

## The Initiatives for Enforcing the Quality Assurance Standards in Fostering Universities' Compliance in Tanzania

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### ABSTRACT

*The world university system currently emphasizes strict compliance with established quality assurance standards for enhancing graduates' quality and academic capabilities. In that vein, compliance with university quality assurance standards across the globe requires critical consideration of the adequate and correct application of initiatives for enforcing such standards. Similar to other countries, Tanzania has some initiatives for enforcing its universities' quality assurance standards. Despite the application of such initiatives, the country is witnessing low to extreme non-compliance cases each year. This study examined the application of initiatives for enforcing quality assurance standards in fostering universities' compliance in Tanzania. It was informed by the qualitative approach and adopting a case study design. Interviews, documentary analysis, and focus group discussion were data collection methods applied in the four universities involving 46 respondents that were purposively chosen. The data analysis was done through a content analysis approach. The analysis revealed that both technical and administrative enforcement initiatives were found to be applied in universities. The technical initiatives are monitoring and evaluation for teaching, examination moderation and strict invigilation, independent examination, self-assessment and academic audits, and accreditation, while administrative ones are improving quality assurance staff motivation and capacity, promoting quality assurance stakeholders' involvement, and establishing an effective quality assurance leadership system. In applying such initiatives, the deficiencies (i.e., incorrect and inadequate applications), strengths, differences and similarities were found across the involved universities. Besides, very unsatisfactory applications of enforcement initiatives were found in private universities compared to public ones. Due to such unsatisfactory applications, non-compliance cases at various university stakeholders' levels exist in those universities. This study concludes that the existing university non-compliance cases in Tanzania are attributed to the existing inadequate and incorrect application of enforcement initiatives. It recommends that there is a need for the Tanzania Commission for Universities to issue more detailed guidelines to harmonize the application of some enforcement initiatives that have attracted different application practices across universities. Besides, the Tanzania Commission for Universities and university quality assurance agencies must take the strongest punitive measures against non-complying individuals and universities to discourage such behavior.*

**Keywords:** Enforcement Initiatives, Quality Assurance Standards, University Compliance

### I. INTRODUCTION

Strict adherence to defined Quality Assurance (QA) criteria is a key component of the worldwide university system's strategy to improve the caliber and competence of its graduates. In that vein, strict compliance with university QA standards across the globe requires critical consideration of the adequate and correct application of the initiatives for enforcing such standards (Mgaiwa, 2021; Rahnuma, 2020). In response, both external (international and national) and internal (university) QA agencies have been dedicating efforts to devising and applying several initiatives correctly and adequately for enforcing QA standards to attain universities' compliance and quality (Asiyai, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021). In such application, the correctness is measured based on conformity with the existing national

or international/universal QA guidelines of implementation, while the adequacy is on the extent to which the existing QA Enforcement Initiatives (QAEIs) are enough to serve in all areas of core university functions (i.e., teaching, research and consultancy) and to all university stakeholders (i.e., top administrators, academics and students in the context of this study) to attain universities' compliance.

Although the main focus of this paper is not to delineate the key terms, in the context of the current study, the university QAEIs will refer to all efforts, processes, methods and strategies dedicated to the university stakeholders for enlightening and making them comply with the existing QA standards and improving the Higher Education (HE) quality (Mgaiwa, 2018a). They include technical initiatives such as Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), Academic Audits (AAs) and accreditation, as well as administrative ones such as promoting QA Staff Motivation and Capacity (QASMC), QA Stakeholders' Involvement and Awareness (QASIA) and Effective QA Leadership System (EQALS) (Mgaiwa, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021). Besides, the university QA standards are the minimum quality requirements, principles and specifications that have been set for improving the level of excellence of the HE outputs (i.e., graduates and knowledge) (Inter-University Council for East Africa [IUCEA], 2015; Tanzania Commission for Universities [TCU], 2019a). Therefore, universities ought to conform either within or beyond such standards. These QA standards are grouped into three: input (e.g., entry criteria for academics and students), process (e.g., learner-centered teaching approach), and output (e.g., Graduate Tracer Studies [GTS]) (IUCEA, 2015). Also, university compliance refers to the state of university stakeholders conforming to the external and internal QA standards (Mgaiwa, 2018a).

Empirical studies in Africa show that universities are not strictly adhering to the QA standards, which leads to HE quality deterioration (Asiyai, 2020; Mushemeza, 2016; Wissam & Amina, 2022). As such, out of 1000 high-quality world universities, 33 and 11 African universities are found in Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) university rankings of 2023, respectively (THE, 2023; Top Universities, 2023). These findings indicate that a large group of African universities may have unsatisfactory compliance with international QA standards, which puts their graduates' capabilities in question.

Scholars assert that weak (i.e., inadequate and incorrect application) QAEIs in some African countries make their university stakeholders lenient to comply (Machumu & Kisanga, 2014; Mrema et al., 2023; Odhiambo, 2014). For instance, some national QA agencies are not doing AA and not taking punitive measures frequently and regularly (Mrema et al., 2023), QA staff are few and some are incompetent to conduct M&E (Machumu & Kisanga, 2014), and QASIA is very unsatisfactory (Wissam & Amina, 2022). Consequently, university compliance with QA standards becomes a choice rather than an obligation.

In East Africa, several QAEIs are reported to be employed in responding to the existing non-compliance cases at various university stakeholders' levels. For example, the national QA agencies have been conducting AAs of universities and providing low to high corresponding punitive measures (Mrema et al., 2023), the universities and their academic programs are undergoing accreditation process (IUCEA, 2015), Students Evaluate Courses and Instructors (SECI), and the University Examinations (UEs) are moderated and reexamined by the independent examiners (Odhiambo, 2018). Despite such QAEIs, extreme to less extreme non-compliance cases are still reported in East Africa (Mrema et al., 2023; National Council for Higher Education [NCHE], 2023). The continuation of such non-compliance cases brings a question: Are the QAEIs applied adequately and correctly in East African universities to influence compliance?

In Tanzania, the process of establishing and enforcing university QA standards is under the mandate of the TCU. The TCU was established by the Universities Act No. 7 of 2005 and serves as the country's regulatory, supportive, and advisory authority for a total of 54 Public and Private Universities (PPUs), university colleges, campuses, and centers that have been registered up to March 2023 (TCU, 2023b). It currently supervises the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the national QA guidebook, released in December 2019 (TCU, 2019a). Also, it has granted the mandate to the universities via their institutional QA agencies to develop institutional QA standards and enforce their compliance without compromising the minimum national QA demands (TCU, 2019a).

In enforcing the national QA standards, the TCU conducts periodical and impromptu AAs to evaluate the universities' compliance levels (TCU, 2022). Once TCU finds extreme non-compliance cases, suspension, closure, and deregistration punishments are taken to universities or their academic programs (TCU, 2019b). Additionally, for less extreme cases of non-compliance, the operations under supervision and warning measures are taken (TCU, 2019b). As such, from the year 2015 to 2022, about 12, 28 and 34 universities, university colleges, and centers were deregistered, closed and banned from admitting students by TCU, respectively, for having unqualified and inadequate human and physical resources (Mgaiwa, 2018a; Mrema et al., 2023; TCU, 2019b). Also, a total of 832 university students were ordered by TCU to be deregistered for lacking the two principal passes from their secondary certificates (Mgaiwa &

Poncian, 2016; Mrema et al., 2023). Moreover, about 107 students had to discontinue their studies after being punished by their universities' authorities for extreme examination irregularities from 2012 to 2018 (TCU, 2019c).

Despite such TCU and universities' efforts commenced some years back, extreme to less extreme universities' non-compliance cases are reported yearly at various university stakeholders' levels (Mrema et al., 2023; TCU, 2022). The critical question is: How are the QAEIs applied in promoting PPU's compliance in Tanzania? Thus, the study's objective was to examine the application of QAEIs in fostering PPU's compliance in Tanzania. This study holds that the inadequate and incorrect application of the QAEIs might influence the existing non-compliance cases in Tanzania.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Initiatives for Enforcing the University QA Standards

The empirical studies (Kadhila & Iipumbu, 2019; Mgaiwa, 2021; Mgaiwa & Ishengoma, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2021) highlighted technical and administrative QAEIs which have to be devised and applied correctly and adequately by external and internal QA agencies for fostering compliance with QA standards at various university stakeholders' levels. While the administrative initiatives facilitate the smooth operation of the technical initiatives, the technical initiatives are oversight agents employed to oversee compliance with QA standards in all core university functions, and then findings and recommendations are communicated for improvement and accountability (Mgaiwa, 2018a). The technical initiatives include quality M&E, SECI, Examination Moderation (EM), strict invigilation, independent examination, self-assessment, AAs, and accreditation (Kadhila & Iipumbu, 2019; Odhiambo, 2014; Rahnuma, 2020) while administrative ones are improving QASMC, promoting QASIA, as well as establishing an EQALS (Mgaiwa, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021). These scholars hold that the adequate and correct application of such QAEIs can promote universities' compliance, quality and graduates' academic capabilities. These QAEIs are deeply elaborated and discussed hereunder:

The quality M&E is an internal initiative for improving the quality of the universities' core functions by collecting and interpreting data from observation techniques (Niyivuga et al., 2019; TCU, 2019a). It is mostly conducted by the QA officers, students and Head of Departments (HoDs) (Komba et al., 2013). As such, Otara (2015) suggests that each university academic unit requires a QA officer to monitor the instructors' practices in the lecture rooms to foster students' meaningful learning. However, Komba et al. (2013) found that some very senior academics at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Tanzania, feel uncomfortable being monitored by QA officers and HoDs in the lecture rooms. Moreover, the students should provide feedback about the quality of the courses delivered and the performance of their instructors through SECI (Boring, 2017; Chavez & Mitchell, 2020). Thus, through the initiative of quality M&E, academics can comply with the requirements of their core university functions.

Examination moderation is another initiative for improving the quality of examinations before administering them to candidates. As such, the appointed academics team observes whether course instructors have conformed to the table of specifications, agreed university format, Bloom's taxonomy, accuracy and clarity in the examination setting (Asiyai, 2020). The EM is emphasized due to the assumption that poor quality examination is an incorrect determinant measure for the attained academic capabilities of the students (Odhiambo, 2018). Besides, the final moderated examination is administered to the candidates and strictly invigilated by impartial academics to enforce students' compliance with the examination rules and attain reliable results (Adie & Oko, 2016). In attaining such reliable results, Internal Independent Examiners (IIEs) and External Examiners (EEs) are highly recommended. The role of such examiners is to evaluate or reevaluate the quality of university examination activities already done by other academics, which involve setting, moderation, production, administration, invigilation, marking, and final results processing, as well as research works for justifying the fairness of the students' results (Asiyai, 2020; TCU, 2019a). They also evaluate the relevance of the course to 21<sup>st</sup>-century human academic capabilities and compliance of the course delivery with the universal principles (TCU, 2019a). All such activities are conducted by the selected academics from outside (EEs) and within (IIEs) the respective university (Kadhila & Iipumbu, 2019; Mgaiwa, 2018a; TCU, 2019a). The IIEs and EEs should be hired at least once after the end of each academic year before students are qualified or disqualified for the next academic year's studies or graduation (Mgaiwa, 2018a; Odhiambo, 2018). Thus, the IIEs and EEs mainly enforce academics' compliance with the examination standards.

Besides, institutional self-assessment involves a special internal team using designated forms to assess the compliance level with QA standards, especially on input, process, and output stages (TCU, 2019a; Vesce et al., 2021). The self-assessment report is required internally for quality enhancement and improvement instead of reward and punishment and externally by the external academic auditors for pre-audit and reflection before the actual audit process (IUCEA, 2010; TCU, 2019a). The AA involves a full assessment and evaluation of the quality of the

academic program or entire university (Kadhila & Iipumbu, 2019). It is mostly conducted after five years and in 2 types, which are internal and external AA under the respective university and the external (i.e., international or national accreditation agencies) teams, respectively (Mgaiwa, 2018a). Academic auditors have been using impromptu (special), regular (periodical), or both approaches (TCU, 2019a). While periodical AAs are preferred as they provide time for universities or academics to prepare the required documents (Odhiambo, 2014), impromptu ones explore the real QA practices of the academics or universities (Mrema et al., 2023; TCU, 2019a). However, periodical AAs are criticized for accelerating academics or university cheating environments, such as borrowing learning materials (Asiyai, 2020; Mrema et al., 2023). Thus, both approaches should be used concurrently but with special care for their limitations. Besides, Odhiambo (2014) emphasizes that effective AAs should have a special time to discuss observed queries and follow-ups for changes. In Tanzania, Mgaiwa (2018a) found that internal AAs are non-existent, while external ones have been conducted in Private Universities (PRUs).

Moreover, accreditation involves approving or disapproving the university or academic program operation license based on external AA findings (Kadhila & Iipumbu, 2019; Vesce et al., 2021). The accreditation approvals are done periodically and involve three certification levels: provisional license, accreditation, and full accreditation (IUCEA, 2015; TCU, 2019a). After obtaining initial accreditation, universities must apply for reaccreditation after five years (Mgaiwa, 2018a; TCU, 2019a). In Tanzania, the accreditation for new academic programs calls for submitting the needs assessment and market survey reports relevant to the respective program to be accredited (TCU, 2019a). Besides, the reaccreditation of the existing academic programs calls for the GTS report as educational feedback from employers and graduates (TCU, 2019a). The national QA agencies are mandated to withdraw the academic program or university accreditation anytime once satisfied that QA standards are no longer complied with (IUCEA, 2015; TCU, 2019a; Vesce et al., 2021). Thus, as technical QAEIs such as self-assessment, AAs, and accreditation enforce university administrators and academics to comply with the QA requirements, the other technical QAEIs enforce mainly the academics and students.

Furthermore, to effectively operate the aforementioned technical QAEIs, the QA agencies must be capacitated with adequately qualified, well-trained, and motivated QA personnel (Machumu & Kisanga, 2014; Mgaiwa, 2021). As such, recruiting, well-paying, and organizing regular training for the QA staff is inevitable (Isaeva et al., 2020). Nguyen et al. (2021) found that the highly enthusiastic spirit of QA personnel had a remarkable effect on the successful QA in Vietnamese universities. Conversely, Machumu and Kisanga (2014) observed that African universities are challenged by incompetent QA officers who have affected the enforcement of QA standards. Likewise, Alzafari and Kratzer (2019) and Odhiambo (2014) found that the main challenge that affects the enforcement of university QA standards is the shortage of funds for employing and training an adequate number of QA staff. In Tanzania, some QA systems of PRUs are weak due to the shortage of competent QA staff and senior academics to be used in self-assessment and internal AAs (Mgaiwa & Ishengoma, 2017).

Moreover, key university stakeholders must be involved in and made aware of QA activities to support the implementation of QA standards effectively (Mgaiwa, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021). Such involvement and awareness building are possible through organizing training for different groups on the essence of QA in HE, the roles of key players in QA activities, and ways to implement new quality guidelines (Mgaiwa, 2021). On that matter, Nguyen et al. (2021) found that the successful implementation of QA standards in Vietnamese universities, among other factors, is attributed to the existing stakeholders' awareness, cooperation and support. Nevertheless, Alzafari and Kratzer (2019) found that inadequate funds have affected key QA stakeholders' training and coaching sessions in European HE. Consequently, stakeholders' resistance to implementing QA standards has been common. In Algeria, it was found that compliance with QA standards is negatively affected mainly by the inadequate involvement of key players in QA activities (Wissam & Amina, 2022). Likewise, Mgaiwa and Ishengoma (2017) found that some PRUs in Tanzania have limited stakeholders' awareness of QA matters. Such limited awareness contributes to unsatisfactory QA implementation.

On top of that, the establishment of an EQALS is also observed to be vital for supervising other initiatives. Nguyen et al. (2021) found that one of the factors for the successful QA in Vietnam universities is the presence of an effective leadership structure coordinating from the top (head of university) to the bottom (students). Besides, Alzafari and Kratzer (2019) found that European universities' leaders are missing leadership skills such as persuasion, harmonizing the stakeholders' interests, developing trust and transparency, allocating resources effectively, developing and communicating good QA policies, cooperating, listening, and motivating which are needed for successfully QA. In Tanzania, Mgaiwa and Ishengoma (2017) found that ineffective QA leadership in PRUs is ascribed to inadequate senior academics. Also, Mgaiwa (2021) found that the allocation of adequate funds for QA activities, academics' employment and development, developing QA policies, and promoting QA stakeholders' partnerships are some of the

leadership initiatives existing in some PRUs. Further, Mgaiwa emphasizes that effective leadership can successfully achieve QA implementation in PRUs.

The literature review has shown that while much is known about the application, strengths, successes and challenges of the technical and administrative QAEIs from abroad, very little is known about how such initiatives are adequately and correctly applied in Tanzania to foster compliance. For instance, a study by Mgaiwa (2018a) delimited its investigation within four QA processes (i.e., self-assessment, EE, GTS, and internal AAs) from the academics' perspective in PRUs of Tanzania. Thus, the unanswered question is: How are the QAEIs applied in PPU of Tanzania to foster compliance at various university stakeholders' levels? This study intended to fill that gap by examining the application of QAEIs in fostering PPU's compliance in Tanzania. This study enlightens TCU, universities, and researchers on the strengths, weaknesses, and possible interventions in applying various QAEIs in Tanzanian PPU.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

The Capability Theory of Education, which incorporates ideas from Sen's (1993) capability approach to human development, informed the current study. According to the theory, any efforts to facilitate the intellectual growth of human beings should be directed at helping them acquire the skills necessary to be someone or do something flawlessly (Mtawa & Nkhoma, 2020). As such, human capabilities (i.e., the ability to be and do) must be considered during the learning process (Mtawa & Nkhoma, 2020). Students pursue particular academic programs based on their intrinsic ambitions and interests (Robeyns, 2017). In this situation, achievement awards will be significant to graduates if such graduates possess the corresponding academic capabilities (Vaughan & Walker, 2012). Thus, understanding students' goals and bridging their achievements are crucial to universities' roles (Vaughan & Walker, 2012). Universities can realize such theoretical ideas by developing, enforcing, and assessing the effectiveness of QA standards to facilitate students' attainment of meaningful learning and academic capabilities. Since attaining students' capabilities highly depends on universities' conformity with effective QA standards, applying initiatives for enforcing such QA standards has to consider their adequacy and correctness.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Approach and Design

This study was informed by the qualitative research approach for understanding the application of QAEIs in fostering PPU's compliance in Tanzania. With that approach, the experiences and ideas of the key HE players were examined, analyzed, and interpreted (Ary et al., 2018). The multiple embedded case study design was used to guide this investigation with four sub-units (sub-cases) of analysis within each of the four units (cases) to gain a detailed understanding of the topic mentioned above (Yin, 2014). The chosen cases were the four anonymized PPU (university 1, 2, 3, and 4) in the Tanzanian regions of Dodoma, Mwanza and Dar es Salaam. Besides, the Students' Cabinet Members (SCMs), academics, Senior Quality Assurance Officers (SQAOs), and Quality Assurance Directors (QADs) from such 4 cases were sub-cases.

### 3.2 Sampling and Sample Size

The selection of such sub-cases and cases was informed by purposive sampling, which calls for the unique qualities of the samples to be most knowledgeable, relevant, and information-rich (Leavy, 2017). The chosen four universities are those from the private (university 2 and 3) and public (university 1 and 4) lists that, between the years 2015 and 2022, received the least (university 2 and 4) and most (university 1 and 3) punishment and attention from TCU for non-compliance cases (at the student, academic, and top university levels) (Mrema et al., 2023).

The six SCMs from each university were picked from the former and current presidents, ministers, and deputy ministers responsible for educational affairs. In each university, two senior academics (in academic ranks) with specialization in HE quality and one academic staff assembly chairperson (only available at Public Universities [PU]) were selected. Two SQAOs at each university were selected for their seniority (i.e., amount of working experience [at least four years]) in the QA office. Also, one QAD was selected at each university as a responsible leader for QA and compliance. As indicated in **Table 1** below, this results in a sample size of 46:

**Table 1***Composition of the Sample*

Participants	Universities				Total
	1	2	3	4	
SCMs	06	06	06	06	24
Academics	03	02	02	03	10
SQAOs	02	02	02	02	08
QADs	01	01	01	01	04
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>46</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

### 3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data was gathered through individual interviews, documentary analysis, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). While the FGDs were done with the SCMs, individual interviews were with the QADs, SQAOs, and academics. The FGDs and interviews were conducted through telephone and face-to-face interrogations while employing semi-structured schedules. The documentary analysis was conducted on the national (TCU) and institutional (4 universities) QA documents. Such QA documents are the TCU quality guidebook (of 2019), TCU periodical magazines (of 2019 and 2022), and examination regulations, prospectus, and M&E forms from the four selected universities. The guiding criterion for the exclusion and inclusion of the documentary data was the existence of the details about how the QAEIs applied in the PPU of Tanzania. The data collected from all three methods was analyzed using a five-step content analysis, as Leavy (2017) advocated. Such procedures include immersion into the datasets, identifying analytic units, coding, examining the frequency of the codes, and interpreting the results.

### 3.4 Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

The findings' trustworthiness in this study was maintained by ensuring the representativeness of the sample categories (through checking the involvement of all key stakeholders in universities' compliance), reviewing the research tools by three HE quality experts, pilot testing research tools at one university before official data collection, triangulating the data, participants, and methods, validating the responses from participants, and intra-coding and inter-coding datasets by two coders (Cohen et al., 2018). Additionally, strict adherence to the protocol for obtaining research permissions, written informed consent, participant and institution anonymity, and data confidentiality were highly observed for ethical compliance (Ary et al., 2018).

## IV. FINDINGS

This section examined the existence and application of technical and administrative QAEIs in fostering PPU's compliance. Among the three core university functions (i.e., teaching [educational], research, and consultancy), the current study has delimited its scope within the teaching/educational function in any description related to QAEIs.

### 4.1 Technical QAEIs

All participants were asked about the existence of, and how, the following QAEIs applied in their universities: M&E of teaching, examination moderation and strict invigilation, independent examination, self-assessment and academic audits, and accreditation.

#### *Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching Function*

TCU (2019a, p. 47) states: "Every university shall develop relevant instruments for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the institutional quality assurance systems in improving the quality of education and training..." Thus, M&E of teaching and learning is compulsory.

The interview and FGD findings revealed that M&E exists in all four universities, but their applications differ slightly. In University 4, all participants confirmed that M&E of teaching is conducted thrice per semester in each course. Then, the report (evaluating all courses and instructors) will be released mid-next semester for each academic department to discuss and deliberate. Accountability measures (e.g., warning letters) are taken to irresponsible instructors. In the first round of M&E, the QA officers enter each lecture room in the first two weeks of the semester. In the second round, the HoDs enter one lecture session per instructor or course from the sixth week of the semester. Such first two rounds were found to attract resistance from some senior academics. In the last round, the students

evaluate all courses and their instructors in the last two weeks of the semester. Besides, apart from such three rounds, the participants highlighted the existence of other well-organized M&Es in UEs' invigilation and students' practical training. The participants had these to say:

*"Yes, we are proud to have a rigorous M&E of teaching thrice per semester, although some senior academics resist. My QA officers conduct the first round, the second by the HoDs, and the last by the students....Other rigorous M&Es include UE invigilation and practical training"* (QAD, University 4).

*"We are monitored and evaluated by the QA officers, HoDs and students at different times on how and what we teach. You may find that the QA officer or HoD suddenly sits and listens to you from the back of the lecture room"* (Academic-ii, University 4).

*"We have been evaluating the relevance of the courses and the instructors' performance. Also, we have been observing the HoDs and QA officers sitting behind the class...some instructors are shocked if they are caught making irrelevant stories or code-mixing English and Swahili"* (SCMs, University 4).

Besides, on reviewing the M&E forms, the study observed that in the first two rounds, they consider instructors' compliance to the required pedagogy, language of instruction, content, and time management, as well as assessing venue conditions and capacity (University '4' Form for Monitoring of Teaching and Learning, 2022/2023). Also, the students evaluate the relevance of the courses, pedagogy, assignments and feedback, and the instructors' teaching performance (University '4' Undergraduate Students Form for Evaluating Course and Instructors, 2022/2023). Moreover, for the UEs invigilation, the QA officers monitor and evaluate the physical conditions of the UE venue as well as academics and students' compliance with examination or invigilation rules (University '4' Form for Monitoring of Examination Invigilation, 2022/2023).

In universities 1, 2 and 3, the M&E of teaching is done twice per semester. The first round is conducted during the opening weeks of the semester, where their Deputy Vice Chancellors-Academic (DVCA) or QA officers pass around the lecture rooms' corridors to monitor the presence of the instructors in the class. The second round is the evaluation of the courses and instructors done by the students at the end of the semester. On top of these two rounds in teaching, university 1 also conducts well-organized M&E of UE invigilation each semester, while university 2 and 3 conduct less organized ones. The participants said:

*"You may find a QA officer or DVCA pass along the corridors to see if we are in the class. They do not enter our lecture rooms as it could interfere with our freedom...during UE invigilation, the QA officers pass but not in each UE"* (Academic-ii, University 2).

*"My officers pass around classrooms to monitor instructors' and students' attendance in the class, especially during the opening weeks of the semester. Also, we rigorously monitor the invigilation process at the semester's end for each course"* (QAD, University 1).

Moreover, the SECI, as reported in all four universities, was found to be done differently. In university 2, it has been integrated online, where students evaluate before they view their UE results. In university 3, it is done by two student representatives in a course where the course coordinator is accountable for supervising the evaluation. In university 1 and 4, the forms are collected from the HoD's office and supervised by the instructors not teaching that course to control influenced ratings. In the same two universities, for a class with over 100 students, a random sample of 100 is taken, while with less than or equal to 100 students, all students are involved. While in university 1, 2 and 4, evaluation reports are generated and communicated to the HoDs twice per year, in university 3, the priority is to use them when academic programs are reviewed. During the interviews, the participants had the following to explain:

*"Students evaluate courses and instructors online before they view semester results, and we generate evaluation reports twice per year for accountability and improvement"* (SQAQO-ii, University 2).

*"As course coordinators, we are asked to find two student representatives to fill in the form on behalf of others. The reports for such filled forms are generated and used during the program review"* (Academic-ii, University 3).

*“HoD calls us to collect the forms, and we go to the class to ask the students to rate... for 100 students, all students must fill in, but for over 100, a random selection should be made. The reports are generated each semester for reflection” (Academic-i, University 1).*

Besides, the participants highlighted some hurdles in SECI, such as the existence of the horn, halo, central tendency and spillover rating effects, inadequate understanding of some students on the essence of SECI and the tendency of some students to use SECI as punitive or rewarding tools to their instructors. The QAD said:

*“However, when we analyze the results, we find indicators of horn and halo effects caused by the inadequate understanding of students. Also, some instructors are complaining about being punished for low-student coursework” (QAD, University 2).*

### **Examination moderation and strict invigilation**

TCU (2019a, p. 110) states that each academic program applying for accreditation should show the component of how examinations will be moderated. The study observed that all four universities are moderating their examinations almost differently. In university 1 and 4, the EM is done for all courses for one week by the end of the semester. A special team (of assistant lecturers or above) is developed at the departmental level to moderate their UEs in the first round. Then, the report is submitted to the respective instructors for corrections before re-submitting for the second moderation round, which will inform the production of the final UE papers. Almost similar practice was found in university 2 and 3, except for the second round of moderation, which is absent. During the interviews, the participants had these to say:

*“The HoDs supervise the moderation exercise for five days within their departments. The moderation teams communicate the observations from the first round of moderation to the instructors. The instructors correct and re-submit for the second round before the production approval is granted” (SQAQO-ii, University 4).*

*“Yes, we do, and you can see the dates in this almanac....the moderators provide the comments for instructors to effect, and after that, they can print the final UEs” (Academic-iii, University 2).*

For the examination invigilation, the study found that a strict invigilation system has been established where at least two invigilators should be per room. The QA officers monitor the invigilation exercise (but it is strictly done to all UEs in the selected PUs rather than PRUs). The UEs' rules are sensitized to students and invigilators and strictly supervised. Punishments are provided to non-complying individuals in all four universities. Unlike university 2 and 3, examination regulations restrict the examinations to be invigilated by the respective course instructor in university 1 and 4 (University 1 Undergraduate Prospectus, 2022; University 4 Undergraduate Prospectus, 2022). Besides, the overcrowded rooms in all universities were mentioned to increase students' examination irregularities. The participants said:

*“There are efforts made to improve invigilation quality, starting from educating students and instructors on dos and don'ts in the examination rooms and circulating copies of examination rules...we face hardship in invigilating the overcrowded rooms” (Academic-i, University 4).*

*“In this university, the instructors can only tolerate minor invigilation cases from the tests but not the UEs. You need to be very smart to cheat in the UEs; for the smallest room, you will find at least two invigilators” (SCMs, University 3).*

The study also found that in all four universities, the above moderation and invigilation efforts are almost absent in tests, where no special and rigorous moderation is conducted, and invigilation is not very strict as some examination regulations are not followed. For example, a test can be invigilated by one instructor or the respective course instructor. One of the academics said:

*“There is lenience in test moderation and invigilation in our university; we have been treating tests as less important assessments, which is incorrect” (Academic-ii, University 4).*



Consequently, the students encounter grammatical and semantic errors, particularly in tests. One of the students said:

*“...examination errors are more common in tests than UEs...for the tests, the instructor may come to rectify, but for UEs, we are told to do as it is”* (SCMs, University 2).

### **Independent internal and external examination**

TCU (2019a) requires all universities to use IIEs and EEs in examining or reexamining the quality of final examination activities (related to UEs and research works) to justify the justice of final marks. Besides, IIEs and EEs are expected to assess the relevance of the course and compliance of the course delivery with international standards. For the case of EEs' qualifications, the TCU guidebook states: “examiners must be academics with seniority” (p. 90), while for IIEs, the guidebook is silent.

The study found that the EEs and IIEs exist in all four universities, and there are common and different application practices across those universities. For instance, all universities use random sampling or inclusion of all in reevaluating UE scripts for the big or small classes, respectively. Besides, IIEs and EEs generate final reports with recommendations for improvements in specific course delivery, UE marking, and UE results processing. The recommended changes in students' marks inform changes in the provisional results, and the university senate will approve such final results. However, there were notable differences in the minimum qualifications for appointing IIEs and EEs, priority areas for using IIEs and EEs, and the involvement timing across four universities. Starting with EEs, in university 2 and 3, the EEs are used for examining all postgraduate students' dissertations and reexamining some UE courses when the budget allows. In university 1 and 4, EEs are used to reexamine all UE scripts and examine all postgraduate students' dissertations. While in university 4, senior lecturers or above from outside the country are selected for EE, in the other three universities, lecturers, especially from inside the country, are preferred. Also, the time to involve the EEs in examining the dissertations in all four universities depends on the number of dissertations available. Besides, the time to involve the EEs in reexamining UE scripts in university 1 and 4 is once every 2 and 3 years, respectively. In contrast, it is unknown for the university 2 and 3 as it depends on available funds. The participants described:

*“.....frankly speaking, we used to have EEs for the last five years, but right now, due to inadequate financial resources, we are using them for very few courses depending on the existing budget. We are relying on internal moderation. However, for all dissertations of postgraduate students, we are using EEs with PhDs from other universities within the country”* (Academic-iii, University 2).

*“EEs are used in examining PhD and masters students' dissertations and reexamining UE scripts once we have finished marking and processing final results. ... normally, the senior lecturers or above are selected as EEs from outside the country. Also, since it is a costly exercise, the university uses EEs once every three years”* (Academic-i, University 4).

*“.....we have been using EEs for some teaching courses depending on our financial ability.....normally, we use lecturers from other universities within the country to minimize expenditures in such tasks”* (QAD, University 3).

Besides, in university 4, the IIEs (lecturers or above) are used to reexamine all UEs once per year and examine all students' research works. In university 1, 2 and 3, IIEs (lecturers or above) are used in examining all students' research works, while the instructors perform the role of IIE when marking their UE scripts. The participants said:

*“Those with a Ph.D. or above are selected internally as IIEs for examining students' research proposals or dissertations and reexamining marked students' scripts once per year”* (SQAQO-i, University 4).

*“Our lecturers are appointed as the IIEs for examining master students' proposals and dissertations. There is no need for special IIEs in UEs as we have course instructors' marking”* (QAD, University 3).

In assessing the presence of anti-plagiarism software in the involved universities for IIEs and EEs to check the originality of the research works and instructors to check assignments, surprisingly, the study found that while PUs (1 and 4) have, the PRUs (2 and 3) do not have for their failure to pay subscription fees. One of the participants said:

*“... We have even failed to pay the plagiarism checker subscription fee because it is too expensive. We wish the government could assist us with that burden as that software is vital”* (SQA0-ii, University 3).

### ***Institutional Self-Assessment and Academic Audits***

One of the regulatory roles of TCU is to conduct external AAs of all universities in Tanzania (TCU, 2019a). Besides, before conducting such external AAs, the universities are expected to have conducted self-assessments or internal AAs to reflect their compliance with QA standards on inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes for addressing the existing deficiencies (TCU, 2019a).

TCU (2019b, 2022) reports that external AAs have been conducted in the country on all PPU's on a periodic and impromptu basis. The warning, operations under supervision and strong punishments have been provided for minor, moderate, and major non-compliance cases, respectively. The strong punishments involve suspension, closure or deregistration of the universities or academic programs. Moreover, post-audit follow-ups on the punished universities are reported to be conducted as the audit profession recommends. The punished PRUs are also reported to be more than the PUs.

All the involved universities confessed to having been audited by the TCU periodically, impromptu or both, and received at least any form of punishment or recommendations for improvement. They also confessed that TCU has had entry and exit audit meetings and post-audit follow-ups. However, for the case of internal AA and self-assessment, the study observed that while university 1 and 4 are complying with both initiatives periodically, university 2 and 3 are not conducting internal AA at all and have conducted self-assessments for the past 6 and 7 years, respectively. For university 2 and 3, they see no need for internal AA or self-assessment for financial reasons so long they have TCU audits. The participants said:

*“Last year was the last time the TCU audited our university, and they gave us some areas for improvement. For institutional self-assessment and internal academic audits, we have been conducting periodically (at least four years) for internal reflection and improvement”* (QAD, University 1).

*“The last time we conducted a self-assessment was six years ago. We do not see the need for an internal academic audit or self-assessment as we are audited by the TCU, which is final; after all, it adds university costs...and even after the TCU audit, they have been making serious follow-ups to see our improvements”* (QAD, University 2).

### ***Accreditation of Universities and Academic Programs***

According to TCU (2019a), all accredited academic programs and universities operating in the country must be reaccredited two years after the end of the delivery cycle and after five years, respectively. The respective university has to conduct a self-assessment, where its report will be used by the TCU when they come for external AAs before granting accreditation or reaccreditation certificate. According to the current accreditation data (of March 2023), TCU has accredited 54 universities as well as university institutes, campuses, colleges, and centers (TCU, 2023b). The TCU admission guidebooks that are published annually show all accredited academic programs per university in the country (TCU, 2023a). Moreover, TCU (2022) reports that most universities in the country fail to conduct GTS correctly in program reaccreditation for missing the knowledge on how to go through it. Further, the report shows that those conducting are not doing it correctly as expected. Owing to the lack of GTS knowledge, TCU has intensified the training on GTS for university stakeholders.

The study found that the four universities have been undergoing accreditation processes for both universities and academic programs as per stipulated TCU requirements. However, they confessed to delaying completing reaccreditation requirements due to inadequate funds, which constrain the adequacy and quality of physical and human (staffing) resources for university reaccreditation as well as organizing stakeholders meetings, conducting a needs assessment, market surveys and GTS in academic programs accreditation or reaccreditations.

*“TCU strongly pushes us to comply with reaccreditation requirements. At last, we always comply with all requirements but at a delayed time due to financial factors, especially in the program review where we must conduct GTS and stakeholders meetings”* (SQA0-i, University 2).

*“.....Our main problem is financial resources. So you may find we postpone the application because we have not met all the requirements. We always strive for perfection in all QA undertakings at this university”* (QAD, University 4).

## 4.2 Administrative QAElS

Likewise, in this subsection, all participants were asked about the existence of, and how, the following initiatives applied in their universities: improving QASMC, promoting QASIA, and establishing an EQALS.

### *Improving QASMC*

The participants disclosed that the TCU requirement for QA representatives in each academic department shows that the QA directorate could have adequate QA officers. However, the study found that due to inadequate financial resources for paying and motivating QA staff in executing their duties, universities (2, 3 and 4) have not complied with such a requirement. Such universities have QA representatives up to the college level, and some colleges have no representatives. University 1 has QA representatives up to the academic departments. The participants explained:

*“We are proud that our university has established QA representatives at both college and department levels, so we have enough QA personnel. However, it is expensive to motivate such an entire group given that QA duties are extra to them, so we do where we can”* (QAD, University 1).

*“It is insufficient for financial reasons despite the TCU's requirement to supply QA representatives to the department level. So we have a job in that area”* (QAD, University 2).

### *Promoting QASIA*

As part of TCU's supportive function, TCU has been conducting several QA training sessions for the university stakeholders on how to conduct institutional self-assessment, employing the best teaching methods for instructors who have no teaching professional background and implementing other QA requirements to improve their internal QA systems (TCU, 2019b, 2022). Among the successes is the voluntary request to deregister and suspend six universities and 33 academic programs, respectively, from 2015 to 2019 (TCU, 2019b). Also, TCU sensitizes university admission applicants annually on application steps through exhibitions and public outreach programs (TCU, 2019b, 2022). Through such sensitizations, the applicants know if they qualify and how to select accredited universities and academic programs in their applications.

Also, the participants from QA offices in the involved universities revealed that there are efforts to improve QASIA by conducting periodical seminars for university stakeholders at least once or twice yearly. University 4 revealed that such seminars are done for students and academics at the beginning of each academic year and the end of each semester. At the beginning of the academic year, first-year students are exposed to the general university rules for their successful academic journey. All students are exposed to examination rules at the end of each semester. In contrast, academics are exposed to the requirements for examination setting, moderation, production, invigilation, marking, results processing, IIE and EE. A similar practice exists in universities 1, 2, and 3, except such periodical seminars are conducted at least once per year for each group of academics and students. The participants highlighted:

*“We are doing our best in my office to organize periodical group seminars for academics and students at least twice yearly. Our key area of focus is to raise awareness and remind them of university rules and best practices in examination undertakings”* (QAD, University 4).

*“At the beginning of each academic year, we conduct periodic QA seminars for academics and students to remind them about the university regulations and expectations”* (QAD, University 3).

However, some students and academics from university 1, 2 and 3 were unsatisfied with the one QA seminar per year as it is not easy to remember all QA requirements in both semesters' academic activities, and some are coming back from study leaves, respectively. The participants described:

*“We have received several cases of students' examination irregularities connected to inadequate students' awareness. They could be at the beginning or middle of each semester to remind us about our academic obligations and examination regulations”* (SCMs, University 3).

*“...these academics who have been employed recently or coming from their studies are struggling to understudy academic operations from us. I think if we could have at least one seminar per semester, it could help”* (Academic-ii, University 1).

### ***Establishing an EQALS***

The members of the QA units from the involved universities disclosed that the TCU has set an EQALS that provides the coordination of QA activities from departments and colleges up to the QAD level through their representatives. In university 1, with departmental QA representatives, the participants acknowledged the existence of good QA coordination from the top university to departments. In universities 2, 3 and 4 with college QA representatives, such coordination reaches the college level. However, academics and students in all universities were concerned about unsatisfactory relationships with their QA representatives. The participants said:

*“The QA system in our university is very good. As I have said, we have QA representatives from all academic departments and colleges who form the university-level QA directorate. It helps to extend my leadership coordination to each academic department”* (QAD, University 1).

*“Our QA system comprises QA representatives from colleges and schools. As a QA leader, my work could be easier if I had departmental QA representatives. Each college could have a QA unit to discuss, plan, and supervise its QA activities while the university-level QA directorate sets and supervises QA policies”* (QAD, University 2).

*“However, they are responsible for consulting us instead of drafting their views as they used to do”* (Academic-ii, University 1).

*“We have never been consulted by the so-called 'college QA representatives'..... The president attends senate and council meetings”* (SCMs, University 4).

## **V. DISCUSSIONS**

This study examined the application of QAEIs in fostering PUs' compliance in Tanzania. Generally, the study observed different practices across universities when applying such QAEIs. For the M&E, it is evident that only university 4 has a rigorous M&E of teaching, which can make academics comply with the process-related QA standards, although some resist. Likewise, Komba et al. (2013) found that academics at UDSM, Tanzania, feel annoyed being monitored by the QA officers and HoDs in the lecture rooms. Besides, the other three universities have shown that no one knows what is happening in the class except students. The SECI alone cannot be enough determinant because instructors can bribe the students through good pass marks and yet no meaningful learning if the instructors make irrelevant stories and demonstrate poor mastery of the knowledge. Consequently, non-compliance cases such as theoretical (with limited practical and seminar sessions) and non-inclusive teaching approaches are predominant in Tanzanian universities, which jeopardize students' academic capabilities (Mgaiwa & Ishengoma, 2017; Tungaraza, 2014).

Also, the form of SECI applied in university 3 neither reflects all students' feedback nor generates the reports on time for accountability. Besides, university 1, 3, and 4 still use traditional approaches (i.e., handwritten) of SECI, while other universities worldwide are currently conducting online (as in university 2) to control fabrications and other post-evaluation risks. Furthermore, the students from all universities have shown a limited awareness of SECI, and their ratings are influenced by the tests' results, reciprocity, or generalization factors, which lead to misled ratings. This challenge of SECI concurs with Odhiambo (2014), who observed that students with the lowest marks rated their lecturers poorly in Kenyan PUs. Thus, valid feedback is hard to obtain from SECI's malpractice.

While university 1 and 4 (PUs) have shown best practices in EM and strict invigilation, there are notable weaknesses in universities 2 and 3 (PRUs). Such weaknesses include not tracking instructors' reactions to the moderators' comments to increase their conformity. Also, the course instructors can invigilate their courses, which can attract favoritism assistance. Moreover, all universities have shown to underestimate the moderation and strict invigilation of tests over UEs. Due to underestimated moderation, examination errors (grammatical and semantic) exist more in tests than in UEs, something that contributes to accidental student failures. Also, simplifying setting and marking by preferring past and objective questions, respectively, predominates in Tanzania, which can jeopardize the

assessment of attained students' academic capabilities (Milinga et al., 2022). In the case of underestimated invigilation and overcrowded rooms, the students' examination irregularities become predominant. As such, TCU (2019c) reports that from 2012 to 2018, about 107 students had to discontinue their studies in Tanzanian universities for serious examination irregularities.

Moreover, the study found that at least the PUs (university 1 and 4) value using EEs in overseeing course delivery and academics' fairness in all final examinations as EEs marks are final and conclusive. Interestingly, university 4 uses academics from only foreign universities as EEs to avoid possible biases. However, due to cost implications, such PUs have failed to involve EEs in reexamining UE scripts at least once yearly. In a similar case, Odhiambo (2018) found that due to the non-regular use of EEs in some Kenyan universities, some students were recommended by the EEs to repeat courses by the time they had already graduated. Besides, PRUs (university 2 and 3) undervalue using EEs in reexamining UE scripts for similar financial reasons. Such findings do not agree with the findings by Mgaiwa (2018a), which found that EEs have been adequately used in reexamining UE scripts of Tanzanian PRUs. These findings mismatch might be caused by the differences in selected university cases and respective years of investigation, whereas university 2 (of this study) has reported that the last time for using EEs in UEs was five years ago. Likewise, for IIEs, while university 4 uses the IIEs in reexamining UE scripts, university 1, 2, and 3 rely only on the course instructors marking. Someone can ask how academics' fairness in students' learning assessment and evaluation is justified if there are no IIEs and EEs to monitor it before graduating or re-doing any course. Such negligence or non-regular use of IIEs and EEs might be one of the reasons for the existing mismatch between grades in academic certificates and the corresponding graduates' capabilities in most Tanzanian universities. It is worth noting that academics are human beings who can cause marking errors consciously or unconsciously. Thus, using IIEs and EEs can enforce academics' conformity to assessment and evaluation standards. As such, Asiyai (2020) asserts that IIEs and EEs are important in each course for promoting the academics' accountability and quality of students' learning assessment and evaluation. This study also noted that the ambiguity of the TCU guideline on the EEs' qualifications (i.e., academics with seniority) had led universities to differ on using lecturers, senior lecturers or above. Moreover, the financial failure of PRUs (2 and 3) to install anti-plagiarism software put the effectiveness of IIEs and EEs in evaluating the originality of students' research works into question.

Further, the study found that external AAs have been conducted professionally as universities and audit teams agree on what to improve, and post-audit follow-ups have been done to monitor changes. These findings concur with Odhiambo (2014), who asserts that for academic audits to be meaningful, there should be entry and exit meetings, agreement on audit queries and how to address them, and post-audit follow-ups to see improvements. Despite the self-assessment and internal AA being the requirements of TCU, PRUs (university 2 and 3) have shown non-compliance, while the PUs (university 1 and 4) comply. This non-compliance is ascribed to a lack of awareness about the importance of self-assessment and internal AA and the PRUs' desire to cut expenditures. Likewise, Mgaiwa (2018a) explored the regularity of self-assessment and internal AA in Tanzanian PRUs and found non-regular practices for similar reasons. While PUs see the value of such initiatives, PRUs are not. Such PRUs' negligence implies that the TCU audit teams may not have requested such reports when they conducted external AAs as the guideline requires. Consequently, these PRUs have been caught and punished by TCU for several non-compliance cases, which could be quickly noted and addressed from the self-assessment or internal AA reports. Of interest, TCU has been training university members of QA systems on conducting institutional self-assessments to improve institutional QA systems (TCU, 2019b). This effort concurs with Kadhila and Iipumbu (2019), who insist that once you have stronger internal QA systems, the external QA systems will be less important in enforcing QA standards.

Additionally, the study found that TCU has been accrediting and reaccrediting PUs and academic programs and publishing the results annually on its website. Such published results guide students' application for admission to accredited universities or academic programs. However, it was found in all universities that the related financial expenses in accreditation and reaccreditation have led to delays in meeting the requirements such as adequacy and quality of physical and human resources, organizing stakeholders meetings, and conducting needs assessment, market surveys and GTS. These findings are somehow contrary to Mgaiwa (2018a), who found that excessive financial expenses have led PRUs in Tanzania to neglect GTS in academic program reaccreditations. These findings mismatch might be caused by the previous TCU leniency for demanding GTS in reaccreditations. TCU (2022) found that such previous negligence of GTS was due to the lack of know-how among universities. Besides, such a lack of know-how implies no detailed national guidelines on conducting GTS in Tanzania.

Furthermore, the study found that inadequate funds have severely affected administrative QAIs. Because of that, the universities (2, 3 and 4) have failed to appoint QA representatives up to the academic departmental level and motivate the existing QA staff for the effective execution of their duties. Such failure has also affected the QA

leadership system for large colleges with many departments. This issue of inadequate financial resources for QA activities in Tanzania has been commonly reported due to overdependence on tuition fees (mostly for PRUs) (Mgaiwa, 2018a; Mgaiwa & Ishengoma, 2017; TCU, 2022) and unreliable government subsidies (for PUs) (Mgaiwa, 2018b). Besides, all universities have shown the common problem of insufficient communication between QA representatives and their subjects (i.e., academics and students). Such practice undervalues the essence of such representation since there is no two-way communication between QA representatives and their subjects.

Lastly, while TCU is doing well in raising university stakeholders' QA awareness, the universities (1, 2, and 3) have not prioritized organizing enough QA seminars for their internal QA stakeholders (academics and students). Consequently, the academics and students' non-compliance cases occur due to their limited understanding of QA requirements. As such, Mgaiwa and Ishengoma (2017) found that inadequate stakeholders' awareness contributes to PRUs' non-compliance cases in Tanzania.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Concluding remarks

The study examined the application of QAEIs in fostering PPU's compliance in Tanzania. It revealed that both technical and administrative QAEIs were found to be applied in universities. The technical initiatives are M&E of teaching, examination moderation and strict invigilation, independent examination, self-assessment and AAs, and accreditation, while administrative ones are improving QASMC, promoting QASIA, and establishing an EQALS. In applying such QAEIs, the deficiencies (i.e., incorrect and inadequate applications), strengths, differences and similarities were found across the involved universities. Such deficiencies and differences are caused by the absence of the TCU's detailed guidelines on how to apply some QAEIs, as well as the existing universities' deliberate efforts to cut down the related expenses in applying some QAEIs, which has led to shortcuts. Besides, more unsatisfactory applications of QAEIs were found in PRUs than in PUs. Consequently, non-compliance cases at various university stakeholders' levels exist in those universities. Thus, this study asserts that the non-compliance cases in PPU's of Tanzania are attributed to the inadequate and incorrect application of QAEIs.

### 6.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that: First, TCU has to issue more detailed guidelines to harmonize the application of the institutional M&E on teaching, SECI, EM, and GTS in academic program reaccreditations, as well as how QASIA should be promoted across universities. Second, TCU and universities must strengthen external and internal AAs, respectively, to be conducted frequently and regularly and take the strongest punitive measures against non-complying PPU's and individuals to discourage such behavior. Lastly, the universities should intensify their search for alternative and sustainable sources of funds to promote their financial stability in compliance with TCU's quality requirements.

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