

**MANAGERS' PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES IN
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI:
THE CASE OF CHANCELLOR COLLEGE, THE POLYTECHNIC AND
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE**

MASTER PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT THESIS

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M.A. (Public administration and management) Thesis

By

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Administration and Management

University of Malawi

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used acknowledgements have been made.

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Signature

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval

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ABSTRACT

The quality of university education has become such a high-profile issue, in the 21st century due to the changes and challenges that face the entire education system in the world. The rise in student population through adoption and application of different modes of learning, have raised concerns about quality of public university education. The study sought to explore the views and understanding of higher education managers on being appointed as academic leaders in a higher education context in Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face as leaders in higher education institutions. The study had three research objectives; to determine the nature and magnitude of leadership challenges facing Malawi's public universities in relation to their missions, to determine the implications of leadership challenges on the quality of university education and to identify the strategies public universities have put in place to cope with leadership challenges to ensure quality of education. This study was qualitative in nature; hence employed descriptive design. The study was carried out in three Malawi's public universities which were purposively sampled. The study established that public universities, that took part in the study, did not have enough teaching and learning resources. The study found out that insufficient fund was the biggest management challenge as it affected all the other areas of research, teaching and learning. It was also revealed that the curriculum was not adequately implemented due to inadequate teaching and learning resources and teaching staff. All these management challenges were found to have an implication on leadership and the quality of education offered in the universities. The study recommends that, the universities and the government should establish appropriate, reliable, diversified and sustainable mechanisms for financing university operations. More importantly, universities should put in place clear curriculum regulatory processes and improve lecturers' incentive system.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYM

PAS	Political and Administrative studies
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science Education and Technology
ODL	Open Distance Learning

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

This thesis presents the findings from a qualitative research study that was conducted with three Public colleges in Malawi namely: Chancellor College, The Polytechnic and College of Medicine. The participants in the study talk about challenges they face in leadership as academic leaders. The research was guided by Relational Leadership Theory.

In this introductory chapter the rationale of this study is explained and an overview of the thesis is provided. The chapter starts off by presenting the context within which this study was conducted as well as the researcher's background. This is followed by definition of terms that are commonly used in the thesis. It then proceeds to explain the rationale and objectives of the study. The theoretical background used in this study is briefly outlined. Finally, an overview of the way in which the study was conducted is provided.

The demand for university education all over the world continues to increase as human population keeps growing, and competition to access space in universities rises every year. Similarly, demand for new skills at workplace necessitates furtherance of education and training for employees, and this also adds more pressure to the limited spaces that are available for learning at university level.

To respond to this increasing pressure, university institutions are expanding fast, especially in developing countries. Whilst new universities are being created to meet the demand, the higher education sector has been diversified through various establishments of higher learning outside traditional universities such as community colleges, teacher training colleges, polytechnics, open universities and distance education centres which have mushroomed.

As a result of these changes which have been widely conditioned by the ever increasing student numbers on the one hand and decreasing or stagnation of resources allocation on the other, the university institutions are confronted with a lot of challenges.

1.2 Study Background

The purpose of this study is to explore the views and understanding of managers in institutions of higher learning on being appointed as academic leaders considering that expansions, diversification of public university education have brought new challenges to university management in Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face as leaders in institutions of higher education, in the context of Malawi.

The vision of the University of Malawi is to be a center of excellence in higher education for sustainable development of Malawi and the region and its main aim is to provide the highest quality of education.

The study was conducted in three (3) constituent colleges of the University of Malawi: Chancellor College, Malawi Polytechnic and the College of Medicine which were selected through purposive sampling technique due to their uniqueness:

The study was designed for a sample size of 51 upon considering that 10% of the accessible population is enough for descriptive studies (Gay, 1992; Mugenda & Mugenda 1999; Kasomo, 2006). The study used questionnaire as a tool to obtain factual data and opinions in a structural framework from the respondents (Nisbet, 1970). Five sets of questionnaires were used to collect the required data.

1.3 The development of university education in Malawi

The University of Malawi – considered as the mother university in Malawi - was founded in 1964. Teaching started on 29th September 1965 at the newly established campus in Blantyre in structures which used to be an Asian Secondary School. 90 students were enrolled in the commencement year. By 1967, the then Institute of Public Administration at Mpemba, Soche Hill College of Education, the Polytechnic, all these in Blantyre, and Bunda College of Agriculture in Lilongwe were incorporated as constituent colleges of the University of Malawi. Except Bunda College and the

Polytechnic, the other colleges were amalgamated into one college and moved to Zomba in 1973 to what became the Chancellor College campus.

Kamuzu College of Nursing became the fourth constituent college in September 1979. In 1991 the College of Medicine was established in Blantyre as the fifth constituent college of the University of Malawi.

One cannot conceive of higher education in Malawi without talking about the mother of all universities – the University of Malawi. Since its establishment, the University of Malawi has been instrumental in training and development of a reliable human resource that has gone to serve various sectors of society in the country and beyond its borders.

The recent boom of Private Universities in the country has partly been possible because there has been an availability of personnel to run the universities a larger percentage of this personnel was at some level trained by University of Malawi. Graduates from the University of Malawi have gone to excel in other university in the region and beyond as graduate students as well as faculty staff members.

1.4 Problem statement

In this study, I attempt to assess the management challenges that leaders face in higher education considering that they have a pure academic background. In the twentieth century, Universities are operating in a highly competitive environment that requires strong academic leadership. Some managers have been appointed into leadership positions after having served as academics for a few years (Jooste et al., 2018). This situation makes it more likely for these leaders to experience leadership challenges. The effective leadership of universities is a crucial issue for policy makers, leaders themselves and for university staff. Gibbs et al. (2009) argue that leadership is a critical factor in sustaining and improving the quality and performance of universities.

The current trends in higher education settings are that leadership positions are filled by academic staff who are appointed with limited experience in structured management or leadership roles and responsibilities (Parrish, 2015). Garwe (2014) states that heads of departments are mostly prominent academics that do not possess any formal training beyond their academic credentials, achievements and experiences in academia. Apart from holding a senior position, a staff member can be appointed by a department to serve as a head.

Furthermore, recruitment of academic leaders should take cognizance of the higher education context that is confronted with issues such as those of equity, inclusion and diversity, and stimulating the changes needed for the embedding of social justice (Spendlove, 2007). This situation requires strong academic leadership of heads of departments in universities.

Managers in institutions of higher education have a unique position in their institutions therefore the problems which they meet may not be the same as those met by other stakeholders. and their perceptions may also have different implications to the quality and future of university education (Taylor et al., 2006).

Therefore, the main concern of this study is to explore the views and understanding of higher education managers on being appointed as academic leaders in a higher education context in Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face in higher education institutions. The study also intends to examine whether heads of departments feel that they are fully prepared for challenges associated with higher education leadership.

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to critically examine the managers' perceptions towards the leadership challenges they face in public universities of Malawi.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives of this study are:

- a) To determine the nature and magnitude of leadership challenges facing Malawi's public universities in relation to their missions.
- b) To assess or examine the implications of leadership challenges on the quality of university education.
- c) To identify the strategies which public universities have put in place to cope with leadership challenges to ensure high quality of education.

Overall research question?

It is along the same understanding as described above that the study investigated the key research question below:

□ Is there any relationship between managers perception and the leadership challenges they face in higher education institutions in Malawi?

1.6 Justifications for the Study

This study is an attempt to examine the leadership challenges of managers of higher education institutions and the issue of how leaders in the higher education system perceive them.

The results of this study are significant in several respects:

Firstly, the findings will add to the body of literature in the area under study. This literature will provide empirical evidence that would help formulation of interventions, if necessary, in order to improve the quality of learning, teaching, and the whole learning environment in public universities. This research may reveal views and understanding of managers in institutions of higher learning on being appointed as academic leaders in those institutions in the context of Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face as leaders in higher education institutions.

Secondly, the findings of the study may help public universities to re-design their strategies and policies in the provision of university education in order to cope with the management challenges they are facing with an aim of ensuring that high quality of education at university level is maintained.

Thirdly, findings from this study may be useful to government of Malawi through the National Council of Higher Education in Malawi (NCHE) by bringing to light the state of, resources that are provided to the Universities and need to governance policies for university education. Fourthly, the findings may provide an assurance to the general public, employers, students and other stakeholders by providing evidence of the level of quality in public university education.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

The thesis is comprised of five chapters. The first chapter consists of study background; the development of university education in Malawi; problem statement; study objectives and justifications. Chapter two reviews the literature in relation to the study objectives and presents the conceptual framework for the study. It discusses key concepts in the study such as revolution of leadership theory, transformative leadership,

development of relational leadership theory, academic leadership, university education, development of universities in Africa, Issues and Challenges of University Education in Africa and Education policies in Malawi.

Chapter three of this thesis presents the research framework for the study. It begins by presenting the conceptualization of important terms in the study. It also outlines methods and tools used to collect data. Sampling techniques that were employed, sample size, methods of data analysis will follow thereafter.

Chapter four presents research findings of the study. The chapter presents findings on the challenges which university leaders meet and their implications on quality of education and the perceptions of managers on these challenges. The last chapter of the thesis summarizes the study findings.

1.8 Chapter conclusion

This chapter provides a general background to the study and its focus. It has also given an outline of this thesis. The next chapter presents and discusses the relevant literature to this study and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This is a literature review chapter. There are basically three forms of literature review that will guide this research and these will include; integrative review, where the researcher singles out summaries of past research: theoretical review, in which the researcher focuses on the extent to which the theoretical framework to the problem is being studied and finally methodological review, where the researcher will focus on the methods and definitions of leadership in higher education institutions.

Based on these methods, the research will combine integrative and theoretical methods of literature review. Details of the relevant literature are presented and discussed below. The following is a review of the literature related to early theories and definitions of leadership through contemporary conceptualizations. Following the presentation of leadership theory, the emerging role of a leader in institutions of higher learning as compared with the historical perspective of this leader will be presented.

According to Bass (1990), the term leadership was originally used in the 18th century to define the political influence and control of the British Parliament. Inheritance or appointment was cited in the Anglo-Saxon countries as the most prevalent pathway to leadership. Leadership in this era was defined as the ability to influence others (Katz & Kahn, 1966). The evolution of the term leadership is evident in the work of Michener, DeLamater, and Schwartz (1990), which describes leadership “as a process that takes place in groups in which one member influences and controls the behavior of the other members towards some common goal” (p. 343), suggesting that the control of employees was a necessary element of effective leadership.

More recently, Northouse (2001) elaborates on the definition of leadership as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members. Most relevant to our interest here in exploring relational leadership is the shift from the conceptualization of leadership as the ability to control to the concept of leadership as collaborative, caring, courageous, intuitive, and visionary, (James et al., 2007). In order to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of relational leadership, the following theories of leadership are explored; the evolution of leadership theory, transformative leadership theory, and relational leadership theory.

The relevance that this exploration holds for leadership in institutions of higher education in the dynamic context of the 21st century is reflective of the society that it serves; therefore, these institutions are revolutionising and require leadership styles that will provide vision that leads into the 21st century. The following description of the evolution of leadership theory provides a historical perspective of leadership theory that influenced higher education leaders through the 20th century and beyond.

2.2 The Evolution of Leadership Theory

According to Burns (1978, p. 3), “leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth.” Like the definition of leadership, theories of leadership have also evolved over time. In the 18th and 19th century, the “Great Man” theory assumed that the personal attributes of great men determined the course of history (Denmark, 1993). As compared to his followers, a great man was believed to have unique and exceptional qualities and abilities that were believed to be innate. Following the “Great Man” theory, research on traits theories emerged. According to Bass (1990), during the period from 1904-1947, self-confidence, need for achievement, the ability to have motives to carry out an action, and self-monitoring were valued as leader traits that were unique and inborn. These traits were described in masculine terms, for only 4% of management roles were held by women (Parker & Fagenson, 1994).

After the 1940s, behavior theories emerged as a new way of conceptualizing leadership. Behavioral theories of leadership suggest that desirable characteristics of leaders could be acquired or learned. Over the next 25 years, women began to emerge as contributors to leadership theory even though the percentage of women in the workplace was

minimal (Book, 2000; Henning & Jardim, 1977; Hoyt, 2007). Despite efforts by theorists to demonstrate the contribution of women to leadership theory, the introduction of leadership styles in the 1970s continued to be heavily influenced by a bias toward masculine approaches to leadership being the most desirable and effective. Three types of leadership styles were defined: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire (Jogulu & Wood, 2006).

According to Hoyt (2007), early research examining style differences between men and women compared either interpersonally oriented and task-oriented styles or democratic and autocratic styles. In a meta-analysis by Eagly and Johnson (1990), women were not found to lead in a more interpersonal oriented and task-oriented manner than men in organizational studies unless the social role dictated the behavior in the setting. A later meta-analysis of gender differences in leadership found that women led in a more democratic or participative manner than men (Eagly, et al., 2003). Bass (1990) defined feminist leadership qualities as caring, considerate, and easy to compromise in addition to a sense of responsibility and attachment to followers.

2.3 Transformative Leadership

Burns (1978) developed a comprehensive theory to explain the differences between political leaders and coined the terms “transactional” and “transformational” leadership. Burns defines transactional leaders as people who emphasize work standards and have aims that are task-oriented, and transformational leaders as those who identify potential in their followers.

Transactional leaders are often characterized with strong masculine qualities, such as competitiveness, hierarchical authority, high control for the leader, and analytical problem solving (Klenke, 1993). In contrast, Klenke describes feminine traits as being synonymous with cooperation, collaboration, lower control for the leader, and problem solving based on intuition and rationality. This style of leadership is closely aligned to transformational leadership. The development of transactional and transformational leadership theory marks the shift to the paradigm towards recognizing women in leadership and clearly acknowledging and valuing their feminine characteristics (Jogulu & Wood, 2006). It is evident that the construction of leadership has an inherent gender quality (Lewis, 2016).

In 1995, Regan and Brooks expanded on the tenets of transformational leadership to describe a visionary leader who has the intellectual capacity to embrace the plausible and the implausible, who thinks globally and reaches beyond the moment, and applies both divergent and convergent thinking to affect change. The researchers describe this leader as a relational leader, a concept which is very central in this study and one that is considered in-depth in the section that follows.

Transformative leadership involves an initial choice (Montuori et al., 2017). It is an active decision to acknowledge the current transformative moment, to develop agency by consciously participating in it, and to give this change a direction that allows individuals to embody higher values. In other words, to lead by creating the future in the present.

Transformative leaders are everyday citizens (not necessarily heroic, charismatic, or “born” leaders) who, during a time of planetary transformation choose to engage in a transformative process to mobilize their creativity so that they may “lead” their own lives (as opposed to being led by what they feel are outdated traditions, habits, social roles, demands, and pressures they feel they can no longer accept), make a creative contribution towards leading society towards what they consider a better future (Montuori, 2010).

The term transformative leadership has been used in different ways in the literature. As articulated here, it is somewhat broader than the important definition and articulation by Carol Shields (2010,2012,2014). Shields’ work was developed in the context of educational leadership, drawing on the work of Brazilian educational philosopher Paulo Freire. Shields’s definition of transformative leadership is focused on social justice. The definition we articulate here is not exclusive to the domain of educational leadership, nor does it focus exclusively on social justice, in the sense that Shields explicitly states that her approach to transformative leadership sheds what she refers to as any psychological “trappings,” in order to focus “much more directly on sociological and cultural elements of organizations and the wider society in which they are embedded” (p. 5–29).

Unlike Shields’ definition, transformative leadership as defined here actively embraces the psychological and spiritual as well as the social world and the quest for social justice (Montuori, 2010). In fact, one of the key aspects of transformative leadership as we define it here is precisely the need to combine personal and social transformation and view them as a process that occur hand-in-hand (Montuori, 2010). In this sense,

transformative leadership draws extensively on the notion of transformational leadership developed by Burns and Bass (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns 2004).

James McGregor Burns' articulation of transformational leadership drew extensively on humanistic psychology and specifically the work of psychologist Abraham Maslow (Burns, 2010). For Burns, leadership is a creative act. For Bass, transformational leaders are charismatic, build trust, act with integrity, encourage others, encourage innovative thinking, and coach and develop their people (Bass, 1985). One key difference between transformational and transformative leadership lies in the latter's view of leadership as an "everyday, everyone, everywhere," relational process. In a time of transition and confusion, it is more than ever the case that leadership is not to be found in, and practiced by, only a few selected individuals, particularly in light of the emerging networked culture of collaboration, or "We" culture (Bauwens, 2007; Leadbeter, 2009; Rainie & Wellman, 2012).

It is also the case that in a time of great disequilibrium, even small actions make a difference and contribute to creating our present and future – in any context. Transformative leadership is "everyone, everywhere, everyday" leadership. Everyone can be a transformative leader; it does not involve a specific type of person (like a "born leader," or someone with specific characteristics) or require a specific position in any system (Montuori, 2010).

Transformative leadership does not have a privileged locus, like in an organization (whether for profit or not for profit) with specific roles and lines of authority or a community (Montuori, 2010). It can manifest in any context, which also means that it crosses the divide between "public" and "private." It can therefore manifest in very "everyday" activities and does not require or demand grand gestures or contexts (Montuori, 2010).

Furthermore, transformative leadership proposes that "everyday" activities and small additional incremental actions can be transformative (Jullien, 2011). The fundamental assumption is that human beings lead and create all the time, wherever they are and whoever they are (Montuori, 2010). Transformative leadership involves first of all an acknowledgment, or a recognition of this "everydayness," drawing on Bateson's insight that all behaviour is communication (Bateson, 1972) and not communicating is also

communication. Not paying a bill, not voting, not answering an e-mail, not talking are all forms of communication (Montuori, 2010) .

Human beings are not just observing the world, they are not bystanders, but are already in the world, participating (even when they think they are not), leading (by example) and cocreating every conversation, every movement, and even every habit. This participatory view broadens the question of whether I am leading/creating to how and what am I leading/creating (Montuori, 2010). Transformative leadership provides orienting concepts, a broad conceptual framework for individuals who want to live in the world in a way that is both more creative and more interconnected, more personal, as well as more social, a way of being in the world that embodies their highest ideals and allows them to make a contribution that reflects their values, hopes, and concerns (Montuori, 2010).

Transformative leadership is aspirational since there is no assumption of achievement or completion; its mission is a journey into the unknown and fundamentally a journey of interpersonal creation. One of the characteristics of our transformative moment is that the very concepts and practices like leadership, creativity, the future, even “better,” as in “a better world,” that are traditionally associated with change and transformation, are now destabilized, changing, contested, morphing, and transforming into something other than what they were (Gidley 2010; Kellerman 2012; Montuori & Purser, 1995; Ogilvy, 2002). Heroic Great Man and Lone Genius figures are being questioned, but they are by no means “dead,” as the increasing number of “strong man” leaders at the helm of national states indicates.

We certainly hope the future is not dead, although it may smell funny, as Frank Zappa famously said of jazz. Transformative leadership reflects an aspiration to “lead” one’s life, to create one’s own form of leadership, to collaborate with others to somehow contribute to making the world a better place. But at the same time, there is no clearly established way to do so, let alone “one right way.” Transformative leadership is aspirational because it is an invitation to embody futures that barely exist in the imagination.

Transformative leadership is intended to orient at a time when people want to make a difference and find it is necessary for them to reflect deeply about what that means. The complexity of the current situation, its transitional and transformative nature, does not

lend itself to easy answers. There is much skepticism about social and political movements (Achieve, 2017), and about techno-centric solutionism, since so many of the “solutions” of the past have become the problems of the present.

The conjunction of personal and social transformation coincides with asking questions about what really matters, what it means to be a human being, what human beings are capable of, what it means to “know,” and how we can relate to others. Core metaphors about the nature of the world are changing, and one of the emerging alternatives to a view of the world as a giant clockwork, or a Machine which emerged with the Newtonian/Cartesian revolution (Capra & Luisi, 2014; Morgan, 2006), is the view of an interconnected process of creation (Swimme & Tucker, 2011).

Traditional assumptions, whether about the nature and role of women and men, or the relationship between human beings and nature, are being questioned. Individuals who choose to identify as transformative leaders may defy the traditional images and stereotypes of what constitutes a leader, and how a leader act. They question and mostly reject the old images and stereotypes of “great man” leaders, not least because many of them are women, people of color, or those with marginalized sexual orientations or gender identities. They do want to “lead” their own lives and are not satisfied with hand-me-down lives. They want to break out of being taken for granted assumptions of how a life could and should be lived and create for themselves and those around them lives worth living. Transformative leadership therefore, provides a generative framework for leaders, orienting them towards emergent ways of being, relating, knowing, and doing (Montuori, 2010).

Transformative leadership bridges “heroic leadership” and “leaderless organizations.” It is not just about heroic individuals fighting against all odds and leading their devoted followers to victory, (although there are plenty of remarkable individuals and acts of heroism) (Montuori, 2010). It is also not about organizations that have no leaders, or that rejects leaders, or do not recognize the role of individuals in favor exclusively of collective coordination (although self-organizing teams and leaderless organizations exist and represent a growing trend).

Transformative leaders are adaptable; they can be both leaders and followers, they can embrace the notion of emergence and hierarchy (Stephenson, 2009), with shifting leadership roles based on competence and contextual appropriateness, as well as

participating in swarms, flash mobs, and other forms of collective action. Most of all, transformative leadership is about participation and collaborative creation (Montuori, 2010).

Transformative leadership involves a conscious choice to participate in a process of collaborative creation for mutual benefit (Montuori, 2010) .

2.4 Development of Relational Leadership Theory

This study is guided by relational leadership - oriented theory. Relational leadership is defined as a pattern of reciprocal interrelating between workers and managers to make sense of the situation, to determine what is to be done and how to do it (Gittell & Douglass, 2012). Ramsden (1998) is a qualitative researcher with a focus on effective leadership in higher education settings. His relational leadership-oriented theory makes clear distinctions between leaders and followers (Ramsden, 1998) and signifies the relationships in which people work together. He believed that dimensions of leadership are evidenced in every aspect of the academic development role. Specifically, he states that people with titles such as Head of Department are the ones tasked with formal leadership responsibilities, with a role in staff development (Smith, 2006).

Researchers have conducted a number of studies that examined community colleges and their partnerships with specific stakeholders, such as business and industry, social services and the public school system (Barnett, 1995; Rendon, Gans, & Calleroz, 1998; Restine, 1996; Sloan, 1996). Francis (2006) utilized a relational leadership model to examine the concepts and constructs of organizational processes within a community college in building networks within a community. The framework undergirding the research draws from Komives' Relational Leadership Model (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). Komives concluded that understandings of wholeness in a chaotic world leads to a flexible understanding of leadership: "The chaotic world is a quantum world – a world of wholes, not parts. It is a connected world in which relationships are everything" (Komives et al., 2007, p. 62). Francis (2006) states that relational leadership, which proposes that the whole system of all relations, is the creative ground for relational leadership.

Drawing from Drath's (2001) work, Francis concludes that networks of leaders accomplish this task even though they are not embedded in a single organizational

structure. “Relational leadership is the process by which the community college and community make meaning of diverse perspectives and symbols to build a common vision and purpose and to determine the interactions and processes that will achieve the goal” (Francis, 2006, p. 9).

Further review of the relational leadership model of Komives et al. (2007) reveals five primary components. First, this leadership approach is inclusive of people and diverse points of view. Second, it is purposeful and builds commitment toward common purposes. Third, the empowerment of those involved is recognized. Fourth, the model has an ethical and moral basis. The fifth component of the model is that the four components are accomplished by being process-oriented (Komives et al., 2007). This relational leadership model emphasizes ethical and moral leadership, meaning leadership that is driven by values and standards established by the group. The fifth component, process, defines how a group of individuals goes about becoming and remaining cohesive, how the group makes decisions, and how the group handles the tasks related to accomplishing its purposes.

The Komives et al. (2007) model is derived from a collection of leadership theories that views leadership as a dispersed or shared process within groups or organizations, in other words, as a systemic characteristic (Gardner, 2000; Gordon, 2002; Ogawa & Bossert, 2000; Yukl, 2002). The relational leadership model serves as an alternate view to traditional leadership theories derived from a masculine perspective, that define leadership from an individual or leader-follower perspective (Yukl, 2002). This alternative model is not simply a characteristic possessed by an individual or an authority tied to a role or a situational context; leadership is thought of as a process that happens when people participate in collaborative forms of thought and action (Gordon, 2002). Komives et al. (2007) provide a succinct definition of this type of leadership as a relational process of people working together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good.

Francis (2006) concludes that the goal in relational leadership is not to overcome the variations and differences among participants but to think in terms of webs of connection and to build shared purpose. The ability to collaborate and to find common ground with others is the result of being purposeful. People support what they create, and a socialized vision is building a vision from among group members. The result of

the process is the empowerment of all participants, who take more ownership of group tasks and processes and who feel committed to the outcomes.

Relational leadership is characterized as “intrinsically motivated by a moral code of conduct, a leader who empowers others to achieve mutually agreed upon goals, and, when necessary, guides others to behave in morally responsible ways” (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p.41).

A number of studies have been conducted to examine the partnership between institutions of higher education and specific stakeholders, such as business and industry, social services and the public school system (Barnett, 1995; Rendon et al., 1998; Restine, 1996; Sloan, 1996). Francis (2006) utilized a relational leadership model to examine the concepts and constructs of organizational processes within a college in building networks within a community. The framework undergirding the research draws from Komives Relational Leadership Model (Komives, et al., 2007). Komives concluded that today’s understanding of wholeness in a chaotic world leads to a flexible understanding of leadership: “The chaotic world is a quantum world – a world of wholes, not parts. It is a connected world in which relationships are everything” (Komives et al., 2007, p. 62). Francis (2006) states that relational leadership, proposes that the whole system of all relations, is the creative ground for relational leadership.

Drawing from Drath’s (2001) work, Francis concludes that networks of leaders accomplish this task even though they are not embedded in a single organizational structure. “Relational leadership is the process by which the community college and community make meaning of diverse perspectives and symbols to build a common vision and purpose and to determine the interactions and processes that will achieve the goal” (Francis, 2006, p. 9).

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Relational leadership is characterized as “intrinsically motivated by a moral code of conduct, a leader who empowers others to achieve mutually agreed upon goals, and, when necessary, guides others to behave in morally responsible ways” (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p.41). Regan and Brooks encourage women and men to come together and explore the world through the metaphor of the double helix, stating that: We are hopeful that as women learn to articulate and to value the attributes that are the essence of our authentic selves, we will take the risks required to share our knowledge with others, both women and men; will be creative and respectful of the values located in each strand, feminist and masculinist, of the double helix. We believe that the more we converse with each other, the more common ground we will find, and, in so doing, we

can begin to bond the double helix into a new and stronger form, the transformational model of relational leadership. (p. 105)

In an effort to develop a working definition of Regan and Brooks, relational leadership model, the researchers gathered a group of female school administrators. Over 20 years ago, these women formed the Northeast Coalition of Educational Leaders to record reflections of East Coast leaders as they described outcomes and processes that transformed their understanding of school leadership (Regan & Brooks, 1995). The outcome of their work was the development of three guidelines for relational leadership. First, the development of the double helix as an organizational metaphor for the essence of leadership grounded in women's experience. Second, the defining of five attributes of relational leadership: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition, and vision. Third, the recognition that relational leadership is not restricted to women. In fact, these attributes can be learned and practiced by women and men with the blending of feminist attributes and traditional practices, referred to as masculinist attributes.

2.5 Academic leadership

Leadership has been defined in many ways, depending on the perspective of people who define it. Academic leadership is a specific case of leadership that occurs in academic settings or institutions (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). It represents the functions and responsibilities of top managers, principals, chancellors, deans or heads of departments responsible for decision making at different levels. Academic leadership is an exercise shared by people at all levels of the university, implying its distributed nature (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002).

Academic leadership has been defined as 'the act of building a community of scholars to set direction and achieve common purposes through the empowerment of faculty and staff' (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). Empowerment of heads of departments in leadership development is crucial to address the continuous changes in the academic environment and to effectively act as change agents in order to lead others (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). An academic leader could be required to demonstrate his/her influence through teaching and research.

For years, shortcomings in the leadership area were attributed to the scarcity of sound research on the training and development of academic leaders (Conger & Benjamin,

1999). It could be argued that leadership development is a process that extends over many years, and that most academic leaders in the past have ‘learned on the job’ (Detsky, 2011), rather than being selected for their leadership skills. Leadership development is furthermore a national priority in the South African context (Eckert & Rweyongoza, 2010).

In any organization, effective leadership is one of the crucial components for overall organizational success (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). While many aspects of management and leadership are common to most organizations, colleges and universities present special challenges in both their fundamental characters and in practice (Daniel & Herbert, 2003). The presence of faculty and non-academic personnel in leadership roles in the same organization can create ambiguity and confusion (Daniel & Herbert, 2003).

Beyond looking at it in terms of functions and responsibilities Bikmoradi et al., also defined academic leadership as the attribute of professionals in the academic arena who are renowned pioneers in their discipline and recognized by peers as being leaders. This implies that academic leadership can be conceptualized not only from administration related dimensions but also in terms of being a pioneer in one’s disciplinary area.

Academic leadership plays a crucial role in promoting teaching and learning in higher education (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002).

2.6 University education

High quality university education transforms individuals and societies in ways that reduce poverty and increase the global competitiveness of nations (Nayar, 2004). Private benefits include better employment prospects, higher earnings, ability to understand complex social and political issues, and a higher social status. These benefits often result in better quality of life. Evidence from studies that were conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) show that countries that invest heavily in education and skills benefit economically and socially.

Knowledge-based exports from India are expected to surpass \$50 billion by 2010 (Nilekani, 2006). Rural population of India makes 65% of its national population and the national economy has a per capita of \$3,100 (measured in terms of purchasing-

power parity). The strength of the population is education. Literacy rate of India is at 65%. So far it is considered to be a leading source of computer software in the world.

India's ability to harness and utilize knowledge to solve common societal problems (e.g., increase in agricultural production), is attributed to the huge investments by its government in world-class higher education institutions and universities that are relevant, competitive and meritocratic. Examples of such institutions include the Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institute of Management, Indian institutes of science, and the Regional Engineering Colleges.

University education plays a crucial role in national development. It is a critical pillar of human development worldwide. In today's lifelong-learning framework, tertiary education provides not only the high-level skills necessary for every labour market but also the training essential for service professionals like teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants, engineers, humanists, scientists, social scientists and myriad personnel and even entrepreneurs (Nayar, 2004).

Research findings abound that signify a link between student achievement and the quality of learning facilities provided to support educational programmes. While quality of learning facilities is an important concern to educators, there is no consensus what a quality facility is or how to effectively measure it (Nayar, 2004). However, several writers have suggested a number of criteria that may be used to measure quality of facilities. Adequacy assessments for example, are important indicators. Such questions as whether the facility adequately supports the desired educational programme or enables the development of learning environments that support students and teachers in achieving their goals, are critical measures of quality learning facility (Schneider, 2004; Abend, et al., 2006).

Yurko (2005) argues that space quality is a function of an education facility. Examples of space qualities are; a learning facility having adequately sized classrooms, availability of natural lighting and a welcoming atmosphere. Other aspects such as level of comfort, cleanliness and maintenance are also important measures of quality facility (Cash, 1993). Nightgale and O'Neil (1997) provide an all encompassing definition of a quality facility as one that is fit for purpose. When referring to an education building, it needs to have learning spaces that support the learning process;

is secure, comfortable and provides an inspirational setting for learning (Abend et al., 2006).

Inadequate provision of such facilities as textbooks, online library services are quality issues and such resources are “not fit for the purpose” because they are unable to meet the needs of students’ learning (Abend et al., 2006). Uline and Tschannen-Moran (2008) hypothesise on the likely outcomes of the interplay of quality of facilities and learning environment, by observing that dilapidated, crowded and uncomfortable school facilities were likely to be responsive for low student and teachers’ morale as well as teacher retention /attrition in such academic institutions.

Other reviewers such as Earthman (2004) and Higgins, Hall, Wall, Woolner, McCaughey, (2005) support earlier findings linking quality of library facilities, support services and the study environment. The study environment in libraries which is made of quality of library facilities, support services, and lecture halls in public universities will be some of the facilities investigated in this.

Quality assurance in higher education is so much more complicated than quality assurance in industry, because there are a diverse of players in the field (Brooks 2001). Higher Education has many stakeholders, primary players include; the government or the state, the employees, the students, the Parents and the Society at large and each of these categories has its own ideas. .

In an article published in assessment and evaluation in education, Harvey et al., (1993), after a thorough analysis of the various concepts, conclude: “first, quality means different things to different people. Second, quality is relative to processes or outcomes”. This conclusion fits the idea that quality is in the eyes of the beholder for instance, when the government considers quality, it looks first at the pass/fail ratio, the dropouts and enrolment time (Laitman, 2014).

Quality in the eyes of governments can be described thus: “As many students as possible finishing the programme within the scheduled time with an international level degree at reduced costs.” Secondly, employers training about quality will refer to the knowledge, skills and attitudes obtained during studies: the “product” that is tested is the graduate (Uljens, 2006). Thirdly, quality of education has totally different meaning in the eyes of the students and their parents (Laitman, 2014). For them, quality is connected with the contribution to their individual

development and preparation for a position in society. Education must link up with the personal interests of the student. Yet the educational process also has to be organized in such a way that students can finish their studies in the given time (Masschelein, 2004). Fourthly, an academician will define quality as a good academic training based on good knowledge transfer and a good learning environment and a good relationship between teaching and research (Uliens, 2006).

All in all, quality is a very complex concept as it has been seen in the foregoing paragraph. It is not a simple one-dimensional notion. Quality is multi-dimensional so there is quality of input, process quality and quality of output.

Ross and Mahlck (1990) in an expanded explanation of Beeby's (1968, 1979) notion of qualitative change in the classroom defined quality of education as a process, concerned with educational planning, that is, likely to result in an improvement in the environment in which the student works, which aids the learning provided for that purpose by the school system and that the improved environment, could reasonably be expected to express itself as detectable gains in the knowledge, skills and values acquired by students.

Though this definition does not pinpoint the specific variables required to create the above environment, it provides a basis of looking at the issue of quality in three respects thus: provision of teaching and learning aids, an improved learning environment, as well as gains in the knowledge, skills and values acquired by students (Benner, 2005).

Levin (1993) while acknowledging the complexity of giving an absolute definition of quality divided the status indicators of the quality of education into three: first, educational inputs; which comprise financing aspects, such as per pupil expenditure, physical measures such as the condition of learning facilities and manpower measures which is the number of personnel expressed as a ratio in relation to the number of pupils. Secondly, educational outputs; which include all the levels of knowledge, skills and values acquired by pupils when leaving school and later career accomplishments. Thirdly, educational process; referring to the interaction between students and personnel; the curriculum, and organization of the school environment.

According to UNESCO (1998), quality in higher education is a multidimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities like teaching and

academic programmes, research on scholarship, staffing, students, infrastructure and the academic environment. These are some of the parameters that will be used to measure quality in university education. If challenges facing public universities affect any of the above parameters, then it means quality university education provision to the students will be affected.

According to National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) (2011), the aim of the council is to guide on minimum requirements that are needed for the provision of quality in higher education with focus on both operational and academic.. Quality in higher education is perceived as consisting of a synthesis of conformity, adaptability and continuous improvement; it is a synthesis of a range of expectations of many stakeholders NCHE (2011). Students may focus on facilities provided and perceived usefulness of education on future employment. Parents may also consider the achievement of their children. Employers may consider the competence of the graduates (NCHE, 2011).

Quality can, therefore, be viewed from many approaches. In this study, workable parameters of quality were given in relation to what fits most of the ideas and that covers most of the expectations of the stakeholders in relation to what has been reviewed and to the modern world.

Therefore, the relationship between the learner and the teacher is critical. However, the inputs, processes, environment and outputs that surround a learner foster/hamper learning are important as well. According to Ross et al., (2007), these can be seen as affecting the quality of education at two levels. Firstly, at the level of the learner in his or her learning environment and secondly, at the level of the education system that creates and supports the learning experience.

Additionally, lack of physical expansion in facilities to accommodate the ever increasing demand for university education in the societies, as well as lack of funding for research activities making it difficult for the universities to be at the frontier of knowledge and effectively play their essential role as centres of creativity, innovation and invention (Ross et al., 2007). Similarly, continued loss of public confidence in the universities as a result of the declining academic standards and lack of clear directions which the universities may be taking in the changing society. For instance, there have been heated debates on matters relating to the standards of courses/degrees, their

scope, and their relevance to the current needs of the society and the work environment, especially in industry (Ngara, 1995; Chacha, 2002; Lungwangwa, 2002; Tiyaambe, 2004; Mwiria et al., 2007).

There are a number of changes that can readily be observed in the higher education systems of Africa and elsewhere. The first change has to do with the growth and expansion of higher education systems in the last decade or two in Africa. Tiyaambe (2004) sees the need for increased access and expansion of the systems in Africa as being driven by a mixture of the goal of social equity, the performance of the universal access programmes to education, demographic growth, and the necessity of providing growing economies with large numbers of highly trained workers.

The second major change is the way institutions are funded as governments reduce their levels of funding for education mainly for higher education. This situation is worsened by the fact that budget cuts are occurring at a time when higher education systems are expected to grow and provide access to a larger portion of the population. As noted by the World Bank (1997); higher education institutions are facing increased competitions for scarce financial resources with other public services.

The third change according to Tiyaambe (2004) concerns the goal of making higher education systems more relevant to their societies so that staff and students can contribute to the developmental agenda. Curricula and programmes are now seen in need of reconceptualization to this end. As a result of the aforementioned changes in the African universities, the said institutions were forced to undergo some reforms. Thus, two major higher education reform periods can be identified in Africa. The first is the period following independence in 1960s and 1970s (Tiyaambe, 2004). In most of Anglophone Africa commissions were set up to make policy recommendations aimed at systematically reforming the education systems. The pattern in Francophone Africa tended to comprise the organization of general conferences that adopted resolutions on changes needed in the systems.

Higher education in post-colonial Africa set out to expand and increase participation rates (Tiyaambe, 2004). Reformed higher education systems were expected to play a role in bringing about economic and social development. Unfortunately, as the World Bank (1997) observes, the reformed post-colonial universities continue to

serve the same purpose as the colonial universities by producing the elite for the bureaucracy and the private sector. Higher education budgets were cut as development agencies prioritized the primary and secondary sectors of education. Resources were channelled to meet the goal of universal primary education since international agencies believed that investment returns were higher if governments invested in primary and secondary education (World Bank, 1997; Tiyaambe, 2004). This old development orthodoxy has since been reviewed and abandoned by agencies such as the World Bank.

The second wave of reforms followed political changes and a return to democracy in many parts for Africa in the 1990s. This second wave reflects the shifts underway at the level of continental and regional politics: the dissolution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the formation of a new umbrella body, the African Union (AU). The new body is aiming at forging a far more coherent and integrated strategy for African development than its predecessor was able to manage. The AU's economic recovery strategy is driven through the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) adopted in October, 2001.

According to the Ugandan National Council for Higher Education (NCHE, 2004), Uganda's higher education institutions present a picture of daunting challenges. The national council further reiterates that from every conceivable angle, the present state of higher education institutions in Uganda is not conducive to the delivery of sustainable quality and relevant higher education for the benefit of individuals and the global village of the twenty first century.

This situation in Uganda may apply to Malawian higher education institutions and developing countries in general. It is very clear from this kind of information that, there are changes unfolding in higher education institutions, not only in East Africa but also throughout the world. These changes have brought about a lot of challenges and different pressures to higher education institutions as it is evidenced by Ross and Genevois (2006, p. 41) below:

These different pressures have resulted in the concept of the quality of education coming to the fore as learners, parents and communities, educators, leaders, and nations acknowledge that what is learned (and how learning occurs) is as important as access to education, (Benner, 2005). This is enough evidence that the stakeholders

all over the world are at present concerned with quality of education provision than ever before.

It is especially true now at the beginning of the 21st century when education is increasingly being understood to be more than the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic), and extends to an expanded vision of education as articulated by the Jomtien Conference on Education for all in 1990 (UNESCO, 1990) and later reaffirmed by the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 (UNESCO, 2000).

The general public in Africa, just like Americans, believes that the quality of higher education is declining (Ngara, 1995). It is now, all over the world, ministries other than the ministry of education have begun to take an interest in education. The same applies to NGOs, businesses and the general public, which have all placed different pressures on higher education systems.

Furthermore, the quality of education has become such a high profile issue in this 21st century due to the changes and challenges that face the entire education systems in the world (Martin et al., 2007). Despite the view points that have been raised, the importance of the quality of education cannot be separated from the heightened importance of education policy and education reform within the whole range of public policy. This arises from the of widely acknowledged linkages between education and national economic performance.

It is very clear that the social organization of knowledge and learning are dramatically changing. From this context, it is being revealed that, many universities in Africa entered the 21st century characterized by so many challenges.

In summary, this literature has reviewed the role of university education in development; the concept of quality university education; stakeholders' views on quality university education; the concept of quality education in relation to the modern world; development of universities in Africa; issues and challenges of university education in Africa. Hence this has revealed some gaps in research and documentation about the nature and magnitude of the management challenges facing public universities and their implications for quality education.

Additionally, the increase in students enrolment in public universities and change in study modes (i.e. expansion, diversification and privatization coupled with changes, the mismatch between the skills imparted at the universities and the

requirements in the labour market , have brought concerns about quality education provision. These are the issues that this study ought to study and document.

2.7 Development of Universities in Africa

The operation and development of universities in Africa cannot be separated from the prevailing paradigm, conditioning, and the direction of the existence of the societies on the continent. The first-generation universities in post-independent Africa were largely conditioned by the dictates of modernization thinking. The possibility of catching up with the Western metropolitan levels of development, which modernization theorists assumed resulted in an increased investment in higher education by most African governments.

The guiding principle was investment in human capital as a necessary condition for development and moving ahead with the rest of the world (Harbison, 1973; McClelland 1961; Schultz, 1961; Inkeles & Smith, 1974). The re-constructionist view of society held by African nationalist leaders in the sixties created a partnership between government and universities.

Universities were regarded as partners in the enormous and daunting challenging task of national self-determination, nationalization, sovereignty, and a better life for all (Lungwangwa, 2002). The university was considered a public good on which expenditure of scarce public resources was a justified national necessity. African political leaders had the will and commitment to establish conditions for effective development of universities. Lungwangwa (2002) notes that, public service was rendered to the government and other agencies by university experts without expecting any payment.

Consultancy was a rare term in the vocabulary of academics. The first-generation universities in post-independent Africa include among others, the University of Zambia, University of Nairobi, University of Dar es Salaam and University of Malawi (Lungwangwa, 2002).

The second-generation universities, like Copper Belt University in Zambia, National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe, Moi and Kenyatta universities in Kenya, Morogoro University in Tanzania to mention but a few, were established within the framework of the modernization and deconstructionist paradigm which gave rise to

the first-generation universities in post-independent Africa. The neo-liberal political and socio-economic paradigm of the eighties and nineties ushered in a new thinking about higher education (Lungwangwa, 2002).

The public good view of higher education was substituted by the private good conception. Higher education was viewed as an investment in personal wellbeing. A university certificate was giving rise to higher private returns in form of income, better living conditions and life chances for one's offspring. State financing policies of higher education opportunities gave way to cost-sharing as an acceptable way of meeting the cost of higher education (Psacharopoulos, 1971, 1994). Besides, much of Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered deep stagnation over the last two decades, and is staggering under the weight of domestic and international conflict, disease (especially the plague of HIV and AIDS, poverty, corruption and natural disasters.

According to Mwiria, Ng'ethe, Ngome, Otero, Wawire and Wesonga (2007), universities once shining lights of intellectual excitement and promise suffered from an enormous decline in government resources for education. The market forces conception of life created a detachment of the state from universities and other higher education institutions. This level of education came to be viewed as an integral part of the market. Universities and other institutions are advised to engage in income generation activities and venture into businesses. According to Lungwangwa (2002), managers of university institutions are expected to:

- i. Adopt a market view of the services their institutions provide. This means slapping monetary value on service which experts render to other institutions;
- ii. Determine tuition fees in economic terms;
- iii. Engage in consultancy relationships and
- iv. Adopt business like relationships in all dealings with clients including students.

Business ethos of efficiency, cost effectiveness, value for money in service provision are influencing ways in which universities in Africa are managed (Mwiria, 2000; Association of African Universities and the World Bank, 1997). In the neo-liberal paradigm, higher education is viewed as a market. It has opportunities for generating profit to any potential investor. At present, universities are considered competitive enterprises. Students and their families are the clients whose resources have to be tapped. This is a challenge; the public university management has to cope with so as

to make public universities relevant to society. On the other hand, governments are expected to stimulate this market by providing student loans, vouchers, scholarships and bursaries to those who cannot afford the fees but have the abilities to enter higher education institutions (Lungwangwa, 2002).

Third generation universities in Africa are emerging in various countries, following this neo-liberal conception of higher education. These institutions are coming in form of private universities operated along business lines for purposes of generating profit from the provision of an educational service. Extreme right neo-liberal policies stress the decreasing of funding to public higher education and emphasize on private sector institutions (Tiyambe, 2004). However, open market in higher education, it should be noted, will make it difficult to organize this level of education according to some criteria of excellence. All these kinds of changes occurring in public universities in Africa are coming up with new challenges, which need to be addressed so as to maintain high quality university education.

Africa's commitment to the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) dates back to 1980s (Chacha, 2002). The gap between the universities and governments in most African countries has been exacerbated by SAPs, which many countries on the continent have been following. One of the requirements of SAPs is centred on cost-saving measures through cost-sharing schemes in the social sectors. In practical terms, this means elimination of subsidies where they exist (Lungwangwa, 2002). The technical rationalization based on rate of return analysis in educational investment of the eighties justified reduced government resource support to universities in many African countries. The technical justification of policy change combined with rising poverty levels in many African countries left many universities in desperate conditions (Association of African universities and the World Bank (1997) and ESAURP (1998).

2.8 Issues and Challenges of University Education in Africa

According to Ngara (1995) the African university has four primary functions teaching-promoting human resource development by producing high level human power in all fields of study; research and disseminating knowledge; fostering moral values and raising social consciousness and consultancy and service. Some of the issues and

challenges that have to be addressed by universities in Africa so as to meet the above expectations include the following:

- i. Lack of funding for research activities making it difficult for the universities to be at the frontier of knowledge and effectively play their essential role as centres of creativity, innovation and invention.
- ii. Continued dilapidation and deterioration of the physical infrastructures making it very difficult to have conducive teaching and learning enrolment.
- iii. Low morale of staff as a result of the deterioration in their working environment.
- iv. Inadequate funding and the slow pace of release of the little funds to which the universities are entitled.
- v. Brain drain as staff leave the institutions for greener pastures within the country or elsewhere.
- vi. Lack of physical expansion in facilities to accommodate the ever increasing demand for university education in the societies.
- vii. Continued loss of public confidence in the universities as a result of the declining academic standards.

Lack of a clear direction for the universities in the changing society, for instance, there have been heated debates on matters relating to the standards of courses/degrees, their scope, and their relevance to the current needs and the work environment, especially in industry (Ngara, 1995; Chacha, 2002; Lungwangwa, 2002; Tiyaambe, 2004; Mwiria et al., 2007).

There are several changes that can readily be observed in the higher education systems of Africa and elsewhere. The first change has to do with the growth and expansion of higher education systems in the last decade or two in Africa.

Tiyaambe (2004) sees the need for increased access and expansion of the systems in Africa as being driven by a mixture of the goal of social equity, the performance of the universal access programmes to education, demographic growth, and the necessity of providing growing economies with large numbers of highly trained workers.

The second major change is the way institutions are funded as governments reduce their levels of funding for education mainly for higher education. This situation is worsened by the fact that budget cuts are occurring at a time when higher education systems are expected to grow and provide access to a larger portion of the population. As noted by

the World Bank (1997), higher education institutions are facing increased competitions for scarce financial resources like other public services. The third change according to Tiyambe (2004) concerns the goal of making higher education systems more relevant to their societies so that staff and students can contribute to the developmental agenda. Curricula and programmes are now seen in need of reconceptualization to this end.

As a result of the changes in the African universities, the said institutions were forced to undergo some reforms. Thus, two major higher education reform periods can be identified in Africa. The first is the period following independence in 1960s and 1970s (Tiyambe, 2004). In most of Anglophone Africa commissions were set up to make policy recommendations aimed at systematically reforming the education systems. The pattern in Francophone Africa tended to comprise the organization of general conferences that adopted resolutions on changes needed in the systems. Higher education in post-colonial Africa set out to expand and increase participation rates (Tiyambe, 2004).

Reformed higher education systems were expected to play a role in bringing about economic and social development. Unfortunately, as the World Bank (1997) observes, the reformed post-colonial universities continue to serve the same purpose as the colonial universities by producing the elite for the bureaucracy and the private sector. Higher education budgets were cut as development agencies prioritized the primary and secondary sectors of education. Resources were channeled to meet the goal of universal primary education since international agencies believed that investment returns were higher if governments invested in primary and secondary education (World Bank, 1997; Tiyambe, 2004). This old development orthodoxy has since been reviewed and abandoned by agencies such as the World Bank.

The second wave of reforms followed political changes and a return to democracy in many parts for Africa in the 1990s. This second wave reflects the shifts underway at the level of continental and regional politics: the dissolution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the formation of a new umbrella body, the African Union (AU). The new body is aiming to forge a far more coherent and integrated strategy for African development than what its predecessor was able to manage. The AU's economic recovery strategy is driven through the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) adopted in October, 2001.

Regarding issues of education at the continental level, there is the Association of African Universities (AAU) and at the regional level in East Africa, there is the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). In June 2006, IUCEA together with DAAD organized a workshop on supporting a Regional Quality Assurance initiative in East Africa. In the workshop it was felt that, it is important to have a shared understanding of quality and quality assurance among the universities in East Africa since it was noted that understanding seems to vary from one university to another, the target being harmonization of standards. This is one of the challenges, among others, facing universities across Africa not only in East Africa.

Among the reasons for the current interest in quality, perhaps none is more important than a widely-shared belief that the quality of America's colleges and universities is declining (Haworth & Conrad, 1997). The general public in Africa, just like Americans, believes that the quality of higher education is declining (Ngara, 1995). In fact, all over the world, ministries other than the ministry of education have begun to take an interest in education (Ngara, 1995). The same is true of NGOs, businesses and the general public, which have all placed different pressures on higher education systems. Furthermore, the quality of education has become such a high-profile issue in this 21st century due to the changes and challenges that face the entire education systems in the world (Martin et al., 2007). Besides, viewpoints about the importance of the quality of education cannot be separated from the heightened salience of education policy and education reform within the whole range of public policy, mainly because of widely acknowledged linkages between education and national economic performance.

It is unequivocally clear that the social organization of knowledge and learning are dramatically changing and from this context, it is revealed that, many universities in Africa entered the 21st century characterized by multiple challenges.

2.9 Education Policies in Malawi

The Malawi education system has since independence been guided by plans which have always been linked to National Development Policies and manpower studies and surveys. The first Education Plan (1973 – 1980) and the second Education Sector Development Plan (1985 – 1995), the Policy Investment Framework (PIF) (2000), and the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008-2017, have helped in fulfilling the aspirations of the national education long term vision and provision of guidelines for

education development at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. With this development, it is however, critical to highlight that education planning has been done without a comprehensive policy framework. Thus, there is need for clear policy articulation for proper guidance of the sector, hence the development of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP).

The government of Malawi has identified the education sector as one of the nine priorities among priorities in the nation's development agenda. The government's commitment to the education sector is, therefore, underlined by the increase in funding to the sector. Despite the high proportion of the government budget allocation to education, the demands of expansion and quality education leaves the sector seriously under-funded. However, the cooperating partners have increased their support to the education sector significantly through the Education Sector Wide Approach (ESWAp). The government has also sought and encouraged partnerships with other education providers, most notably, NGOs and religious organizations.

The formulation of this policy was a result of extensive consultative processes which included key stakeholders that helped to identify key issues that needed special attention. The development of the policy also incorporated guiding principles and contents that were contained in several framework documents which were developed to provide guidance in the course of national development and related programs.

The NEP is intended to stand out as one guiding living document that will inform the education system in all its obligations towards achieving relevant and equitable education. It is, therefore, critical for all sectors of the economy to play their roles towards the realization of the policy objectives. The government expects that the coming together of all key players in the implementation of the NEP will make a significant difference in Malawi, and thereby respond to the national and international aspirations and expectations. The critical roles of local communities, development partners and the private sector are recognized.

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) in Malawi, the education sector has since independence been guided by National Development Policies and manpower surveys and studies.

The first formal Education Plan (1973 – 1980) aimed at providing guidelines for education development on primary, secondary and teacher education. An addendum on

technical and vocational training was adopted in 1976. Despite not incorporating all subsectors of the formal education system, it provided the first real attempt on planning for the evolution of education system since the introduction of formal education in Malawi.

The second Education Sector Development Plan (1985 – 1995) incorporated all levels of formal education as well as various parastatal organizations associated with the MOEST at that time. The overall objective of the Plan was to consolidate policies so that a proper balance is maintained in the levels of physical and human resources allocated to all levels of the education system.

In 1994, after the political transition from one party to multiparty system, the government introduced the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy to increase access to basic education in the country. This policy was instituted in line with the new Constitution of the Republic of Malawi in which issues of increasing access to education have been articulated.

Due to other policy implications emanating from the introduction of FPE, the Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) was developed and this guided the education sector development and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) from 2000 to 2010.

Malawi has experienced some major changes in education over the past decade. Many of these changes were triggered by policy shifts, notably the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) which led to significant increase in school enrollment from 1.9 million in 1993/94 to 2.9 million in 1994/95. Additionally, the FPE was instituted without an overall education policy framework.

Due to the transition to multiparty dispensation, the education sector experienced the emergence of private institutions many of which are not to the best standard of education. This resulted from the absence of a comprehensive education policy to guide all stakeholders in the provision of education services, and it has adversely affected learning outcomes at all levels of the education system.

Furthermore, due to the absence of a well-defined education policy, different key players in the education sector have not been well coordinated. Additionally, their roles and responsibilities have not been clearly defined thereby prompting non-conformity to set standards among stakeholders.

It is against this brief background that the National Education Policy was been developed.

The National Education Policy is linked to other relevant policies in that it is designed to respond to the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi which recognizes that all persons are entitled to education. It also aligns itself to the Education for All (EFA, 2000) goals and other international declarations such as Jomtien (1990), Dakar (1991), Ouagadougou (1993) and Copenhagen and Beijing (1995), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which recognize the importance of making education available to all. The Policy is aligned to the Vision 2020 and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II) which is the current medium-term national development strategy. The Policy further recognizes the Policy and Investment framework (2000) and the current National Education Sector Plan (2008). The NEP is also closely linked to the National Gender Policy, National Policy on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and the National HIV and AIDS Policy.

2.10 Chapter conclusion

This chapter presented the general direction of the study through review of relevant literature. From the literature reviewed, it is observed that studies have been conducted on challenges of leadership for managers of several public universities. No study has been done specifically to examine the leadership challenges that managers in Malawian public universities face and their perceptions on these challenges. The chapter has also discussed the relational leadership theory that have guided the study. The message that is coming from the theoretical framework is that there is a relationship between leadership of public university and the quality of education. The next chapter presents and discusses the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methods used in this study. It discusses the design of the study, the methods for obtaining the data, data sources and selection of respondents and data analysis. The research was guided by Relational Leadership Theory

3.2 Area of study

The study was conducted in three (3) constituent colleges of the University of Malawi: Chancellor College, Malawi Polytechnic and the College of Medicine which were selected through purposive sampling technique due to their uniqueness:

Chancellor College being; the oldest, the largest in terms of faculties and departments and located in the old capital city of Malawi, Zomba. Malawi Polytechnic located in Blantyre City and has been the center of most of technical studies for decades. College of Medicine in Blantyre being the center of medical programs for decades. Besides confining the inquiry to a small universe and the sample size being kept small, purposive sampling can serve the purpose well.

Purposive sampling can also be adopted when a known characteristic of the universe is to be studied intensively (Kothari, 2007). The three colleges of the public university in Malawi were selected because they aspire to meet the needs of a wide clientele as opposed to their counterparts in the private universities. The universities need to meet the social demand for education and training as reflected in the rising enrolments and these university objectives need to be met through quality assurance.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is a plan or blueprint of how a researcher intends to conduct research while research methodology consists of the systematic, methodical and accurate execution of the design (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Babbie and Mouton (2001) further clarify that, research methodology may be defined as methods, techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research design or research plan. Carter and Little (2007) describe the iterative planning relationship of methodology to objectives by stating that objectives, research questions and design shape the choice of methodology and that methodology shapes the objectives, research questions and design.

This study is an exploratory research study which falls under qualitative research design. Trochim (2006) illustrates four major qualitative approaches to research that is, Ethnography (the culture of defining groups), phenomenology (emphasizing people's experiences), and Grounded theory focusing on the development of theories through observing people as championed by Glaser and Strauss in the 1960's. Other studies advocating for an exploratory method of inquiry when dealing with problems facing higher education have been advanced by Weber (2005). He posits that the method of inquiry for understanding problems facing African higher education should be rooted in the explanation and not description of the problems.

The study adopted descriptive design. Descriptive design is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaire to the sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003). The researcher employed both tools in data collection exercise. According to Yin (1994:19), a research design is a "blue print" of the research. It is the "action plan for getting from here to there" where "here" is the question to be answered and "there" is the conclusion "answers about these questions". He states that action plan should guide the researcher in the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data. A research design, he expounds, is the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusion to be made to the initial questions of study.

The design was applied upon considering that the study was to explore the views and understanding of higher education managers on their appointment as academic leaders and managers in institutions of higher education in Malawi, and to investigate the perception of those managers on challenges that they face as leaders in higher education institutions. Beside this background, what the researcher wanted to know, and the types of research questions to be answered in the study, were the deciding factors of a research design (Yin, 1994; Merriam, 1998). Ordo and Kombo (2002). The purpose of the

research and the research questions support this kind of a design when seeking out opinions of people about something.

The key variable of this study was **Manager's perception on challenges facing management of public universities' leaders**. This design was considered appropriate since it meets the purpose and objective of the study according to literature on research design.

Travers (1969) states that descriptive design is applied to establish the nature of existing conditions. On the purpose of descriptive design research, Good (1963, p. 244) notes that they include;

- a) To secure evidence concerning all existing situations or current conditions.
- b) To identify standards or norms with which to compare present conditions in order to plan the next step.
- c) To determine how to take the next step having determined where we are and where we wish to go.

Descriptive design studies have the following advantages according to Robinson (1993, p. 128-129):

- a) They provide a relatively simple and straight forward approach to the study of values, attitudes, beliefs and motives.
- b) They may be adopted to collect generalizable information from any human population.

One school of thought views exploratory studies as studies that provide insights and assist in the comprehension of an issue or situation. Another school of thought cautions researchers from drawing definite conclusions (Preskill et al., 2003). Although this caution questions the reliability of an exploratory study, Silverman contends that the ultimate standard for any good qualitative research is whether or not the problem tackled has a theoretical and/or practical significance (Silverman, 2006).

Therefore, descriptive research design was suitable for this study since it sought to explore the views and understanding of higher education managers on being appointed as academic leaders in a higher education context in Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face as leaders in higher education institutions.

Descriptive research design deals with both quantitative and qualitative data which the instruments in this study were intended to gather.

3.4 Target Population

3.4.1 Institutions

The targeted institutions were 3 public colleges in Malawi (Chancellor College, The Malawi Polytechnic and Malawi College of Medicine).

3.4.2 Respondents

The 3 institutions were managed by 3 principals, 3 deputy principals, 15 deans of faculties, 30 Heads of departments.

The following variables that have an implication on quality education were used as benchmarks during discussion and interpretation of research findings;

- i. Curriculum
- ii. Instructional Materials and Equipment
- iii. Physical Facilities
- iv. Instructors
- v. Assessment and Examinations
- vi. Institutional Management and
- vii. Institutional Environment

3.5 Sampling Design

3.5.1 Institutions

Purposeful sampling technique was used in order to identify participants for the study. As Merriam asserts purposive sampling entails the selection of a sample “from which one can learn the most to gain understanding and insight” (Merriam, 1988, p. 48; Mbewe, 2004).

Three public university colleges were sampled purposively for the study as stated above. Chancellor College was sampled purposively because it was the oldest and largest public university in Malawi at the time of data collection. Malawi Polytechnic was chosen for being an academic center of excellence in technical programs for several

years and Malawi College of Medicine was picked for cherishing academic excellence in medical-related programmes for decades.

3.5.2 Sample

The study was designed for a sample size of 51 upon considering that 10% of the accessible population is enough for descriptive studies (Gay, 1992; Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999; Kasomo, 2006). The three university colleges that were sampled represent 42.8% of the accessible respondents, and this percentage was considered suitable for the study since it is bigger than the 10% recommended by a number of research experts. The sample of this study comprised of management cadres of only three colleges, since it was not cost effective and time saving to collect data from all the respondents (Ogula, 2005).

3.5.3 Questionnaire

The study used questionnaire as a tool to obtain factual data and opinions in a structural framework from the respondents (Nisbet, 1970). Five sets of questionnaires were used to collect the required data. The questionnaire consisted of open and multiple-choice questions. These questionnaires were designed differently for each level in management structure; heads of departments and deans of schools/faculties. Questionnaires were used in these respondents because of their suitability to collect data from large numbers of individuals and they can handle a wide range of issues such as adequacy of teaching staff, funds, teaching and learning resources and ICT facilities which are imbedded in this study. Respondents completed questionnaires which were distributed and collected by research assistants. Each college was allocated a research assistant.

3.5.4 Interviews

Interview method yields rich sources of data on people's experiences, opinions, aspirations and feelings (May, 1993). This method is also interactive and enables a researcher to cover the phenomenon under investigation in great depth (Mwanje, 2001).

The study deployed interviews methodology to help examine magnitude of management challenges and how they imply on quality of university education. Views were sought from respondents in discussive interviews. Interviews were conducted with the Principals and vice Principals from the respective colleges and all other respondents.

These interviews were conducted in October 2018 as follows: From 1-5 at College of Medicine, 8-12 at the Malawi Polytechnic and 22-26 at Chancellor College.

3.5.5 Document Analysis

Official written material resources analyzed included;

1. University Strategic Plans to obtain information on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats [SWOT] for the institution and strategies that were adopted to mitigate the challenges and other relevant information concerning the objectives of the study.
2. Quality assurance documents for each college were examined to obtain information on the quality assurance in the institutions and how institutions ensure that there are quality assurance standards.
3. Government taskforces documents and policies on public universities were perused and analyzed for instance; National Education Policy (NEP); the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II) National Education Sector Plan (2008); Commission for Higher Education University Industry Linkage Report, 2002; UNESCO Global Education Digest, 2006, to appreciate the authority aspect of public university colleges
4. The graduation booklets were perused to note the trends of graduates over the last five years.

The researcher also examined the

5. University calendar to ascertain number of lecturers, their academic qualifications and
6. UNIMA report 2014-2016. Alongside these documents, other valid university documents were analyzed as well according to the objectives of the study.

3.7 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). A test must be valid for it to be reliable. The split-half method was used to establish the coefficient of internal consistency of the questionnaires. According to Gay (1992) and Louis, Manion and Morrison (2008), this method involves splitting the statements (items) of a test into two halves (odd and even numbered items).

Then, the odd numbered and even numbered items are placed in two subtests and the scores of the two sub-tests are computed for each individual, then correlated using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula. The obtained value however represents reliability of only half of the test.

To obtain reliability of the whole test, the Spearman Brown Prophecy formula was applied. If the test is reliable, the scores on the two halves have a high positive association, that is, a high correlation coefficient (Orodho, 2005). This procedure was used because of its ability to measure the internal consistency of the instruments being tested. Split-half technique was preferred in this study over other methods like the test re-test method because it takes care of the changes in time and circumstances.

3.8 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data represent the phenomenon under study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). To determine the validity of the items in the research instruments, a pilot study was conducted with the respondents from each category of the subjects. The researcher utilized content validity and considered and construct validity. According to Huck (2000), content validity is done by expert judgement.

The instruments were therefore scrutinized by expert judgement of the scholars in area of management and in higher education. To determine whether the objectives of the study were adequately addressed by the items in the instruments, they were focusing on teaching and learning research and community service.

3.9 Piloting

It is worth repeating that the wording of questionnaires was of paramount importance and that pre-testing was crucial to their success as it was pointed out by Louis, et al., (2008) (see <http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415368780-chapter15,file15.12.ppt>). After piloting, the researcher ensured that; the questions were comprehensive; instructions were clear or non-ambiguous, determined the time which respondents took to complete questionnaires; noted that some respondents' objected to answer some questions.

Piloting also assisted the researcher on how to analyze data collected. The researcher conducted piloting in Chancellor College, one of the sampled colleges. During piloting, the five questionnaires were distributed to the respective respondents and were later collected after the questionnaires were completed. They were analyzed and their results used to revise the items in all the questionnaires. The researcher also sought the advice of the experts from the department of Political and Administrative studies, over all the instruments meant for data collection. The aim was to establish if the instruments were workable and develop ways of improving them. The college selected for piloting was included in the actual study.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected in three phases:

Phase One: The researcher paid a visit to the three public universities for familiarization purposes.

Phase Two: Questionnaire administration: The researcher used three research assistants who were recruited competitively. These research assistants were all briefed on how to administer questionnaires among the respondents targeted. Each research assistant was assigned one public university. The research assistants distributed the questionnaires to the respondents and collected the filled-in questionnaires after an agreed period. All filled-in questionnaires were handed over to the researcher for further processing.

Phase Three: The researcher arranged for an interview with Principals and vice principals each day for one respondent for one institution.

The researcher took ten months to complete the whole data collection exercise. The following documents were analyzed according to research objectives and questions; strategic plan for each university, quality assurance documents for each university, and government taskforces reports for public universities, research works for researchers, graduation booklets for each college, universities calendars and teaching timetables for each college sampled. Multiple sources of information

were sought and used because no single source of information could be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective (Patton, 1990).

3.11 Data Analysis

After the data had been collected, the researcher turned to the task of analyzing hem. The analysis of data required several closely related operations such as establishment of categories, the application of these categories to raw data through coding, tabulation and then drawing statistical inferences (Kothari, 2005). The researcher ensured that the instruments were double-checked for completeness. The information was summarized, and statistics derived. The data was subjected to descriptive analysis encompassing a range of both qualitative and quantitative treatments. SPSS was applied in data analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed by establishing the categories and themes, relationships/patterns and conclusions in line with the study objectives (Van Dalen, 1962).

Descriptive analysis was used because it enables the researcher to inspect the variables in their areas of study. Tabulation enabled the researcher to categorize the subjects in this research. Tabulation was a part of the technical procedure wherein the classified data was put in the form of tables (Kothari, 2005). The frequencies enhanced analysis of the continuous variables.

3.12 Ethical considerations

Where information was collected from human beings in the study, the following ethical principles were observed: avoiding harm to subjects and researcher; obtaining informed consent; respect for privacy; safeguarding the confidentiality of data; and avoiding deceit and lying.

To comply with the research ethics requirement on protection of participants' rights and ensuring that participation in the research did not jeopardize their employment in any way, the researcher ensured that the identity and dignity of respondents from the colleges were protected.

3.13 Limitations of the Study

Mainly, the study was limited by unavailability of resources as it is common to finance travel, communication and upkeep for the researcher and her three research assistants.

Time on the part of the respondents, also limited this study.

3.14 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the analytical framework of the study. It has presented the conceptualization of important terms in the study; outlined methods and tools which were used to collect data. In addition to that, it has presented sampling techniques employed in the study; sample size; and data analysis methods. The chapter has concluded by presenting ethics which were observed in the study and the study limitations. The next chapter presents and discusses the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents and discusses the findings from the data that were collected from the three public colleges of Chancellor College, Malawi Polytechnic and College of Medicine. The study findings focus on perceptions on challenges that leaders in the university colleges face, and how these have affected quality of education and leadership in the colleges and the University of Malawi as a whole.

This chapter is divided into eight main subsections. These include: Challenges Faced in Relation to leadership and management of Teaching and Learning, Challenges faced in management of curriculum and delivering of instructions, Challenges in the management of examinations, adequacy of computers for staff, Text books and Library space, Lecture halls, finances and research.

The data was collected through interviews using questionnaires and various documents analysis. The main research question was: there any relationship between managers' perception and the leadership challenges they face in higher education institutions in Malawi?

4.2 Challenges Faced in Relation to leadership, and Management of Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning, Research, Consultancy and Community Engagement, Capacity Building, Governance and Management, and Finance and Resource Mobilisation are the strategic pillars of the University of Malawi (UNIMA Strategic Plan, 2012-2017). These strategic pillars provide strategic guidance that enable colleges under the UNIMA to offer various programs that lead to the attainment of University certificates at diploma, postgraduate diploma, degree (Bachelor, Masters and Ph.D) levels.

Over the years, university of Malawi through the colleges has expanded the modes of study at to, e-learning; institutional residential-based and part-time in addition to the generic full-time residential programs. The expansion of study modes, has attracted a wider scope of clientele. Different modes of study and different kinds of clienteles entails numerous management challenges at the university colleges.

Effective and sound university management requires the use of five functions of management; planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling in order to achieve pre-determined and desired objectives and goals (Scott, 1999). For an effective teaching and learning, institutional management requires to properly employ the above five functions of management over the following management task areas; staff personnel, physical and material resources which include the lecture halls, furniture, laboratories and lab apparatus, hostels, libraries and library resources, computers; student personnel, curriculum and instruction, financial resources, institution and community relations (Campbell, 1974).

The study, therefore, sought to find out the roles of academic leaders, the capabilities they see as being most important effective performance, challenges they face and what they perceive as implications on their day today activities. It also sought to find out the frequency of curriculum review as per needs of the learners and society in general. This culminates into the achievement of three-core missions of universities which are; teaching and learning, research and community service.

Participants also reflected on their own role and responsibility, and mentioned the importance of being conscious of one's self-awareness and self-discovery during the process of developing effective leadership skills. This view was evident in one of the statements which a participant shared with the research team:

“Well I think leadership is much more than training. Okay, we can be aware of what is a leader, what a leader should do; should do this, and this, and this, whether a leader should manage, should manage this, or should manage time, or a leader should ... but I think leadership is also discovering of yourself, and your abilities. So it's more for me. I don't like the word 'training' (Dean).

This finding is in alliance with the view stated by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2012) that, through training, effective leaders are better able to

implant in their followers the enthusiasm needed for them to work towards achieving their goals and objectives.

Another respondent indicated: ‘We should be identifying potential leaders within our faculty [and] to be nurturing those leaders’. It seems as if a gap in the cultivation of the leadership capacities of future leaders in the institution existed.

4.2.1. Challenges faced in management of academic staff as perceived by Deans of faculties and Heads of Departments

The study shows that; deans of faculties and heads of departments in all the university colleges that were studied, perceived that the main challenge they face in relation to management of teaching staff was demotivation of academic staff that was emanating from poor remuneration. All the colleges that were listed for the study, indicated that poor remuneration of the staff was an issue. Statistical percentages, as expressed by deans of faculties across the universities sampled were; College of Medicine 25 (83.3%), Malawi Polytechnic 6 (60%) and Chancellor College 7 (54%). The deans’ perception as evidenced by statistical percentages from each university studied; show that poor remuneration of the staff was the greatest challenge to the university’s management. Comments from heads of departments indicated that they are feeling a tension in their work between the emphasis on administration, management and leadership. One respondent indicated;

“I find some aspects of the university processes intensely irritating, in that they are bureaucratic and under-supported. It particularly applies to financial matters” (Head of Department, Malawi polytechnic)

“Each day I have to deal with a constant stream of small issues that others seem to think are important. (Dean of faculty)”

The increased workload that was caused by shortage of staff, was also perceived to be another challenge that management was facing. 7 out of 10 which makes (70%) of respondents from the deans of faculties sampled at Malawi Polytechnic felt that, it was a great challenge to college management. respondents at Chancellor College and College of Medicine shared the same view 8 respondents which is 62% of deans of faculties sampled at Chancellor College and 6 responding deans, making (60%) of responding deans of faculties at College of Medicine indicated that inadequate staff in most departments posed a challenge. Hence as leaders they managed to propose to senior management to recruit staff associates to feel the gap.

Another challenge that was noted from the study was insufficient financing. While 7(70%) of deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic reported that limited funds for research was a great challenge to management of the college. Chancellor College and College of Medicine indicated that the challenge of financing is to some extent alleviated by funding from some projects which support these colleges from time to time. It is worth noting that all the colleges are actively involved in various research activities that have led to the production of refereed publications which have helped staff members to gain promotion and international recognition (UNIMA report, 2014-2016).

It indicates that, inadequate funds available for conducting research among the academic members of staff may be a challenge not only to the staff, but also to the college management. Therefore, as leaders, they have been under pressure to generate additional income and to reduce their dependence on the government subventions. Therefore, the volumes of researches carried out at the universities would be compromised due to limited funds allocation by the government.

4.2.2 Implications of challenges faced in management of staff in teaching and learning as perceived by Deans of faculties and Heads of Departments

The study showed that percentage rates of deans of faculties and heads of departments in all the university colleges that were sampled, indicated problems with work continuity that may emanate from lack of younger staff. The percentage form for each university sampled were: At College of Medicine 26(86.7 %) of deans of faculties and Heads of departments, perceived continuity problems due to lack of new younger staff having some implications to management of staff in teaching and learning, followed by Chancellor College 7(54%) and Malawi Polytechnic 4(40%).

Across the colleges that were covered in the sample, the view of deans of faculties and heads of departments concerning the effect that quality of leadership, 9(69.2%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic, 7(70%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at College of Medicine and 29(96.7%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College perceived that the quality of leadership would go down due to the challenges they faced in relation to management of teaching staff. Nearly every college studied, it is looking to improve student success, increase research productivity, improve community relations. Hence heads of

departments and dean of faculties as leaders are the key to making process in each of these areas.

Some deans of faculties and heads of departments attested that fund raising skills and human resources management skills are very critical to their success as leaders in institutions of higher learning. They further suggested that having clear vision of where the department/college should strive to become, as well as how to support their faculty would assist their successful leadership of the faculties or departments.

In addition to this, the deans of faculties and heads of departments consider themselves as to be to be goal setters. Yet the study showed that , lecturers from some of those departments were essentially overwhelmed by student numbers and were spending most of their time teaching and marking examinations papers without having enough any opportunity to carry out research. Lack of sufficient time to conduct academic research; implies a greater risk on the quality of education being disseminated to the students, since new knowledge that would have been generated from research is not incorporated in the teaching processes. Research also helps researchers in writing books on acquired knowledge. The question of staff numbers vis a vis student numbers, plays a great role in the quality of teaching and learning process.

From documentary analysis, the situation of university colleges in Malawi shows that number of students have almost doubled over the last few years while the number of academic staff has not changed with significance. This increase in student-to-staff ratio in public universities has not been matched by additional modes of delivery to compensate for this increase. In this regard UNIMA has ensured that its colleges are fully capacitated in order for it to effectively deliver its core business. To strengthen management, staff have obtained PhD qualifications. In addition to that, UNIMA has developed a Performance Management System to enhance staff development for productivity, efficiency and effectiveness (UNIMA 2014-2016 report). Information from students, lecturers, and document analysis indicates that, sometimes, lengths of semesters are shortened by at least one week in all the Colleges that were sampled. Indeed, there is a big difference in the duration of semesters across the college.

4.2.3 Curriculum and Instruction

The study sought to find how often were college curriculum reviewed and whether the reviews addressed the needs of the learners and the community. Results obtained were as follows;

4.2.3.1 Challenges faced in management of curriculum and instruction as reported by Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments

The study showed that 26 (86.7%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at College of Medicine, 5 (50%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and 6 (46.2%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College perceived lack of information on their current job demands, as a challenge (*i.e. right skills, knowledge and competences required on job*). With curriculum review as a challenge 5 (38.5%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College, 7 (70%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and 20 (66.7%) of their counterparts at College of Medicine perceived that the college had constant curriculum reviews, which were tiresome. The results means that, constant curriculum reviews was a challenge to staff at Chancellor College, whereas it was not a big challenge at College of medicine and Malawi Polytechnic.

While 8 (62%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College, 6 (60%) deans of faculties and heads of departments in Malawi Polytechnic and 13 (43.3%) deans of faculties and heads of departments College of Medicine perceived that the job market was too dynamic for curriculum to catch up, on the other challenge 3(23%) of deans of faculties. Below are the deans' views on the implications of the challenges faced in the management of curriculum and instruction.

4.2.3.2 Implications of challenges faced in management of curriculum and instruction on education as perceived by deans of faculties and heads of departments

The study shows that challenges faced by the deans of faculties and heads of departments have some notable implications on quality of education as perceived by deans and heads across the three colleges. The results in this regard were 4 (31%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College, 3 (30%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and 12 (40%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at College of Medicine perceived that there was less interaction between lecturers and students while 5 (38.5%) of deans of faculties and

heads of departments sampled at Chancellor College and 4 (40%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and 9(30%) of their counterparts at College of Medicine indicated that the challenges they face affected the quality of teaching.

The study further shows that 6 (60%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and 21 (70%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at College of Medicine hold a view that learning standards were compromised and that 8 (62%) of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College, 7 (70%) of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and as high as 27 (90%) of faculties and heads of departments at College of medicine hold the view that graduates may not match job requirements. These statistics mean that the challenges faced in constant curriculum reviews by the universities may not sufficiently meet the desired level of quality for university students, since graduates may not match job requirements and due to compromised learning standards.

From this data analysis; document analysis, lecturers' interview and students interview report, there was an indication that curricula in most programs in the university, were not reviewed and updated. If updating was at all done, then consultation and interaction with stakeholders and professionals in the industry were not sought. The study showed that this resulted from lack of clear regulatory processes that would provide a guide for curricula review and update.

Curriculum covers content, structure, processing, and examination of what is taught and learnt. The critical challenge therefore is to ensure that for every program, a curriculum that is developed and implemented meets the needs of the students, the university and the wider community, (Varghese, 2009). It is imperative that the content and process of the curriculum be current and up to-date in nature. The university should plan its curriculum development to be competitive at the national and global levels in line with notable developments in other universities around the world (Varghese, 2009).

Universities should, therefore, have clear regulatory processes that would enable them to update curricula. Such processes would include, for example, interaction with stakeholders and careful surveys of alumni. Since the updating of curricula has become a profession and is now done in consultation with professionals in the industry, it is

necessary to have a systematic way of reviewing and updating curriculum in Malawian universities.

4.2.4 Management of Examinations

The study shows deans' views on the challenges faced by their faculties in the management of examinations;

4.2.4.1 Challenges in the management of examinations as reported by deans of faculties

The study results on this area were that 8 (62%) of deans of faculties and heads of department at Chancellor College, 7 (70%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at the Malawi Polytechnic and 27 (90%) deans of faculties at Malawi College of Medicine indicated that there was late submission of exams by staff, less staff leading to overwork and some lecturers do not know how to set exams, while 6(46.2%) of the deans of faculties and Heads of Departments at Chancellor College, 5(50%) deans of faculties and Heads of Departments at the Malawi Polytechnic and 15(50%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at College of Medicine hold a view that, there was also lateness in marking and submission of results and that there were too many scripts and few marking staff.

On storage of examination data, 5 (38.5%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor college, 6 (60%) of deans of faculties and heads of departments at Malawi Polytechnic and 22 (73.3%) deans of faculties and Heads of departments at College of Medicine indicated that, there was loss of data due to computer malfunctioning which in some occasions results into leakage of examination to students from secretaries and lecturers.

As regards to cheating in examinations, 7 (54%) deans of faculties and Heads of departments at Chancellor College, 7 (70%) deans of faculties and heads of department at the Malawi Polytechnic and 29 (96.7%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at College of Medicine indicated that there were high rates of cheating due to high student numbers and low numbers of invigilators.

There are many complaints, which raise questions regarding the integrity of how examinations are conducted in all three colleges. Document analysis established that this problem is compounded by challenges of marking exams and Continuous

Assessment Tests (CATS) for very large numbers of students (as many as 300 hundred scripts are assigned to one lecturer). Lecturers are at times under unbearable pressure when giving and marking examinations due to large numbers of students and short deadlines like two weeks for marking.

4.2.4.2 Implications of examination management to quality of education as viewed by the Deans and Heads

The study showed that 5 (38.5%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at Chancellor College, 4 (40%) deans of faculties and heads of departments at the Malawi Polytechnic and 24 (80%) of their counterparts at College of Medicine think that there would be loss of a degree in quality of university education.

In another perspective, 7(54%) deans of faculties and Heads of department schools at Chancellor College, 6(60%) deans of faculties and heads of department at Malawi Polytechnic and 16(53.3%) deans of faculties and Heads of department at College of Medicine indicated that students' integrity would not be measured accurately and 6 (46.2%) deans of faculties and Heads of Departments who took part in the study at Chancellor College, 5 (50%) of their counterparts at Malawi Polytechnic and 15 (50%) deans of faculties and Heads of Departments at College of Medicine indicated that there would be low quality grades.

Stakeholders are therefore concerned that examination cheats and their collaborators could possibly erode the credibility of university qualifications.

4.2.5 ICT Infrastructure

The study showed that heads of departments had strong views on the adequacy/inadequacy of computers to meet teaching and learning goals of students, faculty and staff.

4.2.5.1 Adequacy of computers for staff as reported by heads of departments

The study showed that 32 (56.1%) heads of departments at Chancellor College, 9(26.5%) heads of departments Malawi Polytechnic and 31(46.3%) of their counterparts at Malawi College of Medicine had inadequate computer equipment.

According to UNIMA report of 2014-2016, there was significant improvement of ICT infrastructure to achieve various outcomes such as: enhanced interface between students and staff, widened access to higher education through ODL and diversified sources of information and knowledge acquisition.

For example at Chancellor College, there has been automation of various processes such as; student registration, integration of students records and finances, processing and accessing of examination results, access to Moodle services, enforcement of student regulation, avoidance of human intervention in the allocation of accommodation to eliminate corruption and ensure fairness, reduction of congestion in physical structures through use of Wi-Fi and reduction of errors and processing time in research.

As a way of widening university access, in line with Government Policy, UNIMA has also initiated the development of an Open Distance Learning Policy (ODL) which will result in high student enrollment.

Through document analysis, the colleges that were studied showed to have inadequate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure to effectively support a free flow of ideas, research, teaching, learning and management. This challenge has a negative impact on quality of education and leadership offered in the universities, since ICT infrastructure are crucial facilities for carrying out various technological researches, by both members of academic staff and students.

4.2.6 Text books and Library space

Document analysis and physical observations of library materials and infrastructure, showed signs of dilapidation due to longevity of existence hence the university had embarked on a process of repairing its existing infrastructure while expanding teaching and learning facilities, to widen access to higher education.

It is worth noting that with financial support from the government of Malawi, the Malawi Polytechnic had gone through a facelift; Chancellor College had repaired its main library, classrooms and old laboratories. New laboratories for the faculty of science and an Information Communication Technology Complex had been built with the same support. From the same line of support, College of Medicine and other institutions have rehabilitated their infrastructure.

In this regard college leadership has made significant strides towards improving its library resources. It has subscribed to online journals, supplementing the hard copies and moved towards Wi-Fi on all its campuses and broadband connectivity.

4.2.7 Lecture Halls

The study showed that heads of departments and deans of faculties' views on the adequacy or inadequacy of lecture halls.

4.2.7.1 Adequacy of lecture halls as viewed by Heads of Departments and Deans of faculties.

In the study, 82.5% of the heads of departments and deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 47.1% heads of departments and deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic and 34.3% heads of departments and deans of faculties at College of Medicine rated their lecture halls as adequate. while 12.3% of the heads of departments and deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 35.3% of the heads of departments and deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic and 40.3% of the heads of departments and deans of faculties at College of Medicine rated their lecture halls as inadequate.

The results could not give one conclusion. However, documentary analysis show that lecture halls were not adequate for the number of students that were admitted to the colleges., hence rehabilitation of some buildings is underway and still more the colleges are constructing new infrastructures.

Only very few heads of departments and deans of faculties from all the colleges stated that their lecture halls were very adequate and very inadequate. Interview reports with Principals and Vice Principals of the colleges also confirmed that lecture halls, staff offices and the students' common rooms were inadequate in the colleges due to increased enrolment of students in various old and new programs.

4.2.8 On the teaching and learning process.

4.2.7.2 Effects of lack of enough lecture halls on teaching and learning process as perceived by

The study shows that, 8 (62%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 7 (70%) deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic and 26(86.7%) of their colleagues at College of Medicine reported that lack of enough lecture halls had negative effects the teaching and learning process in that there was no personal interaction between students and lecturers. In addition 5(38.5%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 2(20%) deans

of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic and 14(46.7%) deans of faculties at College of Medicine indicated that adequacy of lecture halls promoted effective learning, while 3 (23%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 7(70%) deans of faculties in at Malawi Polytechnic and 10(33.3%) of their colleagues at College of Medicine indicated that inadequacies caused congestion in the lecture halls, two (15.3%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 4(40%) deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic and 17(56.7%) deans of faculties at College of Medicine indicated difficulties in timetabling, hence tutorial time is taken up by lectures.

Further results from the study were that, 6 (46.2%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 3(30%) at Malawi Polytechnic and 22 (73.3%) College of Medicine indicated that inadequacies were causing delays of classes and 4 (31%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 4 (40%) at Malawi Polytechnic and as high as 25 (83.3%) at College of Medicine responded that postgraduate classes were scheduled either very early or very late in the day in order to utilize inadequate lecture halls. causing inconveniences to both lecturers and students.

From above analysis, it can be concluded that teaching facilities and the physical infrastructure of the public university were not adequate to meet the student enrollment and number of programs that are on offer in the colleges. Increasing student enrolment has over stretched the capacity of libraries, lecture theatres, laboratories, residential accommodation and dining halls.

Earlier studies indicated that, in some cases, some students listened to their lectures through the windows (Hughes & Mwiria, 1999, p. 228). Voice of student who was overheard by the investigator reveals that some common units have many students “we are so many in UCU100-communication skills such that some of us listen to the lecturer from outside the lecture hall.”

4.2.9 Finances

The study shows that heads of departments view on adequacy or inadequacy of finances on the teaching and learning process.

4.2.9.1 Adequacy of finances as viewed by Heads of departments

Majority of heads of departments indicated that the funds allocated to their departments were either inadequate or very inadequate. From the interview report with the Principals

and deputy principals of finances, and documentary analysis showed that financial constraints were major challenges facing public universities.

Leaders and managers in the public universities are busy with strategies of generating income more than strategies of improving education standards.. The major management challenge in public institutions of higher education in Malawi is how to do more with less, since available financial resources have been on the decline (Brown, 2001). The funds allocated to public universities by the government are grossly inadequate and continue to decline with increasing cost of income.

4.2.9.2 Implications of inadequate funds to the teaching and learning process as perceived by Deans of faculties

The study showed that 7 (54%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 6 (60%) at Malawi Polytechnic and 25 (83.3%) at College of Medicine had to cut down some training programs due to inadequate funds.

Six (46.2%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 7 (70%) at Malawi Polytechnic and 21 (70%) at College of Medicine reported that many goals and objectives were not realized.

3 (23%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College; 2 (20%) deans at Malawi Polytechnic and 13 (43.3%) deans at College of medicine indicated that research and publishing work had to be suspended on the basis of inadequate financial resource.

On support with teaching equipment; 5 (38.5%) deans of faculties at Chancellor College, 4 (40%) deans at Malawi Polytechnic and 8 (26.6%) deans at College of medicine reported that their staffs were not able to get necessary teaching equipment due to shortage of financial resources. The motivation to keep research, writing and publishing wide was greatly inhibited when financial aspect was considered.

4.3 Chapter conclusion

This chapter discusses the study findings in view of study objectives. It examines the implications of challenges that public university leaders face in Malawi and assess their perceptions. It also presents impact on quality of education. It is evident from both the literature and study findings that public university leaders face challenges in their day to day life as they execute their duties.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents major conclusions of the study, recommendations arrived and area for further research. The study critically examined the challenges that university leaders face, the leader's perceptions of those challenges and their impact on leadership and quality of education. The study has been guided by relational leadership theory. It is a qualitative study in nature and data was collected through interviews and document analysis. The research question that guided the research was, is there any relationship between managers' perception and the leadership challenges they face in higher education institutions in Malawi? The data was analysed using SPSS.

5.2 Major Conclusions

5.2.1 Teaching Staff

More than 50% of deans of faculties who took part in the study from all the universities, indicated that one of the management challenges they face in relation to management of teaching staff is poor remuneration, which demotivates lecturers. To be specific and in percentages forms, at Chancellor College 54% deans of faculties, 60% deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic and 83.3% deans of faculties at College of medicine perceived that poor remuneration, which demotivates staff, was a great challenge to universities management. Seventy per cent of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic perceived that increased workload due to less staff was a challenge and 80% of respondents from College of medicine indicated that lecturers did not set and mark exams on time. Concerning inadequacy of staff, more than 50% of respondents from Chancellor College and Malawi Polytechnic indicated that they had less staff in most departments.

At least 50% of respondents from all the universities sampled, complained that standards set for acquiring new staff were too high. About perceived aged staff, at least 60% of respondents from Chancellor College and College of medicine indicated that they had staff that was perceived aged by the respondents, who did perform their duties well and 70% of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic perceived that they had limited funds for research.

The study found that at least 40% of respondents from all the three universities indicated that there were problems with work continuity due to lack of younger staff and more than 65% of respondents from all the three universities indicated that the quality of education would go down due to the challenges they faced in relation to management of teaching staff. Poor remuneration of staff, workload and inadequacy of staff were some of the challenges facing public universities management. Implication of these challenges on education as perceived by respondents, 69.2% of the respondents from Chancellor College, 70% of the respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 96.7% of their counterparts from College of medicine felt that the quality of education would go down due to those unmitigated challenges.

5.2.2 Curriculum and Instruction

Over 45% of deans of faculties who took part in the study in the three universities reported that lack of information on current job demands was a challenge. On the other challenge, 15.3% of deans of faculties from Chancellor College and 30% of their counterparts from Malawi Polytechnic indicated that lecturers who were products of past curricula were partly inefficient and over 35% of deans of schools who took part in the study in the three universities indicated that they had constant curriculum reviews, which were tiresome. About curriculum implementation equipment, 23% of deans of faculties at Chancellor College and 40% of deans of faculties at Malawi Polytechnic reported lack of implementation equipment as a challenge. More than 35% of deans of faculties at Chancellor College and Malawi Polytechnic indicated that the challenges they faced reduced the quality of teaching and learning and over 45% of deans of schools in the three universities, indicated that learning standards were compromised and more than 60% of deans of schools in all the three universities indicated that graduates may not match job requirements.

The study from document analysis further reveals that, public universities do not have clear regulatory processes of the curriculum and that there is a mismatch between the skills acquired by the students and the job market requirements. Some implications of these challenges on education; 46.2% of the respondents from Chancellor College, 60% of the respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 70% of the respondents from College of Medicine perceived that learning standards would be compromised in the presence of those challenges. Sixty-two per cent of Chancellor College respondents, 70% of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 90% of their counter parts from College of Medicine felt that graduates may not match job market requirements.

5.2.3 Management of Examinations

In management of examinations, over 60% of respondents from all three universities indicated that there was late submission of examinations by staff, while more than 45% of the respondents from all universities indicated that there was also lateness in marking and submission of results. Concerning loss of data and examination leakages, over 35% of respondents from all the universities indicated that there was loss of data due to computer crashes and examination leakages from secretaries and lecturers. Over 60% of respondents from all the universities indicated there were high rates of cheating due to high student numbers and low numbers of invigilators. At least 45% of respondents from all the universities indicated that there would be loss of quality university education, while over 50% indicated that students' integrity would not be measured accurately and at least 45% indicated that there would-be low-quality grades. The study established that there was examination supervision problem due to large numbers of students sitting for examinations against few supervisors.

5.2.4 ICT Infrastructure

The study found that 34(48.1%) of the deans of faculties and heads of departments from Chancellor College, 14(31.2%) of the deans of faculties and heads of departments from Malawi Polytechnic and 34(34.8%) from College of Medicine had inadequate computers. The trend implies that the computers available in most schools were not adequate to meet the needs of the students and lecturers alike. More than 35% of deans of faculties from Chancellor College and Malawi Polytechnic indicated that the ratio of students per computer was high.

Six (46.0%) of deans of faculties from Chancellor College and 22 (73.3%) deans of faculties from College of Medicine indicated that there should be at least two students per computer, 7 (54%) of deans of faculties from Chancellor College and 4 (40%) of deans of schools from Malawi Polytechnic indicated that teachers have little access to computers except those in IT department. Only College of medicine deans of faculties 28 (93.3%) have indicated that measures are being taken to ensure levels of computerizations are high. Document analyses have shown that there was inadequate ICT infrastructure across the three colleges.

5.2.5 Textbooks and Library Space

It was established that more than 50% deans of faculties and heads of departments from Chancellor College and College of medicine have inadequate textbooks in their faculties libraries while 34(48.1%) deans of faculties and heads of departments from Chancellor College, 6(14.5%) deans of faculties and heads of departments from Malawi Polytechnic and 32 (33.1%) deans of faculties and heads of departments from College of Medicine indicated that they had enough textbooks in their libraries. Five (50%) deans of faculties from Malawi Polytechnic indicated that learning is affected negatively due to lack of enough textbooks. Four (31%) deans of faculties from Chancellor College, 5 (50%) deans of faculties from Malawi Polytechnic and 8 (26.7%) deans of faculties from College of Medicine indicated that learning is not up to date because textbooks have outdated information.

There are some implications of textbooks challenges on education; 7 (70%) of the deans of faculties from Malawi Polytechnic indicated that the quality of research by both students and staff is compromised due to lack of textbooks, more than 50% of deans of schools from all the universities used in the study indicated that most of the textbooks are old and in need of repair or replacement. Six (46.0%) of the deans of schools from Chancellor College, 21 (70%) from College of Medicine indicated that the process of accessing updated texts was slow and (40%) of the deans of faculties from Malawi Polytechnic indicated that some textbooks were missing due to theft. The study has revealed that textbooks and library space were not enough in the sampled colleges due to increased student population.

5.2.6 Lecture Halls

Concerning adequacy of lecture halls, 74.1% of respondents from Chancellor College, 43.8% of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 40.2% of respondents from College of Medicine rated their lecture halls as adequate, while 18.5% of respondents from Chancellor College, 39.5% of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 38.4% of respondents from College of Medicine rated their lecture halls as inadequate. Only very few respondents from all universities responded that their lecture halls were very adequate and very inadequate.

The results of the study showed that more than 60% of respondents from all universities indicated that lack of enough lecture halls affects the teaching/learning process in that there was no personal interaction between students and lecturers, 38.5% of respondents from Chancellor College indicated that adequacy promoted effective learning. Seventy per cent of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic indicated that inadequacies caused congestion in the lecture halls, 46.2% of respondents from Chancellor College and 73.3% of respondents from College of medicine indicated that inadequacies caused delays of classes and 83.3% of respondents from College of Medicine indicated that postgraduate classes were scheduled either very early or very late causing inconveniences to both lecturers and students due to inadequate lecture halls. Student population has soared over the years in public Universities; hence lecture halls have become inadequate.

An interview report from Managers and accommodation departments reveal that boarding facilities are inadequate and sometimes throughout the academic year students are congested in the hostels due to increased students' enrolment.

5.2.7 Finances, Implications of Inadequate Funds and Research

Statistically, percentages concerning research funds indicate that, only 8.8% of the heads of departments in Malawi Polytechnic 15.8% of the heads of departments in Chancellor College and 17.9% of their counterparts in College of Medicine had adequate funds. The majority of respondents indicated that the funds allocated to their departments were either inadequate or very inadequate, 71.9% of respondents from Chancellor College rated the

funds as inadequate while 50% of respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 41.1% of respondents from College of Medicine indicated that the funds were inadequate.

Concerning the implication of inadequate finance as a management challenge, 54% of the respondents from Chancellor College, 60% of the respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 83.3% of the respondents from College of Medicine reported that the universities had to cut down some training programmes due to inadequate funds. Furthermore, 42.2% of the respondents from Chancellor College, 70% of the respondents from Malawi Polytechnic and 70% of the respondents from College of Medicine indicated that many goals and objectives were not realized, and 35% of respondents from Chancellor College and Malawi Polytechnic indicated that their staffs were not able to get necessary teaching equipment.

Seventy-five per cent of the teaching staff from Chancellor College indicated that lack of up-to-date learning/teaching materials led to university education decline. This view was also held by 50% of respondents from College of Medicine and the same number from Malawi Polytechnic. Other 75% of respondents from all the three universities believed lack of motivation in lecturers led to university education decline. Elsewhere, 50% of the students' association leaders indicated that the quality of education in public universities was low, 41.7% indicated it was high and only 8.3% indicated it was very high. Concerning research funds, over 60% of respondents from all the universities indicated that funds for research were inadequate and grants were only offered to limited fields, while at least 35% of

all the respondents indicated that their universities lacked the equipment to do research. About motivation of staff, over 60% of all the respondents indicated that their staffs were not motivated to conduct research due to high workload and limited funds and over 35% of them indicated that most of the research work was not published. The study established that over 65% of all respondents indicated that researches were not ploughed back into the community; at least 35% of all the respondents indicated that the quality of research was compromised and over 45% indicated that the quality of education was reduced. Over 60% of all the respondents indicated that education was overtaken by the dynamic world. Most of the respondents from all the universities agreed that teaching methods adequately equip students for research, only a few disagreed. Seeking heads of departments, opinion, on research; 94.0% of the heads of departments indicated that the biggest challenge they faced was lack of funds to conduct research, 92.8% indicated that they lacked motivation, 88.5% indicated that there was lack of adequate research material, 90.3% of the heads of departments indicated that

standards of education would go lower as a result of the challenges faced in research, 80.7% indicated that career initiatives were reduced, 73.4% indicated that there was negative performance and standards of education, while 59.0% indicated that the society did not know what the university could do for them. The teaching staffs from all the universities were asked whether the universities gave them enough funds to conduct research and they responded that they were not, and that the lack of research funds led to academic decline. Lack of enough funds to run the universities and to enable the lecturers to carry out researches, were a big challenge to the management of the universities.

The most recommended strategy was to provide funds to staff for research. At least 94% of respondents from all the universities indicated that there should be collaboration with other universities to do research. Another popular strategy was to help in publishing researches and posting them on the net as per the views of 70% of respondents from Chancellor College, 82.5% from Malawi Polytechnic and 90.7% from College of Medicine, 75% of respondents from Chancellor College and The Malawi Polytechnic indicated that governments should put more emphasis on research innovations while the same number of respondents from College of medicine recommended that more lecturers should be employed.

Also, the same number of respondents from Chancellor College and The Malawi Polytechnic indicated that enough teaching and learning materials should be provided and 50% from the same universities indicated that research funds should be provided. Further, over 95% of respondents from all the universities would like the government to increase community service funds to universities and over 50% planned to have partnerships with stakeholder industries and other well-wishers. Over 60%, advocated for continuous awareness-raising campaigns among staff.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that all the Colleges that took part in the study did have management challenges which include; limited funding for research activities and for running the colleges, inadequate teaching staff leading to high learner-lecture ratios, poor remuneration of lecturers and non-teaching staff, which demotivates lecturers and non-teaching staff, inadequate teaching and learning resources and infrastructure, for instance lecture halls, computers, textbooks and library

space due to increased student population admitted in the universities. These challenges affect their day to day activities as leaders.

These management challenges were found to have some notable implications on education provided in the sampled colleges. The colleges did not meet quality measures of adequacy in regard to teaching resources and infrastructure. The study established that lack of funding was the biggest challenge as it affected all the other areas of teaching, learning and carrying out research by the lecturers.

It was also established that the curriculum was not adequately implemented due to lack of sufficient teaching and learning resources and due to lack of enough teaching staff.

There were no clear regulatory processes of the curriculum in the colleges that were sampled. Probably, this may explain the mismatch that was found to exist between skills acquired by the graduates and the job market requirements. All these factors were found to have an implication on quality of education provided in the public universities, as per the responses from the respondents.

5.4 Recommendations

1. The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), should institute strict quality monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to universities and revise its accreditation requirements. An accreditation system could be linked to an international accreditation system. An internationally accepted criterion is needed not only for setting standards but measuring quality. Furthermore, universities need to have well established benchmarks and indicators of quality which can serve as positive indicators of self-assessment by both universities and stakeholders.
2. Graduates tracer studies among the workforce should be conducted periodically, at least after every five years in order to inform the universities about the skills that are required in the industries to assist in reviewing curriculum accordingly.

Above all, Malawi's universities can achieve a turn-around in this situation through incentives that motivate lecturers to do more research. It is also necessary to:

3. Provide training on leadership and Management for appointed heads and deans
4. Review facilities and infrastructure available for research and publication with a view to facilitate high research and publication outputs.

5. Enhance mechanism for the dissemination of research findings to consumers other than the public.
6. Develop funding mechanisms for promotion of research and publication.

5.5 Areas for Further Research

This study recommends that the University of Malawi and the Malawi Government should establish appropriate, reliable, diversified and sustainable mechanisms for financing university operations apart from the subvention provisions. Hence a similar study should be carried out in private universities in Malawi.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

University Management Questionnaire for the Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the views and understanding of higher education managers on being appointed as academic leaders in a higher education context in Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face as leaders in higher education institutions.

Instructions

This questionnaire seeks to capture your views on several issues regarding university education. They are in various sections A, B, C, and D.

Please answer all questions by expressing your view in the spaces provided. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Section A

Leadership and Management

1. What makes you think that you have what it takes to be a leader or manager within higher education?

2. How often do you have to chair department meetings and make key decisions?

3. Have you ever reflected on the impact of your approach to leadership and maintaining influence?

4. How do management and leadership processes in colleges and universities differ from those in other organizations?

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5. How do departments select their leaders? What is your view on this approach?

Section B

University cultures and organization management

6. What do you consider to be the ‘culture’ at your university and within your own department?

7. Have you thought about benefits which your department could gain from positive adjustments to its cultural dynamic?

8. Would you like to be equipped with to manage difficult working relationships within your department?

Section C

Strategic Plan

9. Are you responsible for developing your department’s strategic plan?

10. Would you like further support with how to understand, develop, implement and review your strategic plan?

11. Do you feel confident in your ability to establish and motivate a well-performing team?

12. Are there any parts of your team-building approach which you think would benefit from some expert advice?

13. Are you responsible for effectively setting and monitoring your department budget?

14. Have you ever felt that there *must* be a more effective way to manage the administrative and financial aspects of your job?

15. Would you benefit from expert tips for professional and ethical practice in the context of resource management?

Section D

Managing People

1. Do you feel confident in your ability to establish and motivate a well-performing team?

2. Are there any parts of your team-building approach which you think would benefit from some expert advice?

Section E

Managing Resources

3. Are you responsible for effectively setting and monitoring your department budget?

4. Have you ever felt that there *must* be a more effective way to manage the administrative and financial aspects of your job?

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5. Would you benefit from expert tips for professional and ethical practice in the context of resource management?
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APPENDIX 2

University Management Interview Schedule for Principal and Vice Principal

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the views and understanding of higher education managers on being appointed as academic leaders in a higher education context in Malawi and to investigate the managers' perception on challenges that they face as leaders in higher education institutions.

1. Management of finance and physical resources:

To what extent do the challenges emanating from finance and physical resources affect public universities in relation to; teaching and learning, research and community service?

2. Management of finance and physical resources:

What measures that have been put in place by public universities to ensure quality education does not suffer under massification i.e. expansion, diversification and commercialization of public university education in relation to teaching and learning, research and community service?

3. Please comment about the funds available for the general running of the university.

[Probe if adequate or inadequate, sources, how much allocated for research and how it affects quality education]

4. Please comment on the challenges that come from, finance, infrastructure and teaching staff in teaching and learning processes? [Probe in relation to sufficiency]

5. What is the implication of the challenges that the public universities are facing in their Endeavour to fulfill their missions of teaching and learning, research and community service?[probe]

6. How do the above challenges impact on the quality of public university education?

7. What do you think are the solutions to the many challenges facing public universities today?
8. What measures have the commission for higher education put in place to ensure quality is sustained to counter emerging challenges in public universities?
9. Are the measures above effective now that there so many satellite campuses opened by public universities?

Thank you so much for allowing me to interview you