Qualitative Review of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices in Higher Institutions in Uganda

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to investigate how the practices employed in the Monitoring and Evaluation processes contribute to the overall goal of Higher Education Institutions in Uganda. It was carried out using a qualitative document review method. The study was guided by five objectives: to examine the legal framework of monitoring and evaluation in Uganda's higher education institutions, to formulate monitoring and evaluation policy in higher education institutions, to assess the establishment of constituent colleges of Makerere university, to examine how monitoring and evaluation policy affects university teaching quality, and to assess how the M & E policies are performed at the university senates and council committees.

Findings: The findings of the study show that the Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) has prioritized the concept of quality assurance in the sector at all education levels. Each college at Makerere University is administered as a semi-autonomous entity within the larger university and the overall supervision of the college is the responsibility of the university council and it is the responsibility of College leadership to conduct regular M&E of services offered in their units to ensure that quality is not compromised. Student evaluation of teaching (SET) is used in Makerere university where questionnaires are given to students to evaluate the quality of instruction by their instructors at the end of every lecture, course or semester. There is also peer observation of teaching where colleagues from the same department, subject or discipline help in giving and receiving feedback from one another on the quality of teaching and effectiveness.

Recommendations: However, the study recommends that monitoring and evaluation should be implemented even in the secondary and primary education, institutions should have both internal and external evaluations for consistency and transparency, more research should be done on the challenges facing the established policies in higher education institutions of learning in Uganda.

Key words: *Monitoring, Evaluation, Higher education, Learning, Institutions*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have seen an ever-increasing number and variety of models, procedures and instruments used in quality management and quality assurance (QA) in higher education institutions (HEIs) (Leiber, Stensaker & Harvey, 2018). This is attributed to the fact that quality programmes are a central management function in all HEIs the world over. The European Standards and Guidelines, ESG (2015) attribute this increasing interest in quality and standards on the rapid growth of higher education and its cost to the public and private purse.

HEIs in Uganda, just like in the world elsewhere, have realized that the provision of higher education is product-driven, influenced by competition both locally and internationally. Thus, the need for examining the quality of services offered in universities and other HEIs is expected to redefine the products (such as quality of graduates) and ultimately lead to customer satisfaction. The Ugandan government has also realized that its survival of the development agenda is dependent on the long-term survival of the quality of graduates from her universities (Government of Uganda, 2020).

In response to this full understanding, the Ugandan government established the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and charged it with the mandate of, among others monitoring, evaluating and regulating higher education institutions (Government of Uganda, UOTIA, 2001). Consequently, all HEIs in Uganda are regulated, monitored and evaluated for compliance to academic standards by the NCHE with close involvement of institutional leadership, including the university Senate, Council and Quality Assurance directorate (Mayanja, 2020).

NCHE (2018) shows that the increase in enrolment in the higher education sector in Uganda has created many problems including the drop in quality for higher education. Other authors such as Martin and Stella (2007) cite the globalization forces, privatization, the genesis of academic fraud, education marketization, increasing demand for accountability and internationalization as factors responsible for the urgent need for educational monitoring and evaluation in institutions of higher learning.

The challenge with establishing a monitoring and evaluation system in Ugandan HEIs results from the fact that education services are often intangible and difficult to measure since the outcome is reflected in the transformation of individuals in their knowledge, their characteristics, and their behaviour (Hamzah, Purwati, & Kadir, 2018; Tsinidou, Gerogiannis & Fitsilis, 2010). The other factor that complicates the issues of implementing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism in Ugandan universities is linked to the failure to have a common accepted definition of quality that applies specifically to the higher education sector (Michael, 1998) and to compound all this, issues of autonomy in universities make the whole process complicated (Tsinidou, et al. 2010). A combination of the factors above, coupled with the infancy stage of the Ugandan higher education system, have compelled the NCHE to concentrate on institutional and programme accreditation based on reports from NCHE-appointed inspectors and assessors of HEI facilities and resources of the institution (NCHE, 2018) to conduct M & E.

Definitions of M&E Concepts

The term monitoring and evaluation, usually abbreviated as M&E, consists of two constituent words - monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring is defined as a continuous function that uses systematic collection of data on some specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds (Chirau, Tirivanhu, Waller, & Robertson, 2018). It is the systematic collection, analysis and subsequent use of information collected, so that policies and programmes/projects are effective and the management is results-based (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022; Vision,

2020). Monitoring can be understood as regular collection of information and data to measure progress of projects and activities, to enable us track performance and resource utilisation over time (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022). Monitoring enables effective decision-making, learning from past actions and ensures accountability for resources being used (Chirau, Tirivanhu, Waller, & Robertson, 2018).

Evaluation, on the other hand, is the process of determining the worth or significance of a development activity, policy, programme or project (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022; Chirau, Tirivanhu, Waller, & Robertson, 2018). Evaluation tells us how well the project has achieved its objectives and how much change in outcome can be directly linked to project evaluation. Evaluation assesses the information collected through monitoring in an objective manner in order to demonstrate whether activities and outcomes are relevant, effective, efficient, sustainable and whether desired impacts are being achieved (Chirau, Tirivanhu, Waller, & Robertson, 2018).

After defining monitoring and evaluation separately, we now need a joint definition of monitoring and evaluation or M&E in short. M&E refers to a continuous management function for assessing if progress is made in achieving expected results, to spot bottlenecks in implementation and to highlight whether there are any unintended effects, including the positive and negative effects from an investment plan, programme or project, and its activities (Chirau, Tirivanhu, Waller, & Robertson, 2018). M&E focuses on assessment of performance of the institution's strategic plans, and the sector's investment plans with the help of a balance score card framework, using and analysing data from the institution's own surveys and performance reports (Vision, 2040). Thus, M&E is an embedded concept, and part and parcel of every project and program design. M&E is a critical part of programme management and implementation cycle.

M&E are complementary, both are necessary to engage and satisfy the range of stakeholders in any monitoring and evaluation intervention. This process enables effective governance of projects and programmes, demonstration of value for money and outcomes from funded programmes, continued learning resulting in continuous improvement; and transparency from inception through to the realization of outcomes and benefits (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022).

Baguma (2017) outlines three ways of conceptualizing M&E. These include compliance M&E which is conducted by external oversight entities such as the National Council for Higher Education and the Department of Higher Education in the Ministry of Education and Sports. Social Accountability M&E is anchored on public accountability while internal M&E focuses on learning. He advocates for strong and effective institutions for ensuring compliance to systems, standards and procedures which form a results culture thereby guaranteeing quality service delivery (Baguma, 2017, p.xi).

He further advocates for initiatives aimed at providing information to clients (students) on what they are entitled to, so as to increase their participation in social accountability initiatives and contribute to quality service delivery (p.xi). These initiatives may include the appointment or election of student and staff representatives to such committees and boards where performance of staff is monitored and evaluated such as the college academic board, university senate and council (Makerere University, 2012). As a tool for learning, M&E improves organizational processes and performance thereby contributing to quality service delivery (Baguma, 2017).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Chirau, Tirivanhu, Waller, & Robertson (2018) have shown that a M&E plan is the basis for evidence-based decision making. It helps organizations catch problems early since projects always do not go as planned. So, a well-designed M&E plan helps projects to stay on track. The M&E plan helps projects to

define project scope, identify the risk and design mitigation measures. As monitoring is a regular activity, it helps to see problems early and we can accordingly devise solutions to mitigate them (Baguma, 2017). Secondly, M&E can help to ensure that resources are used effectively. The information collected through the monitoring process helps us to determine if the resources are being utilized efficiently or they are being wasted. If the resources are being wasted, it can be prevented. May be the project did not consider such circumstances or the wastage was not foreseen and it was unveiled only during the implementation phase. So, M&E helps in effective management of resources (Government of Uganda, 2020; Uganda Vision 2040).

M&E can help organisations learn from the mistakes. Whereas mistakes and failures are part of every project and programme, a good M&E evaluation process provides a good record of everything that went right and everything that went wrong within a project. So, with good M&E system, we should be able to point out specific failures as opposed to just guessing the problem. So, in a way, we can all learn from our mistakes. M&E improves data-driven decision making. The M&E process provides us with essential information needed to make the best possible decisions. A good M&E can help us to identify mistakes and record success, to avoid the mistakes and replicate the success in future. A good M&E system helps organisations stay organized. A good M&E system details all the desired impact, outcome and output. All the matters for collection, distribution and analysis of information are also covered. So, M&E plan can help the team or organisation to be more organized and focused in their job. Lastly, a good M&E results in better transparency and accountability. With a constant track of activities, analysis and reporting on a project during the monitoring phase, there is more transparency as stakeholders are well-informed about the project and are not kept in dark.

Developing a Results-based M&E System for Higher Education

The term system (the M&E system) connotes the various interconnected parts that help us to achieve our objectives. The system includes the what, why, how and when of M&E, that is, what (indicators of what we are measuring), why do we measure them? how do we measure them? and when do we measure them? (CSNM, 2022). All these are illustrated in Figure 1 below.
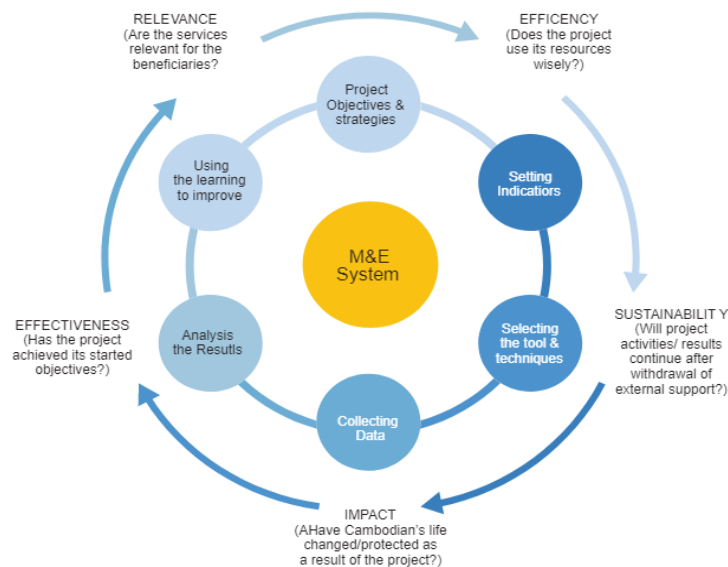

Figure 1: A Comprehensive View of a Monitoring and Evaluation System

Source: CSNM (2022)

A results-based M&E system has got three key words that we need to first understand; these are results, M&E; and system. By results we mean the achievements that have been made as a result of a project's intervention. They can be short-to-medium term, short term or long term. These are the things we want to measure to get an understanding of whether there has been any substantial change (CSNM, 2022). M&E tries to assess and track whether there has been any change as a result of the project's activities.

M&E systems are central in effective management of higher education projects and programs because timely M&E is the source of information for upholding accountability and compliance by determining if the planned work plans and schedules are being complied with in line with the institutional and donor standards/guidelines. As the project implementers reflect on and share experiences and lessons learned, M&E also contributes to organizational learning and knowledge -sharing, resulting in gaining of full benefit of what to do and how to do it (CSNM, 2022).

M&E provides management with accurate, evidence-based reporting that guides their decision-making for improved performance of the project or programme. M&E provides beneficiaries of educational projects, such as the students and employers, with an opportunity to give feedback about the intervention, their perceptions and what needs to change. M&E highlights what has been accomplished (achievements), builds morale and contributes to resource mobilisation (CSNM, 2022). A detailed M&E plan is developed as the project starts, documented clearly and shared with project implementers. It should be monitored throughout the project's life.

Why M&E is a Crucial Function in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Management

Education systems are designed to achieve specific purposes for which public resources are invested. Government and other stakeholders demand for accountability and value for money from schools and educators that receive a large proportion of the annual national budgetary resources allotted to the education sector. Each stakeholder, both internal and external, has got specific expectations about the quality of education and type of graduates churned out from a hi8gher education institution into the job market. Universities, Colleges, Institutes; and Vocational, Technical and Business Schools are constantly being monitored for compliance or defiance on some of the indicators for accessible and quality education by both internal and external quality assurance agencies (Government of Uganda, 2011; GOU, Uganda Vision 2040).

There are basic and applied skills, knowledge, values, and competences expected from a university graduate of the twenty-first century. The public, government, employers, parents/guardians, development partners (donors), and students themselves are concerned with questions such as what kind of Medical Doctor or Surgeon does Medical School X or Y churn out into our health facilities? What skills and competences in an Electrical, Mechanical, Civil or Building Engineer does a University X or Y impart? What kind of Lawyer from a certain University is competent enough to manage and represent clients in different cases before the Judiciary? These and other questions focused on the purpose of education, the quality of education, the kind of graduate desired, the learning experiences, skills, knowledge and competences in the content received by learners from the start to the end of educational programmes; the need for twenty-first skills in learners such as creativity, innovativeness, technology (ICT) literacy and others are the major reasons justifying the need for M&E in HEIs (Government of Uganda, 2011; Uganda Vision 2040).

Theoretical Perspective

This study adopted the Systems theory which was proposed in the 1940's by the biologist Ludwig (von Bertalanffy, 1968) and furthered by Ross Ashby (Ashby, 1956). von Bertalanffy was both reacting against

reductionism and attempting to revive the unity of science. He emphasized that real systems are open to, and interact with, their environments, and that they can acquire qualitatively new properties through emergence, resulting in continual evolution. The Systems Theory is an approach used in evaluation to understand complex social systems. The key concepts and principles of Systems Theory including holistic perspective, interconnectedness and interdependence, feedback loops, boundaries, and multiple perspectives. These key concepts and principles of Systems Theory provide a useful framework for analyzing the relationships and interdependencies between different components of a program or intervention. Systems Theory can help evaluators identify areas of strength and weakness, and develop strategies for program improvement. This study will however adopt all the three components under the interconnectedness and interdependence

1. **Network analysis** which involves mapping the relationships between different components of the system to understand how they are interconnected and interdependent;

2. **Dependency relationships** which involve understanding how changes to one component of the system can affect other components of the system.

3. **Cross-system interactions which** involve understanding how the system interacts with other systems and external factors, and how these interactions may affect the system's functioning.

The systems theory is known provides a holistic perspective on complex programs and interventions, allowing evaluators to understand the system as a whole and the interrelationships between its components. It is also useful in evaluating dynamic and complex systems, as it allows evaluators to account for the various factors that influence program outcomes. This approach also encourages stakeholder engagement in evaluation activities to ensure that the evaluation is relevant and meaningful to stakeholders. Lastly, it emphasizes the collaborative and participatory approach which can help build trust and facilitate communication among stakeholders. Despite the strength of the systems theory, it is also known for some limitations which include issues with its complexity in analysis which is challenging, the significant data requirements which can be time-consuming and expensive to collect and analyze; specificity gaps in identifying specific causal relationships between system components and program outcomes and the limited generalizability gap.

Purpose of the Study

To investigate how the practices employed in the Monitoring and Evaluation processes contribute to the overall goal of Higher Education Institutions in Uganda.

Specific Objectives

1) To examine the legal framework of monitoring and evaluation in Uganda's higher education institutions

2) To formulate monitoring and evaluation policy in higher education institutions

3) To assess the establishment of constituent colleges of Makerere university

4) To examine how monitoring and evaluation policy affects university teaching quality

5) To assess how the M & E policies are performed at the university senates and council committees.

Specific Research Questions

1) Examine the legal framework of monitoring and evaluation in Uganda's higher education institutions.

2) Formulate a monitoring and evaluation policy in higher education institutions.

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3) Assess the establishment of constituent colleges of Makerere university.

4) Examine how monitoring and evaluation policy affects university teaching quality.

5) Assess how the M & E policies are performed at the university senates and council committees.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study applied Document review method where many Government policies were reviewed. Most of the documents reviewed are for higher institutions of learning especially universities.

4.0 FINDINGS

Findings of the review shows the following results as per each reviewed policy

(i) The Legal Framework on M&E in Uganda's Higher Education Institutions

Uganda National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy for the Public sector (2011) emphasizes the Government of Uganda (GOU)'s commitment to achieving results through efficient and effective delivery of key public services, a commitment embedded in the country's National Vision that aims at a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years (Government of Uganda, 2011). Monitoring and Evaluation is one of the various strategies suggested by Government for achievement of this Vision in management of sectors concerned with public service, including higher education.

Additionally, the Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) has prioritized the concept of quality assurance in the sector at all education levels (Government of Uganda, 2004). In the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004 – 2015, the MoES has one of its objectives as ensuring an effective and efficient education sector, through quality assurance and accountability. This is expected to be met through developing and maintaining a coherent and feasible system of standards and performance monitoring. It anchors its need for quality education into national purposes of Uganda's education system articulated in the government White Paper (1992), aiming at promoting citizenship; moral, ethical, and spiritual values; promote scientific, technical and cultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes; eradicate literacy and equip individuals with basic skills and knowledge and with the ability to "contribute to the building of an integrated, self-sustaining and independent national economy."

Th Act regulating higher education in Uganda, known as the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001, gives mandate and powers to the university Senate to be in charge of teaching, research and the general standards of education and research and their M&E. The Senate can, however, delegate any of its powers or functions to a faculty/School, board of studies or Committee as it may deem fit. This mandate is reiterated by Mayanja, (2020) who emphasizes that universities have different organs that play an oversight function, including the university council, council committees, the senate, top management team, and staff associations among others.

On top of that, different higher education institutions hold individual quality assurance policy frameworks that streamline their evaluation systems and frameworks. Makerere University for example, has a Quality Assurance Policy Framework (2007) with an aim of enhancing the effectiveness of the university's core activities of learning, teaching, research performance, research training and management. All these frameworks are intended to streamline monitoring and evaluation in Ugandan higher education institutions to ensure quality.

(ii) Formulation of M&E Policy in Public Higher Education Institutions

The Uganda National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy for the Public sector (2011) stipulates a framework for monitoring and evaluation of government projects (Government of Uganda, 2011). Its purpose is stated as improving the performance of the public sector through the strengthening of the operational, coordinated, and cost-effective production and use of objective information on implementation and results of national strategies, policies, programmes and projects (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022). Kenya's draft M&E policy aims at harmonising M&E systems for all public projects, programmes and policies at all levels (National and County), ensuring timely and accurate reporting of progress and results at all levels (national and county), strengthening capacity to effectively monitor and evaluate policies, programmes and projects at all levels (national and county), ensuring effective coordination of M&E systems in the country, promoting a culture and practice of M&E in the country; and promotion of dissemination and communication (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022).

Any M&E policy in the public sector should be based on principles such as alignment with the constitution and national priorities, ownership, accountability and transparency, credibility and objectivity, ethics, using M&E evidence, learning, participatory and inclusiveness, timeliness and technology (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022).

Monitoring in public HEIs involves measurement of performance indicators in the university such as indicators for quality teaching, learning, research and community engagement. Evaluation focuses on value for money audits, mid-term and final evaluation, impact evaluation and lastly, the ex-ante and baseline evaluation all done during two phases of monitoring; the implementation and impact (Goldman, Chirau, Sossou, & Molaiwa, 2022). These evaluations are done against the activity, output, out-come and impact indicators. It is within this framework that both external and internal evaluation frameworks for public and private higher institutions of learning are anchored but consistent with and in the context of the University's Vision, Mission and Values (Makerere University, 2007).

According to the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (Government of Uganda, UOTIA, 2001), there are established statutory organs established to play an oversight role of M&E in HEIs. The top organs are the University Senate and Council. The Senate is the top academic organ that monitors and evaluates the quality of education and curriculum-related issues, while the University Council is the top governance organ, mandated with establishing policies for use in monitoring and evaluation of human resources, university assets, staff welfare, students' services and welfare, etc.

Mayanja (2020) briefly explains actions that universities in Uganda have taken to implement both external and internal evaluations. He says that externally, higher education institutions deploy external examiners to assess their students, external reviewers to assess quality of research proposals and dissertations, as well as guest speakers. These come with an independent eye so as to ensure quality products and services. This is consistent with Makerere University Quality Assurance, QA, Policy Framework policy (2007) which outlines the external evaluation measures to encompass evaluation of courses/programmes content and delivery, student assessment, programme resources, academic staff qualifications, scholarly work and professional development activities (Makerere University, 2007).

The QA policy also spells out components of its internal evaluation to include internal examination moderation procedures to ensure validity of student assessment and reliability of marking, assessment and monitoring of academic honesty, monitoring academic staff performance standards, self-study reports, standardized programme and course development procedures, such as the Senate-approved

guidelines/templates , an annual appraisal of what the department is trying to do (planning), what it has done, evaluation processes and outcomes, reviewing and making appropriate changes based on the data, academic and non-academic staff performance, taking measures to remedy gaps and mis-performance (Makerere University, 2007).

(iii) M&E Role of Units as Defined in the Establishment of Constituent Colleges of Makerere University Statute (2012)

Makerere University, the country's oldest and premier public university, established the Makerere University College Statute in 2012 to explicitly streamline the administration of large academic and administrative units of the institution (Government of Uganda, GOU, 2012). This statute places the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation of the quality of educational services and facilities on the leadership of the various components or units in the College. The statute envisages that each college at Makerere University shall be administered as a semi-autonomous entity within the larger university and the overall supervision of the college is the responsibility of the university council (GOU, 2012).

Being a management function, M&E is part of the governance university colleges as enshrined in the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, (GOU, UOTIA, 2001) and the College Statute (2012). Among the M&E functions of colleges at Makerere University that must be monitored and evaluated include; the provision of a place (suitable environment) for learning, education, research and service according to the mission and vision of the university, preparation of students through regular and professional courses for degrees, diplomas and certificates and other awards of the university, contribution to the intellectual life the university, focusing on economic, social, cultural and political development pertaining to the interests and changing life of society, establishing positions in accordance with the Act (UOTIA, 2001), university policies and regulations with the approval of the university council, and performing any other functions as may be determined by the university council (GOU, 2012, P.7).

Thus, according to the College Statute for Makerere University, it is the responsibility of College leadership to conduct regular M&E of services offered in their units to ensure that quality is not compromised. In the leadership of a college are members such as the Principal, deputy Principal, members of the constituent academic board, the college secretary, college bursar, college librarian, college registrar, the professors, lecturers and teaching assistants of the college, the deans, academic librarian, researchers of the university in the college, if any, plus the technologists or clinicians of the college. In addition to these leaders, colleges at Makerere are also composed of students, alumni, administrators and other members that the university council may consider from time to time to be members of the college (GOU, 2012). Schools, departments, centres and institutes are all constituent units of a college.

Colleges have legally defined powers, functions and responsibilities that enable them achieve M&E role. Among those laid down in the Statute include ensuring proper discharge of the academic affairs of the university, ensuring the implementation of the strategic plan of the university, registration, examination and recommendation of results for approval by the university senate and issuance of academic transcripts to students, planning, budgeting and executing of budgets as approved by the university council, raising revenue from various sources and programmes as may be approved by the university council, management of university assets at the college, initiating, planning and executing projects and programmes within the university guidelines, promoting and protecting the name, brand and image of the university, and exercising such other functions as may be prescribed by the university council (GOU, 2012).

It is therefore within the mandate of each officer/leader of a college to implement the above functions, powers and responsibility by monitoring and evaluating activities within their dockets. For example, a

college registrar, working with the university's academic registrar and the admission board, is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the process of admission of students to a college to ensure that qualified students are admitted while paying special detail to the affirmative action policy in favour of the admission of marginalized groups such as students with disability, those from disadvantaged schools and gender issues in the admission process. He/she also ensures that persons with special talents in sports, music and other social entertainment activities are duly considered in the admission process (GOU, 2012 P.7).

The overall officer responsible for M&E in a college is the Principal. This is a person at the helm of the college leadership, an Associate Professor or Professor, with proven managerial experience in a given field. In consultation with the relevant organs and officers of the university for guidance, the Principal, serves as the chief administrative, academic and financial officer of the college responsible for promoting and maintaining academic excellence, efficiency and good order at the college. He/she implements university policies and enforces applicable regulations at the college. A principal is deputized by a deputy Principal who is the overseer and supervisor of academic affairs in the college, including review and development of academic programmes, approval of results, time tabling and monitoring the teaching in various schools and departments, monitoring the integrity of university examinations, etc. In performing these duties, this officer is assisted by deans of schools who report directly to him/her. Deans are the supervisors of Heads/Chairs of Departments who manage, monitor and evaluate the work of academic, administrative and support staff in their respective departments. The department is the lowest academic unit in a college (GOU, 2012 P.7).

M&E in colleges is basically performed by established boards and committees recognised in the statute. These include College Administrative Board (CAB), the College Establishment and Appointments Committee (EAC), Quality Assurance, gender and ICT committee, contracts committee. The academic monitoring and evaluation role is a responsibility of the college academic board. This board consists of the Principal, deputy Principal, deans of schools, departmental chairs, all coordinators of centres, two student representatives, one for undergraduate and another for graduate students, college librarian, senate representatives of the college and two senior members of staff elected by academic staff in the college. The college registrar is the secretary to this board.

At the lowest academic unit (the department), departmental chairs/heads conduct routine appraisal of all staff in their units, thereby ensuring that there is efficiency, good performance and accountability by each member of staff in the unit. Chairs/heads of department are in turn appraised, monitored and evaluated by the dean of the respective school while deans are appraised, monitored and evaluated by the deputy Principal of the college. The deputy Principal is appraised, monitored and evaluated by the Principal of the College. Principals are appraised by the top university management including the Vice Chancellor and his deputies. These top university officers are appraised, monitored and evaluated by the University Council.

(iv) M&E of University Teaching Quality

As already indicated, the overarching goal of M&E is quality improvement in the institution and rendering quality service delivery (Baguma, 2017). M&E is therefore closely linked to quality assurance (QA), here defined as the policies, procedures and practices put in place within the institution for maintaining and enhancing quality (Nabaho, 2016). QA in higher education serves two purposes, one of accountability (the purpose of external M&E or QA) and another of improvement (the purpose of internal M&E or external QA).

M&E of the quality of teaching in a university can be conducted using a variety of approaches or tools (Nabaho, Aguti & Oonyu 2016). For example, Student evaluation of teaching (SET) uses questionnaires that are given to students to evaluate the quality of instruction by their instructors at the end of every lecture, course or semester. However, one of the draw-backs of this approach is the reluctance of university administrators and managers to utilise the students' feedback seriously to improve on the policies for improvement of teaching quality. Another challenge is the lack of a culture of giving feedback at earlier levels of education, resulting in the students answering the questions unserious.

Another M&E approach for teaching quality is peer observation of teaching, which involves colleagues from the same department, subject or discipline giving and receiving feedback from one another on the quality of teaching and effectiveness in promoting student learning (Nabaho, Aguti & Oonyu 2016). Giving out teaching excellence awards is another approach resulting from M&E of teaching in the university. These are intended to recognise and celebrate excellently performing teachers, promote teaching excellence, disseminate best teaching practices and create teaching role models who can motivate other faculty to enhance their own teaching practices (Nabaho et al. 2016).

(v) University Senate and Council Committees' Roles in M&E

The Senate, according to the UOTIA (2001), is the chief academic organ of the university which approves all academic policies and monitors the quality and standards of teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community outreach services by members of the university community. The same Act establishes the University Council as the supreme governing body that formulates governance policies.The quality of academic programmes and curricula are a critical reflection of the quality of graduates from an institution of higher learning. The University Senate is tasked with ensuring that the quality and standards of education at the university remains competitive by putting in place academic policies, guidelines and regulations for quality education. The provision of the best learning environment and experiences, production of highly skilled and competent and graduates are the main focus of the senate. Senate reports to council which is the supreme governing organ of the university. Council establishes governance policies concerned with efficient human resource management, management of university assets, branding the university, and any other policies for the effective governance of the university.

Both the Senate and Council execute their business through Committees that furnish Senate or Council with reports that are debated and passed as policies for academic affairs and governance matters respectively. For example, the Council Committee on Quality Assurance and Gender Mainstreaming is responsible for academic and gender mainstreaming issues in the university. It is concerned with restructuring of academic programmes to ensure that they remain relevant and responsible to the changing needs of society and employers. It has two sub-committees, that is a sub-committee on academic restructuring and a sub-committee on gender mainstreaming. The two directorates of this committee are the Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD) and Gender Mainstreaming Directorate (GMD). The M&E plan in the university can be described as a bottom – top process because the committees of organs at higher levels (senate and council) receive and consider business initiated from lower academic units of the university such as departments and schools, thereby ensuring that all decisions made at high levels are a result of a popular, participatory and consultative process.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Different higher education institutions hold individual quality assurance policy frameworks that streamline their evaluation systems and frameworks. Any M&E policy in the public sector should be based

on principles such as alignment with the constitution and national priorities, ownership, accountability and transparency, credibility and objectivity and evaluations are done against the activity, output, outcome and impact indicators. Higher education institutions deploy external examiners to assess their students, external reviewers to assess quality of research proposals and dissertations, as well as guest speakers.

Among the M&E functions of colleges at Makerere University that must be monitored and evaluated include; the provision of a place (suitable environment) for learning, education, research and service according to the mission and vision of the university, preparation of students through regular and professional courses for degrees, diplomas and certificates and other awards of the university, contribution to the intellectual life the university, focusing on economic, social, cultural and political development.

Recommendations

- Monitoring and evaluation should be implemented even in the secondary and primary education
- Institutions should have both internal and external evaluations for consistency and transparency
- More research should be done on the challenges facing the established policies in higher education institutions of learning in Uganda
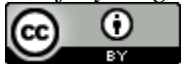
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