

**"An Analysis of the Perceptions and Expectations
of the
Commission for Higher Education
among
Public and Private Universities"**

RESEARCH PROJECT

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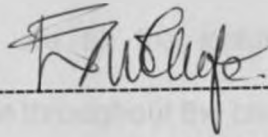


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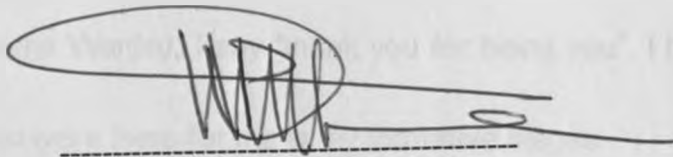
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eliza Chege', written over a horizontal dashed line.

Eliza Chege

This thesis has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor.

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Mr. Peter Oriare

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ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASAL:	Arid and Semi-Arid lands
CHE:	Commission for Higher Education
CVC:	Committee of the Vice-Chancellors
DAAD:	German Academic Exchange Services
FPE:	Free Primary Education
HIV:	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
HE	Higher Education
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
INQAAHE:	International Network on Quality Assurance of Agencies in Higher Education
KAP:	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
KCGs:	Key Communication Groups
PR:	Public Relations
PRSK:	Public Relations Society of Kenya
PSSIs:	Post-Secondary School Institutions
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UIP:	Universities Investment Project
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization
WASC:	Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at establishing the knowledge levels, attitudes and motivations of both public and private universities towards the Commission. It analysed the responses given in determining the extent of these parameters with a view to determining the perceptions and expectations of the universities.

Eight universities were sampled from among the various categories of the public and private sub-sector. Twenty-two respondents were interviewed, three (3) from each institution from the ranks of Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Planning Officers, Librarians and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

The study was primarily quantitative in nature and data was collected using face-to-face interview techniques through the use of questionnaires with both open-ended and close-ended questions. All questionnaires were edited and analysis was done through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Excel.

The high rating of information and knowledge about the Commission, broad usage of and preferences for specific sources of information, the perception that CHE had a good standing in as far as its position and profile in the higher education sector to coordinate and regulation of university education motivated the large majority of the respondents to hold consultations with the Commission for direction and guidance. Several respondents indicated the need for CHE to improve the interactions with stakeholders to enhance their participation.

Results from the study were clearly at variance with the hypothesis which posited that the misconceptions about the Commission's mandate were a direct result of the lack of knowledge and understanding among the university community.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Perceptions are real (Willimon, 2000). They colour what we see, how we interpret what we believe, and how we behave. They create or diminish value. They generate or solve problems. So powerful are our perceptions that many psychologists believe that perception is reality (Cialdini, 1984, Strauch, 1989).

Perceptions are in two forms: experiential and intellectual. Experiential perception is kinesthetic in origin, we develop these perceptions through our sense of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste.

Our proverbial sixth sense – knowing about something – defines the realm of intellectual perception.

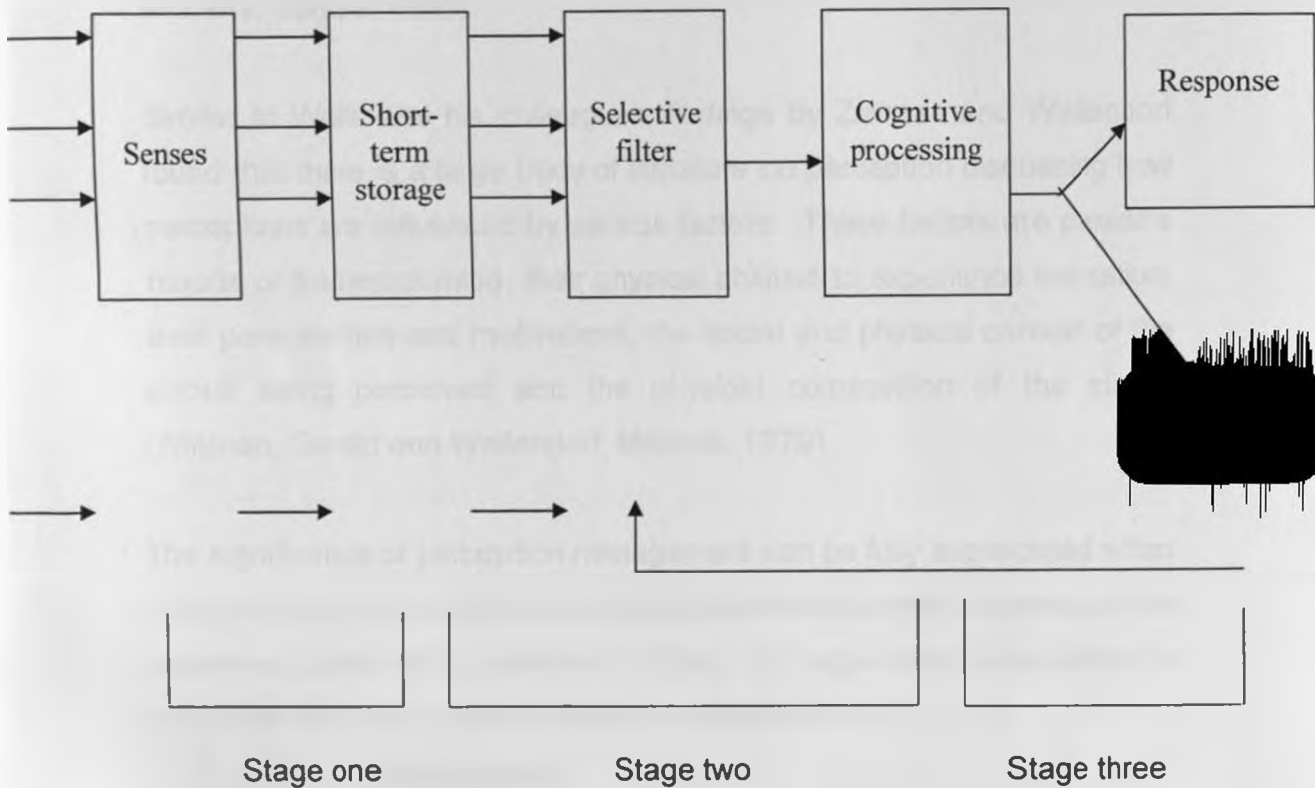
Perception is a complex process by which people select, organize and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful picture of the world (Markin Rom J. Jr. 1974). In a broad sense the topic of perception is concerned with the translation from the external, physical world to the internal, mental world that the individual experiences. There are three basic functions that are contained in the definition of perception: sensing a stimulus in the external world, selecting and attending to certain stimuli and not others; and interpreting the stimuli and giving them meaning. (Wilke, William L, 1986).

The way the individual gains knowledge about his environment in his quest for adaptive behaviour is of prime importance. The gaining of such knowledge necessitates the extraction of information from a vast array of physical energy, which stimulates the senses. Only those stimuli which

have cue value, i.e. which trigger some kind of reactive or adaptive action from the individual, should logically be called information. For the purposes of this study perception will be defined as the process of information extraction. (Forgus, Ronald H. and Melamed, Lawrence E, 1966).

The diagram below explains the process of information selection, which in turn leads to a response by the individual.

Figure 1.1: An Information Model of Information Process



Source: McCombs, Maxwell E. (1979), *Using Mass Communication Theory*. N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc.

According to Wells et al perceptions are shaped by three sets of influences:

- (i) the physical characteristics of the stimuli;
- (ii) the relation of the stimuli to their surroundings; and
- (iii) conditions within the individual.

While the first two sets of influences are both related to the stimuli, the last set of influences is the only reason that makes perception a personal trait. Factors that influence this frame of reference include past experience, attitude, personality and self-image (Wells, William, Burnett, John and Moriarty, Sandra, 1995).

Similar to Wells and his colleagues, findings by Zaltman and Wallendorf found that there is a large body of literature on perception discussing how perceptions are influenced by various factors. These factors are person's moods or frames of mind, their physical abilities to experience sensation, their personalities and motivations, the social and physical context of the stimuli being perceived and the physical composition of the stimuli (Zaltman, Gerald and Wallendorf, Melanie, 1979).

The significance of perception management can be fully appreciated when one considers that confidence in corporate entities largely depends on the perceived quality of the services on offer. An organization's reputation is the public perception and can assist an organization to:

- build a brand;
- capture market share;
- influence behaviour; and
- achieve business and public policy goals.

The benefits of reputation/perception management include an enhanced relationship with core audiences, improved employee productivity and the creation of a good reservoir for crisis management and government relations.

The practice of reputation or perception management embraces the integration of various communication disciplines associated with public relations, public affairs, advertising and direct marketing.

The role of perception management is to create positive public perception that, in turn, creates positive results in establishing and sustaining of the goals and objectives of an organization.

Corporate reputation is driven by core messages that guide all communication activities and outreach. These dynamic messages must support the organization's mission, vision and values, and address key issues involving the target audience.

For public relations this becomes essential when one considers that the messages are cultivated by blending corporate philosophies with feedback from key publics.

Cognitive studies clearly indicate that needs influence opinions, attitudes and behaviour. An individual's needs values; cultural background and interest determine their perceptual readiness. One of the many needs human beings have is the need for cognitive consistency and in its absence, there is psychological tension resulting in the motivation to alter knowledge, attitude and actions (Festinger, 1957).

1.2 Problem Statement

Information on the intricacies of the accreditation process in quality assurance of higher education institutions in Kenya is not readily available to those who need to use it. Little or nothing is known about the operations of the various specialist committees with which the Commission works when determining the adequacy and appropriateness of the physical facilities, academic resources, library resources, staffing, academic programmes, governance structure and financial resources during the inspection of private universities. This has led to real and perceived misgivings and misconceptions on the role of the Commission of Higher Education in streamlining, coordination and regulation of university education in Kenya.

As a result of this, the Commission's role in the planning and streamlining of university education has not been fully appreciated. Middle level colleges and universities continue to disregard the Rules governing the operations of higher education institutions as they collaborate to offer diplomas and degrees of the institutions which they affiliate with. This has tended to perpetuate the notion that the quality of higher education in the country is being compromised. Without the force of law to back the Commission, it has tended to take a low profile as foreign universities affiliate with local PSSIs and universities (some of which have not been accredited by the Commission).

To address this in October 2004 the Government published the (Universities Coordination of Post-Secondary School Institution,) Rules, 2004 to give the Commission "teeth" to validate the programmes, and inspect the physical and academic resources of the collaborating institutions. The effect of these new Rules is yet to be felt.

To a very large extent, it is apparent that the Commission must reposition itself in the face of the new and emerging challenges in the higher education scenario. This research will attempt to show how important perception management is to an institution.

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Through employing the interviewing technique the study will assess the levels of awareness, opinions, attitudes and practices and establish levels of satisfaction among these publics.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to gauge the opinions and attitudes of universities towards the Commission for Higher Education with a view to determining the factors that influence their perceptions. It will also establish the expectations by universities of the Commission. Apart from informing the Commission's planning process, the data from this study will provide a benchmark for similar studies in the future.

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

To establish the knowledge, attitudes and motivations of both public and private universities with regard to Commission for Higher Education.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The following were the objectives of the study:

1. To gauge the level of awareness that individual categories of universities have of the role of the Commission in the regulation and coordination of university education in Kenya;

2. To identify and determine information sources on the Commission available to various universities;
3. To establish levels of satisfaction with the performance of the Commission among various universities;
4. To establish reasons for perceptions held.

1.5 Hypothesis

The misconception about the functions and activities of the Commission for Higher Education by the universities are a direct result of inadequate information on the organization's regulations and coordination process and procedures as they pertain to university level institutions.

1.6 Justification for Study

An organization's reputation – or public perception is reality in the minds of key publics, opinion makers and shareholders. It is the most valuable institutional asset and a negative reputation is a costly liability.

Credibility is the key to all perception. If the stakeholders do not trust their organization, they will not trust the services that they purport to offer and thus will not subscribe to them.

This study will be geared towards identifying, quantifying and prioritizing the needs/wants and perceived degrees of satisfaction of specific target markets or key communication groups (KCGs), in this case universities.

It becomes essential when one considers that without this process, no meaningful communication strategy can be formulated. The purpose of any meaningful communication strategy is threefold:

- (a) To create or increase awareness of a service or brand;
- (b) To create or shift target market perceptions to the point where they are satisfied; and

(c) To achieve a physical response(s).

Having said this, one can neither put the fundamentals in place nor realize the very purpose of their communication without the benefit of knowing exactly what perceptions universities hold. Perception measurement, which is what this study entails, is thus the key ingredient required for a sound strategy.

When correctly approached and conducted, perception measurement will:

- (a) Quantify and prioritize the needs/wants and/or decision criteria and the desired standards of performance of universities.
- (b) Quantify their levels of awareness of and the perception they hold regarding potential satisfiers of their needs in comparison with their desired standard of performance.
- (c) Identify and prioritize the messages to be delivered to the specific target publics in this case the various universities.
- (d) Track or monitor the effect of any communication in the course of the strategy's implementation.

In essence therefore proper perception measurement is an important pre-requisite to strategy development. Not only will it assist an organization to identify messages to be sent, but also prioritizes them and indicates the weights that should be assigned to them or frequency and emphasis to be placed upon them.

Thereafter, when implementation phase of the strategy is underway, perception monitoring will monitor the receipt of the messages and thus direct any amendments necessary to the communication.

Of particular reference to this study is the fact that perception measurement will be expected to yield a very specific brief for the Public Relations practitioner from the onset.

This study is aptly summarized by the dictum “know the needs of your market” and considers such knowledge to be a cost-effective approach to any organization's survival and success and assurance of continued institutional credibility.

1.7 Significance of Study

This is the first study of its kind to be conducted in Kenya and as such the findings of this study will be useful to practitioners, researchers, policy makers, administrators, Deans of Faculties, Directors of Schools in both public and private universities and the Commission. The policy makers include the Kenya Government, the parent Ministry – Ministry of Education, Science and Technology who make decisions regarding the implementation of legal provisions regulating the higher education sub-sector.

This study will help those groups in decision-making regarding how to facilitate the operations of the Commission to make them more effective in the fulfillment of its mandate. This in turn will create an environment in which the Commission will be able to enhance provision of quality education which is credible, viable and relevant to Kenya. The study appreciates the pivotal role that higher education plays in propelling any country's development.

The study will also add to the body of knowledge on the mandate, operations and challenges facing the Commission by filling the gap of sector similarities or differences and enable stakeholders in higher education to appreciate the importance of putting in place comprehensive

accreditation procedures for the sustenance of quality higher education for the benefit of all players.

The study will, as a result, foster greater understanding among the universities and the Commission, who will see themselves as partners as opposed to competitors in the provision of quality higher education.

The study will also investigate the factors that facilitate or inhibit this understanding and ensure that the reasons for this are duly disseminated to the respective parties. The information so disseminated will enable universities and the Commission to better comprehend their complimentary role in the variegated higher education arena. This study will lead to further research on the perceptions of other stakeholders and hopefully lead to comparative analyses.

1.8 Scope of Study

The study will analyse the perceptions and expectations of the Commission by the various universities, as the Commission fulfills its mandate of streamlining higher education in the country.

The primary target audiences will be Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Finance Officers, Deans of Faculty and other top managers that the Commission interacts with in the fulfillment of its mandate.

The scope of the study will be the university sub-sector, which can be categorized as follows:

1. Public universities and
2. Private universities

The study is limited to only one of the KCGs of the Commission, namely universities. It will not cover post-secondary institutions (PSSIs), industry, policy makers and other stakeholders.

1.9 Limitations of Study

The findings of this study are subject to certain limitations inherent in the nature of the issues being investigated mainly inquiry into perceptions of institutional performance and the inquiry design selected.

The study will be conducted only among the key categories of universities, both public and private, and therefore the results of this study cannot be generalized to a larger population.

It is possible that some informants may exaggerate or under-report their perceptions. There is also an element of bias in this mode of data collection. This is taking into account the fact of the socio-psychological dimension of the study, and the group dynamics and other environmental factors, which are bound to impact on respondent perception. An attempt has been made to address these limitations and in addition to the structured open-ended questionnaire format, contingency questions will be factored into the questionnaires to enrich the research.

Due to constraints on time and resources, research will be conducted on only one of the key stakeholders of the Commission for Higher Education – the university sub-sector. This, of necessity entails that the results will be skewed.

Other stakeholders include secondary schools, post-secondary school institutions, industry, researchers, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, suppliers and the general public. However, due to the

reasons elucidated above, it was not possible to place them under purview of this investigation.

1.10 Definition of Operational Terms

A definition and clarification of operational terms used in this study are provided below:

Accreditation – Signifies public acceptance and confirmation evidenced by the creation of a university through an Act of Parliament, in the case of public universities or the award of Charter for private universities, that a university meets and continues to meet the standards of academic excellence set by the Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Universities Act, 1985 (Cap 210B) and relevant Rules and/or guidelines developed under the Act.

For any institution to be accredited the Commission must be satisfied that the institution concerned has adequate physical, library, human and financial resources, viable programmes and sound base and structure of governance. The institution must fulfill the standards and procedures laid down in the Universities Rules, 1989.

Consequently accreditation implies any evaluation, assessment or other activity to determine whether or not the academic standards of any institution of higher education are comparable with internationally recognized standards.

Academic accreditation comprises institutional review and programme validation.

Attitude is an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspects of the individual's world (Krech and Crutchfield, 1948, pg. 152).

Thurstone defines attitude as the intensity of positive or negative effect for or against a psychological object (a symbol, person, phrase, slogan or idea towards which people can differ as regards positive or negative effect).

As evidenced above, there is neither general agreement about the definition of attitude nor consensus about how attitudes should be measured.

Behaviour – Fishbein et al view behaviour as an observable overt act.

Commission means the Commission for Higher Education established under Section 3(1) of the Universities Act, CAP 210B of 1985.

Coordination means bringing the different elements (of a complex activity or organization into a harmonious or efficient relationship (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1999); or to organize, combine or integrate diverse elements in a harmonious operation (Collins English Dictionary, 1994; Chambers Dictionary, 1994).

Evaluation refers to the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence, leading, as part of the process, to a judgement of value with a view to action (Beeby C.E., 1977).

Perception is a complex process by which people select, organize and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world (Berelson and Steiner). It belongs to the socio-psychological realm and can be described as intuitive judgment.

Perception implies knowledge of the world of material things in which we live. With this world we make acquaintance through the sensations that we receive from it.

Perception management can be described as a strategic design and action agenda for turning passive reactions into proactive realities. (Stupark, Greisler, 1997 pp. 12-14).

Post-secondary School Institution means an institution involved directly or otherwise in offering education and training courses or any instruction of comparable nature, beyond secondary school level of learning (CHE Post-Secondary School Institutions Committee, 2001).

Quality assurance is a planned and systematic review process of an institution or programme to determine that standards established are maintained. It refers to the policies, systems and processes designed to ensure the maintenance and enhancement of quality within a programme or institution (Girdwood, 1997). Literature on quality assurance gravitates towards two groupings:

- (i) There are theoretical discussions of structural frameworks for quality, including those for assessment, accreditation, programme review, academic audit and performance review (Harvey, 2003).
- (ii) Descriptive pieces on the actual practices of national systems, organizations and institutions (Elton, 2002; Gates et al, 2002; Harvey and Howells, 2002).

Examining quality assurance and quality enhancement as relational communication processes may provide a viable and useful approach. Quality processes are communication activities in that they involve oral and written representations of institutional or programmatic practices in dynamic discourse (Harvey, 2003).

Quality in higher education is a complex concept that has eluded clear definition. There exists a range of overlapping interpretations of quality. Harvey (1995) identifies five broad approaches to defining quality in higher education. These are quality as exceptional, perfection, fitness for purposes, value for money and transformation.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1 Development of University Education in Kenya

The establishment of the Commission must be viewed against the backdrop of the growth and evolution of higher education establishments to give it purpose and direction.

Higher education entails the furtherance of university and other post-secondary education and training for skilled manpower expected to respond to the demands of national development and emerging socio-economic needs, with a view to finding solutions to problems facing society (Koech Report, 1999).

Higher education can be traced back to 1922 when Makerere College was established as a small technical college which grew into an inter-territorial institution admitting students from Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar (Kamunge Report, 1988).

It was not until 1956 when Royal Technical College of East Africa was established in Kenya, to offer technical and communal education for the East African countries by preparing candidates for professional examinations in the courses as well as preparing them for 'A' level courses, which were not available at the time (Kamunge Report, 1988).

By an Act of the East African High Commission in 1961, the Royal Technical College was transformed into the Second University College of East Africa and renamed University College of Nairobi, which was then affiliated to the University of London. In 1970, the University College was transformed into the current University of Nairobi, becoming Kenya's first university (Kamunge Report, 1988).

2.1.1 Post-Independence Expansion of Higher Education

Upon attainment of independence in 1963, considerable importance was placed on the role of education in spearheading economic and social development.

This was evidenced by the tremendous expansion in university enrolment from 565 in 1963 to 5507 in 1980, an increase of 87.5% in two decades (Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract, 1964 and 1985). The upward trend in enrolment was to accelerate in the latter years with the shift in the country's education cycle from 7.4.2.3. to 8.4.4. cycle, as recommended by the Presidential Working Party on the Second University in 1981 (Mackay Report, 1981).

The large enrolment of university students was a key corollary to the establishment of more universities. Moi University was established as the Second University in 1984, following a Report of the Presidential Working Party. Two former constituent colleges of the University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University College and Egerton College became the third and fourth universities to be established in 1985 and 1987 respectively. (Kamunge Report, 1988). At the time there were 14 private university institutions in Kenya offering degrees of foreign universities.

In 1994 Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology was established and six years later Maseno University became a university. In addition to the six (6) public universities, there is one constituent college of Maseno namely Western University College of Science and Technology. This increased accessibility to university education leading to the current enrolment of 40,000 students.

The demand for higher education also led to the establishment of 17 private universities, which currently enrol approximately 10,000 students (individual university returns, 2002/2003). Of these there are six (6) chartered universities, five (5) with Letters of Interim Authority and six (6) institutions that existed before the Commission was established and which were issued with Certificates of Registration (Commission for Higher Education, brochure 2003). The full complement of the private universities and their categories is provided in Appendix I document.

The insatiable demand for higher education in Kenya was in response to a number of factors. The first factor stems from the close relationship between education and the formal sector employment. Another factor was that the income-generating potential of agricultural activity had been severely, if not terminally, undermined by increased land scarcity, unpredictable governmental pricing policies, lack of capital and poorly implemented and supported rural development initiatives. (Kamunge Report, 1988).

As a result of these dynamics, families increasingly turned to wage employment for economic survival. Higher levels of education became the prerequisite for such employment.

Coupled with this upward spiral in university education establishments, has come the unprecedented mushrooming of post-secondary training institutions throughout the country.

Currently there are 42 public training institutions namely five (5) national polytechnics, 20 teacher training institutes and 17 institutes of technology (Koech report, 1999). These institutes offer curriculum set by the Government's Kenya Institute of Education, but have also mounted their

own tailor-made courses in a bid to diversify and to generate income in view of the dwindling funds from the Exchequer.

Other public post-secondary training is undertaken by Government departments and parastatals, which both set the curriculum and examine internally.

Private providers such as religious organizations, commercial enterprises and individuals also conduct this level of training and account for over 2,000 institutions all over the country.

As demand for post-secondary, including university education, continued to soar, the proliferation and the concomitant loose coordination ensued, leading to the necessity for a coordinated approach to the growth and expansion of higher education in the country.

Several Presidential Commissions were set up to enquire into various aspects of the country's education system and it became apparent that the multiplicity of providing bodies had led to a growing concern over the regulation and coordination of the higher education sub-sector.

In order that universities and post-secondary education may be adequately coordinated in the country, a body called Council of Higher Education was recommended in 1981 (Mackay Report, 1981). At the time, it had become clear that the higher education landscape was fast becoming dotted with private universities, mostly affiliated to foreign institutions of higher learning whose quality was of questionable standards. It therefore became vital to put in place a mechanism to ascertain that the academic programmes that were offered were of high quality and relevant to the country's overall development.

2.2 Establishment of the Commission for Higher Education

The Kenya Government, through an Act of Parliament, the Universities Act CAP 210B, established the Commission for Higher Education as a corporate body, in 1985. The mandate of the Commission is to make better provision for the advancement of university education and for connected purposes. The Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond welcomed the establishment of the Commission, as an important step in the control and guidance, especially of the establishment of private university institutions (Kamunge Report, 1988).

The mandate of the Commission can be categorized into five broad functions namely:

- planning, budgeting and financing of public universities;
- accreditation of universities;
- coordination of post-secondary education and training for the purpose of higher education and university admission;
- standardization, equating and recognition of qualifications;
- documentation, information service and public relations.

The need for an institutional framework for the effective planning, financing and coordination of the universities – both public and private – over the years, became the main focus of the development partners (World Bank, Universities Investment Project Supervision Mission. Aide Memoir, 1998).

From the onset however, it was apparent that the Commission's functions of planning and development of universities, staff development, financing and admission of students appeared to be similar to the functions of individual public universities, as provided by the Acts that had established

them (Kamunge Report, 1988; Koech Report, 1999). The need to review the relevant legislation was obvious.

The Act establishing the Commission envisaged that the Commission would take on all its functions pertaining to public universities effectively and efficiently. It has not done so largely because the Vice-Chancellors, though themselves members of the Commission have been, understandably, reluctant to give up their perceived autonomy, and direct access to the Chancellor, who was at the time also the Head of State. They also had access to the Ministry of Finance without recourse to the Commission for their planning and financing. (World Bank Aide Memoir, 1998). The differential appointing authorities of the Commission Chief Executive (Minister for the time being responsible for Education) and public universities Vice-Chancellors (President), cast a shadow on the role of the Commission as the apex supervisory body for university education.

The government recently introduced the policy of performance contracts for Chief Executives of State Corporations including the Commission for Higher Education, Universities and Higher Education Loans Board, which stipulates that this position be granted on a competitive basis.

The function of coordination of public universities also suffered the same fate. The informal Committee of Vice-Chancellors (CVC) established in 1985, met monthly under the Chairmanship of one of the Vice-Chancellors to deliberate on matters of common concern. Where public universities have recognized the need to cooperate, as with the establishment of the CVC and the Joint Admissions Board, they have done so effectively.

Under these circumstances, the Commission has tended to concentrate most of its functions under the Universities Act which it has found feasible to perform, principally the promotion and accreditation of private universities, which it has done in an effective manner (World Bank Aide Memoir, 1998).

Consequently, the bulk of the operations of the Commission were limited to the regulation and coordination of the private university sector.

The Commission works through specialist committees to ascertain the adequacy and appropriateness of the physical, human and financial resources in private university institutions. The Commission also evaluates the academic programmes as well as the structure of governance (Appendix II gives the various Committees and their functions). This is done to ensure that the institutions fulfill the standards and procedures laid down in the Universities Rules, 1989.

Since its establishment, the Commission has distinguished itself as an effective quality assurance and advisory body for higher education. This is evidenced by the following achievements:

2.2.1 Achievements

Planning, Budgeting and Financing of Universities

- (a) Coordinated the overall planning and budgeting of universities, working jointly with the universities to draw-up short-term and medium-term financial plans for Government planning, as well as master plans for development of physical infrastructure. This process ensures that comparable norms are used in financing public universities;

- (b) Implementation of the Universities Investment Project (UIP) which assisted public universities to purchase equipment and books, train staff and carry out selected applied research through funding from the Government of Kenya and a credit from the World Bank;
- (c) Sourced for funds from development partners, namely DAAD, UNESCO and the Rockefeller. The funds were used to organize workshops that assisted universities to enhance management skills, promoted university-industry linkages and research activities;
- (d) Coordinated the formulation of 6-year development plans and 3-year financial plans for public universities;
- (e) Worked closely with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in organization, facilitation and participation at various national and international workshops and conferences. These have provided an opportunity for Commission, universities and other stakeholders to share their experiences and to keep abreast with international trends in higher education;
- (f) Initiated the concept of Exhibition by Kenyan Universities. To this end, the Commission has successfully organized and hosted three such exhibitions in May 2002, October 2003, and August 2004. These have served to market the universities, locally and internationally;
- (g) Coordinated the exercise of rationalization of functions and staff rightsizing in public universities;
- (h) Enhanced the Commission's capacity through various educational visits and workshops both locally and internationally;
- (i) Compilation of a database on the status of research activities in some institutions of higher learning and related organizations with a view to identifying gaps in crucial areas relevant to the development of the country in order to advise the Government on the same;
- (j) Coordination of HIV/AIDS activities (programmes) in university education sub-sector;

- (k) Processing of Declaration of Assets and Liabilities for members of staff of the public universities as the Responsible Commission for this process;
- (l) Presentation of papers at national and international workshops and conferences;
- (m) Membership in:
 - The International Network on Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE);
 - The Inter-University Council of East Africa;
 - National Committee in Trade-in-Services;
 - Some Public University Councils;
 - Higher Education Loans Board;
 - Association of Professional Societies of East Africa.
- (n) Participation in committees and commissions established to inquire into specific aspects of higher education;
- (o) Preparation of a master plan on Higher Education and Strategic Plan for the Commission for the period 2005-2009, (Planning Documents, CHE).

Accreditation of Universities

Before the inception of the Commission, there were several institutions offering university education whose establishment and development were unco-ordinated and unregulated causing general concern, over the quality of education being offered.

To address this growing concern, the Commission developed the Universities Rules, 1989, which provided for the establishment and accreditation of universities.

To ensure that this process is fair, thorough and comprehensive, the Commission has developed standards and guidelines which serve as benchmarks in the accreditation process.

Standards for:

- Physical facilities
- Curriculum
- University libraries

Guidelines for:

- Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a new university;
- Preparing curriculum for academic programmes;
- Establishment of university libraries;
- Development of Rules and Regulations governing the conduct and discipline of students in universities with Letters of Interim Authority;
- Preparing Charters and Statutes;
- Criteria for Standardization, Equation and Recognition of Qualifications.

Award of Charters

The Commission has accredited six private universities, which have been awarded charters.

Granting of Letters of Interim Authority

- The Commission has granted Letters of Interim Authority to five private universities.

Registration of Universities

Institutions which were offering degrees before the establishment of the Commission for Higher Education were issued with Certificates of Registration in 1989.

When the Commission was established, there were eleven such institutions. Five of these have already been awarded charters. (See Appendix I for the categories of universities).

Evaluation of Proposals to Establish Private Universities

Proposals continue to be received from a number of institutions/sponsors in the country wishing to establish private universities in accordance with Section 6(2) of the Universities Rules, 1989. The Commission processes the proposals for purposes of granting Letters of Interim Authority (CHE Report to Minister for Education, 2004).

Re-Inspection of Universities

To ensure that standards are maintained in chartered universities, the Commission continually monitors the activities of these institutions through periodic inspections. In this respect the Commission re-inspected University of Eastern Africa, Baraton in February 1998 and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa in March 2003.

The Commission has assessed the self-evaluation report of Daystar University and has scheduled re-inspection.

Evaluation of Academic Programmes

Before an academic programme is introduced in any private university, it has to be evaluated and approved by the Commission to ensure quality. During 2004, the Commission has approved 10 such programmes.

Review of Accreditation Fees

Experience gained over the years has shown that accreditation is an expensive process. To enable the Commission to continue to meet its ever increasing challenges of ensuring quality in university education, the Commission reviewed and increased the fees payable by private

universities in line with the Government policy of cost-sharing for services rendered. The fees were gazetted in Legal Notice No. 60 of 13th September 2002.

Coordination of Post-Secondary School Education and Training

With regard to post-secondary school institutions (PSSIs) the Commission has accomplished the following:

- (a) The Commission has material for the second edition of a directory of post-secondary school institutions.
- (b) Inspection of physical facilities in Kenya and Mombasa polytechnics and Bandari College in Mombasa for purposes of upgrading selected programmes to degree level. The reports and budgets were submitted to the Minister for Education, Science and Technology.
- (c) Preparation of Rules for:
 - Validation and upgrading of selected programmes of post-secondary institutions to degree level;
 - Collaboration of PSSIs with other institutions of higher learning, for purposes of offering degree programmes.

Equation and Recognition of Academic Qualifications

Many Kenyans obtain qualifications from foreign universities. These qualifications are oriented towards the social, cultural and economic characteristics of the countries in which the universities are located. To be useful to Kenya, they have to relate to our needs. This means examination of the type and context of the respective training programmes, in order to equate the content and achievement levels with those that have been obtained within the Kenyan university system.

To this end the Commission has:

- (a) Prepared guidelines for the standardization, equation and recognition of degrees and diplomas. These guidelines have been used to advise employers and institutions of higher learning on the standardization, equation and recognition of academic qualifications on a continuous basis;
- (b) Studied different educational systems in the world and collected documents which it utilizes to identify recognized institutions and to relate qualifications from these institutions to those awarded in Kenya;
- (c) Liaised with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to identify those countries with which Kenya has bilateral agreements on recognition of each other's academic qualifications.
- (d) Formed professional links with foreign academic bodies.

Documentation and Information Services

Using information to keep abreast of the global trends in higher education the Commission has:

- (a) Established a resource center, which is adequately equipped with a collection of books, journals and periodicals in higher education;
- (b) Assembled a data-base on information on higher education used by persons seeking university education locally and internationally;
- (c) Maintained a database of recognized institutions of higher learning in Kenya. Information from this database is disseminated to the public periodically through the media.

Regional and International Consultations

Several countries have sought advice from the Commission on the establishment and strengthening of similar bodies within their countries. Among those countries are: Ghana, South Africa, Lesotho, Zimbabwe,

Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, India. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), an accreditation body from the USA and Faculty from the State of Georgia in the United States have also held consultative meetings with the Commission.

Advisory Services

The Commission continues to provide relevant advice to the:

- (a) Various committees of council of public universities (although the Act limits representation to some of the Councils);
- (b) Higher Education Loans Board; and
- (c) Public on higher education.

Visits

- (a) Undertook visits to Europe, Asia and the Americas to study how the educational systems have contributed to their countries development with a view to enriching development of higher education in Kenya.
- (b) Hosted visitors and professionals at national, regional and International levels.

Review of Legal Framework

Arising from limitations inherent in the Universities Act, 1985 and Universities Rules, 1989, the Commission has prepared a Higher Education Bill to harmonise the legal framework governing higher education.

The Commission has also undertaken amendment of the Universities Rules, 1989 to provide for:

- (a) Coordination of post-secondary school institutions for purposes of university admission and training;
- (b) Collaboration between institutions for university education;

(c) Regulation of distance education, including e-learning.

* Achievements sourced from CHE departmental documents and informal contacts with staff.

2.2.2 Challenges Facing the Commission

The challenges facing the Commission are numerous and touch on access and equity, the need for expansion of higher education, globalization of higher education, HIV and AIDS and drug and substance abuse, ICTs, research and development, financing of university education, and the legal framework.

Access

The growth in the number of university level institutions has not kept pace with the rising demand for university education. In response to this demand, public universities introduced the self-sponsored programmes beginning 1998. The programmes cater for both school leavers and the working class, and are relatively less costly than similar programmes abroad.

Equity

Closely related to access is the concern for equity which is manifested in gender and regional disparities, and limited access for people with special needs and orphans. At the university level, gender imbalance is still prevalent both in terms of participation and areas of specialization, although positive trends have been noted in the recent past as a result of the affirmative action policy.

Gender disparity is more pronounced in public universities where undergraduate female students comprised 32.9% of the total student population, while in private universities they constituted 52.5% in the academic year 2002/2003 (CHE Planning Department documents).

Regional disparities and under-representation of students with special needs still persist. In spite of affirmative action, many communities in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) and other disadvantaged groups do not send a single student to the universities in some years. The number of students with disabilities participating in university education is also negligible.

Expansion of Higher Education

According to internationally accepted standards, there should be one university level institution for every population of one million people. With a population of about 30 million people, Kenya should have 30 university level institutions.

The first cohort of the Free Primary Education (FPE) will be due to join university education in the year 2015, when the population of Kenya is expected to reach 40 million. Ideally, the number of university level institutions should be 40 by that time. This is a challenge to both the government and the Commission and calls for concerted efforts in a bid to establish new university level institutions to cope with the expected increased demand.

Satellite Campuses

Satellite campuses are a recent development in university education in Kenya. A satellite campus is a post secondary-school institution which is affiliated to a university for purposes of offering university level education and granting the university's degree.

A preliminary survey indicates that a number of universities, both local and foreign are already affiliating with several educational institutions for purposes of offering their degree programmes.

The Commission notes that while these arrangements enhance access to higher education, they have raised new challenges in quality assurance. The Universities Act 1985 provides for the Commission “to coordinate education and training courses offered in Post Secondary School Institutions’ for purposes of higher education and university admission”. The Commission interpreted “coordination” to include registration, categorization, standardization, validation, harmonization and supervision of post secondary school institutions.

The Commission thereafter developed and proposed “The Universities (Co-ordination of Post Secondary School Institutions for University Education) Rules, 2004” in line with the above interpretation.

Globalization of Higher Education

Globalization of higher education has increased access to higher education, and liberalization and commercialization of higher education, including provision of cross-border higher education.

In Kenya this is evidenced by an influx of foreign institutions offering higher education, multiplicity of academic qualifications, and increased number of students seeking education outside Kenya. This has posed challenges in ensuring quality of programmes offered, and created problems of recognition and equation of qualifications. It also underscores the need to ensure that Kenyans seeking higher education are admitted in recognized and accredited institutions.

There has been a stated desire to see the Commission strengthened in order to carry out the control and guidance of the development of the public universities and harmonization of PSSIs as well as advising on the general policy and development of university education. This echoed the

concern of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya in 1998 (Koech Report, 1999).

Legal

Weaknesses inherent in the Universities Act

Section 6 of the said Act spells out specific tasks that the Commission for Higher Education is expected to perform. This is the section that introduces most of the challenges that the Commission is currently facing, particularly in its attempt to regulate the public universities and other institutions of higher learning.

For instance, section 6 (c) states that one of the functions of the Commission is “to accredit universities”. This presupposes that the Commission can accredit both public and private universities. However, Section 6(b) which provides that the Commission's role in establishing public universities is mainly to advise the Minister has been interpreted to mean that public universities can only be established by the Minister. This is a contradiction that needs to be addressed.

There are other Sections that limit the Commission's mandate to inspect public universities, such as Section 6 (h) and (c) which restricts the Commission's authority to visit, inspect, approve courses of study and examination to private universities only.

Because of the foregoing, the Commission is not able to fulfill the function spelt out in section 6(k) that requires it “to ensure the maintenance of standards for courses of study and examinations in the universities.”

This means that there is no standard procedure that is applicable to both public and private universities to govern their establishment or guide in quality assurance.

Universities Act, Cap 210B versus the individual Universities Acts

At the time of establishment of the Commission for Higher Education, there already existed two public universities. Public universities are established by Acts of Parliament. This differs with the private universities, which are established by charters.

By virtue of their formation, public universities, like the Commission for Higher Education are bodies corporate. For instance, they are both subject to government appointments and the State Corporations Act. It is clear from the mandate of the Commission that the intention of the Universities Act was to create a body to supervise university education.

However, it is noted that none of the Acts establishing the public universities (even those established after the Commission for Higher Education) require them to make reference to the Commission. Unlike private universities' charters that specifically provide that a charter is subject to the provisions of the Universities Act. In effect, therefore, we have legislation of equal status.

As a result the functions spelt out in section 6 that relate to the public universities are construed to be in contravention of the individual Universities Acts.

For example, by virtue of their Acts, public universities have the powers, to determine what may be taught, how it may be taught and who may teach.

The Universities Act empowers the Commission “to make regulation in respect of admission of persons seeking to enroll in universities and to provide a central admission service to public universities”. However, the individual public universities also empower them to determine who may be admitted to the universities. These Acts need to be harmonized in order to resolve these areas of conflict.

The Post Secondary Schools

The Commission for Higher Education is mandated to co-ordinate education and training courses offered in post secondary school institutions for purposes of higher education and university admission (section 6 (q)). The Universities Act does not define a post-secondary school institution nor does it define coordination. This has been interpreted to mean that the Commission's role should be confined to university education.

Advances in Technology

The provisions of the Universities Act have been overtaken by advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which have facilitated new modes of delivery of education.

The Higher Education Bill

In order to address the foregoing legal constraints the Commission drafted a Higher Education Bill and submitted it to the Minister for Education, Science and Technology.

The Bill proposes the following main features:

- (a) The Bill defines higher education to include post-secondary school institutions and universities. In effect, the term higher education shall be applied to refer to post-secondary school institutions public and private public universities. This is important in creating unity in

Higher Education. The purpose of this definition is seen in section 12 of the bill that sets out the functions of the Commission, which include:

- to advise the minister on all matters relating to higher education in Kenya;
 - to formulate and administer general guidelines governing the establishment and accreditation of institutions of higher education and to accredit and promote the development of such institutions; and
 - visit and inspect institutions of higher education.
- (b) The Bill gives the Commission new mandate of accrediting foreign universities.
- (c) This empowers the Commission to conduct a general inquiry into the state of higher education in Kenya, and make a report to the Minister. Such a report will also be made available to the higher education institutions.
- (d) The Bill also sets out standards that universities must maintain. Section 20(1) provides that every university operating in Kenya shall ensure the availability of facilities for the highest level of teaching and training and shall ensure through its programmes of instruction or study that persons enrolled therein receive quality education. This provision accompanied by general power of inspection given to the Commission guarantee improvement in university education.
- (e) The Bill makes provisions for distance education as well as further education institutions. Under this Bill, further education institutions will be accredited by the Commission.
- (f) The Bill also harmonises the various individual Universities Acts and makes them subject to the Bill. This therefore means that all the universities will be subject to the Commission for Higher

Education. This will create unity within institutions of higher learning.

Rules under the Universities Act

While awaiting the enactment of the Bill, the Commission for Higher Education drafted Rules to govern the post-secondary school institutions and distance education institutions whose aim was as follows:

- The post secondary school institutions Rules aim at coordinating these institutions by first validating their programmes, then upgrading selected programmes to degree level if they attained excellent academic status. The Rules also provide that if a person is granted a diploma in institutions whose programmes had been validated, such a graduate may gain admission to universities. This provision in effect created a system of credit transfer.

The Rules also attempt to address the problem facing universities, which are collaborating with institutions to offer their degree programmes. The Rules recognized that not all institutions should be allowed to collaborate with universities because this will compromise the standards of education offered. The Rules therefore provided for a procedure that would be followed to verify that an institution may collaborate.

- Distance education Rules aim at controlling e-learning and open learning. The Rules required that only institutions accredited may offer distance education in Kenya. The Commission is given powers under the Rules to inspect the facilities of institutions that intended to offer distance education.

** challenges to the Commission derived from discussions during a three-day workshop culminating in a report to the Minister for Education, Science and Technology.*

2.3 Challenges to Public Relations

In the light of the myriad challenges facing the Commission, PR must facilitate the forging of strategic alliances with local and international stakeholders and create a dialogue platform to adopt best practices and chart the way forward. PR is also duty-bound to enhance the Commission's corporate visibility and reputation as the sole regulatory body for higher education in the country. The Commission must be presented as being equal to the task and challenges through appropriate communication strategies so as to retain confidence levels among stakeholders.

For effective perception management PR must do the following:

- (a) Determine the stakeholders who critically impact on the realization of desired results – employees, PSSIs, universities, industry
- (b) Clearly identify CHE's uniqueness and enhance the corporate identity;
- (c) Relate what needs to be accomplished and develop targeted, focused messages that will have emotional appeal to individual internal and external stakeholders;
- (d) Use basic communication techniques to influence stakeholder perception. This can be done by identifying current perceptions, targeting KCGs, refocusing reality and bringing about desired behaviours and measurable results.

Communication is the primary tool for managing perceptions to motivate the desired behaviours in specific audiences. This is understood very well in marketing. For the PR practitioner to target audience to "buy" an idea/concepts they must create a need and manage the audiences' perceptions so that they feel that need and believe that the product will satiate them (Stupak, Stupak, 1997).

- (e) Always consider the rational content of a message and the perceived meaning;

- (f) Consider how various trends in communication impact messages and the ability to manage perceptions effectively;
- (g) Actively listen to internal and external target audiences; dialogue is essential for increasing communication efficiency and understanding;
- (h) Reach out to internal audiences to crystallize and anchor the fundamental objectives of CHE and to determine how PR and communication activities can support and help to bring about a mutual accountability for achieving those objectives;
- (i) Perceptions and style can never be a substitute for lack of quality in performance. There must always be a reinforcing interaction between perception management and performance. (Stupak and Stupak, 1997: pp 1-4).

The challenge to PR therefore is to properly sequence perceptions in the CHE arena. All stakeholders must be made to realize (intellectually, experientially and emotionally) that they can and are receiving quality outcomes at reasonable costs in a caring environment (Willimon, 2000).

This can only be accomplished with a well-thought-out, systematic, team-oriented approach to perception management (Katzenbach, Smith, 1994 pp 87-108). In essence, CHE must develop a perception management approach that compliments its mission, vision, organization structure, corporate values, and strategic objectives.

2.4 Theoretical Perspectives Relevant to Perception Studies

2.4.1. Overview

Social scientists have over the years advanced several theories of how communication can affect human perception and behaviour. Theories and analytical models of such processes as learning, attitudes and behaviour change provide communicators with indicators and examples of what

influences the behaviour of the audiences, in what ways and under what conditions.

Both theories and definitions have been strongly influenced by the need for a concept that will account for individual differences in behaviour. These theories and models offer foundations for planning, executing and evaluating of communication projects.

In spite of the historical and theoretical pressure in the direction of behaviourally defined attitude, attitudes are almost universally measured by pencil and paper or verbal report techniques (Kiesler, 1969).

The literature dealing with theories of measurement of attitudes (Fishbein, 1969) suggest that an attitude has three distinct components:

- (a) Cognitive – certain knowledge and beliefs about the objects towards which an attitude is held;
- (b) Affective – the degree of positive and negative feelings associated with the object towards which the attitude is being measured; and
- (c) Action/behavioural – the tendency to act favourably or unfavourably towards the object of the attitude (Fishbein et al, 1975).

Fishbein et al argue that any given behaviour may either be studied in its own right or be used to infer beliefs, attitudes or intentions.

It is commonly assumed that attitudes and behaviours are closely related in natural settings. Nevertheless, there are several studies often cited that demonstrate an inconsistent relationship between attitude and behaviour.

Analysts of attitude and behaviour have established that there is not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence between them. Although research in this domain posits a consistency between thought and action (Parsons and Shils, 1965), such consistency is often not apparent.

La Pierre (1934) found a huge discrepancy between actions towards minority groups members by persons in the service sector such as restaurants and hotels and their stated attitudes towards those minorities.

Fishbein (1967) argued that general attitude measures do not predict behaviour instead they predict behavioural intentions, which in turn predict behaviour.

So there is a kind of theoretical bind: in order to justify research linking attitudes and behaviour, the researcher must assume a consistency between a person's views and a person's actions, but at the same time acknowledge the difficulty of specifying exactly what the relationships are.

This problem can be taken further; Ajzen and Fishbein, (1975) desired to make precise distinctions among attitudes, behaviours and outcomes. According to their definitions, typical achievement measures in communication are outcomes, not behaviours. For Ajzen and Fishbein, the measurement issue in the attitude arena is to define specific behaviour and relate them to specific attitudes. So, although the problem of relationship between attitude and achievement in communication and research are considered to be important, viewing the problem within the context of attitudes and behaviour may be misleading.

Studies in perception, attitudes and communication postulate that exposure to a communication, interpretation of contents, retention of the communication and the attitudinal and behavioural consequences to a

communication are significantly determined by the psychological predisposition of the perceiver (Allport et al, 1947; Cohen, 1964, Hovland et al, 1953, Schramm et al, 1961).

If a communication is in harmony with the frame of reference, motivation, attitudes and values of the perceiver, he responds to it favourably (Festinger, 1957). Communication theorists Hyman and Sheasley et al in their article 'Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Fail' posit that motivation in achievement or learning, or in assimilation of knowledge, is an important factor which is often overlooked in information campaigns amid talk of increasing the flow of information.

They argue that the widest possible dissemination of material may be ineffective if it is not geared to the perceiver's interest because interested persons acquire the most information (Tan, 1985).

On the other hand, if the communication generates dissonance or conflicts with existing cognitions, attitudes and values, various forms of psychological defences will operate against the communication, and this may result in rejection of the communication, distortion of the facts and conclusions and even aggressive response towards the communicator and communication (Festinger, 1957).

2.4.2. Examination of Theoretical Orientations

The perspective underlying many of the early research orientations was influenced by the simplistic model of the communication process deriving from **information theory** (Shannon and Weaver, 1949). According to this model, the transmission of a message is linear and uni-directional. Following this model, the first theories of mass communication all tended to view the audience as an undifferentiated (homogeneous) and substantially passive entity upon which it was possible to exert direct

influence. As Elihu, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) observed every message was considered to be a direct and powerful stimulus to action that would elicit immediate response.

From this model, which recalls in certain ways the idea of the subject seen as a mere responder to stimuli, there emerged the model proposed by Harold Lasswell (1935). The model of “who says what to whom through which channel and with what effect”.

In psychology, the experimental empirical approach progressively focuses on the characteristics of each of the elements included in the 5-Ws model. It went on to isolate, experimentally, the individual variables so as to analyze the ways in which they can intervene in the persuasion process. The studies of Hovland and his research group at the Yale University (Hovland 1954, Hovland, Lumsdaine and Sheffield, 1949; Hovland, Janis and Kelly, 1953) considered the complexities which come into play in the relationship between transmitter, recipient and message in the area of the study of persuasion (for example, the characteristics of the source, message, recipients and intervening variables between the transmission and reception of the message).

The research of the Yale School of thought was a reworking of Lasswell's model, which attributed to the media powerful effects (hypodermic needle approach) in its ability to influence public opinion. The Yale School emphasized how the effect of messages varied with the varying of certain characteristics of the source of the message, recipient and that the effects of mass communication depend essentially on the interaction of these factors.

The ideas of communication scholars (Lasswell, 1927; 1935) with regard to powerful effects of the means of mass information on attitudes and

behaviour, were gradually abandoned due to an increasing interest in the variables that intervene in the relationship between the message and the behavioural response for example selective perception, the role of cognitive structures of the recipient and the social-demographic characteristics of the audience.

The idea emerged that interpersonal relationships have a key role in the sphere of influence exerted by the means of communication. In fact Katz (1954) posited the hypothesis that the communication process may be described in terms of a two-step flow of communication. These postulations as well as the **Diffusion of Innovations** theories (Ryan and Gross, 1943; 1944 and 1950; Rogers, 1962) did not lead to any paradigm shift: basically communication was still regarded as a transmission process. Elements of value to perception studies however can be derived from some of these earlier studies, which view the "active" audience as selectively attending to message sources and interpersonal relationships having a mediating function in message reception and attention.

The link between mass communication processes and the characteristics of the social context within which these take place became central for the sociological empirical approach. Here, the audience is no longer considered as a passive receptor with no link to the social environment. In fact, it was emphasized that individuals were reached by the media through a filter of social bonds.

In this perspective the limited effects of the media was proposed (Klapper, 1960) where selectiveness is linked not so much to the individuals' psychological profile as to the network of social relationships which constitute the environment in which the audience lives and which form the groups to which he belongs. The shortfall here is that language is still regarded as a fundamental problem-free and acontextual vehicle for the

transmission of information. The latter day **Group Dynamics Approach** (Lewin, 1947; Zimbardo 1977) also subscribed to this notion.

2.4.3. Group Dynamics Theory

Initially developed by Kurt Lewin (1947), the main assumption of this approach is that the individual is a social being with an intimate dependency on others for knowledge and decisions on his attitudes and actions. The group one belongs to, or identifies with, is important in shaping beliefs, attitudes, expectations and behaviour.

According to Zimbardo et al (1977) a major factor that changes people's attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of the world is the discrepancy that exists between the individual's attitude or behaviour and the group norm. The mere awareness that one holds a position different from that of the group norm is sufficient to make one change his position to be in line with that of group, if the group's acceptance, approval and recognition are needed. Lewin et al (1947) postulated that in a group, various pressures exist that cause people to behave, think and feel alike. One of the pressures is the tendency for people in a group to reflect those who are very different. A person whose opinions, attitudes or actions are remarkably different will be rejected. The possibility of rejection from a valued group generally causes people to become more like the members of the group (Asch, 1956). The **spiral of silence** theorists extend this concept that when an individual holds a view which is at variance with the group, the tendency is to fall silent to avoid ostracisation (Noelle-Neumann, 1973, 1974).

2.4.4. Social Comparison Theory

The theory is an attempt to explain how social pressures towards uniformity operate at the individual level. The central idea of this theory is that people tend to compare themselves to others in order to evaluate

their own abilities and opinions (Festinger, 1954). A major aspect of the theory is that individuals tend to compare themselves with similar others. We select comparison groups on the basis of their similarity to us. Our attitudes, abilities and evaluations are influenced by our social comparison processes.

Because there are no objective standards to evaluate our attitudes, the tendency is for individuals to evaluate their attitudes by comparing themselves with other people.

This means that to evaluate opinions and attitudes one needs to know what others think about that attitude. Where attitudes differ from those of the group members, there is a tendency to reduce the gap/normative discrepancy or by rejecting the group as irrelevant.

2.4.5. Theory of Construction of Social Reality

Attention to the role carried out by the media in the representation of reality begin to emerge in the late 1960s in the area of media studies through research which combined the analysis of mass-media communication with ideas developed by sociological theories and the sociology of knowledge.

It is in this perspective that the media is given a fundamental role in the symbolic construction of reality and in those processes of production, reproduction and distribution of knowledge which allow recipients to give meaning to the world and to model their perceptions (McQuail, 1987).

In this perspective, the media communication process is viewed as a specific production process, supplying general interpretative frameworks which individuals and collectivities use to give meaning to social reality.

The emphasis on the construction of social reality as an effect of mass communication came to be referred to as media “cultivation” or “enculturation approach”. The basic assumption is that the media are able to determine our perceptions about the facts, norms and values of society through selective presentations and by emphasizing certain themes (Gerbner and Gross, 1977).

2.4.6 Social Learning Theory

The principles of **social learning theory** can also be used to explain such enculturation effects, which involve the generalization of information learned from the media to our own social environment (Bandura, 1977 and 1986).

The theory argues that most human behaviour is learnt observationally through the informative function of modeling. It departs from overemphasis on disposition and looks at behaviour and the situation. The theory argues that there is a continuous reciprocal interaction between a person’s behaviour, events going on within a person and the environmental consequences of that behaviour.

Thus most human behaviour leads to consequences that feedback on behaviour, either maintaining or changing the probability of similar behaviour in the future. The theory assumes that the mechanism by which a person’s behaviour is changed is a form of learning.

The important dimensions in this theory of value to this research are that people can directly experience the consequences of their own behaviour, people can learn by observation (also known as observational or vicarious learning) and through media exposure.

The theory also emphasises vicarious reinforcement or incentives. This is indicated when observers increase behaviour which they have seen others reinforce. Since both direct and vicarious reinforcement inevitably occur together in everyday life, it is their interactive effect, rather than their independent ones that should be of primary interest to this study.

2.4.7 Cognitive Dissonance Theory

In view of the psycho-social approach to the perception analysis one needs to gain a deeper insight into the cognitive foundations of opinions, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour (perception).

Most of the cognitive consistency theorists have been interested primarily in the process of belief and attitude change. They reason that the individual possesses a drive toward cognitive consistency and that therefore inconsistency acts as an irritant or stimulus which motivates individuals to change their beliefs and attitudes, to bring any conclusions "into line" (McGuire, 1960).

Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance has been the most influential of the cognitive consistency theories. This is an extension of group dynamics approach but rather than the focus being the social forces of the group, there are cognitive forces within the individual (intra-personal). The theory elaborates how needs explain behaviour. Needs can be assumed to be a result of "discrepancy or inconsistency".

The theory retained the notion that discrepancies or inconsistencies cause psychological tension or discomfort that people try to reduce or eliminate by bringing their attitudes and actions into line. Dissonance becomes the motivating factor for an individual to change his knowledge, attitude or his actions.

Cognitive elements are bits of knowledge, opinions or beliefs about the environment or individual. Festinger (1957) suggested that public actions can resolve dissonance between attitudes and behaviour by bringing private perceptions closer to public awareness. The cognitive dissonance theory explains the concept of how needs influence behaviour.

In the individual needs approach the individual need therefore becomes the motivation or mechanism which leads to specific behaviour such as the adoption of innovations. The individual need, whether resulting from economic, social or other environmental situations or from cognitive dissonance, leads to a search and retrieval of ideas and information which can be used to select the idea or innovation that can satisfy the original need or discrepancy, or it can be used to bring attitudes and actions into line and hence reduce the uncomfortable state caused by discrepancy of the needs.

Third, a state of dissonance is frequently avoided mainly by seeking only that information which is expected to support or confirm a decision already made through a mechanism of selective exposure, perception and forgetting or disregarding dissonant information.

An element of value to this study is that the theory is cognizant of the fact that there are times when situations of cognitive dissonance call for manipulation to result in behavioural change. The idea, however, is to let people think it is their own decision and to express this new attitude that you intended. This theory brings out the very essence of perception management.

Another important element of this theory is that it lays stress on the need to fully comprehend the various individual's cognitive elements.

2.4.8 Attribution Theory

The aim of theory is to explain the way in which people try to account for human actions. It is a cognitive theory which attempts to understand motives, intentions and causes of people's actions. There are no motivational constructs or need to reduce dissonance but descriptive and explanatory elements in the theory. This theory stresses the importance of communicative strategies to understand what people are thinking about or why they behave in a certain manner, if behavioural change is to occur (Festinger, 1957).

In perception analysis studies, both situational and dispositional perspectives of behaviour needs to be taken into account. While acknowledging the limitations of this theory, there are social, physical and psychological factors that need to be addressed. In developing communication strategies, this theory underscores the importance of addressing people's immediate concerns and even justifications for given behaviour.

2.4.9 Conclusion

The above cited theories are useful to this study for the manner in which they describe intervening variables both internal and external to the individual which impact on their knowledge, attitudes, opinions and behaviour.

Two broad generalizations may be drawn from the many studies conducted on knowledge, attitude and practices:

- Knowledge and attitude do not necessarily have a isormorphic (one-to-one) relationship with practice, (La Pierre, 1934).
- Positive attitudes do not necessarily assure behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

The generalizations suggest that in order to explain these factors, socio-psychological determinants must be accurately identified.

Most of the KAP studies have identified knowledge and attitude at a very general and superficial level. In most of these studies, the knowledge has been restricted to mere awareness.

These studies did not often define knowledge in a functional sense which influences decisions towards acceptance/non acceptance of a method, practice or even institution.

In a typical KAP survey, respondents may score high on knowledge (a broad awareness) and yet may have strong misconceptions and reservations about the use of various methods or about an institution. Unless these negative cognitive forces are identified, a simple measurement of the degree of awareness would not be meaningful in interpreting:

- (a) The role of awareness in influencing acceptance; and
- (b) What communication strategy would be necessary to create a positive functional knowledge.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This section describes the research approaches used in this study. Specifically, it provides information on type of research undertaken, population of study, sampling design, methods of data collection, data processing and analysis. These are briefly described and explained below.

3.1 Type of research

This study was exploratory in nature because no study of its kind has been conducted to gauge the perception and expectations of universities toward the Commission of Higher Education in Kenya. The findings should be treated as exploratory to provide reliable data and information upon which further descriptive studies would be based.

The study was quantitative in nature.

3.2 The Sampling Plan

The sampling plan described the unit of analysis, the target population, sampling frame, sampling design, and data collection and data analysis.

3.2.1 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was the universities in Kenya. The study sought to describe and analyze the perceptions and expectations of universities toward the Commission of Higher Education. The unit of analysis "is simply what or who is to be described or analyzed" (Singleton A.R, Jr., Straits C.B and Straits M.M. 1993. Approaches to Social Science Research. Oxford: Oxford University Press).

3.2.2 Target Population

The target population of the study was universities in the Republic of Kenya. The universities were categorized as public universities, chartered private universities, universities with letters of interim authority and registered universities. There are a total of 24 universities in Kenya. (See Appendix I).

3.2.3 Sampling frame

The sampling frame was the Register of Universities published by CHE. The register has 17 private universities and seven public universities. (See Appendix 1)

3.3 Sampling design

The research design used probability sampling to select cases to be included in the sample. Probability sampling gives all cases in the population a known probability of being included in the sample (Singleton at al). It also removes bias on the part of the investigator while selecting cases. It also allows the laws of mathematical probability to be applied to estimate the accuracy of the sample.

3.3.1 Sampling technique

The study used systematic sampling technique to select cases to be included in the sample. This technique involved the selection of every K^{th} case from a complete list of the population, starting with a randomly chosen case from the 1st K case on the list (Singleton at al). The important requirements for this technique are the sampling interval and a random start. The sampling interval is the ratio of the number of cases in the population to the desired sample size. On the other hand, a random start is the initial case between 1 and K (Singleton et al).

The sampling was done at two stages to select the universities to be included in the sample and the respondents to interview.

Stage 1: Selection of Universities

A list of all universities in Kenya was obtained from CHE. A sample interval was calculated based on the ratio of total number of universities in the list to desired sample size. Due to the small size of the population, a large sample was needed for representativeness, about a third of the total population. As a result the sample interval is three (24 divide by eight). Every third university in the list was selected systematically. The random start was in the list and the 3rd case from it was selected for inclusion.

Using this method the selected universities were:

1. University of Nairobi
2. Moi University
3. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology
4. Maseno University
5. Kenya Highlands Bible College, Kericho
6. St. Paul's United Theological College
7. Scott Theological College, Machakos
8. Kabarak University

Stage 2: Selection of Respondents

The institutions selected for the study were provided a list of senior officers to be interviewed. The following senior officers were targeted for inclusion in the sample:

- Vice-Chancellor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Administration)
- Registrar-Academic
- Registrar – Administration/Administration Officer/HRM

- Planning Officer
- Librarian
- Finance Manager
- Sponsors of universities

Every 3rd officer in the list was selected systematically to be interviewed.

Officers who are not available were replaced using similar procedure.

The officers to be interviewed at the universities were:

(1) **University of Nairobi**

- (a) Vice-Chancellor
- (b) Registrar (Administration)
- (c) Sponsors of university (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology)

(2) **Moi University**

- (a) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- (b) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning)
- (c) Vice-Chancellor

(3) **Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology**

- (a) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (AP&D)
- (b) Deputy University Librarian
- (c) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)

(4) **Maseno University**

- (a) Deputy Registrar (Academic)
- (b) Finance Officer
- (c) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration & Finance)

(5) **Kenya Highlands Bible College**

- (a) Ag. Academic Dean and Registrar of Admissions and Records
- (b) Sponsor (Africa Gospel Church in partnership with the World Gospel Mission)
- (c) Principal

(6) **Nairobi International School of Theology**

- (a) Human Resource Manager
- (b) Principal
- (c) Administration Officer

(7) **Scott Theological College**

- (a) Head Librarian
- (b) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
- (c) Planning Officer/Administrator

(8) **Kabarak University**

- (a) Ag. Finance Officer
- (b) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration & Finance)
- (c) Ag. University Librarian

3.3.2 Sample size

According to Singleton and colleagues, factors determining sample size include:

- Heterogeneity of the population
- Desired precision
- Type of sampling design
- Availability of resources
- Number of breakdowns planned at data analysis

This study considered the above factors while determining sample size. A total of eight universities were selected for inclusion in the sample. Three senior officers in each university selected were interviewed. Therefore, the total sample was 24.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected through face-to-face interviews. The study used a structured questionnaire with both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

3.4.1. Questionnaires

Qualified research assistants with knowledge of social science research methodologies conducted the interviews under the supervision of the researcher. The researcher trained the research assistants in the administration of the questionnaire.

The research assistants completed the questionnaires through a face-to-face interview with the selected respondents. This gave the interviewer the opportunity to probe for answers in order to bring out the true nature of their perceptions and expectations.

The questionnaire technique was used because it is believed to elicit information on a wide range of issues such as one's knowledge, attitudes, opinions, perceptions, problems and suggestions among others.

Further, it has the advantage of gathering a lot of information within a short time and the answers given by the respondents are not influenced by the researcher (Kerlinger, 1970; Anderson, 1975, Tuckman, 1978, Mugenda et al, 1999).

The questionnaire administered the likert-type attitude rating scales 1-5, and five options ranging from strongly agree/very good/very satisfied/very often rated (5) to strongly disagree(rated 5) very poor/very dissatisfied/not at all (rated 1). Some of the items consisted of favourable or unfavourable statements with regards to attitudes, knowledge and motivations. A tick (✓) was put in the right column depending on their degree of agreement, where applicable.

3.4.2. Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

This was carried out in two randomly selected universities one public and one private. The universities selected for this purpose were not among the sample universities for the actual research. The main purpose of this exercise was to confirm the validity and reliability of the instruments. It also helped ascertain the feasibility of this study.

For Likerts-type knowledge attitude and motivation analysis scale for example the purpose of the pilot testing was to determine what Anderson (1981) referred to as "Likert's criterion of internal consistency" of the scale.

The researcher applied the Test-Retest Reliability in this process. After pilot-testing, necessary adjustments were made to ensure that the instruments were adequate for this research.

3.5 Method of Data Processing

The researcher edited all questionnaires to make sure all the questions were correctly completed. A questionnaire was declared spoilt if 10 per cent of its content is not answered. In such a case the researcher would do another interview.

The data was coded and entered into a computer. Once data capture was complete, it was edited to remove clerical mistakes before it was

statistically manipulated. Open-ended questions were coded using relevant categories, which made them statistically amenable.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using either Excel or Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was done according to analysis variables developed from the instrument. The results were mainly quantitative.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction:

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The chapter is divided into three parts. Part one indicates the findings on the understanding/knowledge of CHE; part two addresses the attitude of the respondents towards the Commission; and part three looks at the motivation in dealing with the organization.

Part One: Knowledge/ Understanding of CHE

Table 4.1(a): Percentage ranking of sources of information through which knowledge was first acquired

Mode of communication	Frequency	Percentage
Med	14	63.6
Cow	10	45.5
Piws	6	27.3
Wose	4	18.2
Come	3	13.6
Cora	1	4.5
Other	0	0

Key:

Med- media

Cow- written communication

Piws- personal interaction with CHE
staff

Come- Commission meetings

Cora- oral communication

Wose- workshops/seminars

Table 4.1(a) above indicates the percentage ranking of information sources through which knowledge on CHE was first acquired. Six information sources were listed. 63.6% of the respondents first learned of CHE through the media;

45% acquired their first knowledge on CHE through written communication; 27.3% through personal interaction with CHE staff while 18.2%, 13.6% and 4.5% acquired this knowledge through workshops/seminars, Commission meetings and through oral communication respectively.

Table 4.1(b) Number of sources through which knowledge was first acquired

Number of channels	Frequency	%
0	0	0
1	12	54.5
2	5	22.7
3	4	18.2
4	1	4.6
5	-	-
6	-	-
Total	22	100

Table 4.1(b) above shows the 22 respondents and the corresponding number of channels through which they acquired their first knowledge of CHE. Out of the 22 respondents, 54.6% learned about CHE through one channel; 22.7% of the respondents through two channels; 18.2% three channels and 4.6% through four channels. None of the respondents learned about CHE for the first time through all the modes of communication identified nor did any of them respond to the question as to whether there was any 'other' mode other than the ones provided.

4.1.2 Understanding of CHE

Table 4.2: Level of understanding of CHE

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
VERY POOR (1)	-	-	-	-
POOR (2)	4	18.2	18.2	18.2
AVERAGE (3)	4	18.2	18.2	36.4
GOOD (4)	10	45.5	45.5	81.8
VERY GOOD (5)	4	18.2	18.2	100.0
TOTAL	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode = 4

When asked to rate their understanding of CHE using the likert- type stakeholder perception scale, the study indicated that the 81.9% of the respondents' understanding of CHE was average and above; 45.5% of the respondents said they had a good understanding of the Commission. This is reflected on the mode value of 4 (for good as per the likert- type scale). While only 18.2% had a poor understanding of the organization. This information is presented statistically in Table 4.2 above.

4.1.3 Level of Satisfaction with CHE

Table 4.3 Satisfaction with communication about CHE

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
VERY DISSATISFIED (1)	1	4.5	4.5	4.4
DISSATISFIED (2)	8	36.4	36.4	40.9
INDIFFERENT (3)	1	4.5	4.5	45.5
SATISFIED (4)	12	54.5	54.4	100.0
VERY SATISFIED (5)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	22	100.0	100.0	100.0

Mode = 4

Table 4.3 above shows the level of satisfaction with the way in which CHE's activities have been communicated to the respondents. While the study reveals that 54.5% of the respondents were satisfied, it is important to note that a large number of the respondents – 41%, expressed their dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Commission's operations, plans and achievements were being communicated to them.

4.1.4 Overall Performance of CHE

The next successive tables 4.4(a) to 4.4(f) give the respondents' rating of the overall performance of the Commission in six different areas. The same likert-type scale was used.

Table 4.4(a): Approachability and Responsiveness of CHE

RESPONDENTS' RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	Cumulative Percent
DONT KNOW (0)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
VERY POOR (1)	2	9.1	9.1	13.6
POOR (2)	2	9.1	9.1	22.7
AVERAGE (3)	8	36.4	36.4	59.1
GOOD (4)	8	36.4	36.4	95.5
VERY GOOD (5)	1	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode =3, 4

Table 4.4(a) shows the assessment of the respondents of the level of CHE's approachability and responsiveness. From the total 22 respondents, only 4.5% did not rate CHE as either approachable or responsive. The majority of the respondents rated CHE's approachability and responsiveness as above average. Looking from the bimodal trend of 3 and 4 (corresponding to average and good respectively), it clearly shows that CHE's performance is good, since the cumulative percentage of average and above is 77.3%.

Table 4.4b: Relevance to Emerging Issues in Higher Education

RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
DON'T KNOW (0)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
VERY POO (1)	1	4.5	4.5	9.0
POOR (2)	1	4.5	4.5	13.5
AVERAGE (3)	11	50.0	50.0	63.5
GOOD (4)	8	36.4	36.4	100.0
VERY GOOD (5)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	22	100	100.0	100.0

Mode = 3

Table 4.4(b) on the relevance of CHE to emerging issues in higher education, depicts almost the same trend as in Table 4.4(a) and the mode is still 3 (average). The cumulative percentage more than or equal to average is 86.4%. This shows that CHE is rated high in relevance by this category of stakeholders.

Table 4.4(c): CHE Relationship with the University Sub- Sector

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative Percent
DONT KNOW (0)	2	9.1	9.1	9.1
VERY POOR (1)	2	9.1	9.1	18.2
POOR (2)	2	9.1	9.1	27.3
AVERAGE (3)	7	31.8	31.8	59.1
GOOD (4)	7	31.8	31.8	90.9
VERY GOOD (5)	2	9.1	9.1	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mean = 2.95

Modes =3, 4

Table 4.4 (c) above reflects information received on the respondents' views on CHE's relationship with the university sub- sector. The fact that the relationship was viewed to be good is clearly depicted by mean of 2.95 and bi-modes of 3 and 4; with a cumulative percentage of average and above of 72.7%. Only 9.1%

respondents were unaware what this relationship between CHE and the universities entailed.

Table 4.4(d): Positioning and profile of CHE in the higher education sub-sector

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	DONT KNOW (0)	2	9.1	9.1	9.1
	VERY POOR (1)	1	4.5	4.5	13.6
	POOR (2)	1	4.5	4.5	18.2
	AVERAGE (3)	9	40.9	40.9	59.1
	GOOD (4)	7	31.8	31.8	90.9
	VERY GOOD (5)	2	9.1	9.1	100.0
	Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode=3

Table 4.4(d) rates CHE's positioning and profile in the higher education sub-sector. The mode of 3 (corresponding to average in likert-type scale) shows consistency with the previous analysis in tables 4.4(a), 4.4(b) and 4.4(c). The cumulative percentage above average is 81.8%, indicates that CHE is perceived to be well positioned to take the lead in the higher education sub-sector. Only 9.1% did not know where to place the Commission in this scenario.

Table 4.4(e): Perception of CHE's mechanisms established to enhance quality higher education

Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
DONT KNOW (0)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
VERY POOR (1)	3	13.6	13.6	18.2
POOR (2)	2	9.1	9.1	27.3
AVERAGE (3)	8	36.4	36.4	63.6
GOOD (4)	7	31.8	31.8	95.5
VERY GOOD (5)	1	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode = 3

Table 4.4(e) provides information on the rating by respondents of CHE in as far as the establishment of mechanisms to enhance quality higher education is concerned. Only 4.5% of the respondents were unable to rate the level of effectiveness of the CHE mechanisms for quality control and assurance. Looking at the mode of 3, corresponding to average on the ranking it shows that CHE is rated as being above average.

Table 4.4(f): Perception of CHE's capacity to streamline the higher education sub-sector

RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
DONT KNOW (0)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
VERY POOR (1)	-	-	-	-
POOR (2)	2	9.1	9.1	13.6
AVERAGE (3)	15	68.2	68.2	81.8
GOOD (4)	1	4.5	4.5	86.3
VERY GOOD (5)	3	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode = 3

Table 4.4(f) on the performance of CHE in streamlining the higher education sector enhances the trend. The mode of 3 corresponds to average on the rating scale. A cumulative percent of 86.3% of above average indicates that the Commission was viewed as having impacted positively in its capacity to streamline the higher education sub-sector. Only 4.5% of the sample appeared unaware of the Commission's performance in this area.

4.1.5 Information on Performance of CHE

Table 4.5 CHE's performance in evaluation and assessment of HE

Rating	Physical and spatial facilities	Library resources	Structure of governance	Financial resources	Staffing and staff requirements
Don't know (0)	18.2%	22.7%	18.2%	22.7%	22.7%
Very poor (1)	*	*	4.5%	4.5%	*
Poor (2)	4.5%	*	9.1%	4.5%	9.1%
Average (3)	22.7%	31.8%	27.3%	27.3%	18.2%
Good (4)	36.4%	36.4%	40.9%	36.4%	36.4%
Very good (5)	18.2%	9.1%	*	4.5%	13.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mean	3.14	2.86	2.68	2.64	2.86
Mode	4	4	4	4	4
skewness	-1.003	-0.921	-0.914	-0.693	-0.721
Kurtosis	-0.119	-0.502	-0.63	-1.016	-0.876

Key: X(Y %) in each cell of the table gives frequency and valid percentage respectively.

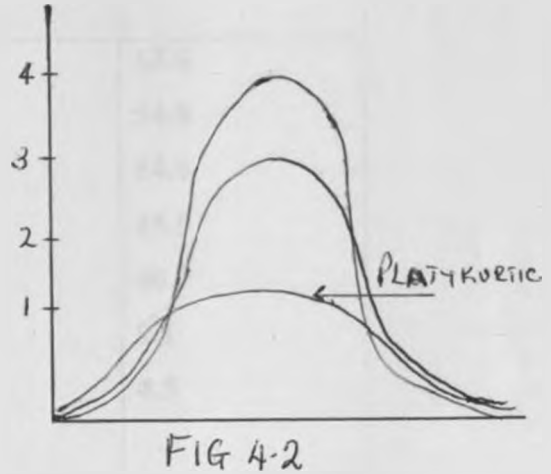
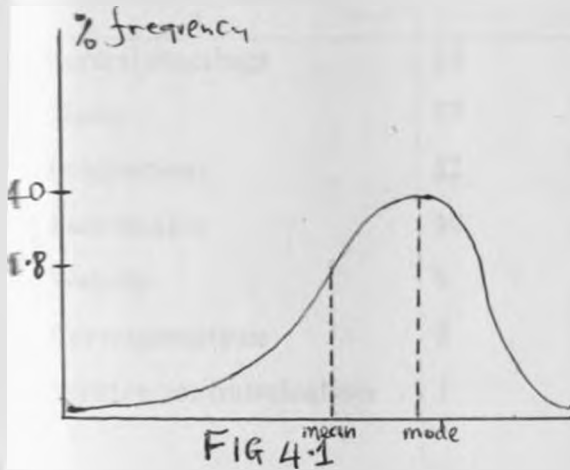
* shows that it does not apply to the aspect being referred to.

Table 4.5 presents the findings on the respondents' views on the performance of CHE in the evaluation and assessment of academic resources of university institutions.

The statistical analysis performed displays a modal value of four (4) in all the five tested aspects. Over 77.3% of the respondents rate CHE's performance as being average and above with respect to the capacity to assess physical and spatial resources as well as library resources.

68.2% of the respondents rated as average and above CHE's capacity to assess the structure of governance, while 78.2% had a similar rating for the assessment capability for both financial resources and staffing requirements.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 Distribution of Responses



i) Since the co-efficient of skewness calculated for all the aspects are negative, the distribution is skewed to the left as illustrated in Figure 4.1 above. This suggests that with the numerical magnitude of the likert scale, the majority of the respondents were of the view that CHE's performance in the aspects identified was rated high.

ii) The calculated moments of Kurtosis are less than three for every aspect for the normal distribution and therefore the trend reflects a platykurtic distribution as illustrated in Figure 4.2 above. This attests to a significant relativity of the respondents' viewing of CHE's performance as wanting as reflected on the lower side of the likert scale. While we have demonstrated that a considerable number of respondents' reflected on the upper side of the scale, the findings indicate that attention needs to be placed on reversing this trend.

4.1.6 Sources of Information on CHE

Table 4.6(i): Information sources on CHE available to universities

Information sources	Frequency	%
Formal meetings	14	63.6
Media	12	54.6
Publications	12	54.6
Face-to-face	10	45.5
Website	9	40.9
Correspondence	2	9.1
Written communication	1	4.5

Table 4.6(i) above on the information sources on CHE which have been available to universities, shows that 71.4% of the information sources each scored over 40%. 63.6% of the respondents cited formal meetings as a source; the media and publications accounted for 54.6% each; face-to-face communication constituted 45.5% and website 40.9%. The less common information sources- correspondence and written communication were rated at 9.1% and 4.5% respectively by the respondents.

Table 4.6(ii) Number of information sources available

Number of sources	Frequency	%
1	4	18.2
2	4	18.2
3	8	36.3
4	4	18.2
5	2	9.1
6	-	-
7	-	-
Total	22	100

Table 4.6(ii) presents the number of sources available to the respondents. 18.2% of the respondents indicated that they accessed information about the Commission from one, two and four sources; the highest number of respondents, 36.3% utilised three sources to gain information about CHE. This translates to 81.8% of the respondents having more than one source of information on the Commission available to them.

Table 4.6(iii): Preferred communication channels

Channel	Frequency	%
Face-to-face	8	36.4
Written communication	7	31.8
Internet	5	22.7
Publications	4	18.2
Website	4	18.2
Formal meetings	3	13.6
Telephone	2	9.1
Correspondence	2	9.1
E-mail	1	4.5
Media	1	4.5
Workshops/seminars	1	4.5

In the above Table 4.6(iii), over 22.7% of the respondents indicated preference for 27.5% of the identified communication channels. The most preferred channel was face-to-face with 36.4% of the respondents favouring this; publications, website and formal meetings, also representing 27.3% of the preferred channels,

were given preference by between 13.6% and 18.2%. 45.5% of the channels each received less than 10% preference ratings from the respondents.

4.2 Part Two: Attitude

4.2.1 Level of Satisfaction with CHE

Table 4.7: Extent that CHE meets the respondents' expectations

Level of satisfaction	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
VERY DISSATISFIED (1)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
DISSATISFIED (2)	6	27.3	27.3	31.8
INDIFFERENT (3)	1	4.5	4.5	36.4
SATISFIED (4)	13	59.1	59.1	95.5
VERY SATISFIED (5)	1	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode = 4

Table 4.7 gives the respondents' level of satisfaction with the way the Commission as an accreditation body had met their expectations. Based on the likert-type scale a mode of 4 (corresponding to satisfied) shows that 59.1% were satisfied; 31.8% were dissatisfied.

4.2.2 Capacity to coordinate and regulate university education

Table 4.8: Views on the capacity of CHE

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
N	4	18.2	18.2	22.7
Y	17	77.3	77.3	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Key:

0 = Not aware

N = No

Y = Yes

The respondents were asked to give their opinion as to whether the Commission is best placed to coordinate and regulate university education in the country. The summary of statistics for this information is provided in Table 4.8 above. Only 4.5% of the respondents failed to give an opinion; 18.2% of the respondents said CHE was not best placed but 77.3% were of the view that the Commission was best placed in the aspect of coordinating and regulating university education in Kenya.

4.2.3 Level of agreement on CHE's efficiency and effectiveness

Table 4.9: Efficiency and Effectiveness of CHE

RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
DISAGREE (2)	9	40.9	40.9	45.5
NEUTRAL (3)	2	9.1	9.1	54.5
AGREE(4)	10	45.5	45.5	100.0
STRONGLY AGREE (5)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	22	100.0	100.0	100.0

Mode = 4

When asked whether they concur that the Commission undertakes its tasks efficiently and effectively, as shown in Table 4.9 most of the respondents 45.5% agreed, while 41% disagreed.

4.3 Part Three: Motivation

4.3.1 Frequency of Consultations

Table 4.10: Frequency of Consultations with CHE

RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
NOT AT ALL(1)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
RARELY (2)	2	9.1	9.1	13.6
AVERAGE (3)	11	50.0	50.0	63.6
OFTEN (4)	7	31.8	31.8	95.4
VERY OFTEN (5)	1	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode = 3

Table 4.10 shows the frequency in the number of consultations with CHE. The study clearly shows that 90.9% (which constitutes almost all the respondents), consult with CHE.

4.3.2 Consultations with CHE

Table 4.11: Usefulness of Consultations with CHE

RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
NOT AT ALL USEFEUL (1)	-	-	-	-
INSIGNIFICANT (2)	1	4.5	4.5	4.5
AVERAGE (3)	5	22.7	22.7	27.2
USEFUL (4)	13	59.1	59.1	86.3
VERY USEFUL (5)	3	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0	

Mode = 4

Table 4.11 presents the findings on the perceived usefulness of the consultations with CHE.

A total of 95.5% of the respondents to considered the consultations to be useful. This shows that the institutions are largely motivated to seek advice from the Commission. Only 4.5% of the respondents described the consultations as insignificant.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

4.4.1 Knowledge/ Understanding

The study examined the knowledge, attitudes and motivations among mainly academic staff from both public and private universities towards the Commission.

Most of the respondents expressed their satisfaction with the manner in which the activities of the Commission were being communicated and requested that there be more interactive sessions, professional for a, a regularly updated website and wider circulation of publications, in order that their knowledge and understanding be enhanced.

It is crucial to note that there were a significant number of respondents who indicated that they were dissatisfied with the communication strategies employed by the Commission towards their stakeholders. This type of response greatly informs to public relations process and is addressed in the recommendation section of this report.

The high rating of the Commission as an effective body to regulate and coordinate higher education is indicative of the seriousness with which respondents said that they perceived the role of the Commission.

The one key concern which appeared to be expressed by respondents from both the public and private university sub-sector, was that while CHE appeared to have developed comprehensive mechanisms for ensuring that standards of academic excellence are established and maintained in the private university sector, the same stringent procedures did not obtain to public universities.

The fact that most respondents indicated that the Commission had made a positive impact on the university sub-sector tallied with the above average knowledge of the role of the Commission.

On the preferred channels it was apparent that the respondents were keen to have information that is authenticated and not receive it through third party interpretation, thus the preference for face-to-face and written communication, each of which constituted over 30% of the sample under study.

4.4.2 Attitude

Most of the respondents expressed their satisfaction as indicated by the high rating on the extent to which CHE had met their expectations in so far as adherence with the stipulations of the Universities Rules, 1989 which govern the operations of CHE.

On the question of whether CHE undertakes its tasks effectively and efficiently, the results were not above or below average, which suggests the need to nurture more positive attitudes among the stakeholders to sustain the confidence and enhance the reputation of CHE.

The opening up of more and frequent channels of reliable communication becomes a key challenge to the Commission as the demands placed on it to enhance its service delivery become more pronounced.

As the sole regulatory body for the advancement quality assurance in university education each public becomes a critical public and so appropriate communication strategies must be developed to address their specific needs.

4.4.3 Motivation

The study revealed that the majority of the respondents were motivated to consult with the Commission for advice and guidance in matters covered by the CHE mandate. The fact that the respondents largely found the consultations useful is a clear indication that the Commission offered them the requisite specialist information that they required.

This is an area that should be fully exploited by the Commission and the concerns expressed that feedback be provided in a more timely manner, addressed accordingly. It is clear from the responses that the higher the motivation the greater the reputation and confidence in CHE.

Perception studies of this nature must pay attention to reputation management and stakeholder involvement becomes a crucial means of lending credence to any organization.

The demand on the part of the respondents for a more proactive rather than reactive approach to communication will greatly serve to inform the corporate communication process and help address the loopholes that exist in the current PR practice within the Commission. A de-motivated clientele would ultimately spell doom for the Commission which has monopoly in the area of quality control and assurance of university education.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study established that universities were fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of the Commission and that there were several information channels at their disposal which had served to enhance their knowledge and understanding.

The respondents clearly identified the information gaps which they felt needed to be filled by the Commission and the preferred information sources which would better equip them with the information they required for their purposes.

The main purpose of the study was to establish the perceptions and expectations that the public and private universities had of the Commission and the extent of their motivation to consult for advice based on how they viewed the Commission's profile.

By revealing that universities had an overwhelming understanding of the Commission and that the majority viewed the consultations as being useful, the results of the findings of the study were a clear departure from the hypothesis as stated in chapter one.

There was an above average knowledge of the application of the Universities Rules to the private university sub-sector led respondents to call for an across-the-board application of the Rules also to public universities due to what was perceived as the positive impact that it had on ascertaining quality.

5.2 Recommendations

The research revealed numerous concerns as to how respondents perceived that the mandate of the Commission could be strengthened. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the following are the recommendations:

Knowledge/understanding

- a) Some of the respondents argued that knowledge on the roles and responsibilities of the Commission in quality assurance of university education was largely limited to those who are directly affected by the exercises undertaken at the time. The tendency has been to lock many others out and thus stakeholders and public alike are many times ignorant of process involved and the criteria used in many of the accreditation and planning processes. It is being recommended that the Commission should broaden stakeholder involvement since the operations ultimately impact on the wider society.
- b) In view of the high levels of dissatisfaction with the way in which the Commission's activities have been communicated, it is incumbent upon the Commission to open up avenues for broader consultations with institutions of higher education and other stakeholders through such interventions as:
 - i. organise interactive sessions;
 - ii. face-to-face consultations with individual institutions to gauge their specific and unique needs;
 - iii. conduct professional fora on a regular basis.
- c) The Commission should undertake internet marketing to enhance the profile as the sole regulatory body for higher education in the country. Tied to this is the need for the Commission to update its website so that it can serve as a vital source of information and interaction for the stakeholders in higher education. These initiatives will all be aimed at increasing the levels of understanding on the role, achievements and plans of the Commission

through utilization of appropriate communication strategies tailored to meet the specific needs of the target publics.

Attitude

- a) The major challenge is for the Commission to continually nurture the already existing positive assessment of the Commission profile and position in the higher education arena. One way that this could be done is through ensuring timely, prompt and accurate information is disseminated to stakeholders on a regular basis to enhance the confidence in the organization as an important repository of vital specialist information in all matters pertaining to the advancement and quality assurance of higher education.
- b) There is an equally important need for the Commission to establish a rapport and build a sustainable relationship with media to enhance positive public perception through creation of an open-door policy with publics in a manner which will demonstrate transparency and openness and lend credence to the Commission as a result.

Through the planned creation and management of positive and productive relationships with stakeholders the Commission will enhance their positive corporate image and foster a favourable attitude and sense of belonging among the 'customers'.

Motivation

- a) There is need to tap into the desire by universities to consult with the Commission by enhancing the corporate visibility and image of CHE as an essential repository of information and ideas on matter pertaining to the regulation and coordination of higher education in the country.
- b) As the Commission faces the daunting challenges and there are increasing demands for quality higher education, it will become imperative that long-term partnerships with stakeholders are established to enhance the corporate reputation and influence public perceptions in order to contribute to the bottom-line in achieving the goals of the organization.

By building up 'stocks' of reputation 'capital' the Commission's survival will be assured as will the very important goodwill and support from the critical publics.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

The study established that the university sub-sector had a high level of understanding of what the Commission does and how it undertakes accreditation and planning of universities. It also shed light on the many factors influencing the attitudes and motivations of the universities towards the Commission. These factors have been tackled in detail in chapter four of this report.

However, many questions remain unanswered and open for further empirical investigation. These include:

- a) Whether the findings of the study would apply if a similar investigation was carried out among the student communities and non-academic staff of the same universities;
- b) A wider study covering more universities is recommended to come up with conclusions that can be more generalisable;
- c) Studies should be conducted to gauge the perceptions and expectations of the Commission among other stakeholders such as the Higher Education Loans Board, industry, PSSI's, parents, regional and international accreditation bodies and development partners. This wider net of stakeholder perception analysis will in turn inform the processes and procedures of the Commission to make them more responsive and customer-oriented where applicable.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I:
SAMPLING FRAME

Public Universities

1. University of Nairobi
2. Moi University
3. Kenyatta University
4. Egerton University
5. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology
6. Maseno University
7. Western University College of Science and Technology

Private Universities

8. East Africa School of Theology
9. Kenya Highlands Bible College
10. Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology
11. Nairobi International School of Theology
12. Pan Africa Christian College; and
13. St. Paul's United Theological College
14. University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
15. Catholic University of Eastern Africa
16. Daystar University
17. Scott Theological College
18. United States International University
19. Africa Nazarene University
20. Kenya Methodist University
21. Kabarak University
22. Kiriri Women's University of Science & Technology
23. Aga Khan University ; and
24. Strathmore University.

Source: CHE register of universities.

APPENDIX II

COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSION

(a) The Steering Committee

This is the executive Committee of the Commission. It works under the general direction of the Commission in coordinating the work of the various committees and the Secretariat.

(b) Appointments and Promotions Committee

This Committee deals with matters related to recruitment and promotion of the staff of the Commission. There are three sub-committees one each for senior, middle-level and junior staff.

(c) Inspection Committee

The Committee is charged with the responsibility of assessing and ensuring the establishment and maintenance of high academic standards in university institutions and institutions that have applied to the Commission for accreditation.

(d) Curriculum and Quality Assurance Committee

This Committee is responsible for evaluation and approval of curricula of academic programmes and assessment of academic resources supporting such programmes; and advises the Inspection Committee accordingly.

(e) Technical Committee

This Committee assesses the suitability of buildings and other physical and spatial facilities for university education in accordance with the Universities Rules and the Laws of Kenya, and advises the Inspection Committee accordingly.

(f) Legislation Committee

This Committee advises the Commission on legal matters. It specifically reviews Rules and Regulations governing the conduct and discipline of students, Charters and Statutes and advises the Inspection Committee on the same.

(g) Documentation and Information Technology Committee

This Committee advises the commission on matters pertaining to the provision of information and documentation services. It also guides the direction of the development of library and information services in institutions of higher education in the country.

(h) Equation of Qualifications Committee

The Committee recommends to the Commission the national standards on recognition and equation of qualifications from various parts of the world.

(i) Post-Secondary Institutions Committee

The Committee sets standards for post-secondary school institutions, coordinates the education and training, establishes criteria for credit transfers between various programmes and maintains a directory of post-secondary school institutions.

(j) Policy Analysis and Research Committee

The Committee is charged with the responsibility of promoting the role of research and education for national development. It also facilitates and coordinates research funding by establishing sustainable linkages between universities and development partners and other stakeholders.

(k) Universities Grants Committee

The Committee provides liaison with Government departments and the public and private sectors of the economy in matters relating to overall national manpower development requirements.

(l) Central Universities Admissions Committee

This Committee whose membership is provided in Section 8(3) of the Universities Act is expected to advise the Councils, through the Commission, on the co-ordination of admissions to public universities on a national basis; the establishment and maintenance by such means as it considers appropriate of equivalent educational standards as a prerequisite for university admissions; and prescribing the minimum requirements upon compliance with which a person may become academically qualified for admission to a university.

(m) Tender Committee

The tender Committee processes the procurement of goods and services in the Commission.

Source: (CHE Strategic Plan 2005-2010)

**APPENDIX III:
STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Introduction

This questionnaire is part of the research being undertaken to determine perceptions and expectations of the Commission for Higher Education. The main purpose is to establish the knowledge, attitudes and motivations of both public and private universities with regard to the Commission. The results of the research are expected to provide an objective benchmark to measure the impact of the organization's image management campaign. Your honest response will be highly appreciated. Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of responses as well as to safeguard the anonymity of the respondents.

Place a tick (✓) in the box and suggestions/comments in the space provided.

Part I: Knowledge/Understanding

1. How did you first learn about the Commission for Higher Education (CHE)? *(multiple response allowed)*

- (a) Personal interaction with CHE staff
- (b) Media
- (c) Commission meeting
- (d) Workshop/seminar
- (e) Communication: Oral Written

Others _____

2(i) How would you rate your understanding of the Commission for Higher Education?

- (a) Very good (b) Good (c) Average
(d) Poor (e) Very Poor

(ii) Suggest how this can be enhanced?

3 (i) Are you:

- (a) Very satisfied (b) Satisfied
(c) Indifferent (d) Dissatisfied
(e) Very dissatisfied

with the way in which the Commission's activities have been communicated to you?

(ii) Give reasons for your answer.

(iii) Suggest improvements that can be made to the communication methods

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 – very poor, 2 – poor, 3- average, 4 – good, 5 – very good) how would you rate the overall performance of the Commission in each of the following areas:

Approachability and responsiveness

1 2 3 4 5

(a) Relevance to emerging issues in higher education

1 2 3 4 5

(b) Relationship with the university sub-sector

1 2 3 4 5

(c) Positioning and profile of the organization in the higher education sub-sector

1 2 3 4 5

(d) Establishment of mechanisms to enhance quality higher education in the country

1 2 3 4 5

(e) Streamlining the higher education sector

1 2 3 4 5

5. The Commission works through specialist committees to inspect and supervise private university institutions to ascertain the adequacy and appropriateness of the academic resources. This is done to ensure that the institutions fulfill the standards and procedures laid down in the Universities Rules, 1989. On a scale of 1-5 (using the same ratings as in question 4 above) how would you rate the performance of CHE in evaluation and assessment of:

(a) Physical and spatial facilities

1 2 3 4 5

(b) Library resources

1 2 3 4 5

(c) Structure of governance

1 2 3 4 5

(d) Financial resources
1 2 3 4 5

(e) Staffing and staff requirements
1 2 3 4 5

6 (i) What information sources on the Commission are available to you as an institution? (multiple response allowed)

- (a) Website (b) Publications
(c) Face-to-face communication (d) Media
(e) Formal meeting
(f) Other (Specify) -----

(ii) Which is your preferred channel of communication with the Commission on important issues?

Part II: Attitude

7 (i) Which of the following best describes your level of satisfaction with the way the Commission as an accreditation body has met your expectations?

- (a) Very satisfied (b) Satisfied
(c) Indifferent (d) Dissatisfied
(e) Very dissatisfied

(ii) Give reasons-----

8. (i) In your opinion is the Commission best placed to coordinate and regulate university education in the country?

Yes No

(ii) Give reasons-----

9 Do you:

- (a) Strongly agree (b) Agree
(c) Neutral (d) Disagree
(e) Strongly disagree

that the Commission undertakes its tasks efficiently and effectively?

Part III: Motivation

10. How often do you consult CHE for advice on matters pertaining to the management of higher education?

- (a) Very often (b) Often
(c) Average (d) Rarely
(e) Not at all

11. (i) How would you describe your consultations with the Commission?

- (a) Very useful (b) Useful
(c) Average (d) Insignificant

(e) Not at all useful

(ii) Give reasons for your answer

(iii) Suggestions for making consultations useful

12. Any comments or suggestions that you may want to discuss

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.

APPENDIX IV

MARKING SCHEME FOR THE LIKERT-TYPE STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION SCALE

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Range</u>
Strongly agree	Very Good	Very Satisfied	5
Agree	Good	Satisfied	4
Neutral	Average	Indifferent	3
Disagree	Poor	Dissatisfied	2
Strongly Disagree	Very Poor	Very Dissatisfied	1

APPENDIX V

CODING PROCEDURES

The questionnaires are coded in respect to institutions and individuals interviewed without any regard to their positions in the particular institution. The first interviewed respondent is given Code 01 and the third is given 03. Institutions themselves are coded from 1 to 8

- (1) Scott Theological College (Machakos)
Code 1
Respondents will be: 101, 102, 103.

- (2) Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology
Code 2
Respondents will be: 201, 202, 203.

- (3) Nairobi International School of Theology (Nairobi)
Code 3
Respondents will be: 301, 302, 303.

- (4) Kenya Highlands Bible College (Kericho)
Code 4
Respondents will be: 401, 402, 403.

- (5) Kabarak University (Nakuru)
Code 5
Respondents will be: 501, 502, 503.

- (6) Moi University (Eldoret)
Code 6
Respondents will be: 601, 602, 603.

(7) Maseno University (Kisumu)

Code 7

Respondents will be: 701, 702, 703.

(8) University of Nairobi

Code 8

Respondents will be: 801, 802, 803.

**APPENDIX VI
BUDGET**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Cost (Kshs.)</u>
1) Pilot testing of questionnaires (questionnaire administration, transport and lunch). Two (2) universities in and around Nairobi.	1,600/-
2) Transport and lunch for four (4) universities in and around Nairobi (data collection).	2,100/-
3) Transport, accommodation and meals [for four (4) universities outside Nairobi] for 10 days (data collection).	19,200/-
4) Questionnaire administration @ Kshs.500 for 24 questionnaires.	12,000/-
5) Binding of Research Project @ 150/= for 4	600/-
Total	<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> 35,500/- <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>