developed countries. For example, in recent years, both the general enrolment rates and the number of universities have increased in developing countries (Jegede, 2012). However, this expansion may have been at the expense of quality education because the increase in number of universities and students seem not to match with the level of resources necessary to provide quality education. In many developing countries, universities still face a paucity of resources, which in turn affects the quality of education provided (Jegede, 2012).

It follows that, due to the paucity of domestic resources that are thinly distributed in the sector, higher education in developing countries has continued to rely significantly on assistance (financial, technological and facilities) from developed countries. The upshot of such reliance is the de facto domination of global and hegemonic higher education ideas within the higher education systems of developing countries that are reflected by the tendency of mimicking whatever is happening in developed countries (William, 2011; Deem, Mok & Lucas, 2008). Since higher education systems and institutions in industrialised counties are leading in terms of research, technology and advancement in educational facilities, and have a strong financial base, automatically they tend to dictate

how education should be provided, what knowledge is legitimate and under which standards it should be provided. This leads to the tendency of developing countries to rely upon, adopt and even reproduce whatever is done in the education systems of developed countries. As a result, higher education systems in developing countries and decisions pertaining to them are in many ways dependent on and influenced by those from developed countries (Martin & Griffiths, 2012; William, 2011).

Further to the prevalence of the above situation, it could be argued that the dependency of higher education in developing countries has resulted in the emergence of the so-called conditioning environment. Through this condition, the development of developing countries' higher education systems is becoming conditioned and contingent upon the development of Western higher education systems, that also translate to proliferation of hegemonic ideas. That is, the development is not from within themselves, but a reflection of what is happening in the higher education systems of developed economies (Martin and Griffiths, 2012; Mazrui, 1975). The impact of such trend is higher education systems and institutions in developing countries to get caught in policy borrowing dependency in such a way that may only occasionally make major reforms without borrowing or reflecting the higher education policies from developed countries.

The manifestation of the dependency trap theory in developing countries in relation to formulation of national university standards may be explained in two ways: implicitly or explicitly. The implicit way is when a developing country formulates policies and guidelines by borrowing ideas from developed countries, modifying them to fit their contexts and then incorporating them in their policies to be institutionalised. The explicit way is when the governments in developing countries, through policy makers and educational planners, borrow and implement models that have been implemented successfully in developed countries, without adequate consideration of the new local context. A good example of this is the acceptance and implementation of recommendations (not always pertinent to higher education contexts of developing countries) that stem from technical advisory and expert committees from countries with well-established higher education systems.

However, the dependency of universities in developing countries particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa has argued not to be a new phenomenon, as it has existed through the past four decades. For example, highlighting the levels of dependency of African higher education on Western higher education, Mazrui (1975) commented that African

universities have changed their impetus and become extensions of metropolitan institutions from developed countries. He claims that developing countries have been in this condition for a long period of time but with little success, implying that clinging to this condition may not warranty developing countries to achieving the quality higher education goal. Moreover, being like developed countries may not be a panacea for the problems facing higher education in developing countries, nor would it put an end to dependency. Instead, by learning from history, it may be possible to argue that the longer the higher education systems in developing countries keep reflecting those of Western higher education systems, the more dependent they become (Lumumba, 2006).

These arguments moreover imply that, with continued dependency, it becomes difficult for developing countries to revamp their education systems by either establishing their own regulations from scratch or by genuinely shaping the borrowed ones to fit their own contexts properly. As has been argued in fields of politics that; power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely, it could similarly be argued in the field of higher education that dependency tends to corrupt, and absolute dependency corrupts absolutely. What is meant is that excessive dependency of developing countries' higher education systems on those from developed countries may not necessarily improve higher education in developing countries. The fact is that, although Western models of governance, financial and technological assistances may appear to have potential for improving the functioning, quality and efficiency of developing countries' higher education systems, in practice they may be merely a placebo or a partial solution to problems. Developing countries should take risks by designing regulatory frameworks that may enhance the quality of education whilst at the same time considering their own contexts. A failure to be like Western higher education systems does not suggest the demise of higher education in developing countries. In fact, it could be the beginning of a new form of higher education that reflects the African and developing countries' contexts in general.

To conclude, the use of this theory in this study was essential in analysing and bringing an understanding of how higher education systems in developing countries have been trapped by the adoption of Western models of higher education systems. Further, the theory could be useful in reviewing the experiences and practices of higher education in developing countries. In other words, it could be used as a starting point and a foundation to deconstruct, reconstruct, reorganise and regenerate higher education systems that relate getter to the unique features, structures and different sociocultural and economic contexts of developing economies. As long as it has existed, the theory also provides a lesson that

adoption of Western models has presumably failed to bring the expected results and it is unlikely to be a panacea to the problems impairing higher education systems in developing countries. These arguments, however, do not mean that developing countries should not have partnerships with or not accept assistance from developed countries. Instead, the aim of analysis of the dependency trap theory with regard to university education systems in developing countries is to promote a more nuanced use of policies and standards that are based on a Western ethnocentric understanding of university education. The analysis suggests the need to consider seriously the socio-economic milieu of universities in developing countries in order to formulate standards that will be successful in enhancing both the quality of education and the milieu in which it is provided.

3.1.2 Globalisation theory

Globalisation is a complex theory with many definitions and interpretations. It is also diverse in nature (explaining various fields of knowledge) and embedded with varied experiences, challenges, consequences and opportunities. Highlighting this idea, Zgaga et al. (2014) argue that, depending on the point of view, it could be seen either as a solution or at other times as a force for destruction. In this study, the focus of globalisation is on higher education. Specifically, the two facets of globalisation theory in higher education suggested by Torres (2013) and their implications for the adoption of standards and regulations within higher education systems are discussed within the theories informing this study. These are 'globalisation from above' and 'globalisation from below' (Torres, 2013).

'Globalisation from above' in higher education could also be referred to as neoliberalism or neo-colonialism in higher education. This is because it describes the dominance and manifestation of Western hegemony (global hegemonies) in higher education with the principal goal of creating a world order system in higher education (William, 2011; Deem, Mok & Lucas, 2008). It is founded on a linear, top-down and sometimes deterministic drive towards homogenisation of higher education (Vaira, 2004). The foundation is evidenced by emerging models embodying characteristics and efforts to create a standardised higher education system in the world through: universalisation of knowledge, harmonisation of higher education institutions, increased competition (university ranking) and standardisation of environments in which higher education is provided. Vaira (2004) sees this aspect of globalisation as a convergence thesis, as it emphasises the homogenisation process (isomorphic change at institutional level).

According to Torres (2013), ‘globalisation from below’ (also referred to as ‘anti-globalisation’) is manifested through active opposition by individuals, institutions, social movements and countries against globalisation from above. However, it should be noted that although the term anti-globalisation has negative connotations, the main agenda and effort behind it are not against globalisation per se. Instead, anti-globalisation movements seek the creation of forms of integration between global and local factors to facilitate fair democratic representation and consideration of various factors for sustainable development of higher education systems in both developing and developed countries. Vaira (2004) interprets this aspect of globalisation as a divergence thesis, since it emphasises providing room for localised responses to global processes through idiosyncratic strategic responses, translation processes, manipulation processes, mediation processes, heterogeneity and even resistance.

Generally, the proponents of globalisation from below emphasise two key things. First, there is no university or country that does not want to have a quality or best higher education system. The fact is, while countries struggle to set national higher education standards and regulations to enhance the ability of their universities to provide quality education, universities themselves work on establishing the structures with a similar aim.

Second, there is no such thing as ‘one size fits all’. What anti-globalisation theory asserts is that the current model of globalisation is superficial, unbalanced and unfair. It is superficial and unbalanced because it is not grounded on the principles of achieving the goal of better higher education systems that adequately take account of the diverse factors found in different countries. Addressing this concern, Zgaga et al. (2014) argue for the need to have globalisation that puts pressure on universities into two directions that appear opposed, at first glance: to be globally competitive; and to serve the needs of the local economy. It is not fair, because too much engagement in globalisation from above may lead to neglecting the autonomy, values, social, cultural, economic and political contexts of different countries. Consequently, with globalisation from above, the higher education systems that do not fit Western countries’ criteria for standards and quality higher education (for which the criteria are not clearly known) would not be recognised or ranked as institutions that provide quality university education in a dignified context. In addition, globalisation from above appeals to higher education systems across the world that seek to know what it is to be a distinctive university by understanding and adopting certain standards and then measuring themselves against these standards, so that they may rectify the deficiencies. Such approaches to looking at quality in universities could be argued to be vague, since

they lack clarity in terms of the criteria used to define quality or are based on criteria that are difficult to attain. This is consistent with Harvey and Knight (1996), who comment that it is difficult to attain quality that: (i) is not determined by what is happening within or provided by universities; (ii) is not a result of clear criteria or benchmarks set to measure it; (iii) if it exists, is difficult to attain; and (iv) has no definition of what a good university is. According to Harvey and Knight (1996), this is a hypothetical type of quality that is simply based on an assumption that distinctiveness and inaccessibility of such kind of universities is, of itself, quality.

3.1.3 Other global forces and their influence on the behaviours of universities

Over the last two decades, the world has experienced tremendous efforts to modernise, standardise and regulate the operation of universities and the provision of university education. There are number of relevant factors, not mutually exclusive, ranging from global, regional and national. These factors include but are not limited to: globalisation; modernisation; marketisation and internationalisation forces in university education; European policies for higher education, such as European Union for higher education strategies; rapid expansion of universities; changing national policies and laws for higher education that have affected the autonomy of universities; various discussions about the role of contemporary universities; a continued political desire to align higher education with the needs of society; renegotiations of the state/university relationships; and universities suffering a loss of trust and being under pressure to adopt to changing environmental settings (Kwiek & Kurkiewicz, 2012; Huisman, 2009; Rosa & Amaral, 2007).

Starting with forces from globalisation, internationalisation, marketisation, competition and related factors, the evidence shows that there has been a trend towards the integration of international frameworks into domestic national higher education frameworks (Enders, 2004). That is, national higher education policies are increasingly being subsumed and re-articulated into autonomised international higher education systems (Huisman, 2009). Consequently, countries that have embarked on higher education reforms in order to accommodate these forces may have unintentionally but substantially changed the focus of their universities. This is because, although these policies are created at national level, they are largely shaped by and interwoven with the aforementioned global forces.

It follows that when such policies are accepted and being institutionalised, they significantly shape the operation of universities and even somehow disconnect them from

focusing on the specific traditional needs of their localities and countries, due to being overly linked with global trend and requirements (Kwiek & Kurkiewicz, 2012; Huisman, 2009; Enders, 2004). In this case, it could be argued that an increase in conformity and convergence with international and global forces reduces the autonomy of local universities. A good example of this could be drawn from the effects of Bologna Process, whereby its implementation required universities in European countries to make substantial changes to adopt or promote issues, such as curricular development and programmes of study with a European perspective rather than simply national or local contexts and needs (King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013). As put forward by Elias (2011), the Bologna Process had a convergence aim: to homogenise universities across European countries.

Therefore, it may be argued that, as countries are becoming increasingly embedded in the national university regulatory frameworks and as these frameworks become prominent and institutionalised within universities, then there is no doubt that the link between universities, national and international regulatory frameworks is increasingly becoming seamless. Consequently, as universities are increasingly becoming shaped by national regulatory frameworks, which are interwoven with global frameworks, not only may their relevance to their own localities be threatened but their autonomy may diminish, as well.

Regarding forces emanating from the European Union (Europeanisation of higher education), historically there were two major forces that impacted higher education in Europe and then extended to other higher education systems. First, starting in 1999 there was a series of ministerial meetings among European Union member states that ultimately resulted in the Bologna Process. The major objective of the Bologna Process was to create a European Higher Education Area and to make European higher education competitive and attractive in the globalising world (King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013). Further, the aim of this process was to make European Union member states work together to improve the delivery of university education that responds to the needs of twenty-first century by setting up and sharing effective policies (Kwiek & Kurkiewicz, 2012).

This was followed by the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, which actually fitted well into the Bologna Process. The aim of Lisbon Strategy was to reform European higher education systems into a more powerful engine for the European knowledge economy by 2010 (King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013). Therefore, both the Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy, termed the ‘modernisation agenda’ by King, Marginson & Naidoo (2013), subsumed the European countries’ traditional higher education policies under the new policies that were

strongly promoted by the European Union (Kwiek & Kurkiewicz, 2012). It was claimed that quality of teaching and learning in higher education was central to making European higher education competitive; and it was at the heart of the Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy (Kwiek & Kurkiewicz, 2012).

As a result of these two forces, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was established in 2000. The aim of ENQA was to formulate standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education in order to modernise university education and develop a quality culture in higher education institutions within the European Union. According to ENQA (2009), the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) are divided into three parts. First is internal quality assurance within higher education institution, which includes, *inter alia*, policy and procedures for quality assurance, assessment of students, quality assurance of staff, learning resources and students support. Second is the external quality assurance of higher education institutions. This includes, *inter alia,* the development of external quality assurance processes and criteria for decisions. Third is the external quality assurance agencies. This includes, *inter alia,* the use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education, official status, activities, resources, mission statement, independence, external quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies, and accountability procedures. These were further to work in harmony with the national quality framework of general rules, policies and standards that were to be introduced, so that member states would be able to guide the university sector as a whole.

The fundamental argument is that, although these policies, standards and guidelines were made for and meant to work for European regional co-operation, they did not end up only in European countries. They actually formed a broader global agenda in higher education. They are basically multinational and multi-layered and are increasingly becoming common around the globe. They have extended to, prompted, and even compelled many countries to adopt similar frameworks. This is because these standards were promoted to contribute to the achievement of a consensus on good-quality assurance practices and mechanisms for university education. As a result, these standards and guidelines feature either explicitly or implicitly in the higher education systems of many countries around the world. It could be argued that it is becoming common for countries to intervene in higher education by setting minimum standards and requirements that should be adhered to or at least adopted with modifications by universities. These standards range from those related to systematic procedures for establishment of new universities, to new processes for reviewing and

evaluating institutions and programmes offered to determine whether both institutions and programmes meet acceptable (local and international) standards for education, teaching, administration and infrastructure. It could further be argued that contemporary universities across the world, implicitly or explicitly, are functioning under similar standards that require them to adopt to new operating environments.

However, as discussed above, it is difficult to establish national standards and guidelines that are completely insulated from the forces explained earlier. Therefore, one could argue that, over the past two decades, the capacity of countries to frame their own policies has diminished significantly. Consequently, for those countries that have already developed national frameworks such as standards, regulations and guidelines governing the provision of university education, these instruments are not neutral. They are driven by, and are directly linked to, a hybrid of standards and guidelines informed by multiple forces such as globalisation, supranational organisations such as the World Bank, OECD and European co-operation (Bologna and Lisbon processes). Emphasising this argument, Huisman (2009) comments that, although, the interference of supranational agencies in higher education (particularly in developing countries) is fairly recent, there is growing evidence that interaction between domestic and supranational policies is increasing. This explains why policy makers and universities in many countries are currently challenged to adopt policies and regulations that aim at modernising and enhancing the contexts for provision of education in order to improve the quality of university education to meet the demands of the labour market within both local and international contexts. In fact, within these new contexts stemming from different forces, Kwiek and Kurkiewicz (2012) and Huisman (2009) argue that universities, university leaders and academics are pushed and pulled in directions that are mostly unanticipated, and the trend suggests that they cannot escape from the midst of these large-scale combined forces of globalisation, modernisation, marketisation, European cooperation and national strategies.

According to Enders (2004), these forces and their configuration in national frameworks of higher education are contributing, if not leading, to a process of rethinking the social, cultural and economic roles of university education. This is because how these forces are being translated into institutional frameworks whilst at the same time allowing universities to fairly satisfy all parties (governments, academics and students, labour market and industries, professions and occupations, status groups and reference groups, communities and localities and the global) is a real challenge (Enders, 2004). This is similar to the question raised by Huisman and Westerheijden (2010) about the legitimacy of quality

assurance standards and guidelines, specifically whether their political legitimacy at national or international level is more important than at the organisational level, closer to the heart of educational processes and to the actors. This implies that in this era contemporary universities find themselves in a complicated and delicate situation, as there are now too many parties to satisfy and too many forces to respond to. However, it could still be argued that the ability of universities to respond to multiple forces, particularly external forces, gives them the opportunity to attain legitimacy as glonacal institutions by showing how they consider and respond well to the issues that they face from national to international forces. The ability that provides an account for their activities, protect them from having their conducts questioned and act as the legitimacy that strengthens their support and secure their survival (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

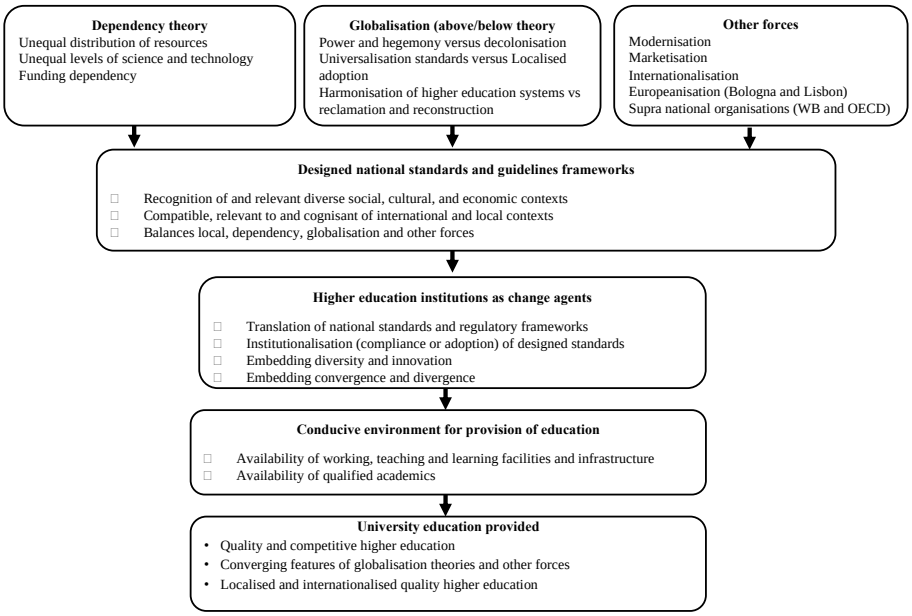

Figure 3.1 Depiction of the theoretical framework for the study

3.2 Conceptual framework

The approaches taken by universities to adopt and respond to standards and regulations set by governments or their agencies (regardless of theoretical frameworks used to inform their formulation as explained above) vary and depend on different factors. The factors include: the approaches used to influence the higher education system of the country in questions to adopt the standards, how the policy makers intend the institutionalisation to occur, and the autonomous power of universities. To guide this study, the conceptual framework (with reference to the literature) explains the approaches through which the

national standards and regulations after being formulated could be enforced and institutionalised by universities.

The approaches are presented in a continuum ranging from voluntary to coercive enforcement. At one end of the spectrum, the framework suggests that voluntary institutionalisation occurs when universities have strong autonomy, while the government or standard setters have less control over the operation of universities, or where policy makers desire this kind of institutionalisation to take place. At the other end of the spectrum, coercive enforcement occurs when the government or standards setters have strong control and influence on higher education systems, while universities have limited autonomy, or policy makers desire the institutionalisation to take place in that way.

In the middle of the spectrum, both approaches may be used together in varying degrees, either leaning more to one side or being equally applied. This is most likely to happen in contexts where the government or standards setters have control over the sector but where universities are also sufficiently autonomous, hence enforcement tends to adopt soft power or a combination of approaches instead of the application of purely coercive or purely voluntary/inspirational approaches. The soft power approach may include government steering reform tools such as the use of stakeholder and market empowerment, using stakeholders as part of regulators, and the use of new public management (NPM) that uses agreed performance indicators, measurement and evaluation between the government and universities (Ferlie, Musselin & Andresani, 2008). The situation could also be through other soft power strategies that policy makers may deem relevant and then engineer a conducive environment for this kind of enforcement to take place.

The next part explains how the constructed and enforced standards could be mediated by universities when presented for compliance. As highlighted above, this situation could occur when universities are autonomous institutions or are able to apply the concept of loosely coupled or mediatory power when dealing with external forces. The last part, using the fivefold success continuum, ranging from success to failure, presents the outcomes in terms of the extent to which the formulated and enforced standards have been successfully reflected by the operating milieu in universities.

3.2.1 Approaches to enforce the standards

Stensaker (2007) describes two perspectives as to how higher education policies may be enforced and institutionalised. The first perspective suggests that, in a higher education

system where the government has strong control, standards and regulations are seen as important laws that define the core values of universities, and therefore ought to be institutionalised without being significantly altered or refined (Stensaker, 2007). Under this perspective, the standards and regulations could be formulated by the government itself or by an agency (mandated and with expertise) or might have been borrowed from other systems that have implemented the ideas successfully and then been imposed on the new context.

As the standards in this perspective have to be diffused homogeneously and seamlessly to the system that consists of a number of universities, the universities tend to have no room to modify the standards to fit their contexts of operation. Instead, their adoption and institutionalisation may be done by mimicking the systems that have implemented the ideas in questions successfully (Stensaker, 2007). The assumption is that, when universities comply with standards without modifying them, dual goals would be achieved: universities would gain legitimacy from the government and at the same time the goals of the standards would be achieved. However, as the formulation of the standards may not have involved the participation of implementers (universities), their compatibility and subsequently their implementation could be problematic unless the implementers see the ideas as natural, fitting to new contexts nicely, and obvious things to be done. Nevertheless, the coercive nature of enforcement and institutionalisation is more likely to bring widespread compliance. This means that the standards would achieve their desired goals, although it could be at the expense of some universities that might be removed from operation due to non-compliance with the standards.

According to Stensaker (2007), the second perspective provides an opportunity for the standards and regulations to be seen as abstract entities that are difficult to imitate or implement as they are. As a result, since universities are autonomous, powerful, flexible, rational and imaginative organisations, they ought to conduct a need analysis for the policy, then translate or reinterpret the standards before adopting them to fit their own needs and contexts (Stensaker, 2007). The main idea in this perspective is that, prior to their institutionalisation, standards may be translated or re-interpreted by universities to reflect better their core goals and needs. With an understanding of their core goals, universities within the same higher education system may adopt the standards differently depending on their interpretation of the core ideas, their needs and the contexts surrounding diffusion and operation. However, the ultimate goal is to arrive at the same overarching policy goal (equifinality). Therefore, unlike the first perspective, this one does

not guarantee that universities will comply with the standards in similar fashion and consequently no guarantee that the standards would achieve their intended goals.

Another body of literature suggests that approaches to setting and adopting higher education quality assurance and standards frameworks could either be by top-down, bottom-up or pragmatic approaches (Hou, Chen & Morse, 2014; Jarvis, 2014; Teelken, 2012; Drezner, 2005; Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). With the top-down approach or hierarchical model, the government will set the regulatory frameworks that seem best and fit universities across the country and require (by direct/indirect coercion and sometimes voluntarily) universities to provide education within the nationally defined frameworks. With this approach, universities have to develop their own capacity to implement the policies.

On the other hand, the bottom-up approach is when the process of formulating the national regulatory framework is led by or significantly involves the universities that are expected to implement the framework. Therefore, although the national standards address issues ranging from local, national to global, there is a coordinated decision-making between universities and government. The third 'pragmatic' approach is where national regulation occurs through an interactive process where there are elements of both the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach.

It has been argued that many developing countries tend largely to follow the top-down and relatively coercive approaches, rather than bottom-up and voluntary approaches to institutionalisation of national higher education regulatory frameworks (Hou, Chen & Morse, 2014; Jarvis, 2014; Teelken, 2012; Drezner, 2005). This preference for the use of top-down approaches is consistent with the earlier argument that national higher education policies in developing countries tend to be formulated simply by the translating or repackaging of the international packages. According to Teelken (2012), the cascade tends to be from international to nations, to universities, to faculties and to departments.

Top-down approaches have, however, been criticised as having compatibility issues through failing to balance the global and local dynamics of university education in developing countries. There is a concern that universities in developing countries are increasingly being compelled to institutionalise the global dimensions of the university rather than the local. Commenting on this, Hou, Chen and Morse (2014) assert that the reputation of contemporary universities, disregarding geographical location, is directly linked to the intensity of their global involvement and to features that over-ride local and

national public services and contexts. The approach is characterised by the imposition of standards on universities without carefully analysing the context in which a university is operating in or without adequate consultation and negotiations with university stakeholders (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012).

The literature highlights various specific challenges and impacts of using the top-down approach in the setting and implementation of national higher education regulatory standards in developing countries. The challenges are presented first, followed by the impacts.

3.2.1.1 Challenges of top-down approach to standards adoption in developing countries

The challenge faced by many developing countries in relation to the use of the top-down approach is in designing standards and regulatory frameworks that simultaneously fit the particulars of their institutions, their localities and the global context. Enders (2004) sees this challenge as threefold: to design frameworks that support global expansion, nationalisation and localisation of university education; to redefine the role of universities in the regional context; and to struggle with the global forces confronting it. These suggestions clearly indicate that the university regulatory frameworks for developing countries should consider the glonacal role of the university in order to reduce the likelihood of being dominated by global features and hence compel the use of top-down approaches. Failure to do so would result in the frameworks being seen as instruments to shape higher education systems in developing countries to be like those in the developed countries (Lo, 2014), therefore the use of top-down approaches cannot be avoided.

Second, it is argued that many developing countries did not develop their own models of quality standards and guidelines. Instead, the frameworks are to a large extent borrowed from Western higher education and are therefore fraught with compatibility problems (Martin & Griffiths, 2012; William, 2011; Lumumba, 2006; Mazrui, 1975). For example, in Africa, very few countries, such as South Africa, Egypt and Tunisia, have been able successfully to establish higher education systems with glonacal characteristics by adopting Western models of standards and at the same time consider their own local features. In many developing countries, the models have resulted in the unintended consequence of fragmented higher education systems characterised by a small number of universities that meet international standards, whilst many others do not.

Third, the top-down approach is challenged by a weakness in the extent to which universities and other key stakeholders are consulted in the process of formulation of

standards. Stakeholders (students, academics, experts in higher education policies, and universities) tend to have less confidence that the standards aim at enhancing the quality of university education adequately by considering the environments they operate within. Consequently, they perceive the framework as an umbrella to coerce universities to institutionalise policies that do not define them or ignore the contexts they are operating in. To minimise the chances of policy failure, it is advised that, in case the bottom-up approach does not seem to work, at least a combination of the top-down and bottom-up approaches to policy making should be considered (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000).

3.2.1.2 Impacts of top-down approach on university systems in developing countries

The adoption of standards and quality frameworks has accelerated mass higher education and its associated problems. Many developing countries, by establishing standards and regulation, have permitted the use of public–private partnership in the provision of higher education, thinking that the regulations and standards would be sufficient to control the behaviour of universities. It has been further assumed that the adoption of standards would improve competition and efficiencies among universities. Universities were expected to engage in the use of advanced science and technology, engage in offering science-related courses and improve the general environment for provision of education in order to compete for students.

Unfortunately, in reality the increase in universities, particularly in the non-government sector, has resulted in universities offering programmes that do not meet local demand in developing economies, apart from having to operate in poor conditions (Jackson, 2012; Akinyemi, 2010; Al-Samarrai & Bennell, 2007). Studies have shown that most of the students in higher education are taking humanities and social sciences pathways (Meyer et al., 2006; Van Deuren, 2012). Two reasons have been suggested. The first, which is considered to be minor, is related to gender stereotyping. It has been assumed that the majority of students (particularly females) tend to pursue these courses as they are believed to be less difficult than science and technology courses such as medicine and engineering. Therefore, the majority of students tend to enrol in social science and humanities disciplines.

The second reason, probably the more important, which has been well researched and is related to the first reason, is the inability of young non-government universities to invest in the facilities and technologies (which are expensive) essential to the provision of science and technology courses. There is ample evidence confirming the acute shortage of

resources, facilities, equipment and overall poor milieu for teaching and learning science and technology courses in developing countries' universities (see Jegede, 2012; Lumumba, 2006). Therefore, it is possible to argue that the adoption of quality standards and frameworks, instead of improving the quality, has caused a deterioration in the quality of university education in developing countries. Prior their adoption, many developing countries had a few yet well-established universities that, although had limited capacity to enrol, were providing quality education across all fields of knowledge.

3.2.2 Policy mediation and success-failure spectrum

As discussed above, there are various approaches and perspectives through which higher education regulatory frameworks may be enforced by government or its agencies in order to become institutionalised at university level. However, for various reasons, such as policy mediation or implementation processes used; time; policy contents/programmes; resources; information; policy relevance; support/opposition (McConnell, 2010), no approach guarantees successful incorporation of the policy at institutional level and the full realisation of the intended goals. As part of conceptual framework to this study, the focus is on explaining the impacts of the mediation process on the success of policy at university level. These reflections are explained using the fivefold levels of policy success plotted on a policy success–policy failure spectrum adopted from McConnell (2010).

3.2.2.1 Policy mediation

Educational leaders; including those in universities, play many roles including acting as change agents in order to proactively or reactively improve their institutions. Sometimes, they find themselves tacitly (knowingly or unknowingly) acting as conduits for the implementation of government-driven reform; that is, promoted mostly to facilitate the improvement of the educational system (Wallace et al., 2010). To reduce the mediatory power of universities, the reforms may not be put forward and supervised directly by the government. Instead, special agencies that act as government conduits may assume the role in a professional manner to facilitate the achievement of desired government outcomes. They do this through various policy enforcement approaches, including the acculturation method (Wallace et al., 2010). This approach involves various initiatives for promulgating the standards to university leaders in order to gain both support and legitimacy for the standards from them and their institutions.

Exemplifying the scenario through the Tanzanian context, TCU as the government agency responsible for overseeing the operation and establishment of universities, may also act as the government conduit to facilitate the achievement of the government's sometimes politically driven objectives. Through working closely with universities, preferably their leaders who are ones that set the direction for the institution and make sure, through their supervision, that the directions are followed, the agency may acculturate these leaders to accept the reforms proposed.

This could be done in two ways. The first one is through overt acculturation geared towards promoting the government agenda by influencing a revolutionary mind in university leaders to support the policy at hand, in order to make them committed as change agents for the collective transformation and improvement of the education system. Meanwhile, the subliminal agenda is tacitly to make these leaders become conduits for achieving government political intentions. However, the aim of both approaches in promoting and 'selling' the ideas is simply to win the hearts and minds of universities leaders so that they will be committed to managing what they think and feel, and not just how they behave (Wallace et al., 2010). If this process is successful, the result is that the government's broad intentions, through the agency and the university leaders (as conduits and change agents), would have the opportunity to interact with the existing organisational and professional cultures of universities.

However, this process is neither easy nor smooth as described. Instead and more often, universities and their leaders, informed by autonomy, professional decision-making, authority and leadership values, and by applying loosely coupled concept, tend to generate space for some degree of mediation. This could, of course, lead to modification or even subversion of the practices and beliefs that the universities are being acculturated to adopt. The modification and subversion of original ideas is possible since mediation in its own right entails some re-interpretation and adaptation of the advocated practices and beliefs to suit the interests and welfare of universities, that may or may not coincide with the government interests and expectations. This suggests that there is no guarantee of full realisation of outcomes expected by government.

The probability of success is likely to be determined by three factors. First, there might be degrees of both coherence and of dissonance, plus the extent of overt and covert contesting, between the promoters of the standards – the agency and target recipients – universities and their leaders (Wallace et al., 2010). Second, since the old ways of doing

things may already be deeply embedded in the culture of the target autonomous recipients (universities), without mediation it may not be possible directly to change and replace the existing culture, beliefs, values and norms with new ones in the way that laws, mandates and sanctions can secure behavioural compliance (Wallace, Tomlinson & O'Reilly, 2011). Consequently, practice continues to build on the body of knowledge that government desires, executed through legitimate agencies acting as conduits, may not always achieve the goals, especially when subjected to the mediatory power of universities; hence a business may fail to corner a market. Third, although universities have to operate within government laws and regulations, nonetheless their leaders are neither government agents nor solely the agents of other stakeholders. Being in a largely neutral position, they can use their authority to mediate government and other stakeholder expectations to make sure that they align with their existing professional environment and accustomed culture, with a good understanding of what would work or not work in their organisations (Wallace, Tomlinson & O'Reilly, 2011).

In summary, and using the context of Tanzania as an example, the overarching idea hinges on the argument that, due to mediatory power, the agency may not necessarily be successful in acculturating university leaders to be faithful change agents. However, it should be noted that the concept of mediatory power used here was borrowed from sociology as put forward by Wallace et al. (2010). It refers to the degrees of freedom that an organisation (in this case a university) and its leaders may exercise in order to modify, extrapolate, downplay, work around or even avoid the practices and beliefs that they are being invited, persuaded, mandated or coerced to adopt by others (Wallace et al., 2010; Oliver, 1991). Consequently, due to the inescapable mediation process explained above combined with the perceived incompatibilities of the advocated practices with the existing culture, it could be argued that the acculturation process may not directly make change happen (Wallace et al., 2010). Moreover, Wallace et al. (2010) argue that educational leaders (including university leaders) retain sufficient personal and even professional power to resist acculturated practices covertly, even if their external behaviour is consistent with assimilation of the fostered practices (acceptance by acquiescence). Moreover, they tend to conform sagaciously due to unanticipated changes in higher education trends and government policies (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). That is, although universities are responsive to external forces, they are also distinctive organisations. Their leaders have discretionary power to sidestep or modify external change; indicating that they ought not to be undermined when dealing with them. In fact, research suggests that the leaders of

autonomous institutions such as universities are deeply imbued with such behaviour and more often than not, tend to be change resistant, if not hesitant (Wallace et al., 2010).

3.2.2.2 Fivefold levels of policy success continuum

To enforce the standards, the conceptual framework surmise that, in situations saturated with mediatory power and other constraints, such as financial capabilities, ownership and age of universities, coercive approaches are more likely to achieve compliance within a shorter time than their counterpart inspirational ones. This is because of sanctions to remove universities from operation due to compliance failure regardless of the reasons. Conversely, it was surmised that non-coercive approaches were likely to bring less compliance in contexts saturated by mediatory power of universities and the other constraints. However, the non-coercive approach has the advantage of preparing the environment for the standards to become assimilated gradually whilst at the same time allowing universities to continue operating in the sector, despite non-compliance.

Regardless of the approaches used, the continuum of policy success, from left to right in Figure 3.2, suggests the different extent that the milieu for provision of education may reflect the achievement of the standards in the universities. Each level of success suggests different things in relation to how the standards are reflected by a university. Using the McConnell (2010) model, the following levels of success suggest the extent to which the operating milieu of universities have been able to reflect the goals of standards along the journey of their institutionalisation. ‘Success’ implies that opposition to implementation was virtually non-existent, there was good support for the standards and therefore they gained legitimacy from the implementers (McConnell, 2010). ‘Resilient success’ level implies that resistance was minimal and restricted to few issues, compared to the level of support for the policy, therefore the policy was able to achieve its intended goals in broad terms, notwithstanding small modifications and setbacks (McConnell, 2010).

The ‘conflicted’ level of success is characterised by substantial controversy; indicating that, notwithstanding conflicts such as delays, considerable target shortfalls, resource shortfalls, and communication failure, the standards were able to achieve their goals partially or in some respects (McConnell, 2010).

In the ‘precarious success’ level, although some achievement of the standards is exhibited, controversy is substantial, the expected outcomes fall short of intentions in a broad way and the level of opposition outweighs the small level of support (McConnell, 2010).

‘Failure’, the last level, is the opposite of the ‘success’ level. The standards faced great opposition, failed to achieve their intended goals and support was non-existent (McConnell, 2010).

It should be noted that no hard rules were used categorise levels of success. Therefore, regarding the extent to which the milieu reflects the standards (Research Question 3), for each item of analysis the five success clusters of reflection of the milieu to the standards are demarcated as follows. ‘Success’ is taken to be when 70% to 100% of respondents respond in the direction that indicates that the respective measured item significantly reflects the standards. As it goes down, the other levels of success follow. ‘Resilient success’ ranges from 60% to 69%; ‘conflicted success’ ranges from 40 to 59%, ‘precarious’ is from 20% to 39% and ‘failure’ 19% or less.

Figure **3.2** depicts the conceptual framework for this study. It recognises that national university standards could be formulated by being inspired by the various theories explained in the theoretical framework and that they could be enforced through approaches discussed in the conceptual framework, namely coercive, non-coercive or pragmatic. At the foot of the diagram, the conceptual framework shows that, regardless of the approach by which the standards were formulated at national level, how their formulation was inspired and how they were enforced, due to various factors including levels of mediation and application of loosely coupled concept, the extent to which the standards are actually reflected in the operating milieu of universities may be at different levels. The levels could theoretically lie within the five levels of the success spectrum: success, resilient success, conflicted success, precarious success, and failure (McConnell, 2010).

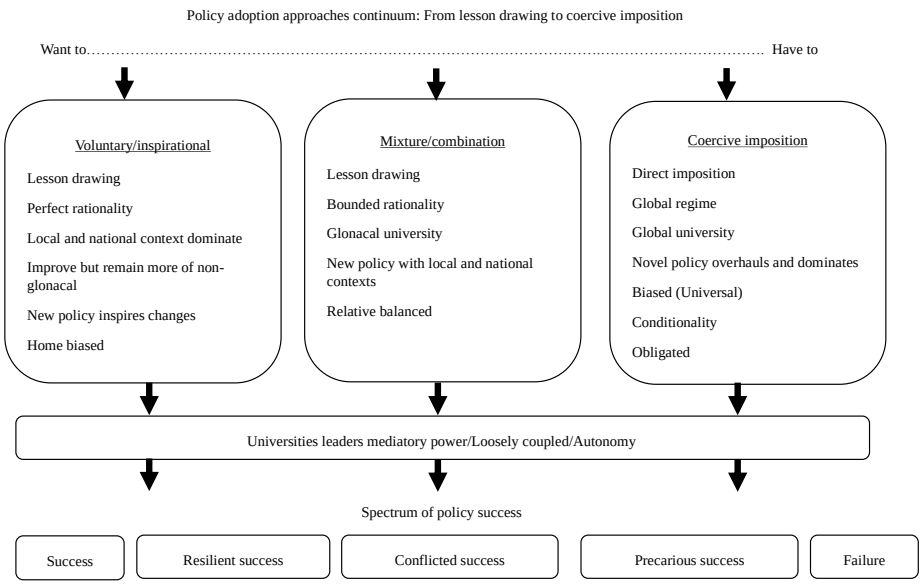

Figure 3.2 Conceptual framework for policy adaption continuum with varied degrees of success. Modified from Dolowitz & Marsh (2000); McConnell (2010)

Various studies and scholarly works on quality assurance in university education across developing countries, Sub-Saharan counties and Tanzania, in particular, have been conducted. Some have focused on quality assurance challenges facing higher education systems in Sub-Saharan countries (Materu 2007; Lumumba, 2006). These covered broader areas and therefore missed what was happening country-wise and in specific types of universities. Others examined the national and institutional quality assurance for postgraduate studies in old universities (Cross et al., 2015). However, this level normally admits a considerably smaller proportion of students than undergraduate level. Some focused on the state of quality assurance as a result of an increase in the number of private universities in Tanzania before the national standards were established (Ishengoma, 2007; Makulilo, 2012; Manyaga, 2008). In the same vein, some focused on the utilisation of resources in universities, particularly academics in private universities in Tanzania (Simon, 2010). Although some were conducted after the establishment of the national standards, they focused on the institutional constraints that private universities and universities colleges in Tanzania encountered in executing quality assurance (Mgaiwa & Ishengoma, 2017).

Therefore, despite the plethora of scholarly works on quality assurance in universities across developing countries, Sub-Saharan Africa and Tanzania in particular, many of them focused on either institutional mechanisms as parts of an academic oligarchy task to ensure

quality in universities or as responses of universities to global forces such as internationalisation, modernisation and globalisation of university education. Consequently, there is a scarcity of studies to examine or investigate the dovetailing of national university standards in terms of state intervention or policy within young universities. Using Tanzania as a case study, this study fills the gap by examining how the national standards were formulated, how were they enforced, to what extent were they relevant to and compatible with young universities, and to what extent the milieu for provision of education in such universities reflects the goals of the standards.

Chapter 4 Research methodology

This chapter provides an account of the philosophical underpinning, and the research design and methods, employed in this study. It is divided into three main parts. The first presents the philosophical stance, alongside its validity and practical application in this study. Next are the research methodology and methods employed in this study. These include the research design, procedures for data collection, sampling, data analysis procedures, and the reliability and validity of the data. Finally, various ethical issues and concerns that were considered before, during and after the fieldwork are presented.

4.1 The approach and the philosophical stance of the study

Through conflating the constructivism/interpretivism and post-positivism paradigms, this study employed mixed methods in its philosophical approach. The use of mixed approaches is grounded in the nature of the study. That is, part of the research aimed at acquiring or creating knowledge that was value laden and socially constructed (ontology). This necessitated the use of carefully designed data collection techniques that enhanced social interaction between the researcher and informants in order to understand the multiple realities of the phenomenon (epistemology) and at the same time reduce information bias. The other part of the research was aimed at creating or acquiring knowledge and reality that to a large extent existed independent of the carefully created rapport and social interaction between the researcher and informants (ontology) and was, therefore, possible to be discovered objectively (epistemology).

In mixed methods, the major three paradigmatic stances combining the two contrasting philosophical assumptions (positivism and constructivism) are dialectic, pragmatic and transformative (Mertens, 2012). From these three, the most frequently debated, differentiated and used are dialectic and pragmatic. In particular, this study employed a dialectic stance of mixed methods to examine the national universities standards within the post-1995 universities of Tanzania.

4.1.1 Validity of the stance: why dialectic over pragmatic

The dialectic stance has been employed in this policy–practice nexus study over the pragmatic stance because of its suitability. That is, it is capable of providing a three-dimensional view of a phenomenon by comparing the perspectives of different

stakeholders (policy makers, policy implementers and beneficiaries) on the same issue, and thus facilitate both breadth and depth of understanding of the matter under scrutiny. Although the dialectic and pragmatic stances or positions of mixed methods research act as a nexus to integrate the two competing paradigms (Mertens, 2012), the differences in how the two stances could be applied in research are clearly explained by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), and Greene and Caracelli (1997).

The pragmatic stance, similar to dialectic, recognises the use of the diverse paradigms of inquiry that are informed by different philosophical assumptions in a single study. Pragmatists assert that philosophical assumptions may be mixed by using appropriate choices of methods to achieve a combination that suits a given inquiry problem (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). However, they argue that these paradigm differences do not really matter in the practice of the study, since paradigms are just descriptions of, and not prescriptions for, research practices (Greene & Caracelli, 1997).

Therefore, according to the pragmatic stance, what is more important and should drive methodological decisions in undertaking research is the nature of inquiry and its practical demands (Mertens, 2012; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Greene & Caracelli, 1997). As such, the pragmatic stance hinges on the practices that will result in successful and effective research. This means that, without being limited or inhibited by philosophical assumptions, what fits the research questions and works out should inform the undertaking of mixed research (the ‘make the baby happy’ principle).

In contrast to the pragmatic stance, the proponents of the dialectic stance in mixed methods argue that, instead of being ignored or reconciled, the differences between philosophical paradigms are important and therefore should be honoured to maintain the integrity of each paradigm (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). As such, when conducting a mixed methods study informed by this stance, a researcher has to adhere to the beliefs of each of two paradigms (positivism and constructivism). Accordingly, the dialectic position proposes that the collected data from the diverse paradigms should be put in conversation with each other to allow deeper understanding of findings based on the convergence and dissonance found between the approaches (Mertens, 2012; Betzner, 2008).

As the dialectic stance is broad and could be used to guide research in various formats, the use of the dialectic stance in this research specifically follows that of Georg Friedric Hegel. The use of this form of dialectic stance is consistent with the theoretical framework and the researcher’s motivation for undertaking this study. The theoretical framework and

motivation of this study suggest that what informs the process of imposing standards for provision of university education in developing countries is partly the result of the existing relationship and the history that many developing countries share with developed countries. Therefore, the application of Hegel's dialectic to this study is due to the fact that Hegel used dialectic as a way to understand history and freedom; which, according to him, are critical forces defining and shaping the nature of the human race, its choices and development (Betzner, 2008). According to Hegel, salvation, reformation and the possibility of the existence of a rational community depend on the ability of that community to judge right from wrong and that can be traced from history (Betzner, 2008). As such, the importance of having considerate and relevant standards to guide the milieu of the provision of university education is similar to that of having a rational community that has the ability to learn from history and control or manage forces.

Further, the use of the dialectic stance is relevant in this study because the aim of the study is to examine the extent of coupling between, on the one hand, the agency that oversees the enforcement of standards guiding the operation of universities and, on the other hand, the practices of the institutions in incorporating the standards. As this study is about the interface between government standards and university practices, the dialectic stance allowed me to compare and bring together findings from both agency officials and university practitioners. As a result, I was able to establish the degree of coupling between the two sides, understand the extent to which the standards were reflected in universities practices and identify areas where there was divergence. Such kinds of analysis were possible due to the use of the dialectic stance.

4.2 Application of dialectic position

The use of Hegel's dialectic stance in this study followed the notion of thesis, antithesis and synthesis in the reporting of findings obtained through diverse categories of respondents (policy makers, implementers and beneficiaries). Therefore, the modus operandi was: thesis (findings from one category of respondents) to face antithesis (findings from another category of respondents) and then be transformed to synthesis (interwoven finding) that encompasses both groups. To illustrate this point further, the hypothesis of this study could be stated as that the milieu of provision of education in post-1995 universities reflects the demands of the standards guiding them. The focus being on the condition and availability of teaching and learning milieu as perceived by students and academics. However, it should be noted that the use of thesis and antithesis is arbitrary and

employed simply for the sake of understanding how the data and findings were treated (Betzner, 2008). The use of the dialectic stance in this study therefore did not require that the findings from one group of respondents be termed ‘thesis’ and those from another group ‘antithesis’.

In particular, I first honoured the integrity of each paradigm by carefully applying both approaches to an acceptable level of quality. This allowed me to retain the premise of the dialectic mixed method literature, which asserts that the diverse paradigms proffer valid information for research and decision-making (Mertens, 2012; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The next step considered was Hegel’s approach to the dialectic, whereby findings emanating from diverse categories of respondents but related to similar issues were reviewed and examined side by side. This enabled me to identify and compare the extent of convergence, divergence or uniqueness of the findings.

Finally, integration of findings was achieved by juxtaposing the perspectives of diverse categories of respondents that came from either the diverse or similar approaches employed (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The aim of having diverse categories of respondents for the same issues was to create both an in-depth understanding and a panoramic view of the phenomenon under scrutiny from different angles. This means that the converging findings from diverse or similar categories of respondents were straightforwardly presented as strengthening each other. For the diverging (conflicting) findings, a Hegelian dialectic stance was used to resolve the situation. Since both conflicting findings were assumed to be correct, in order to integrate them the researcher was forced to be thoughtful and creative, through examining data, to come up with a new and more encompassing truth that accommodated both categories of respondents.

4.3 Research design

In particular, this study employed the convergent parallel design (concurrent mixed method design). Using this design, the fieldwork involved simultaneous but separate collection of quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2006). While the independent analysis of data was conducted to honour the integrity of each paradigm, the simultaneous collection of data aimed at soliciting exploratory and confirmatory questions allowed the collection of converging and diverging data from diverse categories of respondents in order to compare their perspective in relation to the realisation of intended standards outcomes in the

institutions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Moreover, this procedure allowed the data from diverse paradigms to have equal weight in informing the findings of this study.

4.4 Data collection design/procedures

Using the concurrent mixed method design, data collection used the multilevel mixed technique of data collection (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Through this technique, although quantitative and qualitative data were collected in parallel, they were collected from different levels of hierarchies in the higher education system, ranging from policy makers to implementers and beneficiaries of the outcomes. Multilevel was selected as a data collection technique because its implementation is consistent with this study. The technique allowed the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from different levels in parallel, analyse them independently and then integrate the results for meta-inferences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

4.5 Sample and sampling techniques

As the aim of this study was to obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and at the same time to generalise findings to a wider population, stratified random sampling, simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to obtain various samples, as described below.

4.5.1 Stratified random and purposive sampling techniques for universities

The first stage involved selecting the sample of universities. This included a chronological listing of all universities established from 1995 to 2014. Two strata of ten years, 1995 to 2004 and 2005 to 2014, were created of universities established within that period. Time factor was important because, apart from factors such as financial capability to invest in physical and human resources, changes across universities are also influenced by time. Even if other factors remain constant, the number of years that a university has been operating in the sector has implications for the extent, speed and ability of a university to enhance its operating environment to reflect the requirements of the standards. Earlier established universities were considered likely to fare better than those established later.

After arranging and allocating each university according to age, letters were sent to eight universities (four from each stratum) requesting them to participate in the study. Six universities agreed and, from each stratum, two universities (making a total of four

universities) were purposively selected to participate in this study. These four were selected because the researcher was satisfied that, in addition to fitting in the strata, they were also performing well in the sector and had relatively good reputations. The selection of number of universities was limited to four for two reasons: first, access to universities was problematic; and second, even if there was access, the collection of rich data from more than four universities would have been impractical due to limitations of time.

With regard to ownership, the statistics showed that the number of government-owned universities was outstripped by that of non-government. Consequently, the strategy of having equal representation of government and non-government universities for each stratum was not going to give a good representation of the sector. Consequently, to improve the representation of universities based on ownership and age from the two strata, three non-government and one government owned universities were selected.

Apart from age, ownership and reputation, additional factors for purposive selection of a university to participate were based on the unique characteristics of each university. However, the exact number of years since the universities were established is concealed to reduce their traceability and protect their anonymity. Other characteristics of universities selected are presented below.

University 1 is a government-owned university offering undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes. It is organised into six campus colleges: College of Education; College of Humanities and Social Sciences; College of Informatics and Virtual Education; College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics; College of Health and Allied Sciences; and College of Earth Sciences. Each college offers a number of affiliated undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The university belongs to the 2005 to 2014 stratum and was purposively selected because its establishment was a result of massive government investment, giving it the capacity to admit up to 45,000 students.

University 2 belongs to the 1995 to 2004 stratum and was purposively selected because it was the largest, oldest and most reputable non-government owned university in the country. It offers courses in different broader academic disciplines, such as social sciences, engineering and natural sciences, for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

University 3 belongs to the 1995 to 2004 stratum and was purposively selected because it specialises in offering health-sciences related courses. As a non-government university, it

offers health and allied sciences courses in medicine, nursing, medical laboratory sciences, pharmacy and public health, for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

University 4 belongs to the 2005 to 2014 stratum and was purposively selected because it is a relatively large non-government university offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in different disciplines such as social sciences, health sciences and natural sciences.

4.5.2 Simple random sampling

One aim of this study is to examine the extent to which the contexts in which post-1995 universities were providing education reflected the requirements of the standards guiding the operation of universities in the country. It follows that broad representation of key stakeholders was of paramount importance to this study. Therefore, to ensure that the sample used in this study was sufficiently representative to allow inferences to be drawn for the target population of the post-1995 universities in Tanzania, the use of probability sampling, particularly simple random technique, was required. Consequently, it was initially planned that successful collection of data through randomly administered questionnaires to 400 academics (100 academics from each university from different academic disciplines and experiences) and 1,000 students from the four participating universities (250 students from each university from different disciplines and years of study) would allow the findings to be generalised to the wider population of universities at the 95% confidence interval.

However, it was difficult to achieve good response rates from academics, as most of them were busy, unavailable in the offices visited or did not return questionnaires. Consequently, from all four universities, a total of 225 questionnaires were returned: University 1, 86 questionnaires; University 2, 93 questionnaires; University 3, 18 questionnaires; and University 4, 28 questionnaires.

The response rate was good in University 1 and University 2, because these universities had many academics. It was still difficult, but over time it was possible to collect a good number of completed questionnaires. In these two universities, 130 questionnaires were distributed to academics at each university. This represents a response rate of 66.15% and 71.54% respectively. For University 3 and 4, due to their smaller number of academics, 60 questionnaires were distributed to academics at each university. From University 3, the 18

questionnaires collected back represent a response of 30%. From University 4, the 28 questionnaires collected back represent a response rate of 47%.

On the part of students, at each university 320 questionnaires were distributed to students of various disciplines and years of study. At University 1, a total of 291 questionnaires were returned (response rate 91%); at University 2, a total of 269 questionnaires were returned (response rate 84%); at University 3, a total of 293 questionnaires were returned (response rate 92%); and at University 4 a total of 293 questionnaires were returned (response rate 92%). In total, 1,280 questionnaires were distributed to students in the four universities and 1,146 questionnaires were returned, which represents an overall response rate of 90%.

Given the use of random sampling, the sample size for students (n = 1146) seems to be statistically sufficient to limit sampling error, provide adequate precision and representativeness, and allow inferences to be made for the target population of universities, but the sample size for academics (n = 225) is much less sufficient. Consequently, while the findings from student data can be generalised with some confidence, the findings from the academics' data can only be generalised with caution.

Academics and students were involved in this study because they are regarded as key informants and stakeholders. They are essentially the witnesses, users of facilities and infrastructures, and general beneficiaries if the contexts were enhanced to improve their academic experiences at the institutional level. Therefore, the reflection of the standards can be assessed by using academics' and students' experiences. That is, if universities have institutionalised the standards, there will be an impact on the day-to-day experiences of students and academics in terms of sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in relation to the conditions and availability of various teaching and learning resources and contexts.

4.5.3 Purposive sampling

Assuming the role of a constructivist researcher with the aim of understanding the phenomenon in depth, I regarded universities as peculiar and complex organisations both in nature and in the contexts within which they exist and operate. Hence, understanding their world required inductive approaches that involved qualitative in-depth exploration of issues in order to get information from participants. It was therefore necessary for me to create good rapport and trust to enable me to work collaboratively with participants in ways that allowed open discussions with them to understand their world.

Using purposive sampling technique, interviews were first conducted with four officials from the Accreditation Department at the TCU. These were key informants regarding among other issues, the approach used to formulate the standards, their enforcement approaches, the intended goals and the expected outcomes after compliance, their relevance to the context of post-1995 universities and the extent to which the compliance with the standards has enhanced the provision of university education to address both global and national contexts and demands (see Appendix A).

In addition to policy makers from the Agency, purposive sampling was extended to selection of nine quality assurance officers or other senior university leaders or, depending on the governance structure of the university, any person who acted as a link between a university and Agency or any person responsible for standards implementation. These were key informants regarding experience of the practical institutionalisation of standards in the universities, the relevance and compatibility of the standards, and views on the extent to which the contexts in which their universities were providing education reflected the requirements of the standards (see Appendix B).

4.6 Data collection methods

Employing dialectic mixed research methodology, this study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The aim of using both qualitative and quantitative data collection serves a dual purpose: where possible to generalise the findings to the wider targeted population, whilst at the same time to obtain in depth and detailed information about the phenomenon (Bazeley, 2002). In terms of quantitative data collection, 1,146 and 225 questionnaires were collected from students and academics respectively from the four participating universities. For the qualitative data collection, semi-structured interviews were used, taking advantage of their flexibility to explore in depth the detailed views and perceptions of the key stakeholders. The data collection methods used in this study are described in detail below.

4.6.1 Interviews

Various interview structures (un-structured, semi-structured and structured) have different purposes when used to collect data. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggest that unstructured combined with semi-structured interviews are more useful when researchers have no preconceived ideas about the phenomenon that they are investigating and therefore are relying on the respondents to tell them. In this study, semi-structured individual face-

to-face interview guides were designed by the researcher after careful examination of the major research questions. These were administered to both two groups of interviewees, the Agency officials and senior staff in the universities who were responsible for standards. Adopting a multi-level approach, interviews were first conducted with the four Agency officials from the accreditation department whose expertise or positions were related to regulations, standards, policies and quality issues in university education. From these interviews, data were solicited relating to technical expertise regarding the approaches and process used in designing of standards, their enforcement, relevance, compatibility and expected results.

Second, from the four selected universities, a series of face-to-face interviews were conducted with senior staff with responsibility for overseeing the practical incorporation of the standards at an institutional level. These were the key informants on issues related to experience of the approach used to formulate and institutionalise the standards, the relevance and compatibility of the standards to their organisation, and the extent to which they felt that the contexts that their universities were operating was reflected in the standards.

4.6.2 Designing of questionnaires

In this study, structured questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data to measure the extent to which the milieu for provision of education reflected the requirements of the standards. The questionnaires included some items adopted from Harvey and Knight (1996) that categorised different institutional resources and conditions for provision of education in a conducive environment. This included items that measured the general perception of the university environment, such as: infrastructure and facilities like classrooms; library and laboratories; teaching and learning facilities; auxiliaries to teaching and learning facilities; the academics' working environment; and accommodation for students, such as the condition of the halls of residence and associated services. Some items were taken as they were from Harvey and Knight (1996). Some were redesigned to suit this study by changing their original focus of measuring quality to measuring the extent to which the learning environments were enhanced to reflect the standards guiding them, through the experiences of academics and students. Some items, for example those on biographic data, were developed by the researcher with reference to standard procedures for designing questionnaires, while others were modified form Harvey and Knight (1996). For example, in the Harvey and Knight (1996) questionnaires, respondents

were broken down into three major broad subject areas: science, social sciences and arts. As can be seen in the questionnaire for students in Appendix C and questionnaire for academics in Appendix D, respondents in this study were broken down into five simplified areas: (1) education/humanities/social science; (2) business/economics/law; (3) architecture/engineering/technology; (4) health sciences; (5) natural sciences. An additional option (6) ('others') was provided in case a respondent did not belong to one of the main five options. Items that solicited the views, experiences and levels of satisfaction of academics and students originated in various issues arising from the Agency standards.

On the part of academics, higher levels of academic qualifications and their appreciation of the working environment indicated that the standards were progressively being reflected by universities and vice versa. On the part of students, higher levels of satisfaction with the teaching and learning facilities and the university environment in which they were accommodated indicated the same.

Structured and closed-ended questionnaires were used to collect data from students and academics. This follows the advice or 'rule of thumb' that they are more suitable and relevant when the sample is size is large (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). However, to ensure that the questionnaires collected the intended data, various measures were taken before they were administered in the field.

First, the questionnaires were crafted to have fewer and broader questions covering different indicators of Research Question 3 guiding this study. The questions were written in simple language, asking for precise yet brief responses. After supervisors' approval, they were further subjected to a pilot study to assess: (i) how much time was taken to complete a questionnaire (the aim was to have a questionnaire that could be completed within 20 minutes); (ii) whether the questions were clear; and (iii) whether the answers provided were in line with the major research question. Based on the results from the pilot study, a number of changes were made to improve the questionnaires. Changes included adding new items, removing other items, reviewing the length of items, reducing the time taken to complete a questionnaire and an improved wording of items. After these changes were incorporated and approved by the supervisors, the final draft was implemented in the field.

However, one might question the legitimacy, viability and suitability of using experiences and perceptions of respondents collected through questionnaires to measure the extent to which the milieu for provision of education reflects the standards guiding them and assess

this against the five levels of success on the continuum of the conceptual framework guiding the study. Basically, the use of the perceptions and experiences of respondents to measure the above in this study is based on the argument provided by Timmermans and Epstein (2010) that, to standardise the provision of social services including education, is inevitably to standardise the tests of their consumers. Supporting Busch (2000) (cited in Timmermans & Epstein (2010)), the authors further argue that to standardise policies is to standardise those administered by them and those who administer them. These two arguments imply that consumers of services, in this case students and academics, and those who administer, in this case policy makers and implementers, will be able to sense and rate the changes brought about by the standards. Therefore, although when compared with other forms of data the perceptions and experiences might not precisely reveal the exact conditions of the milieu in relation to the standards guiding them, they suffice to measure or indicate the policy outcomes.

4.7 Data analysis procedures

For questionnaire data, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS v. 24) was used to assist analysis. In this study, the questionnaires were designed to solicit information reflecting what is happening in universities in relation to the objectives of the standards. That is, they were designed to gather data related to staff qualifications, their working milieu, and students' studying and living milieu. This means that the questionnaires for both students and academics were mainly divided into two parts: biographic information, and a Likert scale with five levels of agreement on certain components as a measure of the extent of reflection of the standards from the learning milieu. However, as most of data were categorical and ordinal, the quantitative analysis mainly involved conducting some descriptive analysis to understand the descriptive statistics and behaviour of the data/universities such as frequencies, percentages and measures of central tendencies; and using a correlation coefficient (Cramer's V) to determine relationships and their strengths among various identified variables and issues (Field, 2009; Muijs, 2004). This was done using cross-tabulation to determine whether responses on particular issues across universities shared similar patterns or not. However, due to the use of cross-tabulation, it is worth bringing to attention that the response categories in the Likert scale for both academics' and students' questionnaires were re-coded in order to be reduced from five to three, therefore the analysis was conducted from the re-coded data sets. The aims of re-coding and reducing the response categories from five to three were to group together

response categories that carried similar ideas and to increase the reliability of findings by avoiding or reducing the number of cells that would have emerged with expected counts of less than five.

The qualitative data collected using semi-structured interviews with policy makers and policy implementers were analysed using thematic analytic strategy. Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) package (NVivo 11) facilitated the making of various thematic analytic tasks. Before entering data into NVivo, they were first prepared. The preparations were first, careful transcription of all audio-recorded data. After transcribing, as the transcriptions were in Swahili, came careful translation from Swahili to English to ensure that original meanings from the primary interview did not change. The translated transcripts were then arranged in a Microsoft Word document by assigning to the content different types of headings to facilitate easy use of NVivo software (Silver & Lewis, 2014). Before any analysis was performed through NVivo, the researcher read and re-read the data to explore and familiarise himself with the data for better understanding. This was done from the results generated by the auto-coding and word queries, with the help of NVivo. The auto-coding was performed see how each item was answered across respondents (Silver & Lewis, 2014). Word queries were performed to highlight the prominent words used or to capture ideas so that they could provide a clue to some themes (parent nodes) and sub themes (child nodes) from the data (Silver & Lewis, 2014). However, it should be noted that the analysis followed a more inductive approach. That is, the themes were identified from the data through analysing the pattern of responses, not that they were confirmed by the data (Silver & Lewis, 2014). This means that responses that shared similar patterns but answering similar items were grouped together and then studied by the researcher in order to understand the message that they conveyed.

After identifying various levels of themes, different child codes/nodes and attributes attached to themes were organised to represent the themes that also represent the major qualitative research questions. This procedure was iterative, as it aimed to capture more consolidating concepts or ideas presented by the data through examining the theme levels cascading from attributes, child nodes to main themes. Finally, for each analysis, the results were saved and some excerpts supporting and representing the captured themes or ideas were incorporated into the write-up and presentation of findings.

4.8 Validity and reliability of the instruments/data

Several measures were taken in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the instruments that were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in this study, and hence the validity and reliability of the study overall.

4.8.1 Validity for quantitative

Starting with the questionnaires, the content and construct validity measures were taken to ensure that the items in the questionnaires measured what they were intended to measure in this study: the reflection of standards in the milieu that education is provided within the universities. The content validity measures taken were consistent with those indicated in section 4.6.2 above, explaining how the construction of questionnaires took place. They included the examination of the questionnaires by my supervisors, piloting prior to main data collection, taking necessary measures to rectify the shortcomings that were found from the pilot, re-examination by my supervisors, and gaining final approval for the main data collection.

Construct validity for the questionnaires involved examining the extent to which the items in the questionnaires covered well the aspects that the literature and the national standards themselves suggest to constitute the milieu for provision of education in universities (Muijs, 2004). For academics, these aspects included the working milieu, teaching and learning milieu/facilities, auxiliaries to teaching and learning milieu, and other cross-cutting issues that examined academics' perspectives on their universities. For students, the aspects included the teaching and learning milieu/facilities, auxiliaries to teaching and learning milieu/facilities, and accommodation. The biographic data for academics and students were not included in the analysis.

The construct validity involved conducting Principal Component Analysis (PCA) that examined the validity of data by extracting the number of aspects being analysed in both student and academic questionnaires. For academics, the PCA extracted four components/aspects, whereby 16 out of 19 items (excluding demographic data) in the questionnaire loaded successfully in the first three components. However, the first component combined items that measured both teaching and learning milieu and the cross-cutting perspectives of academics on the contexts in which universities were operating. The second component consisted of items that measured the working milieu of academics and the third components consisted of items that measured auxiliaries to teaching and

learning milieu. Henceforth, the extracted components could be argued to confirm the existence of the four aspects (shrunk to three) of the learning milieu that were initially targeted when designing the questionnaires. The extraction analysis (PCA) included the following measures; the rotated matrix component as indicated in Table **4.1** and, Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation, where the rotation converged in six iterations, as indicated in Table **4.2**

Table 4.1 Rotated matrix component – Academics

	Component			
Items	1	2	3	4
There are sufficient T/L facilities	0.762	0.235	0.004	0.084
Copies of important books in library	0.743	0.006	0.033	0.092
TL facilities in the classrooms enrich T/L	0.72	-0.137	-0.021	0.12
Laboratories have resources for effective T/L	0.692	0.149	0.152	-0.075
Re-choosing the university for facilities	0.656	0.162	0.165	0.157
Workload is reasonable	0.606	0.045	0.09	-0.096
The university continuously improves T/L facilities	0.571	0.032	0.189	0.323
Adequate lecture theatres in this university	0.552	0.007	0.164	-0.063
Friendly infrastructure for the physically challenged	0.536	0.22	0.16	-0.086
You see yourself working at a modern university.	0.526	0.348	0.323	-0.195
Office sharing	0.109	0.737	-0.087	-0.196
Office has an institutional computer	0.026	0.627	0.167	0.173
Access to institutional provided internet	0.075	0.537	-0.048	0.34
T/L facilities are better than where you did your Bachelor's	0.326	0.379	0.298	-0.211
You use computer in classroom to facilitate teaching	-0.021	0.106	0.828	0.002
You have convenient access to printers	0.318	0.06	0.656	0.288
Use projector in addition to writing board when teaching	0.206	-0.108	0.608	0.133
Average class size an academic teaches	0.202	0.093	0.321	-0.142
An academic has an office	0.107	-0.043	0.167	-0.687

Table 4.2 KMO and Bartlett's test – Academics

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.824
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	767.392
	df	171
	Sig.	0

From Table **4.1**, two items (one examined whether academics perceived that teaching and learning facilities in their current universities were better than where they did their Bachelor's degrees, and the other one that examined the average class size) did not load successfully in any of the four components. Also, one item (that examined whether academics had offices) was found to be relating negatively with others; meaning that its

responses followed a different pattern from other items. The cut-off point for loading was 0.5. As some educational studies, due to the nature of their data, tend to have low construct validity values (Muijs, 2004), the 0.5 cut-off point could be accepted, although 0.7 and above is recommended (Field, 2009).

For students, the PCA extracted three components. These also confirmed the existence of the three aspects of milieu that were targeted for measurement by the items in the questionnaires. The aspects included: the teaching and learning milieu; auxiliaries to teaching and learning milieu; and accommodation. The PCA for students included the following measures; the rotated matrix component as indicated in Table **4.3**; and Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation; where the rotation converged in five iterations, as indicated Table **4.4**. The cut-off point was also low at 0.4, in order to allow more items to load successfully, although the normally recommended cut-off point is anything above 0.7 (Field, 2009).

Table 4.3 Rotated matrix component – students

Items	Component 1	2	3
T/L facilities are good as they should be for a university	0.677	-0.102	0.199
The government ensures that quality education is provided	0.639	-0.084	0.176
Standards for quality education are in place at this university	0.629	-0.075	0.195
Infrastructure is user-friendly for special needs students	0.622	-0.076	-0.045
The university is good for both local and international students	0.594	-0.12	0.251
The quality of education you receive is worth the money	0.593	-0.031	0.175
You evaluate the quality of facilities such as hostel	0.587	0.057	-0.048
There are enough copies of important books in the library	0.487	-0.08	0.303
The class sizes facilitate effective teaching and learning	0.416	0.047	0.32
Joined this university because of its facilities reputation	-0.403	0.011	-0.004
Obtainability of water in campus affects your studies negatively	-0.017	0.876	-0.063
Obtainability of water in the halls affects your studies negatively	-0.017	0.87	-0.088
The quality of toilets in the halls affect your studies negatively	-0.155	0.712	0.001
There are sufficient computer laboratories at this university	0.151	-0.014	0.767
Computers in computer laboratories are connected to internet	-0.112	-0.106	0.763
Library accommodates a reasonable number of students at once	0.308	-0.013	0.493
Enough subject laboratories are available	0.432	-0.097	0.475
Quality of toilets makes you spend extra time studying at campus	0.067	-0.284	0.407

Table 4.4 KMO and Bartlett's test – students

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.852
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3679.929
	df	153
	Sig.	0

From Table 4.3 Rotated matrix component – students, the shaded items in Component 1 measured the teaching and learning milieu, the shaded items in the second component measured accommodation milieu, and the shaded items in the third component measured auxiliaries to learning milieu.

However, one item (examining whether students were convinced about joining their respective universities because of the perceived reputation of facilities) was found to negatively correlated with others by -0.403, indicating that the item had a different response pattern from the others. That is, although most of students wanted to study in their universities with the expectation that they had good facilities, the experiences were the opposite of their expectations.

4.8.2 Reliability for quantitative

The reliability of questionnaires was measured by examining the internal consistency of the scale in terms of the extent to which items were inter-correlated. The relatively high inter-item correlations in each component and among components suggests that the items in the questionnaires have a strong relationship to the latent construct or overall concept that the questionnaire is measuring (Muijs, 2004). The internal consistency of the scale is mostly measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, for which values of 0.7 to 0.8 are the recommended and accepted levels, while lower levels than those indicate an unreliable scale (Field, 2009). Table **4.5** below shows the reliability test for the variable/aspects for both academic and student questionnaires.

Table 4.5 Reliability tests for students and academics

		Reliability Statistics	
Respondents	Components	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Students	T/L milieu	0.674	9
	Accommodation	0.773	3
	Auxiliaries to T/L	0.654	5
Academics	T/L milieu and perspectives	0.852	10
	Working milieu	0.644	3
	Auxiliaires to T/L milieu	0.651	3

While the desirable value of Alpha is 0.7, some components had an Alpha value of 0.6, which is also acceptable though not recommended.

4.8.3 Validity for qualitative approach

For the qualitative part, several validity measures were put in place to ensure that the findings and conclusions emanating from the qualitative accounts were true in terms of representing both the voices of informants that took part in the process and the local contexts of the study, in addition to relating to the things that the accounts claim to make about the phenomenon (Hammersley, 2008; Cho & Trent, 2006).

The main approach that was used to enhance the validity of the research (from the data and then accounts) was to ensure that each category of interviewee respondents constituted a sufficient number of informants. This follows the idea of Cho and Trent (2006) that validity can be enhanced by employing techniques or methods by which: (i) misunderstandings can be adjusted and fixed; (ii) informants are adequately engaged, in order to ensure that their realities correspond with interpretation brought forth by the

researcher; and (iii) the validity of the excerpts/accounts is treated as being of primary importance throughout the presentation of findings, interpretations and conclusions.

To this end, I ensured (to my level best) that I persistently asked more or less similar main questions and probing questions to informants that belonged to one category. The aim was to minimise the range of misunderstandings in terms of the way the informants would have encoded the particular issues under scrutiny. Therefore, by increasing the number of informants in a category and asking similar questions to each, the danger was minimised of being biased or obtaining superficial information that may have resulted when a single source was used to get detailed information on particular issues under scrutiny. Second, having data from different informants who had different experiences and then scrutinising their responses to arrive at a combined or representative account, and claims representing their perspectives in terms of findings and conclusions, enhanced the rigour of this research.

4.8.4 Reliability for qualitative approach

Reliability for qualitative data requires that the processes and methods undertaken in collecting, keeping, processing, and analysing of data and subsequent having the findings that address the research questions and represent the participants views on the phenomenon to be clear, consistent, and transparent (Noble & Smith, 2015). The aim of having clear, consistent and transparent methods and processes is to improve the rigour in such a way that when the processes and methods are applied by an independent researcher in the same contexts or in similar contexts, settings and groups, they should lead to arriving at similar or comparable results or findings (Noble & Smith, 2015).

To achieve the reliability of qualitative data, two procedures were employed: being clear and consistent in both, the line of questioning during data gathering sessions and the methods of data analysis (Shenton, 2004). Regarding the line of questioning pursued, it should be noticed that the qualitative data were collected from two different hierarchies of participants, (policy makers and policy implementers) and each hierarchy had a number of respondents. Therefore, through the use of semi-structured interviews, the respondents within each group responded to more or less similar questions (indicating some were rephrased) that were clear and consistent. Also, the two groups responded to some questions that were more or less similar (clear and consistent) but with the different focus due to their roles; policy makers or policy implementers. It should be noted that the participation of policy implementers from different universities facilitated to reduce the

effect of obtaining information that could be peculiar to one institution rather than across universities. This form of triangulation or corroboration that involves the use of wide range of informants or data sources, allows viewpoints and experiences of respondents to be verified amongst themselves and hence obtain a rich and reliable picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny (Shenton, 2004). The approach furthermore facilitated the interviews to uncover the taken for granted issues or assumptions due to different perspectives held between policy makers and policy implementers on similar issues within and across the groups (Shenton, 2004).

Second, regarding the methods of data analysis, improving the reliability of the qualitative data involved the application of proper and specific procedures for analysing qualitative data that were clear in details enough to be repeated by other researchers (Shenton, 2004). This involved two steps. The first step of data analysis focused on the preparation and cleaning of data before analyses where the semi-structured interviews were recorded, transcribed and translated. This, in the end of analyses, enabled the data to be revisited repeatedly across their different forms in order to check whether the emerged themes from complex analytical tasks and the interview extracts to be used, represented well the views of respondents in relation to research questions. The second step involved subjecting the recorded, transcribed and then translated data to the analytical procedures or analytical tasks through the help of NVivo 11 software. These procedures are detailed in the second paragraph of section 4.7 that describes the analysis procedures for qualitative data.

4.9 Ethical issues and considerations

Social science research involves collecting data through working with people and reporting findings related to them. Consequently, one of the most important concerns is doing ethically informed research throughout the study. Therefore, it was important for me as a researcher to be aware of the moral and ethical considerations in undertaking ethically informed research (Fellows & Liu, 2008). In this study, the following ethical issues were adhered to before, during and after the study.

4.9.1 Before the study ethical issues

This involved two phases. First, before my journey to Tanzania for fieldwork, ethical approval from the University of Southampton was sought. The process involved submitting required documents and completing the online Ethics Screening Checklist through the

Electronic Research Governance Online system (ERGO). This was successful and I was granted approval for fieldwork.

Second, after arriving in Tanzania, I followed the procedures to allow me to gain official permission and access to the intended study sites in Tanzania. At this stage, I applied for research clearance from the University of Dar es Salaam. The university has the mandate, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to provide research clearance to staff and students doing research in Tanzania. The ethical clearance letters from University of Dar es Salaam were then used to seek permission at the intended study sites. This involved contacting and requesting key and appropriate staff and officials from the potential participating institutions (universities and the Agency) to accept the data collection exercise to be carried in their institutions.

4.9.2 During and after the study.

Ethical considerations during data collection and reporting of the findings involved the following: anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent and protection from harm. Detailed accounts of how these were observed are set out below.

4.9.2.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

The researcher ensured that the study sites, particularly the universities participating; the individual participants (those participating through interviews and completion of questionnaires) and the information provided by the participants were treated with confidentiality and anonymity. One of the ways this was done was by concealing participants' identities during data collection and in reporting the findings.

For universities and their interview participants, the true identities were concealed by replacing them with pseudonyms. That is, the four universities were termed University 1, University 2, University 3 and University 4. In order to link the staff who participated in the interviews with their universities easily, the pseudonyms of university staff reflect the universities that they represented; the first two characters represent their universities and the remaining one their interviewee series. For example, U1-1 means the first interviewee at University 1, while U1-2 means the second interviewee at University 1. Additionally, to preserve their anonymity, students and academics who completed questionnaires were requested not to write their names on their questionnaires.

For the Agency respondents, two pseudonyms were used; Agency and TCU. Therefore, the term 'the Agency', whenever used in this thesis, refers to the government agency responsible for overseeing the establishment and operation of universities in the country. In the same vein, the names TCU-0, TCU-1, TCU-2, TCU-3 and TCU-4 mean the Agency officials (by series of interviews) who participated in the study.

4.9.2.2 Informed consent

The researcher provided relevant and correct information about the aims of the study to the participants so that they could make voluntary and informed decisions on whether to participate, not to participate or even to withdraw from participation at any point. Consent forms were used to seek participants' consent before they participated in the study. Moreover, the researcher took various efforts to ensure that respondents who refused or were not willing to participate in the study were given the opportunity not to participate. This facilitated data collection sessions that involved only those who were genuinely willing to take part and offer data freely and frankly (Shenton, 2004).

4.9.2.3 Protection from harm

Necessary measures and precautions were taken by the researcher to protect the participants from any form of psychological or physical harm that could have occurred as a result of participating in this study. The researcher carefully protected the information obtained from participants by ensuring that under no circumstances could the information be leaked and hence jeopardise the lives, jobs, work relationships or even psychological well-being of participants.

Chapter 5 Approaches to formulating and enforcing the standards

This study examines the national university standards within the post-1995 universities in Tanzania. It is guided by three research questions: (1) Through what approaches were the national university standards formulated and enforced in post-1995 universities in Tanzania? (2) To what extent were they relevant to and compatible with the operating milieu of post-1995 universities in Tanzania? and (3) To what extent does the milieu for provision of education in the post-1995 universities reflect the standards?

This chapter presents findings for Research Question 1: through what approaches were the national standards formulated and enforced in post-1995 universities in Tanzania? As the question is twofold, the presentation of findings is correspondingly divided into two parts: the approaches to formulating the standards, and the enforcement of the standards. Findings for Research Questions 2 and 3 are presented in their own chapters, that is, Chapter 6 and 7 respectively.

5.1 Approaches to formulating the standards

In the approaches to formulating the standards, two major issues were of concern. First came the genesis of ideas, that is to say, where and how the ideas behind the formulation of the standards arose. Agency officials were the source of information regarding this issue. The second concern was about the participation of universities, particularly the post-1995 universities, in the process of formulating the standards. Unlike the former issue, the sources of information for this concern were both the Agency and the universities.

5.1.1 How and where the ideas to formulate the standards originated from?

Referring to the literature review in Chapter 2, the formulation of national higher education standards may be influenced by multiple factors, reasons and forces. Consistently, findings of this study identified three broad drivers that informed the formulation and content of the standards. The drivers include: the jurisdiction of the Agency in terms of executing its duties of overseeing the higher education sector; national/macro concerns related to higher education in the country; and the influence external global forces.

5.1.1.1 The jurisdiction of the Agency

The Universities Act (2005), among other things, established the Agency and its functions. The Agency was intended to act as both an autonomous institution with full mandate and power to regulate universities, and at the same time, implicitly, to assume the role of being a government conduit in matters related to university education in the country. Therefore, as part of its jurisdiction, the Agency was entrusted with power and tasked with interpreting the Universities Act (2005) to create frameworks and standards that would facilitate the execution of its remit. This further implies that the Agency, acting as the conduit, had power to formulate such frameworks as part of ensuring that the government's prevailing ideology embedded in the Universities Act was carried through to the institutions. Highlighting this, TCU-2 stated

> Some standards and regulations just come from the universities law. There are different sections in the Universities Act of 2005 that challenged to do various things, including designing tools like these. The law alone is not enough. We needed to interpret various sections in the law to come up with various tools for specific issues.

As part of the jurisdiction of the Agency, it was also found that the functions of the Agency were threefold: regulatory, supportive and advisory. Therefore, standards were established as part of these functions or to overcome challenges arising from the execution of these function.

For example, the regulatory function involves addressing regulatory challenges in universities. This includes, among other things, ensuring that universities have appropriate management structures suggested by standards and other internal policies necessary for smooth running of universities. Examples of internal policies include the availability of institutional research, and staff development and training policies. The aim of such policies is to ensure that universities are able to perform their core activities: research and teaching. Therefore, it is through the presence of executable internal policies for training and developing academic staff that universities are able increase the capabilities of academics in fulfilling their core roles of teaching and undertaking research. As a result, the Agency developed standards to address those issues in universities. TCU-1 said:

> We face challenges when regulating higher education in the country. The challenges give us ideas for what should we do. Should we set regulations, guidelines, or a policy on a certain issue? For example, we found that some universities did not have institutional research policy, and of those that did, some had weaknesses in staff development policies.

Unlike the above standards relating to regulatory function, the supportive standards were found to be more rhetorical than functional in ensuring that universities comply with standards or are facilitated to achieve their academic goals. This means that the supportive role was developed in order to circumvent the ironic perspective that some standards were formulated to address challenging areas in the absence of support from the Agency to facilitate compliance. For example, it was found that, as part of supportive role, the Agency was to help universities to redress the shortage of academics with PhD qualifications in young universities, to improve leadership and management structures and capabilities in young universities, and to improve the infrastructure for provision of science and technology.

However, the evidence indicated that the supportive role was largely rhetorical, in the sense that it had the subliminal intention of gaining legitimacy for the Agency's existence rather than solving practical problems. The findings indicated that the support provided to assist universities in complying with standards for the challenging areas were seriously inadequate when compared with the needs and low capability of universities to comply with the standards. As highlighted by TCU-1 in the interview excerpt below, it could clearly be seen that the support provided by Agency to address the challenge of shortage of academic staff was inadequate for to the magnitude of the problem:

> We support universities in many ways to meet the standards. A good example is through projects on science and technology facilities; by World Bank (WB), and capacity building to curb the shortage of PhD qualification staff; by the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD). For academic staff capacity building project, the government of Tanzania, via us, is collaborating with DAAD. Each year, at least 20 staff from both government and non-government universities, after competing and being screened, get opportunity to study for a PhD in Germany.

Another reason for the establishment of standards relates to the advisory remit of the Agency. That is, the Agency is the advisor to the government on universities matters, to universities, and to both current and prospective university students. Therefore, some standards were formulated with the aim of simplifying this daily role of the Agency; that is, the standards simplified the consultation role of the Agency by making issues relating to university education easily accessible and understandable by government, universities and students. In other words, the Agency is acting as a hub for information relating to university education in the country. Regarding this, TCU-1 said:

> Whenever the government, universities, prospective and even continuing students in universities seek clarifications or advice on particular things, it is our task to advise them accordingly. Without these standards and guidelines, this work would have been tough.

5.1.1.2 Macro issues

In addition to standards being established as part of the jurisdiction of the Agency, standards were formulated to address various concerns at national level in relation to university education in the country. For example, there were concerns that the number of universities that already existed, and the pace at which new universities were being established, needed nationwide structural intervention. Therefore, as part of addressing this concern, the Agency had to formulate national standards to govern the operation of existing universities and the establishment of new universities. TCU-0 said:

> They were made from challenges encountered. Just an increase from one university in 1961 to all universities we have now, is a challenge on its own that necessitated the establishment of standards.

Linked to this concern, there was also concern as to the number of programmes and how were they run in universities across the country. Agency officials seemed to be convinced that the number of universities established and the programmes that were being run were not supported by a sufficient level of resources for the provision of quality education. The perceived shortages were in both the quantity and quality of physical resources such as equipment, infrastructure, teaching and learning tools and facilities as well as in human resources, especially academics. Due to the perceived shortages, Agency officials were concerned that the sector was experiencing a widening gap between the ideal milieu in which university education should be provided and in which universities should operate, and the existing situation in respect of both physical and human resources. As the situation was likely to affect the quality of education provided, the establishment of national university standards was seen as pivotal to either address (if the situation existed) or prevent such a situation from happening. TCU-0 commented:

> We had feelings that the increase in number of universities and courses being offered did not match the increase in resources, either physical or human. Because such an increment of universities and courses should go hand in hand with increase in resources. We were afraid that this was not the case and we hoped that formulating standards would be useful to address the imbalances.

The next concern was the projected impact suggested by the trend if universities kept operating without national guidelines and standards. There was a feeling that the use of university-based quality assurance mechanisms was limited in terms of its ability to address the issues in the sector. Consequently, there seemed to be concern amongst Agency officials that the absence of national standards was to likely lead to negative consequences for public welfare and wellbeing, specifically in terms of financial and social costs that the government and the general public would suffer due to the low quality of university education. Highlighting the losses that could be suffered in absence of national standards, TCU-3 said:

> These standards were very important for two reasons. First, absence of standards in a liberal market would mean some people would have studied in some poor universities using loans from the government. This means that they will be poor in competency to the extent that they will not become employed. Since they will not become employed, they will not be able to pay back the loan money, which is taxpayers' money. This is a loss, a write-off.
>
> Second, if you have a poor system, it follows that some incompetent graduates may become employed, let's say as teachers. This means that they would transfer their incompetence to students. Imagine you send your child to school but all they do at school is just waste time, and leave the school without education. This child is condemned for life. Both of these are serious damages the government is worried about. We were going to regret in future unless we develop these standards, at the very least.

The other macro concern is the aspiration to have a trusted university education system. Agency officials were of the view that the formulation of national standards, in addition to facilitating the curative purpose by redressing the existing gaps, were imperative to improve the quality of education provided by universities across the country. Reflecting this conviction, TCU-3 said:

> We noticed that there were problems or gaps. That is why we designed respective standards and regulations, specific for different problems – be it academics or teaching and learning environment. However, they are not only for today's problems. They are for the future wellbeing of university education system as well.

Another reason for the formulation of standards relates to the influence or demands of government on higher education. The findings indicated that this was practised using the government's accountability approach, namely 'eyes on, hands off'. Through this control approach, the government is to hold responsible and accountable for its actions the

Agency, as part of its bureaucracy. Although the approach was promulgated in the name of protecting public interest, it was also being used as a means for government to achieve its predominantly political objectives. It follows that, although the enactment of the Universities Act 2005 aimed at, among other things, establishing the Agency and its remit, there were associated ulterior motives. One was that, in addition to creating an autonomous bureaucratic Agency responsible and accountable for university education, there was a tacit aim to create a conduit to channel the government's interests in university education and avoid substantial or overt resistance. Highlighting this, TCU-0 said:

> The government wanted us to set standards in order to protect and enhance the public welfare linked to higher education. …include: employability of the graduates, quality of education provided, fair competition, fair prices for consumers and the general contribution of higher education to economic growth of the country. These are things that the government is interested in, in the provision of higher education, be it by a government- or private-owned universities.

5.1.1.3 External forces

Consistent with the theoretical framework, it was found that there were various external forces that triggered the formulation of the standards. One driver is associated with the forces exerted by international cooperation and affiliations that the country and the Agency had with others. In this regard, it was found that some standards were developed through borrowing ideas and learning from other systems outside the country in order to comply with international communities and make the system comparable to other systems. While borrowing and learning from other standards give rise to the potential for the existence of dependency, efforts to modernise the system in order to make it comparable to international communities suggest that, behind the formulation of the standards, there were other motives such modernisation, marketisation, internationalisation and responding to forces such as globalisation of higher education

For example, as a member state of the East African Community (EAC), there was ongoing pressure for EAC member states to use a more or less common framework in order to facilitate the free movement of students, graduates and workers within the East African region. As a result, to ensure that the country complied with the regional agreement, the Agency used this opportunity to establish a network with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), which performs a similar function as the Agency but with a broader scope (East Africa region). From this network, the Agency learned not only how to

perform its duties but also borrowed some standards to complement areas that it did not have standards for. The Agency was also networking with a similar agency in South Africa, namely the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), for the same purpose. TCU-1 stated:

> Although, we have lots of standards, they are still not exhaustive. We have taken a lot of best practices from Inter-University council for East Africa (IUCEA) and SAQA. We learn from IUCEA because we both aim at promoting higher education in the same area. The direction is to have an East Africa common higher education area. Therefore, you find that, some practices we incorporated in this document came from IUCEA and SAQA. We borrowed and tailor-made them to suit our environment as they were on average better.

However, it was found that the chain of borrowing and learning for standards goes back even farther. That is, in addition to learning from IUCEA, there was working in cooperation with other stakeholders interested in quality in higher education, such as some institutions in Germany and borrowing some standards from them, and the Agency also expended considerable effort in learning from experienced countries. Regarding working with IUCEA TCU-1 said:

> the whole process of learning and borrowing was long. In fact, it is a long story. In addition to borrowing and learning from IUCEA that had relatively higher standards because they also developed their standards in cooperation with DAAD, Germany Rectors and other institutions from Germany, we also worked so hard on our own to get to the standards that we had before we worked with IUCEA.

5.1.1.4 Policy borrowing and learning procedures

The interviews regarding the specific processes on how the learning and borrowing of standards from others took place indicated that various stages were involved to ensure a successful transfer of both the soft skills and practical experiences required for both Agency officials and universities. Generally, the interviews indicated that the process was divided into several steps, each with its own targeted impacts.

From the interviews, the first step was to understand the management of universities in terms of how they could best be regulated and guided by the government/the Agency. Policy learning at this stage involved Agency officials travelling to Malaysia, Canada and Australia with a focus on learning about governance and leadership in higher education. This stage resulted in the formulation of the National University Qualification Framework

(UQF) of 2012. Among other things, the framework set out a structure for the education system in the country, focusing on stipulating different levels and paths that individuals could take through the higher education system after completing the lower levels of education. TCU-1 said:

> We went to Malaysia, Canada and Australia to learn how to frame our higher education system. This was the big project under the Ministry of Education that involved all levels, but we only focused on higher education. We commissioned a team of experts that consisted of our staff from here and three professors from different universities. They went to these countries to learn. And sometimes, some experts from these countries came here to provide training to the team.

The interviews also indicated that, prior to the official UQF being formulated, various processes took place in order to ensure that the UQF would be good enough to serve its intended functions. First, after attending training and brainstorming from the Agency, a team was briefed by the Agency with the desired contents that needed to be in the UQF. Adhering to the desired contents, a series of four drafts were then presented to the Agency and the fourth draft was finally approved, *mutatis mutandis*. In some presentations, the experts from Malaysia, Australia and Canada, where the team went to learn, attended and even presented their experiences to the stakeholders. The stakeholders who attended the presentations included officials from MEST, university officials, and officials from the National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) and HESLB. This process suggests that the policy borrowing largely took the form of the 'selective participatory', but was also through a 'top-down' approach.

The second step focused on efforts to strengthen quality assurance in universities in order to make universities operate in the context and conditions necessary for the provision of quality education. This stage involved working on and establishing minimum standards and guidelines cutting across different aspects, as necessary. This stage also involved making sure that each university was not only aware of the minimum standards and guidelines but was also equipped with the right tools and inspired to implement them. From the interviews, it was also found that, at this stage, the Agency worked in collaboration with IUCEA, MEST, other East African countries and DAAD to ensure that the standards formulated did not only fit the Tanzanian context but were also in harmony with that of IUCEA. The aim was to have harmonised standards for all East African member states. Related to this, TCU-1 said.

> In order to have standards that are in harmony with the IUCEA, top officials such as Minister, Permanent Secretary (The Ministry) and top officials from here (Agency), officials from ministries and higher education regulatory agencies from other East African countries (member states) and officials from IUCEA went to Germany through DAAD sponsorship to learn on how the Germany was doing in the quality assurance. Also, from each East Africa member country, seven university officials from seven different universities attended the training. To trickle down the knowledge obtained, those who attended the trainings were used to train others in universities.

To strengthen the standards further, particularly with regard to their practicability in terms of working and collaborating with providers of higher education, the next step involved learning from SAQA. At this stage, officials from the Agency went to SAQA in South Africa to learn how SAQA was regulating the higher education system there. Specifically, the aim was to obtain the practical experience of SAQA on various issues relating to the governance of universities. These issues include the verifications of awards, providing guidance to young universities to ensure that they excel in the sector, and protecting consumers of higher education from harmful and untrustworthy providers. Therefore, this was essentially fieldwork aimed at refining standards and improving working relationships with higher education institutions. The learning from South African experience was then transferred to Tanzania and applied by the Agency. Regarding this, TCU-2 said.

> Some officials from here went to SAQA to learn the field part of the standards. To get more practical experiences on working with universities, verifying awards, and protecting consumers of education.

The final external source of ideas in formulating standards relates to the trend in higher education to reflect what is happening in other countries. Linking to external sources, some Agency officials were of the view that, in addition to university-based efforts and government aspirations, research and trends across countries have shown that the adoption of nationwide frameworks to guide the operation of universities and address quality assurance issues in universities has been successful in many countries. Reflecting this, TCU-2 said:

> ideas also came from a study that indicated the need to have standards in our university education system. They have a strong link with quality assurance. If universities were to comply with these standards, they would definitely provide quality education. Nowadays, many countries are doing the same.

From the analysis above, it could be observed that the drivers for the formulation of standards were eclectic. They ranged from the jurisdiction and remit of the Agency, through macro concerns related to university education in the country, to external forces. Specifically, regarding the contribution of external forces in the process of formulating the standards, two main findings were the confirmation of the existence of both dependence-trap issues and ulterior (hidden) motives of modernisation, marketisation, internationalisation, and responding to forces such as globalisation of higher education. However, no evidence was found to indicate any initial pressure from universities themselves to formulate standards.

5.2 Construction and the co-construction of the standards

Arguably, policies and standards formulation in higher education could take different models with various degrees of participation by stakeholders across the sector. Examples of the models are top-down, bottom-up and collegial/co-construction. In addition to the models for formulation of standards, the rigour of the process, the extent of involvement of stakeholders, the existing power relations among the participants such as government officials, Agency officials, experts from different disciplines involved and universities together determine the extent to which the standards formulated represent the concerns and consensus of the stakeholders. Evaluating the above, but with special attention to the involvement of universities as key stakeholders in the co-construction of the standards, is the focus of this section.

5.2.1 The construction of the standards process.

Thematic analysis of the Agency official interview responses indicated that Agency officials unanimously appreciated the importance and impact of involving and cooperating with universities in the co-formulation of the standards. Therefore, efforts were made to ensure that the standards formulated were a result of adequate involvement by both Agency officials and universities. The process, and efforts expended, are analysed below to evaluate their effectiveness in achieving the goal.

First, the findings indicated that Agency officials were satisfied with the processes and efforts expended to ensure universities participated in the process of co-construction of the standards. Reflecting this, TCU-0 said:

> After the first draft, stakeholders were convened in one meeting and lots of contributions were given. The team went back and incorporated the recommendations. Then the document was brought back for further discussion with stakeholders until we reached a consensus of at least 80%. Therefore, the whole process was shared until the last minute the document was out. They had an absolute participation on this.

Using these rigorous procedures, it was further found that Agency officials were convinced that universities that participated were representative of the sector. That is, the net was cast as widely as possible in order to have good participation of universities in different categories and stages across the country. TCU-3 said:

> Participation of universities was good as it involved mixing people from different types of universities, government, non-government, new and old. We didn't favour any sides. We wanted to get views from different universities with different experiences on different issues.

Despite the appealing, well-intentioned and rigorous processes, and the efforts expended in the co-construction of the standards indicated above, the co-construction of standards was nonetheless found to have some limitations and problems. First, the participation of universities was based on adherence to standard policy formulation procedures. In other words, the procedures deployed did not put universities at the heart of decision-making but simply achieved the goal of allowing them to participate. That is, in comparison with other stakeholders, the participation of universities was more or less equal, instead of being exceptionally important. Despite their central role, this kind of participation reduced the negotiating power of universities in the process to be simply the same as that of other stakeholders. Reflecting on the general participation of universities, TCU-0 said:

> In the process of designing, be it a policy, guidelines or standards, all necessary stakeholders participate. You cannot lock yourself inside and make any of these alone.

Further evidence indicating the participation of universities as merely generic was that, depending on the categories of standards, there were different stakeholder interest groups whose contributions mattered. No special attention was given to universities as a key stakeholder, but the voices of other stakeholders, for example, the Medical Council of Tanganyika in relation to standards for provision of health-related courses, was given equal status to that of universities offering such courses. Furthermore, no officials commented on the opportunity for universities to have a veto in cases where standards seemed not to fit their contexts. Reflecting this TCU-1 said:

> When making standards, we normally involve necessary stakeholders as well. We invite universities, ministries and other stakeholders that we see are of interest. There are many stakeholders depending on the issue at hand and their views are very important. For example, we must involve Medical Council of Tanganyika when we are working on standards or regulations to govern medical schools…...

The second concern was related to the use of creative and selective participation in the co-construction of the standards. This was found to be divided into two parts. One was the use of experts in the teams that designed the standards. Second was the acculturation of university leaders through training in order facilitate the standards and give them legitimacy.

Regarding the use of experts, the findings indicated that Agency officials were of the view that the inclusion of academics in the teams formulating the standards was one of the ways that universities would have participated sufficiently. The findings indicated that the experts involved in the teams could be categorised into three groups: experienced academics in terms of their working experiences and specialisation in specific academic disciplines; experts from the Agency itself; and experts from other organisations affiliated to particular subjects whose standards were being formulated. They were convinced that the use of this approach would elicit the necessary technical contributions. However, its predominance meant that the opinions of those who actually deal with day-to-day decisions and operations of related standards in universities such academics themselves were conspicuously absent. This could be explained by the response provided by TCU-2:

> I would say that universities participated in one way or another. After we had ideas on key areas to establish standards for, experts [academics] were invited, sat down and wrote the ideas in detail and in depth before they were published as standards and guidelines.

Moreover, the outsourcing of experts from universities in the teams formulating the standards suggests that the process was technocratic. It was the shortage of technical staff at the Agency that necessitated the outsourcing of additional experts. In other words, if the Agency had been better staffed, the under-representation of stakeholders from universities would have been more severe, with even fewer academics participating. Indicating this, TCU-1 said:

> People may think that the Agency has lots of experts in different fields. But no, we don't. What we do is to involve and outsource. The work is huge, … and as you can see, the

> personnel in the office [the whole Agency] are not that many. Now we are at around 30 or 40 people.

Agency officials were of the view that outsourcing of experts from universities was an ideal approach to the co-construction of the standards. The experts were assumed to have a good knowledge of what universities were experiencing in relation to standards, in additional to their qualifications as potential candidates for brainstorming alternative solutions to the problems. Therefore, their participation in the designing of the standards was tantamount to that of university stakeholders. TCU0-3 said:

> We cooperate and involve universities' people because they are the actual target and main stakeholders. In collaboration with people from here (Agency), they sat together and designed these standards. More often, the people involved are from universities. They are the experts, they are in universities, they know the problems that universities are facing and hence had ideas on what kind of standards would improve the situation.

Regarding the co-construction of standards through acculturation of universities leaders, the findings indicated that Vice-Chancellors (VCs) and Deputy Vice-Chancellors (DVCs) of universities were often invited to attend workshops and training conducted by the Agency. The training and workshops were used to acculturate universities leaders in the standards through enhancing their awareness of the standards so that the leaders would support the standards, provide their views on further improvements and have a guarantee of support from the Agency. They were also used to encourage university leaders to set systems for implementing the standards, for example the establishment of quality assurance offices and the appointing of quality assurance officers. Using these training events, Agency officials developed confidence that the standards were co-constructed and would therefore result in more voluntary compliance rather than coercive. TCU-1 said:

> The Vice-Chancellors were the ones invited to learn the importance of this matter. We had various workshops to enhance their awareness on the standards before they got published. We sat down with them, and their views were used to improve the standards. From there, we had a consensus that they accepted the guidelines. When they got back to their universities, they started to implement. If there is no quality assurance office and officer, they would establish these first. We also guarantee them our support. By doing this, you will find that it is more of voluntary adherence rather than coercive.

However, the limitations of the approaches used in the co-construction of standards were also confirmed by university officials. Findings from universities officials consistently indicated the existence of a top-down approach. However, the top-down approach was also

found to be at a modest level, as it was tempered by the creative and selective participation of stakeholders from universities and the training of universities leaders, although the participation did not really extend to making decisions on the actual process of co-construction. So although there was participation by universities, it lacked both depth and scope, especially in respect of the new private universities. Reflecting this, U2-1 stated that:

> I think it was just the Agency alone who designed the standards. But if universities participated, for how the standards seem, not all universities participated. May be government universities participated more. The only thing I see is the standards and Agency wants universities to comply with them.

This was further supported by U3-2 who stated:

> I don't know which universities participated. I have been working in this university since 2012, but I and my colleagues do not seem to know much. I have asked several times, who is Agency? Who is part of Agency? How is the Agency making decisions? I don't get answers. So, obviously, it is not a system that you would say is participatory enough. We see a framework of things coming from them. Almost a top-down approach.

The standards were found to be reflected in the vision and strategic plans of some universities, confirming that there had been some acculturation of university leaders, but there was little evidence of participation by those who supervised and implemented tactical and operational plans, including academics. Reflecting this, U1-2 commented:

> These standards came in year 2012. I remember seminars were conducted to some top leadership of university and colleges. I also attended one. In those workshops, the standards were discussed and recommendations were given on them. They form part of our mission, vision and plans. The only problem is that, normal academics did not participate, making implementation a struggle.

In addition to the selective participation indicated above, it was further found that university leaders who participated in the process did not take adequate measures to transfer or share their experiences with significant practitioners in the lower levels. U1-2 further said:

> but when they came back here, they did not make efforts to ensure that the stakeholders at the base, who are actually the implementers, understand how and what to do with the standards.

To shed further light on the findings above on the transfer or sharing of experiences with other practitioners, an examination of the co-construction of the standards was extended to the involvement of academics in the process. Five elements, suggesting a continuum of different levels of involvement of academics in the co-construction process, were evaluated. They ranged from: academics being informed about the standards; discussion of the standards with quality assurance officials; attending training on the standards; involvement in making decisions about the standards; and whether they had a platform to provide feedback or raise issues regarding standards in their working environment.

Analysis of the elements was guided by the overarching null hypothesis that there is no variation in the perspectives of university academics in relation to different levels of involvement. It should also be noted that, in the analysis process, the response categories were re-coded from the five that were in the questionnaires: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'don't know', 'agree' and 'strongly agree' to three response categories: 'disagree', 'don't know' and 'agree'. The aim of re-coding was to reduce the impact of smaller sample size on longer response categories and to group together responses that essentially conveyed the same idea. As cross-tabulation were used, and as the tables were larger than 2*2 for each analysis, Chi Square (x^2) and Cramer (V) were used to test the results for statistical significance (whether there were variations) and strength of variation respectively.

The first element, suggesting the least level of involvement of academics, examined the extent to which academics were informed (made aware) of the standards by either through quality assurance officials in universities, Agency officials or other sources. As indicated in Table **5.1**, findings for this element were not statistically significant indicating no variation in terms of views regarding being informed about standards. From Table **5.1**, the lack of variation could be explained by the similar pattern of response whereby the majority of academics, both university-wise and generally (79%), disagreed that they were informed about the standards. This indicates that neither Agency officials nor university staff took adequate measures to ensure that majority of academics were informed about the standards.

Table 5.1 Academics' involvement in co-construction of standards 95% CI

Involvement level	Universities					Chi Square	Cramer's V	
	1	2	3	4	Total	x^2, *df*, p	V, p	N
Informed								
Disagree	29.5%	33.0%	7.1%	9.4%	79.0%	3.859, 6, .696	.093, .696	224
I don't know	2.7%	4.5%	0.4%	1.8%	9.4%			
Agree	5.8%	4.0%	0.4%	1.3%	11.6%			
Proportion	37.9%	41.5%	8.0%	12.5%	100%			
Discussions								
Disagree	17.0%	33.5%	5.4%	7.1%	62.9%	29.270, 6, .000	.256, .000	224
I don't know	7.6%	4.5%	1.8%	1.8%	15.6%			
Agree	13.8%	3.6%	0.9%	3.1%	21.4%			
Proportion	38.4%	41.5%	8.0%	12.1%	100%			
Training								
Disagree	24.3%	33.3%	5.0%	7.2%	69.8%	9.462, 6, .149	.146, .149	222
I don't Know	1.8%	2.3%	0.5%	1.4%	5.9%			
Agree	11.7%	6.3%	2.7%	3.6%	24.3%			
Proportion	37.8%	41.9%	8.1%	12.2%	100%			
Decision-making								
Disagree	20.7%	27.0%	5.4%	5.0%	58.1%	8.409, 6, .210	.138, .210	222
I don't know	4.1%	4.1%	0.0%	1.4%	9.5%			
Agree	13.5%	10.4%	2.7%	5.9%	32.4%			
Proportion	38.3%	41.4%	8.1%	12.2%	100%			
Platform for feedback								
Disagree	25.3%	23.1%	5.9%	6.8%	61.1%	3.286, 6, .772	.086, .772	221
I don't know	4.5%	7.2%	0.9%	1.8%	14.5%			
Agree	8.6%	11.3%	1.4%	3.2%	24.4%			
Proportion	38.5%	41.6%	8.1%	11.8%	100%			

Source: Field data

Regarding the initiatives by university staff to discuss the standards with academics, the findings were statistically significant. This indicates that there were varied levels of discussions about the standards across universities. While findings suggest that majority of academics across universities (62.9%) disagreed that they had been involved in discussions relating to standards, the variations in response seem to be explained by findings for University 1. The proportion of those who did not discuss standards at University 1 was notably low (44.3%) compared to University 2 (80.7%), University 3 (67.5%), University 4 (58.7%), and to the general average across universities (62.9%). These findings indicate

that more academics at University 1 were part of the co-construction of the standards in terms of discussing them compared to academics in other universities.

The next level of involvement of academics in the co-construction of standards was the use of training of academics to provide knowledge of the standards as part of quality assurance. Regarding this, the findings were not statistically significant, indicating no variation in perspectives regarding participation through training. As can be seen in Table **5.1**, there was a consistent response from academics at the four universities, with at least 60% from each saying they had not participated in training for standards and quality assurance, and an overall average of 69.8%. This also indicates a lack of participation by academics in co-construction of the standards even by translating them (as a result of training) into their daily routines.

Findings on the involvement of academics in decision-making related to standards in their universities were also not statistically significant, hence no variation in perspectives by academics across universities. Table **5.1** indicates that on average, 58.1% of academics across universities said that they had not participated in decision-making associated with standards and quality issues in their universities. Across the universities, the pattern was very similar, with the slight exception that at University 4 a somewhat higher proportion of academics replied that they had been involved in decision-making on standards. However, the average involvement of academics in decision-making of only 41.1% indicates that overall involvement in decision-making was only at a moderate level. This also indicates that some efforts were expended on this area of involvement, despite being unable to reach the majority of academics.

Lastly, regarding the availability of any form of platform through which academics could raise concerns or provide feedback on issues related to quality assurance and standards, the findings were also not statistically significant, indicating no variation in perspectives from academics across universities. From Table **5.1**, the consistency in perspectives is seen in that with an overall average 61.1% of academics who said they did not have such a platform in their universities, individual university responses were: University 1 (65.7%); University 2 (55.5%); University 3 (73.8%); and University 4 (57.6%).

In general, the findings relating to the involvement of university academics in the co-construction of standards through different levels indicate the existence of selective or partial involvement of academics, with fewer involved than those not involved. Probably, this was because insufficient effort was expended by universities and Agency officials to

ensure that the majority of academics were aware of the standards and had the opportunity to discuss them, attend training to enhance awareness, participate in decision-making or provide feedback in terms of experience in their own working environment.

However, the following caveats should be noted relating to the findings on the different levels of involvement of academics in the co-construction of standards. First, the continuum of involvement does not imply the existence of a linear progression in involvement. It is just a framework for understanding different levels of involvement intensity. Hence, it could be possible for academics to attend training but not necessarily to have a platform to discuss the standards among themselves and/or with the leadership. By the same token, academics might have a platform to raise issues related to standards with their managers but might not attend training. Also, due to lack of knowledge of standards, it could be possible that they sometimes raised standards-based concerns without identifying them as such.

Second, because the analysis is based on the use of cross-tabulation, it follows that one of the pre-conditions is to have no cells with an expected count of less than five. However, due to the sample size for University 3 and University 4, a few cells with an expected count of less than five did exist for each analysis, thus violating the rule. However, the aim was twofold: to highlight different levels of involvement of academics as part of the con-construction of the standards at the university level, in addition to examining the variation.

Returning to the findings on the existence of selective participation in terms of participation of stakeholders in the co-construction of the standards, some university officials were of the view that the participation did not adequately engage the different kinds of universities that existed in the country. Instead, they were convinced that it was old universities that participated, because the standards seemed to be based on the old university model. Therefore, while the standards might fit well in old universities, this was not the case for young universities. U3-2 said:

> I think the problem is, the decisions were made for the model university. If not the model university, then based on much older universities or the people who participated were from old universities. When you are established, it's a different story in relation to the standards.

In addition to disregarding different kinds of universities across the country, the standards were also associated with the isomorphism agenda that leaned toward old universities. Some universities respondents believed there was a tacit but deliberate intention to make

all universities be like the old ones. Supporting their assertion, they claimed that the end result of the process (the formulated standards) seemed not to accommodate all stages of universities operating in the country. This meant that young universities either did not participate or, if they did participate, their participation was illusory because their voices were technically (not by chance) disregarded to fulfil the ulterior isomorphism agenda. These views are reflected in the comments given by U3-2:

> I don't think it was thought that universities were in different stages. We have young universities that cannot simply follow these standards. They couldn't even exist if they had to do that. Because, if you look at these standards, it sounds and feels like a tendency that, whenever there is anything to be done in this country, there is an established group of people who have to do it. Yeah, they have created a very good foundation in this country, yeah, but I think they need to let new idea in.

The isomorphism was also extended to leadership in new universities. In connection with the above findings, some respondents were of the view that the top leadership in new universities originated from the old universities. Consequently, although new universities may have participated in the co-construction of the standards, their leaders were no different from those of the old universities. Therefore, it is no surprise to have standards based on the 'old university' model. The combination of the ulterior isomorphism motives behind national standards with the participation of top management from new universities was termed by one respondent as 'the national disease' of running all universities in the 'old university' style. Moreover, respondents were of the view that, if no further efforts were made to evolve the regulations at university level by involving new ideas from younger people, then new universities might become carbon copies of the old universities. Reflecting this, U4-2 said:

> There is what I call a national disease whereby universities in this country are run in an old universities style. To illustrate this, let me focus on this university and this will reflect to other universities, whether they confess this or not. What I mean to say is, when this university was started, almost everything was imported from a certain old university. Why would it be different for the standards?

In conclusion, findings from both Agency officials and university respondents indicate that efforts were made to involve universities in the co-construction of standards. However, the participation was found to have several limitations. First, the representation or participation of some universities, particularly the young ones, was poor or illusory, therefore their participation was simply to adhere to the rule of thumb of stakeholder participation.

Second, where young universities did participate, then their voices were either neglected or it was predominantly their leaders who participated. Third, if academics participated, they did not participate as academics but rather as experts in the teams, due to a shortage of staff at the Agency, making the process more technical and less a part of the day-to-day academic undertaking.

However, the participation of university leaders was found to play a critical role in ensuring that universities incorporated the standards in their vision and strategic plans with the aim of providing education in contexts that reflected the standards. Thus, the standards were able to gain some legitimacy across universities, despite the challenges in their formulation. Moreover, notwithstanding the poor participation (undiscerned by Agency officials), universities were expected by the Agency to comply with the standards as if they had participated sufficiently in their construction. Also, the consideration of standards within the strategic plans of some universities meant that the standards were gradually becoming embedded in those institutions.

5.3 Findings on the approaches to enforcement of the standards

I now turn to the second aspect of Research Question 1 to consider the findings relating to the enforcement approaches through which universities were to comply with or institutionalise the standards. Particular attention is given to how the Agency (as a regulator of higher education) expended effort to ensure that the standards, once formulated, were enforced or institutionalised in universities. The findings are broadly divided into two parts: how the Agency wanted the compliance to occur, in terms of levels of freedom for universities to comply with or customise the standards; and the actual enforcement approaches taken to ensure that universities complied with the standards.

5.3.1 How the Agency wanted the compliance to occur

Presuming that they were set at a minimum level, were simple rather than very advanced and were launched as a universal means to address a universal (i.e. nationwide) problem, Agency officials wanted the standards to be complied with as they were. That is, universities had no freedom whether or not to comply, or to customise them. The freedom to shape the standards was available only after universities had successfully complied with the standards as they were initially. The reasons for mandatory compliance were threefold. First, the standards were perceived by Agency officials to be minimum standards. It

follows that it was perceived to be impossible for universities to not comply with these minimum standards yet provide a quality education. TCU -3 said:

> These are minimum guidelines. They have to comply with, whether they like or not. And if they fail to comply with, it is obvious that the standards won't achieve their intended objectives. That is, universities will not be providing quality education.

Supporting the view above, some Agency officials viewed the standards as a set of laws. Their primary aims were to protect and promote the welfare and interest of the general public in relation to university education. As a result, any breach of the laws (non-compliance) was to be followed by sanctions, including the possibility of shutting down universities that did not comply with the standards. Reflecting this, TCU-0 stated:

> The standards are like laws. Probably, they may not please some universities. You cannot design something of this nature that would please everyone. This has never happened. Therefore, once the Agency learn that a university did not comply with the standards, the Agency will have to close that university.

Second, compliance with the standards is mandatory, because the standards are an integral part of the accreditation procedures of universities, forming part of the accreditation framework that allow a university to operate. The difference between the minimum standards and the accreditation framework is their scope. While compliance with the minimum standards is mandatory for a university (to offer courses and admit students), the accreditation process stipulates a continuum of stages and procedures. Accreditation involves several stages before a university can start to operate and prior to the granting of a charter of incorporation. Then, say in the middle, there is an accreditation stage equivalent to minimum standards, compliance with which would allow a university to operate. Beyond this stage, the development and operations of universities are evaluated by further accreditation procedures. Therefore, regardless of the differences between the two approaches, the use of the accreditation approach still does not provide any opportunity for universities to circumvent mandatory compliance with minimum standards, at least in order to start operating in the sector. Regarding this, TCU-2:

> Where you are now, is an accreditation department that is concerned with registering of new universities and making reaccreditation of universities. The processes, on their own, compel universities to implement the standards as required. If the university is operating on a par with the standards, it will not excel the ladder of excellence in terms of accreditation. If we find it operating below par, we close it and put it under probation.

Third, compliance with the standards is regarded as mandatory because of the nature of their development as perceived by Agency officials. That is, that the participation of universities leaders in their development, in workshops and training activities, and in achieving of consensus on their form and compliance convinces Agency officials that the standards have secured legitimacy for compulsory compliance. Indicating this TCU-1 said:

> Universities participated very well. Therefore, we expect that, what we have on the table would be implemented as it is.

Regarding customisation or modification of standards by universities to fit their contexts or financial capabilities, Agency officials consistently held the view that the standards were a minimum and had already been contextualised to fit the milieu of local universities. The only customisation encouraged was do over and above the minimum standards. TCU-2 said:

> No! They don't have such a room because these are minimum qualifications. If they do below these standards, then they must be compromising quality.

5.3.2 The actual enforcing approaches exerted

Despite the desire for mandatory compliance with the standards, the approaches exerted by the Agency to ensure compliance with the standards were found to lie somewhere between the coercive and non-coercive. In particular, the findings indicated that mixed methods leaning more towards a 'soft power' approach were used. That is, through soft power, the Agency wanted its predominant perspectives on standards to be shared by universities, with standards representing: the popular culture of universities; good reputation; the international or global community of universities; and the minimum standard way of doing things in universities. The main aim was to get universities to share similar perspectives through co-opting them and other stakeholders, instead of directly coercing and ordering them.

The soft power approach was found to be applied in various ways. One was by co-opting university education stakeholders. For example, by improving the awareness of students and employers through exhibitions and other media, the Agency was convinced that, in time, the stakeholders were becoming more rational decision-makers on university education matters. Therefore, through the response of students to the contexts in which universities were operating, or the perceived quality of graduates held by employers and students, universities were automatically being held accountable not only to provide

quality education but also to be contextually responsive and were thereby under pressure to comply with the standards. Reflecting existence of this this soft power, TCU-4 said:

> Things are changing. We have been working so hard to increase awareness to students, parents and even employers. We do exhibitions every year, we go to secondary schools, we have the website showing status of universities, and we even use media such as televisions and radio to inform the general public about what is happening. These are strongest tools to kill bad universities.

In conjunction with this, Agency officials were of the view that the increased competition in the sector (among universities themselves) reduced the need to coerce universities to comply with the standards. Instead, universities would be compelled to instil quality assurance measures in order to provide quality education that would in turn improve their quota in terms of reputation and admission.

Agency officials held the view that if universities did not instil quality assurance measures or became less vigilant on these issues, the result would be a natural sieving out of universities (due to decline in number of students) offering education in poor contexts and producing incompetent graduates, gradually leaving the sector with good universities. Thus, the standards were to act as a referral point in terms of providing a clear framework for what universities were naturally required to do if they were to continue operating in the contemporary environment. Reflecting on the application of competition as a soft power in enhancing compliance, TCU-2 said:

> Universities are responsible to provide quality education anyway. Because, if they provide poor quality education, they are killing themselves. If graduates fail to deliver in the labour market, the labour market will definitely come to know this, and will avoid the graduates of the universities in question. Besides, they are now competing for students.

In addition to the assumed accountability as a result of pressure from stakeholder responses, as explained above, further mechanisms were deliberately devised by the Agency in order to enhance the accountability of students as soft power agents to oblige their universities to comply with the standards. First, the Agency broadened the engagement of students in influencing the operation of universities by establishing communication links with students in universities. Therefore, students and their union leaders became aware that they could directly report shortcomings in their universities to the Agency in the event that they failed to find solutions from the university management. For this TCU-0 said:

> After enhancing their awareness, students have been very helpful to us. They communicate to us in case of anything related to our duties or standards goes wrong in their universities. And after we get notified, we normally make an immediate visit.

Second, in conjunction with the above increased awareness and engagement of students, it was found that the Agency shifted some burden of costs of the so-called quality assurance to students. Unlike in the previous system in which universities incurred the costs of quality assurance on their own, the new system shifted some costs from universities to students. From academic year 2015/16, students across the country were to assist in the implementation of quality assurance in their universities by paying 20,000/= Tanzanian Shillings, (equivalent to £7) annually. From this amount, 20% went to the Agency to assist with training, workshops and other matters relating to standards and quality assurance. The remaining 80% remained at the university for quality assurance and associated matters. Therefore, because students were paying this money, they acted as soft power agents to hold universities accountable for ensuring that their money yielded the desired results. Describing the use of the financial contributions of students in quality assurance matters as a soft power mechanism to achieve compliance with standards by universities, TCU-3 said:

> The good thing is that, from this academic year 2015/2016, we devised a mechanism to get some money that would assist the implementation of these standards. Now, all students were to pay 20,000/= Tshs for quality assurance. 20% of the money comes back to the Agency while the 80% remain at universities to facilitate quality assurance issues. If students are paying, they obviously make follow-up on their money to see whether is making difference in their studying experiences.

Apart from increased engagement of students as described above, acculturation methods were also used to get universities do what the Agency wanted. Through acculturation methods, the Agency expended effort in creating conducive environment to bring about compliance with standards by universities. The efforts were threefold: working harmoniously with universities; training of universities leaders and visiting universities to conduct technical evaluation on the progress of compliance with standards; and advising universities accordingly. Reflecting the use of acculturation as soft power to influence universities, TCU-3 said:

> First of all, the Agency doesn't operate like police. What we do is, we advise, we train, we encourage and we entice universities to adopt such good standards. We wanted a voluntary compliance.

Indicating that the use of training and workshops was important in helping universities to realise that the standards were indispensable ingredients in the provision of quality education, TCU-1 said:

> We organise frequent workshops with people from universities. We train them on different standards so that they use the knowledge gained to institutionalise the standards in their universities. Sometimes, we invite them to attend with us the international workshops such as those organised by IUCEA. This way, they get directly involved in building up skills and understand the importance of voluntary compliance with the standards.

Also, regarding the use of visits for technical evaluation, monitoring progress and provision of recommendations as part of encouraging voluntary compliance, TCU-2 said:

> We do various audit visits. Some of them are abrupt while others are scheduled. When we see a gap in the audits, we normally write to advise them and make follow-ups. If no change, we rewrite and revisit.

In conclusion, despite the desire for mandatory compliance, the enforcement of the standards was found to be based on the use of soft power approach. This could partly be explained by the autonomous power of universities and the perceived low-economic capability of some universities to comply with the minimum standards. This further meant that the use of soft power also implicitly provided grace periods for universities to fix shortcomings. Coercive approaches were strategically applied at universities with higher chances of complying with the standards or in situations with no prospects of compliance. In situations in between, where such likelihood was not very feasible but also absolute failure was unlikely, as in the majority of universities, soft power dominated.

Moreover, the findings indicated that the emphasis on enforcement through soft power aimed to ensure that the standards were reduced from legal to moral obligations on the part of universities. This is confirmed by findings on the need to ensure that the provision of university education was doing justice to students, employers and taxpayers' money. Furthermore, the view of standards as moral obligation was also expected to cultivate an intrinsic motivation among universities to comply with standards, whether or not the standards were enforced or protected by law, hence avoiding legalism. That is, if universities are legally coerced to comply with the standards and if they are able to operate without violation of standards, coercing them might make them choose to go no further than minimum compliance, which would be an undesirable outcome.

Chapter 6 Relevance and compatibility of the standards within post-1995 universities

This chapter presents the findings for Research Question 2 that examined the relevance and compatibility of the standards within the post-1995 universities as critical components for effective reforms in universities. The findings are thematically divided into the relevance and the compatibility of the standards. Findings on relevance focus on how the national standards, being central to the glonacal concept, are able to harmonise the global and local contexts for provision of university education. By contrast, the findings on compatibility focus on how the standards are able to work in harmony with the inherent values of autonomy and creativity within universities.

Both Agency and university officials responded to various interview questions related to the research question. However, due to their positions, the focus of the interview items for Agency officials was different from that of university staff. Agency officials were asked and responded as manufacturers and overseers of the national standards, whereas university officials were asked and responded as implementers of standards in universities. Therefore, although the findings are presented based on themes related to relevance and compatibility of the standards, their organisation follows the perspectives of the two groups: Agency officials and university staff.

6.1 The relevance of the standards

As national standards, their relevance in this research was based on examining their ability simultaneously to encapsulate and address global and local demands in the provision of university education. The hypothesis is that the gap between the contexts in which young universities in developing countries are operating and the ideal global context that universities ought to operate is wide. This suggests that formulating standards that are relevant to young universities and at the same time encapsulate the global and local contexts is a challenging task, especially for developing countries such as Tanzania. Consequently, the first part of the analysis, through the perceptions of Agency officials, examines the efforts made to ensure that the standards successfully harmonise the two concepts. The second part of the analysis, using the perceptions of both Agency officials and university staff, examines the actual relevance of the standards in terms of how they fit within the contexts in which post-1995 universities are operating.

6.1.1 Relevance in terms of global and local nexus –Agency officials

It was found that a benchmarking approach was used to ensure that the standards were able simultaneously to address the global and local contexts. The approach was justified by creating national standards that are neither too local, neglecting the global features of a university, nor too global, unable to be implemented by local universities. It was mainly executed through the process of looking for best practice in different parts of the world and then studying how this could be adapted to fit the local context. Both looking for best practice and benchmarking were done by experts (the teams involved in the formulation of standards as highlighted in the previous chapter) in collaboration with the Agency officials. TCU-1 said:

> We did this through the practice called benchmarking. We told the experts to look for the best practices in other regions such Australia, America or Canada or in some part of Africa and others and see how we could contextualise those best practices in our contexts. That is what we did.

The use of benchmarking was, however, found to be challenging. Agency officials were cognisant of the fact that the blending of global and local features needed to ensure that there was a tolerable trade-off between global features and local contexts encompassing various nation's social, cultural and economic aspirations. They were also aware that, if the standards leaned too far towards global features, they would fall short in relevance by being unrealistic for both old and new universities, in addition to compromising the socioeconomic and cultural factors of the country. If, on the other hand, they leaned more towards local features, the result would be a reduction in the global aspects of the university, and probably the quality of education, thus undermining the purpose of having standards. Therefore, they acknowledged that the challenge was to create standards that are multifaceted; that is, standards that harmoniously ensure that quality education is provided, local contexts are considered, national endowments, social, economic and cultural factors are preserved, and global perspectives are embedded. Regarding this challenge, TCU-2 said:

> Honestly, this was a challenge. We really wanted our university system to have a good reputation like others in the world. But also, as a nation, we have our own history and economic priorities that we wanted to take on board. We were also very careful not to set high standards that universities cannot deliver accordingly. However, we also wanted quality university education to be provided in dignified contexts.

To improve the relevance of the standards as a result of the challenges above, the findings indicated that three benchmarking approaches were used. One was through creating some standards from scratch. The second was through carefully learning and borrowing from developed higher education systems such as Canada, United States and Australia, as highlighted earlier. The third was through benchmarking for the second time standards that had already been benchmarked by other bodies operating in Africa, such as IUCEA and SAQA, to suit African contexts. The officials were confident that borrowing and learning from experienced and successful African agencies simplified the benchmarking process and increased the chances of designing more relevant standards that fitted both the international and Tanzanian contexts. TCU-3 said:

> These organisations [SAQA and EUCEA] have done research, considered what outside Africa is doing and they have been successful. Therefore, we have been learning from them to make sure that the standards we make consider both global and local contexts, in addition to being smoothly implemented.

6.1.2 Relevance of the standards in universities –Agency officials

Findings indicated that Agency officials were convinced that the standards were relevant in terms of being appropriate and applicable to the environment and the era in which post-1995 universities in Tanzania were operating. However, their perception of the relevance of the standards was found to be based more on the theoretical functions or impacts of the standards when complied with, rather than the capability of universities to implement them.

For example, their first perception of relevance was the functioning of the standards as tools available nationwide to enable universities achieve their core goal/activities of teaching, research and community outreach in both global and local aspects of the university. Regarding this, Agency officials were convinced that the standards were relevant because it was through them, in addition to or in conjunction with the university-based quality assurance mechanisms, that universities could objectively improve their teaching and learning environment, their programmes and quality of their academics, who in turn also determine the quality of research. Thus, they viewed the standards to have simply strengthened the university-based quality assurance mechanisms by providing a more comprehensive and clearer framework of what was necessary for the provision of university education that meets global and local demands. This was evidenced when TCU-1 said:

> The standards are instruments to help them to perform well their core functions of teaching, research and community outreach. The university-based mechanisms were subjective and hence had shortcomings.

The standards were perceived by Agency officials to cover the full terrain of development, wellbeing and necessary conditions for the provision of internationally comparable education that overcame the limitations of university-based quality assurance mechanisms. Therefore, universities were expected to use the standards to ask themselves whether the resources and environment necessary for provision of quality education were present, such as availability of classes, teaching and learning facilities, qualifications and numbers of academic staff, offices conducive to working and accommodation conducive for students, good teacher–student ratios, and so on. Regarding this, TCU-2 said:

> From these standards, many universities found themselves missing lots of things when levelled against them. They had to do lots of things to improve according to the standards. I would say that they simplified and facilitated the task of overseeing universities in the provision of quality education. They also simplified the designing of university-based quality assurance mechanisms.

The claims above suggest that Agency officials were aware that the relevance of the standards was primarily based on a framework of ideas and normative issues necessary for ideal university education, hence limited in terms of capability for bringing change in financially constrained universities. Therefore, despite the standards being appealing to Agency officials and universities, they could still be perceived as irrelevant to some universities because they could not be separated from substantial investment in physical and human resources. That is, universities would have had, in aggregate, to spend much money on teaching and learning facilities, on infrastructure and on recruiting new academics or investing in further training and education in order to meet the standards. However, Agency officials considerately prioritised the functions of the standards above the financial implications for young universities, taking the view that financial constraints should not be allowed to undermine what universities are intrinsically meant to provide, namely quality education. Therefore, allowing standards to be marginalised for financial reasons would mean neglecting the basic right to provision of quality education that all universities subscribe to. TCU-3 said:

> Young universities… may find the standards to be mmmhhh, this is too much. This is because they usually don't have enough fund at the beginning while they have lots of

things to do. This makes them see our standards as too demanding. But the standards and costs associated with them are part and parcel of quality university education.

6.1.3 The compatibility of the standards – Agency officials

The literature review indicated that behaviour of universities could be influenced in three ways: academic oligarchy (professional self-regulation that includes autonomy), state regulation and market forces. Moreover, the dominance of one may affect the performance of others. It follows that, in addition to examining the encapsulation of global and local concepts in the standards, and the actual relevance of the standards in the post-1995 universities, this section examines the compatibility of the standards in term of their ability to work harmoniously with the key university values of autonomy and creativity.

The perceptions of Agency officials on the compatibility of the standards were based on demarcation of the functions of the standards from the risk of clashing with university autonomy. That is, there was a clear line between the functioning of national standards in ensuring that the sector achieved the broader goal of providing internationally comparable quality education and academic oligarchy in universities.

Consequently, for Agency officials, university autonomy was not synonymous with having an unregulated university education system. In other words, regulating the university education system was not tantamount to depriving universities of autonomy. On the contrary, the view was that an unregulated and unguided system was unhealthy, particularly for young universities compared to the established ones that were able professionally to optimise their academic oligarchy and exercise financial autonomy to ensure quality education was provided. This means, older universities had gained trust that translated into more students and more income. This is because more financial autonomy provided them with greater ability to accommodate proposed changes more easily. For example; spending more on resources than younger universities that tend to have fewer students and consequently less financial autonomy. Therefore, one of the advantages of national standards was the creation of an equal platform for quality judgements in the sector, overcoming the shortcomings of the university-based systems that historically and economically tended to favour older universities. The standards shifted the judgement criteria from being subjective to being more objective for both universities and stakeholders. The assumption was that, universities operating in standardised and institutionalised environment are generally more likely to survive. Therefore, if young

universities incorporated the standards, they would have become more legitimate, successful and likely to survive. Highlighting this idea, TCU-1 said:

> They are still autonomous institutions. What is important is, unlike before where each university had its own Act, now they are all regulated under one common law. They objectively know what is needed. In fact, it has really helped to get rid of gods, as it was before when they operated using their own Acts. Young universities should be grateful for this instead. They now know all the secrets to good reputation and quality education.

The standards were deliberately designed to be minimum standards in order to work in harmony with the universities' missions and visions that together aim to achieve the goal of providing quality education. The essential point in making the standards minimum was to ensure they neither suppressed nor deprived universities of their autonomy. The Agency officials viewed the standards as providing an essential but undemanding clear yardstick as to what universities must do in order to provide internationally comparable education, continue to exist in the sector and fulfil their visions and missions. TCU-3 said:

> The country must have the means to ensure quality in university education. If universities were left to do whatever they think, many would actually fail and a few would make it. But if you have baseline model to guide them, it makes a difference from the same starting point. I mean they start the race together but others may go further a mile, depending on their capabilities.

Another aspect of the compatibility of the standards was their impact on innovation and creativity in universities. Agency officials were of the view that the standards did not limit or affect the ability of universities to be creative. Instead, they believed that implementation of the standards required little or no creativity on the part of universities. This means that, for Agency officials, compliance with the standards was marginally associated or inversely related with creativity in universities. That is, the more creative and innovative universities were, the fewer difficulties would be encountered in complying with the standards. This also meant that, if universities failed to comply with the standards, then they perceived the problem not to be in the standards per se but that the universities were not functioning with the expected minimum amount of creativity and innovation. Highlighting this idea, TCU-0 said:

> The standards are minimum. I don't see why they should limit innovation and creativity in universities. By the way, universities are think tanks organisations. The government cannot think on their behalf every time it sets minimum regulations like these or get too much worried about their failure to comply with them.

Some Agency officials were of the view that creativity was not affected by lack of compatibility of the standards but rather by the negative attitudes of university leaders. One of the attitudes was the perception of leaders of young universities that the standards were suppressing their creativity because they seemed unachievable. Such perceptions made them expend less effort to comply with the standards or use their mediatory power in the direction of ignoring rather than adopting the standards.

Another way creativity could be affected was if university leaders took the view that compliance with the standards was a goal in its own right. Agency officials were of the view that, since the standards were only minimum, even full compliance did not demand innovation or creativity. It was thus possible that the standards could turn out to be a threat to creativity and innovation, if some universities took compliance with the standards as being sufficiently creative and innovative. The above claims is highlighted by TCU-3's comment:

> It depends on the understanding of the university leadership on the standards. If universities leaders have negative attitudes towards standards or just comply with the standards and relax and call for celebrations, don't expect creativity. It is true that the standards could be their boundary to thinking or encourage universities to be even more creative and innovative.

6.2 Relevance of the standards – University officials

So far, the findings on relevance and compatibility of the standards has been presented from the perspective of Agency officials. Regarding the relevance of the standards from the perspective of university officials, the findings indicated a congruence among Agency and university officials. For example, like Agency officials, university officials appreciated the standards as a framework of thought for achieving a model university. That is, the standards were relevant in terms of explaining the ideal environment through which internationally comparable university education could be provided across the country. Several reasons relating to this view were provided.

One reason that made some university officials perceive the standards as normative was the appreciation of the theoretical rather than practical function of the standards in facilitating the attainment of what the nation's university sector should ideally be. This was also in comparison with other successful systems across the world. U1-2 said:

> I would say that the standards are helpful in attaining the ideas of things that universities should do. They articulate the baseline model of a university.

The second way in which the standards were relevant was by facilitating the standardisation of the environment for provision of quality education. This included the elimination of confusion and mixed interpretations on various issues such as qualifications of academics, teacher–student ratios, the environment or facilities for provision of different courses, quality of graduates, the expected minimum skills for graduates of different programmes, and others. U1-1 said:

> The presence of these standards links universities across the sector at least with criteria that should be common across universities. If the standards were not there, there were to be lots of things of any nature; a fragmented higher education system.

This was also found to be linked with the idea of standards being relevant in terms of simplifying the operation of existed and newly established universities. This was the advantage over the previous system in which universities had to discover good practice either heuristically on their own or by learning from other particular universities (as their models) from within or outside the country. Therefore, the standards were relevant in terms of providing a clear frame of reference through which universities became aware of what they ought to do, in order to get to where they ought to be. U2-1 said:

> The standards have simplified the operation of existing universities and even the establishment of new universities. They clearly explain things that even some established universities are still missing.

The third way in which the standards were relevant relates to protecting universities from dying, particularly the young ones. University officials were of the view that, if young universities operated without such a framework in country, they were likely to die. This is because they would be wandering aimlessly and even operating below par without their knowledge. Furthermore, such kind of operation leads to a lack of public trust and confidence in young universities. In the absence of national standards, the public would tend to heuristically think that older and more established universities are relatively safer than the new ones. Highlighting this, U4-2 said:

> There are two ways of killing a university. One is to let a university operate below standards unknowingly until it dies. The other one is to have regulations that when they fail to comply with and the public knows. Therefore, the standards are rescuing, if not to warning us, from the consequences of operating in their absence or below them.

The fourth way in which the standards were considered relevant was that they embedded the necessary criteria for international comparability in the provision of university education in a conducive environment. The inclusion of internationally relevant criteria enhances the hope that, if the standards are faithfully complied with, universities (including young ones) would progressively be able to join the international academic community in future. Highlighting this, U4-2 said:

> Leaders have agreed to have an EAC with free labour movements. That means, a person could study and work anywhere within the EAC without any problems. Moreover, university education is global. Therefore, it is through those standards and their compliance with, we may gain respect from international academic community.

As highlighted before, the views on the relevance of the standards from the university staff were also based on the perspectives of standards as a framework of thought for achieving a model university.

However, unlike Agency officials, university staff went further and focused their assessment of the relevance of the standards in terms of either their capacity to bring changes in the operation of universities or the capacity of universities to comply with them. Three major concerns were expressed regarding the relevance of the standards from these perspectives.

The first concern relates to finance. By comparing the financial capability of new universities to what the standards were suggesting as an appropriate level of investment to meet the necessary conditions for provision of quality education, university staff viewed the standards to be less relevant to young universities. They were sceptical of the prospects for young universities, particularly non-government ones, to comply with the standards. U2-2 said:

> The struggle comes when it comes to facilities, particularly in young non-government universities. Meeting the standards for facilities at the moment is a challenge because they require huge capital.

Moreover, some university officials were of the view that, although the individual standards did not look intimidating, in aggregate they demanded many things that young universities would not be able to address in the short term. The view was that the need to comply fully with the standards in their entirety brought feelings of being overwhelmed and apathy that deterred young universities from genuine efforts to comply with the standards. The holistic approach to setting and implementing standards was therefore

criticised as being expensive. Instead, a gradual and controlled approach to change was recommended as being more viable in bringing real impact, because of its advantage in prioritising crucial factors for improving the quality of education, compared to the existing holistic approach. Moreover, there was a feeling that the holistic approach was doomed to fail because it appeared that young universities were increasingly losing interest in complying with the standards. This meant that the reflection of standards was continuing to diminish and the situation would persist largely unchanged until the standards culminated their journey towards irrelevance, producing no further impact unless other forces intervened. Highlighting this, U4-2 said:

> Actually, what is being done is changing everything in order to improve everything at the same time. When it fails, you don't have a clue what factors and to what extent contributed to failure because the changes were uncontrolled. It makes implementers tired before they start. Therefore, if you ask my opinion on the relevance of these standards on improving our university education, I would just advise to start all over again, but scientifically.

The second concern related to the reported severe dissonance in the relevance of standards in young universities for science-related programmes. First, there were science programmes that did not fit at all in the standards. Therefore, universities had to stop running or establishing them until they were capable of satisfying the standards relating to such programmes. For example, U1-1 said:

> For some programmes, the standards are relevant while to others are not. For example, programmes such as Bachelor of Science in Physics, we satisfy the standards guiding its offering, both practically and theoretically. But we also have programmes on shelves that we cannot offer due to inadequate facilities as stipulated by the Agency standards.

The above observation was also linked to the impact of the standards on the survival of young universities. The view was that the failure to establish some courses implied that fewer students would be admitted. This would in turn result in financial difficulties as fewer fees would be collected from fewer students in fewer programmes. The financial difficulties would then inhibit the ability of universities to comply with standards for other programmes offered. The ultimate end of the process would be the closure of young universities. Describing this, U3-2 said:

> The standards are irrelevant, and I think they are going to kill some young universities due to failure to comply with them, especially those focused on science and medicine. Where would they get money to run universities if they are not allowed to admit students?

The complaints about the irrelevance and incompatibility of the standards for science courses went further, regarding the standards relating to the promotion of academics. Generally, the standards required all academics to be promoted using, among other criteria, the publication of empirical articles in journals in their specific subject areas of teaching. This criterion was criticised as disadvantaging academics teaching science-related programmes such as natural sciences, medicine and engineering in comparison with those teaching social sciences, humanities and related subjects. The complaint was that academics from science disciplines were unable to publish pure scientific articles due to a shortage of laboratory facilities in which to conduct their research. Therefore, they were lagging behind in publishing and promotion. Moreover, when compelled to publish, it tended to be more theoretical papers in less reputable journals. Highlighting this, U3-1, who is also a lecturer on a science-related courses said:

> I am a science teacher. For me to publish, I have to do genuine science. I can't just write lots of words in a science paper. For example, if you would like to do experiments in molecular biology or bio chemistry, which are completely applied sciences, you would need many things. Despite the fact that we cannot publish easily as others, we get promoted using the same criteria.

Moreover, it was found that the incorporation of international standards for science courses accentuated the lack of relevance of the standards in young universities. Being internationally comparable, the environment for the provision of science courses was theoretically addressed. However, in practice, the gap was huge as young universities were unable to procure the necessary internationally comparable facilities for teaching science courses. The result of this, according to university staff, was that teaching predominantly focused on theory, with far less attention on practical science, producing graduates who were less competent in practical aspects of their subjects. U3-1 said:

> The standards seem to consider relevant features for international contexts. But many universities have not achieved the standards, particularly for science courses. We might be equal in terms of theories, but we are still very far behind in terms of practical. But, you have to remember that theories are fed and complemented by practical. This means that even theory won't be internationally comparable.

The next observation on the relevance of standards for science courses was on the teacher–student ratio. University staff were of the view that the required lecturer–student ratios were unrealistic due to a worse shortage of science teachers than in other disciplines. Moreover, in their view it was less easy to address shortages of university science teachers

than shortages in other disciplines. Reasons given included: the time taken to train a science university teacher; fewer students taking science courses in lower levels of education reducing the supply at higher levels; those who were trained well in science avoid teaching at universities and pursue other careers; and the qualifications set for recruitment of science academics being difficult to attain. As a consequence, many young universities tend to have a shortage of science teachers and hence fail to meet the standards, including those related to teacher–student ratios. For example, addressing the impact of the shortage of science teachers, U3-1 who is also a science teacher at University-3, said:

> due to the shortage of teachers, we have not been able to separate some courses for specific groups of students. For example, I teach biochemistry and parasitology. Ideally, I should have separate classes for nurses, for labs, for medicals and for pharmacy. But this is impossible for me to do because we don't have enough teachers and spaces. Therefore, we assemble them together, so it is a bit difficult to be interactive.

The third concern as to the relevance of the standards is associated with the history or the development phase of university education in the country. First is the change of government ideology from socialism or centrally planned economy that restricted the participation of private sector in the provision of social services, including university education, to a mixed economy that encourages the participation of the private sector. This change made some university staff feel that the standards were irrelevant to young universities, because the decision to involve the private sector in the provision of university education was partly due to the failure of the state-owned system to address the increased demand for university education. Therefore, the sector was still in an expansionary phase as many universities were being established, and more students were being admitted to universities set up under the previous system and to new universities. According to some university staff, this massification of new universities (private and public) and increased enrolment of students in a developing country is sufficient to explain the irreversible deviation in teaching and learning conditions from the standards. Although the public universities continue to be mainly funded by government, demand is still higher, as they charge lower fees than non-government universities. In other words, some university officials held the view that managing quality at this stage in a developing country is inescapably challenging. Highlighting this, U1-3 said:

> We are reaping from history. As a country, are in the phase of quantity education. The priority for now is to have more universities and more students attending universities.

> Under normal circumstances, for developing countries, if quantity is the priority, quality would definitely suffer.

A linked reason to the above relates to the way universities were being established during the expansionary phase. Findings indicated that, between the change of the political ideology to 2012 when the standards were released, there were no clear regulations on how universities were to be established. This caused some universities to be established below standard or with poor conditions (knowingly or unknowingly). Therefore, the standards clashed with both the effects of mass higher education and the conditions under which many universities had been established. Hence, requiring universities to provide education concomitantly with the standards accentuated the feeling that post-1995 universities would incur huge investment costs. Therefore, from this perspective, some post-1995 universities perceived the standards to be irrelevant because of the poor conditions under which they were established in the first-place signposted compliance struggles. U3-1 said:

> You can imagine that, despite the existence of these standards, there are universities where people are still pointing fingers at them, don't go to that university! So, although some universities would love to make improvements, but because of the conditions they were established in the first place, the trend does not guarantee that they will make it.

6.2.1 Compatibility of the standards

Like Agency officials, another focus of compatibility of the standards for university officials was how the standards were able to work without clashing with university values of autonomy and creativity. That is, to understand whether universities had reasonable scope, freedom and flexibility to make complex decisions and be creative in their operations.

Starting with the compatibility of the standards with university autonomy, there were various concerns on how the standards affected the decision-making process in universities for matters that university officials considered needed less intervention from government.

First, the standards for employment of academics, especially in science disciplines, were criticised as unrealistic and hence stifling the freedom to employ. They were unrealistic because, given the shortage of potential science academics, the standards were too restrictive. This compelled some universities to contravene standards when recruiting science academics. U3-1 said:

> If you hold onto them, you may find yourself not having teachers. Because, the problem is neither a university nor standards but availability of science teachers on its own. Many people with good GPAs in science courses don't turn out to be lecturers and those who apply for a job do not meet the prescribed qualifications. What do you do?

However, the above claim was criticised by other university staff, who viewed that the employment standards did not negatively affect universities' autonomy to recruit. Instead, the issue could partly be explained by the influence of supply and demand. That is, the standards were compelling universities to return to recommended teacher–student ratios, which they had already tampered with in the prevailing climate of unacceptable teacher–student ratios. Therefore, it was difficult for young universities to rectify the situation in short run. This explains why the standards were viewed as incompatible with the autonomy to employ. Highlighting this situation, U4-2 said:

> It is not true that the standards invaded the academic independence of universities. What the standards say is, a tutorial assistant should not lecture, or one lecturer should teach a particular number of students. Are these bad ideas? No! They are quite fair. The main problem is, universities and students keep increasing with total disregard for the availability of sufficient competent staffing and facilities.

Regarding the compatibility of the standards with creativity in universities, some university staff were found to share the views expressed by Agency officials regarding the attitudes of universities leaders toward the standards in explaining the impact of standards on creativity in universities. That is, some staff perceived the standards to be affecting creativity in universities because they equated 'standards' with 'standardisation'. Creativity would be discouraged because some universities considered there to be no point competing and building brands and reputations if the end result was to be equal. Therefore, they argued that it was in the absence of standards that universities could have been creative and would have automatically encompassed compliance, and even surpassed the levels required by the standards. For example, U2-2 said:

> Of course, the standards affect creativity and innovation in universities. It is like saying, all primary school pupils should wear uniforms. By doing that, you are no longer challenging parents to buy more clothes for their children. It simply means no more extra efforts needed above minimum.

However, some university staff had less strong views on the effects of the standards on creativity in universities. Two factors were mentioned in relation to the impact of standards on creativity: the financial capacity of universities and the perspectives of university

leaders on standards. That is, if a university has good financial capability and positive management, it was possible to view standards as minimum, and see compliance as helpful in improving their reputation and brand in the sector. On the other hand, for financially constrained universities, university leaders were likely to find the standards to be too demanding and hence would need creativity to comply with them. Highlighting this, U3-1 said:

> They are very tricky on how they influence universities in making decisions. Being minimum they may pose challenges to some financially constrained universities and at the same time stimulate some well-established universities to use the standards to seek reputations more than other universities.

Summarising the findings on relevance, it was found that, despite the re-benchmarking of standards that were being used in other African contexts, both Agency and university staff acknowledged that the relevance of the standards was mainly limited to being a framework of thought for achieving a model university in the country. Financial constraints and the phase at which university education was in the country made standards less relevant in bringing intended changes, especially in post-1995 universities.

Regarding the compatibility of the standards with university values of autonomy and creativity, there was a divergence of views between Agency officials and university staff. Agency officials held that these values were not compromised but instead were supported and guaranteed in a more secure environment, whereas universities complained that the effects of the national standards did impinge in some respects on these values.

Overall, the incongruence in perspectives between Agency officials and university staff could be summarised as follows. Due to the lack of trust on the part of government about the ability of institution-based mechanisms to bring about the desired results (enhancing the context for providing university education), it wanted the governance of universities in the country to take a dual approach. First, both private- and government-owned universities were to be subject to defined standards. Second, in recognition of the inherent values of universities by the Agency, universities were granted the right to exercise their autonomy with one prerequisite: compliance with the minimum standards. Therefore, while for Agency officials the prerequisite for exercising university autonomy was compliance with the standards, this was not the case for universities. Universities, because of various factors such as financial resources and the historical phase of nation's university education, were

reluctant blindly to have their right to autonomy be contingent upon compliance with the standards.

Chapter 7 The reflection of standards from the milieu

This chapter presents findings for Research Question 3; the extent to which the milieu for the provision of education in the post-1995 universities reflects the minimum standards guiding them. The reflection is based on the experiences of the respondents to various aspects of the teaching and learning milieu in universities. The presentation is therefore organised according to categories of respondents: Agency officials, university respondents, academics and students.

7.1 Findings on the reflection of standards: Agency officials

Agency officials were not satisfied with the extent to which the contexts within which education was being provided reflected the standards guiding them. They seemed to be convinced that universities did not significantly enhance the teaching and learning environment for academics and students to meet the threshold standards. Furthermore, they were convinced that the working and teaching environment for academics lagged even further behind the standards than those for students, suggesting that students' learning milieu was being given priority and that, therefore, their learning environment and experience in academe mattered more than the working environment and experience of academics. Universities were perceived by Agency officials to be more responsive to factors that could cause adverse experiences for students, and therefore affect admission, than retaining academics. That is, universities perceived it to be relatively easy to replace academics, to make them improvise or persevere working in a relatively poor environment. These things were less easy to do for students, so for this reason the universities were perceived to be expending more effort in improving students' learning milieu and experiences in the academe and neglecting the academics. TCU-2 said:

> They are not impacting teachers. There is a trend of putting more focus on students than on teachers. Teachers are not considered to be very important as they may be easily replaced or could persevere working in shared offices, shared printers, and so on. If there are no office computers they can use their own. Life goes on, as long as they do their jobs.

Slight improvements were noted by Agency officials regarding the reflection of standards for qualifications of academics. Before the introduction of the standards, there was a tendency for academics to teach students at levels at which they were not qualified to

teach. As a result of the standards, academics had started teaching classes/levels at which they surpassed by at least one level of education, with the exception of PhD holders teaching PhD classes. TCU-1 said:

> Previously, especially in new universities, you would find a Bachelor's degree holder teaching undergraduate students. But now they know that in addition to employing academics who have at least a GPA of 3.5 and above in their Bachelor's degrees, academics must have at least a postgraduate degree to teach an undergraduate class. To teach Master's, they must be a PhD holder and above.

7.2 Findings on the reflection of standards: University officials

From the perspective of university officials, the reflection of standards through the conditions of the academics' and students' teaching and learning milieu are presented in two parts. First comes the reflection of the standards in student populations and in teacher–student ratios. Second comes the reflection of the standards in the teaching and learning milieu, for both academics and students.

7.2.1 Reflection of standards in student populations and teacher–student ratios

The reflection of standards in student populations and teacher–student ratios was examined by comparison with the national standards that guide student populations and their ratios with academics in universities. For clarification, the national standards for student populations and their ratios with academics are rated at four levels: ideal; good; acceptable; and unacceptable. The findings were converted and reported to match the five levels of policy success continuum (success, resilient success, conflicted success, precarious success and failure) of the conceptual framework for this study. That is, ideal would be regarded as success level, good as resilient success level, acceptable as conflicted success level and, depending on the figure, unacceptable would either be precarious or failure/success level. Further information explaining the features that constitute each level of success has been described in section 3.2.2.2 on the Fivefold levels of policy success continuum of the conceptual framework for the study.

7.2.1.1 University 1

For a university to be operating at the ideal level, the lowest number (population) of full-time academics should be as follows. PhD holders should not be less than 10, Master's degree holders should not be less than 10 and Bachelor's degree holders should not be less

than 20. According to U1-3, University 1 has approximately 700 academic staff, ranging from PhD to Bachelor's degree holders. Consequently, the university is operating at the ideal level in terms of its academic population. This suggests that the university has been successful in reflecting the standards in terms of number of academics.

However, according to U1-3, University 1 has approximately 25,000 students. This means that the general average teacher–student ratio at this university, regardless of programmes, is around 1:35 (equivalent to 700:25000). Comparing this ratio to the prescribed Agency discipline-specific ratios, as indicated in Table **7.1**, the findings suggest that University 1 is operating at an acceptable level for social sciences programmes. Converting this into success levels of the conceptual framework, it falls within the conflicted success level, indicating the existence of substantial controversy, considerable target shortfall and partial achievement in terms of how the ratios reflect the standards guiding them.

However, the university has unacceptable teacher–student ratios for science, health science and engineering-related programmes, suggesting that the standards have been reflected at the failure level, indicating non-existent support from implementers with regard to standards at University 1. However, these are generic observations. Data for academics and students for each discipline might result in more accurate conclusions, programme-wise.

In addition to the findings above, the interviews with the quality assurance coordinators for the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences, and the College of Informatics and Virtual Education provided further information on teacher–student ratios, specific to these colleges.

According to U1-1, from the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences, the college has 2,937 undergraduate and 20 postgraduate students. The college has three schools: Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences and Mathematical Sciences. The students are divided into these three schools and the majority of them are male. The college has 105 academics across the three schools; most of them are on duty and some are on study leave. Specifically, there are two native professors, four expatriate professors, a few senior lecturers and lecturers, and the majority of assistant lecturers with Master's degrees.

From the above numbers of academics and students, the teacher–student ratio is around 1:28. Therefore, as a natural science college, it is operating at an unacceptable level when measured against the Agency's standards for natural sciences teacher–student ratios (Table **7.1**). This suggests that the standards achieved their goals at the failure level, indicating

non-existent support from implementers with regard to complying with standards for teacher–student ratios for natural sciences at college level.

According to U1-2 from the College of Informatics and Virtual Education, the college has approximately 100 academics: one professor, two associate professors, no senior lecturers, several lecturers, many assistant lecturers and a few tutorial assistants. Approximately 70 to 80 academics are on duty while the remainder are on study leave. The college has approximately 1,000 students on both undergraduate and postgraduate studies, the majority being undergraduates.

As the teacher–student ratio (taken as 80/1,000) is around 1:13, this college is operating at a good level as per Agency's standards for technology programmes. This also indicates that the standards achieved their intended goals at the resilient level, indicating that the goal was achieved in broad terms notwithstanding minimal resistance, small modifications and setbacks.

Regarding student populations, for a university to operate at an ideal level the total number of students should not be less than 10,000. As University 1 has around 25,000 conventional programme students, it is operating at ideal level. This means that the standards achieved the goal at the success level, which further suggests that the standards gained legitimacy and good support from implementers in terms of student population at this university.

7.2.1.2 University 2

University 2 had 7,062 undergraduate students (4,392 males and 2,670 females). Total numbers of academics were 342 (224 male and 118 female). Within these, there were more than 10 PhD holders, 10 Master's degree holders and 20 Bachelor's degree holders. This implies that the university was operating at the ideal level in terms of the academic population and their qualifications. Therefore, the standards achieved their goal at the success level in terms of the academic population.

From the population figures for academics and students, the general teacher–student ratio for University 2 is around 1:20. Comparing this ratio with Agency standards, the university was operating at good level for social sciences programmes and at an acceptable level for natural sciences, health sciences and engineering-related courses. This suggests that the standards were reflected at the resilient level for social sciences. That is, resistance and modifications were minimal and confined to a few issues, while overall support was high. However, for natural sciences, health sciences and engineering-related programmes, the

standards were reflected at the conflicted level. Despite the goal being achieved partially or in some respects, the implementation was characterised by substantial controversy, considerable target shortfalls and communication failure.

As the population of students at this university is 7,062, it follows that the university operates at a good level. That is, the student population was at the resilient success level, indicating that the standards were reflected in broad terms, notwithstanding minimal resistances, small modifications and setbacks.

7.2.1.3 University 3

University 3 specialises in offering health-related courses and has approximately 2,500 undergraduate students and 122 academic staff; some of them working for the university hospital as well. This means that the general teacher–student ratio for this university is 1:20. Both the teacher–student ratio and total student population imply that the university is operating at an acceptable level against the Agency's prescribed standards for the two criteria (university population and teacher–student ratio for health sciences). These results indicate that the standards are reflected at a conflicted success level; that is, there was substantial controversy, considerable target shortfall, resource shortfall and the standards were only partially achieved.

7.2.1.4 University 4

University 4 has 3,003 students and 111 academics, giving a teacher–student ratio of 1:27, when the number of postgraduate students is ignored. The number of postgraduates was ignored in the ratio because the information was not available. However, it was assumed that its size was insignificant in terms of effect on the overall ratio. For example, to increase or to decrease the total ratio by one, that is, to arrive at 1:28 or 1:26, there would need to be an increase or decrease of at least 111 students. This marginal increase or decrease, if restricted to postgraduate students, is assumed substantial for such a university.

Therefore, programme-wise, the ratio of 1:27 implies that the university was operating at a good level for social sciences and at an acceptable level for science programmes. For health sciences and engineering programmes, the university was operating at an unacceptable level. Regarding the conceptual framework success continuum, the results suggest that, for social sciences, the standards were reflected at the resilient level, meaning that they were achieved in broad terms and with minimal resistance. For science programmes, they were reflected at the conflicted success level, implying the existence of

substantial controversy and that the standards were only partially achieved. For health sciences and engineering, the standards were reflected at the failure level, indicating that the implementation was characterised by non-existent support from implementers and perhaps great opposition.

Table 7.1 Standards for student population and teacher–student ratios by discipline

Population and courses		Ideal	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Students population		10000	5000	2000	<2000
Ratios by discipline	Arts, social sciences and humanities	1:18	1:30	1:40	>1:40
	Science and Technology	1:10	1:15	1:20	>1:20
	Health science	1:8	1:15	1:25	>1:25
	Engineering	1:8	1:15	1:25	>1:25

Source: Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU).

7.2.2 Reflection of standards for academic and student milieu– University officials.

Findings from officials at University 1 indicated that the standards were reflected at varying levels in different areas. The university was doing well in terms of availability of facilities and infrastructure for teaching and learning such as classes, laboratories, libraries and offices for academics and for auxiliary facilities such as toilets, cafeterias and libraries. Both teaching and auxiliary teaching facilities were said to be reasonable in terms of accommodating an optimum number of students across the university. U1-1 said:

> If I look at the environment where students are studying and lecturers' offices, and other facilities, I could say they are good and adequate. We don't have shortages on these.

Specifically concerning student accommodation, as part of the auxiliary facilities of the student learning environment, and taking into account the fact that the university is located on the outskirts of town, it was found that the university had adequate halls of residence on campus to accommodate all students admitted. U1-1 said:

> We are able to accommodate all students in good environment. Students may decide to live outside university accommodation for personal reasons, not because of shortage or poor environment in hostels.

However, due to the large number of students, the university was found to be struggling in terms of having sufficient teaching and learning facilities for some of the courses offered.

There were shortages of chemicals, laboratory apparatus, computers, books and other teaching and learning materials. The university further suffered from a shortage of academic staff, particularly senior staff. Regarding this, U1-1 from College of Natural Science and Mathematics said:

> We still have a shortage of teachers. The teachers we have are enough for teaching theory but for lab experiments is a problem. We also don't have enough teaching and learning facilities, especially for laboratories.

Responding in the same vein, U1-2 from the College of Informatics and Virtual Education said:

> The main shortage is that of senior academic staff…. When we started, we had no professors at all. Now we have three. We also still have shortage of facilities for teaching our programmes; computers, antiviruses, reliable internet and other electronic equipment.

Responses from officials at University 2 indicated that the standards were reflected to a moderate level for buildings, teaching and learning facilities, the availability of academics and accommodation for students. The university officials seemed to be aware of and keenly paying attention to what the standards required of them. Therefore, there was a deliberate effort to improve both quality and quantity of physical and human resources for threefold objectives. Specifically, to ensure that the university: complied with the standards, used the standards to climb the accreditation ladder and, importantly, enhanced the experience of both students and academics in academe. Reflecting this, U2-1 said:

> We have done well in teaching and learning facilities. We have adequate books and journals, including electronic ones, and we have wireless internet across the university. For science courses, we have a small laboratory, but we are building a big one. For buildings, we have enough classes, although not all have projectors. We have a satisfactory number of teachers and all have offices, despite being normal offices.

Although University 3 had the smallest numbers of students (2,500) and academics (122) of the participating universities, the available physical resources and environment were found to be insufficient to address the needs of students and academics. With regard to infrastructure such as buildings necessary for teaching and learning activities, the situation was complex to judge. This is because some buildings were still owned by the hospital, there were still ongoing projects such as the building of a library to accommodate around 800 students, and the construction of additional lecture theatres, each with the capacity to accommodate up to 450 students. Comparing the teaching and learning facilities with the

standards for health and allied science courses, there seemed a shortage of both laboratories and facilities for experiments and research for both students and academics. Moreover, in the working environment for academics, there were shortages of offices, hence many had to share one an. The auxiliary services, especially toilets for students and academics, were rated from normal to dilapidated. Reflecting this, U3-1 said:

> For staff, the environment is not pleasing. I fail to do lots of things because of lack of facilities. There are offices but they are inadequate. Some toilets are good, especially those used by the university management and administration block. Others are either normal or in bad condition.

Responding in a similar vein, regarding laboratory facilities and number of academics in relation to students, U3-2 commented:

> Facilities for science is indeed a disaster. Their availability is tantamount to unavailability. This is because we have so many students per class, around 450. But we have few laboratory facilities that can accommodate approximately 30 students each. Therefore, for 450 students, we find ourselves having lots of rounds, as teachers are few.

Regarding accommodation as part of auxiliary services to the learning environment for students, it was found that less than a quarter of all admitted students were being accommodated in university-owned halls, compelling the majority to find accommodation in private hostels or to rent rooms in the streets, some located distant from the university. U3-1 said:

> Many students are not accommodated in the university hostels due to shortage of rooms. The university halls can only accommodate up to 500 students.

At University 4, it was found that the university had made some improvements to the working environment for academics. Academics had spacious offices with university computers that were connected to university-based internet. Although the offices were spacious, they were shared by more than one person per office. Nevertheless, university officials were comfortable with this and were convinced that the number of academics sharing one office did not affect their performance. U4-1 said:

> Each teacher has an office with office computers connected to the internet. If a teacher is using his/her computer, then it is their preferences but not because of shortage of university computers. Each office has no more than three teachers. But our plan is to get to one teacher one office.

However, it was found that the standards were not significantly reflected in terms of the general experience of students at the university in relation to the teaching and learning milieu. For example, teaching and learning materials such as writing boards were reported to be out of order. This affected teaching and learning of courses that needed clarification through writing and hence compelled an overuse of PowerPoint. Moreover, the use of PowerPoint was not reliable, due to an unreliable electricity supply, resulting in frequent postponement of lectures. Reflecting this, U4-1 said:

> The white boards are now very dirty. So, teaching courses such mathematics, statistics, and accounting is really challenging because teachers are forced to use projectors only; which is also not reliable due to power.

For auxiliary services, it was found that the university had an acute shortage of toilets for both students and academics due to poor maintenance, and most of those that were in use were in a poor condition. Regarding poor toilets, U4-1 said:

> We have a toilet issue that poses challenges to both students and teachers. The sewerage system needs maintenance. There is no timely maintenance of defective toilets. If a toilet gets broken, it would be closed, until they are all closed. Sometimes the smell is too much. I have personally relocated students who were doing examinations in a smelly environment. And sometimes there is no water in toilets.

It was also found that the standards had no significant impact on the professional development of staff. Academics at this university were not publishing, therefore most of them remained stagnant at the academic level that they had been employed on. In relation to this, it was also reported that there was no time limit for academics to remain serving at the same rank, especially for junior academics such as those with Master's degrees. Regarding this, U4-1 said:

> I have been in this office since year 2011 and I have only seen not more than five promotions on the basis or criterion of research and publications. Most promotions are based on education. The problem is, there is no limit of being an assistant lecturer at this University. We have assistant lecturers since year 2007 when the university was established.

Generally, the findings from Agency and university officials were diverse on the reflection of the learning milieu to the standards on the: student populations and their ratios to academics; working environment for academics and their qualifications; teaching and learning experience of both academics and students; and experiences of academics and

students in relation to auxiliary services. Some universities were found to be doing well in certain areas but not in others. However, the universities shared the challenge of a shortage of both teaching and learning facilities and academic staff. This seemed to be caused by either the disproportionate number of students admitted, or financial constraints where the numbers of students admitted were reasonable.

7.3 Reflection of standards for academics' working and teaching milieu: Academics

The reflection of standards for the academic working and teaching milieu from the views expressed by academic staff are presented in five groups or constructs. Each consists of items measuring the perspectives and experiences of academics on one broad issue. The five broad issues are: demographics of academics; working milieu; teaching and learning milieu; auxiliaries to teaching and learning milieu; and cross-cutting issues.

The analysis of the reflection of standards in relation to the demographics of academics examined academic employment criteria – especially the universities where they completed their Bachelor's degrees, age, levels of education, working experiences and the academic disciplines that they belonged to.

Analysis of the reflection of standards in relation to the working milieu for academics involved the perspectives and experiences of academics on: office allocation, office sharing, allocation of university computers in the offices, access to internet and class sizes.

Analysis of the reflection of standards in relation to the teaching and learning milieu included the perspectives and experiences of academics on: teaching load, adequacy of teaching and learning facilities, adequacy of laboratory facilities, whether the quality of classes facilitated effective teaching and learning, adequacy of lecture theatres, whether the university had better facilities than where the academics did their Bachelor's degrees, whether the university was improving the teaching and learning facilities, and whether the academics were likely to choose the same university based on teaching and learning facilities.

Analysis of the reflection of standards in relation to the auxiliary teaching and learning milieu included the perspectives and experiences of academics on: access to printers, use of computers when teaching, use of projectors when teaching, availability of copies of

important books in library, and whether the facilities were user friendly for those with special needs.

The cross-cutting issues included one general item that examined whether academics perceived themselves as working at a modern university.

7.3.1 Reflection of standards from academics' demographics

The universities where academics completed their first degree may suggest various things. For example, recruiting universities may employ academics based on the perceived mastery of subject matter linked to the reputation of the university they graduated from. As part of understanding the employment behaviour of the post-1995 universities in Tanzania, analysis was undertaken to establish whether more academics were from post-1995 universities (trusted their own graduates), from local old universities (trusted old local universities) or graduates from universities outside the country, ranging from East Africa, Africa in general and outside Africa (trusted universities outside the country). It should be noted that although academics filled in the specific names of the universities where they completed their Bachelor's degrees, the data were re-coded into five main groups of universities: Local old; Local new; Within East Africa; Within Africa; and from outside Africa. However, where deemed important, the data were also examined with reference to the specific names of individual universities at which the respondents completed their Bachelor's degrees.

Cross-tabulation was undertaken, guided by the hypothesis that there is no variation across the post-1995 universities regarding the universities where academics completed their Bachelor's degrees. The results indicated variation across universities with a Pearson Chi square x^2 (12) = 59.08, P<.05 and Cramer's V= .312, P<.05 that indicate moderate variation. Cramer's V was used to check the strength of the variations instead of Phi because the table was larger than 2*2. However, 50% of the cells had expected counts of less than five. Although this did affect the validity of findings to some extent, the findings are still considered to have some validity, because they indicate both variations and the descriptive statistics in relation to the matter.

Therefore, from the results, there are variations in terms of behaviour of universities in employing academics based on the universities where they completed their Bachelor's degrees, suggesting that universities had varying levels of trust in the quality of graduates from different universities that, in turn, influenced their decision to employ graduates from

different universities as academics. As well as the existence of varying levels of trust in the quality of graduates, the findings indicated the existence of psychological contracts in relation to employment behaviours of universities. That is, universities preferred to employ academics who were either their own graduates or graduates from old government-owned universities.

Table 7.2 Universities that academics completed Bachelor's degrees, N = 202, 95 CI.

	Universities Bachelor's degrees were completed %					
University	Local old	Local new	East Africa	Africa	Outside Africa	Total
1	72.5	17.5	0.0	1.3	8.8	100
2	20.3	63.3	10.1	1.3	5.1	100
3	38.9	55.6	0.0	0.0	5.5	100
4	40.0	52.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	100
Proportion	45.05	43.07	3.9	1.0	6.9	100

Source: Field data

Table **7.2** shows that 72.5% of academics at University 1 completed their Bachelor's degree at the old universities of the country. Further analysis showed that, of those, 86.2% graduated from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), which is the oldest government-owned university, while 17.5% were from local new universities, whereas 42.86% of those were from University 1 itself. These findings suggest that University 1 preferred to employ graduates from UDSM, followed by its own graduates, and then those from outside Africa. Hence, the university first trusted graduates from old government universities, followed by its own graduates, then those from outside Africa.

For University 2, 63.3% of academics were graduates of local new universities. Further analysis indicated that, of those, 86% were from University 2 itself. Also, 20.25% of academics were graduates of old universities, within which 62.5% were from UDSM. These findings suggest that University 2 trusted its own graduates first, followed by graduates from old universities, from East African universities and those from outside Africa.

Findings for University 3 indicated that 55.56% were from local new and 38.89% were from local old. Further analysis indicated that, within the 55.56% from local new, 90% were from University 3 itself while within the 38.89% from local old, 71.43% were from Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS). These findings suggest that University 3, as a health and allied sciences university, trusted its own graduates first,

followed by the oldest government-owned university for health and allied sciences (MUHAS), followed by other universities from within and outside the country.

For University 4, it was found that 52% of academics were graduates of local new universities and 40% were from local old universities. Further analysis showed that, of the 52% from local new universities, 76.92% were from University 4 itself and, of the 40% from local old, 50% were from UDSM. These findings suggest that University 4 employed its own graduates first, followed by those from the oldest university (UDSM) and others.

The general observations from the findings are as follows. First, with the exception of University 1, most universities employed for the largest proportion academics its own graduates. This is an indication of the existence of a psychological contract (other factors being equal) and probably trust in the quality of their own products. The second largest proportion of academics across the universities had gained their Bachelor's degrees at old universities. This also suggests that the employing universities had trust and a psychological contract in respect of the quality of graduates from old government universities, which are assumed to have institutionalised solid standards and quality assurance mechanisms for the provision of quality education.

The next cross-tabulation analysis focused on the reflection of two demographic factors (age of academics and their educational qualifications) at the universities. The assumption behind the analysis was, the greater the numbers of younger but highly educated academics in the universities, the greater the likelihood of such universities having academics with qualifications, reflecting the standards in both the short and the long run, and vice versa.

The results were statistically significant with a Pearson Chi square x^2 (6) = 39.84, P<.05 and Cramer's V = .298, P<.05, suggesting small variations across universities in terms of educational qualifications of academics with respect to their age. Due to the small sample sizes for University 3 and University 4, there were some cells with less than five counts in each age cohort. However, the findings could still be considered valid as the aim was, in addition to examining the variations of academics by their age and education levels, to examine the composition of qualifications of academics at the universities.

Table 7.3 Academics' educational qualifications in the universities, *N*=222, 95% CI

Age of academics	Academics qualifications	Universities				Total
		1	2	3	4	
20-29	Less than Master's	17.9%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	46.4%
	Master	17.9%	28.6%	0.0%	7.1%	53.6%
	Proportion	35.7%	42.9%	14.3%	7.1%	100.0%
30-39	Less than Master's	5.3%	3.8%	3.8%	0.8%	13.6%
	Master	35.6%	28.8%	3.0%	10.6%	78.0%
	PhD and above	4.5%	1.5%	0.8%	1.5%	8.3%
	Proportion	45.5%	34.1%	7.6%	12.9%	100.0%
40-49	Less than Master's	0.0%	7.0%	4.7%	0.0%	11.6%
	Master	20.9%	32.6%	2.3%	7.0%	62.8%
	PhD and above	11.6%	14.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.6%
	Proportion	32.6%	53.5%	7.0%	7.0%	100.0%
50-59	Less than Master's	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	7.7%
	Master	7.7%	15.4%	0.0%	15.4%	38.5%
	PhD and above	0.0%	53.8%	0.0%	0.0%	53.8%
	Proportion	7.7%	69.2%	7.7%	15.4%	100.0%
60+	Master's	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%
	PhD and above	16.7%	33.3%	0.0%	16.7%	66.7%
	Proportion	16.7%	50.0%	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%
Total	Less than Master's	5.4%	5.4%	5.4%	0.5%	16.7%
	Master	27.9%	28.4%	2.3%	9.9%	68.5%
	PhD and above	5.4%	7.7%	0.5%	1.4%	14.9%
	Proportion	38.7%	41.4%	8.1%	11.7%	100.0%

Source: Field data

Starting with education levels, Table **7.3** indicates that the composition of academics at University 3 is different from the other three universities. While the other three universities shared a pattern of having a higher proportion of academics with a Master's degree (University 1: 27.9%, University 2: 28.4% and University 4: 9.9%), followed by academics with PhD and above (University 1: 5.4%, University 2: 7.7% and University 4: 1.4%), the converse was true for University 3. The greatest proportion of academics in University 3 have less than Master's qualification (5.4%) and also it also has the lowest proportion of academics with a PhD and higher qualification (0.5%).

Overall, the composition of academics in post-1995 universities is characterised by 68.5% of academics with a Master's degree. This is followed by 16.7% of academics with less than Master's degree, then 14.9% of academics with PhD education. Presuming the ideal qualification for a university teacher is a PhD, the findings suggest that universities are

relying on non-PhD academics, which may have adverse effects on research. This does not mean, however, that universities are operating with academic staff of lower levels of qualification than required by the standards.

Turning next to age, the results indicate that the participating universities had no academics with PhD qualifications within the first age cohort of 20–29. For age cohort 30–39, around 8.3% of academics had a PhD, while for age cohort 40–49 the figure was 25% and only from Universities 1 and 2. The findings generally indicate that the universities had academics with PhD in older age brackets, at a later stage of their career path. This suggests the possibility that a significant proportion of academics with PhDs might be nearing retirement age.

Working experience was cross-tabulated with levels of education of academics and universities to examine the length of working experience served in different ranks, with particular attention paid to non-PhD academics. The assumption is that, *ceteris paribus,* the shorter the working experience for non-PhD academics, the shorter the time to climb the academic ladder and the greater the likelihood for universities to have more PhD academics at a younger age, and vice versa. In addition to reflecting the standards, the prevalence of more PhDs indicates the growth of the sector in terms of responding to global forces such as competition, publications, modernisation and the ability of university to conduct research.

The findings were statistically significant, with an overall Pearson Chi Square X^2 (6) = 39.35, P<.05. The null hypothesis was that there is no variation in the length of working experience of academics at different education levels. The findings confirm the existence of variation in terms of working experience tenures that academics spend at different academic ranks or education levels at each university. As the table was larger than 2*2, Cramer' V was used to check the strength of the variation instead of Phi. An overall Cramer's V =.296, P<.05 was found, implying small variation across universities. Further findings are presented in Table **7.4** and for the sake of capturing descriptive statistics of the data, cells with expected count less than five counts were included and counted as valid data.

Table 7.4 Working experience for different qualifications. *N*= 224, 95% CI.

Working experience (years)	Academic qualifications	Universities				Total
		1	2	3	4	
0-2	Less than Master's	21.7%	13.0%	8.7%	0.0%	43.5%
	Master	26.1%	15.2%	2.2%	10.9%	54.3%
	PhD and above	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
	Proportion	47.8%	30.4%	10.9%	10.9%	100.0%
03-05	Less than Master's	1.3%	3.8%	10.1%	0.0%	15.2%
	Master	24.1%	41.8%	1.3%	8.9%	75.9%
	PhD and above	2.5%	5.1%	0.0%	1.3%	8.9%
	Proportion	27.8%	50.6%	11.4%	10.1%	100.0%
06-07	Less than Master's	1.9%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%	7.4%
	Master	37.0%	27.8%	3.7%	9.3%	77.8%
	PhD and above	3.7%	5.6%	1.9%	3.7%	14.8%
	Proportion	42.6%	37.0%	5.6%	14.8%	100.0%
08-10	Less than Master's	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
	Master	27.8%	19.4%	2.8%	16.7%	66.7%
	PhD and above	16.7%	13.9%	0.0%	0.0%	30.6%
	Proportion	44.4%	36.1%	2.8%	16.7%	100.0%
11+	Less than Master's	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%
	PhD and above	22.2%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	77.8%
	Proportion	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Proportion	Less than Master's	5.4%	5.4%	5.4%	0.4%	16.5%
	Master	27.7%	28.1%	2.2%	10.3%	68.3%
	PhD and above	5.4%	8.0%	0.4%	1.3%	15.2%
	Proportion	38.4%	41.5%	8.0%	12.1%	100.0%

Source: Field data

From Table **7.4** the following could be observed. First, universities had no tendency to employ new academics with PhD qualification, since it was only University 2 that had academics with a PhD (2.2%) within the working experience bracket of 0–2 years. Only 8.9% of academics across the universities and with up to five years of experience had a PhD. Therefore, the findings suggest that the standards did not significantly influence universities to employ new academics with PhDs, hence universities continued to rely on the traditional career approach of recruiting academics who get PhDs through in-service training.

Second, the findings indicate that the majority of non-PhD academics served in their positions for relatively long tenures. As can be observed in the table, for working experience of 0–2 years, there were 97.8% non-PhD academics; for 3–5 there are 91.1%

academics, for 6-–7 years there are 85.2% and for 8–10 years there are 69.5%. Again, due to the majority of non-PhD academics serving in their positions for relatively longer tenures, the succession opportunities for a PhD are limited. This situation indicates that the standards have had little influence on academics in pursuing PhDs in universities.

Lastly, the spread of academics within four broad disciplines (education/humanities/social science, business/economics/law, architecture/engineering/technology, health sciences and natural sciences) in the universities was examined to understand the extent to which each discipline was represented and tacitly informed the findings of this study. A cross-tabulation of university by academic discipline was performed. The hypothesis was that there is no variation in the spread of academics from different disciplines in universities. The results were statistically significant, with a Pearson Chi Square X^2 (15) = 227.01, P<.01 and a significant variation of academics representing the disciplines across universities by Cramer's V .583, P<.01. Some cells had less than five counts. However, for the sake of demographic characteristics over statistical variation, the findings were taken to be valid.

Table 7.5 Disciplines that academics belong to in universities *N*=223, 95% CI,

	Universities				
Academic discipline	1	2	3	4	Total
Education/Humanities/Social science	22.4%	18.4%	0.4%	6.3%	47.5%
Business/Economics/Law	1.8%	17.0%	0.0%	1.8%	20.6%
Architecture/Engineering/Technology	9.0%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%
Health sciences	0.0%	0.0%	7.6%	1.8%	9.4%
Natural sciences	4.5%	0.4%	0.0%	2.7%	7.6%
Others	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Proportion	37.7%	41.7%	8.1%	12.6%	100.0%

Source: Field data

From Table **7.5**, the findings indicate a considerable variability in the spread of academics by discipline across the universities. While some universities were well represented in particular disciplines, some were less well represented and others were completely unrepresented. It follows that findings related to extent to which the milieu reflects the standards related to education/humanities/social science disciplines are well represented by University 1, University 2 and University 4, as they are leading in terms of having the larger proportion of their academics in their discipline. For business/economics/laws disciplines, University 2 is leading by having the largest proportion (17%) of its academics

in the discipline, acting as a good representative of the reflection of standards in the discipline.

The architecture/engineering/technology disciplines are well represented by University 1 and University 2, while health and allied sciences-related courses are well represented by University 3 and University 4. Lastly, findings related to natural sciences are well represented by University 1 and University 4. However, it should be noted that, overall, Education/Humanities/Social science and Business/Economics/Law disciplines take a lead in the representation followed by business/economics and law, then architecture/ engineering/technology, followed by health and allied sciences, and finally natural sciences. Importantly, it should also be noted that the disciplines are only tacitly informing the findings. Most analysis is based on the reflection of the standards by universities as a whole rather than within particular academic disciplines.

7.3.2 The reflection of standards for academics' working environment

Measuring whether academics were working in milieu reflecting the standards, the following were found. Regarding office allocation, there was no variation by university as suggested by the Chi Square and Cramer's V in Table **7.6**. The lack of variation indicates a shared pattern of responses across universities, where the average proportion of academics that were allocated offices across universities was found to be 96%. These findings suggest that the standards were well reflected as the majority of academics across universities were allocated with offices for fulfilling their duties while at university.

However, results on the extent to which one office was shared by academics showed a small but statistically significant variation across universities. While 51% of academics at University 1 did not share offices with their colleagues, 50% and 57% of academics University 2 and University 4 respectively shared one office with up to two colleagues, 55% of academics at University 3 shared an office with up to four people.

These findings suggest that the standards were reflected differently across universities in terms of whether academics were working in conducive offices. That is, universities were at different stages of striving to achieve one academic per office. For example, while University 1 was striving for one academic one office, others were currently striving for two academics per office, for example University 2 and University 4. Others had further to go in reducing the ratio to no more than two academics per office; for example, University 3.

Table 7.6 Reflection of academics' working environment, 95% CI (modernisation)

Item	Universities					Chi Square	Cramer	
	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
Office ownership								
Yes	36.2%	39.7%	7.6%	12.5%	96.0%	(3) =1.406, .704	.079, 704	224
No	1.8%	1.8%	0.4%	0.0%	4.0%			
Proportion	37.9%	41.5%	8.0%	12.5%	100.0%			
Office sharing								
Alone	19.4%	9.7%	1.4%	0.9%	31.3%	(9) =47.817, .000	.271, .000	217
01-02	8.3%	20.7%	2.3%	7.4%	38.7%			
03-04	6.9%	6.9%	4.6%	4.6%	23.0%			
5 and above	2.8%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%			
Proportion	37.3%	41.5%	8.3%	12.9%	100.0%			
Institutional computer								
Yes	21.1%	13.8%	5.0%	8.7%	48.6%	(3) =17.336, .001	.282, .001	218
No	17.0%	28.0%	2.8%	3.7%	51.4%			
Proportion	38.1%	41.7%	7.8%	12.4%	100.0%			
Internet access								
Yes	28.8%	27.9%	6.8%	8.7%	72.1%	(3) =2.930, .402	.116, 402	219
No	9.1%	13.7%	1.4%	3.7%	27.9%			
Proportion	37.9%	41.6%	8.2%	12.3%	100.0%			
Class size								
0-15	2.8%	1.4%	0.0%	0.9%	5.0%	(12) =29.16, .004	.211, .004	218
16-30	0.9%	4.1%	1.4%	0.0%	6.4%			
31-45	0.5%	4.6%	0.5%	0.0%	5.5%			
46-60	2.8%	6.0%	2.3%	1.8%	12.8%			
Above 60	30.3%	25.7%	4.1%	10.1%	70.2%			
Proportion	37.2%	41.7%	8.3%	12.8%	100.0%			

Source: Field data

Regarding the allocation of university computers in academics' offices, the results were statistically significant with small variation across universities, as can be seen in Table **7.6**. The variation can be explained by University 2. That is, while in University 1, University 3 and University 4, more than half of academics were allocated university computers in their offices, that is 55.4%, 64.1% and 70.2% respectively, whereas only 31.1% of academics at University 2 had computers in their offices. These findings indicate varied reflection of the standards across universities in this matter: for University 1 at the conflicted success level; for University 2 at the precarious success level; for University 3 at the resilient success level; and for University 4 at the success level.

Considering the importance of the internet in universities, the extent to which the academics had access to internet (regardless as to whether personal or university computers were used) was examined. The results were not statistically significant, indicating no variation in terms of access to internet across universities. The universities shared a similar pattern indicated by 72.1% of academics across universities responding in the same direction, indicating that access to internet was good at the academe. University-wise, the results suggest that accessibility to internet services was at the success level at University 1, University 3 and University 4, and at the resilient success at University 2.

Finally, the reflection of the standards through teaching load for academics as indicated by class size was examined. The results were statistically significant when tested using the Pearson Chi Square, with a small variation as explained by Cramer's V. As can be seen in Table **7.6**, the variation can be explained by University 3. Unlike University 1 that has 81.5% of academics teaching classes with more than 60 students, University 2 with 61.6% and University 4 with 78.9%, University 3 was found to have fewer than half of its academics (49.4%) teaching classes with more than 60 students.

Moreover, an average of 70.2% of academics across the universities were teaching classes with more than 60 students. It should be noted that, according to the standards, the maximum class size is 40 students for social sciences and humanities, 20 for natural sciences and technology, and 25 for health and allied sciences, and for engineering. From the findings above, if the maximum number of students in classes were raised to 45, only 16.9% academics would be teaching such classes. Therefore, the gap between the ideal and reality is huge, suggesting that the reflection was falling far short of the intention.

7.3.3 Reflection of standards for academics' teaching and learning milieu

This section presents findings on the reflection of standards from the teaching and learning milieu through the experiences and perspectives of academics in the universities. It should be noted that the response categories for the items were reduced from five to three, for two reasons: to group together responses that carried similar ideas, and to reduce the impact of small sample size on the validity of findings by reducing the number of cells that would have an expected count of less than five.

Table 7.7 Academics' teaching environment 95% CI

Item	University 1	2	3	4	Total	Chi Square X^2, p	Cramer V, p	N
Teaching load is reasonable								
Disagree	18.5%	25.2%	5.4%	7.7%	56.8%	(6) =15.122, .019	.185, .019	222
I don't know	1.8%	5.9%	0.0%	0.9%	8.6%			
Agree	18.0%	9.9%	2.7%	4.1%	34.7%			
Proportion	38.3%	41.0%	8.1%	12.6%	100.0%			
Sufficient T/L facilities								
Disagree	10.3%	28.7%	4.9%	4.0%	48.0%	(6) =46.091, .000	.321, .000	223
I don't know	2.2%	4.9%	0.0%	0.9%	8.1%			
Agree	25.1%	8.1%	3.1%	7.6%	43.9%			
Proportion	37.7%	41.7%	8.1%	12.6%	100.0%			
Sufficient resources in laboratories								
Disagree	7.9%	18.2%	5.6%	3.7%	35.5%	(6) =26.369, .000	.248, .000	214
I don't know	10.3%	13.6%	0.0%	4.2%	28.0%			
Agree	19.2%	9.8%	2.8%	4.7%	36.4%			
Proportion	37.4%	41.6%	8.4%	12.6%	100.0%			
TL facilities in the classrooms enrich T/L								
Disagree	17.6%	33.3%	6.8%	6.3%	64.0%	(6) =28.334, .000	.253, .000	222
I don't know	5.0%	3.6%	0.5%	1.4%	10.4%			
Agree	16.2%	5.0%	0.9%	3.6%	25.7%			
Proportion	38.7%	41.9%	8.1%	11.3%	100.0%			
Adequate lecture theatres								
Disagree	25.7%	30.2%	3.6%	7.7%	67.1%	(6) =19.031, .004	.207, .004	222
I don't know	2.3%	6.3%	0.5%	1.4%	10.4%			
Agree	10.4%	4.5%	4.1%	3.6%	22.5%			
Proportion	38.3%	41.0%	8.1%	12.6%	100.0%			
Better T/L facilities than where you did the Bachelor's								
Disagree	16.2%	14.4%	5.1%	2.8%	38.4%	(6) =12.847, .046	.172, .046	216
I don't know	5.1%	8.8%	0.5%	0.9%	15.3%			
Agree	17.1%	18.1%	2.8%	8.3%	46.3%			
Proportion	38.4%	41.2%	8.3%	12.0%	100.0%			
The university keeps improving T/L facilities								
Disagree	23.4%	31.2%	7.8%	6.4%	68.8%	(6) = 17. 976, .006	.203, .006	218
I don't know	5.5%	4.6%	0.0%	1.4%	11.5%			
Agree	9.6%	5.5%	0.0%	4.6%	19.7%			
Proportion	38.5%	41.3%	7.8%	12.4%	100.0%			
Re-choose the university for T/L facilities								
Disagree	17.0%	22.9%	5.8%	5.4%	51.1%	(6) = 7.610, .268	.131, .268	223
I don't know	7.6%	9.0%	0.9%	2.7%	20.2%			
Agree	13.5%	9.4%	1.3%	4.5%	28.7%			
Proportion	38.1%	41.3%	8.1%	12.6%	100.0%			

Source: Field data

The results for the experience of teaching load were statistically significant, with little variation in responses across universities. The variation could be explained by University 1. At Universities 2, 3 and 4 the number of academics reporting the workload was unreasonable was two to three times greater than the number who found it reasonable, while at University 1 opinion was evenly divided, with around half of academics finding the workload reasonable. The findings therefore indicate that, with the exception of University 1, academics' teaching loads were overwhelming.

Regarding the availability of teaching and learning facilities, the results were statistically significant, with moderate variations across universities. That is, while 66.6% and 60.3% of academics at University 1 and University 4 agreed that there were sufficient teaching and learning facilities in their universities, only 19.4% and 38.3% of academics at University 2 and University 3 agreed. Framing the findings into the levels of success, the availability of teaching and learning facilities at universities would be at the resilient level for University 1 and University 4, and at the failure and precarious success level at University 2 and University 3 respectively.

Regarding availability of laboratory resources, the results were statistically significant with little variation across universities. It should be noted that the number of those who did not know was significant for University 1, University 2 and University 4, confirming that a significant number of academics at these universities were not teaching courses that required laboratories and associated equipment. Nevertheless, the variation could be explained by different levels of responses, where 51.3%, 23.6%, 33.3% and 37.3% of academics from University 1, University 2, University 3 and University 4 respectively agreed that there were sufficient laboratory facilities at their universities. The responses indicated that availability of laboratory resources across universities were at the conflicted level for University 1 and at the precarious level for the remaining universities.

On whether facilities found in the classrooms enriched the teaching and learning experiences, results were statistically significant with small variation across universities. While only 41.9% of academics at University 1 agreed that the facilities in the classrooms enriched their teaching and learning experiences, it was 11.9%, 11.1% and 31.9% of academics in University 2, University 3 and University 4 respectively who agreed with this. This suggests that the extent to which classrooms enrich teaching and learning experiences in the universities was at the conflicted success level at University 1, the

precarious success level at University 4, and the failure level at University 2 and University 3.

Results for availability of lecture theatres in the universities were statistically significant with little variation across universities. While 50.6% of academics at University 3 agreed that there were adequate lecture theatres, only 27.2%, 10.9% and 28.6% of academics from University 1, University 2 and University 4 agreed. The results therefore indicate that the availability of lecture theatres was at the conflicted success level at University 3, the precarious success level at University 1 and University 4, and at the failure level at University 2. However, findings from University 1 contradict those of officials from the same university who claimed that there was no shortage of buildings. The difference between the two could be explained by the focus of the response. While university officials responded in broad terms regarding availability of building including normal classes for teaching that could accommodate up to 100 students at once, academics focused on the availability of traditional big theatres that tend to accommodate a larger number of students at once compared to normal classrooms.

The first general item examined whether academics viewed the teaching and learning facilities in universities they were teaching to be better than the facilities in the universities they did their Bachelor's degrees. The results were statistically significant with small variation across universities. While 69.2% of academics at University 4 agreed, only 44.5%, 43.9% and 33.7% of academics at University 1, University 2 and University 3 agreed. These findings suggest that academics noticed changes in teaching and learning facilities at their current teaching universities compared to how the situation was in universities at the time they did their Bachelor's degrees. Thus, it could be claimed that the standards had resulted in some change in universities, in this case, at the resilient level at University 4, at the conflicted level at University 1 and University 2 and at the precarious level at University 3.

Regarding the perspectives of academics on whether the universities were continuously improving the teaching and learning facilities, the results were statistically significant with small variation across universities. Academics who agreed with the statement were 24.9%, 13.3%, 0% and 37.1% from University 1, University 2, University 3 and University 4 respectively. These results indicate that the improvements were happening at the precarious level at University 1 and University 4, and at the failure level at University 2 and University 3. This further suggests a lack of maintenance or repair of damaged

facilities in order to improve them to reflect the standards. University 4, despite being at the precarious level, was still leading the other three in terms of undertaking improvements in the teaching and learning context. This supports the findings from the previous item in which academics at University 4 agreed to a greater extent than academics in other universities that the facilities were better than where they did their Bachelor's degrees. However, achieving success at the precarious level still supports the claims made by staff at University 4, that the writing boards were not being repaired and hence caused difficulties in teaching courses that required the use of writing boards, in addition to PowerPoint.

The last analysis examined whether academics, looking only at teaching and learning facilities, would choose again the universities they were working for. The results were not statistically significant, indicating no variation in direction of responses across universities. The average response across universities indicated that 51.1% of academics would not return to their university on the basis of availability of its teaching and learning facilities. This suggests that around 50% of academics were not happy with the conditions or availability of teaching and learning facilities at their university.

7.3.4 Reflection of standards for auxiliary teaching and learning milieu

This section presents findings on the reflection of standards from the experiences of academics in relation to the auxiliary to teaching and learning milieu for academics in the universities. It should be noted that the response categories were also reduced from five to three, for two reasons. One was to group together responses that carried similar ideas and the other was to improve the validity of findings by reducing the number of cells that could have expected counts of less than five.

From Table **7.8**, the first auxiliary item was the availability of printers. The findings were not statistically significant, indicating no variation in responses across universities. The direction of responses across universities was on the non-availability of printers; that is, 64.8% of academics across universities said that they did not have access to a printer. Therefore, the majority of academics experienced difficulties when they needed to print materials for teaching and other tasks that required copies through a printer or photocopy machine.

The next auxiliary to teaching was whether academics were also using computers (normally personal, as there were no pre-installed ones in classes), in addition to writing boards when teaching. The findings were not statistically significant, indicating no variation in responses across universities. As can be seen in Table **7.8**, the majority of academics (67%) were not using computers when teaching. These findings indicate that they were relying on alternatives, such as using class blackboards and written notes when teaching.

Table 7.8 Reflection of standards from auxiliaries to teaching facilities 95% CI

	Universities					Chi Square	Cramer	
Item	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
Access to printers								
Disagree	23.7%	26.5%	6.4%	8.2%	64.8%	(6) =3.860, .696	.094, .696	219
I don't know	2.3%	3.7%	0.0%	0.9%	6.8%			
Agree	12.8%	11.0%	1.8%	2.7%	28.3%			
Proportion	38.8%	41.1%	8.2%	11.9%	100.0%			
You use computer to facilitate teaching								
Disagree	28.0%	23.4%	6.4%	9.2%	67.0%	(6) =11.948, .063	.166, .063	218
I don't know	1.4%	5.5%	0.5%	0.0%	7.3%			
Agree	9.2%	12.4%	1.4%	2.8%	25.7%			
Proportion	38.5%	41.3%	8.3%	11.9%	100.0%			
You often use a projector when teaching								
Disagree	29.6%	31.4%	8.1%	9.4%	78.5%	(6) = 10.741, .097	.155, .097	223
I don't know	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%			
Agree	8.5%	8.5%	0.0%	2.7%	19.7%			
Proportion	38.1%	41.7%	8.1%	12.1%	100.0%			
There are copies of important books in library								
Disagree	5.9%	24.0%	4.1%	3.6%	37.6%	(6) =40.044, .000	.301, .000	221
I don't know	9.0%	7.2%	2.3%	3.2%	21.7%			
Agree	23.1%	10.0%	1.8%	5.9%	40.7%			
Proportion	38.0%	41.2%	8.1%	12.7%	100.0%			
Facilities are user friendly for special needs								
Disagree	20.9%	19.1%	5.5%	4.1%	49.5%	(6) =11.949, .063	.165, .063	220
I don't know	4.5%	10.9%	0.5%	3.6%	19.5%			
Agree	12.7%	11.4%	2.3%	4.5%	30.9%			
Proportion	38.2%	41.4%	8.2%	12.3%	100.0%			

Source: Field data

Regarding the use of projectors as a more technologically advanced auxiliary to teaching, the findings were also not statistically significant, indicating no variation in responses across universities. The responses indicated that the majority of academics across universities (78.5%) were not using projectors in teaching.

Generally, the results on the three items above, ranging from the availability of basic to advanced auxiliary facilities to teaching across the universities, are at the precarious success level. That is, the auxiliary to teaching facilities in the universities were at the minimum level of achievement (less than 40%). This situation demonstrates the gap in terms of universities being internationally comparable and competitive.

Findings on the availability of library books perceived to be important by academics were statistically significant, with moderate variation across universities. While 60.7% of academics at University 1 agreed that important books were available in the library, only 24.2%, 22.2% and 46.5% of academics agreed at University 2, University 3 and University 4 respectively. The findings suggest that the availability of important books in the universities was reflected at the resilient level of success at University 1, at the conflicted level of success at University 4 and at the precarious level of success at Universities 2 and 3.

The last auxiliary to teaching was the availability of user-friendly facilities to enhance the movement of academics and students with special needs (disabilities) in the universities. The results for the item were not statistically significant, indicating a similar pattern of response across universities. The pattern indicated that the learning environment for people with special needs was reflected at the precarious level across universities. That is, 33.2%, 27.5%, 28% and 36.6% of academics at University 1, University 2, University 3 and University 4 agreed that facilities were user-friendly for those with special needs. These findings imply that special needs were addressed only in a minor way.

7.3.5 Reflection of standards from the general perspectives of academics

To shed light on whether their general working environment reflected the standards, academics were asked whether they perceived themselves to be working in modern universities. The results were statistically significant, with some variation across universities. Table **7.9** shows that, while 43% and 50.4% of academics at University 1 and University 4 agreed that they perceived themselves working in modern universities, reflecting the general working milieu at the conflicted level, the reflection was at the

precarious level (23.8%) at University 2 and at the failure level (16.3%) at University 3. The results for University 1 are supported by the claim made by officials of that university that, despite the availability of modern and new buildings, there were shortcomings in teaching and learning facilities.

Table 7.9 Reflection of standards from general milieu - academics 95% CI

	University					Chi Square	Cramer	
Item	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
You see yourself as working at a modern university								
Disagree	18.8%	21.4%	4.9%	4.0%	49.1%			
I don't know	3.1%	9.8%	1.8%	2.2%	17.0%			
Agree	16.5%	9.8%	1.3%	6.3%	33.9%	(6) = 17.749,	.199, .007	
Proportion	38.4%	41.1%	8.0%	12.5%	100.0%	.007		224

Source: Field data

7.4 Reflection of the standards: students

Findings are divided into five major sections: demographics of students at the four participating universities, reflection of standards in the learning milieu, reflection of standards of auxiliary learning facilities, reflection of standards in accommodation, and reflection of standards in other cross-cutting issues.

7.4.1 Demographics of the sample

The characteristics of the sample of students are presented in Table **7.10**. The results indicate that private post-1995 universities had less gender disparity than University 1, where the proportion of female students was less than a quarter (23.1%). Regarding the year of study, more than half of the students across the universities were in their second year, followed by over a quarter of first-year students, followed by those who were in the third, fourth and fifth years of their studies. This suggests a good combination of students with both expectations of and lived experiences in academe. The representation for degree programmes could be divided into two main groups. The first consisted of subjects that are less science based and hence demand relatively fewer and/or less expensive facilities beyond the basic ones, such as library and classrooms. These are in the subgroups of education, humanities, economics, law, business and other social sciences. In total, their representation was 38.9%. For science courses that are in the subgroup of architecture, engineering, technology, health sciences and natural sciences, which were assumed to

require more facilities and in relative terms be more expensive, their representation was 59.2% combined. This representation with over half of the students being from science related courses was helpful in ascertaining the reflection of the state of the learning milieu for sciences courses.

Table 7.10 Demographic characteristics of students, 95% CI

	Name of university					
Item	1	2	3	4	Total	N
Gender						
Male	19.5%	13.2%	13.7%	16.2%	62.6%	
Female	5.9%	10.3%	11.8%	9.4%	37.4%	
Proportion	25.5%	23.4%	25.6%	25.6%	100.0%	1,131
Year of study						
One	2.1%	10.4%	7.0%	7.5%	27.0%	
Two	14.6%	9.5%	12.5%	15.7%	52.3%	
Three	7.8%	1.9%	2.4%		12.1%	
Four	1.1%	1.5%	2.8%	2.4%	7.8%	
Five			0.8%		0.8%	
Proportion	25.6%	23.3%	25.6%	25.6%	100.0%	1,126
Degree programme						
Education/Humanities/Social sciences	5.4%	11.3%	0.1%	7.6%	24.4%	
Business/Economics/Law		9.0%		5.5%	14.5%	
Architecture/Engineering/ Technology	2.4%	1.8%	0.1%	0.2%	4.5%	
Health sciences	8.9%		24.8%	2.8%	36.5%	
Natural sciences	8.8%	0.1%		9.3%	18.2%	
Others	0.1%	1.0%	0.6%	0.3%	2.0%	
Proportion	25.6%	23.2%	25.6%	25.6%	100.0%	1,121

Source: Field data

7.4.2 Reflection of standards from students' learning milieu

Five items were used as indicators to measure the experiences and perspectives of students in the reflection of the standards in the learning milieu of the universities. The response categories for the items were also reduced from five to three in order to group together responses that carried similar ideas and reduce the number of cells that could have an expected count of less than five.

The first item examined whether there were enough laboratories for subjects that required practical experience to complement theoretical knowledge. The results were statistically significant, with small variations across universities. Table **7.11** indicates that those who

agreed that there were enough subject laboratories were 45.4%, 28.8%, 48.4% and 40.2% students from University 1, University 2, University 3 and University 4 respectively. These results indicate that the standards related to laboratories were reflected at the conflicted level of success in universities, apart from University 2 where there was only a precarious level of success.

The other item examined whether students perceived the teaching and learning facilities of their universities to be as good as they should be for their conception of an ideal university. The results were statistically significant, with small variations across universities. While 25.9%, 19.5% and 35.2% of students at University 1, University 2 and University 3 perceived that the teaching and learning facilities were good as they should be for a university, 46.9% of students at University 4 agreed. The findings suggest that the perceived ideal environment for teaching and learning facilities in the universities was attained at the conflicted level at University 4, at the precarious level at University 1 and University 3 and at the failure level at University 2.

By generally looking at their learning environment, students were asked whether they considered that the government was doing enough to ensure that universities provided education in conducive environments. Findings were statistically significant, with very small variations across universities. As can be seen in Table **7.11**, there is a substantial number of 'I don't know' responses due to the nature of the item (more imaginary). However, 31.9%, 25.9%, 38.7% and 38.4% of students in University 1 to University 4 respectively were of the view that the government was doing enough to ensure that universities have conducive learning environments. From such results, universities shared similar levels of reflection of standards, at the precarious level. There was some variation within the level of precarious, some at the upper and some at the lower boundary.

The next item examined whether, by looking at their learning environment, students considered that their universities had put standards in place to ensure that quality education is provided in a conducive environment. The results were statistically significant, with very small variations across universities. Perhaps because the response required much imagination, the 'I don't know' response was substantial (22.3%). The results showed that 16.4%,14.1%, 20.6% and 26.7% of students in University 1 to University 4 respectively agreed that their universities had put in place standards or other mechanisms to ensure that quality education was provided in a conducive environment. The findings suggest that at university level the standards seemed to be virtually non-existent, as the extent to which

there was agreement with the statement was at the failure level at University 1 and University 2, and at the lower boundary of the precarious level at University 3 and University 4.

The last item examined whether students perceived that class sizes facilitated effective learning. Findings were statistically significant, with small variations across universities. Students who agreed that the class sizes were effective for learning were 28.1% at University 1, 18.2% at University 2, 39.5% at University 3 and 27% at University 4. The results indicate that class sizes reflected standards at the failure level at University 2, and at the precarious level at Universities 1, 3 and 4. In addition to suggesting that students were also affected academically by large class sizes, the results concur with the claims made by academics regarding large classes and teaching overload.

Table 7.11 Reflection of the standards from students' learning milieu 95% CI

	Name of university					Chi Square	Cramer	
Item	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
Enough subject laboratories								
Disagree	11.7%	8.8%	10.5%	12.0%	43.0%		.190, .000	
I don't know	2.5%	7.8%	2.5%	3.4%	16.2%	(6) = 80.790, .000		
Agree	11.8%	6.7%	12.1%	10.3%	40.8%			
Proportion	26.0%	23.3%	25.0%	25.6%	100.0%			1119
Teaching and learning facilities are good as they should be for a university								
Disagree	16.9%	16.4%	13.6%	11.5%	58.3%			
I don't know	2.0%	2.2%	3.0%	2.2%	9.5%	(6) = 60.010, .000	.163, 000	
Agree	6.6%	4.5%	9.0%	12.1%	32.2%			
Proportion	25.5%	23.1%	25.6%	25.8%	100.0%			1125
The government is doing enough to ensure that quality education is provided								
Disagree	14.0%	12.5%	11.8%	12.5%	50.9%		.085, .013	
I don't know	3.5%	4.6%	3.7%	3.5%	15.3%	(6) = 16.187, .013		
Agree	8.2%	6.0%	9.8%	9.9%	33.8%			
Proportion	25.7%	23.2%	25.3%	25.8%	100.0%			1126
The university has put in place the standards to ensure quality education is provided								
Disagree	15.0%	14.1%	15.3%	13.9%	58.2%		.093, .003	
I don't know	6.4%	6.1%	4.7%	5.1%	22.3%	(6) = 19.435, .003		
Agree	4.2%	3.3%	5.2%	6.9%	19.5%			
Proportion	25.6%	23.4%	25.2%	25.8%	100.0%			1121
The class sizes facilitate effective teaching and learning								
Disagree	16.4%	16.8%	14.5%	17.3%	65.1%		.119, .000	
I don't know	1.8%	2.0%	1.2%	1.6%	6.5%	(6) = 31.873, .000		
Agree	7.1%	4.2%	10.2%	7.0%	28.4%			
Proportion	25.3%	23.0%	25.8%	25.9%	100.0%			1119

Source: Field data

7.4.3 Reflection of the standards in student auxiliary to learning milieu

Seven indicators were used to measure the extent to which auxiliary to learning facilities in universities reflected the standards. The response categories for the items were also reduced from five to three in order to group together responses that carried similar ideas and reduce the number of cells with expected counts of less than five.

Table 7.12 Reflection of the standards in auxiliary learning milieu 95% CI

	University					Chi Square	Cramer	
Item	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
Computer laboratories are sufficient								
Disagree	9.9%	12.3%	7.1%	16.0%	45.3%			
I don't know	3.6%	4.1%	5.5%	1.2%	14.4%	(6) =	.209,	
Agree	11.9%	6.8%	13.1%	8.5%	40.3%	98.228,	.000	
Proportion	25.4%	23.3%	25.7%	25.7%	100.0%	.000		1126
Computers in laboratories are connected to internet								
Disagree	9.2%	16.5%	13.2%	23.5%	62.4%			
I don't know	7.0%	4.6%	6.0%	0.9%	18.5%	(6) =	.314,	
Agree	9.4%	2.0%	6.2%	1.5%	19.1%	216.53,	.000	
Proportion	25.5%	23.2%	25.4%	25.9%	100.0%	.000		1100
Toilets at this university motivate studying at campus.								
Disagree	14.1%	7.2%	11.2%	9.9%	42.3%			
I don't know	1.8%	2.3%	2.2%	2.0%	8.3%	(6) =	.127,	
Agree	9.7%	13.8%	12.0%	13.8%	49.3%	36.134,	.000	
Proportion	25.6%	23.3%	25.3%	25.8%	100.0%	.000		1129
Obtainability of piped water at campus affects your studies negatively								
Disagree	11.8%	7.1%	9.6%	8.8%	37.2%			
I don't know	2.6%	5.4%	2.3%	3.6%	13.8%	(6) =	.130,	
Agree	11.7%	10.4%	13.9%	13.0%	49.0%	36.813,	.000	
Proportion	26.0%	22.9%	25.7%	25.4%	100.0%	.000		1090
There are enough relevant books in library for different courses								
Disagree	11.6%	12.8%	15.1%	12.3%	51.8%			
I don't know	2.9%	1.9%	2.5%	2.4%	9.7%	(6) =	.082,	
Agree	11.1%	8.9%	7.9%	10.7%	38.6%	14.953,	.021	
Proportion	25.6%	23.5%	25.5%	25.4%	100.0%	.021		1118
The library accommodates a reasonable number of students at once								
Disagree	10.6%	14.8%	5.7%	8.6%	39.8%			
I don't know	2.2%	2.0%	1.2%	1.6%	7.0%	(6) =	.237,	
Agree	12.9%	6.3%	18.8%	15.3%	53.2%	126.124,	.000	
Proportion	25.7%	23.1%	25.7%	25.5%	100.0%	.000		1127
Infrastructure is user-friend for special needs students								
Disagree	14.6%	8.3%	9.1%	7.2%	39.2%			
I don't know	3.4%	4.3%	2.2%	3.5%	13.4%	(6) =	.183,	
Agree	7.5%	10.7%	14.1%	15.1%	47.4%	74.645,	.000	
Proportion	25.4%	23.3%	25.4%	25.8%	100.0%	.000		1120

Source: Field source

The first item examined whether there were sufficient computer laboratories that students could use for tasks that required computers. The results were statistically significant, with relatively small variations across universities. Those who agreed that there were sufficient

computer laboratories across universities were 40.3%. This indicates that the standards related to availability of computer laboratories in universities were reflected at the conflicted level. However, those who agreed at Universities 1 and 3 were 46.8% and 51% respectively, indicating the conflicted success level, while for Universities 2 and 4 were 29.2% and 33.1%, indicating the precarious success level.

The next item examined whether the computers used by students in the laboratories were connected to the internet. Findings were statistically significant, with moderate variation across universities. While the students who agreed that the computers were connected to the internet were 36.8% and 24.4% at Universities 1 and 3, it was only 8.6% and 5.8% of students at Universities 2 and 4 who agreed with the statement. The results thus suggest that the standards achieved the goal at the precarious success level at Universities 1 and 3 but were at the failure level at Universities 2 and 4.

The next item examined whether the condition of toilets was good enough to encourage students to spend extra time studying on campus. The findings were statistically significant, with minimum variation across universities. Those who agreed that the conditions of toilet in the campuses motivated students to spend extra time studying were 37.9% at University 1, 59.2% at University 2, 47.4% at University 3 and 53.5% at University 4. This means that the extent to which the toilets in universities were good enough were at the precarious level at University 1 and at the conflicted level in the remaining universities.

The fourth item examined whether the availability of piped water in the universities negatively affected students' experiences. Findings were statistically significant with minimum variation across universities. Those who agreed that they were negatively affected by the availability of water were 43.4%, 45.4%, 54.1% and 51% of students at Universities 1 to 4, respectively. The results altogether indicate that the standards for availability of water were reflected at varied levels at the conflicted level of success.

The fifth item was the availability of relevant books in the library for different courses. The results were statistically significant with very small variation across universities. Those who agreed on the availability of relevant books were 43.4% at University 1, 37.9% at University 2, 31% at University 3 and 42.1% at University 4. These results indicate that the availability of relevant books in the library was at the conflicted level at University 1 and University 4 and at the precarious level at Universities 2 and 3.

The sixth item examined student perceptions as to whether the libraries in the universities had the capacity to accommodate a reasonable number of students at once. Results were also statistically significant with minimum variation across universities. Those who agreed that the libraries had capacity to accommodate a reasonable number of students at once were: 50.2% at University 1, 27.3% at University 2, 73.2% at University 3 and 60% at University 4. These results indicate that the standards for library space were at the conflicted level of success at University 1, the precarious success level at University 2, the success level at University 3 and the resilient success level at University 4.

The last item examined whether the milieu reflected the standards for experience of physically challenged students. Findings were statistically significant with small variations across universities. The results showed that 29.5%, 45.9%, 55.5% and 58.5% of students in University 1 to University 4 respectively agreed that facilities were user-friendly to physically challenged students. The findings imply that learning environments for physically challenged students reflected the standards at the precarious level at University 1 and at the conflicted level for the three remaining universities. These student perceptions differ from findings on the same issue from academics that indicated the learning environment for physically challenged students to be generally at the precarious level across universities. The difference of views between students and academics is may be because, as claimed by the Agency officials, universities are prioritising the experience of students over those of academics. Nevertheless, the margin between their perceptions in rather small, one being at the conflicted level and the other being at the precarious level.

7.4.4 Reflection of the standards in student accommodation

Constituting the auxiliaries to the learning milieu, five indicators were used to examine the reflection of the standards in these aspects of the students' learning milieu. As for the main auxiliaries above, the response categories for some items were reduced to three in order to group together items that carried similar ideas.

The first item examined the proportions of students who were accommodated in universities and other types of halls of residences. The results were statistically significant with moderate variation indicating that students were differently accommodated across different types of halls of residences across universities. The results showed that 97.3% of students at University 1 were accommodated within university halls, indicating the success level. However, the proportion of students accommodated in university halls was at the failure level for University 2 and University 4 (15.9% and 17.2% respectively). For

University 3, around 32.9% of students were accommodated in the university halls, indicating the precarious success level. Further findings showed that while 46% of students at University 2 were accommodated in private hostels, students that were accommodated in private rented rooms near universities were 39.8% at University 3 and 53.1% at university 4. It should also be noted that private accommodations tend to be relatively expensive, distant from universities and less safe as students have to commute daily.

Table 7.13 Reflection of the standards in student accommodation 95% CI

	University					Chi Square	Cramer	
Item	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
Type of accommodation the student is staying								
In a university hostel	24.8%	3.7%	8.4%	4.4%	41.4%			
In a private hostel	0%	10.7%	2.7%	3.6%	17.0%			
In a private rented room near university	0.4%	5.0%	10.2%	13.6%	29.1%			
At home with family	0%	2.8%	2.5%	2.7%	8.0%			
Far from university	0.3%	0.9%	1.9%	1.3%	4.3%	(15) = 690.74,	.452, .000	
Proportion	25.5%	23.2%	25.6%	25.6%	100.0%	.000		1127
Students sharing a room in university accommodation								
No sharing	0.4%	4.6%	1.3%	1.7%	8.0%			
Two	0.2%	4.9%	5.7%	1.3%	12.0%			
Three	7.6%	0.8%	10.5%	0.2%	19.2%			
Four	50.4%	0%	2.7%	0.6%	53.8%			
More than four	0.2%	0%	0%	6.8%	7.0%	(12) = 669.012,	.686, .000	
Proportion	58.9%	10.3%	20.3%	10.5%	100.0%	.000		474
The quality of toilets in the halls affects your studies negatively								
Disagree	10.2%	10.5%	10.2%	10.5%	41.4%			
I don't know	2.7%	3.2%	2.2%	4.0%	12.1%			
Agree	13.0%	9.6%	13.2%	10.7%	46.5%	(6) = 13.630,	.078, .034	
Proportion	25.9%	23.4%	25.5%	25.2%	100.0%	.034		1110
Obtainability of piped water in the halls affects your studies negatively								
Disagree	11.6%	7.4%	9.0%	8.1%	36.1%			
I don't know	2.0%	5.0%	2.4%	4.5%	13.8%			
Agree	12.7%	11.1%	13.4%	12.9%	50.0%	(6) = 33.504,	.126, .000	
Proportion	26.2%	23.5%	24.7%	25.5%	100.0%	.000		1063
You evaluate the quality of facilities such as hostel								
Disagree	11.8%	10.0%	10.1%	9.1%	41.0%			
I don't know	2.9%	2.8%	2.0%	2.5%	10.2%			
Agree	10.8%	10.3%	13.5%	14.1%	48.8%	(6) = 14.798,	.081, .022	
Proportion	25.6%	23.2%	25.6%	25.7%	100.0%	.022		1126

Source: Field data

Of those who were accommodated in university halls (41.4%), an examination was made to ascertain how many shared rooms. The results were statistically significant, with significant variation across universities. The results indicated that, despite being able to accommodate the largest proportion of its students, 84.9% of students at University 1 reported that one room was shared by four students. The majority of rooms at University 2 had either one student or were shared by two students. The majority of rooms at University 3 were shared by three students and the majority of rooms at University 4 were shared by more than four students. These results indicate two things. First, with exception of University 1, universities are a long way from achieving the majority of their students being accommodated in university-owned halls. Second, with exception of University 2, universities are far from achieving the goal of one room per student which also indicates a long journey to modernisation.

Regarding the perspectives on the quality and condition of toilets in the halls, the availability of piped water in the halls and whether students are given an opportunity to evaluate university facilities, particularly halls, altogether, the results were statistically significant with minimum variation across universities. The findings further indicated that at each university, the provision of quality toilets was at the conflicted success level, as indicated by average of 46.5% of students who agreed that they were negatively affected in their studies with the condition of the toilets. The availability of piped water was at the conflicted success level, as indicated by average of 50% of students who agreed that they were affected negatively in their studies by unreliable availability of piped water. Lastly, universities were found to engage in collection of feedback from students regarding quality and conditions of their facilities at the conflicted level, as indicated by average of 48.8% of students who agreed that they were given opportunities to evaluate facilities such as halls.

7.4.5 Reflection of standards in cross-cutting issues

Examining the general outlook of universities from the students' perspectives, the following three indicators were used. The first examined whether students' decisions to choose the universities were influenced by the expectations that they had of the quality of the university facilities. The results were statistically significant, with small variations across universities. The results indicated that, to a large extent (77.6%), students across universities chose their universities because of the high expectations that they had about facilities in those universities. The variations were therefore on the extent to which they

agreed to have been influenced. This indicates that facilities were an important determinant of students' choice of university.

However, the lived experiences of students in the universities was found to be the opposite of their expectations. Their expectations were met in few universities and only to a small extent. For example, the results on whether the students viewed their universities as being good enough (tacitly by facilities) for international students were statistically significant with small variations across universities. The variation was on the varied proportions of those who agreed with the statement that their universities were good enough for international students. That is 15.3% and 16.3% at University 1 and University 2, indicating the failure level, and 24.3% and 38.5% at University 3 and University 4 indicating the precarious success level. Overall, the findings indicated that the universities were lagging behind in terms of having conducive environments for international students.

Table 7.14 Perspectives on universities generally

	University					Chi Square	Cramer	
item	1	2	3	4	Total	X^2, p	V, p	N
You wanted to study at this university because of its reputation in facilities								
Disagree	5.2%	2.7%	1.9%	6.6%	16.4%			
I don't know	1.8%	1.7%	0.8%	1.8%	6.0%			
Agree	18.5%	18.9%	22.9%	17.3%	77.6%	(6) = 52.248,	.152, .000	
Proportion	25.5%	23.2%	25.5%	25.7%	100.0%	.000		1124
This university seems good for both local and international students								
Disagree	18.6%	16.6%	15.7%	12.8%	63.8%			
I don't know	3.0%	2.9%	3.6%	3.1%	12.6%			
Agree	3.9%	3.8%	6.2%	9.9%	23.7%	(6) = 58.160,	.160, .000	
Proportion	25.5%	23.3%	25.5%	25.7%	100.0%	.000		1137
The quality of education is worth the money you paid for it								
Disagree	17.0%	14.4%	10.6%	12.0%	53.9%			
I don't know	2.8%	2.6%	2.3%	2.2%	9.9%			
Agree	5.9%	6.3%	12.8%	11.2%	36.2%	(6) = 61.891,	.166, .000	
Proportion	25.6%	23.3%	25.7%	25.4%	100.0%	.000		1120

Source: Field data

The last item was the perception of students as to whether the educational experience in the university was good value for money. The results were statistically significant, with small variations. Table **7.14** indicates that, while only 23% and 27% of students in University 1 and University 2 respectively agreed that the experiences in the academe represented value for money, 49.8% and 44.1% of students agreed at Universities 3 and 4 respectively. These

results suggest that the universities were able to provide education that represented good value for money at the precarious level at Universities 1 and 2 and at the conflicted success level at Universities 3 and 4.

Chapter 8 Discussion of findings

This chapter is divided into two major parts. The first expounds the findings presented in the preceding three chapters in the context of the literature and the theoretical and conceptual framework guiding this study. The discussions are therefore based on the objectives of this study, which examine: the approaches to formulate and enforce the standards; the relevance and compatibility of the formulated standards within the post-1995 universities; and the extent to which the milieu for provision of education reflects the standards formulated to guide them. The presentation of this part is therefore organised to follow the life course of standards, that is their creation or formulation; their enforcement, which also include acculturation and mediation processes; their relevance and compatibility; and finally, the extent to which they are reflected by the milieu. Figure **8.1** depicts how the findings and hence conclusions of this study could be synthesised by linking them to theoretical and conceptual framework of the study.

Based on how the research was conducted and the findings presented and discussed, the second part of this chapter reflects on the limitations of the study and its implications for policy makers, for higher education institutions, for the theory and for further research.

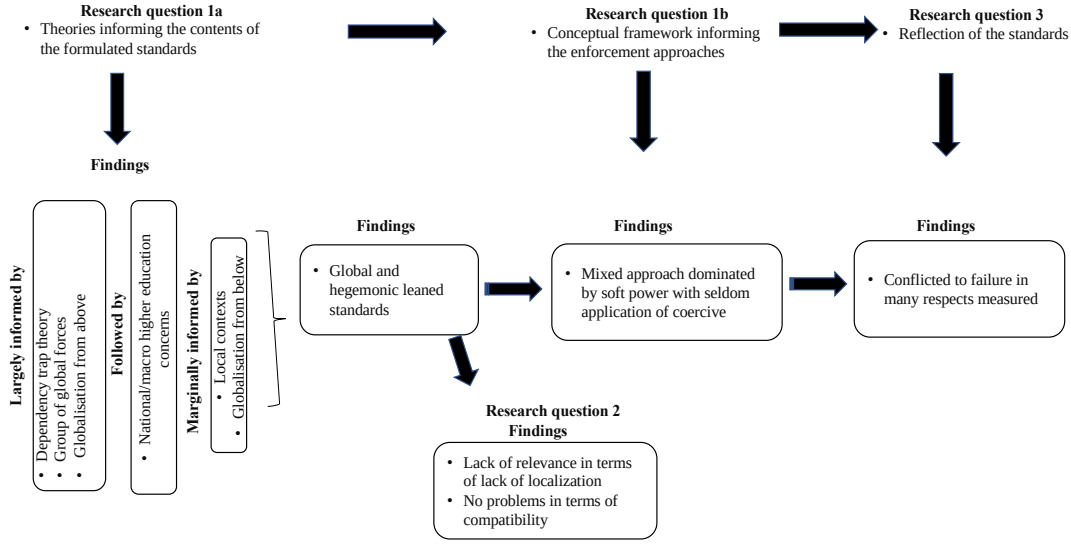

Figure 8.1 Synthesis of research questions, key findings, and theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

8.1 The creation of standards

Findings regarding the creation of standards were mainly divided into two areas: on the reasons for establishment of standards and on the process deployed in the creation of standards. The discussions for the two areas are presented below.

8.1.1 Reasons for the establishment of the standards

Evidence from the responses of Agency officials indicated that there were multiple reasons for the establishment of the standards to guide universities' milieu for the provision of education. The reasons originated from the perception of the government on the existence of an inertia within the academic oligarchy to ensure that universities provided quality education that address local, national and global demands in addition to responding to the global higher education forces surrounding the sector. This is in line with Rosa and Amaral (2007), who noted that the increased complexity and difficulty for higher education institutions to effectively implement many education reforms on their own led to a change in government attitude towards higher education institutions, and the emergence of the state supervision model. The idea is also similar to the assertion by Meyer and Rowan (1977) that there are two ways for organisations to succeed; to have strong internal quality controls or through confidence and stability achieved by isomorphism with rules and standards governing the sector. The latter being the case here.

Hence, it could be surmised that the standards were formulated to facilitate the sector in realising the glonacal concept and achieving the characteristics of the contemporary university (King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013; Enders, 2004; Marginson, 2004). Simply put, the standards were established with the view to guide the provision of university education that consistently addressed the local contexts, the national concerns, and the global forces surrounding higher education. This can be seen in the thematically categorised results regarding reasons for the establishment of standards in Chapter 5. The reasons included using the standards as a mechanism to respond to global higher education issues, the need to address the increased national/macro issues that the sector was facing, and as part of the jurisdiction and responsibility of the Agency to ensure that individual universities in their localities were supported and advised in a way that would enable them to provide quality education.

However, the above reasons were basically found to hinge on two main objectives: first, to serve as solutions to problems that higher education in the country was facing; and second,

to serve as necessary measures for enhancing and making the sector flourish – making it operate pluralistically within the contexts that were assumed to be the threshold of the glonacal university.

In seeking solutions to the problems hampering the development of higher education, the Agency officials were convinced that, while the sector was growing in size and more providers were entering in, the prevalence of institutions offering education in poor contexts and hence low quality was also increasing. Hence, the adoption of pluralistic standards to guide the provision of university education across the country became inevitable in order to safeguard public interests relating to higher education and rescuing the system from operating below the perceived inherent standards.

In other words, the standards were formulated in order to make universities across the country operate within the basic threshold indicators for provision of quality education. That is to say, they consisted of tentatively designed criteria for the milieu that each university should have, as a minimum, in order to address the national concerns relating to provision of quality higher education. The view consistent with argument provided by Meyer and Rowan (1977) that rationalised institutional structures (standards) at national level makes formal organisations (including universities) to be more common (isomorphic), more elaborate, easier to regulate the sector centrally, necessary for their efficient operations and increase their legitimacy. This focus on national concerns does, however, suggest that, by default, universities' local contexts were only marginally considered or could have been subsumed under the national concerns.

Regarding enhancement of the sector, the standards were found to be linked to the intention to ensure that the country's university system addressed the issue of the global university over and above national concerns. Embedding the concept of the university as glonacal institution, the standards were created to respond to the global forces surrounding university systems across the globe, such as globalisation, modernisation and internationalisation. Therefore, as part of responding to these forces, the formulation of standards through learning and borrowing from what other developed systems were doing was seen to be inevitable. This included the contextualisation of best practice gleaned from other developed systems such as the United States, Australia, German, Canada, and from some African higher education organisations, such as IUCEA and SAQA.

Such practices suggest deliberate efforts towards integrating national university standards within the global regulatory network. That is, requiring local universities to comply with

national standards informed by global forces constituted the process of reconnecting the micro world of higher education institutions with developments within the macro world (Kerwer, 2005; Ferlie, Musselin & Andresani, 2008). Also, learning from other successful systems in developed countries such as the United States, Australia and Canada, and from middle-income countries such as Malaysia, and from developing African contexts such as IUCEA and SAQA, confirmed the existence of both a dependency trap and globalisation phenomena in the process of formulating the standards. They further indicate that the movement was largely based on achieving global ideals in guiding the operation of universities.

However, on the other side, learning and contextualising or benchmarking the standards to facilitate their local adaptation within the pre-existing contexts represented globalisation from below, as promoted by the literature such as Torres (2013). The supporters of globalisation from below oppose the domination of globalisation from above in the development of higher education. Instead, they suggest that the two should be woven together in order to have national standards that adequately consider the local and global contexts and demands. Although the standards setters aspired to create an internationally comparable milieu for the provision of university education, they had made considerable efforts to contextualise or benchmark best practice. This is because they were aware that sole application of hegemony, globalisation and global forces would not work in a higher education system of a developing country like Tanzania. Instead, they were cognisant that it was through localisation and benchmarking of global best practices that the formulation of standards that concurrently address the local, national and global concerns became possible.

The findings on the reasons for the formulation of standards seem to follow closely the efforts expended by other countries in the sector. The literature indicates that various countries support the existence of government-stimulated and streamlined approaches to formulation of pluralistic national higher education standards and regulations in order to either enhance further, or tackle problems hampering the development of, their higher education systems.

For example, the growth of enrolment and multiplication of programmes due to the increase in private universities in Chile made the government re-coordinate its higher education system through new bureaucratic structures and policy instruments to increase its efficiency and quality (Salazar & Leihy, 2017). Also, despite the good reputation of the

UK higher education system and the claims that it is somewhat less centralised, the report by the UK Higher Education Commission (2013) suggested similar reforms. It made the case for the UK higher education system to adapt and use a less political and more technocratic form of governance that involves the use of standards and regulations with dual objectives. The first objective was to enhance the environment for provision of university education by ensuring that there was a level playing field for providers, that students were safeguarded and that taxpayers were protected (Higher Education Commission (UK), 2013). The second objective was to ensure that the global reputation of the sector was maintained, if not enhanced (Higher Education Commission (UK), 2013). Therefore, despite the difference between the UK and Tanzania higher education systems, the findings confirm the significant role played by standards in solving problems and in enhancing the higher education systems of both developed and developing countries. Similar standards approach with similar objectives was adopted in Australia (Shah & Jarzabkowski, 2013).

Drawing from above discussions, it could be argued that the formulation of standards in Tanzania was borne out of similar principles. Simply put, the standards were formulated to offer optimum solutions to recurring problems and to provide a framework for enhancing the milieu for provision of university education consistent with the local, national and global demands on higher education. The findings on the creation of standards in Tanzania were found to align to the theoretical framework underpinning this study; that is, the phenomena of a dependency trap, globalisation from above and from below, and the influence of global forces in higher education such as internationalisation and modernisation of higher education, as illustrated in the literature review.

8.1.2 The standards formulation process

From the findings, it is relatively hard to conclude whether the standard formulation process justified the standards as the outcome of negotiations of all university stakeholders. It is also hard to justify whether the formulated standards were the lowest common denominator of the available options for how things should be across universities that exhibit diversity in areas such as length of establishment, size, financial constraints, ownership (private or public), orientation in academic disciplines and others. However, the process seemed to build in particular on the assertions of William (2011), Timmermans and Epstein (2010), and Kerwer (2005) that their formulation was hugely characterised by negotiations with some but not all stakeholders, some with more power than others. The

process also corroborated previously cited literature on how global policy could be diffused by stages in a country starting with the national level where negotiations and mediations take place amongst key actors and intermediaries who convince each other why and probably how global policies should be adopted in a country (Alasuutari, 2009; Alasuutari & Qadir, 2013: Gandara, Rippner & Ness, 2017). The following findings on the processes for the formulation of the standards support this.

The formulation of standards was found to start at the national level and was based on extensive use of committees consisting of representatives of stakeholders from universities. The assumptions of the Agency officials regarding the use of this approach were as follows. First, if the net was cast wide enough, then even those who did not become directly involved would have been adequately represented and hence their concerns would have been considered. Second, if the standards were formulated collectively in this way, then there should be some form of buy-in from stakeholders across the sector. The intended outcome would be that the standards would be reasonable in scope, specificity, flexibility and precision, and consequently achieve the ultimate goal of enabling the standards to act as a social contract between the Agency and universities, and to gain legitimacy in terms of relevance and compatibility across the sector.

It was also found that there was top-heavy participation of universities leaders and experts in the committees and teams that were involved in the formulation of standards. The experts involved were in three groups: experienced academics – chosen for their experience and expertise in particular academic disciplines; experts from the Agency itself; and experts from organisations affiliated to specific standards being formulated.

Heavy reliance on experts was justified by various reasons. For example, for standards relating to the milieu for provision of medical, engineering, and information and technology courses, technical expertise was seen as indispensable. That is, embedding expertise was important in describing the facilities, contexts and activities necessary for production of competent graduates in such disciplines. In addition to describing the facilities and contexts, it was perceived that involvement of a substantial proportion of experts and leaders facilitated the creation of implementable standards that offered the necessary precautions for provision of such sensitive programmes. For standards relating to programmes that did not require the same degree of scientific and technical expertise, such as standards to guide the provision of social sciences and humanities courses, expertise was

regarded more in terms of experience associated with the higher levels of education (doctors and professors) that an individual possessed in the field.

However, the drawbacks of this approach to the process included under-representation of ordinary academics and students for whom the standards were actually formulated to enhance the teaching and learning milieu in academe. For example, findings on how the standards were constructed at national level indicated that the majority of ordinary academics did not participate. Also, findings on the co-construction of the standards at university level indicated that the majority of academics were not informed about the standards, did not participate in discussions or decisions about them and did not attend training in relation to standards. This meant that the engagement of academics was limited, and the standards were developed with insufficient input from those who were to implement them. These findings are in line with the claim by Timmermans and Epstein (2010) that, although standards are intended to serve the public interest, there is sometimes a lack of public involvement or representation on the creation committees.

The lack of participation by academics and students, and the selectivity of participation seem to back up various assertions in the literature on the possibility of the process of standards creation being predominantly characterised by hegemony and power relations among committee members and standards creators. That is, the organisations or individuals with the greatest power, including the Agency as a sponsor and those with technical expertise, might have influenced the creation of standards to conform to their own interests, resulting in the standards creation process becoming a form of advocacy for collating the strategies of elites. A good example of this from the findings was the Agency's claim to have made the initial proposal about the standards. At the initial proposal stage, the Agency could have manifested its power and influence through reviewing reports from other committees that formed the bigger standards creation committee. That is, the Agency might have liked the reports to concur with what it had envisioned before, so the review process may not have been neutral. Another example of the existence of power relations could be traced in the creation of standards for health-related programmes. For these programmes, the technical expertise of stakeholders such as the Medical Council of Tanganyika prevailed over the contextual, economical and practical concerns of the universities offering the courses.

The above discussions could also be extended to examine the legitimacy and suitability of the standards created. For example, Agency officials claimed that the standards were a

minimum threshold in terms of the milieu for the provision of both locally and internationally comparable and competitive education. The aim was to get universities across the country to operate at least at the threshold level. However, the literature suggests that the standards-setting process in its own right matters and may significantly affect the outcome. That is, while creators may think or claim that the formulated standards represent both their envisioned idea (for example, the standards as a minimum threshold) and the expectations of those for whom the standards were created for (universities), this might not be the case. Instead, echoing the assertions by Timmermans and Epstein (2010) and Kerwer (2005), depending on the process of standards-setting, standards may reflect various things, including the lowest common denominator of available options that should be included, the power of strongest stakeholders in the process, a negotiated order among some or all stakeholders, or a confirmation of how things should be done.

Therefore, although technical expertise may be indispensable for formulating standards that guide organisations such as universities, over-reliance on them with insufficient regard to context, economy and practicability impaired the formulated standards. This suggests that the involvement of stakeholders for whom the standards were created for, irrespective of level of expertise, should have been considered in order to improve the objectivity and extent of legitimacy. Lack of attention to this (broader participation) probably resulted in deficiencies in the knowledge necessary for creating standards that would have worked more efficiently in contexts in which the post-1995 universities were operating.

8.2 Enforcement of standards

Generally, the findings indicated the application of a pragmatic approach that was dominated by soft power. In very few circumstances were hard (coercive) approaches used by the Agency to enforce compliance with standards in the universities. While the soft power enforcement strategies were in three forms: expertise, acculturation, and accountability, the coercive strategies involved the use of heavy sanctions such as banning some universities to admit students on some courses. These are discussed in more details, starting with expertise, acculturation, and accountability strategies, as part of the soft power approach, and then looking at the use of heavy sanctions as part of the coercive approach.

8.2.1 Expertise approach

It was found that expertise embedded in standards was used as a soft power mechanism to generate full compliance with standards by universities for the following reasons. First, the Agency wanted to convey its view to universities that the standards were absolute minimum thresholds that any university wished to provide quality education could not circumvent. This is consistent with the assertions of Timmermans and Epstein (2010), that in order to minimise resistance (at least overt) or to boost mandatory compliance, standards setters may convince implementers that the standards are technical conditions that institutions must conform to if they are to provide a quality output. It is through this perspective the Agency officials expected the standards to gain legitimacy and ideally result in full compliance. That is, to achieve compliance without resistance from universities through the application of either mediatory power, autonomy or relative autonomy as described by the loosely coupled concept, when responding to external forces.

Second, backing up the new public management perspective (NPM), the Agency and universities (leaders) had already agreed that the standards would be an integral part of technical accreditation procedures. Therefore, being minimums, the standards were at the point of making a straightforward technical judgement between two choices: whether a university should operate or not. The aim of integrating the standards with the judgement for universities to operate or not seemed to be borne out in the NPM literature in the sense that the standards were for protection of public interests related to higher education (Ferlie, Musselin & Andresani; 2008; Blackmur, 2007; Ewell, 2007). However, the aim was to achieve this goal without making universities view the standards as authoritarian rules compelling them to operate within a politically influenced and motivated environment. Thus, Agency officials were afraid that if universities were to sense political entanglement in the standards rather than technical expertise, they might overtly apply their autonomy and mediatory power to resist the standards and jeopardise compliance. This corresponds with the ideas of Ferlie, Musselin and Andresani (2008), that the ulterior motives of the standards in higher education are similar to other government interventions applied in key public sectors. The difference is simply in the modus operandi. That is, unlike in other sectors, the governments tend apply NPM as part of soft power to bring about reforms in higher education while overcoming the inherent mediatory power, autonomy and loosely coupled characteristics of the sector.

8.2.2 Acculturation approach

In order to encourage compliance and enhance the legitimacy of standards across universities, Agency officials were convinced that, in addition to the use of expertise and NPM strategies explained above, the engagement of university leaders in the formulation of and training on standards was imperative. They wanted to ensure that university leaders who participated in the formulation process were adequately acculturated so that their consent during the process would act as an implied warranty that the standards were uniformly regarded as technical binding contracts worthy of compliance across universities. This idea concurs with the claim by Kerwer (2005) that when key stakeholders have extensively participated, the opposition between the rule makers and compliers vanishes.

In addition to acculturation through training and workshops, Agency officials visited universities in order to conduct technical audits and monitor progress achieved in compliance. On these visits, advice and recommendations were offered. This method of enforcement concurs with the comment by Timmermans and Epstein (2010) that, in order to keep standards on track, an auxiliary support network of technicians, auditors, monitors, and consultants should exist to evaluate compliance with the standards. The idea is also in line with the ‘eyes on, hands off’ governance approach that allows government agencies to act as conduits for the government, enabling it to control or influence the operation of universities remotely.

Further, the use of the acculturation approach through involvement of university leaders, workshops and field visits took account of the diversity in universities in relation to mediatory power, autonomy, economic capacities, age, physical locations and culture. In other words, Agency officials were aware that, due to diversity in the sector, the use of coercive approaches would result in incompatibilities in many areas. This would have led to some universities not being able to comply with the standards, even if the levels of resistance and mediatory power were minimal or non-existent. Consequently, through the training, workshops and recommendations from the visits made, the aim was similar to the ideas of Wallace et al. (2010) on the need to nurture universities to reach conditions sufficient to allow the standards to thrive in them. Moreover, the idea was to make the standards become a natural and integral part of decision-making in universities.

The aim of the acculturation method was thus to circumvent all sorts of resistance, including the use of passive autonomy in universities, characterised by the loosely coupled

system described earlier. That is, to minimise the impact of the functioning of autonomous agents/subsystems that have considerable mediatory power when responding to or interacting with structures that set rules for them, the strategy is to evaluate and then reward their performance. The idea also concurs with the warning by Timmermans and Epstein (2010) that, normally, the environment where new standards are to be applied tends to be populated by existing practices and inherent standards that increase the probability of uncertainties, incompatibility and even non-compliance with the new standards. This suggests that the application of the acculturation method as part of soft power in the enforcement of standards in universities was seemed to be a viable approach.

8.2.3 Accountability approach

In conjunction with other soft power methods, the findings indicated that the use of the accountability method seemed to build on some ideas in the literature on how stakeholders such as students, employers, and the role of competition could be used to bring about compliance with standards in universities. in this study, this was done through establishing communication links with students that enabled them to communicate directly with the Agency, making students share the quality assurance costs, and students having the choice to transfer to other universities if they feel dissatisfied with the studying environment or perceived a lack of quality in the education offered. These made students take a keen interest in quality issues in their respective universities and hence become part of the regulation of the operation of universities.

The views of Agency officials on the use of accountability supported the literature suggesting that, increased accountability due to increased awareness of stakeholders and competition in the sector may make the use of the coercive approach less necessary. Although universities could be left to operate in laissez-faire contexts, accountability could compel them to comply with the standards in order to compete for students and therefore maintain or improve their quota of admissions. This is because most private universities in Tanzania derive almost all their income from tuition fees charges. This is in line with the assertion by Kerwer (2005) that the use accountability approach to enforce compliance is strong because of its ability to make standards lose their voluntary character even when they are officially to be complied with through voluntary approaches. This also supports the view of Rosa and Amaral (2007) that competition works efficiently in regulating the sector when both producers and consumers become accountable after having information about quality, price, and other relevant characteristics of the goods. From this, it follows

that the presence of awareness and accountability amongst actors could replace coercive approaches. That is, if something was amiss in the universities, the accountability and awareness harnessed by stakeholders would act as a mechanism to detect the problem and act accordingly on behalf of, or with support from the standards setters.

The findings also echo the views of De Wit and Verhoeven (2004) that, where individual freedom, awareness and a free market in higher education are promoted, government intervention would only be demanded to guarantee moral and political order. Thus, when institutionalised soft power strategies such competition and increased awareness on the part of stakeholders are applied as interventions, they may significantly influence universities to offer education that meets the needs of government and the labour market. Furthermore, the idea concurs with the loosely coupled concept by Weick (1976) that subsystems, in this case universities, may perform better when they are more accountable for their actions as a result of operating in loosely coupled contexts than would be the case if they operated in tightly coupled contexts.

8.2.4 Coercive method

In part due to the waxing and waning in effectiveness of soft power approaches, it was found that in contexts where quality was at stake (following an audit or evaluation), coercive measures, in terms of heavy sanctions, were applied. The application of coercive measures therefore seems to have followed the argument described in the literature that adverse accreditation consequences could be among the most serious quality assurance mechanisms for small universities that are heavily dependent on tuition fees (Ewell, 2007). A classic case of this is that, following the accreditation audit conducted in September and October 2016, the Agency was not satisfied with the context in which education was provided in some universities. This resulted in the Agency issuing a public circular on 24 July 2017 that banned 19 institutions from admitting students (first year) across all academic disciplines for the academic year 2017/18. The circular also banned 75 programmes from 22 institutions from admitting first-year students for academic year 2017/18 (TCU, 2017a).

The institutions banned from admitting first-year students across all disciplines for academic year 2017/18, within the three categories of institutions under Agency, were the following six universities: Eckenforde Tanga University; United Africa University of Tanzania; International Medical and Technological University; University of Bagamoyo; Kampala International University; and Teofilo Kisanji University. There were four

university colleges: St. Francis University College of Health and Allied Sciences; Archbishop Mihayo University College; St. Joseph University College of Engineering and Technology; and Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College. There were nine university centres: Jomo Kenayatta University in Arusha; Kenyatta University in Arusha; Archbishop James University College; Cardinal Rugambwa Memorial University College; Marian University College; St. John's University of Tanzania Msalato; St. John's University of Tanzania Marks Centre; Teofilo Kisanji University Tabora; and Tumaini University Mbeya. All these universities are post-1995 universities and are privately owned.

For the 75 programmes banned in 22 universities, there were only three programmes from old universities: one at Mzumbe and two at the University of Dar es Salaam. These universities are also government owned. Of the remaining programmes banned, only two were from a single post-1995 university owned by the government. The remaining 70 programmes were from 19 post-1995 private institutions. The heavy sanctions confirm the prevalence of the poor reflection of standards, mostly amongst private post-1995 universities.

However, such heavy sanctions were found to be rarely taken, in fact only as a last resort after an overall audit of universities across the country had indicated a huge discrepancy in the reflection of the standards across the sector. Therefore, although they have very serious consequences, leaving universities with little choice but to engage the standards in some way if they are to survive (Ewell, 2007), their infrequent and selective application suggests that some universities were continuing to offer education in only marginally improved environments. Some universities continued to use the same contexts to train continuing students for courses on which they were banned from admitting new first-year students. As a result, the responsibility fell on continuing students to save themselves whenever deemed necessary using the caveat emptor concept. That is, if they learn on their own that they were studying in a substandard context or influenced by Agency's decisions of banning admissions to some courses, they had the option to transfer to another university offering similar programmes and proceed with their studies. Although this was an acceptable mechanism, as stipulated by Agency's regulations, it was somewhat discouraging for the students because it required them to take the initiative and the procedures they had to follow were cumbersome.

In general, the findings on approaches to enforcement of the standards fit within the conceptual framework of this study, particularly the application of pragmatic or mixed approaches. The enforcement of standards varied considerably along the spectrum depending on the circumstances. Consequently, it could be concluded that, Tanzania, like other countries follows a mixed approach to enforcement of standards in the sector and mainly through soft power and occasionally coercive methods. The difference in the application of these approaches across countries could be on the relative balance between the soft power and coercive approaches, where some countries may apply more of one or the other (De Wit & Verhoeven, 2004; Jarvis, 2014). The choice depends on various factors, including the degree of awareness of the standard setters of the contexts in which the standards are to be applied.

Awareness of contexts that the standards are to be applied has been identified in the literature as an important factor in successful enforcement of standards. For example, Wallace et al. (2010) and Timmermans and Epstein (2010) argue that if the reforms or standards are perceived to be overly prescriptive and seeking results that are not realistic, then tinkering, repairing, subverting or circumventing is likely to happen. Alongside this, if the standards or reforms are perceived to be unsuitable across the sector, then universities might take advantage of the weakness of soft power (of being ineffective in achieving goals) to continue operating without complying with the standards. However, the literature also suggests that when soft power and its associated indirect approaches are used, they may also work better than rigidly defined standards and rigid enforcement (Timmermans & Epstein, 2010; Dill, 2007; Blackmur, 2007; Ewell, 2007; Weick, 1976). In summary, it could be said that the use of the pragmatic approach provided the Agency with a toolkit of a wide range of strategies to enforce compliance with standards, ranging from soft power to coercion.

8.3 Relevance and compatibility of the standards

Findings on the relevance and compatibility of the standards involved two distinct ideas. Findings on the relevance of the standards revealed how well the national standards encapsulated the global and local contexts in order to ensure that universities complied with standards that emulated the concept of a glonacal university. Findings on the compatibility of the standards shed light on the tension between the national standards, as a government intervention to enhance the context for provision of university education, and the core values of autonomy and creativity in universities. In respect of relevance or how

successfully the standards captured the glonacal context has already been fully incorporated in the earlier discussion of the creation of standards, so does not need to be repeated here. Consequently, the focus of this section is on the compatibility of the standards.

Findings on the compatibility of the standards indicated that the tension within university officials was consistent with the argument in the literature that organisations including universities tend to develop defence mechanisms or resistance to external or government intervention in higher education. The view consistent with organisational theory that organisations do not merely respond to external control through compliance, rather tend to undertake a variety of strategies to somehow alter the situation or confronting them to make the compliance less necessary (Oliver, 1991). For example, although Agency officials were convinced that the standards were timely and compatible in terms of addressing important issues facing universities, university officials had concerns that the standards affected autonomy in the employment of academics and creativity in universities.

Regarding the standards for employment of academics, especially the qualifications of academics on science programmes, university officials linked these standards with ulterior motives for achieving a standardisation agenda in terms of academic qualifications with little regards for the diversity of universities based on academic disciplines. That is, the standards on the qualifications for employment of academics were considered to be too general across disciplines. This caused science-related programmes to suffer a shortage of academics due to potential academics for science programme not meeting the required qualifications.

University officials were also of the view that the standards were not compatible because, in aggregate, their compliance demanded enormous and costly decisions that did not adequately take account of the financial capability of young universities, which is consistent with the views of O'Mahony and Garavan (2012). This view also corroborates an observation by Oliver (1991) that government controls are complex, specialised and fragmented that the end result is a jungle of requirements at the local or institutional level. Both of these views seem to support the warnings in the literature about having policies or ideologies that gain their legitimacy through acquiescence, therefore cannot be fully realised by implementers (Timmermans & Epstein, 2010; Thorsten, 2008).

However, Agency officials indicated that they were cognisant of the autonomy issue and felt that they had designed standards that protected autonomy rather than diminishing it.

Additionally, they wanted the standards to act as a guarantor of the moral rights of stakeholders in higher education by ensuring that despite being minimum, they would be sufficient to ensure that universities provided quality education addressing the local, national and international demands. Their view was that, institutional autonomy existed to protect the pursuit of truth, rather than protecting institutions from being accountable in case they jeopardised their norms and values that include doing justice to stakeholders (Neal, 2008). This means that, for Agency officials, if universities sought to keep their autonomy at the forefront but at expense of their norms and values including providing quality education in a decent milieu, this constituted an abuse of autonomy. The view similar to Oliver (1991) that organisations may use autonomy as a shield to permit continual adaptation as new contingencies arise or as the latitude to alter or control the surrounding environment in accordance with their own objectives.

Agency officials also anticipated resistance and concerns from universities about the incompatibility of standards. However, they associated the concerns with the inherent tendency of universities to be overprotective of their autonomy. They felt it was this behaviour that was the stumbling block to compliance with the standards, and not the relevance and compatibility of standards themselves. These views concur with the argument summarised by several authors, including De Wit and Verhoeven (2004), that universities tend to develop resistance to government interventions relating to quality assurance. This is also supported by Zabrodska et al. (2014) that most attempts by governments to influence universities tend to be viewed by universities as a threat to their autonomy.

8.4 The reflection of the standards from the operating milieu

It was found that, in the opinion of academics and students, the contexts in which education was being provided hardly reflected the minimum standards guiding them. The opinions were measured in three broad areas: student population and teacher-student ratios; experiences of academics in relation to working and teaching milieu; and the experiences of students in relation to learning and accommodation milieu.

Regarding student populations and teacher–student ratios, the findings indicated the following shortcomings. First, the universities had low number students compared to either standards for student populations in universities or the infrastructure capacities of universities. For example, University 1 had the infrastructure capacity to enrol and

accommodate up to 40,000 students, yet the university had approximately 25,000 students and 700 academics. Therefore, although the university was operating at an ideal level in terms of standards for student population, the total number of students was only slightly above half of its capacity. University 2, despite being one of the oldest private universities, had 7,062 students. This means that it was operating below the ideal level (less than 10,000 students). The remaining universities were significantly under populated with students, University 3 had 2,500 students and University 4 had 3,003 students. Second, universities had relatively few academics, compared to standards for teacher–student ratios, especially programme-wise, indicating that academics were teaching larger classes than the requirements of the standards.

These two findings suggest that, due to contextual factors such as the existence of two categories of universities in the country (big, normally old; and small, normally young), young universities were experiencing challenges in adequately enhancing their teaching and learning milieu to reflect the standards. This had some negative impacts on both the perceived quality of education provided by the young universities and their ability to attract more students. That is, low student populations in the young universities generated low income (income largely depending on fees from students). This in turn affected their ability to employ enough staff and pay them attractive salaries. An inability to employ enough staff and pay them attractive salaries due to low student populations exacerbated the teacher–student ratio as well as leading to a shortage of senior academics in universities. This situation is contrary to what would happen in big universities that are heavily funded by either the government or through fees from optimum student populations. As indicated in the literature, education is a complementary good in which students are both inputs and consumers (Dill, 2007), suggesting that big universities are more likely to enjoy the spill-over benefits of optimum student populations than small universities. The benefits include re-using their income to further enhance their operating milieu and employ more academics that in turn enhances their reputation and their ability to attract even more students than small universities (Dill, 2007).

Regarding the reflection of the standards in the academics' working and teaching milieu across universities, the findings indicated: severe sharing of offices by academics; lack of working facilities such as computers, printers, projectors; excessive workloads; and a shortage of/unsatisfactory teaching and learning facilities, such as laboratory equipment and facilities for enhancing classroom teaching and learning. In relation to this, the majority of academics did not perceive themselves to be working in modern universities

and said they would not choose to work at the same university based on the availability or quality of its teaching and learning facilities.

Regarding the reflection of the standards in the student learning milieu, the findings also indicated severe shortfalls in terms of what the standards were intended to achieve. The majority of students felt that the teaching and learning milieu in the universities was not up to a university standards and that neither the government nor the universities were doing enough to ensure that quality education was provided or standards were complied with. Also, the findings on student accommodation indicated that majority of students in private universities were not accommodated in university halls, and those that were accommodated in university halls faced challenges such as excessive numbers of students sharing one room and severe shortages of water in both halls and toilets.

In the light of literature, these findings suggest various things. First, from the perspective of Ewell (2007), the findings suggest that engagement with the national standards might not have influenced overall investment in the universities to meet the expected standards and therefore could not bring the desired benefits to the experiences and perceptions of students and academics. This is because the perceptions of students and academics showed dissatisfactions with the working, teaching, learning and accommodation milieu. That is, the conditions of teaching, learning, working and accommodation milieu for academics and students in the academe were characterised by increasing distractions and cognitive loads, less privacy, less working and studying spaces, and decreased motivation. All of these have been argued to be detrimental to the quality of education that universities value, respect and strive to provide (McCarthy, 2016).

Second, the theory is supported that the use of soft power to effect reforms in contexts that have a high prevalence of private and young universities tends to be ineffective, despite the existence of clear standards (Blackmur, 2007; Dill, 2007; Atkinson, 2010). For developing countries, the situation can be severe. For example, due to over-reliance on soft power in enforcing the standards that were established in 2012, the sector has since experienced an increase in universities (mainly private) that essentially provide education in poor contexts instead of their decrease. Supported is also the theory that when coercive approaches are used, they are more likely to reduce the numbers of universities operating below par. For example, despite being used only occasionally and as a last resort, coercive approaches such as banning universities from admitting new students seems to be more effective in

eliminating universities operating in poor contexts much earlier than the alternative soft power approaches.

8.5 Implications of the study

Despites the above limitations, the study does have various implications for the following: (i) policy makers and government; (ii) higher education; (iii) theory; and (iv) further research.

8.5.1 Implications for policy makers and government

The research found selective participation of stakeholders in the formulation of standards and therefore substantial neglect of the other stakeholders whom the standards were formulated to benefit. New higher education policies are recommended to be based on more open policy-making approaches that effectively and genuinely increase the participation and engagement of those whom the policies are meant to protect or whose experiences are meant to be enhanced. This could be done in several ways. One is through visiting universities and talking to students and academics on matters relating to standards in terms of their experiences in academe. Another way could be through the use of digital platforms. This could include creating a special platform similar to the National Student Survey (NSS) of the United Kingdom or the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) of the United States, through which students would have the opportunity anonymously to voice their experiences of the courses and studying milieu in their universities, saying what they like and what could be improved. The feedback should then be accessible to stakeholders so that it can be used to inform the decisions of prospective and continuing students, existing universities and those who wish to establish new universities. Also, during the standard-making process, the digital platforms such as the use of website and mobile phones could be used to elicit the views of students and academics regarding their learning and teaching experiences. This would facilitate the creation of standards that are informed by the concerns and views of the beneficiaries or victims of the system. It would also help to overcome the weakness of university-based student evaluation and feedback mechanisms that have been argued to have had little or no effect in identifying areas for change or improving learning conditions at the faculty level (Marie & D'Andrea, 2007).

This study assumed that the standards were established in order to regulate the behaviour of universities in the country towards providing quality education in a dignified and

glonacal context. Both an appropriate design of the standards and appropriate enforcement measures were essential to ensure the goals were achieved. The evidence indicates that the design of the current standards was appropriate and relevant in furthering the objectives. However, there was little evidence that the enforcement approaches had been effective in bringing about practical changes in the operation of universities. This may be because the over-reliance on soft power approaches limited the ability to have the desired impact. This suggests that policy evaluation is needed in order to ensure that enforcement approaches bring about the desired results. The recommendations therefore include switching the positions of the approaches. Instead of the current model that is predominantly based on soft power approaches augmented by coercive approaches, coercive approaches should dominate the enforcement and be augmented by soft power approaches. The recommended model, in addition to achieving the intended goal of enhancing the contexts, may also mitigate the number of universities providing education in inadequate contexts. However, care should be taken in order to reduce unintended outcomes and adverse effects on autonomy, employment and access to education. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that decisions about the levels of toughness of both the standards and their enforcement are a matter of public policy preference. If the aim is to have more universities operating in the sector, weaker standards and/or predominantly soft power enforcement may serve a purpose. Conversely, tougher standards enforced more vigorously using more coercive approaches, such as closing institutions or preventing universities from admitting students to programmes that do not meet the standards, may remove some universities from the sector. However, this approach would result in a more rapid improvement in the milieu for provision of education than the soft power approach, resulting in better institutions, improved quality and ultimately the creation of a well-educated workforce to meet local, national and global challenges.

The evidence supports the need for the country to evaluate its higher education policies, particularly those encouraging the expansion of university education, in order to curb the problem of universities operating in poor contexts, that is also linked to operating below the optimum threshold for student numbers. This is because the study found that universities were substantially under populated with students, according to standards for student populations and infrastructure capacity. Also, the statistics from TCU show that as of 2015 the country had 28 fully fledged universities, 19 universities colleges and 21 university centres. At the same time, they also show that the total enrolment of students in all three clusters for the past five years was 38,610 students in 2012/13 academic year,

44,414 students in 2013/14 academic year, 48,171 students in 2014/2015 academic year, 51,244 students in 2015/16 academic year and 52,467 students in 2016/2017 academic year (TCU, 2017b). This means that the number of students is small compared to the number of universities available, bearing in mind the recommended standards for student populations in universities.

Therefore, evidence indicates that although anti-expansionary policies and coercive enforcement approaches may restrict the number of universities, those that would survive would still have the capacity to enrol and absorb all students without affecting the goal of widening access to university education in the country. This strategy could be carefully engineered by the Agency through the following proposed steps. First, the universities that are least likely to be closed should be evaluated in terms of their student populations and teacher–student ratios. Second, universities that are most likely to be closed due to serious standards compliance failure should also be assessed in terms of their student populations. Third, the ratio at which the expected surviving universities would be likely to absorb both students and academics from the universities that are likely to be closed should be ascertained. The last step would then be to implement the strategy after ensuring that the universities that are likely to survive absorb the students and academics from those that are likely to be closed, have their milieu enhanced and sufficient resources such as academics, teaching and learning facilities and so on to match the influx of additional students.

The evidence showed that, unlike the government-owned universities, privately owned universities were found to stagnate way behind in terms of the extent to which their milieu for provision of education reflect the standards guiding them. At the same time, statistics showed that their number was increasing. This trend suggests that private universities are more problematic to regulate and are less responsive to current national approaches of regulating universities than their counterpart government-owned counterparts. It follows that the country should strengthened regulation for privately owned universities. For example through the formulation of new policies and/or strengthening the current policies specifically to regulate the operation of privately owned universities. The focus should be on protecting consumers from private universities that provide education in poor contexts and hence to reduce the risk of producing graduates lacking in competence.

8.5.2 Implications for higher education

There is need for higher education providers and those who wish to participate in the provision of higher education in Tanzania not only to be aware but also to commit fully to

the reality that provision of quality higher education is costly and requires huge investment. To ensure this, the government should strictly examine the financial capabilities of those who wish to engage in the provision of higher education. This is because if the present and potential providers satisfy the minimum standards in terms of financial conditions and the threshold standards for provision of quality university education, the effectiveness of the standards and policies in regulating the behaviour of universities would have profound and measurable practical impacts. Furthermore, quality could be further improved through optimal utilisation of inputs and enhancement of education processes in terms of teaching and learning activities. For those that are already in operation, the recommendation is a need to plan how to mobilise funding other than tuition fees, which are part of government funding through student loans. It is also necessary for them to direct the available resources to more important areas and use them productively. Otherwise, if providers manage to establish and operate universities without having suitable sources of funds to at least meet the threshold standards, the standards are merely paper tigers.

Although resources are vital in enhancing the teaching and learning milieu, they are not a panacea to the quality of education. There is also a need for universities in developing countries such as Tanzania to rethink and come up with teaching strategies that would enhance the teaching and learning experiences of academics and students in academe within resource-constrained contexts instead of relying solely on increasing resources. Such strategies could include: focusing on institutional processes and results, establishment of strong management of quality of teaching, improvement of teaching and learning through training of academics to embrace the culture of interactive teaching and learning sessions with their students, use of information and communication technology to reduce costs, and democratisation of the system in order to allow academics and students to air their concerns about teaching and learning environment and participate in looking for solutions (Marie & D'Andrea, 2007).

8.5.3 Implications for enforcement and diffusion approaches

The research found that, the formulated standards were aligned to the glonacal concept despite the controversy between Agency and university officials about how the standards neglected the local contexts particularly the financial constraints of young universities in a developing country such as Tanzania. The evidence for the controversy is that, although the four participating universities supported the existence of standards with their desired

goals, they were also sceptical of the financial implications. On the other side, standards setters had the view that financial constraints could not serve as a proxy or an excuse for universities not to do what they were intrinsically meant to do, namely provision of quality glonacal education.

It follows that this study contributed to the theory as follows. (1) when soft power approaches are applied to bringing about compliance with standards in a developing country where young universities, particularly private and financially constrained, have already been established; and (2) in contexts that universities may be able to exercise varying degrees of autonomy, mediatory power, or loosely coupled responses to the standards; then (3) the likelihood is that, regardless of how relevant the standards might be, it will take a relatively long time to achieve the intended goals with no guarantee of success. This phenomenon highlights the limbo in decision making that developing countries face with regard to approaches to enforce regulations pertaining to their higher education systems. The study therefore contributes to knowledge by building on the existing knowledge about the approaches to enforcement or diffusion of standards in relation to the impacts associated with each approach.

That is, developing countries have to make bold and smart choices between coercive approaches or soft power approaches or how best they could be combined. While coercive approaches may work relatively quicker to achieve the goal but it could be at expense of removal of some higher education institutions from operation. This is the opposite of their counterpart soft power approaches. That is, although, the soft power approaches might get the job done, but they are unreliable cure for the ill system because they are characterised by lack of guarantee or may take longer time to get the desired results (Nye, 2004). This also means that, an optimum combination of the two approaches could be a viable choice. This is consistent with argument by Oliver (1991) that, while the lower degree of coercion is accompanied by higher degree of soft power behind diffusion of standards or policies, there is a greater likelihood of organisational resistance to the enforced requirements, and the vice versa is true.

8.5.4 Implications for further research

Since standards for financial sustainability in universities are available, research is needed to investigate their compliance in order to ascertain the extent to which the post-1995 universities rely on income derived from student fees and/or other sources. This is because over-reliance on income from student fees beyond the threshold in the standards has

implications for the financial capability of universities, including spending on salaries and other expenditure such as infrastructure and facilities.

As highlighted above, higher education institutions that are under the jurisdiction of Agency form three clusters: universities; university colleges; and university centres. This study focused on the university cluster, and the conditions were found to be not very promising. Research examining similar or specific other standards is recommended for the remaining two clusters: university colleges and centres.

Despite the existence of the standards for some time in Tanzania, the findings indicate that the contexts under which education is provided in the post-1995 universities were unsatisfactory. This suggests a need for the Agency to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the sector. This should include visiting universities for a sufficient amount of time to view the contexts and conduct interviews. Interviews should be conducted with a sufficient range of staff (both academic and non-academic), sufficient numbers of students from different years and courses, members of students' unions, members of university councils, alumni and even employers. The aim of this evaluation should be to develop a database for all universities across the country, particularly judging their ability to meet specific categories of minimum standards that universities across the country are homogeneously expected to comply with. The profiles should also contain universities' current state of compliance alongside the perceived reasons for such levels of compliance. The outcome of this evaluation would facilitate institutional analysis in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Enforcement of (revised) sets of standards could then follow or be tailored to suit the contexts revealed by the analysis, considering each university as an individual institution (*sui generis*), unless some happen to share similar analysis profiles. This would in turn enhance the contexts, at the same time measuring actual changes taking place in each university (brought about by standards). The introduction of such a semi-longitudinal study, alongside the full repertoire of university profiles, the appropriate standards, appropriate enforcement approaches and expert advice, could consistently enhance the contexts for provision of education for both existing and new universities.

Chapter 9 Conclusions

In accordance with section 5(1) of the Universities Act Cap 346 of 2005, the Agency mandated to oversee the operation of universities in Tanzania established the national universities standards in the year 2012. Among other things, the standards provided guidelines for the state of resources in universities such as infrastructure, teaching and learning facilities, academic staff qualifications and their working conditions, and accommodation for students. The overarching aim was to ensure that the education provided addresses and reflects the global, national and local (glonacal) demands and contexts.

Considering that Tanzania is a developing country with higher education institutions operating with a diverse range of sizes, operating localities, ownership, age, visions, missions, financial capabilities, and so on, it follows that any attempt to standardise their operating milieu requires caution, especially if the standards are to achieve their goals. Additionally, literature suggests that, although governments may seek to regulate their higher education systems for various reasons, they should consider the inherent nature of universities. That is, by using autonomy, mediatory power or loosely coupled behaviour, universities tend to exercise discretion in making some decisions, despite having ties with significant others.

Consequently, focusing on young universities, this study examined the national university standards within the operating milieu of post-1995 universities in Tanzania. It was guided by three research questions: (1) Through what approaches were the national university standards formulated and enforced in post-1995 universities in Tanzania? (2) To what extent were they relevant and compatible with the operating milieu of post-1995 universities in Tanzania? And (3) to what extent did the milieu for provision of education in the post-1995 universities reflect the standards?

The mixed methods approach was used. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic strategy with the help of NVivo 11. Descriptive and cross-tabulation analyses were performed on the opinions of students and academics by using SPSS version 24 to ascertain the extent to which the milieu in universities reflected the standards. Therefore, cross-tabulations were performed in order to compare the situations across the participating universities and to indicate response patterns for each aspect measured.

Chapter 9

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study by offering a summary of the major findings informed by the literature, the theoretical and conceptual framework and, of course, based on the research questions guiding the study. It also presents the contributions of this study to the body of knowledge in the field of higher education in developing countries.

9.1 Major findings

Regarding the first part of research question one that sought information on why and how the standards were formulated, the following major findings were reported.

The evidence showed that the standards were created by Agency largely because the independent application of both academic oligarchy (power of university to effect changes) and global higher education forces (globalisation, marketisation, modernisation and internationalisation) had been remarkably ineffective in enhancing the milieu for provision of the higher education in the country to the desired levels. Consequently, as the government's conduit for regulation of universities, the Agency established the national university standards as an intervention aimed at the enhancement of the milieu in universities. The intervention seems to be informed by part to Clark's (1983) triangle of three drivers (state, academic oligarchy and market) of behaviour of universities. The triangle explains that in some countries one driver may be more powerful than others. In this case, due to the perceived inertia of the academic oligarchy and global forces to bring the desired changes in the context for provision of education, the Agency intervened by formulating standards to guide the milieu for the provision of university education. This meant that the state, through the Agency, became the dominant driver of the sector in respect with setting the standards for milieu for provision of quality education.

The findings indicated that there was an underlying homogenising or isomorphism agenda beneath the standards; that is, achieving a higher education system based on standards, hence a standardised higher education system. However, the focus of this agenda was only on the baseline context and on nomenclature of things such as academic ranks and degree programmes. Two evidences supported this finding. First, the standards formed part of the accreditation process and they were at the verdict point determining whether a university should operate or not. Second, there was an assumption (on part of Agency officials) that if universities provided education within the prescribed standards, their compliance would

act as prima facie evidence that (quality) education addressing global, national and local demands and contexts was being provided.

It was also found that although the standards were formulated based on and in accordance with the legal jurisdiction of the Agency from the Universities Act of 2005, they were also infused with global forces so that their compliance by universities would also translate to responding to global higher education forces. Supporting this, the study found that the initial ideas for designing the standards were conceived through policy learning and borrowing from other successful systems and contexts. This also confirms the existence of the dependency trap theory, which claims that the development of higher education systems in developing countries is largely dependent on the development of higher education systems in developed countries.

Furthermore, it was found that although the initial aim was to formulate standards that were consistent with the glonacal concept (international facet of higher education, national concerns and local contexts and demands), the goal was achieved in a biased way. That is, the standards were substantially informed by global forces, followed by national concerns and only marginally by local contexts.

Lastly, it was found that, although the construction of the standards was participatory, the process was also characterised by selective participation. It was mainly university leaders and experts, represented by experienced academics, experts in particular disciplines, or Agency officials who dominated the formulation of standards process, in addition to having a stronger voice. This was found to be deliberately done for two reasons. While the involvement of university leaders aimed to ensure that the standards gained legitimacy in universities, the involvement of experts aimed to acculturate the notion and perspective that the standards were technical prescriptions for doing things. The overarching aim was to minimise (at least overt) resistance to compliance.

Regarding the second part of question one, the enforcement of the standards, the study found that the Agency wanted the standards to be perceived by universities as fiduciary duty and indispensable minimum prescriptions. Consequently, compliance with the standards was theoretically expected to be compulsory for all universities. However, the enforcement of compliance was based on a soft power approach. The soft power enforcement approach was found to be executed through various strategies namely acculturation, accountability and expertise. The acculturation strategy included conducting seminars for university leaders and visiting universities with the intention of auditing the

contexts and promoting the idea that the standards were indispensable ingredients in the provision of quality and glonacal education. The accountability strategy involved enhancing awareness among stakeholders, particularly students, through exhibitions, getting them to share quality assurance costs and providing them with direct communication access to the Agency to raise concerns. It also involved harnessing competition in the sector as a mechanism to screen out universities that failed to compete. Altogether, these strategies acted as soft power mechanisms to compel universities to comply with standards as part of responding to them. However, when the soft power approach lacked the ability to bring about the desired changes in some circumstances, coercive approaches were used to either complement them or as a last resort.

Regarding Research Question 2; the relevance and compatibility of standards, the study found that, in terms of relevance, the standards were generally acknowledged to address the national and global concerns. However, they were not adequately contextualised to fit the local contexts that young universities were operating within, especially considering their financial implications on such universities. As a result of this, they were perceived by universities to be normative in terms of depicting a model university compliant with the standards rather than functional in terms of being able to work in universities.

In terms of compatibility, the findings indicated that the standard setters were aware of the ethos of universities especially their autonomy. Therefore, from the outset, their intention was to avoid making standards that would affect university autonomy. On the other hand, the reported lack of compatibility and adverse impacts on creativity were found not to be caused by standards per se but by the inherently oversensitive and overprotective behaviour of university leaders, who perceived government intervention to be affecting university autonomy.

Finally, the findings for Research Question 3 reported that the universities were providing education within a milieu that poorly reflected the standards guiding them. Using the policy success continuum scale, findings on the different milieux ranging from working, teaching and learning, and auxiliary facilities to teaching and learning for both students and academics to the findings for students' accommodation, scored either conflicted, precarious or failure levels of success. No single aspect scored success or resilient success levels. The results could be linked to the impact of over-reliance on the soft power approach to enforcement of the standards.

The general conclusion that can be drawn from the overall findings and the entire study is that although commendable efforts have been expended to achieve a higher education system of standards in Tanzania, the evidence suggests that the system is yet to be a standard one. The conclusion is consistent with Timmermans and Epstein (2010) that, although standards are ubiquitous in the world and are powerful tools in organising and regulating modern social life, achieving a standard world is yet to happen.

9.2 Contributions to knowledge

Using Tanzania as a case, the above findings, discussions and conclusions provide discursive contributions to the body of knowledge regarding the involvement of states in regulating young universities in a developing country. Although not exhaustive, this part provides some specific contributions of the study to the field.

The first is on how standards are formulated and promoted. The study found that, when higher education standards and policies are formulated and promulgated in the name of enhancing quality, protection of public interest, positioning the system with a glonacal perspective and other related objectives, implementers are more likely to accept them. However, their acceptance could be by mere acquiescence, indicating that they are perceived to be impractical or simply to represent a model university that at particular moment and for various reasons, including financial reasons, it would be difficult to comply with fully. Consequently, the study adds to the knowledge that there is a need for approaches through which standards are formulated and promoted to be reviewed in order to improve their objectivity and effectiveness. That is, standards setters should formulate standards that genuinely capture the realities in terms of the capabilities of institutions so that their appropriateness is enhanced. In conjunction with this, the standards should be promoted in such a way that they establish a good understanding of their impacts among the implementers; including unwanted outcomes such as the closure of some universities for non-compliance.

The next contribution is on enforcement approaches. Although the predominance of soft power approaches could have a significant role in regulating universities while at the same time respecting the inherent characteristics of universities, such as autonomy, the approach should also be taken with care due to its inherent caveats. That is, although the standards might be good, reliance on soft power approaches in regulating young, particularly private universities, in contexts where they had already proliferated, and in a developing country

like Tanzania, is less likely to bring about the desired outcomes than a reliance on more coercive approaches. This knowledge contribution is consistent with the overarching modus operandi of the soft power approach. That is, soft power tends to work indirectly by shaping environment for policy, but its effectiveness depends on acceptance by the receiving implementers and tends to take a long time to produce the desired outcomes (Nye, 2004).

Another contribution to knowledge is on the weakness of the holistic approach that was found to have been used and hence the need to adopt a more scientific approach. From this study it was found that Agency officials were convinced that the standards constituted the minimum thresholds for the things that universities should have in order to provide quality education and satisfy their nature as glonacal institutions. This is similar to curiosity expressed by Rosa and Amaral (2007) on why universities that are ostensibly concerned with excellence are currently facing quality assurance demands that, by their nature, seem to question the ability of universities to provide quality education. On the other hand, although the standards were minimum thresholds, in aggregate they had substantial financial implications for young universities, particularly private ones. This confused the universities, because the broader array of standards sent unclear messages as to what should universities prioritise in order to achieve what the standards wanted. This situation contributes to the knowledge that, although the standards could have a broader clear objective, given that resources are limited on the part of implementers there is a need for applying a more scientific approach that follows an atomistic rather than holistic approach that aims at solving everything at once. Therefore, using the findings on the reflections of the standards in this study indicating the state of operating milieu and quality assurance in young universities, the following could be done. Analysis could be performed on the standards, and then the standards could be issued for compliance depending on their scale of preference (levels of importance) and how universities have already fared in achieving the goals of quality and glonacal university education.

Lastly, my investigation of the application of the loosely coupled concept as a kind of relative autonomy that inevitably tends to exist even when the government regulations are strong, offers a contribution to this study. Although, its original application by Weick (1976) was based on lower level non-university education institutions, the concept and its impacts on the regulation and management of universities are also familiar to higher education researchers when investigating the popular autonomy of universities in terms of the autonomy-heteronomy continuum. With regard to this, the study extends further and

contributes on existing knowledge and understanding of this concept by other researchers in the regulation of higher education. Example of researchers' assertions on this concept include that of Stensaker (2007) that universities tend to largely coordinate in a loose coupling fashion. The other one was by Orton and Weick (1990) that universities are loosely coupled systems because they are both responsive and distinctive. Altogether, imply that attempts to externally control them requires a great deal of care. Therefore, theoretically and practically examination of the application of this concept in this study reaffirms the application and strength of this concept in regulating of universities with particular interest in developing country's context.

9.3 Limitations of the study

Notwithstanding the above, the following are some limitations to this study.

With reference to the sample used, this study involved four post-1995 universities, of which three were private and one government owned. Also, the sample size of academics in Universities 3 and 4 was small. Thus, the overall sample of universities and the sample of academics from two of the universities may limit to some degree the extent to which the findings on the reflection of the standards in the operating milieu can be generalised. Larger samples of universities and academics would have overcome this limitation and hence enhanced the robustness of the findings and the scope of their generalisation.

Although justification was provided for the use of the perspectives of students and academics in evaluating the extent to which the milieu for provision of education reflected the standards guiding them, their use is still subject to some limitation. These perspectives are necessarily subjective and could have overstated or understated the examined conditions. Consequently, the use of more objective forms of data, including physical verification and observation, could have led to more robust findings on the extent to which the standards were reflected by the contexts, rather than relying on the perspectives of students and academics.

The focus of this study was on the examination of how the national university standards were formulated and enforced, their relevance and compatibility, and the extent to which the milieu for provision of education in post-1995 universities reflected them. The assumption underlying the study was that, other factors being constant, the teaching and learning milieu substantially determines the quality of education provided. However, the shortcoming of this assumption is that, in some circumstances, the quality of the milieu

may not directly determine the quality of education provided. This is because the quality of education depends on various factors, for instance, optimal utilisation of the available facilities, in addition to their availability. This study therefore does not provide extensive or in-depth evidence regarding the quality of education provided in the post-1995 universities in Tanzania. Consequently, further studies examining whether these universities provide quality education that address the local, national and global needs would provide a clearer picture.

Although this study reported the conditions of the milieu via the perspectives of both students and academics, the extent to which such conditions could be linked to the impacts of the standards is limited. This is because the study was unable to measure the changes that took place as a result of introduction of the standards. The situation was probably worse before the standards were introduced and probably the standards have brought some improvements. However, it is also possible that the situation may have become worse or remained largely unchanged even after the introduction of standards. The chief claim that this study can make is that, even after the introduction of the standards, the conditions of the milieu for provision of education in the post-1995 universities are still relatively unsatisfactory or at the nascent level of improvement, suggesting that more effort is needed to ensure that the milieu is up to threshold standards. This study could provide a new milestone for possible future studies to measure the changes that have taken place by comparing their findings with this study's findings.

9.4 An overview of the thesis and of the conclusion chapter

Literature on higher education argue that universities, regardless of where they are located, ought to possess the quality of being global, national and local institutions (glonacal concept) (Marginson, 2004; Enders, 2004; Meyer et al., 2006; Jones, 2008; Marginson, 2008, King, Marginson & Naidoo, 2013, Hou, Chen & Morse, 2014). Due to economic conditions, one of the major challenges for universities in developing countries has been to justify their legitimacy with respect to this concept. In particular the challenge has been on their ability to meeting the global aspect of the concept (Lee, 2013; Alperin, 2013; Yang and Welch, 2011) that is entangled with global hegemonic ideas and constitutes of an array of pressure being exerted on universities such as internationalisation (movement of academic staff and students), globalisation (isomorphism) and modernisation (having world-class universities). This is a serious challenge to developing countries because,

unlike developed countries, the gap between global and local contexts and conditions that university education is provided in developing countries is huge.

Regardless of such differences between developed and developing countries, in order to ensure that their higher education systems conform to the concept, particularly its global aspect, developing countries have also embarked on establishing national higher standards, policy frameworks and guidelines to govern the establishment and operation of universities in addition to establishment of world-class universities (Alperin, 2013: Byun, Jon and Kim, 2012; Altbach, 2004). In light of this and using Tanzanian higher education system, this study, forming part of higher education policy evaluation studies in developing countries, examined the policy agenda behind formulation of higher education standards in Tanzania, the actual process of their formulation, diffusion, implementation and subsequently their reflection with particular interest in young universities.

The findings, as concluded in this last chapter of the thesis indicated that, Tanzanian higher education system responded to the global higher education ideas, policies and templates through policy diffusion. The process encountered negotiations and mediation during their formulation stage at national level and during their enforcement at institutional level. The formulated national standards were found to be enforced throughout the system mainly by soft power enforcement approaches which included the use of expertise, acculturations, and accountability approaches. The soft power approaches were seldom accompanied by coercive approaches such as closing some universities and banning some to admit students for some courses and years. Regarding the reflection of standards within the operating milieu of (young) universities, it was found that due to economic conditions, overreliance on soft power enforcement approaches, and the latitude of universities to exercise autonomy in various forms such as loosely coupled and various mediation strategies, the standards were poorly reflected in many aspects measured in the universities.

Following this, recommendations and implications of this research for policy makers and government, for higher education institutions in the country, for enforcement approaches, and for further research have been put forward. In addition to recommendations, some contribution to knowledge have also been put forward.

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Appendix A An interview guide for TCU officials

Examination of the national university operating standards within the post-1995 universities in Tanzania.

Interview guide questions

1. How were the national university standards/policies formulated?

   Probing questions

   - Where did ideas to formulate the standards come from?
   - How and what extent universities participated?

2. How did you make sure that the standards capture both international and local aspects for provision of quality university education without affecting their relevance and compatibility?
3. Through what approaches are universities to institutionalise the standards?

   Probing questions

   - How do you oversee the institutionalisation?
   - How do you ensure they are not adhered in craft way?
   - What are the effects of mechanisms on university autonomy?

4. What do you think are the perspectives and attitudes of universities on the standards?
5. To what extent do post-1995 universities have a room to customise the standards to fit their operating environment?

   Probing questions about customisation in the following areas:

   - Teachers qualifications
   - Facilities and infrastructure for working, teaching and learning

6. What are impacts of the standards on quality of education provided in post-1995 universities?

   Probing questions

   - What impacts are on the provision of quality education for both local and international needs?
   - What are the impacts on the quality of teaching and learning environment in post-1995 universities?
   - What the impacts on innovation in universities?
   - How do you inform prospective students about the universities they can be enrolled?

Thank you very much for your cooperation and participation in this study

Appendix B An interview guide for quality assurance officials in universities

Examination of national university operating standards within the post-1995 universities in Tanzania

Interview guide questions

1. Can you tell me a brief profile/history of this university?

   Probing questions
   - Number of all students (if possible undergraduate)
   - Number of teaching staff
2. As a person in charge of quality issues at this university, can you describe how the national standards and policies related to quality of teaching and learning are being institutionalized at this university?

   Probing questions
   - How has the experience been?
   - How have the standards affected university autonomy?
3. What do you think were the motives for establishing university national standards for academics' qualifications, teaching and learning environment and students' living welfare?
4. What do you think was the level of participation of universities as stakeholders in the formulation of these standards and guidelines?

   Probing questions
   - What is the working relationship between you and policy makers/overseers/TCU?
   - How do you communicate about these standards to teachers and students?
5. To what extent are the standards set by TCU relevant to and compatible with this university?

   Probing questions: relevance and compatibility on:
   - Teachers
   - Facilities and infrastructure for teaching, learning and working
   - For students' lives at this university
   - Is there a possibility of university to deliver according to the standards?
   - What can you comment in general about their relevance and compatibility?

6. What has been the impacts of these standards on the quality of education and operation of university?

   Probing questions

   - The quality of teaching and learning
   - Innovation in universities
   - Working environment for academics at this university
   - Students accommodation (toilets, water, internet, electricity)
   - Any other new things that have been brought by these standards that were not available before

Thank you very much for your cooperation and participation in this study

Appendix C Questionnaire for students

Research title: Examination of national university operating standards within the post-1995 universities in Tanzania.

Name of researcher: Yohana William

A: Respondent's information sheet and consent to the study

Dear student. Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. Your participation is important because this study aim at understanding how national university standards and regulations are being institutionalised by universities and the impacts of the institutionalisation on improvement of your academic and living environment at the university. Therefore, the data you provide will form the findings of this study and may inform higher education policy makers and universities regarding various issues related to the provision of quality education under conducive environment for both students and academics.

As part of ethical concerns in research, you do not have to mention your name. Further, the name of this university will be a pseudonym and the information you provide and your identity will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity, in this research and others that may use the data. By agreeing to fill in this questionnaire, it implies that you have voluntarily consented to participate in this study. However, you have the right to withdrawal from participating in this study any time or not to answer any questions that you may prefer not to answer.

The questionnaire has 25 questions and may take up to 17 minutes to complete

In case of any concerns, including feedback for this research in future, please contact me via this email: ysw2g14@soton.ac.uk

Appendix C

B: Questionnaire items

For each question, please circle the number behind the option that represent your answer

1. Your gender
   1. Male 2. Female
2. Your current year of study
   1. First year 2. Second year 3. Third year 4. Fourth year
3. From the following, in which category does your degree programme belongs to?
   1. Education/Humanities/social science 2. Business/Economics/law 3. Architecture/Engineering/Technology 4. Health sciences 5. Natural sciences 6. Others
4. Where do you stay?
   1. In a university hostel 2. In a private hostel 3. In a private rented room around this university 4. At home with family 5. Far from university
5. Within university accommodation, how many students are you sharing a room with?
   1.1 2. 2 3. 3 4. 4 5. More than 4

C: For the following questions, please circle the response that correspond with the level of agreement with the statement

1= Strongly agree 2= Agree 3: I don't know 4= Disagree 5= Strongly disagree

No.	Question	Levels of agreement
6.	You wanted to study at this university because of its reputation on the availability of teaching and learning facilities.	1 2 3 4 5
7.	There are sufficient computer laboratories at this university	1 2 3 4 5
8.	Computers in computer laboratories are connected to internet	1 2 3 4 5
9.	Enough laboratories are available for subjects which requires their own laboratories	1 2 3 4 5
10.	The quality of toilets at this university motivate you to spend extra time studying at campus.	1 2 3 4 5
11.	The quality of toilets in the halls affect your studies negatively	1 2 3 4 5
12.	Obtainability of piped water at this university affects your studies negatively	1 2 3 4 5
13.	Obtainability of piped water in the halls affects your studies negatively	1 2 3 4 5

No.	Question	Levels of agreement
14.	There are enough relevant books in library for different courses	1 2 3 4 5
15.	The library is big enough to accommodate a reasonable number of students at once	1 2 3 4 5
16.	This university seems to be a good place to study for both local and international students	1 2 3 4 5
17.	You think the context that education is provided at this university worth the money you pay for your education	1 2 3 4 5
18.	The standards of teaching and learning facilities are good as they should be for a university.	1 2 3 4 5
19.	By looking at this university in general, it seems the government is doing enough to ensure that quality education is provided	1 2 3 4 5
20.	By looking at this university you would say that the standards for providing quality education are in place	1 2 3 4 5
21.	The class sizes facilitate effective teaching and learning	1 2 3 4 5
22.	Infrastructure and facilities at this university are user-friend to students with special needs (disabilities)	1 2 3 4 5
23.	There are multiple copies of important books in the library	1 2 3 4 5
24.	You are given opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning for the subjects you have attended.	1 2 3 4 5
25.	You are given opportunities to evaluate the quality of facilities and infrastructure at this university such as hostel and classroom facilities	1 2 3 4 5

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix D Questionnaire for academics

Research title: Examination of national university operating standards within the post-1995 universities in Tanzania.

Name of researcher: Yohana William

A: Respondent's information sheet and consent to the study

Dear academic. Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. Your participation is important because this study aims at understanding how national university standards and regulations are being institutionalised by universities and the impacts of the institutionalisation on improving your academic and working environment at the university. Therefore, your participation is important because the data you provide will make the findings of this study may inform higher education policy makers and universities regarding various issues related to the provision of quality education under conducive environment for both students and academics.

As part of ethical concerns in research, you don't have to mention your name. Further, the name of this university will be under pseudonym and the information you provide will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity, in this research and others that may use the data. By agreeing to fill in this questionnaire, it implies that you have voluntarily consented to participate in this study. However, you have the right to withdrawal at any point in time or not to answer any questions that you may prefer not to answer.

This questionnaire has 32 questions and may take 15 minutes to complete

In case of any concerns, including feedback for this research in future, please contact me via this email: ysw2g14@soton.ac.uk

Appendix D

B: Questionnaire items

1. Name of university you completed your Bachelor's degree…….

For each question, circle the number behind the option that represent your answer

2. Your levels of education
   1. Bachelor 2. postgraduate 3. Master degree 4. PhD 5. Post-doctoral
3. What is your teaching post qualification?
   1. Tutorial assistant 2. Assistant Lecturer 3. Lecturer 4. Senior lecturer
   5. Associate professor 6. Professor
4. Where does your age belong among these categories?
   1. 20-292. 30-39 3. 40-49 4. 50-59 5. 60-above
5. What is your working experience since you became a university a lecturer?
   1. 0-2 years 2. 3-5 years 3. 6-7 years 4. 8-10 years 5.11 and above
6. Do you have an office?
   1. Yes 2. No
7. If you have an office, do you have an office computer in your office?
   1. Yes 2. No
8. If you have an office, do you have an access to university internet in your office?
   1. Yes 2. No
9. If you have an office, how many people do you share an office with?
   1. I am alone 2. 1-2 3. 2-4 4. 5-6 5. 7 and above
10. From the following academic disciplines, which one do you teach/belong to
    1. Education/Humanities/social science 2. Business/Economics/law 3.Architecture/Engineering/Technology 4. Health sciences 5. Natural sciences. 6.Others
11. What is the average size of classes (number of students) you teach?
    1. 0-15 2. 16-30 3. 31-45 4. 46-60 5. More than 60

C: For the following questions, please circle the response that correspond with the level of agreement with the statement

1= Strongly agree 2= Agree 3: I don't know 4= Disagree 5= Strongly disagree

No.	Question	Levels of agreement
12.	Teaching and learning facilities at this university are better than where you did your Bachelor's degree.	1 2 3 4 5
13.	You see yourself working at a modern university.	1 2 3 4 5
14.	The working load is reasonable	1 2 3 4 5

15.	In general, there are sufficient teaching and learning facilities.	1 2 3 4 5
16.	The quality of classes facilitates effective teaching and learning.	1 2 3 4 5
17.	Laboratories have sufficient resources for effective teaching and learning.	1 2 3 4 5
18.	The university is continuously improving teaching and learning facilities.	1 2 3 4 5
19.	Teaching and learning facilities in classrooms enrich teaching and learning experiences.	1 2 3 4 5
20.	If you were to choose a university to work by considering availability of facilities, you would choose this university again.	1 2 3 4 5
21.	You have a convenient access to other ICT facilities such as printers	1 2 3 4 5
22.	Apart from writing boards, you often use projectors in classes and lecture theatres.	1 2 3 4 5
23.	There are adequate lecture theatres at this university	1 2 3 4 5
24.	You use technology such as computer in classroom to facilitate teaching	1 2 3 4 5
25.	Infrastructure and facilities at this university are user-friend to staff and students with special needs (disabilities)	1 2 3 4 5
26.	There are multiple copies of important books in the library	1 2 3 4 5
27.	You participate in seminars/workshops related to improvement of quality university education.	1 2 3 4 5
28.	Quality assurance office shares and discusses with academics about issues related to quality and standards	1 2 3 4 5
29.	There is a university platform where academics can raise, share and discuss issues related to educational standards and quality	1 2 3 4 5
30.	You are aware of the issues related to standards and quality in the provision of university education	1 2 3 4 5
31.	You get involved in making decisions on issues related to standards and quality at this university	1 2 3 4 5
32.	The university seems to be committed to improving the quality of working, teaching and learning environment	1 2 3 4 5

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Glossary of Terms

Accreditation	Process of approving the trustworthiness of operation of higher education institutions in terms of their abilities to quality education based on measurable evaluation criteria and standards.
Agency	Refers to Tanzania Commission for Universities as a whole although the data were collected from its accreditation department.
Glonacal university	A contemporary university that operates with the aim of both providing quality education and addressing the global, national and local needs and demands.
Milieu	Encompassing whatever contexts or settings that education is provided including all resources, facilities and infrastructure in the academe.
Optimum (point)	This indicate the most ideal or efficient level for operation, success and growth for a university or any aspect in a university as applied for firms in economics.
Quality education	Education that enables learners to acquire cognitive, behavioural, human, and social and situational skills, knowledge and competencies in order to address different aspects of local, national and global demands and challenges.