Building the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR) University into A First-Class University: The Role of The University Administrator

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Abstract

A University's rank is useful in the current era where arc universities are progressively enlarging their umbrella of strength and performance to remain competitive in the spheres of academic excellence. Essentially, world ranking by the Times Higher Education is a valuable means by which challenged emerging universities can possibly heighten their efforts for making recognizable impacts in the form of quality products and services in the particular academic niche they operate. In view of the merits associated with the ranking of universities, this research unraveled key underlying responsibilities for administrators of emerging universities such as the University of Energy and Natural Resources in Ghana. As indicated by this study, building a world-class university calls for an integrated and vested efforts by all forms of bureaucracy in universities in order to achievable this objective. This study maintained that, attaining this objective of being a world-class university could be quite challenging due to the operational reformations most emerging universities must undergo, however, it was posited that the benefits of being "tagged" as a world-class university is enormous, and therefore recommended the need for administrators to champion the ideal world-class university standard by promoting interventions that are in line with this agenda.

Keywords

University, administrators, world-class, rank

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1. General Overview

Building universities that meet global standards has become a great concern the world over [1]. Although it is not immediately clear what constitutes a world class university, many have referred to top 100 universities in global university rankings as being world class. Research in recent times has revealed several key policy objectives by many countries geared towards having their universities represent in the top 100 in global league tables inferable from [1]. Although a relatively young university, UENR aspires to be a center of excellence in the areas of energy and natural resources. In order to attain this status and also remain relevant in the teaching and research community, the administration and management of this university need to work at all levels and provide basic facilities for teaching and research. As postulated by [2], usually the significance of capacity building in many universities is grossly undervalued. Yet, a holistic emphasis on it is extremely crucial if the determination to reform this university is to yield long-lasting results. In their research, [3] declared that emphasis should be on the transfer of knowledge and good practices in teaching and learning. Admittedly, due to several unfavorable contextual factors, the building of world class universities in developing countries requires a higher degree of continual commitment as posited by [4]. Thus, capacity reinforcement in research and higher education calls for an ambitious and long- term strategy as maintained by [5]. This study highlights and discusses the centrality of the office of the university administrator in ensuring that this university moves to the top. It principally catalogues a collection of key suggestions and guidelines that could drive this university towards its goals of becoming a center of excellence in the areas of energy and natural resources.

1.1 Guiding Principles
While international ranking has put pressure on universities, governance in higher academic institutes has become very crucial for achieving and maintaining excellence. Salmi posited in [6] that talent concentration, adequate funding and good governance are key factors associated with top universities. University administrators develop and coordinate the academic and student programs. Although their duties may vary by institution, but generally their tasks revolve around curriculum choices, financial aid, student recruiting, admissions, scholarships and student affairs. These central roles explain the need for guiding principles in the University to direct policies and programs. The regular duties of administrators as can be deduced in [2] requires guiding principles which have been elaborated under the following shortlisted titles.

1.2 Guiding Principles
The University Administrator ought to strive to enliven the academic environment through the institution of both new learning facilities and the re-structuring of existing buildings to address the needs of the students, faculty and staff. Robust academic facilities are known to set a good tone for excellent academic work [7]. Thus, the functionality and easy access to such facilities present a welcoming and inspirational space for healthy teaching and research. There is no gain repeating that the UENR has academic facility challenges. While this may invariably be due to the fact that the university is young, it cannot be said that this challenge is insurmountable. This is where the position of university administrators becomes relevant. They possess enormous authority to ensure not only that existing facilities on campus are properly maintained but also new ones are constructed to aid teaching and research [8]. It is thus incumbent on the administrators of UENR to cultivate the principle of constantly revitalizing the academic environment to ensure the advancement of the university.

1.3 Strengthening Campus Identity
The Times Higher Education (THE) world university ranking [1] estimates that the quality of being the preferred choice for international students and faculty is an inalienable character of universities that meet global standards is their ability to attract foreign students. Being attractive internationally however requires the cultivation and strengthening of the sense of identity and diversity. The world's leading universities such as Oxford have unique, distinguishable identities that set them apart as commented in [9]. As mentioned by [10] and maintained by [11] in their research on "Campus Diversity and Ethnic Identity Development" and "How Colleges can Cultivate Students' Sense of Belonging" respectively, the objective of building diversity fundamentally increases access for underrepresented students to imbibe accept other peoples' opinions and believe them for who they are, thus, fostering social equity. This means that Administrators must strengthen campus identity as it can create a good impression in academic environment which is necessary for achieving a higher rank on the global scale.

1.4 Engaging the Strategic Enrollment Plan
Strategic planning of all activities should be an important action for administrative sectors in higher institutions of learning. As asserted by [12], and maintained in [13], visionary universities that met their enrollment objectives but were lacking strategic enrollment plan suffered huge

fiscal bottlenecks. Guiding principles are vital especially for younger universities that want to grow stronger and obtain dominance in the world of increasing academic competition. University administrators must therefore be guided by underlying policies or Master Plan that are potent enough to strengthen the University's core values and capabilities as maintained in the discourse of [14]. Effectively and efficiently engaging the Strategic Plan will essentially make the university vibrant in elevating academic excellence, supporting personal growth and encouraging social responsibility.

2. Commitment to Excellence

There is the need as University Administrator to strive for excellence through creativity, innovation and efficiency that allows for the optimization of the university's meager resources [15]. Additionally, there should be the need to value people by ensuring and providing a safe, wholesome and comfortable environment that nurtures mutual respect, diversity and inclusion [16]. Another important point to note is that since the university administrator is in a position to have constant exchange with other members of staff, it is imperative that he/she cultivates the habit of confidentiality [17], [18] and [19]. This means that for an administrator to contribute to building a strong university, he should be able to keep private every pertinent information in his/her custody.

2.1 Engaging the Strategic Enrollment Plan

Teaching and research in universities is undergoing global transformation. The traditional forms of lecturer-led seminars and discussions are fast making way for more progressive student-centered approaches [20] that focuses on improving knowledge transfer as elaborated in [3]. As posited by [21] and maintained by [22], it is worthy of emphasis that the transmission of knowledge from lecturers to students has been deemed to be less effective than a method teaching and learning which involves the students at the fore-front of knowledge production. Building a world class university thus places a huge responsibility on university administrators to not only promote student-centered programs and initiatives but more importantly support them. What this means is that the University Administrators should not remain unconcerned about the aspects of student life. This is inclusive of student-centered education and knowledge transfer. As suggested by the analytical review of [23], this could be done by establishing skills that raise life-long learning and independent problem solving capacities, and also, skills that interpret their needs and expectations. In this regard, actions that result will represent outstanding service to society. Inferable from the study done by [24] and [25] on ensuring student-centeredness form of teaching and learning and inclusion, there should also be the provision of educational programs and effective learning commu-

nity that reflects the highest form of quality academic standard.

2.2 Commitment to Fiscal Accountability and University-Wide Engagement at All Levels

The global ranking top universities consider accountability has been deemed as a very crucial segment indicating the quality of higher educational institutes. The issue of trust has been global debate over years for stakeholders. However, the leading educator, George Couros' statement that "as leaders in education, our job is not to control those whom we serve, but to unleash their talent. If innovation is going to be a priority in education, we need to create a culture where trust is the norm.", is a matter of concern. As revealed by [26], transparency and accountability has been highlighted as factors that evidence value-for-money and boosters of public investor confidence. Good university governance must be foremost in leading with a sense of higher accountability. In line with the discourse, recent researches have focused on accountability in higher institutions due to the belief that it is a predetermining factor of quality in higher education organizations as maintained in [6]. Additionally, the studies of [27] revealed that accountability is very essential for sustaining public interest, and guaranteeing the quality of academic standards. Thus, administrators must foster credible recipes that promote equity especially during enrollment of students. They must allow for equal access by needy students, and champion sound utilization of public resources as posited by [2]. Deducing from the report of [27] on the essence of accountability in higher institutes of learning, there should be the commitment to financial accountability by stimulating and developing a culture of compliance and integrity throughout the University. In line with the discussion, administrators must ensure that all forms of engagements with all academic and professional staff, management and students across all sections of the university focus on team building towards building a stronger university.

3. Strategies

The rank of world-class universities requires certain basic strategies such as talents centralization, resource availability, and policies that can empower the quest for educational excellence [28]. Few universities think strategically about their products. With regards to the strategic document submitted by [29], it is relative that as the market for academic faculty, funding and recognition heats up, the need for strategic thinking has become critical. Affirmatively, universities identify the requirement of building obligation for what makes them distinct. A color or a symbol can summon up strong acknowledgement and demand for some institutions but not for others because product is more than a color or a symbol as maintained by [30]. From the foregoing, it's obviously imperative to

establish key strategies for building strong universities. Inferable from published literature by [31], these strategies are significant to universities, where scope, density and an aversion to "publicizing" makes it difficult to build a comprehensible brand. Thus, the more affiliated your determinations and promises, the stronger your product will be. The following outlines the various strategies a university administrator can use in building a strong university.

3.1 Trademark is not a promotion; it is your culture

The focus of higher academic institutions must be on just building a trademark but on how to market it. Culture must shape how the built trademark is communicated. As has been postulated by [32], to establish UENR as a world class university, there should be an unmitigated drive for a unique university trademark and culture. Already the university has an important goal of becoming the center of excellence for the training of energy and natural resources experts. This broader goal can be constituted into a culture or trademark. By constantly ensuring that students, alumni and faculty of university remain at the forefront of their endeavors, the name of the university would gradually transform into a household name among its contemporaries. Deducing from the catalogue of information from the study by [33] on how global universities have reshaped the world, in building a stronger university, there must be a burning desire to encouraging others through the instigation of sound cultural values. Thus, it is imperative to employ time with people across other universities in order to understand their perspectives and to identify the fundamental principles that underpin the success of their university.

3.2 Community driven

Universities are large, complex communities with intertwined responsibility of serving not only their immediate community, but also providing useful services through the products it delivers across board. They must nurture and deliver quality products, and added services which collectively champion the needed positive reputation it requires from the broader society. As can be extrapolated from the study by [34], University Administrators of UENR must especially understand such crucial role it must play regionally, in addition to its immediate community(s). Strategic planning by Administrators must gear towards strengthening collaborations with the broader civil community and society through collaborative networking and synergy of developmental agenda into an all-inclusive community-driven objective, whereby, finding solution to challenges and wants of society is a prime focus. Such forms of partnerships have the tendency to create synergy by fusing complementary Skills and knowledge, and resources of a varied class of individuals, groups and organizations. Thus, there is no other basic mandate for the existence of University Administrators

than striving for excellence by factoring the influence of stakeholders far and near into its development agenda. To achieve this, advocating scholarships in the form of necessities evaluation, provision of technical support, consultation, participatory and demonstrative research are viable options for consideration. As stated by Martin and maintained [35], there is a great deal of profits that could be mutually gainful if the university culture prioritizes and promotes a strong bond of association with communities. In the same discourse, it was outlined that building synergy in the form of networking cooperative research, program structure, joint economic development and neighborhood partnership in conjunction with not-for-profit organizations and governmental sectors of the community elevates the degree of learning and life. Of course, whenever product is community driven, it goes from promise to reality, as greater products and impacts, being the objectives of the University, are key missions people envisage and want to be a part of. This great mandate must not only be believed in, it needs the node of the administrators of the University so as to effect changes in the university's culture, in the best way possible for it to attain the zenith rank of success it seeks among its competitors.

3.3 Strengthened research processes

As a key indicator of success, research, and applied skills of all faculties and students in the University represents a crucial factor that can foster the achievement of the University's mission, promote academic excellence, and economic contributions to society. As in the case of [29], [36] and [14], recent transformation in strategic plan for most Universities focuses on building their research capacities in order to enhance their stance on international forums. Strengthened research capacities in universities will not only improve their rank on global scenes but will again boost their competitive chances in accessing international and domestic research funds. Therefore, universities must prioritize and support innovative scientific studies, and, as a matter of fact, it is the duty of university administrators to provide the needed administrative and logistical support to the university's researchers to increase their research output.

3.4 Stimulating behavior

The goal of most Universities is to provide a sustained and conducive environment that promotes sharing of knowledge and values. To be effective in carrying out this scholastic mission, it is very key that all faculty members demonstrate rightful conduct which are in accord with the professional standards applicable in academia inferable from [37], [38] . Leaders in institutions of higher learning generally have a critical task in shaping and determining the ethical conduct in academic organizations. According to [39], one of the key segments that characterizes a good administration is ethics, while research by [40] asserted

that ethical conduct can greatly reduce public trust in a governing system. Thus, the study by [37] on ethical leadership maintained that a key to shaping the code of conduct within an institution is leadership. This is because unethical conducts have unproductive results and are life-threatening to young universities such as UENR. Although people may want to do the right thing, how do they know what the right thing is for the university? Thus, there must be vested efforts towards directing conduct in academic institutions. This task can be effectively enhanced if all facets of leadership work closely together towards achieving it. By seeking to achieve excellence, it is vital to know that a strong university must seek to promote distinct and articulated behavior by leadership since the success of the administration of any institute of higher learning could be heightened or sustained by good ethical behavior.

3.5 Enhancing PhD education

Advanced education is a powerful device to develop science and innovative capacities necessary for improved living conditions in a worldwide body of knowledge. Thus [41] revealed numerous vested efforts as in the case of China and India in order to compare educational performance metrics including higher-impact research and world university rankings. Enhanced PhD education is a valuable way by which problem-solving abilities could be developed. Additionally, it is the bedrock for publications, grant awards and securing global recognition as postulated by [42]. While some scholars, as in the case of [43] tried to reveal darker sides of PhD education, funding PhD research as maintained by [44] and asserted [45] will bring the relief PhD students might require in their academic pursuit. Significantly, to train students with the requisite capacity to analyze and address contemporary issues and to identify and address the right research questions to generate new knowledge of high quality is an invaluable benchmark of any world class university. The university administrator ought to be supportive of PhD candidates and attend to their research needs. This would culminate into not only producing studies that are of relevance to society but more importantly provide support for the university's research output and increase its appearance at knowledge dissemination fora and other outreach activities.

3.6 Discipline

University administrators have another vital role in quest of the shared goal of developing world-class universities [7]. They need improve their international experience so as to provide meaningful lessons across all disciplines. The choice of institution by students greatly rely on the dynamic educational programs facilitated by a particular institution inferable from [26]. Administrators ought to greatly influence the products of a university by making vibrant decisions that can impact the choice

by students as they embark on their professional and/or private endeavors. The need for commitment by university administrators will lead to the achievement of great and significant products, better connections and building a valuable trademark. Administrators can foster the building of a stronger university by developing great themes that keeps the university upgraded every year. Dynamic curricula activities provides a greater deal of options that makes a particular university very unique among its competitors as indicated by [26].

3.7 Hardworking and Visionary: Never finished

There is no finishing line for a strong university. There is a need for reflecting on the achievements of the institution periodically in order to identify areas of pitfalls. The goals and objectives of that academic body must never be left unechoed or ajar. As can be potentially inferred from [46], the goals of higher institutions are key drivers of success. Therefore, new projects or initiatives must not swerve from the overarching vision and objectives of the university. Plans and actions must fit strategically into the culture of the university without leaving the broader community unenthusiastic. The goal and effort of various faculties and departments, and other units of the university however, much collectively focus on hardworking towards arriving at the ultimate standard of excellence.

3.8 Direct Training for Younger Academic Staff

According to MacLagan's human resource wheel as indicated by [47], it is the distinct role of the administrator to coordinate every training, organization and career development program in the higher institutions as posited by [48]. To strengthen the human resource base and increase the university's capacity to translate local and international research to the benefit of Ghana, there is the need to focus on the training of the younger staff of the university. The younger staff need to upgrade their knowledge in their respective disciplines through specially arranged sabbatical programs, which could be facilitated by visiting lecturers or professors, through Higher Education Teaching Network facilities. This will strengthen the teaching skills of academic staff and champion optimal impacts through the learning process in some peculiar circumstances. As noted in [49], a vibrant and creative trained staff is a key strategy that can guarantee the highest level of quality achievable from higher learning institutes amidst the global dynamics of academia. It is imperative that the University's leadership or administrators be the champion of what has been expounded so far. They must foster the formulation of informed changes in current practices and lay out measures or plans that factor in a broader range of perspectives. For instance, doctoral training could be offered for academic staff who do not yet possess one. Whilst this approach could increase the overall research output of the university, it could more im-

portantly improve the teaching and research competence of the staff.

4. Key Attributes of a World Class University and the Role of the University Administrator

4.1 Conceptual Framework of World-Class University

The Times Higher Education (THE)[50] outlined a few attributes that feature World-Class Universities. The framework below highlights the distinctive features for the top 100 universities globally:
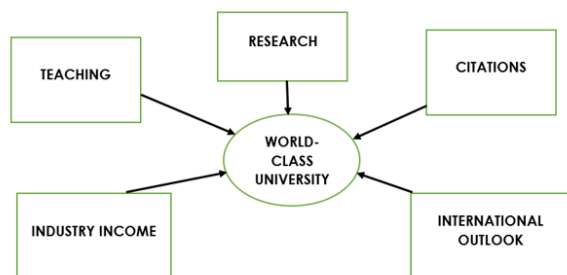

Figure 1. Author's construct based on the Times World University Ranking, 2014-2015

Inferring from the framework above, World-Class Universities are characterized by five main features based on the Times Higher Education's methodology for ranking World-Class Universities, including; teaching, research, number of citations, university's international outlook, and income stream. Research and publications generally give an indication of how able a University is in terms of publishing its academic work in high quality peer-reviewed journals. The research criterion thus entails three core indicators which consider a university's reputation for research excellence, university's research income and the total number of publications as scaled against the total size of the university. Also, the number of citations from published work by universities are very useful especially for determining the role of the academic body in disseminating new knowledge and ideas. The category indicator termed as income industry deals with the ability of the university to innovate, invent and facilitate consultancy in a way that provides solution to industrial challenges. Industry income determines institutional quality by giving an indication of the willingness of businesses to pay for research, and it also reveals the capacity of the University in terms of attracting funding resources amidst global competition. International outlook: This category considers campus diversity and the degree at which academics collaborate with international colleagues on research projects. It considers diversity of staff and students' population, and research collaboration ratios. This provides clear indication of the ability of a university

to attract both undergraduates and postgraduates universally, and it is determined by the ratio of international students to domestic students.

5. Quality Teaching Versus the Learning Environment

5.1 Role of Administrators: The Way Forward

The following paragraphs provide vivid information about core areas and related activities, as well as the specific activities which university administrators, particularly in UENR can perform to greatly transform their university into a world-class learning community.

5.2 Recruitment and admission

The process of applying and gaining admission into a university is a key determinant of how robust that university is. The University Administrator can be positioned with the aid of multi-channel communication levels to deliver a rigorous scrutiny of application and admission procedures. One way of doing this is by providing constant information to both applicants and prospective applicants on key issues such as admission and application criteria, and the like via recognized online platforms. With this, prospective applicants can easily track the status of their application, know their fee information beforehand and go through registration procedures very comfortably on their desktops, laptops, smartphones and tablets from their respective geographical settings. There are many universities which spend too much valuable time on manual work. Nonetheless, with the assistance of university management systems, these responsibilities are now computerized and rationalized to strengthen efficiency and save time and effort. Robust university management systems also permit administrators to speed up the admission process by linking several stages without stress. Additionally, university administrators could use advanced technology to keep and store digital documents, track and achieve admission accessibility, schedule meetings, facilitate fee payments both from web and mobile devices and view the entire progress through dashboards and get the report.

5.3 Enrollment and registration

Enrollment and registration management plans are very important for achieving the enrollment goals of any high-class university. Enrollment plans must focus on the development of many new recruitment and student support initiatives, and additionally the reexamining and revitalization of various existing programs. There is the need for examining enrollment plans, to find out the persistence, and retention patterns so as to the interest of many new students. In the long run, the degree of students' persistence would be enhanced, thereby increasing their retention rate. Implementing enrollment and registration module mechanisms that are online-based will

enhance the enrollment of students into programs, planning courses, managing course sections and registering for courses with much ease.

5.4 Academic planning and administration

Academic Planning and Administration is a significant tool which could be employed by university administrators to help create modified learning platforms with strong planning and implementation to ensure retention of students and staff. Academic planning will essentially aid in ensuring the immediate tracking of course progress and student performance, which is also useful for decision making purposes.

5.5 Faculty support tools

Faculty development has a direct impact on outcomes from an academic institution. A strong university management system should have lecturer provision tools for uploading assignments online, affirming results of student tests, assessing scores, posting grades, scheduling course timetables, monitoring attendance and providing other records constantly and accurately. As indicated by [51] that "faculty development has measurable impacts on teaching," it is relevant to make possible amendments in archaic practices of faculties as well as student learning methodologies so as to produce possible positive impacts.

5.6 Fee invoicing and payment

The process of feeing and invoicing should be simple and digitized. A strong university should have a fee invoicing and payment system which is also a significant tool for providing easy access to fee records for students and staff. The university should adopt flexible installment plans, apply discounts and fines, automatically generate receipts, send instant alerts and reminders via email and SMS and push notifications from mobile devices.

6. Building Strong Internal Culture

Strong and successful university cultures manifest in diverse faces. They are those university cultures that characterize growth and are accompanied by a high level of teamwork and engagement. The following enumerates some of the strong internal cultures a university administrator can champion in building a strong university.

6.1 A purpose-driven university culture

Purpose is a vital element for a sustainable university culture. A sustainable university culture ensures that workers do not only have a clear sense of purpose but also are able to recognize and comprehend their immediate and long-term goals. This is essential because a purpose-driven university channels individuals and resources towards the advancement of the university's ultimate goals rather than simply managing them. Purpose is a motivational driver for engaging staff and communities. When the university administrator institutes a clear purpose for the university, it will become the inspiring driver for engaging workers and also offer them a solid source for enthusiasm. In other words, the university's strategies, capabilities and culture become the engine behind the university's purpose. The long-term benefits of having staff affiliated with a solid sense of purpose are thus immense.

6.2 Effective communication patterns

One of the tools for strong internal cultures a university administrator can use in building a strong university is effective communication channels. This can be seen in three categories: Clarity, Courtesy, and Proactivity. Clarity is an essential component of skilled productive interaction, which necessitates that thoughts be conveyed unequivocally, succinctly and transparently. And regardless of wherever and however humans engage in such communicative interactions—whether downwards from superiors to staffs or within teams—this can be seen. This is the stage where the message is received and decoded by the recipient(s) or audience. In a university where staff communicate among themselves clearly, people work together better and productivity is increased as a result. Courtesy is another key aspect of effective communication. It demonstrates respect for the other person and gets the message across within safe limits. In this way, feedback, information, and messages can be transferred with minimal concerns for hurting others. Proactivity is a yet another crucial aspect of effective communication because the only way to conduct a productive discussion is to conduct a proactive one. A forward-looking discussion is based on the notion that whatever happened has happened and it cannot be changed. This means that discussions are more centered on what we can do from this point going forward in order to reach our goals or operate better as a team.

6.3 A culture of feedback

Developing a culture of feedback is fundamental to the success of every university because feedback drives higher levels of performance. Creating an open, feedback-oriented university culture requires people to be receptive of feedbacks and to understand when and how to give it. Feedback can come from diverse quarters. It could be internal or external and the feedback could be about any aspect of university life, including leadership and vision, management and internal practices and operations. A culture of feedback means not only that feedback is given and received but that, it is given and received safely, clearly, and productively, with sensitivity to diversity of cultures, personalities, and situations.

6.4 Embracing diversity

Cultural sensitivity is the consciousness of practices and cultures. A culture that embraces diversity has the cognizance of different cultures, how these cultures should

be accurately approached and how to communicate with them accordingly. Administrators and team members evaluate how cultural differences affect how people work, communicate, and interact without judging, making assumptions, or discriminating. A university culture that embraces diversity is positioned on tolerance and acceptance of others, which adopts teamwork and a general sense of collaboration.

6.5 Teamwork

Teamwork is the heart of every strong university culture. Team culture places emphasis on team activities rather than individual accomplishments. It also boosts relationship and permits an activity to be completed in a quicker, better and more efficient manner. Some of the delusions of teamwork is that the success of a team is built on behaviors of team members. The administrators that work together positively make teamwork easier. Thus, there is the need to know the expectations and what the roles and rules are. Once the need of the university is secured and clarified, teamwork becomes much easier.

6.6 Growth and development

In building a strong university, an administrator always ensures successful university cultures by offering its staff prospects for growth, both in training and their capacity to grow as individuals attaining new skills and, as a result, new potentials. It is the duty of the university administrator to achieve the best possible performance from staff as well as facilitating their grow. The prospects for development are formative factor in staff appointment and various types of development opportunities that university can offer workers.

6.7 Professional and financial growth

In building stronger university, a university administrator should be enthused and keen on pursuing opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge. University administrators crave to progress as professionals and the university should permit such growth in order to build strong university. Financial growth is very vital to every university. This serves as display of their value and worth to the university as well as hope for growth. Inadequate or insufficient financial growth is normally construed by university administrators as lack of development of their own value for the institution which may result in disengagement or even increased staff revenue. However, university administrators make phenomenal accomplishments when there is growth.

7. Operational System

Operational system is accountable for all aspects of building facilities in a university. It administers resources such as material, machines, people and technology and creates products and services that the university wants. The university administrator should make sure that services that are needed to build a stronger university are well managed for a university to be competitive. Operational System does not only serve as the engine room for the university but also aid in planning and motivating built-up facilities. However, the operational system must exploit efficiency, yield and profit which are always significant to a university's survival. Here are some key points of operational system in building a stronger university.

7.1 Use of data

There has been an increasing concern in terms of performance assessment in higher learning institutions around the World, and as was opined by [52], performance indicators must be used in direct relation to the main objectives the particular academic body has committed itself to accomplish. Under the right circumstances, performance indicators can useful in providing a good knowledge about performance of institutions. This makes analytics for strong planning, adjustments and decision making a necessity. Two common types are efficiency metrics and effectiveness metrics. Effectiveness deals with accomplishing the outcome anticipated by the institution or being on the right path. However, efficiency can bring change if the aims and objectives the higher academic body is in the correct direction. According to [53], institutions are established to be the most effective and efficient social units and the real effectiveness of a particular institution could be measured by the extent to which it accomplishes its laid down goals and objectives. Since "Outcome Goals are the substantive objectives of the institution" as postulated by [54], performance assessment as supported by [55] is a powerful way by which the esteemed objectives of a higher learning institution can be measured. Therefore, data about the various activities pursued by the academic body would imperatively facilitate a meaningful discussion of success as was noted by [52].

7.2 Data challenges

Following from above, challenges with analytics affect planning, adjustments and decision making in many organizations. Measuring efficiency and effectiveness requires adequate and reliable data records for the goal of easy comparisons during annual or regular performance discussions. There is the urgent need for higher institutions of learning to imbibe newer systems and setups that make it easier and helpful in carrying out analytical tasks and management options through better examination of data in new, helpful and thoughtful dimensions.

7.3 Process design

Process design requires a continuous improvement and development of difference processes and strategies. For higher institutions, researching, forecasting and developing a sound process take expertise and energy but result can be lasting. The design of the learning process must

bring a perfect collaboration between faculty members, as well as learners, and researchers. As noted in [56] "design thinking is about helping people and organizations to solve their problems for long-term satisfaction, not achieving efficiency for short-run gains". This means that careful process design is a powerful tool for achieving the goal or impact higher educational institutes seek to arrive at.

7.4 Forecasting and goal setting

Institutional purpose has received global node as it forms an essential part of the whole organizational life. Therefore, the process of forecasting and formulating goals must have broader view or knowledge and agreement of both internal and external concepts/culture that summarizes clear conceptions of purpose which could potentially signal the directional and operational strategies for the academic body as postulated by [57]. This is necessary since the best forecasting often combines historical data with analysis of changing conditions. AS can be further determined from [57], there exists a variety of public misconceptions on the reality and confidence of educational organizations. As a result, most institutions have become dysfunctional. Of course, no one will bear with investing its confidence and resources in an institution that pays no heed to his/her idea; in terms of its operational mode if there is a lacking of greater assurance of its investment.

7.5 Collaboration with departments

Administrators of institutions have a greater mandate of collaborating plans and strategies with all members of faculties, departments and other units within the academic community. As maintained by [58] and reaffirmed by [59] "the faculty-administrator relationship in colleges and universities is central to the effectiveness of shared governance" As posited by [60], administrators must strive harder to militate against various forms of disagreements that normally rule out the core values of academic institutions. With good communication and collaboration, operations system can work effectively with finance, sales, marketing, human resources and other departments which would totally substantiate greater heights efforts in the world of growing competition among institutions of higher learning. Additionally, [61] stated that "collaboration and mutual respect are central to developing a positive relationship between faculty and administration, the development of which is critical to institutional success". The need for building strong relationship between faculty and administration are not only critical, but vital for a healthy and productive working environment. With a clear comprehension of the core mission and culture of the University, administrators must make unflinching efforts towards ensuring that they themselves and other workers understand and highly regard the university's mission.

7.6 Collaboration with departments

With all the advancements in technology, people remain critical to the equation; though often in different types of jobs. Managing people is very crucial, especially with the kind of indifferent conduct and campus diversity that pervades most academic communities. Obviously, the mandate of university governance cannot be relegated to a single entity. The tasks for administrators have become quite challenging as they may have to "become all things for all people" in many respects as opined by [61]. However, the greater task of managing the diverse campus life could be lessened if both administration and faculty work harder closely together. Judging from the discussion so far, it is relative that a university administrator knows the fields of operational system that comprises of diverse functions and roles in order to build a stronger university. Among others, these functions include:

- Planning and implementing

- Managing projects

- Planning information systems

- Helping to design and develop products and services

- Managing delivery in a timely manner

- Optimizing quality control

- Conducting procurement/purchasing

- Managing logistics

- Managing and maintaining facilities

- Forecasting for planning

- Planning for capacity

- Optimizing resource usage

- Continuously improving processes

- Executing a university's strategic plan

7.7 Stakeholder Linkages

As defined by [62] "stakeholder" refers to an individual or group of individuals either impacted upon by a company or able to impact on the achievement of its objectives. Similarly, [63] identifies stakeholders as individuals or groups that have the power to directly impact the future of an organization. Therefore, a stakeholder is an individual or group of persons with an interest in the success of an organization; in fulfilling its mission, delivering intended results and maintaining the viability of its products, services and outcomes over time. The distinction between internal and external education stakeholders is important. With respect to building a stronger university, internal stakeholders have greater capacity to

produce positive change in the university, but they do not have all of the power needed to sustain it. This is because a plethora of factors can affect a university's performance over time (such as staff attrition, shifting priorities and "mission drift"). Another instance is that, improved outcomes achieved one year can easily fade the next year. For this reason, external stakeholders also have a critical role to play in sustaining improved outcomes. If they are informed of the university's effort to improve, they can help sustain the government's focus over time on "mission-oriented change"; improvement that lies squarely at the heart of the government's mission or purpose. Most stakeholders have a human scale; the members of a group of stakeholders often share a common identity (in the sense of belonging together, or sharing common culture or location) with certain shared obligations both on the side of the members as well as on the side of the university. In higher education, the most important or core part of the community would be the students.

7.8 Students

The student body is one formidable stakeholder in the university system. They play a significant role in terms of the global competition in improving the ranking of higher institutions. As maintained by [64], in addition to the quality of the teaching provided, greater levels which can be achieved by a university rely greatly on the ability of its students under its training. Therefore [65] posited that most visionary universities utilize the customer-input technology. In this wise, students being the customers of higher education institutions are a vital input into the teaching process. A range of factors must be considered in terms of those that shape knowledge of students. Deducing from [66] and the study by [67], it is inferable that it is not only through lecturers, professors or other efforts of universities that students are educated but also the efficiency of education is further enhanced through the contributions of fellow students. Students are partly educated through their peers and the quality of peers co-determines the outcome of learning. Revealing the essential role of key stakeholders in such as students in higher institutions of learning, [68] noted that students drive a lot of the activities in higher academic institutions especially through their engagement with external communities as maintained by [69], [70]. Therefore, global university governance must critically review their responsible task in society and to evaluate the relationships with various constituencies, and stakeholders such as its students, and communities.

7.9 Government

A lot of studies including [71]–[73] have covered policy instruments and governance arrangements in the field of higher education. As a key provider of resources such as funding of higher education, governments would like to ensure that higher education meets the interests of stu-

dents and the society in general. The quality of products and services including commercialization and knowledge transfer, graduate employability and academic productivity ([26]) delivered by the system of individual higher educational institutions give a better view of how well that country competes in the worldwide economy. While we may agree that government is an important stakeholder, this by no means suggests that government represents a well-defined and clear-cut influence on higher education institutions. As demonstrated by the educational analysis of the OECD [74], the present complex system of global competition among universities and private institutions, and other international institutions makes it inappropriate for the affairs of higher educational institutions to be run by governments or the state. Importantly, university governance must be free and independent of external bureaucratic bottlenecks that militate against the smooth operation of administrators in higher educational institutions as reported by [75]. However, this does not deprive governments of their vital position as key stakeholders in building highly-competitive institutions of excellence since according to [74], governments are required to "balance the encouragement of excellence with the promotion of equity". While the basic function of higher education may be seen as being responsible for the transmission of knowledge to the younger generation, universities equally interact with many in the other public policy domain. Thus, regulatory reforms and governmental engagements must not so much stifle the independence and dynamism of administration in universities.

7.10 External stakeholders

External stakeholders also affect the goals and visions of higher academic institutions. They have wider range of influence. Stakeholders have many solid grounds for the kind of influence they possess, as indicated by Freeman [62]. They are mostly part of powerful statutory bodies that take charge of voting, economics and politics. This implies that they can influence resources sharing such fiscal aids and grants which are essential for growth higher institutions of learning. As posited by [76] and supported by [77], stakeholder relationships have a tendency to result in either positive or negative impact on the overall goals and mission of any academic body. Therefore, the administration of universities must attach a greater value and essence to their claims or demands. This because, it is only when the university regards their claims as important that their voice may be heard via external representatives in the university's internal decision-making bodies.

7.10.1 Prevailing External Stakeholders in the University of Energy and Natural Resources
Regional Center for Excellence (RCEES)

In responding to the "call for proposal" by the Africa Centers of Excellence (ACE) Impact, a proposal was submitted by University of Energy and Natural Resources

on establishing an Excellence Center in the University. The name of the center "Regional Center for Energy and Environmental Sustainability (RCEES)" aptly indicates the focus of the center, to deal with issues regarding power (energy), environmental/social safeguards and water. The Africa Center seeks to provide educational training to all stakeholders including graduate students (MSc/MPhil/PhD) on energy and environmental related issues to bridge the skill gap. The main objective of this Center is to conduct internationally competitive training and research, aimed at turning out high quality graduates to drive the socioeconomic development of the sub-region in Energy/Power Development using an environmentally sustainable approach. The center is mandated to:

- Train Postgraduate Students (both Masters and PhD)

- Build capacity of sector organizations through short courses and joint research

- Collaborate with industry & Academic/Research Institutions to address challenges in the Energy Sector and

- Conduct state-of-the-art research to advance knowledge in Energy and Environmental Sustainability.

The UENR-ERAMUS program

The project seeks to offer educational training to all stakeholders including graduate students (Undergraduate /MSc/MPhil/Ph.D.) on Renewable Energy Engineering and environmental-related issues to associate the skill fissure. The main objective of this center is to prepare students to meet local socio-economic needs and equip students with entrepreneurial skills for employability and self-employment. The project is mandated to:

- Redesign program, implement and evaluate it as well.

- Trained lecturers at UENR by the LTF on the redesign of study programs similar to the BSc Renewable Energy Engineering.

- Form UENR Stakeholder Panel (SP) with representatives for external stakeholders from within the area of Management Information Systems and a gender-balanced team of students and recent graduates established.

- Make available and access to redesigned study programs at UENR for disadvantaged students, especially girls and rural students, improved.

- Establish Cross-regional and cross-continental networks on HE established between UENR and other project partners.

- Establish an institutional strategic plan for the sustained continuation of the project activities at UENR prepared, including plans for mandatory pedagogical staff development.

- Provide training workshops for UENR teachers conducted by the LTF.

- Establish training workshops for teachers at UENR conducted.

- Study programmes redesigned by teachers trained by the LTF.

- Provide enrolment of disadvantaged students in the redesigned study programmes increased by the end of the project period

7.11 Administrators
The table 1 provides information about stakeholders and the various groups they are made up of.

8. The Way Forward

It is undeniable that the ranking of a university is important. In this age of globalization, top universities are striving forward to improve or maintain the standard they have acquired by the unflinching efforts to become what they are today. The world ranking by the Times Higher Education must challenge all emerging universities make the needed decisions and changes that could alter their lower standard. A lot of universities do not meet the criteria of this worldwide ranking by the Times Higher Education which necessitated this research. Consequently, building a world-class university places a great deal of responsibility on administrators of universities. Championing such a change requires hardworking and much commitment. This research posits that becoming a world-class university requires the integrated efforts by all governments and stakeholders. However, the major facilitators of the synergies are the administrative systems found in universities and colleges. As was identified in this study, there is the need for changes in strategic plans of most emerging universities that have the objective of becoming a world-class university. As a matter of fact, administrators must ensure that there exists a system of continuous improvement in management plans and collaborations between all facets in their institutions. Every faculty, department or respective division in the university cannot be exempted if the university really seeks to become a highly-ranked academic body. The key discussions highlighted by this study such as building campus identity, diversity and equality, strengthened research, and financial supports, among others, require careful examination by various administrators of universities as they seek to attain to greater heights.

Table 1. Table showing stakeholder category and constitutive groups

Stakeholder Category	Constitutive groups, Communities, Stakeholders, Clients, etc
Governing entities	State and federal government; governing board; board of trustees, Organizations, sponsoring religious organizations
Administration	Vice-Chancellor; Senior Administrators
Employees	Faculty; Administrative staff; Support Staff
Clienteles	Students; Parents; Tuition reimbursement providers; Service Partners; Employers
Suppliers	Alumni; Other colleges and universities; Insurance companies; Utilities; Contracted services
Donors	Individuals (Including trustees, friends, parents, alumni, employees, industry, research councils, foundation)
Non-governmental regulators	Foundations; institutional and programmatic accrediting bodies; professional associations; church sponsors
Financial Intermediaries	Banks; fund managers. analysts

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